

C O N F I D E N T I A L

The WAR CRIMES OFFICE

Judge Advocate General's Department --- War Department

United States of America

In the matter of the failure to provide * Perpetuation of Testimony of Donat
American Prisoners of War with proper med- * Francois Dauteuil, 2nd Lt., 074759.
ical care, food and quarters at Buchen- *
wald Concentration Camp, Weimar, Germany *
from on or about 20 August 1944 to October *
19, 1944. *

Taken at: 1214 SCU, Army Ground and Service Forces Redistribution
Station, Atlantic City, N. J.

Date: 14 August 1945.

In the Presence of: John M. Reynolds - Agent S. I. C. FPI Section,
Headquarters Second Service Command, 1270 Sixth
Avenue, New York, N.Y.

Reporter: Lester S. Dickensheets, T/Sgt.

Questions by: John M. Reynolds

- Q. State your name, rank, serial number and permanent home address.
- A. Donat Francois Dauteuil, Second Lt., 0747759; 2523 DuPont Ave., Shreveport, Louisiana.
- Q. State the date and place of your birth and civilian occupation.
- A. 26 February 1921, New Bedford, Massachusetts; employed by the Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company working behind the meat counter in New Bedford, Mass.
- Q. Are you married or single?
- A. Married September 2, 1943 and have one daughter.
- Q. What formal education have you had?
- A. Graduated from New Bedford, Mass. High School January 1940.
- Q. When did you return from overseas?
- A. I arrived in New York 2 June 1945 aboard the U.S.S. Le June, a Navy Transport ship.
- Q. What unit were you attached to at the time?
- A. The 391st Bomb Group, 574 Bomb Squadron - 9th Air Force.
- Q. At what places were you held and state the approximate dates?
- A. I was a B-26 pilot, 391st Bomb Group, 574th Bomb Squadron, 9th Air Force. My plane was shot up over Paris on 27 May 1944, and I bailed out over Pacy, France. I landed near the plane and hid out over night. The Germans found my parachute and were looking for me. The next day I walked to Vernon, France and stayed with a family named Cressy. Mrs Cressy was a widow and was the caretaker of the town cemetery. I lived with the Cressy's for nearly 2 months. Prior to

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reaching the Cressy's I had been referred to the Chief of the French Resistance movement in that area who, after satisfying himself that I was not a German in disguise, referred me to Mrs Cressy. I learned that she had cared for at least 10 other Allied fliers who had been shot down. About 24 July 1944 I started for Paris. The plan was to contact the Resistance there and to be flown back to England. Another flier, ^{1st Lt} Lt Kennis, RCAF, and myself were driven to Paris by a fellow known as Jack the Belgian who was supposed to be one of the Resistance but who turned out to be working for the Gestapo. He took us to the Piccadilly Hotel in Paris where he left us with the manager or owner, a fellow known as Louie the Jew. He also turned out to be working for the Gestapo. We were there for two days. On the second day two men came to the hotel. Louie the Jew took us down to their auto and told us that these men would take us to Spain where we would be flown to England. The two men instead took us to Gestapo Headquarters. That was the 27 July 1944. That night I was taken to Frenz Prison in Paris. Then I was taken to the Buchenwald Concentration Camp near Weimar, Germany and arrived there on or about 20 August 1944. I was there nine weeks and was then taken to Stalag Luft III, Sagen, Germany, arriving there 21 October 1944 and remained there until January 28, 1945. From there I went to Nuremberg, Germany Stalag Luft III arriving 4 February 1945. I then moved in early April 1945 to Mooseburg, Germany, Stalag VII A and was there until liberated by the 14th Armored Division of the 3rd Red Army on or about 29 April 1945.

Q. Are you familiar with the circumstance of the failure to provide American Prisoners of War with proper medical care, food and quarters at Buchenwald Concentration Camp, Weimar, Germany from about 20 August 1944 to 19 October 1944?

A. Yes.

Q. State what you know of your own knowledge concerning those conditions.

A. We spent 5 weeks in the open. We had 49 blankets for 160 men. The only clothing we had was one pair of trousers and one shirt, both very thin. We had no shoes or stockings. The last 2 weeks in this open lager it rained most every day. We had to sleep right on the ground. Cases of pneumonia were breaking out right and left. At the end of the 5th week we were put into a barracks with French, Polish and Russian civilian prisoners. The total roster was 750 men to a barracks. At the end of 7 weeks we finally talked them into giving us our shoes and stockings. The rations during our stay at Buchenwald were as follows: one cup of weak clove tea at 6 in the morning at which time we were also given our daily bread ration consisting of 1/7 loaf bread; at noon we were given 1 small bowl of grass soup which was full of maggots. We got nothing more at night. Twice a week we were given a small piece of margarine and 3 times a week we were given 2 small boiled potatoes. During the period of 5 weeks that we were in the open compound without shoes or stockings many men received cuts on their feet which became badly infected. Their feet and legs swelled up to where you could not distinguish an ankle from the rest of the leg. They had to be assisted to urinals and to roll calls. Many men got pneumonia while in this open compound and no man was taken to the hospital until he was pretty far gone. I know of 2 American Prisoners of War and one British Prisoner of War who died after being taken to the hospital with pneumonia. When we left for Sagen, Germany 19 October 1944 12 American and British Prisoners of War were left behind with pneumonia. I have never heard their fate.

Q. Do you know names of any of the 3 Prisoners of War who died in the hospital at Buchenwald?

A. I recall one. His name was 1st Lt. William Beck from Long Beach, California. He was a P-47 pilot in E.T.O.

Q. How do you know they died?

A. 1st Lt. Michael Petrich, Los Angeles, California went to the hospital to visit Lt Beck shortly before we left for Sagen. He was told that Beck had died as well as the 2 others who had died earlier. Their bodies were cremated in one of the 3 crematories in camp. Those crematories were kept pretty busy.

