

SECRET

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

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SERVICE PERSONNEL
EVADING OR ESCAPING FROM ENEMY OCCUPIED COUNTRIES

Amours

THOMAS M. GERBING 2nd Lt 04635924

TARGET: *S + Mo*

Date mission in action: *June 23, 1944*

Date arrived in UK: *3/9/44*

(Name) (Rank) (ASN)

(No. of missions)

(Squadron) (Group)

MEMBERS OF CREW: (Please list names next to positions)

Indicate what happened to each man and how you know.

PILOT *G. G. MCCARTHY - DEAD - Not certain but SAW ONE MAN hit in field and after tal Kurg with rest of crew Am sure IT WAS him -*

CO-PILOT *T. M. GERBING -*

NAVIGATOR *J. D. MCCSWEENEY - Bailed out - was with him in France.*

BOMBARDIER *None - NOSE GUNNER - HARDY - Dead - died in France 3 or 4 days after bailing out -*

RADIO OPERATOR *Knigh - Don't know*

TOP TURRET GUNNER *Byron Houser - Is still hiding in France - we had to LEAVE him AS we were fighting with FFI and he was injured*

BALL TURRET GUNNER *None -*

WAIST GUNNER *Morris - Don't know -*

WAIST GUNNER *Ecklinger - Don't know*

TAIL GUNNER *Eckhart - Don't know for certain but I was informed by the underground that 1 man was in the plane when it hit the ground and as we were hit in the tail - I assume he was badly wounded or killed*

Decorations:

Date of Birth: *FEB 13, 1921*

Private Address: *Route 4 Box 9, Oregon City, Oregon.*

Length of Service: *3 years*

Job as Civilian: *Student -*

From what field did you take off? Take off time.

WENDLING. - 18:30

Were all secret papers and equipment destroyed? *YES.*

Were you wounded? Give details. *Hit inside of head by FLAK - the ear AND SKIN NEAR the ear was hit -*

Did you pay your guides? If so, how much? *No guides.*

Do you speak FRENCH? *No* SPANISH? *No* GERMAN? *No* ITALIAN? *No* OTHER LANGUAGE? *No*

Did you have identity papers? *Yes. DOG TAGS*

(over)

Have you been questioned before on your escape or evasion? If so, where and by whom?

No—

Have you given any one a written report on your experiences. Where and When?

No.

Did you report on your operations? If so, where and to whom?

No—

• Did you sign a security certificate warning you against talking about your escape or evasion? If so, Where and When?

No—

Date of arrival in Spain:

Date of arrival at Gibraltar:

Place and date of departure for UK. By sea or air.

PARIS. 3/9/44

AIR

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

DON'T KNOW—

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

Byron K. HOSER. — ENGINEER —

TOP SECRET

E & E CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

THOMAS M GERBING, 2nd Lt O-1635924
 (Name) (Rank) (ASN)
 392nd Bomb Group, 578th Bomb Sq
 (Unit)

3/9/44
 (Date)

Date, time and approximate location of plane crash or landing.

JUNE 23, 1944 - 2000 LAON, FRANCE

Nature and extent of damage to plane when source bailed out.

Was it on fire, etc? 2 Engines Out. No Rudder or AILERON CONTROL

At approximately what altitude did source bail out?

17,000-

Were any of the crew injured or killed before the plane crashed? I believe the
 the Tail gunner was killed -

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

ALL EXCEPT ONE -

ALL EXCEPT ONE - THE PILOTS

Did the plane explode on striking the ground? YES

Did source see any other members of the crew dead or alive after reaching the ground? 2 members. ENGINEER AND NAVIGATOR

Did he receive any information from others as to whether any other members of the crew were dead or alive? If so give detailed furnished by his informant and whether the other crew members were identified by name or otherwise. Yes - HARRY died on the ground and was buried in LAON. by the French - ~~PILOTS CHUTE DID NOT OPEN -~~ TAIL GUNNER WAS WOUNDED OR KILLED BY FLAK.

Did source examine the wreckage of the plane? If so, what was its conditions? NO -

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

What is source's opinion as to the fate of the other crew members and his reason for his opinion? 3 EVASUED DEFINITELY - Pilot Nose Gunner

AND TAIL GUNNER ARE DEAD, ONE might possibly be still evading - As the resistance hid one in woods but he ran away before they returned.

S E C R E T

APPENDIX "D" TO E AND E REPORT NO.

