



CARL WOLLNER - PRESIDENT
PANTHER OIL & GREASE MFG. CO.

PANTHER - THE GREASE
 IN THE DRUM
 SILVER

PANTHER - BATTLESHIP
 LIQUID ASBESTOS ROOF COATING

FORT WORTH, TEXAS

March 28, 1944.

Mrs. Deakins :

If you have not been in touch with Tracy Strong, it might pay you to find out how to reach him. The local Y.M.C.A. can tell you. Enclosed article came from the March issue of "Think" - - a publication of International Business Machines Corp. of New York.

Sincerely,



Mr. Deakin

th

Thind (J.B.M.)

March 1944

Prisoner of War in Germany

By TRACY STRONG

General Secretary, World's Committee of the Y.M.C.A.

How American servicemen fare in German prison camps . . . Books, musical instruments, sport equipment, food parcels and essentials for religious worship provided by Red Cross, Y.M.C.A. and kindred agencies which help them "rise above dreaded hours of idleness" . . . Maintaining contact between prisoners and folks at home . . . Camp routine for both enlisted men and officers.

"Lieut. Lawrence H. Smith, bombardier, reported missing in action December 22, 1943, in making a flight over Germany."—War Department notice.

WHEN this news reaches the home folks through the alert and sympathetic Information Department of the Army, the parents or wife begin to ask questions: How long must I wait until I know whether he died in action or is a prisoner of war? If dead, will he be buried with military honors? If wounded, will he receive proper care? What kind of camp will he live in? What will he eat? What can I do to help him? What is being done to let him know the folks at home care?

Until the first question is answered the anxiety of the parents and the worries of Lieut. Smith, if still alive, are almost unbearable. Uncertainty is often worse than death. Prisoners never cease to worry until they know the home folks have heard they are alive. It takes from three weeks to three months and sometimes longer until the official report from the German authorities is sent through the High Protecting Power—the Swiss—and through the International Red Cross in Geneva to Washington. Washington confirms the report and wires immediately the next of kin whether he is dead or a prisoner of war and sends, if possible, his camp address. Some have waited an even longer time, for some prisoners seek to hide and escape back to their own lines. Parents should never give up hope until a final word comes from the War Department saying that he "died in action." If he was killed in action and

can be identified, he will be given a military burial.

If a prisoner of war, Lieut. Smith becomes a prisoner under the law, for his nation in 1929 in Geneva, Switzerland, signed with 47 other nations the International Convention Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War. The 98 articles in the convention root back in spirit and often in letter to the best efforts of mankind, through their statesmen, philosophers and prophets, to change the status of a prisoner of war from that of a slave, a chattel, a thing to be ridiculed, to a man with rights, a soldier of honor, a person to be protected from inhumane treatment, insults and public curiosity. At the heart of this struggle the unselfish flame of neutrality—the service of the International Red Cross, the mother Red Cross Society—is always found burning.

When Lieut. Smith's name, with all essential information about him, reaches Geneva, the machinery of the humanitarian world begins to move. Cables carry his name to his home. Mail starts from the family and from Lieut. Smith. Representatives of the High Protecting Power, the International Red Cross (Swiss) and the War Prisoners' Aid of the Y.M.C.A. continue to visit the camp where he is interned—the first two sending official reports to Washington which describe in detail the conditions under which Lieut. Smith lives. The reports of the War Prisoners' Aid of the Y.M.C.A. are not as official but give a picture of the program needs of the prisoners. These organizations, together with the American Red Cross, the Chaplaincy Commission of the World Council of Churches, the



Y.M.C.A. representative interviewing captured American in prison camp to ascertain men's needs.

Catholic Church, the European Student Relief, the Bureau of International Education, begin to provide relief, comforts, educational and recreational facilities and essentials for worship, all aimed to help Lieut. Smith overcome the shock of becoming a prisoner and rise above the dreaded hours of idleness.

If Lieut. Smith is wounded, he will go to special hospitals for prisoners of war. He will probably be cared for by a captured medical officer of his own nation—if enough have been captured—under the supervision of capable medical doctors of the German Army. The Germans rightly take pride in the hospital care, occupational therapy and special arrangements made for the blind and badly wounded.



IF LIEUT. SMITH is well and active, he will probably be interned in Stalag Luft III. This camp is exclusively for men of the air forces. It is located in a pine, spruce and larch forest ninety miles southeast of Berlin. The camp is divided into three sections, two for officers and one for non-commissioned officers and enlisted men. The prisoners are mostly British, Canadian, Americans, but there is a goodly sprinkling of all United Nations fliers. The Americans are now in a separate section. They all live in barracks, each of which accommodates from eight to eighty men. The barracks are surrounded by gardens planted by the prisoners. Nothing keeps men normal and helps them fight barbed-wire sickness better than a love and responsibility for growing things.

