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The Author; B.R.D. Jones

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PLATE 1. The 1939 Buffs Territorial Army spring camp at Wannock Camp, nr. Eastbourne. Note the somewhat unconventional dress code!

PLATE 2. In full kit and under canvas at Wannock Camp, Eastbourne.

PLATE 3. Mrs Hilder and her son, Jack. I was billeted with them at Station Road West, Canterbury in 1939.

PLATE 4. Daisy Hilder at my 'civvy digs'. During the war she met a South African pilot whom she married after the Armistice.
PLATE 1
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encouragement grass
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PLATE 2
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and under canvas at
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Exposition.

PLATE 3
Mr. Higbee and party stuck
I was hit by a bullet in Station Road
West Carleton in 1939.
PLATE 5. The Citadel at Huy, Belgium. This was to be our first ‘prison camp’, and where we were held for about a month in the summer of 1940. The vast majority of prisoners here were French and Belgian, with only eight British lads apart from Sid Bartlett and I. We were put to work straight away, making daily working party trips outside the fort.

PLATE 6. The exercise yard inside Huy Citadel. There were at least four floors below this level. Note the ‘funicular railway’ towers. This system was used to transport supplies up the hillside to the Fort. Our stay in Huy was fairly comfortable, but we were lucky to leave when we did. Conditions deteriorated quickly when, in September, the Germans converted the fort into a Nazi penal colony where more than 7,000 people were imprisoned (Appendix VI).
Then and Now

PLATE 7. (left) Two of my mates posing beside the engine shed construction frame-work we erected at Schlüsselmühle. Bert Sales (left) of the West Kents Regiment, and ‘Darkie’ Anderson (right) of the Kings Royal Rifle Corps.

We were working for Siemens Bauunion in early 1941, constructing railway buildings and sidings.

PLATE 8. (below) When I returned to Schlüsselmühle in 1977 I found that the engine sheds were still there and in full use. The Direktor was kind enough to give me a guided tour, and allowed me to take photographs.
PLATE 9. 'Lofty' Dove and myself in the rear rank, with some of the Schüsselmühle lads. ‘Darkie’ Anderson is on the extreme right. Note that several soldiers are wearing clogs in the front rank.

PLATE 10. My metal I-D tag giving my German POW number. These were issued at the 'Balloon Hanger (Camp XIIA), and at the same time we were photographed, fingerprinted, and had our heads shaved bald.
PLATE 11. Fort ‘12’. Part of the Thorn defensive complex built in 1880 to defend the borders of West Prussia. During the Second World War most of these forts were used as prison camps with this one holding French POWs.

PLATE 12. All that remains of the ‘Balloon Hanger’ (Camp XIIA). Originally constructed to hold ‘dirigibles’, the buildings on this site acted as an induction centre at which we were ‘processed and sent out to permanent camps.
Entertainment in Stalag XXA.

PLATE 13. Top Left: The dance band at Schlüsselmühle. The chap playing piano was Eric Williams, a professional musician. Before the war he played in the Herman Darweski dance band.

PLATE 14. Bottom left: The ‘Repertory Company’ at Schlüsselmühle camp. The officer on the left of the photograph was our camp medical officer.

PLATE 15. Above left: Program for a comedy called ‘Home from Home’ by Muriel and Sydney Fox. Scripts for shows and musical scores for the dance band were sent from England by the Red Cross.

PLATE 19. Typical contents of a Red Cross prisoners-of-war parcel.  
Photograph: British Red Cross.

PLATE 20. One of the food parcel depots at Geneva.  
Photograph: British Red Cross.

