

JOURNAL OF A PRISONER OF WAR IN WORLD WAR 2



ISRAEL JOSSELOWITZ

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Introduction

Israel Josselowitz, known as Issie, was born in 26 June 1911 in Johannesburg. His mother died giving birth to him shortly after they arrived in South Africa. After her death his father, a travelling smous, had nothing further to do with the family. Issie was fortunate to be adopted by the Grevler family in Doornfontein, Johannesburg, while all his sisters went to the Arcadia orphanage. When he had his Barmitzvah he was told about his sisters and he chose to go and live with his married sister, Dora Cohen in Krugersdorp. He resumed his birth name of Josselowitz.

He owned and ran the Tip-Top Bazaar in Roodepoort, South Africa and married Reva Miller on 12 March 1939. He enlisted in the army in May 1940, rising to the rank of sergeant and was serving with the 2nd South African Division in Tobruk, Libya when, along with nearly 11,000 other South Africans, he was captured in June 1942 and was a prisoner of War first under the Italians in Libya and Italy and following the fall of Mussolini, in Germany.

After the War Issie shortened the family name to Joss and ran a dry-cleaning business, the Golden Arrow. Years later burglaries put paid to the business, and it was forced to close. Issie then worked at Crystal Delicatessen and Bakery in Doornfontein, Johannesburg as a despatch manager. Issie left Crystal in November 1966 and then worked at Robot Paint and Hardware in Booyens, Johannesburg. In his seventies he worked at Station Garage and continued to work there despite receiving third degree burns in a house fire in 1986. Issie passed away in Johannesburg on 23 May 1994 age 83. For additional information see the Josselowitz family story on the 'People' page of the Roodepoort community <https://chol.website/communities/roodepoort/people.htm>.

This handwritten journal recounts his experiences as a prisoner of war under the Italians from June 1942 until July 1943 when the Italian Prisoner of War camp he was in was taken over by the Germans following the death of Mussolini. The journal ends with a poem, "longing", referring to his wife Reva, who he had married three years earlier.

The journal is in the possession of Issie's daughter, Jenny Evans, who also supplied her father's birth, death and naturalization certificates. It was transcribed by Dr Jeremy Hodes in August 2024. Issie's Prisoner of War questionnaire has been supplied by Dr Naomi Rapaport.

POW Journal of Israel Josselowitz

Tobruk

I was awoken in the morning by the noise of the ack-ack and enemy planes and mortar bombs, with shells whistling over the dugout; a most terrible sensation. Later on was the noise of tanks firing and guns going full blast.

Enemy planes were dropping bombs and buildings were on fire. I don't know what is happening. The phone is out of order so there are no messages whatsoever. Everything is supposed to be under control. I feel really sorry for the few tanks as they seem to be going through hell. Our dugout roof almost caved in from consequences of the dropping bombs. My thoughts are of those at home and wondering what they would say if they could see what is happening.

In the afternoon we are told to take as many natives as possible on trucks and go towards the coast. We only had a chance to grab our greatcoats, all other stuff was left behind in the dugout. We were told that we would come back later. We went to a place on the Derna Road. The congestion was really terrible, but eventually we all got together. There were enemy planes overhead all the time.

Later we were told to move towards the coast on the road there. We had to take cover and it was amazing how we crowded into the smallest hollow; not that it would have afforded much protection. Lucky for us, the bombs did not fall too close but things did not feel too pleasant. We arrived at the coast. It was very dark and we were hungry and miserable and wondering what is going to happen next. I met Munro and got a bit of food later and went to sleep in the open. I was dog tired and fell to sleep almost at once.

It is really amazing how one gets used to these things so soon. I thought only of the dear ones at home and what they will be thinking of when they hear what has been happening.

The following day there were smoke screens all over and gunfire. I had a mouthful of food but it seemed tasteless. I went to the kitchen of the unit at the place we were and got a drop of hot coffee and also took a few tins of bully beef.

Then we were told to burn the trucks etc., and so we knew that it was all over for us. So, with mixed feelings we fired the trucks and others were run off the cliff into the sea. The smoke and burning vehicles and also those that were run into the sea is really a sight that will never be forgotten.

The day was very hot. We found a few sheets of iron and made a roof to keep the sun off while we waited to be rounded up. Escape was nigh impossible as there was quite a big drop to the sea and also no boats. We thought of all sorts of means of trying to get away but all seemed impracticable, as enemy planes were patrolling the sea and also their U-Boats. Some fellows attempted to get away by going along the coast but I doubt if they managed it as Jerry (Germans) seemed to be all over the place, lining up the fellows and taking them away.

Our time soon came. We were herded into a truck and taken to Tobruk from where we were marched to the harbour, and on the way some fellows were relieved of their watches, wallets and their trinkets. I tore up all my snaps except three which I took with me. At the harbour I

had a bit of a wash and some bully beef to eat but I felt really down in the dumps wandering what was next.

In the meantime, prisoners were being brought in by the hundreds. I got some water to drink after waiting for almost the whole day. Enemy traffic was going up the road in a never-ending stream nose to tail and very many of the vehicles were our own. Towards midnight we were put into groups of hundreds and marched a few miles to a pen. The few miles seemed very, very far. Eventually we got to the pen and just lay down where we could find a place to squeeze in and tried to get to sleep but had very little, as the crush was really terrible.

After lying about in the hot sun for most of the day we were given some bully beef and biscuits – very little of it too, and also a little water. We put up blankets on pieces of wood and wire to make a little shade to keep the sun off. A few days later we were told to stand by as we were being moved further up.

We were given two Italian biscuits and one tin of Italian bully beef for the trip, and what a trip it was too! There were fifty of us in a closed truck and was it hot! I then realised that it was my birthday and thought what a way to spend it. Towards evening we got to Tamimi, a place which seems to have been a salt lake or something. The smell of the place wasn't very pleasant.

We found a place where to sleep, put over one blanket, which we had picked up, for a base, and used our greatcoats to cover ourselves with. We collected a few bits of twig and grass and made a fire and boiled up some water and made some tea, after which we went to sleep. The following morning I got up and had a bit of a wash with some water out of our bottle, then made something to eat which consisted of crushed biscuit, water and some bully beef heated together in a tin. Still it was something to fill the empty space in our tummies.

Later we were given some fresh water but it was not enough so we got some from a river, and what water it was too! The camels had a good time in it, and what a terrible smell and taste it had too. Words cannot express the flavour or smell of the water. We were then put into trucks just like sheep with hardly any standing room.

On our way to Benghazi we climbed all sorts of steep hills and many a time thought that we would go over the side of the trucks or that the truck would tip over. However the driver seemed to be able to negotiate all right as we got to a part of our destination without any mishap apart from a few chaps having loose tummies and making quite a smell. We were put into a pen again for another day, but managed to have a wash in the sea which although very short was very welcome. From there we were taken on our way to Benghazi, which place we eventually reached about two o'clock in the morning.

There were fellows lying all about the place and the stench was awful, as there were no latrines but only holes in the ground and plenty of "dysentery". Still we managed to find a place where to lie down, and had a little sleep, my thoughts being at home and what my folks were thinking of. It was hardly possible to believe that one was a P.O.W. now.

Next morning we were herded into groups of fifty and given a general bivvy tent and six of us had to sleep in one of them, their size being about four foot six inches by six feet and about three feet high. Still, it was a cover over our heads. Then we got a ration of bread, five men to four loaves, the bread weighing about ten ounces per loaf. So imagine how well we

were being fed (I don't think). All this time I hadn't had a hot meal. Anyway we got together and turned a steel helmet into a pot and put bread, Italian bully beef and water in it and cooked it up and so made a meal. We also boiled up some water and put in a bit of tea that we had brought with us from Tobruk. The meal we had was to be our usual for quite a while, only instead of tea we got some ersatz Italian coffee, which at times we also did not get. We burnt the crust of the bread and made that do as coffee.

After a day or two the Ites (Italians) decided to count us again so we were herded out of the gate like sheep with dozens of guards and counted and recounted and eventually they must have got so tired themselves that they let us back into the pen. Water was rationed to each man, one pint for the whole day. Anyway we just had to put up with it all as we had no other alternative or unless we wanted to get shot as the Ites loved pointing their rifle at one for the slightest thing. I suppose they thought that, having had the few successes they did, it must have gone to their heads. After a few weeks they decided to shift us to the next pen. So the usual shuffle, herding and searching started. Then we went to the next pen. There I saw Barney Greenberg, who said he was leaving for Italy at any time, which he incidentally did do within a few weeks.

We still had no hot meals and the rations were still the same. Our mugs were tin with a wire handle, which when not in use as a pot or mug, was also used for a bath. I became quite an adept at having a bath in a thimble of water. The weather was very hot and we were quite thankful for that as quite a few of us had very little in the way of clothing. The cigarette issue we got was about three per day when we were lucky or when they had it. One evening some of our planes came over on a raid and the Ites started firing at them and got a hit on one of the planes. The shouting and cheering were great but the Ites put an end to that by threatening to stop our wonderful issue of rations. Gus Ackerman, Terry and myself had been together all this time and got on quite well.

The pen I am referring to is the enclosure we were in. It is bare hard ground, rocky in places and dammed dirty. It has barbed wire mostly right round the area. The three strands are very close together.

Later on the rainy season started and then a little more worries came. The place where we were, being in a hollow, the water came into the tents. So we had to get busy at all hours of the day or night trying to keep it out or trying to get dry. Then we got showers which were very welcome. We stand, sit or loll in a queue for about an hour and a half to two hours for a two-minute shower. We became quite expert at soaping and washing ourselves in the allotted space of time.

