

## DOP/01/004

Hawtin Mundy, born February 1894  
16 King Edward Street  
New Bradwell

- 000 Describes food in prison camp. Three meals described.
- 050 Work – pay 2d a day. Lined up in early morning. Villagers hire prisoners on Monday morning. Luck was out – he was biggest – he got heavy work.
- 075 Shirt in rags, no feet in socks, trousers and tunics worn and scruffy. Tried to keep themselves clean – but no soap. No Red Cross parcels at first. Had squared pieces of rag for socks.
- 097 Posten – head man not very nice. Got friendly with young lady on other side of road. She had a brother aged 17 who took mickey out of them. Sent home to mother. Mother worried by it – he looked hell of mess. Before prisoner weighed 12 and a half - 13 stone, as prisoner weighed 8 st. 5 lb.
- 124 Man came from another village, British man died. Said if they gave him money he'd erect a stone. A long time later he brought photos of grave. Stone said "In memory of Private T. Snelling. Erected by comrades in captivity 1917".
- 158 Working in village. Went past hotel. German sergeant on sae pavement pushed HM into road, saying HM should salute him. Posten sent for him, told him he should salute him and get off pavement.
- 183 Every prisoner taken out in street to clean up village. All locked up then. Visit from Kaiser William to see reconstruction work in village. As he came by Yorkie said "Blimey, look at him, he's worse than we are" – one of Kaiser's guards had worn down heels.
- 216 Locked in cellar. Posten brought Army officer on visit. Told him who people were, English, French, Serb, Russians and Rumanians. Walked to three Rumanians and said "Bucharest is kaput – finished. We've taken it over". One of the Rumanians said "Hooray". Upset the rest of prisoners – swore at the Rumanians afterwards. None had any time for them afterwards.
- 253 No Red Cross parcels, no letters. Got down in dumps. HM picked up German language well. Posten showed himself to be savage, cruel man. Brought girlfriend and brother into "lager" (camp). Always carried stick and revolver. Took opportunity of thinking whenever prisoners were laughing, they were laughing at him. Hit prisoners with stick. Girls laughed. Yorkie got hit – would stand with hand on hips staring at German. German would do it more.
- 300 Locked in cellar. Came out in morning. Posten would hit every third or fourth man as they came out in morning. Yorkie said, "If I got the buggar at Hartlepool I'd catch him one".

- 320 Somebody caught fox and gave it to Posten, tied it to pole in yard. Got prisoners and girlfriend there. Taunted fox and when fox came to him he hit it with stick. Did this repeatedly.
- 336 Got very low. Scrounged and stole food in village. Finally tide turned. Back in yard at night Posten called HM to office. Great big bag marked "GPO London, Berne, Switzerland". Parcels stacked on floor, heap of letters. Ran out into yard and told them. Barged in – Germans kicked them out, made them come in one at a time. Some had several parcels. Like kids at a Sunday school party.
- 388 Been starving for months, but nobody touched the parcels until read letters. Warm evening, stripped stark naked, got tablets of soap and washed themselves, then started on food. Chit in each parcel giving contents and Red Cross card to send back to say they'd got it and whether anything missing.
- 420 Everyone had same whatever your wealth – describes parcels. If you had friends they sent it, financed it, through Red Cross. Once had one from mates in Body Shop at Works.
- 456 Letter from Lady Leon at Bletchley Park. Her gardener's son a POW – she would be HM's godmother for parcels – but no different to anybody else. Also had clothing parcels. Every 3 months allowed private parcel, but without food in it.
- 496 British had parcels. French had parcel now and again, not a lot. French had parcel now and again, not a lot. Rumanians, he thinks, had none. Russians never had one, all that did come, came privately. None organised.
- 525 When young – very patriotic. Rushed to join colours because believed in them. Ruled the waves. Was it worth it? We had everything, they had nothing. What would happen today - Colonies given away. Do you think Russian POWs would have nothing and English all – no the reverse today.
- 565 In parcels had uniform, cap and shoes – looked very smart. Sergeant who kicked him off path, walking down street when well dressed and well fed, saw him, stepped in road, and saluted. He said "No, no, no, don't salute me, that's OK". Wanted cocoa, wife was ill, wanted a little cocoa. "Oh no" said HM "We're weak and we need it". Went from a tramp to a king. The tide turned. Even looked up too.
- 634 In bunch of 9, 3 were Scotsmen. One in killed regiment. Should be admired. When POW took kilt and gave him trousers. Gave kilt back – never got rid of it – offered food for it.
- 670 Soon began to miss things out of parcels. Suspected Posten stealing – proved it to be true. Posten terrified of going to Western Front. HM came back to camp late. Posten sent for him and HM told him he was working late.