XMAS DAY — 1941

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Meal</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8 AM</td>
<td>TEA &amp; CHOCOLATE BISCUITS ( Rune)</td>
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<td>10 AM</td>
<td>ROLL-CALL, ON THE SQUARE</td>
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<td>11.30 AM</td>
<td>CAMP DINNER FROM COOKHOUSE (So Much Good)</td>
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<td>12 NOON</td>
<td>ROSTP PORK, BANNS PEAS, WELD CARROTS,</td>
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<td>SPOTING POTATOES</td>
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<td>1 P.M.</td>
<td>STURSEL - CHRISTMAS PUDDING &amp; STEMSBRAV</td>
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<td>7 P.M.</td>
<td>JELLY, BLANC-MANG, CREAMED RICE (CREAM ON TOP)</td>
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<td>BREAD AND JAM, FRENCH, FISH PIE, LEMON CURD</td>
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<td></td>
<td>CHRISTMAS CUP (ROASTED WITH JICCA &amp; CHOCOLATE)</td>
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<tr>
<td>11 P.M.</td>
<td>MEAT-LIKE SANDWICHES</td>
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<td>10.30 P.M.</td>
<td>TOASTS</td>
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<td></td>
<td>THE KING</td>
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<td>THE FOLKS AT HOME</td>
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<td>OUR ALLEN COMRADES</td>
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<td></td>
<td>MOTHER B——Y BORT</td>
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PLATE 22. The back page of the XMAS menu. It reads:

'This menu is a souvenir of a XMAS day spent in a prisoner-of-war working camp. The food was not the usual, partaken of, on this said day; but it was none the less appreciated. And in spirit, we pulled crackers, played games, and drank beer and wine, with our dear people across the sea. Indeed, under the circumstances, the Day was a very happy one; and will be remembered by the eleven men of Room 9, Hut 1, Schlisselmuhe, Thorn - forever. For the food which we had, we thank the BRITISH branch of the International Red Cross.'

PLATE 23. The Toast ‘That B——Y Boat’, given by ‘yours truly’ refers to a Colonel ‘Tatie’ Jones, who was supposed to have risked his life getting a ship-load of potatoes through to Spain during the Civil War. I have been unable to find out the exact details of this event.

PLATE 24. A greetings card packed with the special ‘XMAS’ food parcel.
PLATE 25. Outside the main farmhouse at Hof-Waldow. The farmer was a Captain in the German Army. I am in the back row, extreme right, and my mate, 'Lofty' Dove is having his 'short back and sides.' The barber was a chap called 'Tonner'.

PLATE 26. The Hof-Waldow farmhouse as it looks in 1997. It has been much modified since 1945, and has a very run-down appearance. Most of the original roof has been removed, and a small shop occupies the right-hand end. A Polish family now lives in the remainder.
PLATE 27. The rear of the building where we lived at Waldowke (Hof-Waldow). At the far end of the building are the windows of the cow-stalls, where Lofty and I used to do the daily milking. After we'd finished the milking, Lofty would wait under one of the cow-shed windows and I'd pass him a can-full of fresh milk, which he would quickly take up to our billet. *Photograph taken in 1997.*

PLATE 28. The buildings of Hof-Waldow farm made up a large square. This was the building which was the guards living quarters. It was also where one of the Polish women used to cook our food. Now Polish villagers dwell here. *Photograph taken in 1997.*
PLATE 29. Some of the lads at Hof-Waldow (Waldowke). The farm wagon was the standard Polish type. I saw identical wagons still in use on my return in 1997. On the wagon: Duncan Mackintosh (left) and a Polish civilian farm worker. Bottom row from the left: myself (in the forage cap), Joe Pattison, Tommy ?, Fred Allen, Willie Forsyth, ‘Sapper’ (Alf Mott), and ‘Lofty’ (Arthur Dove).

PLATE 30. A group photograph taken on the farm at Hof-Waldow.
Rear rank: L. to R:
Alex McCutcheon, Bill Hirst, ‘Lofty’ Dove, Myself, Joe Patterson, Bill Forsyth.
Middle rank:
Front rank:
‘Dewey’ Dewhurst, ‘Sapper’ Mott, and Duncan Macintosh.
PLATE 31. Extreme left.
The window of our billet on the farm at Hof-Waldow. Occasionally, at night I used to pull aside the wire netting covering the window and climb out to go wandering around the Polish countryside. Although this might seem foolhardy, you have to remember that we only had one German guard, and we could count on him being fast asleep most nights.

PLATE 32. Left.
The road leading to ‘Komierowo’ from outside of our billet. (about a couple of miles away) I walked this route several times at night in the hope of meeting friendly Poles, and perhaps cadging a bit of extra food.

On one occasion ‘Sapper’ and I decided to go apple ‘scrumping’. Unfortunately, the Polish farmer had set a guard and we were nearly caught. I escaped with a bleeding leg and a pullover full of apples!

