

P.O.W. Diary 1945 February 01 1945 Stalag VIII B J.H.Hallam

Februari 1 1945 Thursday

Had a good sleep, get completely undressed, first time in march. I feel fairly fit, my lips are a little better. A thaw has set in. I see one of my old Regiment this morning. We catch up with more of the boys. The travel is slow. Pass through Jauer today put up at farm again, have the pleasure of a barn. Have tea, porridge was very welcome. We was lucky and got another loaf and half, turn in pretty early.

Note

Jauer = Jawor Polish name

P.O.W. Diary 1945 February 02 1945 Stalag VIII B J.H.Hallam

Februari 2 1945 Friday

Last night was the warmest we have had. Slept well too. This rapid change is a marvelous wonder to us. The sun has shone on us all morning! Have passed through numerous villages, we stay at another farm, barn as usual, my foot hurt a little today, I do hope I don't konk out, my lips are a lot better. I find a tin of boot fat for our boots, also a brooch of three elephants.

P.O.W. Diary 1945 February 03 1945 Stalag VIII B J.H.Hallam

Februari 3 1945 Saturday

Slept well all night, it's a little colder this morning, maybe it is because I've had a wash! We pass by Goldberg. We have done nearly 30 kilometers. We stop at a farm once again, have a billet with the Rusks. Tea and Haver Flocken has been cooked and eaten. Move on again tomorrow. All are now feeling hungry.

Note

Goldberg = Zlotoryja Polish name

Haver Flocken = oat flakes, porridge.

P.O.W. Diary 1945 February 04 1945 Stalag VIII B J.H.Hallam

Februari 4 1945 Sunday

Sleep well, not so cold! Have a slice of bread and cheese for breakfast. Have not shaved for three days. We have done 16 kilometers or more. Was very nice marching today, I think the war is on its last legs. Wonder what the folk at home are doing today? I wish I were with them. We made a soup of spuds, 3 onions and a soup powder. We are not doing so bad as yet.

Note

'spuds' common English slang name for 'potatoes'. (Kartoffeln, pommes de terre, aardappel)

P.O.W. Diary 1945 February 05 1945 Stalag

VIIIB J.H.Hallam

Februari 5 1945 Monday

Wake up warm. Dismal day, and inclined to rain. Have a drink of tea and a slice of bread. We do ver 20 kilometer today. Stop at another farm. We have a good place for cooking the stew, it's where the pigs tucker. Dick and I make a stew of our own. We get a bread ration tonight. 1 loaf between 5 men. The first in 14 days. It is now raining. Turning in.

Note

'tucker' Aussie / Kiwi talk for 'food', usually of a very simple and local nature.

P.O.W. Diary 1945 February 06 1945 Stalag VIIIB J.H.Hallam

Februari 6 1945 Tuesday

Still raining, but I have slept well! Had tea and two slices of bread for breakfast. Not moving today. Resting, have a soup for dinner, a very miserable day, no soup or bread for us this evening. We get spuds in their jackets tonight. Roll on the boat.

P.O.W. Diary 1945 February 07 1945 Stalag VIIIB J.H.Hallam

Februari 7 1945

Fine this morning! Have a cup of tea and 1 slice of bread for breakfast. Had a wash and shave in warm water. Dick and I make a stew, it is forbidden to have a fire, but we are just finished before the guard came. Stew made from spuds, onion and an egg flakes. I wonder what tomorrow will bring.

P.O.W. Diary 1945 February 08 1945 Stalag VIII B J.H.Hallam

Februari 8 1945 Thursday

Moving thank the Lord! Trying to rain, we are in the woods now, what a journey, do 16 kilo. Pull in at a farm, surrounded by woods still. All mixed up with Russians, Jugoslavs, Serbs, every P.O.W. there is. Food question gets serious. Cooking facilities nil, we might get a soup, sometime. I put my hand in somebody's dung, dirty sods.

P.O.W. Diary 1945 February 09 1945 Stalag VIII B J.H.Hallam

Februari 9 1945 Friday

Did not sleep well, could not stretch out, noise and stink of human dung all helped to keep me awake. We get bread tonight. Do over 20 kilo today. Pull up at as farm, have a hay loft for a change, have drink, and the last tin of bully between the three of us. News very vague.

P.O.W. Diary 1945 February 10 1945 Stalag VIII B J.H.Hallam

Februari 10 1945 Saturday.

