

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

E & E REPORT NO. 303
EVASION IN FRANCE

See 271 for crew 6

Jan 4 1944
(Date)

THOMAS E COMBS-T/SGT 14134640
(Name) (Rank) (ASN)

Target: PARIS ~~Belgium~~

340th Sq 100th AF
(Squadron) (Group)

MIA: Sept 3 1943

Arrived in Spain: Dec 22 1943

Arrived in Gibraltar: Dec 31 1943

Arrived in UK: Jan 3 1944

AGE: 24
LENGTH OF SERVICE: 16 years
HOME ADDRESS: 2122 2nd St Tenn
Route 6

MEMBERS OF CREW: (This information checked with PWIB)

Official Narrators
Disposition Disposition

PILOT Winkelmann

CO-PILOT Smith

NAVIGATOR Booth

BOMBARDIER Harris

RADIO OPERATOR Ray

TOP TURRET GUNNER Combs

BALL TURRET GUNNER Coccia

WAIST GUNNER Dorsey

WAIST GUNNER Leola

TAIL GUNNER Bankhead

French said he was riding
up & down road looking for
on bicycle

or was sold to Germany
French lady
for 25,000

knew he left the Fatale for Paris 3 days before

French told me they had a funeral for
Sgt B — ~~la Fatale~~
la FERTÉ ALAIS

Were you wounded? no mat. serious

(1)

GENERAL DEPOT G-14
OFFICE OF THE EFFECTS QUARTERMASTER
APO NO. 507
UNITED STATES ARMY

7th October, 1943.

SUBJECT: Class II Assets (Money Orders, Checks, Etc.)

TO : Commanding Officer, 349th Bombardment Squadron (H), Army Air
Forces, AAF Station 139, APO #634, U.S. Army.

E X T R A C T

* * * * *

1. Receipt is acknowledged of your letter dated 29th September, 1943
Subject: Transmittal of Effects.


2. The Class II Assets belonging to personnel listed below, and
amounts indicated after their names, have been received.

<u>NAME</u>	<u>RANK</u>	<u>ASN</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>CONTROL NO.</u>
COMBS, Thomas E.	T/Sgt.	1413460	None	5105

* * * * *

/s/Edward Chayes
/t/EDWARD CHAYES,
Major, Q.M.C.,
Effects QM. Etousa.

A TRUE EXTRACT COPY:


GEORGE F. ERB,
Capt, Air Corps,
Adjutant.

Hq ETOUSA

19 October 1942

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 EISENHOWER:

(signed) RALPH PULSIFER,
Colonel, AGD, Ass't. Adj. Gen.

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) THOMAS E. COMBS Signed Thomas E. Combs

Rank T/Sgt. A.S.N. 14134640 Date Dec 31/1943

Unit 100 BOMB. Sq. 349th Sgl Witness Wm. W. Davis
Col. G. S. C.

6740

AG 383.6

Hq ETOUSA

9 April 1943.

SUBJECT: Safeguarding of P/W Information.

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By command of Lieutenant General ANDREWS:

Ralph Pulsifer
R. T. S.
RALPH PULSIFER,
Colonel, AGD, Adjutant General.

CERTIFICATE

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Name (Print) Thomas E. Combs Signed Thomas E. Combs
Rank 1st Lt. ASN 14134640 Date Jan. 3, 1944
Unit 100th Bomb Gp 349 sqd Witness _____

(8)

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. *THOMAS Edward Combs*
2. Decorations. *T/Lt 14134640*
3. Unit or Squadron. *100th Bomb Gp 349th Sq*
4. Division (Army) or Group.
5. Date of Birth. *April 13 1922*
6. Length of Service. *16 mos.*
7. Private Address. *M. Ch 222009d, Tenn. Route 60*
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?
Paris, Sept 3, 1943. 6 AM. [Dis -
South of Paris 10:00 AM
La Ferté Alais -
9. What was your position in aircraft? *Top turret*
10. Were you wounded? *No, not serious*
11. Did you pay your guides? If so how much? *Turned over 1700*
12. Do you speak French? Spanish? *Francis on the Frontier*
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, British Intelligence*
Gibraltar
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? *yes*
17. Date of arrival in Spain. *Dec. 25, 1943*
18. Date of arrival at Gibraltar. *Dec. 31, 1943*
19. Place and date of departure for U.K. By sea or air. *Gibraltar, Jan. 3, 1943*
20. Place and date of arrival in U.K. *Bristol Jan. 3, 1943*