*Both of these photographs were taken when I returned to Poland in 1997.*
PLATE 33. Obendorf railway station. We would bring wagon loads of potatoes and sugar-beet to the station, or sometimes collect lime and fertiliser for return to the farm. It's now deserted, with rusting tracks hidden in the grass. There was just one very old lady living there who told us that she'd been there for 62 years.

PLATE 34. The river Sepolna (Sepolenka) at the hamlet of Maintel (nr. Olszewka). The river, normally quite narrow, has been dammed at this point to form a mill pond reservoir. It provides power for the nearby water mill. We would bring our grain here to be ground into flour. In winter we would drive our wagons out onto the frozen lake where we would cut blocks of ice. These were then taken back to our farm or distributed around the nearby villages.
PLATE 35. Back in Poland again after 52 years. We had just driven down from Gdansk, (Danzig) and arrived in Waldowo, a small town only 2 miles from our farm at Waldowko. I still had no idea whether I would recognise anything, or even if the farm was still there.

PLATE 36. Typical Polish countryside in the area around Waldowko. These farm buildings are in Maintel, near to the river and mill. It was here that some of our mates were billeted, working on Maintel farms.
PLATE 17. POW's on parade at Stalag XXA. *Photograph: British Red Cross.*

PLATE 18. ‘Spud-bashing party’ at Stalag XXA. There are a number of different nationalities of POW in this picture, and it is possible that it was ‘staged’. Certainly, the British soldiers do not appear too happy about the presence of the German guards. Maybe the man in ‘civvies’ was a Gestapo officer. *Photograph: British Red Cross.*
After my release from Schwerin POW camp, I, like so many others, went on the hunt for souvenirs. These bank notes were from the pre-war days of German 'Hyper Inflation' when you needed a wheelbarrow of money to buy a loaf of bread.

I found a great stack of them stashed away in an abandoned building. They were brand new and numbered consequently. The denomination of the notes was one billion marks each! They were then, and still are, virtually worthless.

PLATE 38. German decorations.
The following three items I took from a German prisoner as souvenirs.

Nahkampfszipange (Close Combat Clasp).
An important infantry decoration, awarded for hand-to-hand fighting when unsupported by armour. This bronze clasp was worn above the left breast pocket, and signified over 15 days of close combat.

PLATE 39.
Infanterie-Sturmbzeichen (Infantry Assault Badge).
The bronze version of this badge was for Motorised Infantry. It was first introduced on the 1st June 1940.

For an award of the badge it was necessary to have taken part in at least three infantry assaults on separate days. (counter attacks and armed reconnaissances also counted).
The badge was worn on the left breast pocket.

PLATE 40.
das Hoheitszeichen
(The National Emblem)
Army, Enlisted/NCO.
White thread weave on dark green.
This was the most distinctive of all insignia worn on the uniform.
It was originally worn by members of the NSDAP (Nazi Party), but in 1934 it was decreed that the emblem be added to all military uniforms. It was worn over the right breast pocket by the Army, Navy and Air Force, and on the left upper sleeve by the SS.
PLATE 41.
The sugar factory at Unislaw. POW work gangs were brought here each year for the sugar beet season. Today 68% of shares are British owned. The building has been much modified, and it is easy to see the old roof-line and the shape of the original windows.

PLATE 42. My return to Unislaw in 1997. Here, my daughter Barbara (extreme right) and I pose with three generations of sugar factory workers. The lady on my right showed me a photo of some British POW's, one of which, she explained, was her father.

PLATE 43.
This building was our sleeping quarters when we worked at the sugar processing plant. The Unislaw sugar factory was just across the road. Today, this building is used as a sports hall by the villagers.

*These photographs were taken in Poland in 1997.*
PLATE 44. An example of ‘Camp Money’ or ‘Lagergeld’. These notes were our ‘pay’ for the hard labour we were forced to do by the Germans. The money was especially produced for the Stalags, and could only be used there. In practice, it was virtually useless as there was hardly anything that you could buy with it, even though there was a ‘Camp Shop’. I sent most of mine back home, including a great wad that I had won in a card game, but I have no idea what happened to it.

PLATE 45.
This is the front page of an ancient exercise book that I’ve managed to keep since 1940. It was in this book that I started my records of my five years as a POW.

