

LECTURE ON
PRE-CAPTURE TRAINING
(As Delivered July-August 1944)

You are being trained for combat, and in combat there are casualties.

Four major classifications are:-

1. Those killed in action. We can give you no further training on that score. That is a job for the quartermaster corps and the chaplain.
2. Wounded. You have all had some first aid training. Beyond what you can do for yourselves, that is a job for the medics.
3. Missing in action. Again there is no further training we can give you. There is nothing at all that can be done until you are found.
4. The fourth classification, a definite casualty, is prisoner of war. That is what I want to talk to you about today.

Now before I go on, I don't want anything I have to say taken as an invitation to go out and get yourself captured so you can sit on your fannies in a P/W camp for the duration. Believe me, a P/W camp is no place to spend any time at all in. But, in the first place, you won't be captured while you have a gun and a bullet to put in that gun and when the bullet is gone or the gun is smashed, you can still use it as a club, and with your feet, beat the stuff out of the Nazis. (That is what General Patton would tell you.) But you might be captured. Brave men have been. There is Dunkirk, and Dieppe, and Corregidor. Those men were brave, but they are P/Ws now. So -- because you might be captured, I am here to tell you what will happen if you are.

When you took your oath as a soldier -- if you were sober that morning -- you remember that you promised to carry on the war with whatever weapons you had at your command, wherever you might be, just as long as you were able to do so. Of course, if you are captured, you will be disarmed. Your only weapons then will be what brains the good Lord gave you what guts you can dig up from time to time. You'll need plenty of both and there is no substitute for either one. If you have read your Soldier's Handbook you will have seen in there that should you be captured, you will take the earliest opportunity to escape. Now you may wonder why we make such a fuss about escaping. There are many reasons. Some are obvious. Some you may not have thought about.

2.

In the first place, if you are free behind enemy lines you have a definite nuisance value. By that I mean if you can tie up ten, fifty or a hundred of the enemy looking for you, there are just so many Nazis that are not available for front line duty or for further training. As an example of that, just about four months ago sixty-three of our P/Ws escaped from a P/W camp and it took five thousand Jerries six weeks to round those sixty-three men up and get them back into camp. Second, you being free has a definite effect on civilian morale. In short, it raises hell with it. Story No. 1 ***** Third, you can't possibly be free behind enemy lines having been trained as soldiers, without picking up a great deal of military information. Information that would be of great value to your own unit. Of greater value to the U.S. Army. We want you to get that information. Get all you can. And bring it back. One word of warning, about gathering military information. Never put anything in writing. I'll go into more detail about that later on.

Now we think of Jerry as being a pretty good soldier. He is. Don't make any mistake about that. Never underrate that guy. He is a damn fine soldier. He is almost a professional. He spends his time between wars getting ready for the next one. But he's no superman. He's dumb as hell in some ways. He is methodical. By that I mean, when he figures out what he thinks to be the right way of doing something, he will do it that one way until hell freezes. It is in his book. The German soldier lives by his book. That is a good thing to keep in the back of your nut. Especially, as far as this escaping racket is concerned. Because if you do something that isn't in Jerry's book, that he hasn't direct orders to cover, he is not going to know quite what to do about it. He is methodical as far as his treatment of P/Ws is concerned. He has treated them just about the same way to-day and will continue to do so for the duration. So-- if you should be captured, here is what will probably happen to you.

In the first place, you will be moved as rapidly as possible away from the front lines. You are a damned nuisance up there, and he is going to move you back as fast as he can. You will be put in small groups -- eight or ten or a dozen in a group, put in charge of walking

3.

wounded guards and moved on the first leg of your journey to Germany. Because that is where you are going. By walking wounded, I mean exactly that. This guy is a combat soldier who has been superficially wounded but is able to get back to an aid station under his own steam for medical attention. He is not a trained guard. He is put over you because he is going in the same direction as you are. And because the Jerries figure that that is all the guarding you need, because they figure you're going to be knocked out, physically and mentally. And you will be. Your morale will be lower than it ever has been before or ever will be again. But, in spite of that fact, and in spite of the fact that you have been knocked out, right then and there is the best chance you ever will have to get away. Because this guy is not a trained guard. He is a wounded combat soldier. He is not interested in P/Ws. He is interested in one thing only. Getting back to an aid station to get his wounds properly dressed. You haven't been counted. Your names haven't been taken. He doesn't know how many he's got. Wouldn't care if he did know. You have been disarmed, but you still outnumber this guy eight or ten to one. At that point you know where your lines are, or you have a pretty good idea of their direction. But every step you take from that point on is a step away from your lines to a very unfriendly country. It is one more step you've got to take on the way back. There will be a great many early opportunities to escape. Take one! Every guy who comes back has the same story. "I wish I had taken that first chance I had to get away. But I was tired. I wanted a night's sleep. I wanted some rest." You will be tired. You will be pretty completely knocked out, but if you dig deep enough, you can get the guts to do it.

Well, if you don't get away immediately, you'll be taken to a part of a collecting point. This may be an area wired with barbed wire in the middle of a field and here and there will be a few more guards, but those guards too will be combat soldiers. They'll be human. When a shell lands nearby, they'll take cover, and I hope you know what you

are going to do.

