

See crew of
TAG finished
of report 127,
128,
129
302

all people
returned on this
Crew have had
TAG's done
with the exception
of Martin who
appears on
previous crews as
Eugene N., instead
of Neal E.

AG 383.6

Hq ETOUSA

9 April 1943.

SUBJECT: Safeguarding of P/W Information.

TO : Personnel concerned.

1. It is the duty of all Americans to safeguard information which might, either directly or indirectly, be useful to the enemy.
2. It is an offense, carrying heavy penalties, to publish or to communicate to any unauthorized person any information which might be useful to the enemy.
3. 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.
4. 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:
 - (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. 4a.
e. No lectures or reports are to be given to any unit without the permission of the War or Navy Department.

By command of Lieutenant General ANDREWS:

Ralph Pulsifer
R. T. S.

RALPH PULSIFER,
Colonel, AGD, Adjutant General.

CERTIFICATE

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 American Military Attache to whom I first report, or an officer designated by the Commanding General of the Theater of Operations. I understand that disclosure to anyone else will make me liable to disciplinary action.

Name (Print) MARTIN, MERLE E. Signed Merle E. Martin
Rank T/SGT ASN 15703580 Date 12/27/43
Unit 388 BOMB GRP 563 Sgd Witness _____

(2)

SECRET - AMERICAN
MOST SECRET - BRITISH
MIS (X)

HEADQUARTERS
EUROPEAN THEATER OF OPERATIONS
PW and X Detachment
Military Intelligence Service

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SERVICE PERSONNEL
EVADING FROM ENEMY OCCUPIED COUNTRIES

1. Full Name, Rank and Serial No. *MERL E. MARTIN, T/sgt. 15103580*
2. Decorations. *AIR MEDAL*
3. Unit or Squadron. *563rd BOMB. Sgd.*
4. Division (Army) or Group. *388th BOMB GRP.*
5. Date of Birth. *DEC. 21, 1921*
6. Length of Service. *1 1/2*
7. Private Address. *R.R. 3, ROCKVILLE IND.*
8. If in A.F., on what operation were you engaged? State place, date, and time of departure. Where and when did you come down?
Were Aircraft and all instruments and papers destroyed?
KNETTISHELL, SEPT. 6, 6:00 A.M. ?
NORTH-EASTERN FRANCE 11:00 A.M. ON SEPT. 6
near MOULIN 20 K.M. FROM TROYES.
TARGET
9. What was your position in aircraft?
TOP-GUNNER
10. Were you wounded?
11. Did you pay your guides? If so how much?
JUST A SMALL 20 m.m. SHELL BURTON Right leg.
12. Do you speak French? Spanish?
NO. USED MONEY for Purchasing black-market food
13. Did you have Identity Papers?
NO
14. Have you been questioned before to-day on your escape or evasion? If so, where and by whom? Have you given anyone a written report on your experiences. Where and when?
YES
NO to both questions
15. Did you report on your operations? If so, where and to whom?
NO
16. Did you sign a security certificate warning you against talking about your escape or evasion? If so, where and when?
NO
17. Date of arrival in Spain.
18. Date of arrival at Gibraltar.
19. Place and date of departure for U.K. By sea or air.
20. Place and date of arrival in U.K.

DEC. 26, 1943

Chapman - 10'

Sunday 10th - 2 3rd - 03TG 4th - Victress lost - we left plane on 3rd loop -
put chute on backward - an arrow would help - out w. door - kept
legs open + spinning like a top - 8000 ft open - in air 5 mins -
a/c hit & exploded - small village - wind blowing me into village - cleared
village by spilling chute - ^{saw} 2 haywagons on road - landed in ~~the~~
field near road - no 109 made grasses at me & I ran toward
potato patch & he lost me - came over 5 times - had seen
only 1 chute - ran in flying boots - difficult - shld have taken them from plane
if I had got it - shld have delayed jump - spin messed me up - ran about 100 yds before
losing plane - in trenchman within 400 yds - waited until sound
of plane gone - started walking from village - into bushes & hid
flying equipment - people were coming from village + then
trenchman were above place - man in field waved
white flag at me - used for a concourse + other
trenchman (2 boys) ran toward me - patted me back + said
comrade + made break arm motion - took me to trenchman
& 3 boys went for help - asked if hurt - 4 trenchman
took me to outskirts of village - all farmers - coal & hat - 4 barn -
family waiting for me - fed - asked questions - not important -
Berry appeared within hour + 2 watches then crack in barn
when Berry came to house + asked if any flyers there - French
said no - moved to house & stayed with one of brothers -

