

Wartime West Sussex 1939 - 1945

The Great Escape case study

Source H - Letter from Leslie Speller to Eileen Stone
describing life in the camp

16th July 1942

P/O LAD Speller. P.O.W. No. Not yet allotted,
Stammplatz Luft 3, Deutschland. 16th July '42

My dear Eileen, Well kid there is no news for you
I'm afraid - each day here is practically the same. We
get up just before nine in time for the Roll call & then
the rest of the day is our own. There are eight of us in
my room, three S. Africans, two Canadians & three English,
one of the latter being on the same course as me in Scotland -
We also met three other chaps I knew in England, while Alan
Payne is in the Sergeants Compound but I'm not allowed to see
him. Ain't it a small world? We do our own cooking in
each room, so after my spell on the desert & my years in
the Scouts I'm getting to be quite a handy man - but don't
you imagine for one moment I'm going to do the cooking on
that dream boat of yours - oh no I shant have forgotten my
navigation I hope. I don't know when to expect from my first
letters from home but usually they only take about three or
four weeks - I believe you can obtain Air Mail Letter Cards
from the Post Office or Red Cross and they are much quicker.

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16th July 1942 continued...

than ordinary letters. We have plenty of books here so
I'm never at a loss for reading material so I'm taking the
opportunity of improving my mind - I'm certain it needs it
badly. There are even gramophone recitals of Classical Music
twice a week but I usually only go once a week. We can
play Soccer, Cricket & Rugby but somehow I miss the Sussex
spectators and haven't worked up any enthusiasm in that
direction as yet. I'm afraid this must be all for now,
so long & lots of love to you, Leslie x.
I'm afraid your big photo was left behind in my tent, but
luckily I had the Polyphotos in my pocket & was allowed to keep them!