

E&E # _____

INTERROGATOR _____

NEIL H LATHROP
(Name)

1ST LT.
(Grade)

0-802866
(ASN)

364
(Squadron)

305
(Group)

JAN. 7, 1944
(Missing in action)

MAY 2, 1944
(Returned to duty)

Message to be broadcast over BBC: NEIL AND ROBERT
ARE IN GOOD HEALTH

Language FRENCH

Time ON ANY DATE OF MONTH DIVISIBLE BY
FIVE

Person requesting message FAMILIES IN VERCHIN WHICH

Date of contact with this person JAN, 8, 1944

Description of this person:

Services Rendered: FED, CLOTHED & CARED FOR R.G. CROSBY
& MYSELF FOR TWO MONTHS - HAVE ALSO CARED
FOR MANY OTHER AIRMEN.

SECRET - AMERICAN
MOST SECRET - BRITISH

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

7 May 1944

E2E REPORT NO. 613
EVASION IN FRANCE

Neil H LATHROP, 1st Lt, 0-802866
(7 Missions)
364 Bomb Squadron, 305 Bomb Group

TARGET: LUDWIGSHAVEN

MIA: 7 January 1944

Arrived in UK:
2 May 1944

MEMBERS OF CREW: (This information checked with PWIB)

PILOT	0-802866	1st Lt Neil H LATHROP	NARRATOR
CO-PILOT	0-808793	2d Lt Jesse R CROOKSHANKS	P/W
NAVIGATOR	0-809715	2d Lt Gordon D PROUT	P/W
BOMBARDIER	0-749790	2d Lt Charles J ROBERTS	MIA
RADIO OPERATOR	13154135	T/Sgt Joseph W GEIGER	MIA
TOP TURRET GUNNER	38192286	T/Sgt Earl L ADAMS	P/W
BALL TURRET GUNNER	38483001	S/Sgt Elmer LE JEUNE	MIA
WAIST GUNNER	15334566	S/Sgt George E AYER	P/W
WAIST GUNNER	12203831	S/Sgt Otto A DAMBACH	P/W
TAIL GUNNER	35348358	Sgt Alfred E WENDT	MIA

DAMAGED BY
FIGHTERS AND
FLAK

After target number three engine had been knocked out by flak and could not be feathered, while the temperature on number one was above red line at half power. The vibration forced me to leave formation, but we were over France when the top turret gunner jumped on my orders. Ten seconds later something snapped in the motor allowing the prop to windmill more freely, and again giving me control of the aircraft. I told the crew to keep their chutes on and we flew in cloud cover at 1500 feet. As we cleared cover the fighters came in. Number two was riddled and started to smoke. An explosion back of the cockpit set fire to the bomb bays. The elevator controls and right aileron were hit. I called the bail-out order over the inter-com and hit the alarm bell. The ball turret gunner called in from the waist, as previously trained, and then I called to see if any one was left in the ship. There was no answer. The elevator control cables snapped, and the aircraft started to climb into a stall as I left my seat. When I reached the hatch I found a crew member sitting there. I told him he must jump, to which he replied "Just a minute." I jumped at 900 feet.

BAIL-OUT ORDERS

JUMPS AT 900 FT

I pulled the ripcord immediately and saw a fighter circling the crew chutes in the distance. As I turned toward the aircraft, I heard a loud explosion and saw a mass of flame. I was still swinging when I hit the ground, and I swung into a little hill which jarred my back slightly. I unhooked my chute and ran to shake hands with a nearby farmer. I asked the whereabouts of the Germans. When he pointed in one direction, I ran in the opposite. We had evidently misunderstood one another. He must have meant me to run where he pointed. As things quickly turned out,

MISUNDERSTANDING
IN SIGN
LANGUAGE

3 1/2-hour
hide-and-seek
with search party
CARELESSLY
LEAVES
TRAIL WITH
EQUIPMENT

which I did not see at first

There was a small town hidden amongst trees at the foot of the hill. I did not see the houses at first and ran in that direction down a tree-lined cow path. As I ran I discarded my flying equipment. As I rounded a corner I burst out on a road and a car surrounded by German officers, was parked five yards away. I did an about face and ran as hard as I could. They must have seen me.

