



Prisoner's drawing of Oflag 64, reproduced from The Item of January 1, 1945

BY JAMES BICKERS

Drawing does not show the three, high, barbed wire fences surrounding the 900 feet by 1200 feet area of the P.O.W.-Camp; nor are the eleven guard towers shown.

VOLUME XXVI #1

POST OFLAG ITEM

FEBRUARY 1992

GLADWYNE, PA. Well, I don't know how we were blessed but I hope you have all received:

1. The Videos you ordered at Norfolk
2. Your group pictures
3. Any other photos that you may have ordered.

Many thanks go to Christine Dunn our Contact at Holiday Inn. Her help in following up on the photographers saved me a lot of long distance phone calls. One of the Photographers actually closed up shop after we received our material.

The next good news is that the photos taken in Las Vegas 1990 and arranged in order for a booklet have been located and are now at "Reunions" for printing and you should receive it shortly.

Enclosed in the booklet is a late 1991 listing of most of all the names on my mailing list. Some of the addresses have changed some have passed away. This printed listing was the way Reunions decided to say "Thanks for your patience". We'll take it.

Naturally our listing has not escaped a decrease and includes some well known ones.

Hope you all had a joyous Holiday Season and that the New Year is starting off well for you.

RAFAEL, CA. The end of October '91 closed out with a nice postcard note from Belle and Matt Smith congratulating the Committee on the nice job at Norfolk. Thanks, Matt and glad you enjoyed the Greenroom Abbey Restaurant. We had a nice meal also as well as a pleasant chat with the Owner after the meal.

Looking forward to seeing you in Colorado Springs.

GROVE CITY, OH. What a beautiful cardinal on the front of Christmas Card sent by Jean and Brad. It was also a real Christmas present containing a nice contribution to the PF. See you in C. Springs.

LONDON, ENGLAND. Overlooked a brief note from our good medic friend Ken Finloyson who last visited us in San Antonio with his sister. He asked if we would be going as a group to Poland again. Ken, I think we have seen our last one, when we joined with Stalag Luft III group from ~~Stalag Luft III~~. The rigors of foreign travel are getting to be too much for us. Perhaps individuals may go but as a group it is highly doubtful. Stay well and maybe you can try another reunion visit, Louisville, KY in '92.

DES MOINES, IA: A change of address from Verris Hubbell. He has now married and will be looking forward to meeting Mrs. Hubbell in Co. Springs. Thanks "Hubb" for letting me know.

BANGOR, ME: Well, Milt Jellison, you were sorry you couldn't make Norfolk and so were we. We had a great time and learned a little bit about the Navy. Great ships and Great Officers'

Club. Thanks for your Holiday Greetings as well as the contribution to the PF.

Sure hope your health improves and your able to make Co. Springs. Bill Korher is looking forward to you both being there. Hope you enjoyed the report on the reunion.

See you in Colorado Springs!

PINEHURST, N.C.: Love to hear from Herb Garris. He is much like "Benny Franklin" whose writings take a special building at Yale University to house. No complaints, just a statement of fact. Thanks Herb, for the communications! I love it! On top of all the letters and postcards he also has given several lectures on P.O.W.'s. He gave one at Sandhill Chapter of TROA. One at the Kiwanis Club and others. That's wonderful because many younger people today do not get to know what a P.O.W. is, or even an Ex-P.O.W. Great work herb. Sure looking forward to seeing you in Co. Springs. Heard from Bob Levin and look forward to seeing him also in Co. Springs.

Chaplain Daniels was at a couple of our Reunions and I have read his book. Thanks for the article on Trevor and his great work with the homeless in the Philadelphia area. I have never met him. Stay healthy and see you in Colorado Springs.

HILO, HI: Christmas Greetings from Fred and Lani Livingston. Not a pleasant note from a fine guy as it has been ascertained that he has degenerative arthritis of the spine, which prohibits him from sitting for any long period of time anywhere. So how can one get from the islands to the mainland! Fred has done the last thing he ever thought he would have to do and that is give up golf. Sorry to hear that Fred.

We are hoping that 1992 will be a good year for us and hope yours is a good one too.

We'll write and let you know how Colorado Springs as a Reunion Center shapes up. Keep well any way!

BETHESDA, MD. Just in case I didn't mention it before in December Wilbur Sharpe sent me a check or over \$2,000.00 to be added to the PF as a result of his great handling of the funds at the Norfolk Reunion. Thanks much for a great job, Wilbur and of course your great Assistant Mary.