Slept, but not very comfy. Make a false start, this morning, we are staying here for the day. My feet hurt last night, also this morning. I am pleased we are resting. Dick and I have made a stew again. Hope the folk at home are not worrying too much about me.

P.O.W. Diary 1945 February 11 1945 Stalag VIII B J.H.Hallam

Februari 11 1945 Sunday

Slept very well, undressed too. We had coffee, and a piece of bread and jam for breakfast. Hefty has brought our brew can full of hot tea, here goes for a hot drink, tea marvellous! Weather is excellent today for time of year. Bunzlau supposed fallen, moving 8 kilometer after dinner. My feet hurt a little, and we have to carry our gear. Soup today without salt. 123 of us in great hall, very crowded. Army and civvy evacuees fill the roads. We buy three pigs off civvy. Everybody is without smoke. Have a decent stew this evening.

Note

Bunzlau = Boleslawiec Polish name. (about 100km from Dresden).

P.O.W. Diary 1945 February 12 1945 Stalag VIII B J.H.Hallam

Februari 12 1945 Monday.

Did not sleep very well! Snowed all night, civvies packing all night. Feet are sore, hope march is not far. Good lord, what a march, I'm just about all in. Put up at a farm. Dick got a ration of bread off a soldier, patiently waiting for the soup to come up. Now 4 kilometre outside Görlitz, might go to Stalag there. Soup is up thank goodness, too very tasty. Making a soup for later too. Weather cold. I have got tucked up in the blankets. We tasted a little bit of chicken broth one of the boys had cooked up in our pot, very tasty too. Roll on warm weather.

Note

Görlitz is a town on the absolute eastmost edge of Germany on the Lusatian Neisse River, in the Bundesland (Federal State) of Saxony. It is opposite the Polish town of Zgorzelec, which

was a part of Görlitz until 1945.

P.O.W. Diary 1945 February 13 1945 Stalag VIII B J.H.Hallam

Februari 13 1945 Tuesday.

Wake up warm! But full of aches and pains. Had warm coffee and two slices of bread for breakfast. We pass through the outskirts of Görlitz, leave four men who were sick at the hospital. Travelling very hard, hilly country; trudge on and on, I am just about on my chin strap. It looks as though we are going to march for ever. Well! We have done over 35 kilo. Billeted in a small barn, just 48 of us. Frau gives us some broth from pig cooking, salty but tasty. Soup comes up late, but we get a good whack of it. Feel very full.

P.O.W. Diary 1945 February 14 1945 Stalag VIII B J.H.Hallam

Februari 14 1945 Wednesday.

Wake up find it's daylight. I slept all night! Feet feel a lot better. We have coffee and bread for breakfast, with a few cold spuds left from last night. Sleep for another 3 hrs. have a welcome wash and shave, soup comes up, good thick soup: feel pretty full after eating it. Have a little trouble this afternoon, Jerry has lost some white flour, he turns us out, makes us stand in the cold for 2 hrs till he finds it. The civvy traded us the flour, so we all go back in barn again, but without the flour. Have spud soup tonight. We are moving on again tomorrow.

P.O.W. Diary 1945 February 15 1945 Stalag VIII B J.H.Hallam

Februari 15 1945 Thursday.

Wake feeling lot better, air raid sirens were blowing all night. Coffee and bread for breakfast. Done 20 kilometre today. Heard our planes flying overhead as we march along, saw leaflets falling. Bombing heard quite plainly. We have a few cold spuds, and last tin of lamb and green peas. Bread is a thing of the past. This place is called Hohekirche. We have a soup this evening, very thin. Get into trouble milking the cows.

Note

Hochkirch (Hohekirche is probably the old spelling) in Saxony, Germany, about 30 kilometres west of Gorlitz.

P.O.W. Diary 1945 February 16 1945 Stalag VIII B J.H.Hallam

Februari 16 1945 Friday.

Slept on and off, dreamed of several different persons, and places. Many planes heard during the night. Breakfast 1 cup of coffee. Rumour bread might come up. Well bread has turned up. 1 loaf 2 men, also a little margarine. How it brightens up the boys to see a bit of bread again. Dick has made a brew of tea, so a slice of bread is a repast for a king. Soup comes up, made of spuds, dried vegetables (Italian), and horse meat.

One of our boys was shot here.

P.O.W. Diary 1945 February 17 1945 Stalag VIII B J.H.Hallam

Februari 17 1945 Saturday.