No., Rank, Name:-

Unit:-

Suggestions for improvement of escape equipment and training come largely from those who make use of them. Your report and comments will help others to evade capture or to escape.

1. AIDS BOX

- a. Did you use your aids box? *Yes*
- b. If not, why?
- c. If you used it, state briefly the circumstances in which you used each item, for example, "While hiding in woods for two nights".
- Horlicks tablets. *did not USE*
- Chocolate or Peanut Bar. *Did not USE*
- Milk (tube). *DID NOT USE*
- Benzadrine tablets (fatigue). *DID NOT USE*
- Halazone tablets (water purifier). *DID NOT USE*
- Matches. *to light CIGARETTES*
- Adhesive tape. *DID NOT USE*
- Chewing gum. *DID NOT USE*
- Water bottle. *DID NOT USE Except to put rest of KIT into-*
- Compass. *Yes - the first day*
- Sewing kit. *DID NOT USE*
- d. Did any of the above items prove unsatisfactory? *NO-*
- e. How did you finally dispose of the box? *Burned it-*
- f. Can you suggest any way in which the contents of the aids box might be changed to make it of greater use, bearing in mind that the size of it cannot be larger?

No-

2. PURSE

- a. Did you carry a purse? *Yes*
State color of stripes and letters. *Do not remember.*
If NOT, State why not.
- b. Did you use the purse? *Yes money and maps.*

(over)

c. If so, which of the following items in the purse did you use? *MONEY & MAPS.*

Maps. Which ones? *THE FRANCE AREA.*

Compass. *THE FIRST DAY-*

File (hacksaw). *No*

Foreign currency. State countries and amounts. *FRENCH*

How did you spend the money? *Not ALL of it-*

d. How did you dispose of:-

Maps. *AFI Has them-*

Compass. *STILL HAVE THEM*

File (hacksaw). *STILL HAVE IT*

Surplus currency. *STILL HAVE SOME of it-*

3. Were you issued any extra compasses or further aids to evasion?

No.

4. PASSPORT SIZE PHOTOGRAPHS

a. Did you carry passport-size photographs? *Yes.*

If so, how many? *6*

b. Did you use them? *Yes*

5. LECTURES

a. Were you lectured on evasion and escape? *Yes*

State WHERE, WHEN and by WHOM. *AT Wendling - 2 weeks before going down - by an evader.*

b. Did you find the lectures of value? *YES - Very Very Much*

c. Do you have any suggestions to make which, from your experience, you feel will help other evaders and escapers?

I feel that the lectures I heard did more than anything to help me out and that the only suggestion I will offer is to get all they can out of the lectures And to do just exactly what the people that are helping tell them to do -

SECRET - AMERICAN
MOST SECRET - BRITISH

APPENDIX "D" TO E AND E REPORT NO.

List all military information which you observed or were told while evading. Give fullest possible details. (Airfields, troop encampments, coastal and interior defenses, AA batteries, radar installations, troop movements, results of allied bombing, location of enemy factories and ammunition dumps, enemy and civilian morale, etc., etc.,.....)

Nothing except that if civilian morale in FRANCE WAS Any higher you would think you were back in the states - The civilians in FRANCE think that the AMERICAN SOLDIERS ARE the best soldiers in the world - and will constantly risk their lives to do everything that is possible to help you get away from the Boche -

1396
2d Lt Thomas M GERBING, 01635924, ~~1892~~ 578/392 Bomb Gp (H), MIA 23 June 44.
Intrvd 4 Sept 44 1397
2d Lt John D McSWEENEY, 0811706, ibid

Gerbing landed N of Presles which is S of Laon, and McSweeney landed SE of Bruyeres which is SE of Laon. McSweeney was picked up almost immediately, hid, fed, and clothed and turned over to Marcelle Laval and her husband Charles at Bruyeres. Three civilians took casualty information. A gendarme brought I/P. He heard that there was an Englishman in the town. He stayed eight days.

Gerbing in the meantime had run a couple of hours and scrambled on Mme De-Bray at Presles who kept him for the next eight days. A gendarme, most likely from Laon, took casualty information.

E&E? 1274
After meeting at the bus gendarmes took Houser, McSweeney, and Gerbing to Laon and then on to Saincency. At St Goubain McSweeney was turned over to a man who in turn turned him over to a boy who kept him in the woods until 11 July. Houser and Gerbing followed a gendarme to Mariselle and stayed with Mme Lafont, whose husband was P/W in Germany, here two daughtersm Elisabeth and Paulette, two Jean's, Michelle, Genavieve, and a little boy named Cluade.

