

Wartime West Sussex 1939 - 1945
 Leslie Speller's War case study

Source 7B - Transcript of diary kept Leslie Speller. It records a march that the POWs were forced to go on by their German captors, as the war was coming to an end.

This diary was provided by the YMCA. The date is actually 1944 but Leslie altered the numbers so that he could use it in 1945. The transcript is on the left and Leslie's comments made in 2006 on the right in italics.

<u>Diary Text</u>	<u>Notes</u>
28: B'fst by Giles as usual!!	January 28 th 1945
29: Gradually getting sorted out. No-one seems to know what is happening	
30: Collected Parcels from W. Vorlager. Store in a shambles	<i>W Vorlager – another compound in Stalag Luft 3</i>
31: Getting more organised now. On kitchen staff as Brew Fuhrer	
Februar	
1: Bags of food. At the moment we are exceedingly lucky.	February 1945
2: They say we are moving tomorrow, by train!! Hope the Fighter Types aren't active.	<i>Fighter Types – RAF. They were bombing the railways</i>
3:	
4:	
5:	
6: Moving off today. 1st Party left 5pm. Left Station 7.20	<i>from Stalag Luft III, Sagan, Germany</i>
7:	
8: Hof 6pm	
9: Still at Hof 11.30am. Left at 2pm. Bayreuth 4pm Kirchenlanbach 8pm	
10: Left Klanbach 12.30pm N of Nurnburg 8pm	
11: Arrived ex-Italian Camp 3pm All Americans there. Rather a	

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<p>shambles</p> <p>12: One long barrack. Not room to sit down. Shan't cope with these conditions very long</p> <p>13: Very unpleasant here. No fuel for cooking –</p> <p>14: stripped Air Raid Shelters & washrooms for wood, but it won't last long. No parcels yet, but still</p> <p>15: scraping along on what we brought. Can't seem to settle down</p> <p>16: yet. Everything irritates. Appell now at 7.30am almost last straw!! The SAO</p> <p>17: suggested to YMCA parole be given to March to Switzerland, as food will</p> <p>18: be very short soon. At least there's a hope to keep us going for a while. Air Raids on Nurnburg</p> <p>19: rather shaking. We've been out of things rather a long time,</p> <p>20: so we can't quite accustom ourselves to them. If only the RAF will keep away so that</p> <p>21: I can sleep. That is the only happy time now, asleep.</p> <p>22: Practically on Goon Rations now. Just a little Tea, Coffee</p> <p>23: and milk left. No fuel anyway so we can't cook properly. Just Klim Tin stoves & odd shavings.</p>	<p><i>Dad slept on the floor underneath a bunk as there were not enough beds to go round.</i></p> <p><i>Appell –roll call. They formed up in 3 rows, easier to count. The Germans walked behind counting. SAO – Senior Army Officer</i></p> <p><i>Only 2 cold taps for 300 to wash!</i></p> <p><i>Nurnburg (Nuremburg) was bombed heavily. A ring of flares was put round the town, but the camp did not get hit.</i></p> <p><i>Goon Rations - 5 slices hard brown bread, thin soup & potatoes</i></p> <p><i>Klim tins (powdered milk, milk spelt backwards) were commonly used by prisoners for making little stoves and stove pipes etc.</i></p>
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<p>24:</p> <p>25: Parcel issue from date of arrival to 26 Feb, one fifth. 4000 now arrived which will be</p> <p>26: an issue of 4/5 per man. Issue of 1 per 6 persons started. Quite a relief!</p> <p>27:</p> <p>28:</p> <p>März</p> <p>1: TURKEY in the War as from today! Potato Ration now cut: apart from Red X Food,</p> <p>2: we now get 2 thinnish soups (1 a Glop & 1 Dried Vegetable with maggots) & about 2 or 3 potatoes, 5 – 6 slices of bread per day.</p> <p>3:</p> <p>4:</p> <p>5: Bread Ration now cut to 1/7 per man = 4 slices!!! So we had a bash to celebrate</p> <p>6: Bread 5 days. Knacke brot 2 days. It's good, like Ryvita, but not filling!</p> <p>7:</p>	<p>March 1945</p>
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