

KNIGHTS IN SHINING ARMOR

After the ordeal of that long march from camp Oflag 64 in Shubin, Poland to Hammelburg, Germany, all the men were exhausted and needed rest to rebuild their bodies. My feet were sore, swollen and raw and I was content to sit around the camp and stay off my feet. Everybody wanted the war to be over so we could go home to our loved ones and the freedoms that we enjoyed in our home land. In prison camp, one's thoughts were, "will I every get out of this terrible place" "when will we be going home". No one could ever imagine the feelings we would experience in the next few hours.

No one in my little group, had any inkling of what would be taking place. Late in the afternoon, we began to hear firing of weapons near the camp. Everyone became excited, and was wondering what was going on. A couple hours later, a great big American tank burst through the tall barb wire fence of the compound. WHAT A SIGHT. Everyone was shouting. Suddenly, the tower guards began shooting into the compound. It was at this time, LC John Waters, with several men came marching down the street with the United States flag. The stars and stripes never looked so good. Unfortunately, John Waters was shot in the hip and leg, presumably by one of the tower guards. He was quickly moved into the barracks and made comfortable until help could be found.

By now darkness had begun to fall. Many of us ran to the tanks, hoping for a ride back to the American lines. A tank commander told me, as I was trying to find a place to sit on the tank deck, "there will be no ride tonight, Lt. . We are out of fuel and ammunition is too low to fight a battle". Col. Paul Goode,

the senior American officer of the camp, called all of us together and explained the situation and gave us these options. We could stay in camp with the Col., join Major Baum's men to continue the fight, or we could hide in the woods. My two best friends, Lt. Bill Warthen and Lt. Roger Euler, chose to stay with Col Goode. Nearby, three other officers were discussing the possibility of heading for the front lines on foot and asked if I wanted to join them. I was too excited to say no, even with the worst feet in camp. The four of us set out on an adventure that would lead us to hiding out during the day and traveling at night. We were out four days and five nights and had reached the Main River when a river patrol happened upon us as we were trying to find a way to cross the river. We were taken to Nurenburg, and held there until the "bombing". Then another march to Mooseburg where we were finally liberated by Gen. Patten's armored forces.

I never did get to meet Major Baum, but I will always remember he and his men as the "Knights in Shining Armor".



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