If you don't get away from here, you'll be marched on the second leg of your journey back to Germany. When the Jerries have got two or three hundred prisoners, they'll put them in columns of threes. At the head of this column will be a truck armed with a machine gun pointing toward the rear. At the rear of the column will be another truck with a machine gun aimed toward the front. Running up and down the left flank will be a guard on a motorcycle. His usual procedure is to ride to the head of the column, wait there until the column has passed, then ride to the head again. The right flank will usually be unguarded because traffic moves on the right. Now the roads will bend over there. They can't possibly bend as much as they do here in England, but they will bend. When the column goes around one of these bends, there will be a great many men, particularly those in the middle of the column, that will be out of sight of all guards. If you find yourself in a spot like this, work out to the right flank and peel off. Drop into a ditch, get behind a tree, a bush, a stone wall, and hide there until the column has passed, then high-tail it back to your own unit. Many British got away this way after Dunkirk. You still know the general direction of Allied lines, and they are still not too far away. A little tip if you are in a column. Straggle -- I don't need to tell a GI how to straggle, do I? Can you help it if your lungs burn, if your heart pounds, if you get a belly ache, or your feet just won't move? So you straggle, and this column will stretch and stretch.

Well, you didn't make it here. At the next collecting point, you are taken over by trained P/W guards. They will load you on whatever kind of transport is available. You may be put on trains, it may be a box car, flat cars, cattle cars, or passenger cars. Or you may be put on trucks. But remember, trucks and trains slow down and stop in traffic. And according to our special intelligence it gets just as dark over there as it does here and just as often. At least once a day it will get dark as Hell. Our planes are continually strafing all moving vehicles. When a plane comes down the road flying low and spitting

lead, the truck driver will stop his truck and take cover. The guards will get out and take cover. The P/Ws get out and take so much cover that most of them never make the truck again.

You can jump from a moving train, not while it is going sixty miles an hour, obviously, but you can jump from a train moving up to eighteen to twenty miles per hour without hurting yourself. I know, because I have done it. As a matter of fact, I know two young Canadian soldiers who jumped from a moving train at night while it was going through a tunnel. That I do not advise. But I told you this escaping business took guts. These lads had them, and they got away. If you jump from a moving train, be sure to jump from the right hand side, because you will thereby avoid oncoming trains. But there is another better reason. If you jump from the right hand side, even though you are seen by a guard it is practically impossible for a man armed with a rifle to fire backward from the right-hand side of a moving train. You can figure that out for yourself. He couldn't hit anything smaller than the Empire State Building. Added to the natural difficulties of firing backward on the right-hand side of a moving train, when your buddies see you take off, they are going to crowd to the doors and windows and will wave their arms and helmets and the guard will find it practically impossible to even get through to get his rifle to his shoulder in the first place. Incidentally, even though you can't get away yourself, help anybody else that tries it. Heckle the guards, create disturbances, make a lot of noise.

Well, -- you didn't make it. So your next stop is the P/W camp. Now for a great many of you, this first camp will not be what you thought a P/W camp would be at all. This place will be like a country club. It will have pleasant surroundings, good beds, comfortable mattresses, plenty of blankets, clean sheets, pillows, maybe even pillow cases, and everybody here will be very, very friendly. Very friendly indeed. It will be just like old home week. And they will not only be very friendly in this place, but they will be damn curious. And that curiosity will take the form of questions about you and your Army. Interrogation we call it.

Now interrogation will start for everyone fairly near the front

lines. Up there, the Germans want tactical information. Information of immediate value to them. They want to know what unit is facing them in the line, what units are on either flank, what units are in support. They want to know what your equipment is, what your weapons are, and how they are being used. They want to know what your plans are, but if you can't answer, won't answer, or don't answer, you may never be interrogated again. However, a sprinkling of privates and corporals and almost everyone from the grade of buck sergeant on up through the officers will be taken to this first camp. The Jerries may call it a transit camp. They may explain that you are there for delousing, for clean clothes, for separation into groups to be sent on to permanent camps. Actually this place is an interrogation center, built strictly for the interrogation of P/Ws.

Now, in this matter of interrogation, we work just about the same way that the Nazis do. And in the matter of interrogating personnel, we use just about the same kind of guys. So just to give you an idea of what a Nazi interrogator would be, I'll tell you how we might get ours. We might call up the personnel section, and we say to them, "Look here, we have to have an officer who speaks German to interrogate German P/Ws." They say, "OK, that's easy." The best way to find the right man would be to take the roster of the United States Army, go through the whole list very carefully from A to Z, pick out the biggest bastard on the list and send him over to us. He comes to us, and we look him over. And if he isn't extra smart and smooth and clever and tough, we give him a little special training. And when we get through with this guy he is a first class A-1 son-of-a-bitch. I mean he is a bastard. He has to be. That is his job. This is the guy that is going to be very much interested in you. So you better know some of his tricks. He's got a million, but I will tell you a few of them.

The first day you are in this place, you are sitting on your bunk in your room. That is one way you will know this is an interrogating center--you will be in a private room. You are wondering about life in general and your life in particular and this interrogator drops into