TOUCH AND GO
WHILE
GERMANS
SEARCH

I began to hear shots, and realized that they might be shooting at me. I jumped over some bushes and ran across a field until I saw a bush bigger than the rest. I ploughed into it. A few seconds later two Germans ran past arguing. During the next three hours armed Germans kept passing within 2 feet of me. I found that the far side of my hiding place bordered on a well beaten path. Once six or seven men stopped close enough to touch and dropping a pile of our chutes and equipment, stood there arguing. Once I was certain a soldier was staring me in the eyes, although I felt sure it was all over, I never stirred, as I was determined they should have to make me come out. I never had to. When, during the course of the search, the soldiers started systematically poking staves through the bushes, I was saved by two gold bricks. According to the system, they should have converged on my bush, instead they stopped to talk. The search lasted 3 1/2 hours. During the whole time I could see flames from the aircraft and hear the bullets exploding.

DO NOT STIR
IN HIDING PLACE
UNLESS FORCED
TO

GERMAN ARMY
ALSO HAS
G.I. GOLD BRICKS

As soon as it was dark I started walking in the direction the farmer had pointed. It was sleeting and my back soon ached so that I started to look for a haystack. I pulled some hay off a turnip shelter, but found it too cold to sleep. I walked until I saw a light in a stable, climbed a fence and looked in. A boy, smaller than myself, was alone there. I opened the door and walked in, frightening him considerably.

APPROACHES
STABLE - 30 Y'

I strode about flapping my arms until he finally understood that I was a thirsty flier. Then he brought me some beer. He was still frightened and looked amazed whenever I asked for something. He finally went to bed and I crawled in beside him. At 0500 hours the next morning I traded my A-2 jacket and 100 francs for an old black coat of his. It was coated with manure but it came down to my knees. We were both very pleased with the arrangement. Then taking my compass and escape map, I set out for Paris. I had not been warned that this is a dangerous town for an evader still on his own. I thought it would be easy to find help there, and did not know how lucky I was that I get lost that day until much later in my journey.

BOYS DIRTY
DISGUISE

NEVER GO TO
PARIS ALONE

I jumped into the ditches along the road whenever I heard traffic. I turned a sharp corner and found several German trucks parked. The troops from the truck were milling about in the middle of the road. I knew I would look conspicuous if I turned back, so I went on through them. To my surprise I was not stopped. This gave me heart as I was wearing a green shirt, OD trousers and GI boots with my old black coat. When I reached the top of a hill I saw a worker's camp along the road in the valley. The guards were just being driven up. As I was not an advocate of nonchalance, I did not leave the road. By the time I reached the vehicles the soldiers were leaving them and falling into formation. I elbowed my way through them without difficulty.

FACES OUT
TOWARD THE GERMANS
TO TURN BACK
WHEN
FACED BY GERMAN
IS MORE
DANGEROUS THAN
CALMLY CONTINUING
ON ONE WAY

The first farm hand I approached could only help me with tobacco. The second was too surprised to be of any help at all. I went on until I came to an isolated group of houses. In the back yard of the poorest looking house an elderly man was chopping wood. He understood me immediately and rushed me into the house. I was fed bread, butter, wine, and what later I

BEST HELP OFTEN
FROM ELDERLY

do nothing for me but give me some

learned
realized was a month's ration of meat. I was given pants to wear over my OD's and a scarf to hide my shirt. They told me the way to the nearest town, and I got half way through it without attracting any undue attention.

Then I did a very foolish thing. I stopped a young man in the middle of the town square and tried to tell him, in pantomime, who I was and that I wanted help. He just kept repeating "~~He~~ Comprends pas." I went on thinking that he ~~thought me~~ ^{took me for} a foreign worker, but I hurried when I saw that he immediately approached the nearest German soldier. I had never been taught that the airman must not look for organized help, but only let it find him. As I left town a German truck and trailer loaded with cement slowed down to go up hill. I was tired of walking and jumped onto the back of the trailer where the driver and armed guard could not see me. After riding for several miles I realized that the truck might turn into a camp while going too fast for me to jump off. The next time we slowed down on a grade I jumped off, further jarring my back. *(Stencil 2)*

My back began to really bother me now as I walked, and when I saw another German truck ~~that was old and slow~~ ^{loaded with bricks}, I got on behind ~~the load of bricks~~ ^{the truck}, and I waved in friendly fashion as we passed people. I did not realize that the French would never hitch a ride on a German truck. A man on a bicycle asked me some questions which I could not answer. He thought that I simply would not and rode off irritated. I thought no more of the incident. (Sometime after my journey had been arranged this man turned out to be a prominent patriot. He immediately recognized me as the man ~~at ease on a German truck~~ ^{who}, I was immediately suspected of being a German stool-pigeon, and my life was temporarily in danger.)