Don between radio room & Bombay closed — heard BO order
I tried to release bombs in Bombay — got doors open & didn't get
bombs released — oxygen mask off — afraid of BOMB out — saw that
COG was gone — I went to nose hatch & found it empty — I left
as Pilot was hooking on his chute — approx 20000 that I was
out — fingers numb when reached for cord to think of my
chute at 17000 ft — did not see aft again — an object
hurtled by me & looking down I saw a chute open beneath
me several thousand feet below me — In all there were 3 chutes
other than my own — had explosion — didn't see it — tried to pull
shroud cords to get to woods — fighters (twining) climbed near me but did not
bother me — effort to spill air & a trenchman & boy came running toward
me as I fell into edge of woods — Before out of harness the man ran up
to me with coat & taser, boy took flying clothes to chute into woods — while changing
clothes a woman came up with bread & meat — Dressed — man took me into a grassy
swamp & hid me — sign language — I stayed till he returns — He was careful to remove
all signs of our entry to swamp — several hrs. later he came back —
we didn't talk — felt friendly — he led me to a boat & crossed stream & he led me further
into swamp & to a hill & he guided to woods & I went into woods & he kept returning
me on — went to hill top — had some things on road — kept in ~~the~~ those woods — on other
side of wood — ran into paved road — walked back around side of hill — had
man hollering & went that direction & saw man plowing with deer — went to
edge of field & as he got near me — I attracted his attention — waved
to him — he came over — I said American — made signs — he returned
I wanted to lie down in wood — he worked on & took some to barn & came back
& at turnip patch he pulled a few turnips & got me & took me to his
barn — he had child — I stayed barn till bedtime — fed me — fired room in house —
Slept there 8 days — never left house & lived there without child knowing it —
my room door locked & never to open except to 3 knocks — map on kitchen wall — tried
to show him I wanted to go to Spain — he noticed I was to keep quiet & stay there —
he had friend in village of K-F-Ax spoke some English — "BLOOM" — wife was
school teacher — we used dictionary — he said Paris lady would take me to PARIS — Paris lady's
sister lives in large castle on edge of village — was to stay until arrangements made — On 8th day
went to Bloom's house — Bloom was making all arrangements — stayed with day & night & next
morning caught train for PARIS with woman from Paris ^{name neorgette} Jackson —

Jean-Korachi
Marie

She took me to her house - 13 of Sept + and stayed in her house 5 Rue Herman La Chapelle (5th floor) — until 18 December x. She connected with Fr. Eng. She had helped get an Eng. Captain out a month before — she was working to keep my lunch from going to work in Germany —

She told me that Fr. had sent them about my identity — it checked — message back that Sgt. Day had returned + also asked if I were wounded

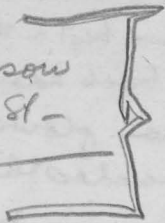
She said two Am's staying nearby — Sgt Wilson + ^{P.O.} ~~Sgt~~ Day
15th Seven forts - 45 men out - Henry got 2 -

An English boy came to see me once — social visit — he was connected with Resistance groups & arms dropping —

1. 13 Sept - green uniform - 300 troops in Paris metro - black boots —
2. ~~airfield - 20 miles~~
2. Troops left Paris - 3 cars - 18 Dec — toward Bordeaux - 100 troops —
Green uniform — some had field packs + rifles — think there was yellow piping on lapels —
3. Passed prison camp south of Bordeaux — his journey by train —

Jean Kozowski
T. brother-in-law

Francis Bigosow
6839 Edward St.
Detroit, Mich



(For details concerning the ~~the~~ mission see E4E report # 271)

When the order to bale-out was given I tried to release the bombs. The bomb-bay doors opened but the bombs were hung up. I was afraid of blacking out because I had taken off my oxygen mask and since the copilot had left his seat I went ~~xxx~~ into the nose and found it empty. I jumped ^{her} around 20000 feet as the pilot was hooking on his chute. My fingers were numb when I fumbled for the ripcord but I got the chute open around 17000 feet. As it opened an object hurtled by me and looking down I saw another chute open several thousand feet below mine. There were two other chutes in the air, and, I heard an explosion but could not see what had happened.