## Side 2

- 000 Mate next day told him that in fact he'd seen rep. from Swiss Red Cross and HM. Told him things were missing. Rep. told him if things were missing German responsible would be sent to Western Front. Posten fell for the story. Next lot were collected at station by British. Never anything else stolen. Reading of what's in Red Cross parcels. Routine of what happened to Red Cross parcels on way to them. 200 cigarettes a month – Woodbine's.
- 087 Before parcels – locked in cellar on Sunday – to pass time voted on what they would like most from England. Decision was a packet of fags. "Give me a fag and I'll die happy". – Yorkie.
- 106 Things got awkward. All nationalities packed in cellars. British only nationality to get parcels. Risk of one of other prisoners stealing. Organised it so that always somebody there to avoid others stealing. Rodney and HM interpreters. HM went to see Posten about accommodation. He shifted English upstairs – large room and large kitchen attached. Provided beds.
- 155 When in village had to chop logs up for old German couple. Old lady took him in and gave him coffee and bread. Never forgot that. Brought coal into station for village. HM shocked to see women unloading coal wagon. Loaded their wagon up. Had to give so much coal to each house. Gave a lot more to the old couple – old lady was frightened, but her bag was filled up.
- 200 In winter allowed other prisoners to use kitchen range upstairs. HM had rice in parcels, cooked and had dripping with it – kept cold out. One evening put rice on to cook, went to wash. Came back. Two Rumanians had shoved his saucepan away. Put his back on. They shouted and took it off. He knocked theirs on floor and grabbed two by throat and shook them. Shouted for Posten. He came and kicked them down to cellar. Wouldn't have happened if not for parcel incident.
- 250 One Serbian, nice chap, looked after him. Gave him bread and sauerkraut dinner when had plenty in parcels. Serbian stood guard over their food for them.
- 275 Now fit and well and well-clothed, respected in village – envied by villagers as they had less food and poor clothing.
- 314 Game of billiards made - Marked out with chalk – full size. Balls were potatoes which were shaped into round balls. Colour for red – used red potato. Cue - broom handle. Lot of fun. Knelt on floor. Made up set of rules. Played for money. Then challenging. Scotsman, Rogers, lost his temper when getting beaten. Accused referee of being biased. Ref jumped on red ball and squashed it. They shared the winnings.
- 434 On Sunday, locked in. Started playing cards for money. Earned money and earned more by selling things. When people ran out of money, HM was asked to go and sell it.

- 468 On Sunday evening, Rodney, a good singer, had a sing-song. Opened window and villagers came and stood outside. Sang hymns, villagers joined in, tunes the same. Plus other songs.
- 493 Sounds like perfect holiday, but it had been harder before.
- 500 Mayor called him in and asked him for cocoa, HM gave him it. HM told him about Posten knocking prisoner about. Asked if Mayor could stop it. He did. Later Posten gave HM written pass to go anywhere in village during daytime.
- 537 Old couple invited HM to Christmas dinner 1917. Took stuff with him – cocoa, bully beef. They got old fowl. Had good Christmas dinner. Told HM about what happened when Cossacks broke into village – very savage. Got hold of German, tied rope to each limb and tied each to horses. Whipped horses and pulled him apart. Ravaged and burnt village. Went to pub, sat drinking, everything until innkeeper had no more. Cossacks then shop him.
- 608 Old couple had lost son in war.
- 620 Mayor sending HM's cocoa to high class hotel – didn't have widowed mother.
- 650 Came to spring 1918. Revolution in Russia in October 1917. Nobody knew of it.
- 680 HM had freedom of movement. Got idea of making a break. Had to go to Russia, couldn't go across Germany. Spoke to Russian POW – invited him to go too. He declined.