

(ROBT ZAWADA)

887-8277

6000 FLAGLER (METairie, LA)

DEAR MR S:

9-27-81

IT WAS VERY NICE OF YOU TO CALL, ALWAYS INTERESTING TO TALK WITH SOMEONE INVOLVED IN THE PAST. PER HAPS YOU COULD ANSWER SOME QUESTIONS I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN CURIOUS ABOUT. WERE YOU ON OUR HALF-TRACK DURING THE NIGHT AS WE TRIED TO BREAK OUT? IT WAS ONE SELECTED TO BE BURNED, WHICH IS WHY I ENDED UP IN THE BACK OF THE ONE YOU ALSO ~~WERE~~ ON AT THE END. THERE ARE SOME SPOTS MY MIND IS COMPLETELY BLANK ON, & CERTAIN THINGS I DO REMEMBER DO NOT COME IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER. I REMEMBER WE WERE TOLD TO ABANDON OUR HALF-TRACK, I WAS GIVEN INSTRUCTIONS TO BE SURE & DESTROY A RADIO CODE BOOK (WHICH I IN 5 MONTHS AS R.O. I HAD NEVER USED) BUT I DO NOT REMEMBER SEEING THE VEHICLE SET ON FIRE (IF IT EVER WAS) THE NEXT THING I RECALL WAS BEING IN THE BACK OF SOMEONES H.T. SITTING ON THE TOP LEDGE, WHEN THE GERMANS OPENED UP. THEN I GO BLANK - I HAVE NO IDEA HOW I GOT OUT OF THE H.T. OR HOW LONG A PERIOD OF TIME ELAPSED TILL THE NEXT I REMEMBER I WAS RUNNING. JUST AS I GOT HIT. I RECALL GETTING UP & TRYING TO RUN AGAIN, NOT REALIZING MY LEG WAS GONE. I VAQUELY RECALL WE WERE NOT THAT FAR FROM THE CREST OF A HILL, I WONDER IF THAT WAS WHAT I WAS TRYING TO GET OVER, OR IF I WAS TRYING TO FIND COVER AWAY FROM THE VEHICLES. (ONE OF THE FIRST THINGS YOU LEARN IN AN AMD DIV. IS THAT WHEN YOU ARE RIDING ON ANY VEHICLE AND IT STARTS RECEIVING TANK FIRE, IS TO GET AWAY FROM IT AS THAT IS WHAT THEY ARE SHOOTING AT.) OR IT OCCURS TO ME THAT I JUST PANICED AND WAS AIMLESSLY RUNNING AWAY. ALTHOUGH

ME DOING THE SAME THING, OR WAS THIS MY IMAGINATION?
COULD YOU TELL ME WHAT YOU SAW & THOUGHT AT THE TIME? THEN
THERE WAS A SEQUENCE OF EVENTS THAT I CANNOT PUT IN ORDER.
THE FIRST THING I DID WAS MAKE A ~~FOUR~~ TORNICQUET OUT OF
MY BELT (NOT A NECK TIE) THEN GOT MY P-38 PISTOL, GERMAN
WATCH & FEW OTHER GERMAN SOUVENIRS & THREW THEM AS FAR AWAY
AS I COULD. A LARGE TREE WAS HIT & I MANAGED TO WIGGLE UNDER-
NEATH IT, PROTECTING MYSELF FROM ANY AIR BURSTS. WHEN
THE SHELLING STOPPED A NUMBER OF PEOPLE FROM OUR PLATOON
STARTED TO COME BY THAT HAD BEEN ON VEHICLES (PROBABLY
TANKS) FURTHER DOWN THE HILL. THERE WAS (VERY CONVENIENTLY,
A LARGE DITCH CLOSE BY THAT HAD SERVED AS COVER FOR THEM.
MOST LOOKED THE OTHER WAY WHEN THEY SAW ME, BUT FINALLY
ONE STOPPED I WILL ALWAYS REMEMBER HIM, HIS NAME WAS
"DELLAPIAZA" & WAS FROM N.Y. CITY. HE ASKED IF HE COULD HELP ME
I TOLD HIM NO & TO GET GOING WHILE HE STILL HAD A CHANCE. THEN
THERE WAS AN AIR FORCE LT. (HE WAS WEARING ADDRESS UNIFORM
PINKS ETC.) CAME OVER & PICKED ME UP & CARRIED ME OVER
BEHIND ONE OF THE H.T.'S. BUT THEN I WAS OUT IN THE OPEN
WHEN THE LINE OF TANKS PULLED UP TO THE EDGE OF THE WOODS,
AS THERE WAS ONE DIRECTLY IN FRONT OF ME. FORTUNATELY,
THEY MUST HAVE BEEN SHORT OF AMMO, AS THEY DID NOT SPRAY
THE WOODS WITH M.G. FIRE AS WE WOULD HAVE. OTHER EVENTS
I RECALL (BUT DID NOT TELL BARON IN THE INTERVIEWS) I DID NOT
RECALL TO MUCH RETURN FIRE, BY THE TIME THE TANKS & INF.
STARTED TO MOVE IN ON US THERE WAS NONE, UNTIL SOMEONE
GOT ON THE BACK OF ONE OF THE TANKS & STARTED SHOOTING
THE 50 CAL. M.G. AT THE GERMANS. WHEREUPON SEVERAL

