

Ex-POW Gains 72 Pounds at Home

(Pictures to the Left)




Clark Township—Seven months of life on the farm and home cooking can go far toward erasing the physical traces, if not the memories, of 119 days as a starving prisoner of war in Germany. Ask the man who's been one—in this case the former Pfc. Frederick J. Schieferstein Jr., 24, son of P. J. Schieferstein Sr. and the late Mrs. Schieferstein of Madison Hill Rd.

Kept Scrapbook
Prominent in Fred's war scrapbook are two photographs of himself: One as a 135-pound, freshly-liberated infantryman in the uniform of the British Army, by which he had just been freed from the hands of the Germans; the other as his almost-normal, 210-pound self, back in Clark Township. The two pictures were taken just a year apart, the first in April, 1945, in Brussels, Belgium; the second in April, 1946, on the family farm where he helps his father in farm work and with a roadside produce stand.

The events leading to these two widely-different pictures of the same man began on Dec. 17, 1944, during the Battle of the Bulge. Private Schieferstein was wounded in the foot while fighting with the 424th Infantry, 106th Division, attached to the First Army, at the Luxembourg-Germany border. He was captured, and his wounds were treated by German doctors on the front lines.

After being sent to a gathering point, the American prisoners were taken to a prison at Limburg, Germany, and from there were shipped out to work camps. Schieferstein during his imprisonment was in several prisons as well as several "Kommandos" or working camps.

To Weak to Work
"We only pretended to work," he related, "for we were actually much too weak to do much work." They had us cutting wood for fuel for a hospital. Our one meal a day was at noon, when we were each given a bowl of watery soup. Some mornings, we were each given a cup of hot tea. We also got an average of about six slices of bread a week while working.

"The Germans took their prisoners' shoes away so they couldn't escape, and in their place, gave them wooden clog shoes which were extremely uncomfortable. They also took away overcoats and sweaters. In the extreme cold, Schieferstein suffered frozen feet, and is still receiving treatments for this condition.

To alleviate their hunger, Schieferstein related, he and his fellow prisoners were sometimes lucky enough to get into some farmer's produce, such as raw potatoes which they promptly "bored."

Meanwhile, Private Schieferstein's family received word on Jan. 17, 1945, that he was missing in action. A POW postcard he sent from prison did not reach them until Mar. 30, through the Red Cross. And on Friday, Apr. 13, Private Schieferstein found reason to doubt all stories of Friday the 13th being a "bad luck day." It was, instead, the luckiest of all days for him.

Dodged Own Shells
On that day, he related, "We were working outside the jail, near Magdeburg, Germany. Fighting was going on, with the Americans and British advancing. We were taken inside the jail for protection from the shells of our own countrymen."

One of the German guards in charge of this particular group of prisoners must have had a kind spot in his heart, for when he heard that the SS Troopers were looking for Allied prisoners with the intention of killing them before they might be liberated, the guard took six Americans, including Schieferstein, into the cellar of a house next door to the jail.

"All six of us were saved and liberated," Schieferstein explained.

THEY—AND NOW—Fred J. Schieferstein Jr., 24, of Clark Township, is shown above in photographs taken exactly one year apart, the left one in April, 1945, just after he had been liberated from a German work camp by the British Army (hence the British uniform); and the right one in April, 1946, as he stood, 72 pounds heavier, in the yard of his farm home in Madison Hill Rd. The former Pfc. Schieferstein lost 72 pounds during 119 days as a prisoner of war of the Germans. He was captured during the Battle of the Bulge.

Variety Show Given at Regional

Springfield—Under the auspices of the Music and Dramatic Departments of the Regional High School, a Variety Show was presented last night in the school.

A one-act play entitled "Georgie Porgie" was staged by Robert Honecker, Virginia Schramm, Betty Ficke, Orland Reid, Betty Jane Knauss, Valerie Palmer, Helen Gunser and Kay Titty.

The Regional Swing Band played. Members are: Dudley Schneider, Wilbur Thomas, John Syich, Edward Leonard, Lloyd Scott, Harry Spencer, John Kilberg, William Selander, Robert Schramm, Virginia Schramm, David McCarthy and Carl Dahlgren.

Dancing specialties were performed by Cecille and Vivian Grate, Margaret Sorge and Lucille Metesner. A magic act was given by William Pollock; a piano solo was played by Paul Hildebrandt and a specialty number was presented by Jack Ambrose and Ray Heilmanski.

Frank Petzinger directed the show and Donald Simms was master of ceremonies.

The proceeds of the show will be used to purchase records for the music students and plays for the speech classes of the school.

Regional PTA Elects Officers

Springfield — Mrs. H. Dunn of Countryside, New Providence, was elected president of the Regional High School Parent-Teacher Association recently in the school. Other officers are: Recording secretary, Mrs. Dallas Wenman; corresponding secretary, Miss Eleanor Murphy; and treasurer, Mrs. Watts Chapin, Springfield.

Vice-presidents representing the various towns are: Mrs. Roy Minion, Mountainside; Mrs. Henry McMullen, Springfield; Mrs. William J. Martin, Clark Township; Mrs. Fred Cowell, Garwood; Mrs. Marie Pitzen, Kenilworth; and Mrs. Theodore Kilgren, New Providence.

The newly elected officers will meet Monday to discuss plans for the coming year. Committee chairman will be appointed at a meeting June 17 in the school.

Baptist Mission Group

Margaret Wick Bride Today

Westfield—Miss Margaret Wick, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Howard C. Wick of Sylvania Pl. and George Dudley Braun, son of Mr. and Mrs. George S. Braun of Harrison Ave., will be married today at 4 p. m. in the home of the bride-elect's parents.

Given in marriage by her father, Miss Wick will wear a gown of white satin, lace trimmed, with a sweetheart neckline and medium train. She will wear the bridal veil of her sister, Mrs. John R. P. coast, the former Katherine Wick of Connersville, Ind., which will be held with a cap of orange blossoms. Her bouquet will be gardenias and stephanotis.

Mrs. George Rodney Wick will be her sister-in-law's attendant. She will wear a gown of mystic blue chiffon and will carry yellow flowers, and will have matching flowers in her hair.

Ralph L. Braun, twin brother of the bridegroom-elect, will be best man.

After a short wedding trip, the couple will reside in New York City.

Miss Wick is a graduate of Westfield High School, Wells College, Aurora, N. Y.; and the Katherine Gibbs Secretarial School, New York.

Mr. Braun attended Westfield schools and is a graduate of the University of Virginia and Harvard Law School. He was released recently from the Army as a captain after five years of service.

Mr. and Mrs. Braun entertained at a dinner party last night in the Park Hotel, Plainfield, for their son and his fiancée and their bridal party before the rehearsal for the wedding.

Communion Services Arranged

Westfield—Holy Communion will be observed tomorrow at the 11 a. m. service in the First Congregational Church. A number of new members received by letters of transfer and upon confession of faith will be welcomed. The Rev. Don Ivan Patch, pastor, will make a brief address at the Communion table on the subject "The Power of Experience."

The Rev. George Y. Flint, superintendent of the Newark District, will be the guest preacher at the morning service in the First Metho-

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Tue, Nov 21, 2017