

Sgt Bernard J. C 1426-27-28
I passed out before the ^{masses} A/C
explosion. When I came
around I was floating
through space in the center
sector of the fuselage, with
my right arm around a parachute.
The wind sucked me out
and I attached my parachute
between ~~4000~~ and 5000 ft.
I ran for an hour before
asking a Frenchman for
help. He said there were no
Germans about and went back
into me to collect my equipment.
I spent the night in the
barn while he contacted
the Resistance. I believe his
name is Desjardins, the village
is Cougen (Charente).
The Resistance people
came for me in a car
and drove me to St. Colomb.
(Charente)

Lt Masseng's story

I passed out after reaching
for my chute. I came off in bad
air with the chute in my hand.
I hooked it on immediately. I
landed in a cow pasture,
and was sitting there suffering
from shock, when two Frenchmen
came up and gave me a drink.
They took me to a deserted
farmhouse where I found
Lt Stelffs.

Lt Stelffs' story

I had my chute on, and
was working on the nose hatch
when we went into a spin. When
I came off I was curled up in
the Plexiglass nose with the
magneto, other crew members
and ammunition boxes piled
on top of me. I could not reach

and could feel my ankle breaking.
I heard the playing glass crack
and blacked out. I came to
in the car but could see
nothing because the pressure
on me had made ~~the~~ them black
shot and swollen closed. I
pulled the rip-cord and found
I could hold my lids open enough
to witness the blow.

I landed near the
village of Remond (Clarents) and
people were waiting for me. A
man with a bicycle took me
to the farm where he was staying
joined me. The next day
we were taken to St Colombe,
where Sgt Berard joined us.
After two days here the wagons
came for us. We went to the wagon
camp ~~at~~ north of Cherves

(Clarente) Chabannais was
the area commandant, but
our regular help came from the
local chief whose name we
never knew. Chabannais
was willing to keep us until
refused point blank to
help get us out. He wanted
our services during fighting
with his ~~men~~ ^{men}. We were ~~forced~~
at his camp by ~~him~~ ^{him} ~~on 25 June~~ ^{on 25 June} ~~1945~~ ¹⁹⁴⁵ ~~at his camp~~ ^{at his camp} ~~1945~~ ¹⁹⁴⁵

On 25 June we loaded
north ~~with~~ took a boy who
knew a woman who had sent
a boy to Spain. He took
us to Mme Beau at Les Mas ^{Clarente}
~~the~~ M. Beau is a farmer, and
Mme operates on the black
market. Their mail comes
through ^{via} Vincent - ~~there~~.
She made us work on
the farm for three days.

A L. McFee of Massachusetts
had stayed with her, but
he had been caught on the
train during an I card check
up, because his hands were
so ~~smooth~~ ^{smooth} those of a deaf and
dumb ^{believed to be} ~~former~~ ^{prisoner}. She had had
another carman, whose she said,
got through.

In 27 June she moved
the five of us to a deserted
farm house near Maison
Neuve ^(parents) ~~the local people~~
~~belonged to~~. The farm belonged to
a man named Michel. His
daughter is Mme de La
local people fed us. Among
those who helped were;
Pasclaud ~~the~~ ^{a farmer},
Sour ~~the~~ ^{Ducier}, Blanchon
all farmers and the latter

was also President of the
Nitrac ^{et Mined (Cigarette)} Committee of Liberation

On ~~the~~ 13 July, we were
having dinner at the Melands
when Max Joe Gilder drove
up. The magues had told
him of us. He sent back
word ~~that~~ we were safe, and
his message was confirmed.
We remained waiting for
allied troops but were
allowed to move fairly
freely as it was a magues
- controlled area.

M. Michallet of Classeneuil
(Charente) has a laboratory shop.
He fed us and put us up
when we went to Classeneuil.
M. Massonnaud who keeps
the crenelle at Classeneuil
also fed us (over)

On 10 August Maj Geldeen
started to bring in
armen who had been
living with the wagons.
Those who joined us were:
Sgt F Lucking E7 1440
Girvatt E7 1438
E7 E Rpt 1439 Lt Brill E7 1372
Rpt Lt Keller E7 1449
Lt Gonet 1645 who took off
on his own.

On 30 August my father
told us we would be leaving
soon for Lomogers where the
A/C would come in. On ~~the~~
31st August we were taken
to Lomogers in two machine trucks
Capt Frazier was in charge of
this American held airport
and we took off on 3 September
reaching U. K. ~~the~~ same day!

S E C R E T

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

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SERVICE PERSONNEL
EVADING OR ESCAPING FROM ENEMY OCCUPIED COUNTRIES

BERARD, F. J. SISGT 11042453

(Name) (Rank) (ASN)

18

(No. of missions)

617TH

(Squadron)

401ST

(Group)

TARGET:

Bordeaux

Date mission in action:

19-6-44

Date arrived in UK:

3-9-44

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

Indicate what happened to each man and how you know.