The showers were actually a mobile one, a truck whose sides opened up a canvas flap let down the sides to make a wall and sixteen showers in it, eight on each side. The showers of course were cold water as they did not use the heating apparatus. We all used to wait till we saw the truck with the water tank for the shower coming then make a dive for the queue as each tank contained enough water to last for about three quarters of an hour. The water was pumped into the pipes by means of a small motor which also conked out every so often. In the meantime, the hygiene squad had got busy and had made vast improvements as far as the sanitary part of the place was concerned, and also with the very few implements etc., supplied by the Ites.

We all used to do a fatigue every so many days to dig trenches for the refuse so that the flies etc., could be kept under control. The doctors and staff also had a very hard time with the very limited medical supplies and bandages at their disposal. They did a really wonderful job of work and real hard work at that, because somehow or other being underfed and undernourished and short of so many vitamins the fellows became weaker and the slightest scratch or cut became septic and all types of sores broke out. But the medics did their best and a good job it was

The raids of our planes over Benghazi were taking place more often lately and there was quite a lot of high-level bombing. On one raid they got a direct hit on the harbour and also on an ammunition ship. From where we were we could see the whole outline of the outskirts of Benghazi and were also in view of the harbour.

When the ship was struck, all we saw at first was a huge billow of greyish black smoke, and as the first lot of smoke drifted away a red glow came in its place and as the weather grew darker so this flame became lighter and then the ammo started to go off. Then we heard plenty of bangs and one of the most beautiful of firework displays as the stuff started to explode. There were sparks of practically every colour imaginable and this kept on for the whole night. I don't think I will ever forget that sight.

We were very lucky that we didn't have many casualties from the falling ack ack shrapnel as there were A/A guns all round us and we had no protection whatsoever.

Anyway we did not mind it in the least because our planes were getting good results. The way the Ites ducked for cover was really great fun; they could never get to their underground shelter quick enough.

There seemed to be quite a lot of Egyptian money in the camp and the crown and anchor kings were doing very well indeed. The boys were gambling with money, watches, rings, anything that had any value. A packet of fifty Springbok cigarettes was bought for £7.10.0 each. C to C for £5.10. The few smokes that were to be had were sold for about 2/- per time when obtainable.

I sold my signet ring for two tins of jam and then converted one of the tins into cash for 30/- which bought me 25 smokes. The approximate weight of the jam was half a pound per tin and one could not really class it as a jam. I really could not say what it consisted of although it was supposed to be apple.

One day we had a real heavy storm. It rained buckets full and the net result was that we were absolutely washed out and sopping wet and so we had to find a new spot for the tent.

There were a few fellows with musical instruments and they used to get up some entertainments for us and some of them were really good. There was also a lot of music and songs composed by some of them and I am sure that one day when they will be published in civvy street they will be real big hits. These little shows did a lot towards making us forget where we were for a while, but they also brought back very many memories of home.

There was also an arts and crafts exhibition got up. One would be amazed at the amount of wonderful talent that was there, especially as there were no such things as tools.

The articles made with pen knives and pieces of wire were really excellent. There were all types of engravings done on pipes with knives or razor blades, also aluminium badges engraved with a nail; really perfect work and done by fellows who have never done that type of work before. There were also many pencil drawings and coloured sketches, many of them depicting various incidences that took place, such as the view we had of the ammo ship being hit. Also "The rains came" and the dejected look on the faces of the washed-out lot. Cigarette holders that looked as if they were factory made but were done out of pieces of wood used for the fires in the kitchen.

We were by now getting one hot meal per day consisting of rice or macaroni and lentils with a little tomato paste in it. The ration was about a one-pint mug full for the day. At least it was hot and filled the tummy. It is really amazing how, when fellows are hungry, they speak of the types of food that they disliked and how they would gladly eat it if it was put before them.

When we got the hot meals and they were thick we used to keep some over to make pies. The pies were made in this manner. We crumbled the bread and daubed it with water and then rolled it into a dough. We put it in a tin and then put the Italian bully beef and hot meal in it and covered it with some more bread dough and then put it in an oven that was made of a petrol tin covered with sand and a fire underneath.

Another type of pie was where the inside of the bread was taken out and cut up. Bully beef and bread were then put into the hollow and that was toasted over the fire. What we didn't do to try and get some variety into our meals although it was only bread and bully beef. One time we got a ration of English biscuits instead of the bread and with the biscuits we soaked them and cooked them up and so made what we called porridge. I met Harry Bornstein in the pen and he told me that he had heard Jack was drowned while being taken to Italy. He was on the torpedoed ship.

After a month or two fellows started trading with the Ite guards who wanted Egyptian money, woollen clothing, leather belts etc., for which they paid in cigarettes, bread or jams. These in turn were retailed to the other fellows at the most exorbitant prices; for instance, ½lb tin of jam 30/-, cigarettes 20/- for ten, bread 20/- for a loaf of about twelve ounces, chocolate weighing 3½ ounces for 10/- and five small onions for 5/-. I also saw an egg sold for 9/-. Later on cigarettes became more plentiful and the price gradually dropped until one could get 160 cigarettes for a pound, but by that time there were very few fellows that had any money left.

Cigarettes seem to play a very big part in the finance of the Prisoner of War world as somehow one could buy anything for smokes. One of the pens alongside ours were told that they were going to Italy the following day and they would get plenty of clothing on the other side. Believing this they started bartering most of their clothing for smokes. Pullovers went for fifteen to twenty smokes, shorts from five smokes upwards, toothpaste about twenty smokes, also razors and any concealable items. The price of smokes at that time was thirty-five for 20/-.

Larry and myself went into the wood business after Gus Ackerman left us. We would get a fellow from one pen to get some wood from the South African natives in the pen alongside his for cigarettes. We would then remake the bundles and sell the wood at a profit of two

cigarettes in turn. The reason we got the wood from the natives was because they went out on fatigues for the Ites and so were able to get plenty of wood.

We made quite a fair amount of trading profit for the few days we were in the business. It did help us to buy a letter card each to send home. I don't know whether it ever reached its destination, but it made one feel slightly more contented having written the first few lines to our folks at home after about three and a half months of captivity and not knowing whether our folks knew whether we were prisoners of war, alive or dead.

Some fellow decided to attempt an escape but was caught while crawling through the barbed wire and was shot on the spot. It was a horrible sight. There were quite a few other ways in which some tried to escape but were caught and luckily for them not shot.

The Ites were very arrogant at that time as they were boasting of their forces being about to enter Alexandria which must have been one of the reasons for them wanting Egyptian money.

One very interesting thing happened when a combined raid took place somewhere near Benghazi and some of our planes were overhead keeping the Ites very busy with the Anti-aircraft guns and searchlights whilst the crews did their work. One of our planes came overhead at a very low altitude. I don't think the Ites were aware of its identity for quite a while but woke up with a shock when he dropped something very close to one of their guns.

Our planes started to come over quite often on daylight raids and I don't think they were very far off their targets as we saw many a big dust cloud where they got direct hits and more than a ship got the same. About midday while sitting in our bivouac tents we heard quite a rumble and ran out to see what it was as we didn't hear any of the anti-aircraft guns going off, but what we did see was a few of our planes going back after doing their job and the Ites scrambling like mad up the hill towards their gun posts. It was a matter of closing the stable after the cattle were gone.

Another remarkable thing about Benghazi was that we didn't get any salt for quite a long time and yet the camp was right on the edge of a salt lake. After agitating for a long while, we eventually got some.

Every time some new prisoner came into the camp the first thing was to find out how our forces were making out as we got no news whatsoever and imagine our delight when we heard we had started to move forward once again and our hopes and wishes were for release by our armies.

In the meantime the Ites had shifted us to another camp about two miles away. This was supposed to be the real transit camp. We had been in the other almost four months. Somehow or other news started to come into the camp of the advance of our troops which brought our morale up quite a lot. Then one morning the Ites called out 500 names and told us we were leaving for Italy. They moved us to another pen, gave us rations for the day and left us in there without any cover over our heads from the fierce sun.

Our Airforce came over and did quite a lot of damage in the harbour and set an oil ship on fire so they were unable to move us that day. They then put us back into another pen where we were for quite a few weeks.

By this time it wasn't only fleas that were troubling us but lice as well. We used to put our clothing through the disinfectant but when they came out there seemed to be very many more animals. We did our best to kill them but the more we killed the more we found. They needed to give us a hot shower but the shower lorry must have got such a shock that it caught alight so there was no hot shower as they had to use the water to put the fire out. The Royal Airforce came over again and did some more damage. They set an oil tanker on fire and this one burned beautifully for about five days.

The Ites told us we were moving out the following day. So there was packing of our goods and chattels which were very few.

That evening while we were lying in our tents some fellow was saying goodbye to a friend of his in the opposite pen. They were talking to one another across the wire. We heard him saying cheerio and the next thing there was a shot fired. A few seconds later someone tripped over the ropes of our tent which was about thirty yards from the fence. Then someone said help me carry him to the medical tent as he has been shot in the knee. This fellow having fallen on our side of the tent, I got up to put my hand under his neck to lift him up. Imagine my feeling when I felt my hand get wet with some warm liquid. The poor fellow had been shot through the neck, not the knee and a minute later he died. The Ites excuse was that he attempted to climb over the wire, but that was not true. But the fact remains an innocent helpless starved man was shot in a most cold blooded and callous way.

The following morning we were marched about five miles to the harbour and what a march it was, being underfed, weak and sick. We just about managed it. When we got to the harbour we were put on board a cargo boat – Santa Maria by name. A little distance away was the oil tanker that had been hit four or five days ago and which was still burning brightly. Eventually they started unloading the hold and then put the 500 of us down. It was dark, cold and miserable and the steel plates were damn cold and the air was musty. So what could we do? They gave us a few lifebelts to wear but we used them as pillows. The Ites said it would take us three days to get to our destination and the rations they gave us was for three days. Towards evening we steamed out. Some of us were up on deck to relieve ourselves as we left and the sight of the burning ship as we passed was a real good sight. Feelings amongst ourselves must have been very mixed as one of the sailors told us our troops had retaken Tobruk. They had taken us away, just as our chances of being released were almost true.