see you, and he is very friendly. He wants to know how you slept the night before, if your bed was comfortable, if you had plenty of blankets, if the sheets were clean. He wants to know if you had a good breakfast that morning, if you had enough to eat, if the food was well prepared, if you can suggest any slight changes in the menu. He'll want to know if there isn't some little thing he can do to make you more comfortable. He'll notice perhaps that your shoes are worn, and offer to get you a nice new comfortable pair of shoes. Where the Hell he would get those kind of shoes in Germany, I don't know. But he'll offer it. And then, very apologetically, he'll get around to asking a few questions. He is very sorry to have to do this to you. You are such a nice guy. But it is S.O.P. He has his orders, and he's got to carry them out. And, he'll ask you some direct questions. First of all, your name, rank, and serial number. You will give him your name, rank, and serial number, and when you have done that, you are through. Whatever he wants to know from that point on, your only answer is "I'm sorry, sir." That's all. If he wants to know how tall the corn grows in Iowa, how big the oranges are in California, how sweet the peaches are in Georgia, how deep the oil wells are in Texas, if the Brooklyn Dodgers are still playing baseball, whatever he asks you, your answer is, "I'm sorry, sir." And you have to "sir" this guy too. You won't like it. You won't like saluting this guy, but you have to do it. If you are an enlisted man, he may be only a lieutenant. If you are a major, he'll be at least a colonel. He has a pocket full of bars and stars, and he can change his rank at any time he likes. And he'll do it. You have to give him the courtesy to which his rank entitles him. Keep yourself firm, polite, and military at all times. He may say to you, "That's all right, buddy. That's all I expected you were going to give me. But I don't need any information from you. I know more about you and your Army than you know yourself." And he'll proceed to tell you about your Army and you will be amazed. He'll tell you when you came into the Army, what your unit is; who your officers are; where you trained in the States; how long you trained; what kind of training you had; when you left the States; what boat you took on the way over; how many boats there were

in the convoy; when you landed in the U.K.; what further training you had here; what kind of gasoline you use in your jeep. After a while you'll wonder just what the hell this guy is getting at. I'll tell you what he is getting at. German military intelligence has a great deal of information about our Army. But this guy may not be quite sure about you and your particular unit. And you'll notice as you listen to him that some of this stuff he is telling you is true, and some is false. Some of it he is guessing at. And as he is giving it to you, he is trying to look directly into your eyes, because if he can look directly into your eyes, just a little flicker there, just a tiny change of expression will give you away. It is just as good to him as if you had opened your mouth and spilled your guts. So you have to be smart. Play dumb. Don't look him in the eye. Pick out a spot right in the middle of his forehead and stare at that spot. Think how nice it would be to drill a hole in that spot with a .30 calibre slug. Or pick out a spot on the wall behind his head and stare at that spot. And drop your jaw and look just plain dumb. You don't care how dumb you look. If you can look like "Sad Sack" himself, that's fine. Remember, the more intelligent you look, the more you are going to be questioned. So just look as dumb as a sick cow and keep giving him that "I'm sorry, sir. I'm sorry, sir. I'm sorry, sir." He's going to get awfully tired of hearing that after a while. But he will keep on with this friendly business for a while longer, because this friendly stuff pays dividends. The Jerries fall for it, and unfortunately, our men do too.

So he'll go on talking. He may talk about baseball. If he does, he will know more baseball than any big leaguer that ever played the game; or he may talk about football, or hockey, or tennis, or fishing, and this guy is a good talker. He'll be damned interesting to listen to, and after a while you'll kind of want to swap fish stories with him--and that is just what he is hoping you will do. He may talk about hunting, and if he does, he'll go into raptures about the beautiful bird dog he's got back home. Hell, this guy never owned a bird dog in his life. No dog would live with the son-of-a-bitch. But he doesn't care about that. He is trying to get

you to talk, because if he can start you talking on any subject under the sun, sooner or later, he'll work the conversation around to military matters. You are all wound up: then you just spill your guts. You can't talk to this guy about anything at all. You can't match wits with him. You can't kid him. You can't lie to him. He has got you licked from the start. This guy is clever. He may have trained for years just for this job. Maybe just for you. So stare at that spot on his forehead or at that spot on the wall and look dumb and keep giving that "I'm sorry, sir." He'll quit after awhile. He can be friendly just about so long, then he has to refuel. So he'll quit.

But the next day, if he still thinks he can make you talk, he'll be back again. And this day he's changed his tactics. This day he is going to try to make you mad, because if he can make you mad enough, you'll talk back to him. To make you mad he'll insult you, and he'll be the most insulting son-of-a-bitch that you ever heard in your life. He'll insult you and your family, your friends, your unit, your Army, the country, your flag, anything he can lay his tongue to. He'll tell you your equipment is no damn good. You should have dumped it in the ocean on the way over. He'll tell you your weapons can't be compared to German weapons. He'll tell you your officers never should have been commissioned. And after a while you'll want to swing at this guy, but you'd better not do that. You know you have the best equipment in the world. You know you've got the best weapons in the world. You know you've got the best Army in the world. And you'll want to tell him so. In fact, you'll want to do more than that. You'll want to prove it to him. And that is just exactly what he is hoping you will do, because if you start talking while you are mad, he has really got you by the nuts. And the harder he squeezes, the more you are going to yell. Don't answer him, other than "I'm sorry, sir." What do you care for this guy's insults. You can take them. He doesn't mean anything to you. Keep thinking how nice that hole would look in his forehead and keep giving him that "I'm sorry, sir." "I'm sorry, sir." After awhile he will get madder than you were, and he'll quit for this day.

