

From the Testimony of Don Krausz about the First Night of the Death March

So the first night we marched fifty-three kilometers. Now, for a soldier with a pack and a rifle, a hundred and twenty bullets, to march fifty-three kilometers is nothing. An English soldier is trained to march thirty miles and thirty miles is approximately forty-three kilometers. Without any trouble. People in our condition, it was a death sentence. And anybody who couldn't walk was shot. They were shooting people next to me. We were walking over the corpses. I can still picture those corpses, what they looked like. An old man lying there, with white hair and a big pool of blood around his head, lying there like this. His mouth open, his eyes staring open straight at the sky. Shot. And we walked over him. So Otto and I couldn't keep up, we didn't have the strength. And we started dropping back to where most of the shooting was. And then some of the Dutchmen came. In the case of Otto, they picked him up and they carried him, physically. Otto was eleven years old and they thought he was six, that's what he looked like. I was fourteen years old and they thought I was eleven, that's what I looked like. In my case, one man held me here, one man held me here and they dragged me, they pulled me. But still, fifty-three kilometers is a long way. No stopping. And then again, I said you've got to be lucky. We were marching and I think we stopped...yes, I don't know whether we stopped or what. No, I remember what it was. We were not stopped. We came past a big wagon which was being pushed and pulled by prisoners and the wagon - say this is the wagon - was heaped as high as you could think with the belongings of the SS. And all these things had fallen off. It was too much on the wagon. Had fallen off and people were picking it up and putting back again. And there was an officer standing there and he suddenly points and he says, "You, come here!" They load the wagon and they tell me to climb on top and to make sure that nothing falls off. I got on top and that is the last that I remember. I must have passed out. I woke up again when everything fell off again including myself, but it was night, it was in a forest. I don't know if there was a moon or not, but it was very, very dark, so in the confusion I went

to the back of the wagon and I helped with the pushing and what do I see hanging in front of me, right in front of my nose is a German soldier's haversack, kitbag, rucksack. And in the meantime, my Dutch group is walking next to me. I put my hand in the rucksack and I find there's a loaf of bread there. The loaf of bread goes into my shirt. I wait until it's again dark, possible a cloud over the moon or something, and I go back to my column, I take the loaf of bread. One-third went to a friend of mine, a Dutchmen, one-third went to Otto, I had the other. That was the only food that we had, and that was fifty-three kilometers.

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