² next a.m. moved to neighbor's house - f Ramond came on ditto
TROYES to see me - 19 kms NW of TROYES - we went to TROYES together -
Went to his garage - then visited Brohard - went to Ramond's house for dinner -
meat & prison for lunch - stayed 3 days & was joined by Brohard - then
we stayed a week more - after which we had to separate - 2 in house
Cingros - I went to stay with Mlle Robert Guellay - 24 du la Rodière?
there until 27th - ~~then~~ me was app'd to go Swiss with
Vic but Ramond didn't like it - we just arrived
hundred - black market Org - went to baker shop &
gave by Brohard from Sway, Cingros, Vickless, Richardson
Hoyd - met Pierre from Paris -

in Vannes - stayed with
Mlle Delroy 1/2 son
2 alone 8th -

Prick

The following information has been obtained from our interview with
..... (.....) who escaped after capture
by the enemy/evaded capture by the enemy after being in enemy/enemy occupied territory.

Further circulation of this information may be made, but when doing so it is important not to divulge any particulars of source.

Statement of information covering period from SEPT 6 1943

to...DEC. 26 1943

1. GUN IMPLACEMENTS NEAR TROYES ANTI AIRCRAFT
2. NEW SUB BASE JUST OUT OF BREST (~~SECRET~~)
3. FRENCH PEOPLE WANTED TO KNOW WHY WE DONT BOMB BREST GOING DOWN THE RIVER INSTEAD OF CUTTING ACROSS AND USUALLY HITTING THE RESIDENT DISTRICT
4. THE GERMANS ARE SUPPOSE TO BE GETTING ONLY 400 FRANCS A MONTH.
THE GERMAN SOLDIERS SOME TIMES WEAR NAVY UNIFORMS OR PART OF BOTH.
THE TYPE OF SOLDIER LOOKS MUCH BETTER NEAR THE COAST THEN IN CENTRAL FRANCE.
ENEMY MORAL GETTING LOWER BUT GOOD
CIVILIAN MORAL EXCELLENT
BOMBING OF SUB BASE AT NANTES OCT. NOT GOOD
BASE STILL GOOD ALTHOUGH HIT. CEMENT REINFORCEMENTS TOO THICK.
THE FRENCH PEOPLE ARE VERY ANXIOUS FOR INVASION
MANY YOUTHS HIDDING FROM GERMANS TO PREVENT GOING TO GERMANY
FOOD SITUATION NOT GOOD
MUCH SABOTAGE FRENCH ARE BEGGING FOR GUNS AND EXPLOSIVES
THE BOMBINGS I'VE SEEN ARE NOT TO GOOD

LORIENT-NANTES-BREST

1. TROYES: flight training - trainees - uniform light green - with wings the uniform was lighter & several thousands -

2. BREST: volunteer workers from France & other countries wore light grey-green uniform with white band & red 'E' on sleeve - only place seen - concentration of naval uniform in Brest - some wore tassels down back of cap & others not - all dark blue -

3. In Brest the personnel seemed to serve in navy & army - Saw some with navy hats & soldiers uniform - French said it was trick to keep numbers of type of personnel from being known -

4. Germans are putting out propaganda to French to fight war of communism. The French are approached to fight Russia but not England or America - These volunteers wear a blue shirt -

5. At TROYES, 10 kms NW of, saw gun emplacements - anti-a/c - there to protect power plant -

6. In Douaumez - 5 light a/c positions on a canal just north of Pauldavic where canal crosses canal going into Douaumez - only Germans there were crews for these guns - only 20 German there -

7. Sept - party express train - traveling south to Paris - Armored personnel - equipment prepared for desert fighting - 50 troops

8. In TROYES - German commandos - all-black, black leather boots (lace) - black leather gloves - black cap - saw several trucks -

Marlin

The following information has been obtained from our interview with
..... (.....) who escaped after capture
by the enemy/evaded capture by the enemy after being in enemy/enemy occupied territory.

