

29th Armoured Brigade

REME

BLA

26-4-45

Dear Beatty,

I'm afraid it's a long time since I last wrote but to say we've been busy is an understatement of fact.

We're in quite a large town now and are living in a beautiful flat, which belonged to a rich German family. We threw them out and made ourselves very comfortable.

I went to Belsen concentration camp the day it was found. I'm afraid any spark of sympathy I might have had for the Germans is now gone. The place is quite beyond me to describe. Out of 60,000 people alive in there when we got in, only 8000 are expected to live. On the first day we buried 7000 corpses and they're still at it. The commandant of the place was handed over to the inmates. He didn't die very pleasantly but it was certainly coming to him.

We're employing a lot of Germans cleaning up bomb damage, and a man complained to me through an interpreter that he had a weak heart and found the work too hard. I gave him a bigger shovel. He hasn't complained since.

We're doing all kinds of odd jobs nowadays. I specialise in opening safes with an oxyacetylene cutter. These safes are mostly in Nazi party offices. The owners of the keys have fled. The first one we did took us a whole day. Now we open any safe in under an hour. I don't know how I'll go back to an honest living.

There are hundreds of thousands of foreigners (Russians, Poles, French, etc.) on the roads, wandering about. We can't feed them so they have taken to looting. They're an awful problem.

Well let's hope this job is over soon,

Love from Bosco

PS Please tell mother I received the socks OK and they're fine. I don't need any darning wool.