Jumps AT
20000 feet

When twin-engine fighters took off from a field south of me and started climbing I tried to slip the air from my chute so that I would fall faster.

There were fields and woods beneath me and I tried to work the shroud lines so that I would fall in the ~~woods~~ trees. I did come down on the edge of a

wood. From the air I ~~had seen~~ ^{had seen} a man and boy running toward me, and, before I had unbuckled my chute harness the man ran up to me with civilian coat and trousers. While I was changing into the clothes the boy ~~took~~ ^{disappeared in the wood with} my flying

equipment and chute, ~~into the~~ and a woman who seemed to be a part of the family arrived with meat and bread. As soon as I was dressed the man took me by the arm and led me further into the wood ~~where it~~ ^{which was} swampy and difficult

to penetrate. After hiding me in swamp grass he motioned that I was to stay there until he returned. I had learned nothing from him because everything had taken place so quickly. From the moment I hit the ground until I was

hidden and alone again not more than ten or fifteen minutes had passed. I had noticed that as my helper left the swamp he was careful to straighten the grass so that there were no signs ~~left~~ ^{left} where we had entered.

Several hours later my helper returned. We tried to talk but couldn't understand each other. However he was very friendly and kept patting me on the back. After a few efforts at conversation he gave up and guided me through the swamp to a small ^{stream} where he had a boat. We rowed down the stream to a path,

GUIDES
CHUTE
INTO WOODS

GIVEN
IMMEDIATE
AID

CANT
UNDERSTAND
HELPER

where we left the boat and followed the path out of the swamp. We climbed a hill and from the top my helper pointed to a wood and motioned me to walk toward it. I started off and thought he was with me but when I turned around he was still standing at the top of the hill. He kept motioning me to go on and it took a few minutes for me to grasp that he was through with me and I was on my own again.

SENT OFF
ALONE BY
FIRST HELPER

I walked through the wood for about an hour before ~~reaching my destination~~ ~~habitation~~ ~~people, as I heard cars and voices I began to walk more slowly~~ I heard road traffic. ~~Thereby~~ Rather than cross a main road at that time I changed my direction ~~in~~ so that I could stay hidden in the wood. I heard a man yelling and creeping forward I saw a farmer plowing with oxen. As he came around the field again near the woods edge I waved to attract his attention.

He walked over to me and nodded his head when I said that I was an American airman. He was not in the least disturbed and made signs to indicate that I was to hide until he could return for me. I watched him ~~go back to~~ ^{take} his oxen back to the farm. On his way back to me he walked through a turnip patch, pulling one now and then as if ~~working~~ he were still working.

~~My~~ This farmer was a taciturn person with very little to say, and if I tried to tell him something about myself he would motion me ^{to} keep quiet. When he took me to his barn he pointed ~~up to the~~ the hayloft and left me without any knowledge of how much he could or ~~would~~ ^{would} help me. During the afternoon he brought food and after dark took me into the house. I discovered that he had spent the afternoon fixing up a back room in his house ~~where~~ I

could stay comfortably until he got help for me. For the next eight days I lived in this room. The door was locked all the time and was never opened except to three knocks. If I heard anyone trying to get in without knocking three times I was to leave the room by an exit which the farmer had ~~in~~ prepared for me. I lived so quietly in this room during the eight days that his small child never knew I was in the house. In the evenings I was allowed in the kitchen and it was then that I began to get some idea of ~~his~~ his plans ~~there~~.

HIDDEN IN
HOUSE

2.

There were some French departmental maps on the wall of the kitchen. I studied these carefully and tried to tell my helper that I wanted to go to SPAIN. He would listen but ~~afterwards~~ always ^{told} me just to keep quiet and wait. At the end of four days he brought a Frenchman, ~~to the~~ who spoke English, to the house; I learned then that my journey was arranged.

Journey
ARRANGED

On 13 September I was moved to a house in another town. There were several hitches in the plans made to return me which caused me to have to

LIVES FOR
THREE
MONTHS
IN SAME
ROOM
live cooped up in a room from ~~the~~ 13 September to 18 December. Several times my ~~extreme~~ lack of patience almost caused me to run out on my helpers although I never lost confidence in them. I had been told ~~that~~ by Intelligence that if ~~nothing happened~~ helpers showed no signs of ~~doing~~ doing anything within two or three weeks that it was time to move on. I think evaders should be very sure that their helpers are ~~helpless~~ not trying before endangering them to the extent of running out on them.

