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Audio Link 13.1

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Tom Boardman recalls two instances of Corporal Leo Britt's working with POW actors: his disregard of rank in dealing with officer-actors, and his patience in dealing with actors whose minds had been dulled by long incarceration.

He would take the officer class of actor under his wing and really dominate them. He was a dominating character. Knew what he wanted. If they couldn't do it, he'd show them how to do it and how he wanted it to be done, shall I say. And in the end, he finished up with some really professional shows. He brought up the novice, as you were, to a professional standard. He was really brilliant, in my opinion. . . . He knew if they weren't playing it as he thought it should be played, he wouldn't hesitate and say, "Oh, no, no, no, not that way! No, do it this way," you know. And he brought out the best in people.

But I remember watching—it seemed a bit stupid really. One of these plays . . . a chap would have to get out of bed and get dressed, and he had virtually forgotten how to get dressed. And Leo [Britt] would say, "Here you go, you put your trousers on, you tuck your shirt in, and all that . . . on like that"— [Leo] had to show him how to go through the routine of getting out of bed and getting dressed, because he'd virtually forgotten. . . . He was only expected to do it in mime. He hadn't any trousers to put on [Laughs]; no shirt to put on. But [Britt] had to go through it with him to show him what he wanted on that.