A Blond girl from Chauny took casualty information. McSweeney at some time or other was in the garage at Chauny, and the group seemed under the control of that well known resistance group. McSweeney joined the others, but it is not quite clear whether in the woods or at the house. At any rate on 19 July a Jean took the three evaders to Lebacq where they stayed with Marious Carion, his wife, and child. A school teacher named Jeanette brought I/P. There they stayed until 10 Aug.

Possibly
(DRISKO 1273)
On 11 July a P-51 P presumably shot down on 26 Jun, Driscoll, E&E?, came into the picture. He seemed subsequently to have left the resistance group, walked eight days on his own, and then disappeared. The men were told that 38 airmen were in the section.

At Mariselle they had been told that about a year before an American and a whole family had been shot by the Germans.

Word got around that the Boche was getting men to work in Paris, so the evaders took to the woods. Houser, who was wounded, had to stay behind. Two Englishmen joined, E/Lt Kenneth MacDonald and E/Sgt Ian Bostridge. They stayed in the woods and a barn until about 31 Aug when they were told that they must fight with the resistance men or leave immediately. They were armed and willing but not Germans turned up. About 1 Sept they rejoined the American forces. They made their way back to Paris, apparently more or less in MP hands. They went to what they describe as a SHAEF office near the Paris Opera, which was probably not, but saw some major of some G-2. Like most G-2's, MP's, and town major's he seemed to know all about WEA, for he sent them to G-1 who quickly gave them orders to return to England, and they flew from Le Bourget to Northolt.

DEE

Gerbing - N Presles (S Lom)
McSwamy - SE Brugeres (SE Lom)

Flah -

Mi-S - 10,000'

Gerbing - 17,000' - delay until about 1800'

and give card

Go McSwamy picked up almost immediately.

Taken - had - fed & clothed - turned over to Marcel

Byrnes Sabat - Lavallo / husband Charles - known by Byrnes.
eight days. 3 cists take cannally info.

Gerbing - on a 2 hrs - met for people taken in -
Mme. Delray - kept 8 days - Berdes Presles
(Anni)

Sendams from Lom? take cannally info.

Sendams more / ^{En} Haver, McSwamy, Gerbing to Lom -
when at Lom met Gerbing - Bus to Saincent

St Bourbain - McSwamy has his - turned over to wife -
turned over to her to the woods.

Then until 11/19.

marked place.

2 Followed good to Mariselle - from / Mme Lafont

2 dts, Elisabeth, Pauline

cannally info again

2 years

Michelle, Benarwi - little girls, little boy Claude

2 1/2 weeks then

11/19 Gerbing on after in woods with 5 young boys. ^{Blond girl from} chain take cannally info.

Then until 19.

year take 3 to Lebaeg - stay with Maris Carion
with child.

McSwamy went through young
at chain

S. J. L. T. G. P.
W. J. L. T. G. P.
J. L. T. G. P.

Then until 10 Aug.

11 July c1930 Pkt + 51^{night} - Driscoll - sent down by Me 109
left machine - walked 8 days - turned

Told 38 others in section

Grigoryan 2

Told in Meriselle that a year ago son & whole family shot

Ran quietly - Boches assembling near - 1 unit in Paris
Went to woods. 1 person wounded - 200 yd behind

2 of mine - F/Lt Kenneth MacDonnell
F/Sgt Ian Bostbridge

In woods - bar -

Then until 31 Aug - did not go ft - 0^{clerk} sized of chief
Don't go with machine or leave immediately
8 had guns, Enfield - 5 long - no Boches
not utter

Ran on back - mine 10

1 Sept + told Don coming near - ask go home -

To him - Tash. Free - (O⁴ Lt) McL 215

Nt 20 miles NW Paris - NW head -

To STAFF near Pain Open - Col A Meyer / 6-2

Gave papers to G-1 - orders

Le Bourget to Bull - then ~~North~~ Northolt

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 supercedes 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) THOMAS M. GORRING
Rank 2nd Lt. A. S. N. 0-163572H
Unit 392nd Bomb Sqdn 578th Sqdn

Signed Thomas M. Goring
Dated 3/9/44
Witness L. J. [Signature] Cyt. [Signature]

AG P BR HQ SOS

122472

RESTRICTED