

NAVAL OFFICER'S STORY OF CAPTURE BY SUB AND ESCAPE

London, Oct. 30.—(Correspondence of the Associated Press.)—Here is the story of Lieut. E. V. Isaacs of the United States navy, watch officer of the American transport President Lincoln when that vessel was torpedoed in the Atlantic on May 21 last. He was captured by the German submarine which sank the ship. When off the Scandinavian coast he attempted to swim ashore but was caught. On his way to a prison camp in Germany he jumped from a train but was recaptured. He escaped from the prison and swam across the Rhine river to safety in Switzerland.

The story has been told briefly in the Associated Press despatches but its details are so filled with the spirit of adventure as to be well worth the telling.

When the President Lincoln went to the bottom of the ocean Lieutenant Isaacs, who is from Cresco, Iowa, climbed upon a raft. Soon after the submarine emerged and her commander demanded the captain of the President Lincoln as prisoner. The survivors told him they believed the captain had gone down with the ship, but that they were aware of that but, if possible, the captain being a prisoner.

While this was going on Lieutenant Isaacs said he lay on the raft with his arms under his uniform but without success, and he was ordered aboard the submarine. It was the day and her commander, Capt. Remy, had resided in the United States and apparently spoke English fluently. "Apparently Remy had been affected by our civilization," said the Lieutenant, "as he treated me pleasantly while inquiring as to the whereabouts of the skipper of the boat. I was told that I would tell him where he would find our captain or go to Germany myself as a prisoner. I could conform to his first command and, of course would not have had I been able to."

The young officer said that he was given a good bunk on the submarine and four good meals daily including meat, eggs and real coffee. The following day as the submarine was cruising about seeking new victims he was sighted by two American destroyers. "While the destroyers were plunging toward us we were getting under water as rapidly as possible and finally stopped at a depth of 60 meters," Lieutenant Isaacs said. "When the depth bombs began exploding every German was at his station tense and prettily scared. Now and then a machine gunner would fire. It was about 300 yards away from us. They were recording the positions with their listening devices. Then would come a depth charge. It is difficult to describe the sensation, but it seemed to me much like a dog shaking a rat and it was anything but pleasant to be in the rat. With each explosion a look of horror would flash over the faces of the Germans for they expected every moment that one of the charges would be fired a bit closer and they knew their craft could not withstand it."

Two many destroyers in that area the German fleet headed for the Kiel canal the next night. When off the Scandinavian coast Lieutenant Isaacs said he decided to attempt to swim to shore when the submarine was at a depth of 60 meters. He took his life-belt on, he was just slipping over the side shortly after mid-night when he was discovered by Remy himself and pulled aboard.

On arrival at Wilhelmshaven he was kept three days in a land prison, carefully guarded and badly fed. During this time he was taken to the German battleship Kaiser Wilhelm II, flag of the fleet, and questioned by a staff officer.

"I finally told him that the United States would send so many men to France that the battle lines wouldn't hold them," said the Lieutenant. "I was then taken to Karlsruhe and placed in an hotel room by myself the first day. The next day I was put into another room with eight French officers. I had been learned in the meantime that I spoke French. These officers were known as the "listening rooms," and they were rightly named. The Frenchmen and I found three dictaphones and distributed them. The next day I was placed in a room with three French officers. There were dictaphones in the room."

After a few days at Karlsruhe, the lieutenant was started for a preliminary detaining camp at Villingen, Baden. In the railway carriage with him were two guards. He was unaware of conditions at the Villingen camp and decided to try to get away from the train if the slightest opportunity came.

"One of the guards seemed to be dozing while the other was interested in watching out the other side of the carriage when I dove through the carriage window," the officer said. "The train was moving more rapidly than I believed, for I received an awful bump on the head and both of my knees were cut on the iron ties of the parallel track.

"I scrambled into the brush as best I could. Very soon a bullet whistling about me as the train had been stopped and guards were on my track. I could not make speed in the condition I was in, so to save my life I held up my hands in token of surrender when the guards were about 75 yards away.

"When they came up to me one of them welcomed me with a blow with his rifle. I was beaten and kicked and knocked down seven or eight times before they finally loaded me back into the train.

Arriving at the camp I was swathed in paper bandages—they have very little cloth in Germany you know. Had it not been for food supplied by the Red Cross I'm sure I would have starved to death but with that we fared very well and within a month I had regained my strength. There were about 150 Russian officers and 75 American officers in the camp.