But the next day, if he still thinks you can be broken, he'll be

back again, and this time he has changed his tactics entirely. This time he will be tough, -- tough as only a Nazi officer can be tough. This day, you are sitting on the edge of your bunk wondering what the hell can possibly happen to you next, and this guy will storm in. The door will slam open, and he'll come stamping in with those big hob-nailed boots, ranting, raging, roaring around, and he's got a couple of guns slung pretty low on his legs. He whips the guns out, slams them on the table, and says, "All right, you, are you going to talk, or am I going to shoot you?" Well, you are not quite sure what he is going to do. He's got a pretty good show he puts on when he is in a mood like this, and it is too good for one man, so he has eight or ten sent into a room and lined up against the wall at attention. Attention, hell, they're braced there. And this room is hot -- hotter than any room you've been in in your life. And over in one corner is a stove with a fire blazing in it, and there are a couple of branding irons in that fire. And the place on the top of that stove glowing red hot is just big enough to fit your fanny. And walking up and down the room is the bull-necked sergeant, chest like a barrel, and he is cracking a whip. And this whip is coming awful close to you. And everything is all set. Now what does this look like? Some melodramatic stage setting. They can't scare you. The hell they can't! When you have been standing there just long enough, this interrogator will storm in the room, and he'll stride up and down, and he says, "All right, you guys, I have been pretty nice to you for the last couple of days, but I am all through with that. I want some information. My Fuehrer ("Heil Hitler") wants some information, and I don't care how I get it, or who I get it from. Sergeant, bring me that first prisoner." And the first prisoner is brought over, and the interrogator says, "All right, now, you are going to talk -- or else. Who is your company commander?"----"I'm sorry, sir."----"Oh, you are, are you. Sergeant, take this man outside." And the guy is pushed outside, and in about fifteen seconds there is a shot and a thud, maybe a groan.

"Sergeant, bring me the next prisoner."-----Business-----
 "Well, are you going to talk? Who is your company commander?-----"

Business-----"I am s-s-s-sorry, sir." "Oh, you are, are you? Sergeant, take this man outside." About fifteen seconds later there is another shot, and another thud, and another groan. And then he goes to the third, to the fourth, and the fifth, and by the time he gets to the sixth man the poor son-of-a-gun is in it right up to his ears. I think if I were the second man, I would be, if I didn't know this. And I want you to get this, fellows, and get it straight. I don't care what you have read or what you have heard. At no time in the last war or this war right up to this present good minute has a British or American prisoner of war been physically mistreated for failing to answer questions. Not one. They'll scare the living daylights out of you. They'll threaten you with everything in the book; and a lot of things that aren't in the book, but they will not hurt you. Believe me. They will not hurt you for failing to answer their questions. Now I know some of you are thinking about those fifty R.A.F. officers who were shot awhile back. But they were not shot for resisting interrogation. If you are escaping and fail to halt when you are told to, that's plain suicide. You see the Germans signed with us in 1929, a little document known as the Geneva Convention. This document governs the treatment of prisoners of war; and they are living up to that document to the letter and pretty much to the spirit of it. They will not hurt you. Remember that as a prisoner of war you are under control of the Army -- not the Gestapo. You will be in a P/W camp, not a concentration camp. Of course, what they do to the Russians is something else again. And incidentally what the Russians do to them is an entirely different story. But you are not Russians.

If you don't talk pretty soon, you're going to be moved out of this place. This place is too good for a guy who is not paying them in return. And the only way you can pay for good treatment is by giving them information. So, if you don't talk, you will be moved and moved fast. If you're there more than a week, or ten days, however, you better take stock because even though you don't think you have been talking, there is a leak somewhere. And you'd better button up.

But before we go on to the permanent camp I want to remind you again that these Nazis are clever and mean. They may not start in a friendly way, but just the reverse. You may be thrown immediately into solitary confinement. They may start the rough stuff right away. You may spend from 5 to 20 days in solitary, and this cell will be almost unbearably hot. At the same time you will be constantly threatened with torture, death, or any other punishment unless you talk, and they'll tell you that if you do talk they'll take you to this nice camp. It won't be easy to resist, but you can. There's nothing they will give you that you can't take if you make up your mind to it.

They may try the old double play on you in the form of a kindly officer who rescues you from a tough one hoping that you'll be grateful and talk to him. They may put you in a room with some of your buddies right after you get out of solitary knowing that you'll want to talk to someone after being by yourself for days. You will want to talk, but be careful -- don't discuss military matters. They will have microphones carefully hidden to pick up your conversation. Remember - don't talk - to the Jerries. Every time you do you may sign the death warrant for one of your own buddies.

Your permanent P/W camp is just what you thought a P/W camp would be. This place will not be very friendly. The beds will be hard. The blankets will be thin, the soup will be thinner, when there is any soup. There will be no bell-hop here to meet you at the gate and usher you to the bridal suite. Now you really are in the clink. I mean you've had it. Direct interrogation will stop when you've left the first camp, but indirect interrogation will continue maybe for months. By interrogation I mean such things as stool pigeons, and they may be in all kinds of disguises. Some of them may be dressed just as you are, so you can't barge up to the first guy you see in a GI uniform and spill your guts to him about who you are and where you came from and how you happened to get captured, because you might be talking to a stool pigeon. Be particularly careful about men in other Allied uniforms. There should be no one but Americans in your compound, and you can bet that anyone else in a French,

13.

a Belgian, a Canadian, or a British uniform is a stool pigeon. Don't have anything to do with them. They'll be quite willing to tell you all about themselves. But they'll be damn curious about you in return. You may be visited by a very kindly gentleman, in fact, the only friendly person in the camp, who is wearing a badge of the International Red Cross on his arm.

**** Story No. 2 ****

Two things you are not allowed to do as long as you are in a prisoner of war camp. You may not broadcast or make recordings which could be broadcast. And you may never give your parole, that is, a promise that you will not attempt escape. You may give what is known as a "temporary undertaking", a promise that for a certain short time, probably for not more than a few hours, you will not attempt to go away, if they will let you get out, to get a haircut, or get some dental treatment, or get a glass of beer. If you say, under this temporary parole, that you will be back at a certain time, you'd damn well better be back, or you will not only be punished by the Nazis, but you will catch Hell from us. This temporary undertaking is used by prisoners to get out for short periods of time to make a reconnaissance of the territory surrounding the camp. If that is broken, the privilege will be taken away from everyone.