Hope to see you before Colorado Springs.

YOUNGSTOWN, OH: Betty Fowler wrote a second time to advise that Charles Fowler had passed away 28 September 1991.

Sometimes my mail piles up so that I do not open it for several days and Betty that could be what happened to your first letter prior to the Reunion, and then on my return I didn't get to it to open it in time for the December Newsletter. I am indeed sorry and hope you will please accept my apologies for being so delinquent.

Thanks much for your efforts to keep us informed. Charlie will be missed.

BIRMINGHAM, MI: Thanks much Victor Kanners, for admitting to the nickname of MAW, as mentioned in my last Newsletter. I had no idea! Now I know. I see by your letter why I did not know of you because of your very brief stay at Orlag '64. I remember Carlos Burrows and of course have gotten to know Ted Pawlaski very well. Talked to Ted a couple of weeks ago.

I do have your copy of "Horsehit & Cobblestones" and found it not amusing but interesting. "Roads to Liberation" is also a great book.

Hope you can make it to Co. Springs and maybe we can have a chance to chat with each other.

Till then stay healthy and hope to see you there.

WHISPERING

PINES, N.C.: At the Norfolk Reunion I asked Jean Christiansen to give her impressions of the affair that I also requested the same of Jim Bechers' wife which you read and was included in the December Post Orlag Item. Included in this letter is Jean's impressions and I'm sure it will bring back many pleasant memories of Norfolk. Thanks much Jean and glad it didn't get written right away as I think this way we get a "double dip" of the Reunion.

Also belated thanks go to Hank Schulte for his work at the Registration desk. See P.S. note at bottom of Jean's report.

Incidentally, I will have some snapshots of the party at H.D. Patterson's home at the Reunion in C. Springs.

Thanks much Jean for a superb letter.

NORTHWOOD, IA: Thanks, Charlie Jones for another of your fine letters. Also for your kudos of the job I'm doing with the Post Orlag Item. Charlie I think you expressed

what many perhaps have thought about the "Item" that ... its good to stay at least somewhat in touch with those who in sharing the same experience, built a foundation of love and concern that has made all of our lives richer. I like that!

Sure like your thinking about our next Reunion and sure hope you can make it. We'll all pray that you can.

Charlie was most upset about the death of Larry Higgins who when he (Larry) was repatriated took home a tablecloth that Charlie spent about 5 months embroidering which had been sent to him by his new wife. It was on his Mother's dining table when he got home and is still used on occasion. Thanks much for the nice contribution to the PF. Every bit helps in today's high postage costs.

We're sure looking forward to seeing you in C. Springs in spite of Parkinson's disease.

LONGRUM, TX: Thanks much Dan whitendck for the nice contribution to the PF.

If you have an up to date address on Capt. Keenan please send it to me on a postcard and then I'll be sure to have the latest one. I have also corrected your zipcode and the mail will get to you sooner.

Better not try the trip to Poland. Colorado Springs will be better. More fun.

Many special thanks go to Betty Fowler, Bob Bishop, George Juskalian, Martin Keiser for their sending the enclosed obituaries.

OKLAHOMA CITY, OK: Thanks Martin Keiser for the "Obit" for O.B. Hamblin. I don't recall having known him. Nice of you to remember. See you in Co. Springs.

IONE, CA: Evelyn Ranck writes a small note to keep sending the "Item" and sent a nice contribution to the PF. Thanks much Evelyn. Hope you are planning to come to C. Springs. There is a tremendous Air Force and Soderberg P.O.W. Exhibit at the Air Force Academy which I'm sure would be of interest. Hope we see you there!

Enclosed is an article sent in by Howard "Boomer" Holder about John Creech. I decided to include the whole article because he is such a great "down to earth" guy. No pun intended. Thanks again Howard!

LOUISVILLE, KY: Bill Cory tells me the hotel, Galt House is already signed sealed and delivered for 1993. Great! Next Newsletter will include the name of the '92 hotel that Bill Korber plans to sign on shortly. We'll keep you posted.

TULSA, OK: Bob Thompson sent me a copy of the Red Cross Bulletins of March 5, 1945. This was a rather expanded bulletin containing the James Bickers drawing of Oflag 64 as well as a map of the Japanese P.O.W. camps and internment camps in Japan.

Very interesting! Thanks Bob. We'll put this one in the Archives with the rest of our papers.

Thanks also for the very nice contribution to the Postage Fund.