If Lieut. Smith's uniform was burned, there will be clothes sent to him by the Red Cross from Geneva. An arrival comforts kit is being sent by the American Red Cross which brings him the comforts so essential in a prison camp. If the camp food is monotonous—and it is, although sufficient to keep a man well—he gets through the American Red Cross an 11-pound food parcel every week or ten days.

The Red Cross is doing a magnificent job in bringing food, cigarettes and extra comforts to him. After some time the next-of-kin parcel, permitted every 60 days, brings from the next of kin that extra touch of home which is so essential.

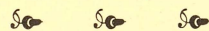
If Lieut. Smith loves athletics and exercise, he can become a member of a baseball, basketball, volley ball, lacrosse, cricket or hockey team. The Germans have provided ample playing fields in this camp and the War Prisoners' Aid of the Y.M.C.A. is trying to keep the prisoners provided with the essential equipment for games. In winter there is ice skating, hockey and curling, although at times it is necessary to share the shoes, skates and even the sticks.

If Lieut. Smith likes to read and study, he will find 10,000 books in the library and 20,000 additional volumes privately owned but generally shared. Recent reports tell of 360 officers enrolled in 44 classes and 1,200 NCO's in 105 classes. Bookkeeping, navigation, stenography, banking, jurisprudence, motor mechanics, cattle breeding, theology and engineering are among the courses chosen. While in the early

days the Americans enrolled in the splendid, well-established British courses, which permitted them to take examinations for advanced credit from the London University, the Americans now have available many of the educational opportunities offered by the Armed Forces Institute of the U.S. Army.

If Lieut. Smith likes to sing, to play in an orchestra, to act or to paint or carve, he will be given opportunities to do so. The War Prisoners' Aid have sent in musical instruments, theatrical kits, paints and brushes, carving sets and a large variety of things which help a man express his artistic abilities.

If Lieut. Smith, like many another prisoner of war, feels a need for worship and prayer, he is not left alone. Fortunate is he if a Chaplain of his own nation is a fellow prisoner. Even without him men desire to seek God and commune with their fellows. Concerning one camp where the American boys captured in Tunisia are interned a recent Y.M.C.A. visitor wrote as follows: "One outstanding accomplishment is the completion of the American camp chapel. It seats 350 men. From the narrow strips of wood used for crating Red Cross parcels the prisoners carved the trellis-work railing to separate the altar from the audience. Modern and ancient art were blended in designing the altar and pulpit. Over the entrance hangs a most exquisite mosaic made entirely of broken colored glass embedded in cement. On the walls are two oil paintings and above the altar hangs a crucifix carved by a prisoner."



THIS is the brighter side of what awaits the Lieut. Smith, or Private* Smith, of the Air Force, the Army, the Navy, the Merchant Marine. With all of these expressions of the humanitarian heart in time of war, they do not receive more than they deserve, for they faced death and Pascal's insufferables. "Nothing is more insufferable to man than to be completely at rest, without study, without passions, without diversion, without business" and, what is even worse, "without privacy" and "without liberty." The endless round of days with little prospect of freedom until the war shall cease tests the strongest.

In the midst of war the nations have continued to respect their agreements regarding prisoners. Men of good will have served them irrespective of their nationality, race or creed, for Lieut. Smith could not be helped if Lieut. Schmidt of Germany were not receiving the same privileges. The best hopes of mankind have expressed themselves practically in keeping the prisoner human and a man beloved by his home folks. May it not be that in the experience, the spirit, the service and the faith which the nations have sought to express towards the prisoner of war the world will venture again with greater confidence and understanding in rebuilding the new world upon the ruins of the old?

*The only distinction made between officers and men who are prisoners of war is that officers are not permitted to perform manual labor whereas the enlisted man is required to.

ENTHUSIASTIC NEWS FROM FRED LAWRENCE

It is always a pleasure to watch Enthusiasm-at-Work in any person. Especially so does that hold good in a case of a Soldier. He's bound to make Uncle Sam an extra good man, for that kind of Enthusiasm begets success, undoubtedly. So it's a pleasure to quote from Fred Lawrence's letter of Sunday, March 5th :