The trip instead of taking three days took eight days. The rations we got was one biscuit and half a tin of bully beef for twenty-four hours. This was later reduced to one biscuit only. Apparently our navy was somewhere about so the Ites had to divert their course and went via the Greek coast. But we were feeling hungry and miserable and didn't give a damn what would happen. We did have a bit of luck as they did let us go up on the deck for a while to get a bit of fresh air. The ship stopped at quite a few ports on the Greek coast to try and get some rations for us. I saw Athens, Piraeus, Patras where they managed to get a few cases of biscuits and while taking them on board they dropped most of the cases into the sea. So we got some salt water soaked biscuit for our ration. It is really amazing the strength one has in going through hell and starvation.

We also went through the Corinth Canal and it is a really wonderful bit of work. On the eighth day we got to Taranto, Italy. That morning our ration was four biscuits per ten men. There we were promised a hot shower and a hot meal. We got the hot shower, had all our hair

shorn off, also beards and moustaches taken off. After that they put us through the showers and our clothes in the disinfector for delousing. After about three hours we were marched to the trucks; about fifty men to a cattle truck and a promise of food later. Towards evening the train moved off. We were cold and miserable. No warm clothes, no socks and no food. We then got to Bari after two nights and a day. We were then herded out of the trucks and marched for miles.

How we did it I do not know but it was in the early hours of the morning that we got to the camp. We were cold and miserable. They gave us some hot coffee that morning, about a small tea cup full. We were kept there until about ten o' clock, then the search started. They took away our blankets, and practically anything that we had – pocket knives etc. They then gave us a clay bowl and a cup for our food and gave us a blanket, a Red Cross one, and put us in tents. There were about twenty-five men to a tent with straw on the ground for a mattress.

The soup came up and that was pumpkin water with a bit of cabbage thrown in and now and again some macaroni. I am sure the pigs at home got better swill. Still we were pleased to get it. Twice a week we got a piece of meat the size of a match box. The cheese we got was about the same size and the thickness about $\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch so we were doing well on the whole. We had no smokes so we smoked chestnut leaves and were they terrible! Still it was something.

The bread we got was very small, about seven ounces. Some of the old hands told us about red Cross parcels and their contents and smokes as well. Did our mouths water? But there were no parcels in the camp so we went without them.

Some of the fellows got hold of some cabbage leaves and stalks because when they had to throw some rubbish away, they passed some rabbit hutches. And were the leaves good. We ate them with relish, the first green stuff we had in five months. The rain came down like hell one night and the wind blew for all it was worth and the tent was half blown away and we were soaked to the skin - blankets and all. Being in the night and dark we could do nothing but huddle up against one another and try and keep warm and just wish for daylight to come.

When daylight did come, we did our best to straighten things out and also sent a complaint into the Ites, and after a few days they put us in bungalows. We got beds for the first time and also straw paillasses and after about seventeen days we got six cigarettes – British Red Cross ones and were they good. Later we got some Italian smokes as well. Then there was another move. We were marched to the station, herded into trucks and off to a permanent camp. Gravina is the name of it. We got there late at night and had to stand in the cold until we were searched again then put into groups and sent to different sectors and here Terry and I parted. He was sent to sector five and I to sector 3.

We were put into bungalows. There were no beds. We were given palliasses and had to sleep on the concrete floor. Not too good at all. Still we could take it.

Some of the boys who were there from before gave us English smokes and some gave us tea with milk - the first we had tasted for very many months. They also told us about Red Cross parcels which we would get in due course. I will say the old hands treated us very nice indeed.

The following day we got an issue of parcels. One between seven of us. The excitement was great and we also got twenty-five cigarettes per man. When it came to dividing the parcel, our

mouths were watering and we were very eager to taste the food. We each got a taste of salmon, sardines, bully beef, a butter meat roll, about two biscuits, some milk, coffee or tea. With seven men sharing the stuff didn't go very far but was it good. Eventually four of us made up a group and so the stuff went further and later one man took the parcel at a time, so we got settled and it worked out quite well. The four in our group were two Brailsfords, Le Roux and myself.

The month we got to Gravina was December 1942 and the boys were already speaking about Xmas parcels. Still we were only too pleased to be getting parcels because to taste the food after five months was really something worthwhile. For brews we got small tins with wire handles and these were put over the fires at the kitchen when the Italian skilly had been taken off. For this we also had to queue up and wait our turn. We termed this the small tin derby. After the morning check we would be waiting with our cans and dixies and the moment the bugle blew check over, then there was one big rush for the kitchen to get the brew going.

On muddy days, which were plentiful, we had many a good laugh as one would see fellows sliding and slipping in all directions trying to be first in the queue.

Some of the older hands had stoves they called blowers. They were a bellows type of affair. Embers were put in the tool box and as they pumped the bellows it kept the embers glowing and so the brew went on. But the main question was the obtaining of wood etc., as the empty cardboard container of the parcel made our brew.

The parcels were of two kinds, English and Canadian and there was quite a variety of items. Some of them also contained oats, egg powder, custard, Yorkshire pudding, apple or fruit pudding. There were all sorts of cakes and blancmanges made with Canadian biscuits.

For the early part of my stay in camp 65 I was feeling really miserable and in a perpetual state of hunger. The Ites had not given us much in the way of clothing and although they had quite a lot of Red Cross stuff but at the same time there was an element of doubt as to who was responsible for our issue – the people in charge or the Ites.

What I got was one pair of Italian underpants and one shirt. I had one pair of shorts and a pullover, no boots or socks etc. I managed to get hold of a pair of second hand takkies (shoes).

The weather was starting to get cold so I wasn't feeling too pleased with myself. The water position was not too good. It would come on now and then for about fifteen minutes to half an hour and during that time if you were lucky enough to get your bottle filled up and to have a wash then you were a good man. It was almost impossible to do, although we managed it now and again.

The lice position was really very bad. It seemed impossible to get rid of them. It was itch, scratch and off with your shirt etc., and start on killing them off, have a bit of peace for about ten minutes and then the same thing all over again. It seemed as if we would never get rid of the damned pests. No matter where one looked the bloody things were there in their thousands. I am really amazed that they did not carry us away. We only had cold water with which to wash our clothing and with the nail brush we were able to borrow we managed to keep them down to a minimum.

There was a canteen in the camp as well for which we part paid twenty Lira per fortnight. We were able to purchase figs and onions, whichever was in the canteen. The rush that took place every time the cry came 'figs in the canteen', I am sure had nothing on the Diamond Field rush that took place in the Union and the price was between eighteen to twenty Lira per kilogram – so you see how far ones pay went. At times the quality was fair but at other times worse than awful. Onions were definitely the best buy of the lot. They cost between four and five Lira per kilogram and went about five or six medium ones to that weight, which is supposed to be 2½ lbs.

These onions were definitely worth their weight in gold as they helped us out with many a meal; fried onions, boiled onions and raw onions and did we enjoy them? I will say that we did as it was one of the few vegetables that we were able to get fresh.

It was nearing Xmas time and the talk turned to Xmas parcels, what the contents were, what we were going to have and different menus. But it all depended on what kind of parcel we would get seeing as there weren't enough Xmas parcels to go round. Anyway the issue was two Xmas (one Canadian and one Indian) parcels between four men and 100 cigarettes per man. Being so hungry and the first month of our receiving parcels, most of the fellows just ate until they were sick, especially as we were not used to eating plenty of food of the grade and quality in the parcels.

Another thing that happened was smoke eyes. Quite a few of us could not see anything - our eyes were smoking and burning. I have never before experienced such a thing. It was due to the heat of the fires and the cold air that we were subjected to while making our brews and warming up our food.

But with all that we were very well satisfied with our Xmas fare and thanked God and the Red Cross for their wonderful work that they are doing and I am sure that every prisoner of war blesses them every time he has a meal. Because I am sure that without the Red Cross parcel many of us would have been under ground for good.

Prisoner of war life has been a wonderful school for many of us and we have seen the best and the worst of our fellow men and one would be really amazed at the way some of us have turned out. Fellows that previously seemed to me to have been fine fellows showed their true colours and what a difference there was. Still we live and learn.

Anyway after Xmas our group of four split up and Janie Le Roux and myself worked together with our parcels and I was not sorry about my choice as he really proved himself to be a staunch friend. I am sure one that I will never forget. I was not in very pleasant spirits as some mail had started coming through and I was always expecting to get some but seemed to slip up every time.

Eventually on a real, wet, cold and miserable day I got my first letter. I was really very delighted and pleased especially as I now knew that my folks at home knew that I was alive and well and am sure relieved from a lot of worries.

Later on Janie and myself decided to make a blower for ourselves (a blower incidentally is a small stove forced draught, not unlike a blacksmith's forge). So we had a look around and scrounged some small cocoa tins etc., and got stuck into making one. The very first one was not too successful so I tried again and the second one worked alright. These blowers used

very little fuel. The tools we had were a pen knife, a stone and a pair of scissors. The job wasn't too good looking but that didn't worry us, as long as we were able to make our brew.

After a few days I decided to improve on my model and did so. Then someone asked me to sell them my old one for some smokes and I did so and at the same time got the idea of making them and selling them to the boys in the other bungalows. So I put Janie on the job of getting tins and wire etc., and I did the assembling. Well we got on famously and sold the first one and to our surprise the fellow was so pleased that he brought down his mate to ask us to make him one. We were getting between forty and fifty smokes per blower – it all depended on the price of smokes.