This camp will be organized. Of course, in the first place, there will be the Nazi commandant and his staff. But there is also an American organization. In EM camps there will be a senior NCO. In officers' camps there will be a senior American officer. These men are your commanding officers so long as you are in that particular camp. Here again you must be careful. You can't go up to the first guy you see with three up and three down or a lot of stuff on his shoulder and spill your guts to him because you might be talking to a stool pigeon. Take plenty of time. You've got plenty of that in this camp. In fact, that is about all you have got as long as you are a P/W. Ask eighteen or twenty or thirty different P/Ws who the senior NCO or the senior officer is. If you get the same answer from all eighteen or twenty or thirty, you can be pretty sure you are approaching the right guy. Then tell him anything you want. Give him all the information you have. He has ways of getting that information.

back to us.

Under the senior NCO or senior officer there will be various committees, -- committees on education, recreation, entertainment, athletics. Take advantage of what these committees have to offer. There is nothing so deadly as sitting in a P/W camp for months on end with nothing to do. You must keep yourselves mentally and physically fit-- at all times.

There will be other committees in this camp. And when you have been in the camp long enough, you'll find out what they are. We hope that you will have been thinking about an escape from the moment you were picked up. Certainly you will think of escape when you get to a P/W camp. But, escape from a P/W camp is not the simple matter it would have been if you had taken that first opportunity. Now you've got to have a plan. And you're the guy that's got to make that plan because you're the one that is principally interested in your own escape. So when you've been there long enough to make a good reconnaissance of this camp -- I mean to really case the joint, you start thinking of a way that you can get out. And when you have a plan, you can take it to the senior NCO or the senior officer, and they will get that plan to one of these other committees, -- to the escape committee. This committee is unofficial. In fact, secret. You may never know who the members of the committee are. But they're doing a hell of a good job. They'll look your plan over, and look you over. And if your plan looks as if it would work, and you look like you can work it, they will give you information, -- information on where to go when you get out of camp, how to get there, what to wear, what to carry, how to act, any information you need to complete your escape back to Allied lines, because that is the best place to head for. With this information, you do complete your plan. It is not enough just to get out of camp. That's comparatively simple. But you have still got to get out of Germany. That's not quite so easy. However, you can do it. When you have your plans completed, send it back to the escape committee. And if they approve of the completed plan, they'll put you on a list. You see there are priorities on escapers in these camps. There are fellows who have been there longer than you have, and they've got to

have their chance too. And it would take some time to work out some of these plans. When your turn comes, the escape committee is prepared to give you even more assistance. They will provide maps, compasses, gadgets like wire cutters, saws, files, tools like picks, shovels, axes. They'll provide clothing, food, money, false papers, anything you need to help you escape.

If you have any peculiar talents, for instance, if you are pretty good at forgery, this is the one place that I can recommend where you can get away with forgery. If you are light-fingered, if you can get into the Nazi commandant's office and borrow papers which might be copied or if you can pick locks, this is one place I can recommend that you can get away with those talents. However, even though you have no special talents, there is one committee that you can all join, and that is the nuisance committee. In short, the fuck-ups. I know that you haven't had any special training in fucking-up since you have been in the Army, but you've had a hell of a lot of experience at it, and this is one place you can put that experience to good use. This nuisance committee is an amazing committee, doing a remarkable job in these camps. They assist in escapes. They keep the Nazi staff in a complete dither 24 hours a day. They take care of guards, they take care of roll calls. -----stories Nos. 3,4,5,6-----.

You can adopt any kind of a disguise you want to help you get out of camp. You can dress up like a head of cabbage and go out with the garbage wagon, and I'm serious about that. Men have hidden themselves in the bottom of garbage wagons and had their friends pour refuse on top of them and gone out with the wagon. Here are some classic escapes

Two men got themselves a bucket of white paint and a brush, started painting a white line in the middle of the road and painted themselves right out through the front gate. Three other fellows got a fifty meter measuring tape. One man held one end of the tape, and the other held the other end. They measured themselves right out of the front gate while the third man followed them jotting down figures on a little pad. They measured themselves through Germany, through France, right into Spain. Any time any-

one suspicious approached them, they would take the tape and measure the width of the road, the height of the curb, the width of the sidewalk, or anything in sight, while the third man continually jotted down figures. The third escape, which to my mind was one of the best that has ever been pulled, was made by a young private. He was on a work detail some miles from camp. Now privates will work, and it is a good idea to go out on these work details because they offer many opportunities for getting away. This lad pushed a wheelbarrow and when the detail was over, brought the wheelbarrow to camp and hid it. Then, with cigarettes, bribed his way through the German guards into the French compound of the camp. You can get anything with cigarettes in Germany. When he got into the French compound, he bought from the Frenchmen, using cigarettes for money, some old civilian clothes. These he smuggled past the guards into his own barracks and hid them. Then when he accumulated sufficient food from his Red Cross parcels for his journey, he placed the food in the bottom of the wheelbarrow, covered it with sand with a couple of bricks in it, put in an old shovel, and one night about dusk pushed his wheelbarrow, dressed in the old civilian clothes, he walked out of the front gate. He pushed that wheelbarrow all the way through Germany, all the way through France, over the Pyrenees into Spain. We pick up escapers in Gibraltar and fly them back to England. When we picked this lad up, he insisted on bringing the wheelbarrow back with him and says he is going to take it back home with him after the war. Now some of you think that is damn silly, that he couldn't have gotten away with things like that. But if you saw a man pushing a wheelbarrow down one of these country roads, would you pay any attention to him at all? Of course not. He is just going about his own business. If he had his hat pulled down over his eyes, however, and he was sneaking around from bush to tree, you would think, "Ah! That man has done something wrong." It is the simple attempts, carried through completely, that have gotten men free.