Look forward to seeing you in C. Springs.

CHEYENNE, WY: Will have name of hotel for 1992 in next bulletin, according to Bill Korber. He hopes to make decision in next couple of weeks. Will be waiting to hear!

See you in Colorado Springs, October 8,9,10, 11, 1992.

Editor: John Slack

December 27, 1991

Dear John,

The arrival of the December, 1991, Cflag Item reminded me that I had agreed to write a short review of the Williamsburg tour during the Norfolk reunion from the viewpoint of one of the ladies in attendance. I apologize for the delay in doing this.

First, as always, certainly one of the best aspects of the reunion was the greeting of and visiting with the many friends made at the various reunions over a period of years. This is truly a heart-warming experience. We thank Wilbur Sharpe for planning an excellent reunion and entertainment.

The day at Williamsburg was fascinating but all too short. Like most of the others, we walked the length of the main street (Duke of Gloucester) admiring the homes, stores and inns. The Capitol building was marvelous, and the docent there gave a superb explanation of the history and uses of various portions of the building, making it come alive before our eyes.

The arsenal and shot tower intrigued us so we climbed the stairs to the top to hear another excellent description and explanation by a docent. On display were a number of old military rifles and other weapons, all in excellent condition, and the docent could name each and describe its function.

Our group of six had a very fine luncheon in one of the restaurants and then visited several of the shops which were selling items reminiscent of colonial times.

Sue and Tom Lawson and Edie and Lester Edsell had their tour tickets punched 5 times (6 was the maximum). Anyone out there who can beat their "jogging" record?

We were betting that Nancy, our tour guide, and Gloria, the bus driver, made history themselves in taking that huge bus down those narrow country lanes to the Pattersons' home, where we enjoyed the generous hospitality of the latter.

We came away from our Virginia sojourn very impressed by the unfailing courtesy with which we were treated everywhere.

After the reunion Bob and I rented a car and visited some of the Virginia landmarks: War between the States battlefields, Skyline Drive, a cavern, Appomatox, Dismal Swamp and Virginia Beach, where we observed an aircraft carrier entering Hampton Roads. We slipped over into West Virginia to visit Seneca Rocks and vicinity where Bob's division had had mountain training exercises during W.W.II. Yes, there is still military training conducted there.

John, you have my permission to edit, delete or omit all of this letter from the Oflag Item.

Jean Christensen

P.S. Hank Shulte was also one of those who manned the registration desk in addition to Marvin Chevalier and Bob Christensen. Those three walked side by side the entire distance from Oflag 64 to Hammelburg.

2/4/92

Dear John —

The thinning ranks.

Washington National Cemetery. Arrangements by HENRY S. WASHINGTON & SONS.

GERSHENOW, LOUIS
 On Sunday, February 2, 1992, at Kimbrough Army Hospital in MD. Beloved husband of Esther Gershenow; loving father of Earl A. Gershenow and Andrea Gershenow. Brother of Ben Gershenow, Lucile Dee and Sylvia Horowitz; also survived by two grandchildren, Alexander and Eric Gershenow. Services will be held on Wednesday February 5 at 2 p.m. at Memorial Chapel in Arlington National Cemetery. Memorial contributions may be made to the American Heart Association, Arrangements by The IVES-PEARSON FUNERAL HOMES

GLAZIER, STEPHEN MARTIN (Age 53)
 Of Delray Beach, FL, on Wednesday, January 29, 1992. He was born in Washington, DC and lived here virtually all of his life, before settling in South Florida in 1990. Mr. Glazier was a successful

LOUIS GERSHENOW
Army Colonel

Louis Gershenow, 79, an Army colonel who retired as chief of staff of the Military District of Washington, died of pneumonia Feb. 2 at Kimbrow Army Hospital at Fort Meade.

Col. Gershenow, who lived in Bowie, was born in Brooklyn, N.Y., and graduated from Lafayette College.

He joined the Army during World War II and served in North Africa during the war. Postwar assignments included service in Germany and the Philippines, where he was a military adviser. He had been chief of staff of the Military District of Washington for about three years before retiring.

His military decorations included a Bronze Star with three oak leaf clusters, a Legion of Merit with one oak leaf cluster and a Distinguished Service Medal.

On retiring from the Army, Col. Gershenow settled in the Washington area and went to work for the Prince George's County government. He had been director of the department of licenses and permits and later director of the department of central services. He retired from the Prince George's government in 1977.

