

RESTRICTED

WAR DEPARTMENT The Adjutant General's Office Washington

AG 383.6 (31 Jul 43) OB-S-B-M

KLS/el-2B-939 Pentagon

6 August 1943

SUBJECT: Amended Instructions Concerning Publicity in Connection with Escaped Prisoners of War, to Include Evaders of Capture in Enemy or Enemy-Occupied Territory and Internees in Neutral Countries.

TO: The Commanding Generals,
Army Ground;
Army Air Forces;
The Commander-in-Chief, Southwest Pacific Area;
The Commanding Generals,
Theaters of Operations;
Defense Commands;
Departments;
Base Commands;
The Commanding Officers,
Base Commands;
Director, Bureau of Public Relations.

1. Publication or communication to any unauthorized persons of experiences of escape or evasion from enemy-occupied territory, internment in a neutral country, or release from internment not only furnishes useful information to the enemy but also jeopardizes future escapes, evasions and releases.
2. Personnel will not, unless authorized by the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, War Department General Staff, publish in any form whatever or communicate either directly, or indirectly, to the press, radio or an unauthorized person any account of escape or evasion of capture from enemy or enemy-occupied territory, or internment in a neutral country either before or after repatriation. They will be held strictly responsible for all statements contained in communications to friends which may subsequently be published in the press or otherwise.
3. Evaders, escapees, or internees shall not be interrogated on the circumstances of their experiences in escape, evasion or internment except by the agency designated by the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, War Department General Staff, or the corresponding organization in overseas theaters of operations. In allied or neutral countries, American Military Attaches are authorized to interrogate on escape, evasion and internment matters.
4. Should the services of escaped prisoners of war, evaders, or internees be deemed necessary for lecturing and briefing, such services will be under the direct supervision of the agency designated by the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, War Department General Staff, or the corresponding organization in overseas theaters of operations.
5. Commanding Officers will be responsible for instructing all evaders, escapees, and internees in the provisions of this directive which supersedes letter, AG 383.6 (5 Nov 42) OB-S-B-M, 7 November 1942, subject: Instructions concerning Publicity in Connection with Escaped Prisoners of War and other previous instructions on this subject.

By order of the Secretary of War:

/s/ J. A. ULIO
J. A. ULIO
Major General,
The Adjutant General.

1. Information about your escape or your evasion from capture *would be useful to the enemy* and a danger to your friends. It is therefore **SECRET**.
2. a You must therefore not disclose, except to the first Military Attache to whom you report, or to an officer designated by the Commanding General of the Theater of Operations, or by A. C. of S., G-2, W. D.
 - (1) The names of those who helped you.
 - (2) The method by which you escaped or evaded.
 - (3) The route you followed.
 - (4) Any other facts concerning your experience.
- b You must be particularly on your guard with persons representing the press.
- c You must give no account of your experiences in books, newspapers, periodicals or in broadcasts or in lectures.
- d You must give no information to anyone, irrespective of nationality, in letters or in conversation, except as specifically directed in Par. 4.
- e No lectures or reports are to be given to any unit without the permission of A. C. of S., G-2, W. D., or corresponding organization in the theater.

GERTIFICATE

I have read the above and certify that I will comply with it.

I understand that any information concerning my *escape* or *evasion* from capture is **SECRET** and must not be disclosed to anyone other than the agency designated by A. C. of S., G-2, War Department, the corresponding organization in overseas theaters of operations, or to the Military Attache in a neutral country to whom I first report. I understand that disclosure to anyone else will make me liable to disciplinary action.

Name (Print) William H. Reese
Rank 2nd Lt A. S. N. 0-701163
Unit 486 FTr Gp 352 Gp

Signed William H. Reese
Dated Sept 17 31st '44
Witness Walter G. Sweet Capt WAC

RESTRICTED

AG P BR HQ SOS

/224 72

E# 1285

CONFIDENTIAL.

CERTIFIED THAT:

No. 0-701163 Rank 2nd Lt.

Name (BLOCK LETTERS) William H. Reese

Unit 486th Fighter Sq, 352nd Fighter Group

has been fully/~~briefly~~/interrogated by an Intelligence Officer of I.S.9(WEA) on 30 Aug 1944

and has signed a Security Certificate.

He ~~should~~/should not/be re-interrogated.

Robert Bacon
2/Lt, Major. AC.

IMPORTANT.

THIS CERTIFICATE MUST BE RETAINED AND HANDED TO (BRITISH)
AN OFFICER OF M.I.9 OR (AMERICAN), AN OFFICER OF PW. & X. DET.
M.I.S. ON ARRIVAL IN U.K. OR U.S.A.