Wake up early, cold this morning, have drink of tea for breakfast, 2 slices of bread. Move off early. There we are in another barn, feel good today. Dicks' foot hurt him a little. I have now given him my civvy boots to wear. We make some flat cakes, from rye meal and water, the old Frau will bake them she says. Cakes are sad, but we are so hungry they taste so good. Pass Bautzen today, only small town. Make a duff from rye meal and water, also good.

Note

Bautzen Saxony, Germany.

P.O.W. Diary 1945 February 18 1945 Stalag VIII B J.H.Hallam

Februari 18 1945 Sunday.

Slept some of the night, bed had a few bumps in it, planes were passing over all night. Had coffee and cold boiled pudding for breakfast. We stay today, maybe for week, so we're staying in bed: it is the warmest place. Tom makes a brew, so we are having a slice of bread with it. Bread comes up, four men to one loaf: cheese also appears. We have our Sunday tea:- 1 slice of bread and cheese, and one sad, sad, flat cake with cheese spread on it too. Feeling quite full, happy.

POW Diaries 1945 February 19 1945 J.H.Hallam Stalag VIII B

Februari 19 1945 Monday.

I was nearly blown out of bed last night with draught under door, and it was colder than the antartic. I get the coffee, have a slice of bread, and the last of the cheese. Stay in bed till soup comes up, fairly thick too. Jerry asks for bakers, everyone is a baker now. Dick makes tea, we make the bed again, get in and drink tea. Freezing. Make another pud. Today! Soup again tonight. Turning in, cold.

Note

'pud' = pudding.

POW Diaries 1945 February 20 1945

J.H.Hallam Stalag VIIB

Slept little warmer, there was an air raid which lasted all night last night. Had coffee and two slices of bread for our breakfast, one slice with marg, one without. Get out of bed 10 o'clock, have shave, and I feel a lot better. I cut a few mens hair this morning. Soup thicker today. Cut Dick's hair, he starts to cut mine. No rations as yet. The cart went for rations, did not get any. I did a bit of darning this afternoon. Made a soup tonight out of crushed horse beans and a few spuds we had. It smelt and tasted o.k., hope it agrees with my stomach. Tom cooked it. We get spuds in their jackets from the cookhouse. We get about 5 a man when they came up. Dick has sold his boots for bread, we have only one pair spare boots with us now, quite plenty too, to have to carry.

Note

Between February 20–25, 1944, as part of the European strategic bombing campaign, the United States Strategic Air Forces (USSTAF) launched **Operation Argument**, a series of missions against the Third Reich that became known as **Big Week**.

Dresden had suffered the infamous bombing raid by the RAF, the previous week.

POW Diaries 1945 February 21 1945

J.H.Hallam Stalag VIIB

Februari 21 1945 Wednesday.

I slept warm for the first time. Had coffee and a slice of dry bread for breakfast and one slice equally divided. Gone for rations again! We spend a lot of time in bed this morning, nothing to eat, nothing to do. Hurrah! The cart is back, and full of bread, one loaf two men; also a tin of

meat between four, no more meat for one week. Tom makes brew, we have slice of bread and meat, (tasty). We have a bath thi afternoon, feel marvellous, more rumours of work. Weather still very cold, roll on the sunny weather.

POW Diaries 1945 February 22 1945

J.H.Hallam Stalag VIIIB

Februari 22 1945 Thursday.

Sleep warm. Have coffee and slice and quarter bread, with the last of the Jerry meat for breakfast. Lie on the straw most of the day these days, too cold to hang outside. It is ration day again tomorrow, I hope they bring more than last time. Nothing very exciting happens these days, we just lie in bed and wait for the soup to come up, no news of the war, no news of home, nothing. We talk of happier days, in between coffee and soup time, so we pass the hours away.

POW Diaries 1945 February 23 1945

J.H.Hallam Stalag VIIIB

Februari 23 1945 Friday.

A cold sleep last night. Have slice of bread and salt for breakfast. The cart goes after dinner for rations. Dick has worked the oracle, he has been out, and brought a kit bag full of spuds in, also a pound of meat, and a good piece of Jerry sausage. The Gods must be smiling on us. Midday soup was good, also "bukshees". Made a stew of the meat, and a few spuds for tea. Dick says he feels full, I do too. What a marvellous feeling. Tom gets some apples off the old Frau: today seems to be our lucky day.