The business flourished and we were averaging a blower per day and at the same time became quite proficient at the manufacture of them. So now we had plenty of smokes and also traded the smokes for extra foodstuffs and bread and thus were able to have some good meals. Now and again someone would want a tin box which we also made. The work wasn't of a wonderful standard, but was quite well made considering the tools at our disposal.

The wood question was quite serious, but after getting together, Fanie and myself managed very well, especially as we pinched a log or two from the cook house. Our slogan was the brew must go on, and so it did.

Then the Ites started sending out working parties. Fanie was put on one of them so I had to do the blower manufacturing on my own. I managed alright and had no worries as to selling them.

Then we were shifted to Sector 5. There I was put in the same bay as Terry R. B and Barney Greenberg was also in the same sector. After I settled down there I started on my blowers again and Terry was my salesman and he sold them quicker than I could make them. With the Lira on smokes that I made I went to the market and bought foodstuffs, bread etc., and was never short of a good meal and can assure you that it was very welcome as the Ites didn't give us very much in the way of food.

Then on 26th June 1943 we were shifted further north to Camp 52. Here I shared a parcel with Barney Greenberg. We got on quite well together. I also met Gus Ackerman there and we were very friendly with one another. At this camp I didn't make any blowers as they all seemed to have them. We had quite a few Lire between us that we had brought up from Camp 65 as we had done quite a bit of trading there and we also received pay of twenty Liras per fortnight and so were able to buy fruit, tomatoes, onions etc., from the canteen.

I didn't take up any subject in the school as I couldn't concentrate and also as we always seemed to be on the move every few months. After being at the new camp for a few weeks the Ites stopped our parcels, their reason being that we were making propaganda on the way up from Camp 65 by throwing chocolate, meat etc., to the Italian population. It may or may not have been so still they did and we went without parcels for about three weeks and then they gave them back to us after a few deputations had gone to see the Commandant. But they never made up the back issues.

At this camp I did quite a lot of reading. The news was very good and it seemed as if it wouldn't be very long before Italy was out of it, especially after Sicily was invaded and then Mussolini was thrown out.

Imagine our joy and excitement when the news came out that Italy had capitulated. The plans we had made and what we were going to do! The camp leader called a meeting and told us that we should not escape as we would be interfering with our forces etc., and that we would be taken away in a few days. Imagine our feelings when the following morning the Jerries (Germans) arrived and just took over the camp and we were cooped in unable to do anything. Some tried to escape but it was impossible as the Ites who had not as yet been taken off by Jerry wouldn't assist us in any way.

Well Jerry kept us there from the 9th until the 12th and then we were told that we were being taken to Germany. What a shock it was to us. Still, what could we do? On the march up to the station B managed to get away at a place where we were given a few minutes rest. Much as I wanted to be with him I couldn't as the guards came and stood right at the place. I was just hoping that he wouldn't be seen. We were then marched to the station and put into trucks

Longing

Oh! I long and I pine for the beloved sweetheart of mine
Oh! How I long to embrace and gaze into her lovely face
Oh to be able to kiss my darling again and to put my arms around her once more
Oh for the day to come, as before this blasted and hellish war.



Figure 1 Issie and Reva on their wedding day 12 March 1939



Figure 2 Issie and Reva in later life

TOP SECRET
M.F. 9841
189154
MIS-X

PART I.

GENERAL QUESTIONNAIRE FOR BRITISH/AMERICAN EX-PRISONERS OF WAR.

1. No. 222750 RANK Sergeant SURNAME JOSSLOWITZ
 CHRISTIAN NAMES ISRAEL
 DECORATIONS _____

2. SHIP (R.N., U.S.N. or MERCHANT NAVY) _____
 UNIT (ARMY) ARMY 2ND S.A. Div. Patrol Coy
 SQUADRON (R.A.F. or A.A.F.) _____

3. DIVISION (ARMY), COMMAND (R.A.F. or A.A.F.) _____

4. DATE OF BIRTH 26 June 1911

5. DATE OF ENLISTMENT May 1940

6. CIVILIAN TRADE OR PROFESSION Kind of books
 (OR EXAMINATIONS PASSED WHILE P/W) _____

7. PRIVATE ADDRESS 4 Ladgham St. Greenlands
Grahamstown 2 Transvaal S. Africa

8. PLACE AND DATE OF ORIGINAL CAPTURE 21 June 42 Tobruk

9. WERE YOU WOUNDED WHEN CAPTURED? No

10. MAIN CAMPS OR HOSPITALS IN WHICH IMPRISONED.

Camp No.	Location	From	Till
<u>3401</u>	<u>Benghazi</u>	<u>29 June 42</u>	<u>7 Nov 42</u>
<u>65</u>	<u>2nd Intern Camp</u>	<u>15 Nov 42</u>	<u>29 Nov 42</u>
<u>52</u>	<u>1st Intern Camp</u>	<u>30 Dec 42</u>	<u>27 Feb 43</u>
<u>General</u>	<u>VIII 6 304 / 10/357/357</u>	<u>17 Sept 43</u>	<u>2/5/45</u>

11. WERE YOU IN A WORKING CAMP? No

Location	From	Till	Nature of Work
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

12. DID YOU SUFFER FROM ANY SERIOUS ILLNESSES WHILE A P/W? No

Nature of Illness	Cause	Duration
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

(b) DID YOU RECEIVE ADEQUATE MEDICAL TREATMENT? _____

Figure 3 Prisoner of War Questionnaire for Israel Josselowitz p. 1

GENERAL QUESTIONNAIRE. PART II. TOP SECRET.

TOP SECRET

M.I.9/Gen/

MIS-X

1. No. 272750 RANK Rat SURNAME Josselson

CHRISTIAN NAMES ISRAEL

2. LECTURES before Capture :

(a) Were you lectured in your unit on how to behave in the event of capture? (State where, when and by whom).

Yes
In England, Sandiswal, Northern Africa

(b) Were you lectured on escape and evasion? (State where, when and by whom).

3. INTERROGATION after capture :

Were you specially interrogated by the enemy? (State where, when and methods employed by enemy).

No

4. ESCAPES attempted :

Did you make any attempted or partly successful escapes? (Give details of each attempt separately, stating where, when, method employed, names of your companions, where and when recaptured and by whom. Were you physically fit? What happened to your companions?)

No

5. SABOTAGE :

Did you do any sabotage or destruction of enemy factory plant, war material, communications, etc., when employed on working-parties or during escape? (Give details, places and dates.)

No

6. COLLABORATION with enemy :

Do you know of any British or American personnel who collaborated with the enemy or in any way helped the enemy against other Allied Prisoners of War? (Give details, names of person(s) concerned, camp(s), dates and nature of collaboration or help given to enemy).

No

7. WAR CRIMES :

If you have any information or evidence of bad treatment by the enemy to yourself or to others, or knowledge of any enemy violation of Geneva Convention you should ask for a copy of "Form Q" on which to make your statement.

(NOTE: Form Q is a separate form inviting information on "War Crimes" and describes the kinds of offences coming under this title.)

GENERAL QUESTIONNAIRE. PART II. TOP SECRET.
(continued)

TOP SECRET
M.I.9 Gen/
MIS-X

8. Have you any other matter of any kind you wish to bring to notice?

.....
..... no
.....
.....
.....

SECURITY UNDERTAKING.

I fully realise that all information relating to the matters covered by the questions in Part II. are of a highly secret and official nature.

I have had explained to me and fully understand that under Defence Regulations or U.S.A.R. 380-5 I am forbidden to publish or communicate any information concerning these matters.

Date

11 May 1945

Signature

[Handwritten Signature]

https://mail.google.com/mail/u/2/#inbox?projection=1

Registration authorized by order of the
 Union of South Africa (introduced by
 Royal Decree No. 20 of 1923)
 R. K. Hunt,
 District Registrar,
 Births and Deaths,
 Johannesburg, 17-4-29.

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA—UNIE VAN SUID-AFRIKA.
BIRTH CERTIFICATE.—GEBORTESEJ TIFIKAAT.
 (Certificate issued in terms of Section 40 of Act No. 17 of 1923.)
 (Sertifikaat uitgereik ooreenkomstig Artikel 40 van Wet No. 17 van 1923.)


Birth Registered in the District of Johannesburg in the Province of Transvaal
 Geboorte geregistreer in die distrik in die Provinsie

This certificate is in the form of the entry as finally amended.—Hierdie sertifikaat is in die vorm van die inskrywing soos finaal verbeter.

