

BARTH



HARD TIMES

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RUSSKY COME!

As seen in JOURNAL OF THE I. N. S. War Correspondent.

RELIEVED!

Colonel Zembe intended to write this appreciation of the relief of duties have made impossible. He has, in his own words, "taken a powder" to make arrangements with the relieving Soviet troops.

It is therefore my privilege to introduce this Memorial Edition of the BARTH HARD TIMES. During the successes, reverses and stagnant periods encountered during this struggle, our newspaper has faithfully recorded the German war communique and expanded upon them in capable editorials.

With the redemption of a continent, our exile is ended. Our barbed-wire community will soon be a memory. So, on behalf of Colonel Hubert Zembe and myself, to all our fellow-krriegies: GOOD LUCK!

G. C. C. T. Weir.



WHAT D'YE KNOW- JOE!!

BRAITHWAITE FINDS UNCLE JOE

Contacts Russian Infantryman at Crossroads Five miles South of Stalag One.

Major Braithwaite and Sgt Korson, our Stalag scouts, raced out to a cross-roads 5 miles south of Barth with the order, "find Uncle Joe". This was 8 p. m., May 1. They searched southward, defying a rumored Russian curfew which was about

as brief and emphatic their own order: "EVERYONE stay where you are. Anyone seen moving will be shot sight." Meanwhile, Wing Commander Blackburn's telephone crew were in Stralsund, hoping Russian would

answer the phone and we could break the big news of our presence. "Try the mayor," they asked the girl (who was still working Barth's phone exchange). "Not a chance," said she. "Barth's mayor poisoned himself and Stralsund's mayor has sprouted wings."

Scouts Braithwaite and Korson pushed on 3 miles. The scenery: thousands of people everywhere, sitting down, waiting.

LIFE AND DEATH IN A GERMAN TOWN

TENSE MOMENTS WHILE ALLES TAKE CONTROL

An air of tension hung over the camp for many days. The presence of the English and American armies on the Elbe and the Russian encirclement of Berlin made everyone feel that the end must be near. The commencement of a new Russian drive across the front was being reported toward the Baltic.

Prisoners in the Vorlager. No German had any more interest in guarding the prisoners, but only in saving his own life. Confidential reports were hurriedly burnt — and copies of "Mein Kampf" went to swell the flames.

Conference with the Kommandant

Finally, late in the afternoon, the Senior British and American officers were called to a conference with the German camp Kommandant Colonel Warnstedt. They were told that orders had been received to move the whole camp westward. Colonel Zemke stated he was not willing to move at all, and asked in that case what the Ger-

man attitude in the camp; if we did not intend to move, he and his men would evacuate themselves and leave us in sole possession of the camp. When the Germans left it would be up to us to take over the camp peacefully and assume full control.

At approximately 1 A.M. on April 30 Major Steinhauser informed Group Captain Weir and Colonel Zemke that the Germans had evacuated the camp, leaving it in our charge. When the camp woke up in the morning it was to find itself no longer under armed guard and comparatively free.

Where are the Russians?

Our next problem was to establish contact with the Russian forces. It was decided to send out something in the nature of a reconnoitering patrol. An American Major, a British Officer speaking German, and an American Officer speaking Russian, set out with the German in the auto which was equipped with a white flag on one fender and an American flag on the other, to investigate the real situation in Barth and then proceed to the main Stralsund-Rostock road, some 15 kilometers south of the camp, to wait there for any signs of Russian spearheads or of the proximity of the front line. The first patrol returned in the early evening. Still no sign or news of the Russian Army, but they were coming!



Russian controlled (from Page 1) and the Germans were (diametrically?). Suddenly, there was Uncle Joe — or one of his ambassadors, a chunky little Dead End guy who hopped up and flashed a variety of lecherous beams and a cacophony of Slavonic expletives.

"Engliski!" barked the scouts. "Never mind the words," said Joe's man, "this isn't a flag or something they went to the... without ceremony. It was 1st Lt. Alexey Karmyzoff, infantryman from Turin, you ought to see that written in Russian. He fought his way from Stalingrad three years across Russia, Poland, and Germany — to the relief of Stalingrad."

Toasts were drunk. Karmyzoff came to the main gate. Commanding Officerinke and Weir received him. Sips seared kriegie throats — glasses smashed Hitler's picture, the barracks jiggled with cheering and back-slapping. Toasts were drunk: "To the destruction of Germany — she will never rise again! And to our solid enduring friendship." Karmyzoff went to the Russian barracks (our co-crier) — told them about himself, they and the new life that was theirs. This is the first contact. Karmyzoff bedded down on the floor — "The floor is cleaner than a German bed," said BBC announced Hitler dead; kriegie heard the "Hit Parade" from his excitement was exhausting. But what an experience!

QUAKING BARTH BURGHERS BOW BEFORE REDS

As Russian tanks rumbled Northwards on the cobblestone roads from Stralsund, as Russian cavalry and guerilla troops tore hell bent for the Baltic, as the spluttering German radio chattered a staccato of place names that had gone under in the Red rip tide, Barth became an open city and an open grave. The few Americans who had been in town on camp chores from Stalag I knew that the life of Barth was a living death. We had seen the streets peopled by children and octogenarians, we had noticed that all males were either lame, halt, or blind; we had stared into empty shop windows, and we had seen the soldiers of the master race straggle back from the fronts dazed, whipped, harbingers of the ruins. By April 30, this year of grace, the good burghers of Barth turned their faces to the wall and stopped hoping.

LET 'EM EAT CAKE

Life had not been good in the bakery shop where the camp had been made hung a sign: cake is not sold to Jews or Poles. It had been sold to supermen either. There was no cake. But there were good things to eat in the larders of Barth, baking powder requisitioned from Holland, Nestles milk commandeered from Denmark, wines looted from the cellars of France, spaghetti and noodles hijacked from Italy, Worcestershire sauce which had trickled through mysteriously from England, olive oil drained from Greece, in short, all types of blood from the turnip of Europe. If Mussolini considered the Mediterranean his sea, Hitler considered the world his oyster and was trying to serve it up to the Reich on the half shell.

A House of Cards

As the first explosions from the flak school reverberated under the smitten Baltic sky, the new order toppled on Barth like a house of cards. Red flags and white sheets began to appear in the windows of the ginger bread houses. Flight was futile and the old stood querosely on their door steps, wringing gnarled hands and weeping. Pictures of Hitler were torn down and scattered like confetti. Two German children came wailing into the bakery shop. They had heard American airmen ate little boys and mother said the day of reckoning was at hand. Barth, like the whole of Deutschland-über-alles Germany, was on its knees in terror. But mayhem did not materialize. Wine, not blood, flowed through the streets. We got drunk.