Further circulation of this information may be made, but when doing so it is important not to divulge any particulars of source.

Statement of information covering period from

to.....

1. NO large amount of coastal defenses there and in Nov. '43 there were only 20 permanent personnel for these defenses at DOURANENEZ. Good SEA Coast. NO ENEMY boats WERE brought to harbor except two regular patrol boats. - (WITNESS)
large fishing trawler
2. New sub-marine base being constructed at BREST near the river mouth.
(Hearsay) *eastern outskirts of Brest*
3. MORALE very good. SEVERAL sabatages going on at an ever increasing rate. Talk of expected invasion at latest by spring.
4. TROOP movements seem very unsettled. First here and then there. (Hearsay)
5. Bombing of sub-bases should be discontinued because they simply cannot penetrate. Shelling and torpedoes from

the sea are more effective.

(Oct. 1 — Observation at Nantes)

THE French people demand more bombings of factories in France no matter what the cost to people. ~~Any~~

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

E & E REPORT NO. 294
EVASION IN FRANCE

12/27/43
(Date)

MARTIN, MERL E. T/sgt 15103580
(Name) (Rank) (ASN)

563 Bomb. Sqd. 388 BOMB. GRP.
(Squadron) (Group)

AGE: 22

LENGTH OF SERVICE: 1 1/2

HOME ADDRESS: R.R. 3 ROCKVILLE
INDIANA

Target: STUTTGART

MIA: 6 Sept
Arrived in Spain:

Arrived in Gibraltar:

Arrived in UK: 27 Dec / 43

MEMBERS OF CREW: (This information checked with PWIB)

	Official Disposition	Narrators Disposition
PILOT <u>1st ALFRED KRAMER #128</u>	HERE	SAFE
CO-PILOT <u>2nd LT. ARTHUR M. SWAP #127</u>	HERE	SAFE
NAVIGATOR <u>2nd LT. RICHARD G. BOWMAN</u> <u>0-673469</u>	find dead with open chute around him	DEAD
BOMBARDIER <u>2nd LT. ROBERT L. BURNETT</u> <u>0-669984</u>	HERE	WOUNDED
RADIO OPERATOR <u>T/sgt. ALLEN J. PRIEBE</u>	HERE	SAFE
TOP TURRET GUNNER <u>T/sgt MERL E. MARTIN</u>	HERE	SAFE
BALL TURRET GUNNER <u>S/sgt. JOSEPH M. THOMAS</u> <u>15062855</u>	machine still on? machine gunned from ground?	
WAIST GUNNER <u>S/sgt. WILLIAM H. VICKLESS-129</u>	HERE	SAFE
WAIST GUNNER <u>S/sgt. WALTER R. SOUKUP</u> <u>302</u>	SPAIN	HEADED SOUTH
TAIL GUNNER <u>S/sgt. WILLIAM W. CHAPMAN</u> <u>31170982</u>		STARTED FOR SWITZERLAND

Were you wounded?

A SMALL BURN on right leg.

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

E & E REPORT NO. 295
EVASION IN FRANCE

Dec. 27, 1943
(Date)

Allen J. Priebe T/SGT 36246275
(Name) (Rank) (ASN)

563 388
(Squadron) (Group)

AGE: 22
LENGTH OF SERVICE: 1 1/2 YRS.
HOME ADDRESS: 2227 NORTH AVE.
MILWAUKEE WISCONSIN

MIA: 6 Sept -
Arrived in Spain: _____
Arrived in Gibraltar: _____
Arrived in UK: 27 Dec

MEMBERS OF CREW: (This information checked with PWIB)

	Official Disposition	Narrators Disposition
PILOT <u>1ST LT KRAMER, ALFRED</u>		<u>SAFE</u>
CO-PILOT <u>2ND LT SWAP</u>		<u>SAFE</u>
NAVIGATOR <u>LT RICHARD BOWMAN</u>		<u>DEAD (?)</u>
BOMBARDIER <u>LT. BARNETT</u>		<u>WOUNDED (SAFE)</u>
RADIO OPERATOR <u>T/SGT ALLEN J PRIEBE</u>		<u>SAFE</u>
TOP TURRET GUNNER <u>T/SGT MERL E MARTIN</u>		<u>SAFE</u>
BALL TURRET GUNNER <u>ST/SGT JOSEPH THOMAS</u>		<u>DEAD (?)</u>
WALST GUNNER <u>SGT WILLIAM VICKLESS</u>		<u>SAFE ?</u>
WALST GUNNER <u>ST/SGT WILLIAM SOKUP</u>		<u>SAFE (SWISS)</u>
TAIL GUNNER <u>ST/SGT CHAPMAN</u>		<u>SAFE (SWISS)</u>

Were you wounded? NO

(See Lt Kramer and Lt Swap, E & E Report Nos 1274/28 for any details connected with the aircraft)

Sgt MARTIN: I went out through the bomb bay after seeing that the crew members in the waist were ready to jump. I had pulled the emergency handle on the bomb bay doors, then — straddling the front of the bomb bay I pulled my legs together and dropped out like a bomb. It was my intention to delay my jump to 2000 feet from 12000 feet, but, just as I ready to go I noticed that my chute was on backwards. ^{Not know whether this was serious} Because of this I pulled the ripcord at 6000 feet, hoping that I could correct any fault if there were one. I had no trouble with spinning, ~~kukxiakadxdawn~~ but, I made ^{the} a mistake ^{of} in looking down when I pulled the ripcord, and, the silk struck me in the face, blinding me momentarily.

There were three chutes in the air other than my own, and, I watched our plane do three complete loops. Enemy fighters were still circling the plane. Before I lost sight of them they had circled one of the chutes above me.

I got rid of as much flying equipment ^(helmet and mask) as I could while still in the air. ~~I was xxxxxxxx~~ Because of my position in the plane I was wearing G.I. shoes instead of flying boots.

There were both woods and fields ~~below~~ beneath me; I thought it best to try to get into the fields ^{and}, to do this, ~~at tree~~, I spilled the air from my chute. ~~I wanted xxxxxxxx~~

~~I xxxxxxxx~~ I came down on a hillside, started rolling, and, for some reason, passed out. When I recovered there were five Frenchmen trying to unbuckle my chute. They took my harness and Mae West, and, one of the men went off with the st

Puts CHUTE ON BACKWARDS

SHEDS CLOTHING IN AIR

IMMEDIATE HELP

and Mae West¹; one of the men made signs of burning this equipment and ran off with it. I was asked whether I was English or American and replied, 'American parachutist'. One of the men, motioning me to follow, led me into a wood. ~~Then~~ Using his watch, he indicated the time of his return, and made it clear that I was to stay hidden where he had put me.

HIDDEN BY
FRENCHMAN

^{I slept until} During the early afternoon ^{when} my helper returned with two bicycles. We cycled about two miles to his home. Our route ^{was} followed paths through the fields and along the edges of woods so that we ^{be} could never have been under direct observation except ^{one had to} once when we ^{immediately} crossed a paved road. Arriving at the house, I was not taken inside, but hidden in a bramble pathh. While I was being hidden a German patrol car passed but we had heard it in time to duck into ^{some} bushes. I slept ^{again for} most

of the afternoon, and until after dark when the Frenchman ^{took} ~~came~~ to take me into the house. ^{then} We had supper before starting, out on our bicycles, for ^a another small village which was out of the area being patrolled by the Germans who were looking for ^{well hidden and well earned for} a friend of ^{many} my helper's friend. I was ~~assured~~ reassured several times that someone was

GERMANS
SEARCH CONTINUES
AT NIGHT

working to help me. Because of language difficulties there was very little conversation with my friends after they understood that I wanted to ^{escape}, and, that I wanted to go to Spain instead of Switzerland. At the end of the four days I was told that my journey was arranged. ~~and~~ A few days later I joined Sgt Priebe.