CHILD. KIND.	PARENTS. OUERS.		INFORMANT. BERIGGEWER.	DISTRICT REGISTRAR ASSISTANT DIET REGISTRAR, JUSTICE OF THE PEACE, OR POLICE OFFICER. VERBODINGSPLAATS, ASSISTENT DISTRIKSREGISTRATEUR, ONRECHTER OF POLISIEBEAMTE.	When Registered or Received. Wanneer geregistreer of ontvang. Stadion. Standplaas. Signature of Assistant District Registrar, Justice of the Peace, or Police Officer. Handtekening van Assistent-distriksregis- trateur, vrederechter of polisiebeampte. When Registered. Wanneer geregistreer. District. Distrik. Signature of District Registrar. Handteke van distriksregistrator. No. of Ep. No. van Ep. wins.	Name added or altered after Registration. Name ingevoeg of verander na registrasie van geboorte. Date. Datum.
	6. Place of Marriage. Waar getroud.	Father. Vader.				
1. Date of Birth. Datum van geboorte. 2. Place where Born. Plek waar gebore. 3. Usual Place of Residence of Parents or Guardian. Gewone woonplek van ouers of Voogd. 4. Christian Name. Voornaam. 5. Sex. Geslag.	7. Christian Names and Surname. Voornam en familienaam. 8. Birthplace. Geboorteplek. 9. Age. Ouderdom. 10. Race. Ras. 11. Occupation. Beroep. 12. Industry. Nywerheid.	13. Christian Names and Maiden Surname. Voornam en familienaam. 14. Birthplace. Geboorteplek. 15. Age. Ouderdom. 16. Race. Ras. 17. Occupation. Beroep. 18. Industry. Nywerheid.	19. Signature (or Mark). Handtekening (of Merk). 20. Qualification. Beroegtheid. 21. Residence. Woonplek. 22. Witness. Getuie. 23. Date. Datum.	When Registered or Received. Wanneer geregistreer of ontvang. Stadion. Standplaas. Signature of Assistant District Registrar, Justice of the Peace, or Police Officer. Handtekening van Assistent-distriksregis- trateur, vrederechter of polisiebeampte. When Registered. Wanneer geregistreer. District. Distrik. Signature of District Registrar. Handteke van distriksregistrator. No. of Ep. No. van Ep. wins.	Name added or altered after Registration. Name ingevoeg of verander na registrasie van geboorte. Date. Datum.	
1. 26 June 1911 2. 44 Marshall Street Johannesburg 3. 20 Annet Street Jeppe, Johannesburg. 4. Israel 5. male	7. Isaac Josselowitz 8. Russia 9. 27 10. European 11. Jewish 12. -	13. Jane Worpe 14. Russia 15. 32 16. European 17. - 18. -	19. J. Josselowitz 20. By order of Com. 4. 21 Linda Street Roodepoort, Johannesburg 23. R. K. Hunt 24. 11-4-29	11 April, 1929 Johannesburg R. K. Hunt 2982/29.		

I, R. K. Hunt, do hereby certify that the above is a true copy of an entry in the Births
 Ek Johannesburg sertifiseer hierby dat bostaande 'n getroue afskrif is van 'n inskrywing
 Register kept at Johannesburg Extracted this 12th day of April, 1929.
 in die geboorteregister gehou te Uittreksel gemaak op hede die 12th dag van April, 1929.

R. K. Hunt
 Registrar/District Registrar, 78-4
 Registrateur/Distriksregistrator, 78-4
 Province/District.
 Provinsie/Distrik.



§G.P.-S.12491-1939-5,000-10. S.

Figure 4 Birth certificate for Israel Josselowitz 26 June 1911

28/02/2019 Issue 1.jpg

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

CERTIFICATE OF NATURALIZATION.

No. 1592

WHEREAS Leibe Josselowitz.....
 and at present residing at.....
Johannesburg
Transvaal
 in the Province of.....
 Union of South Africa, has applied for a Certificate of Naturalization in the terms of the Naturalization of Aliens Act, 1910;

AND WHEREAS the said applicant has complied with the provisions of the above-named Statute, and intends, when naturalized, to continue to reside within the Union of South Africa;

AND WHEREAS notice of the intention of the said applicant to apply for a Certificate of Naturalization has been published in the Gazette;

AND WHEREAS the said applicant has made and subscribed the declaration required by the said Act, I do hereby grant this Certificate of Naturalization to the said Leibe Josselowitz.....
 and I do further declare that he shall, except as is otherwise provided by law, be henceforth entitled to all the rights, powers, and privileges, and be subject to all obligations to which a natural-born British subject is entitled or subject in the Union of South Africa.

GIVEN under my hand at Cape Town
 this 8 day of March 1912.

W. Momb
 Minister of the Interior.

Signature of Holder.....Gust. Vorbeisz.....
 Signed in my presence, Dr. L. J. van der Merwe
 Assistant Resident Magistrate,
 District of Johannesburg

15 MAR 1912
 JOHANNESBURG

<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/2/#inbox?projector=1>

28/02/2019 Issue 2.jpg

Minor Children, at this date, of the Person Naturalized on this Certificate.....

NAME	SEX	DATE OF BIRTH	BIRTHPLACE
<u>Leibe</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>15 Mar 1889</u>	<u>Kovno Russia</u>
<u>Rebecca</u>	<u>do</u>	<u>16 Dec 1901</u>	<u>do</u>
<u>John</u>	<u>do</u>	<u>3 May 1902</u>	<u>do</u>
<u>Margaret</u>	<u>do</u>	<u>5 Jan 1905</u>	<u>do</u>
<u>Isaac</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>7 July 1911</u>	<u>Johannesburg</u>

(2) Not resident in the Union—
 1910

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA,
 Department of the Interior,
 Date 8/3/12

<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/2/#inbox?projector=1>

Figure 5 Naturalization certificate for Israel Josselowitz and his family March 1912

**HUWELIKSERTIFIKAAT.
MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE.**

(Uitgereik ooreenkomstig Artikel 40 van Wet No. 17 van 1923.)
(Issued in terms of Section 40 of Act No. 17 of 1923.)

3 5883



Ras Race: Man *European* Husband; Vrouw *European* Wife

Huwelik bevestig to *Johannesburg* Distrik *Johannesburg* Provincie *Transvaal*
Marriage solemnized at District Province

Datum van huwelik. Date of Marriage.	Volle name van eggenote. Full Names of Persons Married.	Onderdom. Age.	Geboorteland. Country of Birth.	Persoonlike staat. Personal Status.	Beroep. Occupation.	Woonplek ten tyde van huwelik. Residence at time of Marriage.	Naatwysing van huwelik. Licence.	Met of sonder huweliksvoorwaarde. With or without Antenuptial Contract.	Opmerkinge. Remarks.	
<i>Sunday 12 March 1939</i>	<i>Israel Josselowitz</i>	<i>28</i>	<i>South Africa</i>	<i>Bachelor</i>	<i>General Dealer</i>	<i>Johannesburg</i>	<i>by</i>	<i>own</i>	<i>with</i>	<i>none</i>
	<i>Reva Milles</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>South Africa</i>	<i>Spinster</i>		<i>Johannesburg</i>		<i>own</i>		

Hierdie huwelik is deur my bevestig op hede die
This marriage was solemnized by me on this the
12 dag van *March* 193*9*
day of

in die teenwoordigheid van ondergetekende getuies:—
in the presence of the undersigned witnesses:—

Getuies:
As witnesses: *S. Heister*
1. *M. Milles*
2. *C. van der Merwe*

Ek *C. van der Merwe* sertifiseer hierby dat bostaande 'n getroue afskrif is van die Originele Huweliks-
do hereby certify that the above is a true copy of the Original Marriage Register

register in my kantoor gehou, van die huwelik tussen *I. Josselowitz* en *R. Milles*
kept in my office, of the marriage of and

Bekragtig onder my handtekening en seël te *Johannesburg* op hede die *12* dag van *June* 193*9*
Witness my hand and seal at this day of

(Handtekening) *C. van der Merwe*
(Signature) *C. van der Merwe*
(Amptitel) *Magistraat*
(Designation)

Hierdie huwelik is tussen ons voltrek.
This marriage was contracted by us. *Israel Josselowitz*
Reva Milles

S. Steinhilber Predikant, Minister.
Heister Kerkgenootskap, Denomination.

Figure 6 Marriage certificate for Israel and Reva Josselowitz 12 March 1939

Handwritten Journal of Israel Josselowitz

Labnote. Awakened in the morning by the
Haze of the acid gas, & enemy planes dropping
Bombs, shells whizzing over Dugout.
most terrible sensation, later on noise
of Tanks firing & Guns going full blast.
Enemy planes bomb Hoppers & buildings
on fire, Don't know what is happening
phone out of order, no messages what
so ever, every thing supposed to be
hidden, control, feel really so sorry for
the few Tanks as they seem to be
going through hell, Dugout
roof almost caves in from Concussion
of Dropping Bombs. Thoughts of
those at Home wondering what they
would say if they could see the happenings
Afternoon, told to take as many
natives as possible on trucks and
go towards coast, only had chance
to grab our great coats, all other
stuff left behind in Dugout, told

we would come back later, went to
place on Dama Road, Congestion really
terrible, eventually all got together,
Emergency planes over head all the
time, later told to move towards coast
on road there, had to take cover
& amazing how we crowded into a
smaller hollow not that it would
have afforded much protection
luckily for us, they did not fall too
close but things did not feel too
pleasant, Arrived at coast very
dark, hungry, miserable & wondering
what is going to happen next, met
him to, got a bit of M&M later, we
went to sleep in the open, dog tried
a fell off to sleep almost at once.

Really amazing how one gets
used to these things so soon, thoughts
only of the dead ones at home & what
they will be thinking of when they

3

were patrolling the sea & also their
EBoats. Some fellows attempted to get
away by going along the coast but
doubt if they managed, it as I seemed
to be all over the place looking up the
fellows & taking them away. On
turn soon came, we were herded into a
trunk & taken to Jombang from there we
were marched to the Harbour on the
way some fellows were relieved of their
watches, wallets & other trinkets, I stole
up all my snaps except three which I
took with me, at Harbour had a bit
of a wash & some belly to eat but felt
really down in the dumps wondering
what next, In the meantime prisoners
were being brought in by the hundreds
got some water to drink after waiting
for almost the whole day. Enemy
traffic was going up the road in a
never ending stream nose to tail &
very many of the vehicles were
out on fire. Towards midnight we

2.

here what has been happening. The following Day Smoke screens all over Sun fire had mouthful of food but seemed tasteless, went to kitchen of Unit at place we were & got a drop of Hot coffee. also took few tin of Bully.

Then we were told to burn Trunks etcetera so we knew that it was all over for us. As with mixed feelings we fired trunks & others were run off the cliff into the sea, the Smoke a number of vehicles also those that were run into the sea is really a sight that will never be forgotten.

