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additional Jewish refugees. This information comes from declassified escape reports in the archives at Maxwell Field.

In the meantime my ankle was slowly getting better and by the middle of November, I was able to move about with minimum help. Frank's knee had also mended. We began to know and appreciate our hosts at the farm. Sam Mitic was, I believe, the prewar owner of the farm, and Goraje Seliste was his daughter-in-law. Sam's son had been killed earlier in the war. Sam was 76 years old at that time and his daughter-in-law was perhaps in her mid-thirties. The farm was small and I am not sure what crops were raised before the war, although there were orchards.

The rocks everywhere certainly would have made farming very difficult. Sam had a long broomstick-size pole he used for exercises and would stand in front of us with both hands holding the pole while twisting himself around this pole in complex ways. He would then challenge any of us to repeat his contortions and whenever we failed he would laugh heartily at us and swear in Serbian-Croatian. Sam had a very long grey-white handlebar mustache. It was so long he could wind it once around his ears and he was fond of doing so frequently. Frank Oliver also had a mustache. But Frank's was pitch black and short with a Groucho appearance. When the "old man" would curl his mustache around his ears, Frank would immediately simulate wrapping his black mustache around his own ears twice instead of just once.

This would prompt some more violent Serbian-Croatian cussing. Sam also owned his own copper still. On at least one occasion I recall, Sam began his production of Slivovitz. He was extremely disturbed over a decision by the communist commissar to confiscate the only cow Sam had left.

The cow was butchered and only a very small part was returned to Sam. It was a very thin animal and almost appeared to be diseased. I advised our crew not to eat any of it. But back to the distilling of Slivovitz. Throughout this particular day, Sam was collecting the distillate in a glass and drinking it as fast as it was being produced. He kept drinking all day, offering a drink now and then to us. By evening he was thoroughly looped and was cussing anything and everything in sight, especially the communists. This was dangerously unhealthy for Sam and so his daughter-in-law put him to bed.

During our stay at the farm we were fed whatever Sam and his daughter-in-law had to eat - practically always boiled cabbage and very dark black bread. I don't believe any of us lost weight on this diet, but I do remember the arguments we would have over the excess "gas" that would float over our long common sleeping bunk.

While we were in Yugoslavia we were aided significantly by the ability of Harold Sykes to understand some of their language. Harold was a native born Czechoslovakian and although he was not fluent, we did manage simple conversation with his help. Some of the language spoken probably was Arabic or Turkish because some of these people were Muslims.

We were never quite sure who had what background. I learned only recently from an escape report I found at Maxwell AFB that the partisan group near Glina was a Muslim brigade. I think it was the communist commissar who let it be known early after our arrival that for the duration of the war a policy had been put in place directing that any Yugoslavian woman who got pregnant would be executed and the man responsible would join her. We did not test the truth of his statement.

As the ranking officers of our crew, Frank Oliver and I drew the questions and criticisms of some of the partisan leaders. They

would ask us why they were not getting more help from the Americans to fight the Germans or to supply their troops. Generally, Frank and I could offer very little response to them because it was true they were operating without most of the necessities. Their weapons generally were taken from the enemy they killed. Later, when we approached the coast of Yugoslavia, we did observe physical evidence of America's assistance. The problem was that these supplies were not being delivered to the fighting men but instead were in the possession of the "politicos". Additionally, much of the material was being identified as Russian.

Sometimes the partisans would invite us to go along on one of their forays to ambush or sabotage some enemy activity. We declined each time, explaining we were trained as fliers, would get in their way more than help them, and really needed to return to our base as soon as possible to resume efforts we were trained to do. We apparently were not too far away from enemy activity because the partisans would frequently leave for a few days and return, occasionally with walking wounded. Carl Voss reported he and some of the crew were strafed by a German plane while walking to Glina village. They saved themselves by jumping off the road into the ruins of a stone farm house.

During one of the trips to the village, some of the crew came back with colorful, warm Yugoslavian blankets purchased with money from their escape kits. They sure came in handy because the nights at the farm were getting very cold. Frank Oliver and I did not visit Glina until the latter period we were at the farm due to our leg and ankle problems. We talked while the other crew members were gone and he helped me a lot when my mind would start a retrospect debate of "good decision/bad decision" about the bailout and how much further we could have flown. These discussions would usually end with Frank assuring me all the crew members agreed the right decision was made at the right time and no one wanted to tangle with the coastal range in front of us, either in a plane or parachute, or risk ditching our B-24 in the Adriatic.

Essentially, we seemed to be in a safe area controlled by the partisans who were making an attempt to return to normal life. For example near the farmhouse where we were being kept they had started a school and required the children to attend, a sharp contrast to prewar policy in that country. We saw no first hand evidence of German activity or of the notorious Ustase (the German-Italian sponsored radical Croatian nationalist group). The Ustase reputation for horrible atrocities was a verified fact and even the Nazis had repudiated them by this time in the war. One of these atrocities took place in the village of Glina before the partisans successfully seized control of the area. In this instance all the male inhabitants of Glina were herded into the church which was set afire while the Ustase waited with guns and shot any who tried to escape the flames.

Sometimes we would see vapor trails as our planes crossed over Yugoslavia bound for targets. JU-52's flew regularly over us, probably between Zagreb and Sarejevo, in the morning hours. Other than that and news of partisan exploits, the war for us had effectively stopped during the month at the farm near Glina. We kept pondering when and how we were going to get back to Italy.

After a time, in addition to the gaseous problem mentioned earlier, we all started having trouble with lice and had to take turns picking them off each other. When we returned one of the first actions was a thorough delousing.

Yearning for home and a desire for resolution of our status was in our minds constantly. Sometimes tempers grew a bit short. We kept wondering what was happening in the war. At home, our