Q. How do you know they were cremated?

A. We asked the German civilian who was in charge of the block if there would be a burial. He said that all persons who died at this camp were cremated. There

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was never any burial service and the bodies were not seen. We assumed from that that they had been cremated.

- Q. Who was this German civilian, your informant?
- A. He was a German ^{political} prisoner. He had a club foot.
- Q. Was any treatment ever given men whose legs became infected?
- A. The only treatment was given by German or prisoner medics. They came around once and awhile and cut scabs off and swabbed sores. They bandaged the sores.
- Q. Do you know if any American Prisoners of War in your group had to have a limb amputated as a result of infection?
- A. I do not believe so. The only reason was that were moved to Sagen and got more treatment there.
- Q. Did you get an infection?
- A. Yes, on my hand.
- Q. How do you account for this high frequency of infection?
- A. The soil was polluted and everything was filthy. I got my infection from a tiny scratch that I would never have noticed any place else.
- Q. Were epidemics prevalent in your section of camp?
- A. There was an epidemic of dysentery and of scabies.
- Q. How much weight did you lose at Buchenwald?
- A. I lost about 40 lbs.
- Q. Did you get any Red Cross Parcels at all?
- A. None at all. The Red Cross was not allowed in this camp at all. For that reason I was not listed as a prisoner of war until we arrived at Sagen, Germany 21 October 1944.
- Q. How large was the barracks in which you were finally moved after 5 weeks in the open?
- A. About 1 1/2 times the size of American single story barracks. There were about 750 in that building and there were all nationalities represented. All of our group, about 155 American and British were there. The bunks were in five tiers, the first on the floor and the top one maybe a foot from the ceiling. Ten men were supposed to sleep on a tier and that was impossible unless all slept sideways and facing one way. As a result 3 or 4 men from our tier slept on the tables and chairs.
- Q. When did they issue shoes and stockings to you?
- A. After we had been in the barracks for a couple of weeks.
- Q. What latrine facilities were there?
- A. We had an outside pit for our compound. It could accommodate maybe 15 men. There were probably 2500 prisoners in the compound.
- Q. How long did they keep you standing for roll call?
- A. They would call us out at 6 P.M. and keep us standing in place for an hour or more. This was an extreme hardship on men with dysentery. They were always soiling their clothes. The German guards clubbed men who attempted to go to the latrine during formations.

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- Q. Do you know the name of the German Commandant?
- A. Yes, his name was Karl Koch. I believe he was a Major.
- Q. Can you identify any of the other German officers or guards?
- A. They were SS guards. I can only identify one, a Corporal Hoffmann. He was about 5'4", about 155 lbs, dark complexion, about 40 years old. He had a terrible reputation in the camp. I saw him knock a RAF non-commissioned officer down in our group for not standing at attention in the German manner though he was standing at attention according to the British Army.
- Q. Who was spokesman for your group?
- A. Squadron Leader Lamerson, RAF, from New Zealand.
- Q. Can you give names of any American Prisoners of War who were with you at this camp?
- A. Yes, 2nd Lt Stratton M. Appleman, 0673709; 2nd Lt Frederick Carr, 0818597.
- Q. Do you know anything further to state concerning your imprisonment at Buchenwald?
- A. It has been brought to my attention that the group that I departed with from Buchenwald met death by execution. That is not the case. We left Buchenwald 19 October 1944 and were taken to Stalag Luft III, Sagen, Germany arriving on 21 October 1944.
- Q. Is there anything further?
- A. Yes. The only reason that we were finally moved into a barracks from the open compound is that the barracks we moved into were vacated. It formerly had housed 300 children from the ages of 2 to 12. They were eliminated in some manner which I don't know, but the common understanding among the prisoners was that they were killed.
- Q. On conclusion, did your group ever receive any explanation from the German as to why you were put in Buchenwald rather than a Stalag Luft?
- A. Some German civilian representing Dulag Luft came to Buchenwald during our last week there. He told us that they had had a rumor that we were there and had come to verify it. He attempted to apologise for your confinement in this place by saying that it was "all a mistake", that they had lost track of us from the time we left Paris. He then made us fill out forms asking questions as to unit we were in, squadron commander, type aircraft and crew members. He then threatened to leave any who did not answer all these questions in the hands of the SS at Buchenwald. Some of our group who had been so beaten down by their confinement at Buchenwald were intimidated into giving this information.
- Q. Can you give any description of this German civilian?
- A. No. He seemed to command much respect. I suspect he may have been a high officer in the Luftwaffe.
- Q. Is there anything further?
- A. Yes, when we arrived at Buchenwald we were stripped by the SS guards and they kept our clothes and all our personal effects including, in my case, wedding ring, cadet graduation ring, wrist watch and cigarette lighter. We received the clothes back but none of the other things.

Donat Francois Dauteuil
 Donat Francois Dauteuil, 2nd Lt.

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State of New Jersey)
) SS
 County of Atlantic)

I, Donat Françoise Dauteuil, of lawful age, being duly sworn on oath, state that I have read the foregoing transcription of my interrogation and all answers contained therein are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Donat Françoise Dauteuil
 Donat Françoise Dauteuil, 2nd Lt.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 18th day of August 1945.

Benjamin S. Harrison
 BENJAMIN S. HARRISON
 Captain, Infantry
 Summary Court

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, John M. Reynolds, Agent, S.I.C., certify that on 14 August 1945, personally appeared before me Donat Françoise Dauteuil, Second Lieutenant, 074759, and gave the foregoing answers to the several questions set forth.

Place: Atlantic City, N.J.

Date: 14 August 1945

John M. Reynolds
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