The Day was very hot we burned few sheets of Canvas & made a roof to keep the Sun off while we waited to be rounded off. Escape was nigh impossible as there was quite a big drop to the sea & also no boats, I thought of all sorts of ways & means of trying to get away but all seemed impracticable as enemy planes

were put into groups of hundreds
& marched a few miles to a few, but
the few miles seemed very very far.
eventually we got to the pen & just
lay down where we could find a place
to squeeze in & tried to get to sleep
but had very little as the crush was
really terrible after lying about in
the hot sun for most of the day we were
given some Bully biscuits, very little
of it too. also a little water. we put up
Blankets on pieces of wood & were to make
a bit of shade to keep the sun off, a few
Days later we were told to stand by as
we were being moved further up. we
were given two Tin Biscuits & 2in of Tin
Bully for the trip & what a trip it was
too, there were fifty of us in a closed
truck & was it hot, I then realised that
it was my Birthday & thought what
a way to spend it in. towards
evening we got to Timmins a place
which seems to have been a salt lake
or something, the smell of the place
wasnt very pleasant, we found a

place where to sleep, put on one blanket which we had picked up, for a base & used our great coats to cover ourselves with, we collected a few bits of twigs & grass & made a fire & boiled up some water, & made some tea. After which we went to sleep. The following morning got up & had a bit of a wash with some water out of our bottles, then made something to eat, which consisted of crushed biscuit water & some bully heated together in a tin, still it was something to fill the empty space in our tummies, later we were given some fresh water but it was not enough so got some from a river, what water it was too, the camels had a good time in it, what a terrible smell & taste it had too words cannot express the flavour or smell of the water. We were then put into trucks just like sheep with hardly any standing room & on our way to Benghazi

6

we climbed all sorts of steep hills & many a time thought that we would go over the side of the trucks or that the truck would tip over. But the driver seemed to be able to negotiate his vehicle all night as we got to a part of our destination without any mishap. Apart from a few chaps having loose trimmings & making quite a smell, we were put into a few rooms for another day, but managed to have a wash in the sea which although very short was very welcome. From there we were taken on our way to Benghazi, which place we eventually reached about two o'clock in the morning. There were fellows lying about all over the place & the stench was awful, as there were no latrines but only holes in the ground & plenty of "dysentery". Still we managed to find a place where to lie down, and had a little sleep, my thoughts being at home & what my folks were thinking of. Somehow it was hardly possible

2

To believe that one was a P.O.W. now.
Next morning we were headed into
groups of fifty & given a few Bivvy tents
& six of us had to sleep in one of them
their size being about 4 foot 6" x 6 ft &
about 3 foot high, still it was a cover
over our heads, then we got rations
of bread, five men to four loaves
the bread weighing about ten ounces
per loaf. So I imagine how well we
were being fed (I don't think) all
this time I haven't had a hot meal.
Any way we got together & turned a
steel helmet into a pot & put bread
& bully & water in it & cooked it
up & so made a meal. also
boiled up some water & put in a bit of
tea that we had brought with us
from Tobruk, the meal we had
was to be our usual for quite a
while, only instead of tea we got
some Ecosatz the coffee, which at
times we also did not get. we

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burnt the crust of the bread & made that do as coffee. after a day or two the Itis decided to cant us, again so we were herded out of the gate like sheep with dozens of Guards & counted & re-counted & eventually, the must have got so tired themselves that they let us back into the pen. Water was rationed to each man 1 pint for the whole day. Anyway we just had to put up with it all as we had no other alternative or unless we wanted to get shot as the Itis loved pointing their rifle at one for the slightest thing. I suppose they thought that, having had the few successes which they did, must have gone to their heads, after a few weeks they decided to shift us to the next ~~low~~ pen so the usual shuffle, heading & searching started. then we went to the next pen, there I saw Barney who said he was leaving for Italy at any time, which he incidentally did do within a few weeks. we still had 100 hot meals & the rations were

still the same. ² Our traps were Nov. 10
with a wire handle, which when not
in use as a pot or trap, was also used
for a bath. I became quite an adept
at having a bath in a tumbler of
water, the weather was very hot & we
were quite thankful for that as quite
a few of us had very little in the way
of clothing. The cigarette issue we
got was about 3 per day when we were
lucky, or when they had it. One
evening some of our planes came
over on a raid & the Japs started
firing at them & got a hit on one
of the planes. The shaking & screaming
was great but the Japs put an end
to that by threatening to stop our
wonderful issue of Rations. Gus Terry
& myself have been together all this
time & got on quite well together.

The pen I am referring to is the
enclosures we were in base,
hard ground. Rocky in places &
damned dirty. Barbed wire right

round the area mostly 2 Rows the
 strands being very close together.
 Later on the rainy season started
 & then a little more worms came,
 the place where we were, being in a
 hollow. the water came into the tents, so
 we had to get busy at all hours of day &
 night trying to keep it out or trying to
 get dry. Then we got showers which
 were very welcome stand sites loll
 in a queue for about an hour & a half
 to two hours for a two minute shower
 we became quite expert at soaping &
 washing ourselves in the allotted
 space of time. The showers were
 actually a mobile one, a truck
 whose sides opened up & canvas flaps
 let down the sides to make a wall &
 sixteen showers in it eight on each
 side. the showers of course were cold
 water as they did not use the heating
 apparatus. We all used to wait until
 we saw the truck with the water tank
 for the shower coming then make
 a dive for the queue as each tank
 contained enough water to last for

about three quarters of an hour
the water was pumped into the pipes
by means of a small motor which also
centred out every so often. In the
meantime the Hygiene Squad had
got busy & had made vast improvements
as far as the sanitary part of the place
concerned & also with the very few
implements etc supplied by the ITO

We all used to do a fatigue every
so many days to dig trenches for
the refuse so that flies & cetera could
be kept under control. The doctors
& staff also had a very hard time &
with the very limited medical supplies
& bandages at their disposal did
a really wonderful job of work &
real hard work at that, because
somehow or other being underfed &
under-clothed & short of so many
vitamins the fellows became weaker
and the slightest scratch or cut
became septic and all types
of sores broke out, but the medicals
did their best & a good job it was.

The raids of our planes over Benghazi were taking place more often lately & there was quite a lot of high level bombing, on one raid they got a direct hit on the Harbour & also on an ammunition ship from where we were. We could see the whole outline of the outskirts of Benghazi and were also in view of the harbour.

When the ship was struck all we saw at first was a huge billow of greyish black smoke, as the first lot of smoke drifted away a red glow came in its place & as the weather grew darker so this flame became lighter & then the Arrows started to go off, then we heard plenty of Bangs & one of the most beautiful of fire work displays as the stuff started to explode. There were specks of practically every colour imaginable & this kept on for the whole night. I don't think I will ever forget that sight.

We were very lucky that we didn't have many casualties from the falling ack ack shrapnel, as there were AA Guns all round us.

and we had no objection whatsoever
 Anyway we did not mind it in
 the least because our planes were
 getting good results & the way the Eric
 ducked for cover was really great.
 I'm sure they could never get to show
 under ground shelter quick enough.

There seemed to be quite a lot of Giffa
 money in the camp & the crowns & Anchor
 Rings were doing very well indeed. The
 boys were gambling with money watches,
 Rings, pens, anything that had any
 value. a packet of Springbok legs (50)
 was bought for £10.00 each lot C for £5.10.
 the few smokes that were to be had were
 sold for about 7/- per tin when obtainable.

I sold my signet ring for two tins
 of Jam & then converted one of the
 tins into cash for the sum of 30/-
 which bought me 25 smokes. The
 approximate weight of the Jam was
 half a pound per tin & one could
 not really class it as a Jam. I
 really could not say what it
 consisted of although it was supposed to
 be apple.

One Day we had a real heavy storm, it rained bucketsful & the net result was that we were absolutely washed out & copping wet so had to find a new spot for the tent.

There were a few fellows with Musical Instruments and they used to get up some entertainments for us & some of them were really good, there was also a lot of music & songs composed by some of them & I am sure that one day when they will be published in busy street they will be real big hits. These little shows did a lot towards making us forget where we were for a while, but they also brought back very many memories of home.

There was also an arts & crafts exhibition got up. One would be amazed at the amount of wonderful talent that was there, especially as there were no such things as tools.

The articles made with Pen Knives pieces of wire were really excellent.

There were all types of Engravings done on pipes with knives or razor blades, also aluminium Badged Engraving with a nail really perfect work.

and done by fellows who have never done that type of work before. There were also many pencil drawings & colored sketches many of them depicting various incidences that took place. Such as the view we had of the Ammo ship being hit. also "The rains came" & the dejected look on the faces of the washed out Lt. Leganette Holders that looked as if they were factory made but were done out of pieces of wood used for the fires in the kitchen, we were by now getting a hot meal per day consisting of rice & macaroni lentils with a little tomato paste in it the ration was about 1/2 pint being full for the day at least it was hot and filled the tummy. It is really amazing how, when one is hungry they spend of the types of food that they disliked & how they would gladly eat it if it was put before them. When we got the hot meals they were thick we used to keep some over to make pies.

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The pies were made in this manner. we crumbled the bread & mixed it with water & then rolled it into a dough & put it in a tin & then put the 2nd Bully & Hot meal in it and covered it with some more bread dough & then put it in an oven that we made of a petrol tin covered with sand & a fire underneath.