You can wear a German uniform if you can get one or make one. One of the classic escapes of the war was made by a young Britisher who dyed his battle dress the German field green-gray, made a belt out of

cardboard which he dyed black with shoe polish, made a buckle and covered it with silver paper from cigarette packages, made a rosette for his cap, made tabs for his shoulders, made what passed very well for a German officer's uniform. Then one night about dusk he started out through the main gate. His friends were watching him from their barracks windows. They saw him go out the gate, pass the guard, saw the guard pop to attention, saw him go about five paces beyond the guard, stop, turn around and come back, and they thought, "Oh! Oh! Charlie's been challenged and he is caught." They saw him stop in front of the guard, saw his head wag back and forth a moment, saw the guard come very stiffly to attention, give him a very snappy salute, then the Britisher turned on his heel and proceeded down the road. Come to find out what had happened, was that the first time he passed the guard, the guard had given him a very sloppy salute, so he came back to chew the guard's ass out for it.

You can wear civilian clothes--one word of warning, however, as regards disguises in general and civilian clothes in particular. If you are caught, you must be prepared to identify yourself as American soldiers, as an escaping prisoner of war. Your best means of identification are your dog tags. Don't lose them. If you have lost them, remember the number that you were given as a prisoner and where the prison was. Don't ever carry written military information. I mean by that, such things as carefully prepared maps of military installations or factories, gun emplacements, air fields, and the like. If you are caught carrying written military information, in a disguise, inside enemy lines, you are in fact a spy. You will be tried then by the Gestapo and punished as a spy. And the usual punishment is a brick wall and the firing squad and there is nothing at all that we can do about it.

When you are escaping, concentrate on escaping. Don't stop to commit little acts of sabotage. Anything you could do would be an amateur sort of job. And there are experts doing a very swell job. Don't commit any acts of violence because if you are caught, your punishment will certainly be severe. If you are not caught, reprisals may be taken on your buddies. A special word of warning if you are traveling in civilian

clothes. In the zone running about fifteen miles behind enemy lines all male civilians between the ages of 16 and 60 probably will be evacuated. So when you reach that zone you must hide. Lie low. Travel only at night, then very cautiously. However, you will get help if you're careful. Indeed you will get help from 95% of the civilian population in France. You must be careful about asking for this help or accepting it. If a Frenchman is caught helping you, he is taken out and shot immediately. So do as you are told, even though what you are told to do may sound damn silly to you.

If you are cut off behind enemy lines, don't give up your uniform; don't give up your weapon. Lie low. You will get help back to your lines. I can't tell you what it is, but you will recognize it when it comes.

Never carry into combat, letters, diaries, or papers of any kind that would give information to the enemy or could be used to make you give information. ----- Story No. 7 -----.

To avoid all this trouble don't get captured. Sometimes that is easier said, however, than done. If you should be captured, remember you must escape. And remember too that the early escapes are the easiest. If you can't escape, make as much of a nuisance of yourself as you possibly can. I've tried to tell you what you can expect in the way of treatment by the Nazis; what you can expect in the way of interrogation; how to resist that interrogation; what you can expect in the way of assistance; where to get that assistance and how to use it. Now I want to make one thing absolutely clear. Don't under any conditions smoke a cigarette with, take a drink with, have a cup of coffee with, have a meal with, shoot the bull with, be friendly with any Nazi, any time and place. That guy hates you; he hates your living guts. He has only one reason for being friendly to you, and that is to try to get you in that way to betray your own friends, your own unit, your own country. And I am sure none of you want to be guilty of betraying the United States of America. That's all fellows. Thank you very much, and good luck.

STORY NO. 1

About two years ago, some of you may remember this, a Luftwaffe pilot, named Von Werra, escaped from a Canadian P/W camp, crossed the border into the States, crossed all the way through the States into Mexico and eventually got back to Germany. A damn fine escape. While he was wandering through the States, our papers were filled with stories of his escape and subsequent wounds. There were headlines two inches high. You would have thought for a time that we had been invaded by the whole damn German army. Every housewife from North Dakota to Texas was scared silly for the fear this guy would drop in some day, -- or night.

In the last war, a hundred and seven thousand British and American P/Ws escaped from German P/W camps and eventually got back to their own units. At the same time, however, seven hundred and fifty thousand escaped from P/W camps and wandered around Germany anywhere from a few hours to several months before being recaptured.

Now you multiply the consternation caused by this one Jerry in a big country like ours by about nine hundred thousand in a small country like Germany, and you have a faint idea of the hell that was raised by those nine hundred thousand on German civilian morale. By the Nazis own admission, it was these escaping prisoners of war who broke German civilian morale in the last war, and it broke far ahead of the army. That could happen again.