Survivors include his wife, Esther Gershenow of Bowie; two children, Earl A. Gershenow of Potomac and Andrea Gershenow of Herndon; and two grandchildren.

I shall be attending the funeral + have called former colleagues in the area to let them know.

George

WATT

Robert McDowell Watt, age 67, died at Lexington Country Place on Fri. Feb. 14 of Parkinsons Disease & other complications. He leaves his wife of 35 years, Helen L. Watt; a son, Robert M. Watt III; two daughters, Melissa LeBus Watt & Helen Stoll Watt Stumbo; & one stepdaughter Rada R. Jeffers, all of Lexington. Surviving also are grandchildren: John Malloy, Byers Watt, Sarah Watt, Brian Stumbo, Wesley Stumbo, and Allison Stumbo; stepgrandchildren, Christina Adair Miner & Candace Renee Jeffers. Mr. Watt leaves one brother, Malcolm Kerr Watt, Tuscon, AZ. Born in Ky., Mr. Watt was the son of Robert M. Watt Sr. who was for many years President

& Chairman of the Board of Kentucky Utilities Co. and his mother Elizabeth Byers Watt who was a member of the Board of Curators of Transylvania University. Mr. Watt was graduated from Kentucky Military Institute & attended the University of Ky. He was former owner & president of Fern Lake Co., water supply for the city of Middlesboro, Ky. He also held real estate licenses in Florida, Georgia & Kentucky. He held a Captain's license in the United States Coast Guard in the 70's & 80's and was associated with sports & big game fishing in Florida, Mexico & the Bahamas. In WW II, Mr. Watt was an officer in the First Ranger Battalion, captured at Cisterna, Italy after the Anzio Invasion. He was held Prisoner of War by the Germans for 1½ years before escaping to the Russian Army, the liberation of P.O.W. camps in Poland. Mr. Watt was a former Chairman of the Board of Deacons of the Middlesboro, Ky. Presbyterian Church, President of the Middlesboro Rotary Club and served on the board of directors of the Mountain Laurel Festival. He was a life long member of the Sons of the Revolution & the Filson Club. At his death, Mr. Watt was a member of the Presbyterian Church of St. Simons Island, Georgia. He was a member of local & national Ranger & P.O.W. organizations, & the Disabled American Veterans. During WW II, Mr. Watt was awarded the Purple Heart, 3 battle stars, The Presidential Citation & other decorations. In 1990 he was made an honorary member of the University of Kentucky ROTC Ranger Unit. Past club affiliations include the St. Simons Island Georgia Country Club, the John D. McArthur Country Club, Palm Beach,

Florida, and the Idle Hour Country Club, Lexington. A military funeral will include members of the U.S. Honor Guard from Ft. Knox Army Base Mon. Feb. 17 at 1:30 p.m. in the Lexington Cemetery family plot with Dr. John Cavendish of Walnut Hill Church officiating. Visitation will be from 3-6 p.m. today at the W.R. Milward Mortuary-Broadway. Honorary pallbearers are Dr. Fred B. Weller, Henry Ralston, Sam Mars, William Ketchens, Major Lynn Hunsaker, Captain Sam Collins, Captain Jack Lance, William Strother, Dan Stewart, Arthur Abshire, Craig Johnson, & Donald Dick.

Robert Watt, 67, former POW, dies

Staff report

Robert McDowell Watt, 67, a former World War II prisoner of war, died Friday of Parkinson's disease and other complications. Mr. Watt, a second lieutenant in the Fifth Army's elite First Ranger Battalion, had recently returned from the Kentucky Military Institute when he took part in the Allied invasion at Anzio, Italy, on Jan. 22, 1944. Shortly after the landing, he was met by a strong German resistance, Mr. Watt was taken prisoner at Cisterna, Italy, and taken to a German prisoner of war camp in Schubin, Poland.

A year later, Mr. Watt and

some of his fellow prisoners escaped from Schubin and wandered in the Polish countryside for several weeks before meeting up with the Soviet Army, which took him to U.S. officers in Odessa in the Soviet Union.

Mr. Watt earned a purple heart, three battle stars and a presidential citation for his efforts during the war.

Mr. Watt, a former real estate salesman, is survived by his wife, Helen Watt; one son, two daughters and a step-daughter. Funeral services will be 1:30 p.m. Monday at the Lexington Cemetery. Visitation is 3 to 6 p.m. today at the W.R. Milward Mortuary — Broadway.

