

171C Hague Blvd.
Glenmont, NY 12077
August 5, 1998

Dear Major Baum:

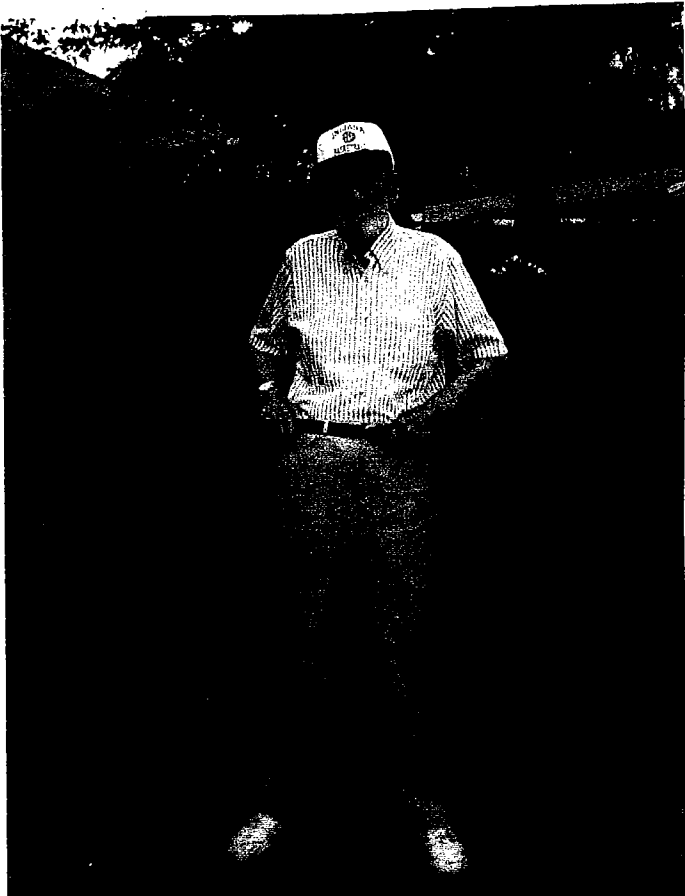
My everlasting thanks to you and your brave 4th Armored men for your most courageous attempt to free us from "durance vile."

I rode with Pickles (half-track) and corresponded with Kmetz until he died—"God rest his soul."

The memory of the Raid events is locked in my mind. Again, heartfelt thanks.

A most appreciative,


Alex Bloom



Alex Bloom, a second lieutenant in the infantry during World War II, served in Europe at the time of Battle of the Bulge.

August 5, 1998

Dear Bill,

To preface my ongoing remarks, let me say—I'm very impressed with your powers of memory retention. My memory regarding past events is quite good—but at my age (past 85), I do have a "Senior Moment" now and then.

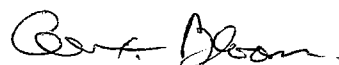
With reference to the vocal rendition of "Lilli Marleine" (with ocarina accompaniment), I don't recall "swinging" during the performance.

The Raid—On the escape attempt, I rode with Captain Abe Baum's 4th Armored men. I rode in a half-track driven by Pickles (an English family name). I recall that after the tank column broke through the fence at Hammelburg, the Kriegies of the 106th Infantry Div. That were being held there, broke out in a raucus and insane demonstration—they lit a huge bonfire to celebrate their liberation (to be very short lived) alerting the German military in the area. I was in the group of Oflag 64 Kriegies that took off with Captain Baum's column that still included tanks, half-tracks, tank destroyers, and the "weasel" (a track-laying Jeep) carrying the wounded 4th Div. Men.

It was a cloudy night. We had gone a short distance when I heard a guttural "Hallo?" A German "Hallo" is not an American "Hello." The German "Hallo" means "Who's there?—What's up?" Within a minute the night was shattered and illuminated by a "Panzerfaust" hitting the leading tank; whereupon startling Pickles when his machine-gunner opened up. Pickles now attempted to turn around on a very narrow road, hitting the side of a culvert over a small stream. I was catapulted out of the half-track into the streambed—a drop of about 5-6 feet. My rib cage took the brunt of the fall. I don't recall who picked me up and carried me to a nearby barn. The next morning, I and most of the Kriegies returned to Hammelburg. Capt. Baum's group decided to stay and fight their way back to the American lines. In the ensuing battle, they too became Kriegies.

Thus ended liberation #2 for me and my fellow Kriegies. We then continued the march to liberation at Mooseburg (Munich) where we were liberated by Patton's 3rd Army.

Best Regards,



Alex Bloom