Lieutenant Isaacs and other officers immediately began to lay plans for escape by collecting necessary articles, such as pieces of wire and rope, and short boards with which to make a ladder if necessary. They also traded some of their food to a Russian for a pair of wire cutters he had smuggled into the camp. Three different times they had their escape plans completed, each time with the connivance of a Russian, and each time they had reason to believe the Germans had been apprised and they did not try.

"Finally we learned that they were to take all the Russians away on Oct. 7 and, working without the Russians, we planned to try again on the night of Oct. 8. Fifteen feet from our barred windows was a high barbed wire fence which turned inward at the top much the same as at our internment camps in the States. Between the fence and our window was a ditch seven feet deep filled with scrapped barbed wire. We had most of the bars of the window in the room in which I was imprisoned, using an improvised saw one of the officers had obtained from a Russian.

"Two other officers with me were to use two tennis court markers, eighteen feet long, as a bridge from our window to the top of the barbed-wire fence. The wooden markers which we calculated would barely hold us when strapped together, were to be brought into our room after the roll-call at night.

"We figured that soon after the attempt the guards would be attracted from the main gate, so three officers elected to try a dash there at the proper moment. Three others were to attempt to get through the fence with the wire cutters, while two others planned to get over. We had fixed the electric-light wires so that they could quickly short-circuit them. This was to be done exactly at 10:30 o'clock, when every man was to be ready to go.

"I will tell the name of only one of the officers, as it does not show the fate of the others. He was Corporal Harold B. Willis of Boston, a member of the Lafayette Escadrille. He was one of those who were to dash through the gate, and he was to rendezvous two miles from camp.

"When the lights were extinguished by the short-circuiting, we forced the bars as quickly as possible, and ran out the two markers strapped together, and dashed across the ditch as fast as possible in the short time we had. These was no moon but the sky was clear.

"One of the window bars stuck, and we made considerable noise forcing it, but it didn't take us long to start the risky trip to the top of the fence. I got outside all right, but there were guards both to my right and left. There were no protecting trees, so I ran as fast as I could with bullets whistling about me.

"I met Willis at the rendezvous and we set out southwest. We travelled at night, slept in the day and lived on raw vegetables we took from gardens. At last we reached the Rhine at a point between Schaffhausen and Basle.

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CZECHO-SLOVAKS MAINTAIN RAILWAY LINE TO IRKUTSK
Peking, Nov. 20.—One of the immediate results of the Czecho-Slovaks' success in Siberia is the re-opening of normal traffic on the Trans-Siberian Railway, at least as far as Irkutsk, the service between Vladivostok and Harbin having been in operation for some time and not strain upon the imagination to anticipate through communication to Europe at no distant date.

MACHINE GUN BULLETS EFFECT ON THE TANKS Cannot Penetrate Armor, But They Beat Off Fine Steel Dust That Is Irritating.
London, Oct. 30.—(Correspondence of the Associated Press.)—Machine gun bullets sprayed against the sides of a tank produce a queer effect within it, says one British army officer, who has spent three months fighting with the tank in France. The bullet, he says, cannot pierce the armor, but it does knock off on the inside a thin flake of steel that pulverizes and flies in all directions. It gets into the faces and hands of the crew and stings them like a strong wind on a cold day. The surgeons have found that a simple bath of iodine solution will heal the pain and prevent infection. Describing the scene within a tank which is being hit with machine-gun bullets the officer said:

HUNS PLANNED TO STAY IN NORTHERN FRANCE Changed Names of Streets in All the Towns They Captured—Dreams Didn't Come True.
With British-American Forces in France, Oct. 26.—(Correspondence of the Associated Press.)—That Germany expected to occupy for a long time, and perhaps permanently, the northern portion of France, is shown by the fact that the Hun military authorities changed the names of all the important streets in the large towns which fell into their hands. There is scarcely a village where a distinctly German designation was not given to a road or street.

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and permitted them only the most ordinary privileges. When the Americans and British came in, the people wept with joy at their deliverance from their oppressors. It is estimated that five per cent of the inhabitants of all the countries now at war are under arms, the percentage ranging from 02 in the case of Liberia to 10 in the case of Germany, which has made by far the heaviest call on its male population.