Another type of pie was, the inside of the bread was taken out & cut up. Bully & bread put into the hollow & that was toasted over the fire, what we didn't do to try & get some variety into our meals although it was only bread & Bully. One time we got a ration of English biscuits instead of the bread & with the biscuits we soaked them and cooked them up & so made what we called porridge. I met Harry Bernstein in the pen & he told me that he had heard Jack was drowned while being taken to Italy. he was on the torpedoed ship.

after a month or two fellows started trading with the 2nd Guards who wanted Egyptian money, Woolen clothing, hats, belts etc for which they paid in cigarettes, Bread & Gams, which in turn was rebartered

to the other fellows at the most exorbitant prices, for instance 15th tin of Jam 20/-
 Cigarettes 20/- for 10. bread 20/- loaf
 of about 12ozs. chocolate weighing 3 1/2 lbs
 10/- 5 small tins for 5/- I also
 saw an Egg sold for 9/- later on
 eggs became more plentiful & the
 price gradually dropped until one
 could get 160 eggs for a pound but
 by that time there were very few
 fellows that had any money left
 cigarettes seem to play a very
 big part in the finance of the P.O.W.
 world. as some how one could
 buy anything for smokes. One
 of the pens along side ours were told
 that they were going to Italy the
 following day & they would get plenty
 of clothing on the other side,
 believing this they started bartering
 most of their clothing for smokes.
 Pullovers went for 15 to 20 smokes
 shorts from 5 smokes upwards
 tooth paste about 20 smokes
 also Razors & any conceivable

Stein. The price of ¹⁸stones at that time was 35 for 207. So very, a myself went into the wood business after Gus left us, we would get a fellow from the one pen to get some wood from the natives in the pen alongside his for cigs we would then remake the bundles & sell the wood at a profit of 2 cigs in ten. The reason we got the wood from the natives was because they went out on fatigues for the Japs so were able to get plenty of wood.

We made quite a fair amount of trading profit for the few days we were in the business it did help us to buy a letter card each to send home, which Edent know whether it ever reached its destination, but it made one feel slightly more contented having written the post few lines to our folks at home after about 3½ months of captivity & not knowing whether our folks know whether we were P.O.W. alive or dead.

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Some fellow decided to attempt an escape but was caught while crawling through the Barbed wire and shot on the spot. It was a horrible sight. There were quite a few other ways in which some tried to escape but were caught. Luckily for them not shot. The Ites were very arrogant at that time as they were boasting of their forces being about to enter Alexandria which must have been one of the reasons of their wanting Gippo Money. One very interesting thing happened when a C-47 took place somewhere near Benghazi & some of our planes were overhead keeping the Ites very busy with the AAA & searchlights whilst the Cs did their work. One of our planes came overhead at a very low altitude. I don't think the Ites were aware of it's identity for quite a while but woke up with a shock when

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he dropped something very close to one of their Guns. Our planes started to come over quite often on Daylight Raids & I don't think they were very far off their targets as we saw many a big Dust cloud where they got Direct Hits & more than a ship got the same. About Midday while sitting in our Bivvy Tents we heard quite a Rumble & ran out to see what it was as we didn't hear any AAA Guns going off, but what we did see was a few of our planes going back after doing their job & the Jets scrambling like mad up the Hill towards their Gunposts it was a matter of closing the stable after the cable were gone.

Another remarkable thing about Benghazi was that we didn't get any salt for quite a long time & yet the camp was right on the edge of a salt lake, after agitating for a long while we eventually got some. Every time some new Diseases came

into the camp the first thing was
to find out how our forces were
making out as we got no news
what so ever. & I imagine our delight
when we heard that we had started
to move forward once again &
our hopes & wishes were for release
by our Allies. In the meantime
the Itos had shifted us to another
camp about 2 miles away this
was supposed to be the real Zanted
Camp, we had been in the other
almost for months. Somehow
or other news started to come into
the camp of the advance of our
troops which brought our moral
up quite a lot. Then one morning
the Itos called out 500 names
& told us we were leaving for
Italy, they moved us to another
pen gave us Rations for the day
& left us in there without any
cover over our heads from
the fierce sun. Our Air force
came over & did quite a lot.

of Damage in the ²⁷ ~~M. Gordon~~
and set an oil ship on fire
so they were unable to move us
that Day. they then put us back
into another pen where we were
for quite a few weeks. by this time
it wasn't only fleas that were troubling
us but lice as well, we used to put
our clothing through the disinfecter
but when they came out there
seemed to be very many more
animals we did our best to kill
them but the more you killed the
more you found. They decided
to give us a hot shower, but the
shower lorry must have got such
a shock that it caught alight so
there was no hot shower, as they
had to use the water to put the fire
out. The RAF. Came over again
& did some more damage. Set
an oil tanker on fire, this one
burned beautifully for about 5 days
the Iles told us we were moving
out the following day. so there
was packing of our goods & chattels
which were very few

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That evening while we were lying
in our tents. Some fellow was saying
Goodbye to a friend of his in the
opposite pen, they were talking to
one another across the wire, we
heard him saying cheers the
Next thing there was a shot fired
a few seconds later some one tripped
over the ropes of our tent which
was about 30 yards from the fence.
then some one said help me
carry him to the medical tent as
he has been shot in the knee, this
fellow having fallen on my side of the
tent I got up & put my hand under
his neck to lift him up. Imagine
my feelings when I felt my hand get
soaked with some warm liquid. The poor
fellow had been shot through the
neck & not the knee & a minute later
he died. The excuse was
that he attempted to climb over
the wire, but that was not true.
but the fact remains an innocent
helpless starved man was shot in

in
a most cold blooded & callous way.
The following Morning we were marched
for about five miles to the Harbour
& what a march it was, being undefeated
weak & sick we just about managed
it. when we got to the Harbour we were
put on board a Cargo Boat Santa Maria
by name, & a little distance away
was the oil tanker that had been hit
four or five days ago. still burning
brightly. Eventually they started
unloading the Hold & then put the
sco of us down it was Dark Cold &
miserable & the steel plates were damn
Cold. the Air was musty, so what could
we do, they gave us a few lifebelts
to wear, but we used them as pillows.
The Etes said it would take us 3 days
to get to our destination & the rations
they gave us was for 3 days. Towards
evening we steamed out. Some of
us were upon deck to relieve ourselves
as we left & the sight of the burning
Ship as we passed it was a real
Good sight. Feelings amongst us
must have been very mixed as one

of the sailors told us that our troops had retaken Jabruk. They had taken us away, just as our chances of being released was almost true.

The trip instead of lasting 3 days took 8 days the rations we got was 1 biscuit & 2 tin of bully for 24 hours this was later reduced to one Biscuit only. apparently our Navy was some where about so the Iles had to divert their course a ment via the greek Coast. but we were feeling hungry & miserable & didn't give a damn what would happen. We did have a bit of luck as they did let us go up on the deck for a while to get a bit of fresh air. The ship stopped at quite a few ports on the Greek Coast to try & get some Rations for us. I saw Athens, Pyreneus, Patras. where they managed to get a few cases of biscuits & while taking them on Board they dropped

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most of the cases in the sea. So we
got some salt water. Soaked biscuit for
our Rations. It is really amazing
the strength one has in going through
Hell & Starvation. We also went
through the Corinth Canal & it
is a really wonderful bit of work.
on the 8th Day we got to Toronto
Italy that morning our Ration
was four biscuits for ten men. There
we were promised Hot Showers &
hot meal. We got Hot Showers, had
all our Hair Shorn off beards &
mustaches taken off after that they
put us through the showers & our
clothes in the disinfecter for delousing
after about three hours we were
marched to the trucks & about fifty
men to a cable Truck & promise
of food later, towards Evening the
train moved off. We were Cold &
miserable. No warm clothes No Socks
& No Food. We then got to Bari
after 2 nights & Day. We were then
herded out of the trucks & marched
for miles how we did it I do not

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know but It was in the early hours
of the morning that we got to the Camp
Cold & nice table they gave us some
hot coffee that morning. about small
tea cup full. we were kept there
until about 2 or 3 o'clock then the
search started. they took away our
blankets, & practically anything
that we had pocket knives etc. They
then gave us a clay bowl & cup
for our food & gave us a blanket
Red X one. & put us in tents about
25 men to a tent with straw on the
ground for a mattress. The soup
came up & that was pumpkin water
with a bit of cabbage thrown in &
now & again some macaroni. I
am sure the pigs at home got better
swill still we were pleased to
get it. Twice a week we got a
piece of meat the size of a match box
the cheese we got was about the same
size & the thickness about $\frac{1}{4}$ of an
inch so we were doing well.

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over the whole. we had no smokes
so we smoked chestnut leaves & were
they terrible, still it was something
The bread we got was very small about
seven ounces, some of the old hands
told us about Red x Parcels & their contents
& smokes as well, Did our month
water? but there were no parcels in
the Camp so we went without them

Some of the fellows got hold of some
cabbage leaves & stalks when they
had to throw some rubbish to
away, they passed some rabbit
Hutches & were the leaves good.
we ate them with relish the first Green
stuff we had in five months. The
Rain came down like Hell one
night, & the wind blew for all it was
worth the tent was half blown away
& we were soaked to the skin,
Blankets & all. Being in the Night
& Dark we could do nothing but
huddle up against one another &
try & keep warm & just wished
for Daylight to come.

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When Daylight came, we did our best to straighten things up & also sent a complaint in to the Lt Col, after a few days they put us into Bungalows & we got beds for the first time & also straw Palliases & after about 17 days we got 6 bags British Red X ones & were they good. Later we got some Hi smokes as well. Then there was another move. we were marched to the Station herded into trucks & off to a permanent Camp Gravina is the name of it we got there late at night & had to stand in the cold until we were searched again then put into groups & sent to different sections & here Jerry & I parted he was sent to section 5 & I to section 8. We were put into Bungalows. No beds, given palliases & had to sleep on the concrete floor. Not too good at all. Still we could take it.

