

# Wartime West Sussex 1939 - 1945

## The Great Escape case study

Source G - Letters sent by Leslie Speller, to girlfriend Eileen Stone, during his first months as a POW in Stalag Luft III.

12<sup>th</sup> June 1942

Letter No 1

I have no P.O.W. No. yet.  
STAMMLAGER LUFT 3.  
DEUTSCHLAND.  
12<sup>th</sup> June.

My dear Eileen,

Well here I am well & truly ditched - aint it silly! We were properly Lacked about on the night of 3/4 May but I can't say much about that - I got 4 holes in me and burns on face and hands but everything is fine now, not even any scars. So far we've been treated quite well and have had enough to eat. My journey here was very interesting - I saw some lovely country - you can imagine how it felt to see grass and trees and flowers again after the desert. Only the fact that I was a prisoner spoilt it. However now I'm with my own types again it's not so bad. I'm afraid I shan't be able to write too often but maybe you can post the news with my people. Its too bad I didn't receive the pull over you knitted for me. I expect

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12<sup>th</sup> June 1942 continued...

it will be returned to you eventually along with  
the letters I shant get & which are piling up in  
Egypt for me. I hope you receive the stockings &  
"things" because I cant send you any more now.  
However after the War we can have a really  
good binge! at least Im saving money now if  
nothing else. You can get gen about writing to me  
from the Red Cross - naturally I want to hear  
as often as possible. So long & lots of love to  
you kid, Leslie X.

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August 16<sup>th</sup> 1942

16<sup>th</sup> Aug.  
My Dear Eileen,  
I last wrote to you ages ago, exactly a month in fact  
& since then I've had two letter cards from you 15<sup>th</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup>  
July & letter 17<sup>th</sup> July received 5<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup> Aug respectively  
which is quite good going. I'm sorry my efforts are so  
few & far between but we are limited to the number we  
can write. I'm glad you received the "things" quite safely,  
after knowing myself to making such purchases it would  
have been too bad if they had gone astray. You do  
seem to be having a busy time - I'm afraid the song  
"Men must work & women must weep." is no longer  
true - I certainly haven't been doing much lately; &  
by golly couldn't we use you in our garden here!  
Every room has a garden of sorts but I'm afraid ours  
isn't one of the better ones - quite the reverse I'm sorry  
to say. However we have a flower plant in a pot & I  
manage to tend that quite successfully. I'm getting to  
be something of a Classical Music fan - some of the

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gramophone records are very good. of course I like  
Dance Music still, but one can hardly fox-trot with  
a fellow prisoner so it isn't much use. I hope the  
letter you sent to Italy catches me up - I should like  
to see your comments on the Badia Adventure - on these  
Eastern women! Actually very overated. However I did  
enjoy my spell in the Middle East even though it was  
remarkably pure, considering. Heigho, happy days!  
Well so long kid for the present & lots of love  
Coley X