When this exercise book was filled I managed to buy a proper diary in the Stalag shop. It was a three year diary, but I was able to make it last right through to the end of the war.

I hung onto it through everything, carrying it for over six hundred miles on our walk from our farm in Poland to our final liberation in Germany.
List of Diagrams

Front cover  Emblem of the Buffs Regiment.
fig. 1       The Boys anti-tank rifle
fig. 2       Heavy Cruiser Lützow

List of Maps

1  The railway station at la Herlière.
2  Walking around France and Belgium.
3  Map of the country around Hof-Waldow.
4  Route of ‘The Black Hunger March’.
5  Map of the Stalags.
6  Stalag XX A. Thorn.
7  Stalag 312 Torun-Glinki.
Map 1. la Herlière showing dispositions and movements during the action on the morning of May 20th, 1940. The 600 men of the 5th Battallion were spread out over a 6½ mile front along the Doullens/Arras road. ‘B’ company was ordered to hold the railway line at la Herlière.

Key to the Map

1. The Railway Station. Sid Bartlett and I were in the observation post on the attic floor of the Station.

2. ‘B’ coy. forward positions in the field to the South of the Station.

3. First appearance of the enemy column moving up from Albert in the South East.

4. Tanks and other armoured vehicles of the 2nd. Panzer division left the road and moved North towards the station.

5. One tank drove down along the railway line while we were hiding in the field.

6. German infantry searched trucks on the railway sidings looking for more of our chaps.

Only 80 men of the 5th Battallion managed to make it back to Britain.
Map 2. Walking around France and Belgium.
Sid Bartlett and I spent nearly a month on the road, living off the land, and evading the Germans. We did have some sort of a plan, which was to make for the low-lying land of Belgium and try to get to the coast on a canal boat.
Map 3.
Map of the country around Hof-Waldow.
The farm of Hof-Waldow was at Waldowke. From there we would visit the mill at Maintel, and also there, in the winter we would cut ice blocks. Obendorf (Obodowo) was the site of the railway station where we would deliver farm goods and collect supplies. Also shown is the farm track that I would use when walking to Komierowo at night.
Map 4. Route of ‘The Black Hunger March’

--- route of our march from Poland into Germany covering over 1,000 km in appalling weather and with very little food.

Note the change of direction at Goldberg. It is probable that our guards had a change in orders and were told to take us to work at Fassberg AFB instead of continuing to Schwerin.

1: Peenemünde rocket research station.
2: Schwinemünde Roads (where we saw the Lützow)
3: Bay of Danzig. This is where the Lützow was shelling the Russians.
Map 5.
Location of Prisoner of War Camps in Enemy Countries.
This Red Cross map was published in 1942, and does not show all camps.

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Marlag und Milag Nord</td>
<td>Westerimke</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dulag Luft (Transit)</td>
<td>Oberwesel</td>
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Colditz, Saxony, Warburg
Map 6. Stalag XX A. Thorn.

scale 1:100 000

1: Fort XI  POW Camp
2: Fort XII  POW Camp
3: Fort XIII  POW Camp
4: Fort XIV  Hospital
5: Fort XV  POW Camp
6: Fort XVI  Prison
7: Fort XVII  POW Camp
8: Stalag 312 Glinki  POW Camp
Balloon Hanger (XIIA)  Transit Camp

All these forts came under the command of Stalag XXA, whose HQ buildings were just across the road from Fort XIII.

Map 7. Stalag 312 Torun-Glinki

1: Cemetery for Russian POWs.
   (this cemetery covered 6 hectares)

2: Layout of Stalag 312.

Most of the prison camps under the umbrella of Stalag XXA were in, or built in close association to, the defensive forts of the Torun complex. Much more room, however, was required for the expected flood of Russian POWs, and so land was allocated to the South at Glinki for a giant camp. It consisted of row after row of wooden huts, covering an area of 128 hectares. By 1945 there were 11,000 Russians imprisoned there.

The death rate in Glinki must have been enormous, as apart from the nearby cemetery, there was a mass grave containing 14,000 Russians in the forest to the South near Cierpice. At Schüsselmühle, we witnessed some of these deaths, as we regularly saw a 'death cart' pulled by Russian POWs.