IF HE DID NOT STOP IMMEDIATELY, WHICH HE FORTUNATELY DID.
THEN THERE WAS THIS. TO MY LEFT & FURTHER DOWN THE HILL I SAW
A BLACK SOLDIER WITH A LEG ALSO BLOWN OFF WHEN THE GER.
INF. CAME IN PICKING UP PRISONERS I ~~THOUGHT~~ THOUGHT I SAW THEM
SHOOT HIM IN THE HEAD. THIS MADE FOR MY WORST MOMENT AS
SOON AFTER A GERMAN WALKED UP TO ME WITH HIS RIFLE POINTED
AT MY HEAD & HAD HIS FINGER ON THE TRIGGER. I TURNED MY HEAD
& CLOSED MY EYES, THE NEXT THING (AFTER A FEW TENSE SECONDS)
I FELT HIM FUMBLING WITH SOMETHING AT MY SIDE LOOKED OVER
& HE WAS TRYING TO UNHOOK THE BAYONET FROM MY BELT. I TOOK OVER,
GOT IT OFF, HANDED IT TO HIM, HE PICKED UP HIS RIFLE WHICH WAS
LEANING AGAINST A TREE & WALKED OFF. I DON'T BELIEVE EITHER
OF US SAID A WORD. I DID NOT RELATE THE THING ABOUT THE BLACK
TO BARON IT SEEMED A LITTLE FANCIFUL. BUT THEN IN THE BOOK
HE TELLS ABOUT SOME OF THE S.S. CHECKING FOR BLACKS, I BEGAN
TO WONDER. THEN BAUM SAYS THERE WAS A BLACK AMPUTEE
IN THE BED NEXT TO ME, COULD THIS BE THE SAME ONE? DO YOU
RECALL ANY OF THIS? THE GUY NEXT TO ME DIED ONE NIGHT A
FEW DAYS BEFORE THE CAMP WAS LIBERATED.

THE MAMEO LIST SHOWS PEOPLE WHO MUST HAVE BEEN IN THE
CAMP HOSPITAL, NOTICE HOW MANY SOME HAVE BEEN PRISONERS,
ALSO SOME NAMES I PICKED UP IN VARIOUS WAYS. HOPE THEY
HELP YOU FIND SOME OLD FRIENDS. IF YOU RUN ACROSS ANY ONE
WHO WAS IN, OR KNOWS SOMEONE THAT WAS IN THE HOSP. WARD
WITH WATERS, PLEASE LET ME KNOW. I WILL TELL YOU MORE
ABOUT THAT SOME OTHER TIME AS I AM RUNNING OUT OF SPACE.

SINCERELY

Bob Fawcett