SECRET

HEADQUARTERS
EUROPEAN THEATER OF OPERATIONS
P/W and X Detachment
Military Intelligence Service

REPORT FOR THE ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE
and QUESTIONNAIRE FOR I.S. 9(WEA) PERSONNEL

Sept 1
(Date)

William H. Reese 2nd Lt. 0-701163
(Name) (Rank) (ASN)

T. of opportunity near Brienne 30
(Target) (Number of missions)

Date Missing in Action: August 17

486 FTr Sq. 352 Gp.
(Unit)

Returned to UK: Sept 1

MEMBERS OF CREW: (List names by positions and indicate what happened to each one)

PILOT self - P-51

CO-PILOT

NAVIGATOR

BOMBARDIER

RADIO OPERATOR

TOP TURRET GUNNER

MID TURRET GUNNER

WAIST GUNNER

WAIST GUNNER

TAIL GUNNER

Date, time and approximate location of plane crash or landing. August 17 - 1500 hrs. near Brienne.

Nature and extent of damage to plane when source bailed out. Was it on fire, etc? Crash landed. engine on fire - rest of flight strapped plane - plane completely demolished.

At approximately what altitude did source bail out? crash landed

Were any of the crew injured or killed before the plane crashed?

What members of the crew bailed out? Did their parachutes open?

Did the plane explode on striking the ground? no

Did source see any other members of the crew dead or alive after reaching the ground?

Did he receive any information from others as to whether any other members of the crew were dead or alive? If so, give details furnished by his informant and whether the other crew members were identified by name or otherwise.

(over)

Did source examine the wreckage of the plane? If so, what was its condition? *destroyed*

If the plane crashed in water how far was the plane from land and by what means was source rescued and what life rafts, wreckage, etc., remained on the surface that would have assisted other personnel to keep afloat. *on land.*

What is source's opinion as to the fate of the other crew members and his reason for his opinion?

Were you wounded?

*Received gash in forehead from
gunsight - wrenched back + stomach.*

Were you in German hands? *no*

Did you kill any Germans in escaping? *no*

Have you previously given the names of your helpers? *yes*

List any names previously omitted, showing what help was given.

What security briefing were you given?

*divulge information to
C.O. officers only*

What souvenirs do you still possess?

none of military value.

Home address. *616 East 71st Terrace, Kansas City, Mo.*

List names of American or British personnel believed to have been arrested by Germans.

List names of American or British personnel believed to be evading.

If any further information is
~~required~~ concerning this report
detailed application should be made
to I.S.9 (WEA) G-2 Div S.H.A.E.F.
giving the E and E Report No.

DISTRIBUTION:

I.S. 9 (WFA) Hq.....3
P/W & X Det. MIS
G-2 Div., SHAF
(Less App. "C" & "D")
File

(Applies to all BRITISH, CANADIAN, U.S. & ALLIED PERSONNEL)

EVADED CAPTURE/ESCAPED FROM (Name of Country) France

For All Personnel.

EAC #1285

- 1. No. 0-701163 Rank 2nd Lt Name William H. REESE
(U.K.: Acting, Temp. or W/S)
- 2. Decorations: (U.S.A.A.F.: No. of missions) Air Medal, one cluster; 31 sorties
- 3. Were you wounded? Give details. Gash in forehead from crash-landing
- 4. Ship (Navy), Unit (Army), Sqn. (Air Force) 486th Fighter Sq
- 5. Div. (Army) or Gp. (Air Force) 352d F Group 6. Job (Pl. Comd., Rfn., etc.) Pilot
- 7. Date of Birth 12 October 1923 8. Length of Service One year and a half
- 9. Peace time occupation student 10. Private address 616 East 71st Terrace,
Kansas City, Mo.
- 11. Did you carry any form of identification, or photograph? Dogtags and E & E photos
- 12. Do you speak French, or any other foreign language? Slight French

FOR R.A.F. ONLY.

- 13. No. and location of O.T.U. // //
- 14. No. and location of Conversion Unit // //

FOR ALL AIR FORCE PERSONNEL AND/OR AIRBORNE OR PARACHUTE TROOPS WHO BALE OUT

- 15. Post in Crew Pilot
- 16. Other members of crew, and information about what has happened to them.
N.B.—Airborne and Parachute Troops: list below names and units of other occupants of plane, including R.A.F. and U.S.A.A.F.
- PILOT Narrator
- CO-PILOT // //
- NAVIGATOR // //
- BOMBARDIER // //
- RADIO OPERATOR // //
- TOP TURRET GUNNER // //
- BALL TURRET GUNNER // //
- WAIST GUNNER (R.) // //
- WAIST GUNNER (L.) // //
- TAIL GUNNER // //

- 17. Type of aircraft, place, date, time of departure P-51 D, Base 141, Bodney, Norfolk; 1200 17 Aug 44
- 18. Where and when did you come down? Near Brienne, 1500 17 August 1944
- 19. How did you dispose of your parachute, harness and mae west? French hid chute, say Germans found it later. Hid other things myself. French found flying shit and gave it me later.
- 20. Were all secret papers and equipment destroyed? Crash landed plane, and then my flight came down and strafed it and set it on fire.