John F. White Jr

W.S. Holt

APPENDIX B:

- a. On 13 September evader travelled in PARIS metro while 300 German troops (green uniform-black boots) were being transported in special cars.
- b. On 18 December 100 German troops left PARIS travelling toward BORDEAUX in three troop cars. They carried full pack and rifle and evader thinks they had yellow piping on their shoulder straps.

EX

SECRET

APPENDIX "D" TO E AND E REPORT NO.

No., Rank, Name:-

T/Sgt. Thomas E. Combs

Unit:-

100th Bomb Gp. 349th Sq

14134640

Please answer carefully the questions below. Suggestions for improvement of escape equipment and training must 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, had you one on you?
- (c) If not, why had you no aids box?
- (d) If you used it, which of the following items did you use?
Put a dash (-) against each item used and state briefly the circumstances, e.g., "Lying up for 2 nights," etc.

Horlicks tablets.

Chocolate. *→ during 1st day while hiking -*

Milk (tube).

Benzadrine tablets (fatigue).

Halazone tablets (water purifier).

Matches. *→ Cigarettes*

Adhesive tape. *→ matches*

Chewing gum. *→ relieve nervous tension*

Water bottle.

Compass. *→ intended use used; not needed much -*

- (e) Did any of the above items prove unsatisfactory? *no*
If so, in what respect?

(f) How did you finally dispose of the box? *Turn the remainder to the organization. Same to French*

- (g) 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*
If so, state COLOR. *brown - Red stripe*
If NOT, State why not.

- (b) Did you use the purse? *yes*

- (c) If so, which of the following items in the purse did you use?
Put a dash (-) against each item used and state briefly the circumstances.

Maps. Which ones?

Compass. *— during several hours walking before picked up -*

File (hacksaw).

Foreign currency. State countries and amounts. *French; 2000 francs*
How did you spend the money? *yes. 300 Francs.*

(d) How did you dispose of:-

Maps.

Compass.

File (hacksaw).

Surplus currency.

3. AIDS TO ESCAPE - (GADGETS+) *Not Issued*
(+Issued separately from aids boxes and purses.)

(a) Did you carry or wear any of the following?
If you used any of them state briefly WHEN and WHERE.

Round compass. *No.*

Stud compass.

Swinger compass.

Fly-button compass.

Pencil clip compass.

Tunic button compass.

Pipe compass.

Pouch

Special flying boots (and knife).

(b) Were they satisfactory?

(c) Can you suggest any improvements, additions, or substitutions, which would improve the above equipment?

4. PASSPORT SIZE PHOTOGRAPHS

(a) Did you carry passport-size photographs?

If so, how many?

(b) Did you use them?

State how.

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 in the following points:

Stay in woods

wrote to go to Spain

look for family parchment

stay under cover + travel at night

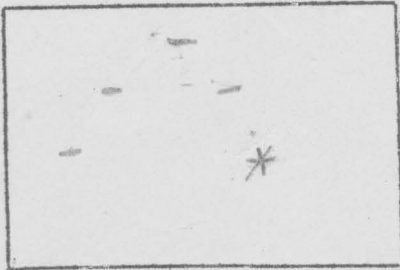
1. *Stay in woods*

2. *approach poor farmers*

3. *stay under cover*

NAME Thomas E. Combs RANK 1st Lt ASN 1413464 REPORT NO. _____

SQ 349 GROUP 100 A/C NO. _____ Letter J Load 6000 Date Sept 3/1943



Position in formation.
Make Diagram

Observed results of Bombing: Did not drop our bombs.

Enemy Fighter Tactics: attacked from the front
Markings: followed by a 5 o'clock attack
Our Tactics: instantly frontal attacks followed by tail attacks at 5 o'clock

Our Fighter Support: none

<u>Flak</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Quality</u>
<u>heavy</u>	<u>10.00</u>	<u>Paris</u>	

Technical Failures

Motors:

Armor:

Armament:

Miscellaneous:

Comments and Suggestions on any of the above: