

**Personal Diary and Notes**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Robert L. Fowler**  
**390<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group / Stalag Luft 1**

*Captured December 20, 1943*

*Transported by train to Frankfurt*

*Arrived at Stalag Luft 1, Barth Germany, December 28, 1943*

*German Evacuation- April 30, 1945*

*Contact with Russians- May 1, 1945, 2020 Hours GST*

*Announcement over Radio that Hitler was dead- 2025 May 1, 1945*

*All Hell on the Loose- May 2, 1945*

*Martial Law- May 3, 1945*

*Contact with American Forces- May 4, 1945*

*Airfield cleared of mines and booby traps by our personnel and is now open to incoming and outgoing air traffic. We are expecting Russian planes with authorities to supervise our evacuation- 1955 Hours, May 4, 1945*

*Eisenhower instructions to "stand by"- May 5, 1945*

*May 6, 1945*

*Montgomery is to arrive today or tomorrow to supervise our evacuation.*

*Radio program of BBC asserts that complete surrender of all German forces is expected today (it is a good day)-\*Louise's Birthday, May 6, 1945, and I had expected to be somewhere on the way home and allowed to send her Birthday greetings).*

*\*Robert's younger sister, Eva Louise Fowler*

*We now have many automobiles that have been confiscated and turned over to us by the Russians, also bicycles, motorcycles, generator units (put, puts), horses, wagons, carriages, trucks, tractors, cattle, etc. Our news service personnel have taken over a press in town and going to put out a Liberation Edition.*

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*We have been visited by several Russian Colonels, Generals, and one Marshal.*

*Lots of officers are working on the cars we have. They are of course little Continental models of Fords, Chevrolets, etc. The mule skinnners are handicapped by the inability of their charges to understand English.*

*I have been aching to get on one of these motorcycles. I haven't been on a German motorcycle but once and that was in San Antonio.*

*\*Red and \*Riley are living on the Airdrome. I volunteered to help the Russians repair the motorboats in the harbor, but everyone else has also. They haven't taken us up on it yet. They need them to take to Isle of Rügen.*

*\*Crew from Robert's B-17: Bombardier Robert "Red" Mulloy, Pilot Bill Riley.*

*Many officers and sergeants have packed up and left camp to attempt going to our lines. It is boring and extremely distracting to just sit here and wait although, I realize that many things have to be arranged and set in motion to accomplish our evacuation. We have been promised evacuation by air.*

*\*Bennett has left the camp for American Lines. He probably will write the story for the papers back home.*

*\*Possibly Earnest J. Bennett who may have been in Robert's barracks.*

*BBC announced that \*Lt. Winant has been evacuated. We heard that he was killed in a bombing raid that hit the camp at Frankfurt-on-the-Maine. I last saw him there in December 1943.*

*\*John Gilbert Winant Jr. was the son of the United States Ambassador to Britain during the war, and later a 3 term governor of New Hampshire. He was held as a special prisoner of the SS and was very fortunate to escape execution.*

*Several days ago, just after the Jerries pulled out, our scouting units found a concentration camp over by the airfield. Only 3 or 4 hundred pitiful human specimens were obvious, but the next day two thousand were found in cellars, and many more*

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*dead bodies. Immediately, medical attendants were sent over. A political camp also is near here, in fact, it is in sight of this camp.*

*Just heard that the same Russian Commander that visited us has just cleared Rügen. Five bodies were found day before yesterday over by the bay. I saw the group just before they were buried. One baby German woman's body was found hanging with throat cut yesterday, toward towns. Rex (our mortician who is in my room) was asked to see about burying her and another woman's body that was reported as being in the Flak School. He found that the first woman had already been buried by the civilians. Her husband killed her it was reported. Rex couldn't find the other body.*

*\*Fouts is on the MP force. He looked tired when I saw him yesterday.*

*\*Maybe John T. Fouts who may have been in Robert's barracks.*

*Water and electricity are both being supplied a few hours each day through the efforts of many of our fellow officers and men.*

*May 7, 1945*

*At 1600 hours the BBC states that an hour ago the German Radio broadcast an announcement supposedly authorized by Doenitz that all German forces surrender unconditionally.*

*2000 Hours - we heard that the surrender was made at 2:41 at Reims to U.S., England, and Russia, and it probably be announced as official in a few hours.*

*Today I attended two Russian films- about Sevastopol and troops in action and pictures of the Yalta Conference. The Russians also gave us two performances of stage shows by their equivalent to the U.S.O. Three Russian girls were with them.*

*A British AirBorne Colonel came into camp today. He assured us that everyone back home knew about us and that we will be out of here in a few days, probably to England.*

*2045-BBC proclaims that Victory in Europe Day starts tomorrow. (I haven't heard a cheer yet, except all the noise of celebrating in London over the radio)*

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*Just now (2230 Russian Local Time - 2130 D.B.T.) We learned that the Allies had announced that Stalag Luft 1, Barth, Pommerania, Germany had been liberated and next of kin are being notified.*

*This is the best news we have heard for days. Although we have been liberated since May 1, 1945, I won't feel liberated until I get out of here out from behind barbed wire. "Don't Fence Me In" the No. 1 on the Hit Parade is ironically appropriate for everyone of us here. Since the Jerries pulled out we have been able to hear the Hit Parade which seems to us here as part of our wonderful American scale of living.*

*The boys here are celebrating a bit now by firing rockets and the very pistols that we have picked up here and there.*

*May 8, 1945*

*Today is Victory in Europe Day, but officially it isn't over until 0001, 9th of May. Confusing no end!*

*Today, several parties of us were permitted to go outside the Camp on a sightseeing tour. I remembered the route used over 16 months ago when they brought me in very well. We crossed country over to the Airfield, which was much larger and extensive than I had imagined. There are between 10 to 15 airplanes of every description in various shades of repair. Gliders, JU88s, FW 190s, ME 109, HE 111k, etc.*

*The Concentration camp is located adjacent to the Airdrome - it is surrounded by high tension wires. Also, there are several Arbeit Kommando camps, Italian, French, Polish, etc.*

*I saw Red at the airdrome. He seems to be very busy - said they could handle unlimited planes and looking for them anytime. Using two aircraft command sets for tower set.*

*We went through town, saw Russians herding Kriegsmarines, Wehrmacht, and Luftwaffe personnel. People stopped and looked at us silently, they didn't jeer, and spit on us or make lewd motions like those that I can remember very distinctly 16 months ago. Children run up and try to be friendly and are imposing to a great extent. There is a*

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*red flag in every window on the streets. Very old men and women of every age are predominant.*

*Two Majors of Medical Corp U.S., came into camp - they said our sanitary conditions were good. We should be patient and stand by for a few days for evacuation.*

*We heard over the radio that Lancasters landed in Germany to pick up 4500 POWs.*

*May 9, 1945*

*This morning we gave an impromptu parade for a Russian General who was inspecting our camp. He later made a speech to the effect that we would be leaving within 4 days.*

*Four thousand more POWs were flown out from Lubeck only 9 miles from here.*

*Now that it looks like we will be here for some time we are creating an officer's club in every compound. They won't be sufficient of course, because there are 2000 officers in every compound. The Sergeants are making an NCO club this helps to pass the time. Wing Commander Hilton is in England now.*

*Hooray- today we got enough meat for a genuine steak. The first meat that I have had in 16 months that was cow meat, not horse meat. We may get pork tomorrow.*

*May 10, 1945*

*I went for a walk through the woods and spent some time laying in the sun.*

*American MP came in, also Army photographer.*

*I wrote a letter to the folks which will be taken to the American lines for mailing.*

*May 11, 1945*

*A Beautiful Day-*

*I was summoned to repeat my observation and knowledge of the murder of Lt. Wyman. I only wish I had the information they need, but I feel that I did as well as could be expected.*

*Very good news - We can expect planes tomorrow or Sunday.*

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May 12, 1945

*Personal and barracks inspection this morning.*

*Planes expected to start arriving at 2:00*

May 13, 1945

*Reveille, 4 A.M. Russian Time*

*Marched to Airfield 0600*

*Take off B-17-0918*

*Circled camp and flew over Rostock, Lubeck, Wismar, Hamburg, and Bremen.*

*Landed about 1200 French time near Laon. GI Trucks to Rheins. At GI chow.*

*Trucks back to Rheins RR station. Boarded Hospital train. Saw ... school Bldg, Peace Treaty ... .. (... where the handwriting is illegible)*

*Eisenhowers special Train*

*On the way to French coast 2140 French time*