

Interviewee:	<u>HARMAN</u> , Bernard S.	Date:	September 12, 1995
Interviewer:	Philip G. Solomon		
Audio tapes:	2 English	Transcript	1 vol. (unpaged) English
Restrictions:	None		

SUMMARY

Bernard Harman enlisted in the United States Air Force in November 1941, trained as a radio operator and gunner, and flew to Scotland with a B-17 "Flying Fortress" crew. They joined 388th Bomb Group in England for missions over France and Germany, until October 14, 1943 when their plane was shot down. He describes his fear of dying as the plane crashed at Weilburg. Because he discarded his "H" dog tags before he was captured, he was never identified as a Jew.

After six weeks at a German military base, he was sent to Frankfurt with other prisoners of war, where guards had to shield them from hostile civilians. He was transported by train to Krems, Austria, where he spent the balance of the war in *Stalag* 17 B, for enlisted men only. He details the extreme cold, limited food and water, lack of medical treatment, and lengthy roll calls. A visit from the Red Cross is mentioned, and their food parcels are said to have saved POW'S from starvation, even though he claims that the Germans took many of the Red Cross parcels for themselves. The prisoners were able to listen to BBC broadcasts. Descriptions of camp life, and of various events, as well as several poems recorded in a journal Mr. Harman kept while in prison are quoted during the interview.

In April 1945, the camp was evacuated, and he was led on a 20 day march toward the American lines with several thousand other POW's. He describes the ordeal, ending in Nancy, France on V-E day. On the road he witnessed Germans shooting Jews in forced labor groups when they could no longer keep up. While recuperating at Camp Lucky Strike near Le Havre, France, Mr. Harman met a friend who had been in a German camp for Jewish POW's, whom he describes as a "skeleton case", brought in on a stretcher. After a month, Harman was shipped to Ft. Dix, N. J. for army discharge.

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SUBJECT HEADINGS

World War, 1939 - 1945 Personal narrative - American
Prisoners of war - American
Red Cross