STORY NO. 2

This bogus Red Cross man will be extremely sympathetic, -- so much so that he will tell you he knows exactly how you are feeling at this particular moment. He knows that you are worried, not about yourself because you know that you are safe and well, but about your family. You will probably, he'll tell you, have been reported missing in action, and that doesn't mean a thing to your family. They may picture you lying cold, hungry, bleeding on some battlefield, and you want them to know that you are safe and well. You want to get mail from them. You want to get packages from home. You want to get Red Cross parcels. You want to be able to send mail, and to have all the rights

and privileges of a P/W. And he will tell you that he is the one man that can fix it up for you. All you have to do is fill out a little form (indicates with hands a long sheet of paper). Now any form that long would be a phoney. And this one definitely is. He'll tell you It's an official Red Cross form. And it starts out all right. It asks your name, rank, and serial number. And then it goes into fifty-seven other questions about your training, equipment, weapons, and plans,-information the Red Cross is obviously not interested in. Don't have anything to do with this phoney. They may ask you to just put in your name, rank, and serial number, leaving the questions blank, and sign it. Don't do it. They pulled that trick not so long ago on an Air Force Major who, with his crew, was shot down and captured. He was put in one room, the crew was put in another. Then the major was presented with one of these forms. At first, he refused to have anything to do with it, but they insisted that it was an official form, and if he would just fill in his name, rank, and serial number and sign it, that would be all right. The major hadn't been briefed; saw no harm in doing that and did just what he was asked. Then the Jerries with what information they had and guessing at the rest, filled in the answers to the questions. Then the Jerries took forms into the Major's crew who at first refused to fill them out, but who changed their minds when they saw the Major's form completely filled out and signed. They filled theirs out,-only they corrected the mistakes that had been made on the Major's form.

You will get an official Red Cross form. It's made like a double post-card perforated through the middle. It asks for the same information on both sections. It asks for name, rank, serial number, date of birth, next of kin, civilian address, condition of health, and Army unit. In your case, your unit is U.S. Army. That's all.

Story No. 3

"The Nuisance Committee"

Let me tell you some of the things this Nuisance Committee does. The Jerries have anywhere from two to eight roll calls a day in these camps. They're not roll calls by name because the Jerries can't

pronounce our names. They're roll calls by number. Suppose somebody has escaped the night before. The next morning before roll call the nuisance committee takes over and very carefully briefs every P/W in the camp. So when the German non-com calls the men out to count them, they know exactly what they are going to do. The easiest way for this Jerry NCO to count the men is to put them in ranks of four, but having been thoroughly briefed, there isn't a P/W in the place that can understand four. Oh no! They can get in ranks of twos, or fives, or nines, or sevens, but they can't possibly get into fours. So the Jerry takes four men and places them carefully one behind the other and says, "Now, stay there." Then he places the next four men, and the next four, and the next four. By the time he has gotten to the next four the first four have evaporated some place. So he gets disgusted and strings all the P/Ws out in a single line. Then he starts down the line counting one---two---three---four, and where five should be is a space, but he is not quite sure whether number six belongs in that space or number five is on sick call or in the latrine or over the fence. He finally gives the man the benefit of the doubt, counts a man for that space and moves on up the line. When he gets to the next space, well, he counted the first space, so he has to count the second, and he keeps on. By the time he is about 3/4 of the way through the line, numbers, one, two, and three decide that they want to talk to Joe Bloke up at the other end of the line, so they sneak around the back, go up to the end and get themselves counted all over again. So by the time the Jerry is through counting, he has 286 men. He is only supposed to have 280 so he has to start all over again. They have actually kept these counts going for two and three hours, which gives the escaper that extra time before his absence is even discovered.

Story No.4

They take care of guards too. That is, in the Nuisance Committee's very ingenious ways. At one camp the guards were particularly tough. They supposedly were very good guards from the German point of view, but from our point of view not good at all. So the Nuisance Committee decided something should be done about it. They appointed three

experts who got pads of paper and pencils. Then they went around the camp and interviewed every guard in the place. One of these lads would walk up to a guard and say, "What's your name?", and write his name down on that pad of paper. Then he would go to the next guard, "What's your name?" until they had been to every guard in the place. The guards got together that night, discovered that all their names had been taken and it bothered them. They just couldn't understand such a procedure. One of them went to one of these experts the next day and said, "Why did you take my name?" The expert just looked at him and then said, "That's all right brother, that's all right. This war will be over some day and I have got you on my shit list," Well, it got so that the Jerries would do anything to get off those lists, and they did.

Story No. 5

There are stories of individual fuck ups among P/Ws that have come out of this war that ought to go down in history, and they would, if they could be printed. I am thinking of two in particular. One is about an American; one is about a Britisher. The American was an air corps pilot, a lieutenant colonel. He was shot down over North Africa, bailed out all right, hit the ground safely, and was just getting out of his Mae West and harness when an open staff car approached with four Jerries in it. They jumped out of the car, covered him with their rifles, and he surrendered. He spoke perfect German. He said "OK, boys, take me away. I am yours". There was nothing else he could do. They led him to the staff car, put him in the back seat between two of the boys, while the other two got into the front seat. He hadn't any more than sat down than he started shoving, saying, "Move over. Move over. Give me room. I've got to have lots of room." The Jerries have a great respect for rank and they moved away as far as they could from him. The car started up, had been going about ten minutes when the Yank jumped to his feet and said, "Stop this car. Stop this car." They stopped the car and wanted to know what the matter was. He said, "I've got to take a leak." So they let him out of the car. He went to the side of the road and took his leak, taking his own sweet time about it, then leisurely got back into the car again, sat down and started shoving