IN MEMORY OF

O. B. HAMBLIN

Born November 11, 1917
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
Died December 26, 1991
Lawton, Oklahoma
Age 74 years, 1 month, 15 days

SERVICES

1:00 pm
Saturday, December 28, 1991
Becker Memorial Chapel
Lawton, Oklahoma

OFFICIATING

Rev. Weldon Rightmer, Pastor
Liberty Heights Chapel
Lawton, Oklahoma

INTERMENT

Sunset Memorial Gardens
Lawton, Oklahoma
With Full Military Honors
Masonic Rites conducted by
Lawton Lodge #183

Service by the Becker Funeral Home

great-great-grandchild.

O.B. Hamblin

Funeral for longtime Lawton resident O.B. Hamblin, 74, will be at 1 p.m. Saturday at Becker Funeral Home Memorial Chapel with the Rev. Weldon Rightmer, pastor of Liberty Heights Chapel, officiating.

26 Dec 91

Mr. Hamblin died Thursday at a Lawton hospital following a lengthy illness.

Burial will be in Sunset Memorial Gardens.

He was born Nov. 11, 1917, at Oklahoma City. He married Oretta Ussrey at Fort Sill on May 17, 1941. Mr. Hamblin retired from the Army in 1958. He later worked for the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation as a game ranger, retiring in 1980. He had been a Lawton resident since 1934. He was a member of Lawton Masonic Lodge No. 183.

Survivors include his wife, of the home; a daughter, Jo Ann Rollins, Grandfield; a sister, Virginia Smith, Oklahoma City; two grandchildren and one great-grandson.

Annie Belle Duncan

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CHARLES E. FOWLER, 72

Retired from Army, Republic Steel employee

Services will be at 10 a.m. Wednesday in St. Brendan Church for Charles E. Fowler, 72, of 215 S. Glenellen Ave., a brother of singer Patti Page, who died of cancer Saturday morning in Windsor Nursing Home after a 2½-year illness.

Mr. Fowler was born Oct. 20, 1918, in Claremore, Okla., a son of Benjamin A. and Margaret Wright Fowler. He came to the Youngstown area in 1943. He was an Army infantryman for 20 years before retiring as a captain in 1957. He served in World War II and the Korean War and was a prisoner of war in Poland during World War II. He was awarded the Silver Star, two Bronze Stars and the Purple Heart.

After retiring from the Army, he worked at the Wonder Bread Bakery in Youngstown and in the tube mill at Republic Steel Corp. He was a member of the church and the Society of the

Third Division, Outpost 057.

Besides his wife, the former Betty Kauffman, whom he married June 8, 1943, he leaves three sons, Charles E. Jr. of Boardman, Robert P. of Youngstown, and Thomas P. of Poland; a daughter, Mrs. Mary Frances Conglose of Youngstown; eight sisters, Mrs. Hazel Morgan, Mrs. Rema Womack, Mrs. Ruby Celeste and Mrs. Virginia Cristantiello, all of Tulsa, Okla., Mrs. Louise Thomas and Mrs. Trudy Miller, both of Wichita, Kan., Mrs. Patti Page Filiciotto of Solana Beach, Calif., and Mrs. Peggy Layton of Oklahoma City; and 10 grandchildren.

Two brothers, Daniel and Mack Fowler, are deceased.

Friends may call from 2 to 4 and 7 to 9 p.m. Tuesday at McVean & Hughes Funeral Home.

9/29/91

RUSH

FROM DER FADDERLAND

BACKGROUND: A firm in Germany ordered coffee from an American firm, and while the coffee was enroute a few bags split open, making it possible for rats to nest in them. The German firm sent the following letter to the United States:

Schentlemens:

Der last two pecketches ve got from you of coffee vas mit rattschidt gemixt. Der coffee may be gute enuff, but der ratt durds schboils der trade. Ve did not see der rattschidt in der zamples vich you sent us.

It takes so much time to pik der ratt durds from der coffee dat it's hardly wurt it. Ve ordered der coffee clean und you schipt schidt mixt mit it. It vas mistake ja? Ve like you to schip us der coffee in vun zack und der rattschidt in annudderden ve mix it to suit der customer.

Write please if ve shouldt schip der coffee bek und keep der schidt, or if ve shouldt keep the coffee und schip der schidt bek, or schip der whole schidden vorks bek.

Ve vant to do right in dis madder, but ve don't like all dis rattschidt bizness.

Mitt Much Respects,

Karl Grummenschidt
Karl Grummenschidt