

Our maps were kept up to date and on them we could locate the various scenes of fighting but on them were marked only the news from the German papers.

Our fine old gentleman General Fortune had a slight stroke one evening after playing tennequoits and had to be put into our little hospital until a few days later he was moved to the Hospital in Frankfort (that is how we spell it in South Africa). I remember his little Scottish batman remarking: "Fancy that old man playing that strenuous game. He, at his age, should know better".

Mentioning hospital, I think it rather interesting about the following: One of our chaps had a hernia operation in a German hospital but, as after a few weeks he seemed to be going downhill. The Germans said they thought he would be better off in our small hospital with his friend around him. Dr Theron said he did not think he would recover. Believe it or not, a few days later a small quantity of Penicillin arrived from Geneva. No one had ever handled the stuff in our camp as it was a new discovery. Anyway, Theron gave the man injections as per direction and do you know that, within a week, he was a different man and eventually recovered. The Germans were most interested and their doctors came to have a look at our man.

One thing we suffered from was athletes foot, and we could not get rid of this terrible itch of the feet. They used Gention Violet for a while and that did help. I remember poor old Colonel Courage, of Courage ales, had it and even on his face. The poor chap had a beard and face painted violet. He said to me one day, he had been a prisoner in the first war too. "Geoff, what a disappointment to have to go home like this". I felt sorry for him.

The Germans were gradually driven back and later when they were being driven almost onto their border, they made a last desperate effort to hamper our forward advance. They made a counterattack in the Ardennes in a desperate effort to retake the port of Antwerp through which all our supplies were now being sent to the front line troops. However, after some heavy fighting they were driven back.

The next obstacle was the Rhine. The crossing of this was going to be a difficult task as the enemy were destroying all bridges across the river. Then we got the B.B.C. news that the Namigen bridge had been captured intact.

We now had high hopes of an early release as not only could we hear the sound of heavy guns but at night we could see the flashes. It seemed just over the rise but was actually thirty miles or so away.

The Germans now decided that it was time we moved further inland and so the assistant Camp Commandant with the Commandant went to recce a camp where we could be sent. The assistant, a very decent chap, returned and said we were to move the next day. However, next day he advised us that the transport had been damaged. One of our chaps, Brigadier Clifton, decided that he was going to make a break that night. Before we were herded into the building he was cunningly hidden so that when the dogs when they went round did not spot him, pepper again. That evening when the Germans were busy counting us in the building it left Clifton a chance and he slipped through the wire, the guards were all inside and he joined our forces a few days later.

Before Clifton made a move he had to wait for our signal, the singing of Brahms Contralsto or some such work by about a dozen or so of our loudest singers. He would then know that the guards had all come into the building to count us before we moved off into the night. The fun was now to start. They counted over and over and finally decided they were one short and that the missing officer was Brig. Clifton. The nasty little security who had been left in charge nearly threw a fit. 'A General had escaped and he would probably be shot, or worse, sent to the Eastern Front. He was really scared but there was nothing we could do or rather would do about it. Nice work George Clifton. There was not much we could take with us as we had no suitcases and John McCartney and I bundled as we could into a sheet and this we carried between us. In the schloss we left all our goods and chattels, Books, Painting, Tapestry, of this I had done quite a lot.

We were marched /