Our squadron had the mission of dive-bombing and strafing any target of opportunity in the area. We strafed the marshalling yards at Brienne and did a good job of it. Several days later a German ammunition train got caught in the bottle neck, and was completely blasted by a P-47, and the explosion started off a nearby ammunition dump at Brienne. When we had finished with the marshalling yards and were pulling up to go home, at about 600 or 700 feet my prop and cooling went out, I threw a couple of rods, and my engine caught fire. I came down and crash-landed in a plowed field, which I do not recommend to others in the future, as there is no skid and the impact is too great. Also as an extra caution, if one does ever have to crash land, first lower the seat in order not to bang the head on the metal part of the gun sights, and make sure that the shoulder straps are tight. I was able to get out and walk away from the ship, and then right afterwards my flight came down and strafed it and set it on fire.

I got out of the field, crossed a road, and walked into the woods, and about fifteen minutes later, I saw two German trucks full of soldiers go down the road headed for the plane. I kept on through the woods until I had reached the far side, and then I sat down on the edge of another field and watched a lone farmer who was working there for a couple of hours until I decided that he was OK. I went up and asked him for help and for some water to wash the bleeding cut on my forehead. He gave me food and water and pointed the way to the American lines in the direction of Troyes. I rested there and waited for evening to come before trying to cross the bridge over the Aube River at Precy. Then I skirted the town and was heading in the direction of Lesmont when a French man on a bicycle came up and contacted me. He turned out to be a member of the Maquis and took me to the house of a Lesmont mechanic, where I spent the night and the following morning, during which time a Resistance doctor came in and gave me expert medical attention. While in Lesmont I saw German SS troops in orderly retreat eastward; a steady stream of well-equipped soldiers in small trucks, with no tanks, nor artillery, nor heavy motorized equipment, moving both night and day and in no apparant confusion.

The next day they moved me to Epagne and took me to the house of the mayor, who was the head of the Resistance for that area. There I met Sgt RATCHFORD, (see IS9(WEA)/8/240) who had already been there two days. We stayed around the house at first and helped to clean guns for the Maquis, but later when the Germans started retreating, we took an active part in some of the Maquis affairs. They held the two bridges over the Aube at Precy and Epagne, and did a great job of it considering the ineffective weapons that they had, and the superiority of the Germans. The bridge at Precy was held only at the cost of the village, which the SS burned, after having needlessly killed thirteen old men and young children, and raped some of the women. That night we captured a French woman of about 25 years, who was an admitted German agent. She was executed by the Maquis. We set up an ambush for the fifty SS men who had been left behind as a sort of rear guard, but they got away by another route. Each was equipped with a rifle, revolver, and grenades, and some of them had machine guns. All were well-disciplined, but obviously scared of the Maquis.

On 27 August 1944 the American combat engineers came into Epagne and removed the barricade and the grenades from the bridge, under the direction of the mayor. Fortunately the Germans had retreated too hastily to mine the bridge, but they had gone as far as to dig the holes for the mines at either end. The engineers sent me to Troyes, where I gave the information that I had to Brigadier General SEABRY of the 35th Artillery. From there I was sent to the XII Corps at Sens, thence to the headquarters of the Third United States Army, and finally to the prisoner of war enclosure at Nemours, where I was received by the representatives of IS9(WEA).

Interviewed by I.S.9 (WEA)

Date 30 August 1944

Attached: Appendix "B"

Appendix "C"

Appendix "D"

I grade this evasion No. 5.

Robert H Bacon

ROBERT BACON,
2nd Lt, AG.

Returned to unit.

Disposal:

Major

Top Secret.

TOP SECRET.
I.S.9 (WEA)

APPENDIX "C" TO E. & E. REPORT No. IS9 (WEA) /8/250/543

If further circulation of this information is made, it is important that its source should not be divulged.

No. 0-701163 Rank 2nd Lt Name William H. REESE

Date of Interview 30 August 1944

I was helped in Epagne by M. et Mme. A. DOIZELET, and their two sons, Andre and Henri, all of whom are very active in the Resistance, staunch patriots, and firm friends of the Allies.

Top Secret.