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Some of the Boats who were there from before. Givens English Smokes & Some gave us tea with milk the first we had tasted for very many months. Also told us about Red X Parcels which we would get in due course. I will say the old hands treated us very nice indeed. The following day we got our issue of Parcels one between seven. The excitement was great & we also got 25 Cigs for seven. When it came to dividing the parcel, our mouths were watering & we were very eager to taste the food, we each got a taste of Salmon, Sardines, Bully, Butts' meat ball, about 2 Biscuits some milk, coffee or tea, with seven men sharing the stuff didn't go very far but was it good, eventually 4 of us made up a Group & so the stuff went further & later one man took the parcel at a time, so we got settled & worked out quite well. The four in our Group were two Brailfords, Leflon & myself. The month we got at Gravida was December 4th & the

Boys were already speaking about
xmas parcels. Still we were only
too pleased to be getting parcels
because to taste the food after 5
months was really something worth
while. For Brews we got Klim Zim
with wine handles & these were put
over the Zines at the kitchen, when
the Eli & Kelly had been taken
off. For this we also had to queue
up & wait our turn. We returned
thus the Klim Zim Derby, after
the morning check we would be
waiting with our cans & dishes
& the moment the bugle blew check
over there was one big rush for
the kitchen to get the brew going.
On muddy days which were plentiful
we had many a good laugh as
you would see fellows sliding
& slipping in all directions, trying
to be first in the queue. Some
of the older hands had stoves they
called blowers they were a bellows.

Types of affair & Embers were put in the
Fire box so they pumped the bellows
it kept the embers glowing & so
the brew went on. but the main
question was the obtaining of woods etc
as the empty of board board contains 1 of
the Parcel made one brew. The parcels
were of 2 no. kinds English & Canadian
and there was quite a variety of Items.
Some of them also contained Cats, Egg-
Powder, Mustards, Yorkshire Puddings
apple & Fruit Puddings. There were
all sorts of Cakes, & Blanc Manges
made with Canadian Biscuits.

For the early part of my stay in
camp 65. I was feeling really miserable
and in a perpetual state of Hunger.
The Ibis had not given us much
in the way of clothing although
they had quite a lot of Red X stuff
but at the same time there was an
element of Doubt as to who was
responsible. for now leave the people
in charge of the Ibis. what I got
was 1 pair of Pants & 1 shirt. I had
1 pair of Shorts & 1 Pullover, no boots or socks etc.

I managed to get hold of a pair of second hand Jackies, the weather was starting to get cold so wasn't feeling too pleased with myself. The water position was not too good it would come on now & then for about 15 minutes to $\frac{1}{2}$ an hour & during that time you were lucky if you got your bottle filled up & to have a wash one was a good man. it was almost impossible, although we managed it now & again. The house position was really very bad. it seemed impossible to get rid of them it was like scratch & off with your shirt etc & start on killing them off, have a bit of peace for about 10 minutes & the same thing all over again, It seemed ~~as if~~ as if we would never get rid of the damned pest no matter where one looked the bloody things were there in their thousands. I am really amazed that they did not carry us away. we only had

boiled water with which to wash our
clothing & with the nail brushes we
were able to borrow managed to
keep them down to a minimum.

There was a canteen in the camp
as well we got paid 20 liras per
208 night with which we were able
to purchase figs, onions, which
ever was in the canteen, the Rush
that took place every time the
cry came figs in the canteen
I am sure, had nothing on the
Diamond Field Rush, that took place
in the Urums, and the price was
between 18 & 20 liras per kilo so you
see how far ones pay went. at
times the quality was fair but at
other times worse than awful. Onions
was definitely the best buy of the lot
they cost between 4 & 5 liras per kilo
& went about 5 or 6 medium ones to that
weight which is supposed to be $3\frac{1}{2}$ lbs.

These onions were definitely
worth their weight in gold as
they helped us out with many
a meal, Dried Onions, Baked Onions,
& Raw Onions & did we enjoy
them? I will say that we did as
it was one of the few vegetables that
we were able to get fresh. It
was Heasing Xamas Zume & the

talk turned towards Xmas parcels
 and what the contents were, & what
 we were going to have, & different
 menus, but it all depended on what
 kind of Parcel we would get seeing as
 there weren't enough Xmas parcels
 to go Round. Anyway the Issue
 was 2 Xmas 1 Canadian & 1 Indian
 parcel between 4 and 100 big per
 man. Being so Hungry & the
 first month of us receiving parcels
 most of the fellows just ate until
 they were sick, especially as we
 weren't used to eating plenty of food
 of the grade & quality in the parcels.
 Another thing that happened was
 Smoke Eyes. Quite a few of us could
 not see a thing as our eyes were
 smarting & burning. I have never
 before experienced such a thing
 it was due to the heat of the fires
 & the cold air that we were
 subjected to while making
 our brews & washing up our
 food. But with all that we

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were very well satisfied with our
Xmas fare & I thanked God & the
Red X for their wonderful work
that they are doing & I am sure
that every P.O.W. Blesses them
every time he has a meal.
because I am sure that without
the Red X Parcel many of us would
have been underground for good.
P.O.W. life has been a wonderful
school for many of us & we have
seen the best & the worst of our
fellow men & one would be really
amazed at the way some of us
have turned out. fellows that
previously seemed to me to have
been real fine fellows showed
their true colors & what a
difference there was. Still we
live & learn. Anyway after Xmas
our group of four split up & I am
happy to say I worked together with
our parcels & I was not sorry
about my choice as he really
proved himself to be a true &
staunch friend. I am sure one
that I shall never forget. I was
not in very pleasant spirits as some
mail had started coming through
& I was always expecting to get some
but seemed to slip up every time
eventually on a real, wet, cold &

miserable day I got my first letter. I was really very delighted & pleased especially as I don't know that my folks at home knew that I was alive & well & am sure relieved from a lot of worries. Later on Jamie & myself decided to make a blowe for ourselves (Blowe incidentally is a small stove forced draught, not unlike a blacksmith's forge) so we had a look round & so ransged some Klein Lins, cocoa Lins etc & got stuck into making one, the very first one was not too successful. So I tried again & the second one worked alright these blowers used very little fuel, the tools we had was a penknife a stone & a pair of scissors, the job wasn't too good looking but that didn't worry us, as long as we were able to make our brew. after a few days I decided to improve on my model & did so then some one asked me to sell them my

old one for some smokes & Edid
So, & at the same time got the
Idea of making them & selling
them to the boys in the other
bungalows. So I put Jamie on
the job of getting zinc wires etc &
I did the assembling. Well we got
on famously & sold the first one
a to our surprise the fellow
was so pleased that he brought
down his mate to ask us to make
him one, we were getting between
40 & 50 smokes per blow. it all
depended on the price of smokes.
the business flourished & we
were averaging a blow per
day & at the same time became
quite proficient at the manufacture
of them so now we had plenty of
smokes, & also traded the smokes
for extra food stuffs, bread & thus
were able to have some good meals
now & again some one would want
a tin box which we also made.
the work wasn't of a wonderful
standard, but was quite well made

considering the tools above disposal.

The wood question was quite serious but after getting together, Jamie & myself managed very well especially as we pinched a log or two from the cook House, our slogan was the Brew must go on, & so I did.

Then the Etis started sending out working parties, Jamie was put on one of them so I had to do the blowing manufacturing on my own. I managed alright & had no worries as to selling them.

Then we were shifted to Setone 5, then I was put in the same Bay as Jerry. R.B. Barnay & we also in the same setone, after I got settled down there I started on my Blowers again & Jerry was my salesman & he sold them quicker than I could make them, with the lava on. Snodes that I made. I went to the market & bought foodstuffs.

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bread etc. & was never short of a good meal. I can assure you that it was very welcome as the ~~the~~ didn't give us very much in the way of food. Then on June the 26th we were shifted further north to Camp 52. Here I shared a parcel with Barney G. we got on quite well together. I also met Gus there & we were very friendly with one another. At this Camp I didn't make any bladders as they all seemed to have them. We had quite a few hours between us that we had brought up from Camp 65 as we had done quite a bit of trading there & we also received pay of 20 liras per fortnight & so were able to buy fruit tomatoes onions etc. from the canteen. I didn't take up any subject in the school as I couldn't concentrate & also as we always seemed to be on the move every few months. after

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being at the new camp for a few weeks the Lti stopped our parcels the reason being that we were making propaganda on the way up for '66. By throwing chocolate, meat etc. to the Lti population, it may or may not have been so still they did it. We went without parcels for about three weeks, when they gave them back to us after a few deputations had gone to see the Commandant, but the news made up the back issues. At this camp I did quite a lot of reading. The news was very good & it seemed as if it wouldn't be very long before Italy was out of it especially after Sicily was invaded & then Russia was thrown out. I imagine our joy & excitement when the news came out that Italy had capitulated. The plans we

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had made ^{up} what we were
going to do. The Camp leader
called a meeting & told us
that we should not escape as
we would be interfering with
our forces etc & that we would
be taken away within a few
days. Imagine our feelings
when the following morning
the Japs arrived & just
took over the Camp & we were
cooped in unable to do anything
some tried to get away but it
was impossible as the Etis who
had not as yet been taken off by
Jerry wouldnt assist in any
way. Well I kept us there
from the 9th until the 12th & then
we were told that we were being
taken to Germany. What a shock
it was to us still what could
we do. On the march up to
the station B managed to get
away. at a place where we
were given a few minutes rest-

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much as I wanted to be with
him I couldn't as the guard
came & stood right at the
place, I was just hoping that
he wouldn't be seen. We went
then marched to the station
& put into Trucks.

Longing

Oh! How I long to find
The Beloved Sweetheart of Mine
Oh! How I long to embrace
and gaze into her lovely face
Oh To be able to Kiss My Darling ~~once~~ again
and to put my arms round her once more
Oh for the Day to come, as before.
The Blasted Hellish War.