with his elbows. The car went on for another ten minutes and again he stood up, and again he said, "Stop this car." They stopped the car and wanted to know what the matter was this time. He said, "I've got to take another leak." So he got out, went to the side of the road, managed to squeeze out about three drops, taking fifteen minutes to do it, and got leisurely back into the car again. This time as he was about to sit down he turned to the Jerry on his right and said, "You get up in the front seat and give me some room in here," and the guy got up in the front seat. Well, you know what he was trying to get at, and he said he succeeded very well. In the first place, he got the Jerries so confused that they lost their way twice. It took them two hours to make a trip that should have taken about forty minutes. Meanwhile he sat back there smoking their cigarettes, drinking their water, eating their rations and having a hell of a time. Whenever the wind was right, he spit (indicate the spit being carried back into the German's faces by the wind with your hand). Eventually they got to a local Headquarters. The Yank got out and decided he could no longer speak German. He explained he only spoke their filthy language to make his wants known but from that time on, anyone who wanted to talk to him must address him in English. A tough little Nazi 2nd Lieutenant approached him and started questioning him in broken English. Right away the Yank said, "Now wait a minute. Let's get this straight. I'm a Lieutenant Colonel. I will talk to no one except an officer of my rank or above." Well, there wasn't a high ranking Nazi officer in the camp who spoke English, so they had to send to another camp some 75 or 80 miles away and have an officer flown in. A plane bearing this Nazi full colonel arrived, set down and the Nazi got out fairly bursting with rage. The Yank waited until he got close enough and then said, "Do you speak English?" The Nazi answered, "Yes, I speak very precise English. What can I do for you?" The Yank replied, "Well, brother, for a start, -fuck you!"

Story No.6

The Britisher had a little different experience. He escaped and was recaptured. Now, the first thing any good escaper thinks of the minute he is picked up is his next escape. He knows what he has

done wrong, and he knows how to correct it. The Britisher was no exception. He knew what his mistakes had been and in his mind he was already back to that point, doing the right thing. He had with him to help him in his escape, a little compass. This is a gadget about the size of a lead pencil. We call them "ass-hole" compasses because that is where you hide them. The Britisher wanted to keep this compass because it had been very useful on his first attempt and he wanted to be sure he had it when he escaped again. Now these compasses have one great advantage. When they are properly hidden, the Nazis can't find them. But they have one disadvantage. Sometimes you can't find them yourself. The Britisher thought of this disadvantage, but he wanted that compass. He knew he would need it, and he wasn't at all sure that he could get another one. Then he had an idea. He found a piece of string in his pocket, cut it, tied it very carefully around the compass, and placed the compass where it belonged. Well, when they got back to the P/W camp, his clothes were stripped from him and were put through an X-ray machine to be searched while a Nazi captain proceeded to look him over carefully. The Nazi got around in back of the Britisher. He was looking him up and down - head to toe. The Britisher had cut the string to long and it was dangling. Quickly the Nazi came around in front of the Britisher and ordered, "Pull that string." The Britisher looked at him for a minute and then said, "You pull it." Well, that didn't set very well with the Nazi at all. That was considerably below his dignity. He saw a sergeant, standing over in the corner of the room and said, "Sergeant, pull that string." Now this sergeant was a smart guy. He had been in the Army some time, and he knew his military courtesy, but beyond that he could think pretty fast on his feet, so he turned to the Nazi Captain and said, "Hauptman, I am only an enlisted man. Would it look right for an enlisted man to go up an officer's ass? You pull the string." Well, they argued that thing out for four hours until the Britisher finally gave up in sheer disgust and pulled the string himself. But there was no compass on the end of the string. The Britisher recovered his presence of mind faster than the Nazi did

though and said, "There, you see? It's that damn food you feed us. It won't digest." Later he got the compass, used it on his next escape, and he is in London now.

Story No. 7

The first Ju 88 shot down over England was piloted by a Luftwaffe major. The major jumped clear and was captured. The plane crashed. Since this was the first Ju 88 to land on British soil, the experts were very much interested. They went over the wreckage of the plane very carefully getting some information, but not enough. So the Nazi major was given a very thorough interrogation. However, he was extremely security-minded and wouldn't talk. He wouldn't even give the names of two members of his crew who had been killed so that their deaths could be reported to the International Red Cross. He wouldn't let out a peep. But the British had to have that information. When all other methods failed, one of the interrogators remembered that among this Nazi's personal effects was a bundle of thirty-two letters, -thirty-two letters tied with blue ribbon written in feminine handwriting and smelling faintly of perfume. You know the kind I mean? Well, that is just exactly what they were. They didn't contain one single scrap of military information, anything else but. These letters were from a girl this Nazi officer had been shackled up with for the previous year while he was stationed in France. He brought them with him because he knew that if anything happened to him those letters would have been sent with his other personal effects back to his wife in Germany. And that was something he certainly did not want to happen. The interrogator took that bundle of letters, got a big brown manila envelope and went in to see the major. When he got there, he showed the major the letters and said, "What else do you want me to send to your wife?" First, the major was indignant; and then he pleaded and begged that those letters not be sent home. But the interrogator insisted that he was going to send them, was trying to be a nice guy and was willing to send something else along if the major desired. Well, the Nazi practically got on his knees and finally got into a huddle with the interrogator and agreed to swap information about that Ju 88 in return for the letters. But it wasn't going to

26.

be as easy as all that. This interrogator wasn't going to give the Nazi his whole bundle of thirty-two letters in return for some information. He was a first class son-of-a-bitch. He sold the Nazi those letters one at a time. So don't you make up your mind as to what is important and what isn't in the way of papers. Don't take anything into combat with you that could possibly be used in the way those letters were used on the Major.