

Later, when the American Colonel asked if we had seen any bad treatment of these girls as was reported and on being told of this one incident he sent for the man. What happened I do not know but rumour had it that he had been tried and shot.

In the station were a number of trucks full of war material but they could not be moved as the line had been damaged.

We wanted to walk up towards some trees on the side of a hill but the Germans told us not to go near the place as there were a number of young Rumanians camped there and it was dangerous. They were fanatic Nazis.

The transit camp we were taken to was an old R.A.F. P.O.W. camp. Here, we were well fed, for the Americans had heaps of food. One thing I well remember was the large tins of tomato juice - of which we made short work.

The American rations to each man were done up in three packets - breakfast, lunch and supper and contained excellent food. We were each given a couple of days rations and in opening one tin I cut my hand slightly and as it would not stop bleeding I went over to the American Field hospital which consisted of a large number of tents covering about an acre. Their first-aid man insisted on bandaging my hand with yards and yards of bandages. As a matter of interest the Germans were very short of bandages and used a lot of paper ones.

We went for walks here but were warned not to go into the woods as there were a number of young 'were wolves' - fanatic young Germans of 16 to 18 years who had shot two Canadians.

We were the first South African P.O.Ws released on the 28th March 1945 and, as I will relate, I was one of a few who were back home by the end of April, before the war in Europe was over and was able to take part in the East London victory march.

Lorna had been so optimistic that the last two letters I had from her had been addressed care of the Union Castle Co London to await my early arrival. These had been kindly typed by the Co. and forwarded to me as they had my P.O.W. address.

After four days we received the very good news that we were to be flown to England the next day.

While in this transit camp our Brigadier Hayton came to me and said there was a native who had spent all his P.O.W. life with British Troops. They told me that Blackie could not talk their language and they could not his. Well, I went along and saw this old boy who had found himself a very fine sheepskin coat etc. He was from the Bechuanaland Protectorate and when I spoke to him in his own language I thought he was going to kiss me. Well Hayton said "Geoff he is yours, look after him", so he followed me about and later boarded the plane with Dan Paterson and myself and later joined us for tea which had been kindly provided by a welcoming committee on the Drome at Oxford to which we had been flown.

The two Americans in whose plane we were flown, on seeing my wings, very kindly invited me to take the co-pilot's seat as all the others were seated on the floor of the plane (all seating had been taken out to give more room). When approaching the English Channel, the pilot handed over to me the flying of the machine until we approached Oxford when he took over to land. I must say it gave me a thrill and it was a very fine gesture.

As we disembarked from the plane we were greeted by three ladies who they were I do not know - but at a guess they were probably titled or of the gentry. We were shown to a large tent where tea and cakes were being served and at the table with Dan and I sat our Moschwans, full of smiles.

The whole organization from the time we were released to our arrival at Oxford was excellent.

After tea we were driven to a British transit camp where everything was laid on, even a paymaster, though it was after ten at night, who asked me how much I wanted. I drew twenty pounds which would do me for a few days until we were taken to our transit camp at Bletchley - and what a camp