"Dear Mr. Wollner : Thank you for your letter. It was nice of you to write. This is my first Sunday at Sheppard Field and I'm at the Service Club. It is nice. The Air Corps really expects every Cadet-to-be to "stay on the ball." We work hard and steady and on the average of eleven hours a day. For example, let me describe my day yesterday, Saturday, the day I was used to working until 1:00 p.m. in civilian life. We rolled out at 5:15. At 5:25 we fell out for Roll Call. At six we had breakfast. Then some time off to clean, sweep and mop our Barracks, make up beds, put on leggins. At 7:20 we fell out for one hour of close order drill, Then to a lecture hall for a training film on Personal Hygiene. At ten we came out and marched about a mile to the Infirmary. There we got two shots and a small-pox vaccination all at once. Three men work on you at the same time. Then we ate Chow and had an hour to loaf. The catch to this is that we have to go to the pay station to get our travel pay and that station is on the other side of the Field. One hour of steady walking gets that out of the way and we get back just in time to fall in for training. Now we go back to the lecture hall for a talk by an Officer on "Patriotism." Then a talk by a S/Sgt., who had been a waist gunner on a Fortress on Henderson Field. He has 75 missions - 6 Zeros - the D.S.C. Oak Leaf Cluster and Purple Heart to his credit. Very interesting talk. Now to the drill field for Gas Drill. Thirty minutes of drill and practice on getting into our masks in twelve seconds. We have to wear it all the time. Then into a chamber full of tear gas to check them. Then into a chlorine chamber to stand in the stuff for about three minutes to show that a mask will help you. By then it is about 5:30 and we are all pretty well worn out. But we have one more little thing to do. We walk into the chlorine chamber without masks and put them on after entering. It's touchy business and hard on the nerves. The fact that a "meat wagon" (ambulance) is standing right outside the door, doesn't help much. Now, as soon as we march the mile home, we are through. That is a long day. I was lucky. Some of our men drew K.F. today, Sunday, which means they get up at 4:30 and go right back to work.

I hope I haven't written so much as to bore you. I think it's interesting to see just how hard a man can go, especially a "soft" guy like me. They say (and I believe it !) that it gets tougher all along. But, Mr. Wollner, it is good for me. I feel fine. I'm toughening up a little. And it gives me a proud feeling to know I'm part of it all. It's a real thrill to visit the "Flight Line" and just stand and watch an hour - - many an off hour is spent there when we could be resting.

A mighty Fortress will come in powerful and big. Then two or three Navy Hell Cats rush in, some P-38, P-40, P-47, B-24's and others. You can see B-25's - - the Mitchells that bombed Tokyo - - or the deadly B-26 Marauders. Really it's thrilling to a guy like me. It makes you feel like we can't lose with the kind of men and equipment we have.

--- See other side, please

And when we march, we sing mostly silly songs like "K-K-K-Katy," or "I Want to go Home," or "The Caissons go Rolling Along" -- but ever so often we break into the Air Corps Hymn and (no fooling!) it nearly makes you cry -- it's such a swell feeling that you are learning to be a part of it. More inspiring than any school song ever was. I guess it is because you have to give up so much -- your home -- your family -- and the life of comparative ease -- and you know it's worth it! We have a wonderful Country and it's worth everything to me -- even my life! I'm proud to be able to do my part so my boy will have the right to grow up in the good old American way.

I guess I'm too far-fetched, but I got to writing and it came out, I wrote all this, too, because I think you can appreciate it. I know you feel the same and won't think I'm silly. I know Chas would agree.

Take care of yourself, Mr. Wollner, and tell everyone hello that asks for me.

Your Friend,

-- FRED LAWRENCE.

OTHER NEWS FROM PANTHER SERVICE MEN :

T/4 HERBERT G. SCHUBERT writes from "Somewhere in Italy" that he's been up to Mt. Vesuvius and watched the eruptions of streams of live lava; also that he has been to the City of Pompeii. Just to refresh our memory we looked up the latter and found it to be a seaport with a population of 30,000 before the war, about 15 miles from Naples, at the foot of Vesuvius. An earthquake and an eruption of Vesuvius in the year '79 buried Pompeii and the site of the forgotten city was not discovered until the year 1748, since which time it has been fairly well excavated and it is still one of the great sights of the world. Herb Schubert gets a bit homesick once in a while and dreams of the days when he can be back with Panther and have a home of his own with a wife, little children and all that sort of thing.

ORVILLE UTLEY, 1st Class Petty Officer of Seabees, somewhere in the Southwest Pacific writes interestingly about his work, but of course is not able to name places. His wife maintains the family home in Fort Worth and, we presume, still keeps writing Orville each and every day, as he probably does to her.

PFC. JOE PRIEST was in the Office Friday and we were happy to see him. He's on a furlough now from Camp Howze, near Gainesville, Texas, expecting to get shipped to a northeastern point of embarkation in the near future. We all wish Joe happy landings and the best of luck wherever he's going. Joe is one of the Panther Factory's best and we'll count the days till he'll come back to stay.

S/SGT. CHAS. E. WOLLNER writes from Nome, Alaska. He went to an I.O.O.F. Lodge dance, the nicest affair, he says, he has been to since joining the Army two years ago. He particularly enjoys the Drippings, because through them he keeps up with the Personnel in Panther Office and Factory.

S/SGT. JIM BELL dropped in on us for a quick trip Friday morning during a very short stop-over while acting as crew chief on a plane that loitered along taking an hour and twenty minutes between his Field in New Mexico and the one at Fort Worth -- a trip that took us part of an afternoon and most of the day via Cadillac last June. Jim looked fine and is making wonderful progress in the Air Corps.

BW.