JOURNEY
ARRANGED

Sgt Priebe: I jumped from the waist door around 12000 feet. My chute was on backward, and, I couldn't stop spinning, ^{long enough to watch the ground} so I pulled the rip cord around ~~12x~~ 8000 feet. ^{There was} I could see one chute below me. Our aircraft crashed and exploded before I got down. The wind was carrying me into a village, ^{but} which I avoided it

CHUTE ON
BACKWARD

STRAFED BY
ENEMY
FIGHTER

by spilling the air from my chute. After I got on the ground an FW came over and made three passes at me while I was running out of the field in which I had landed. I got away from him ^{when I} crawling ^{ed} into a potato pathh. He came ~~over~~ ^{back} twice after losing me, and, then the sound of his plane died away. ^{para} I was up, running again, as soon as I knew he ~~was~~ ^{had} gone. There had been

no Frenchmen near ~~me~~ while the FW was buzzing ^{ed} me but suddenly they ~~seemed to~~ ^{seem} appear from everywhere. I had started running toward a wood away from ^a the small village, ^{when} ~~I had avoided~~ Two

boys caught up with me; ^{because} I ^{hadn't yet gotten out of} still was trying to run in my flying boots. They patted me on the back, ^{repeating over and over again,} saying, "comrade,

comrade." ^{while I tried to talk with the boys there were other Frenchmen gathering} I had left my chute in a field and my flying equipment ^{up my chute and flying equipment which I had left scattered up in the fields and} in the potato patch; ^{and} all this was gathered by the French ^{potato patch. When this was done the boys motioned rapidly with their} while I tried to talk with the two boys. They made a funny ^{arms (they strike the inside of their left elbow with their right hand), indicating that I should} motion with their arm which I understood to mean that I was to ^{go with them} follow them.

They turned back toward the village, and, on the outskirts of the village I was turned over to a man ^(he seemed to be waiting for us) who put me in a nearby barn. ^{after} I was given a coat, ~~and~~ hat and food, ^{attired} after which the man questioned me about when the invasion was to take

place. Within an hour of my being moved to the barn, the Germans ^{in the village} arrived, but did not made ^{an extensive} search. They came to the house ~~of~~ belonging to ^{of} my friends ^{to} and asked if any parachutists had been seen. After the Germans left I was moved into the house, and,

the next morning told that I was being taken away - that my journey had been arranged.

Journey
Arranged

6 Sept to
26 December

Appendix B:

- a. ~~xxxxxxx~~ There were several thousand German Air Corps cadets training in TROYES, ~~Sept-Oct~~
- b. In BREST evaders saw volunteer workers (hearsay) ~~from France and other countries~~ dressed in light grey³green uniforms. They wore ~~a~~ white arm³band showing a red swastika. BREST is the only place evaders saw these people. There was a concentration of naval uniform in BREST; evaders recall only that the uniforms were dark blue and that some of the men had tassels hanging down the back of their caps ~~and~~ ^{white} others did not.
- c. Evaders saw Germans in BREST dressed in a mixture of army and navy uniform, e.g. navy cap and army ~~ki~~ tunic. French told evaders that it was a German trick to prevent numbers of types of personnel ~~from~~ being known.
- d. French stated that Germans had started a ^{wide} propaganda campaign to get the French to fight communism. The purpose is to get the French to fight Russia ~~but~~ ^{for the Germans} not England or America. The volunteers wear a 'blue shirt'.
- e. Ten kilometers northwest of TROYES evaders saw four ~~anti~~ ^{anti} or more anti³aircraft batteries placed ~~to~~ ^{where they} furnish protection ~~in~~ for a large power plant. (could not pin³point)
- f. In DOUARNENEZ there were five light anti³aircraft batteries on the canal north of POULDAVIC where the railroad crosses the canal to enter DOURNENEZ. The only Germans here were the twenty troops who were the crews of the anti³aircraft batteries.
- g. In September, ~~part~~ ^{through TROYES} sections of express trains traveling ~~xxxxx~~ to PARIS from the east were filled with troops carrying equipment for desert fighting.
- h. In TROYES evaders saw German troops dressed in all³black uniforms, black leather knee boots, black leather gloves and black caps. They were told these were the German commando troops.
- i. French wanted to know why BREST was always bombed across the resident district instead of following the river line.
- j. Evaders heard that a new submarine base was being built near the river mouth in BREST. No details given.
- k. The only German boats seen in the harbor at DOUARNENEZ ~~were~~ during November were two regular patrol boats. Times of patrol were not noticed.
- l. French consider bombing of submarine bases to be ineffectual. Cement reinforcements are too thick. French stated that after a late September or early October raid on Nantes that one of the few installations not damaged was the submarine base.