PILOT MASSEY, EDWARD - RETURNED WITH ME
CO-PILOT CERESA, DOMINIC - DIED - ACCOUNTS FROM WITNESSES
NAVIGATOR NEALON, ROBERT - DIED
BOMBARDIER STELLJES, LEWIS V. - RETURNED WITH ME
RADIO OPERATOR EAMES, HAROLD - DIED - ACCOUNTS FROM WITNESSES
TOP TURRET GUNNER FAULKNER, JAMES - DIED
BALL TURRET GUNNER MAHLER, ROBERT - DIED
WAIST GUNNER WIETERS, ALFRED - DIED
WAIST GUNNER
TAIL GUNNER WHITE, PAUL - DIED

Decorations: AIR MEDAL & OAK LEAF CLUSTER

Date of Birth: MAR. 18, 1916

Private Address: 2 SILVER PL. WATERVILLE, MAINE

Length of Service: 2 YEARS & 8 MONTHS

Job as Civilian: BODY & FENDER REPAIRING

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

DEAN THORPE, 04:30

Were all secret papers and equipment destroyed?

UNKNOWN

Were you wounded? Give details.

NO

Did you pay your guides? If so, how much?

NO

Do you speak FRENCH?

YES

SPANISH?

NO

GERMAN?

NO

ITALIAN?

NO

OTHER LANGUAGE?

NO

Did you have identity papers?

NO

(over)

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

FRANCE - FRENCH PEOPLE

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?

LONDON - SEPT. 3, 1944

Date of arrival in Spain:

Date of arrival at Gibraltar:

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

SEPT. 3, 1944 -

BY AIR

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

NONE

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

JOSEPH GONET - B-26 PILOT

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.

GERTIFIGATE

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) FRANCIS J. BERARD
Rank S/SGT. A. S. N. 11042453
Unit 612th B. SQ. 401st B. GP.

Signed Francis J. Berard
Dated SEP. 3, 1944
Witness W. R. Smith Capt WCC

AG P BR HQ SOS

/224 72

RESTRICTED

E & E CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

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

JUNE 19, 1944 - 09:00 - BETWEEN JOULDES & COULGENS
15 KILOMETERS, NORTH OF ANGOULEME, FRANCE

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

Was it on fire, etc? PLANE ON FIRE & EXPLODED INTO
SEVERAL PIECES

At approximately what altitude did source bail out?

WIND PUSHED ME
OFF FUSELAGE SECTION. AT ABOUT 8000 FT.

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

DO NOT KNOW - EXCEPT STELLIES WHOSE EYES
WERE BADLY HURT BEFORE OR AT EXPLOSION.

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

MASSEY & STELLIES - THROWN OUT BY EXPLOSION.
& CHUTES OPENED - NOT CERTAIN OF OTHERS.

Did the plane explode on striking the ground?

BEFORE STRIKING GROUND

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

MASSEY & STELLIES ON FOLLOWING DAY.

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.

MANY STORIES ALL DIFFERENT.

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

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 reasons for his opinion?

ALL DEAD - MOST STORIES POINT TO THAT
BELIEF -

SECRET

APPENDIX "D" TO E AND F REPORT NO.

No., Rank, Name:- SGT. FRANCIS J. BERARD

Unit:- 612TH B.S.G. 401ST B. GR.

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? NO
- b. If not, why? NOT NEEDED
- 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.

Chocolate or Peanut Bar.

Milk (tube).

Benzadrine tablets (fatigue).

Halazone tablets (water purifier).

Matches.

Adhesive tape.

Chewing gum.

Water bottle.

Compass.

Sewing kit.

- d. Did any of the above items prove unsatisfactory?
- e. How did you finally dispose of the box? HAVE SOME ITEMS LEFT - OTHERS GIVEN AWAY
- 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. RED & BLUE STRIPES
If NOT, State why not. FORGOT LETTERS.
- b. Did you use the purse? YES.

(over)

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

Maps. Which ones? FRANCE

Compass. YES

File (hacksaw).

Foreign currency. State countries and amounts.

How did you spend the money?

FRENCH - OVER 2000 FRANKS
FOR FOOD

d. How did you dispose of:-

Maps. HAVE ONE & GAVE OTHERS AWAY

Compass. STILL WITH ME

File (hacksaw). WITH ME

Surplus currency. WITH ME

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

YES

4. PASSPORT SIZE PHOTOGRAPHS

a. Did you carry passport-size photographs?

If so, how many?

8-

b. Did you use them?

NO

5. LECTURES

a. Were you lectured on evasion and escape?

State WHERE, WHEN and by WHOM.

b. Did you find the lectures of value?

YES-

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

NO-

AT GRAND ISLAND, THE WASH. AT GROUP IN MAR
APRIL 1944 BY OFFICERS & NCO'S

A/c fell away from formation
pulled off flak and when seen
other G. G. down so. Went
into a spin. Passed out
came to floating in center section
of fuselage after explosion
Plate next to my right arm
was around it when the wind
blew me out. Fell away
to looked at 4-5000 ft. Pulled
out 2 other chutes pieces of debris.

Landed in a small woods
got out of equipment & ran away
after an air. Came to Fr asked
for help. Said no G. G. in net
together & took up equipment
Went to farmhouse. My life
in barn here. Contingents asked
about resistance. Made contact
left a m. came in car. Took
me to M & S at St Colombe

former Desjardins ??