POW Diaries 1945 February 24 1945

J.H.Hallam Stalag VIIIB

Februari 24 1945 Saturday.

Sleep fairly warm. Drizzling with rain. Tom warms a few boiled spuds up for breakfast, have a slice of dried bread with them, and one apple to finish off. The rations are due today. Wonder what the news is. Boil up more spuds, afraid we'll all look like spuds soon. Rumour we might move on Monday. The rations come up! We get a loaf per man to last us for four days say the Jerry, also a little cheese. Dick does a bit of wood chopping. Tom is out on patrol. Also get a little of Jerry synthetic honey with our rations. Have cold spuds, little cheese and coffee for supper. Weather gets much colder I'm sure, our barn is cold.

Note

article on German rationing and 'synthetic honey' [here](#) ^[1]

www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/.../pubhealthreporig01599-0003.pdf

POW Diaries 1945 February 25 1945

J.H.Hallam Stalag VIIIB

Februari 25 1945 Sunday.

Sleep warm. Had coffee and three baked spuds for breakfast and a slice of bread and white cheese with salt to taste, and one apple as desert. Dick gets two more loafs of bread. Soup, tasty. Dick and I take a little exercise in the yard: just like "pukka" convicts. We get a treat today; they cook up some porridge in the cookhouse, we got "bukshees" too. Have drink of weak tea, and a slice of bread and honey for supper. Allied Forces rumoured fighting in the Rhur Valley.

Note

Pukka adjective Anglo-Indian . genuine, reliable, or good; proper.

POW Diaries 1945 February 26 1945

J.H.Hallam Stalag VIIIB

Februari 26 1945 Monday.

Wonders will never cease, we were awakened about three o'clock this morning by Sgt. Humphreys with a lorry load of Red Cross Parcels. Everyone is happy again. I too feel a little elated. Have coffee with milk and sugar in it, what a treat. The parcels are American the first I have seen; each parcel has one hundred cigs inside. I have given my cigs to Tom and Dick. I shall start smoking when smokes get more plentiful. Dick goes milking cows, gets a little milk. Tom makes a stew for supper. It is raining outside, we get in bed early again. Humphreys has reported the case of the man getting shot to Stalag IVA

Note

Stalag IVA situated Hohenstein, near Dresden.

POW Diaries 1945 February 27 1945

J.H.Hallam Stalag VIIIB

Februari 27 1945 Tuesday

Slept well last night. Dick has gone milking cows again! So we shall get milk in the coffee again. Have bread and American marg for breakfast with a little piece of Jerry sausage and apple. I have washed my vest this morning. We have our last brew of tea today. Ration cart does not go till tomorrow. Today the Jerry puts a smart one over us; we all pack up to move all for nothing. We had complained about guards stealing Red Cross Milk cows --- rumoured foot and mouth disease, no more milk. Rumours of going to Stalag at Pilsen.

Note

Foot-and-mouth disease or hoof-and-mouth disease (*Aphtae epizooticae*) is an infectious and sometimes fatal viral disease that affects cloven-hoofed animals, including domestic and wild bovids. The virus causes a high fever for two or three days, followed by blisters inside the mouth and on the feet that may rupture and cause lameness.

Foot-and-mouth disease is a severe plague for animal farming, since it is highly infectious and can be spread by infected animals through aerosols, through contact with contaminated farming equipment, vehicles, clothing or feed, and by domestic and wild predators.[1] Its containment demands considerable efforts in vaccination, strict monitoring, trade restrictions and quarantines, and occasionally the elimination of millions of animals.

Foot and mouth rarely infects humans

Source Wikipedia

POW Diaries 1945 February 28 1945

J.H.Hallam Stalag VIII B

Februari 28 1945 Wednesday.

Weather quite mild. Have coffee and two slices of bread and marg and one apple each for breakfast. Soup very poor today, we got "bukshees" too. We had some scalded mik from yesterday we put in our soup: it made it really marvellous. Dick gets a tin for cooking, a blue one, also some salt. We made a stew for tea. For supper we had Yankee coffee, and two slices of bread and fat. The fat we got off the guard for rackets. Read Humphreys report to Geneva, etc. Today is the 11 day without exercise. I feel very well considering everything, my legs are only a little weak.

"It has been a sacrifice I would most gladly make again sooner than any I love have to go and give their life and their blood, and to know that at least the ones we love so dear can enjoy life and freedom in a country that is so proud and just." October 6th 1945. J. H. Hallam



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