I saw a woman and a pretty young girl on the roadside. I jumped off the truck and approached the pretty girl. She would have nothing to do with me. It was the older woman who found out who I was, and asked if I were ~~was~~ hungry. She took me to a farmhouse to be fed, and from there on the rest of my journey was arranged.

Compiled by
Dorothy A. Smith
DOROTHY A SMITH
Capt, WAC

Approved by

W S HOLT
Lt Col, AC
Commanding

DO NOT
LOOK FOR
HELP IN
TOWNS

HITCH HIKE'S
RIDE
~~FOUR RIDE~~
ON GERMAN
TRUCK

TRUCK RIDE
CAUSES FRENCH
TO DOUBT FLYER
AN ALLY
EVADER TO
BE SUSPECTED

JOURNEY
ARRANGED

0° 20'

0°

PROCES

CREPY

ANVIN

Monkey
Chagup

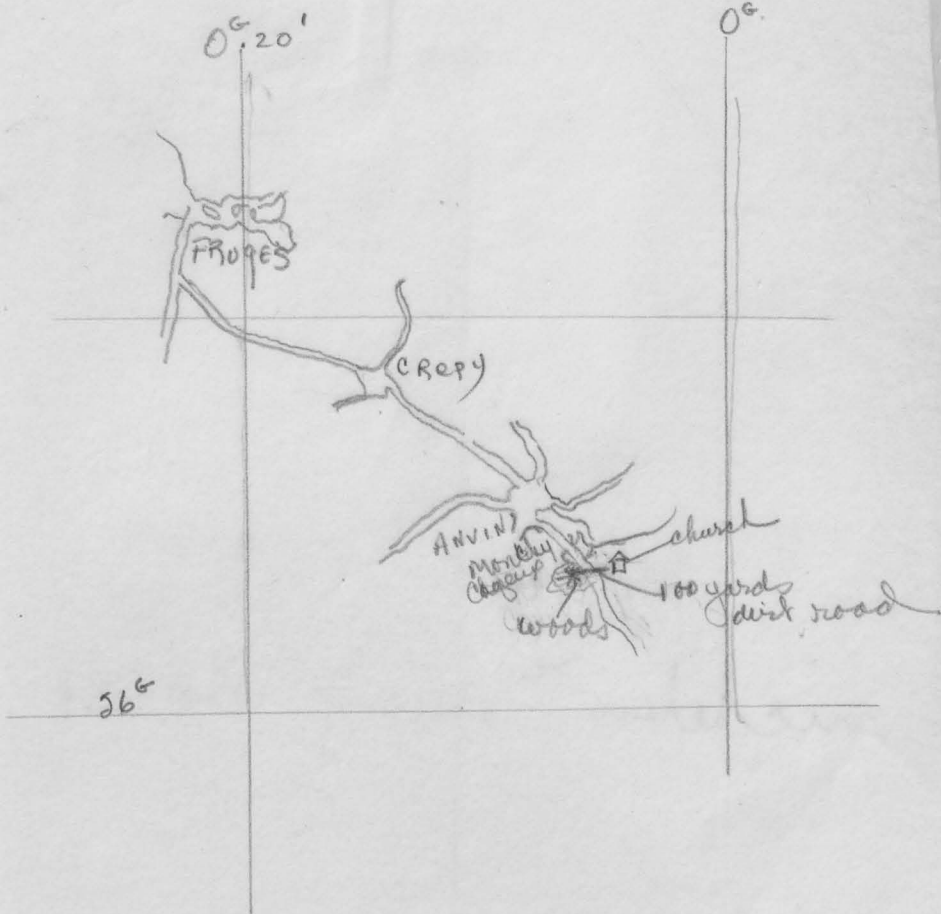
woods

church

100 yds

dirt road

56°



APPENDIX "B" TO E AND E REPORT NO. 613

- a. Hearsay and observation that the morale of the troops in Pas de Calais was very low in January and February. They tell the French they will surrender when the invasion comes. They ~~will~~ listen to BBC broadcasts in French homes and exclaim with delight over Axis reverses, because they will shorten the war. They sell military gasoline to the French in spite of the shortage. Their food is poor; it is mostly hash and they complain of its all being mixed in together. The troops are either very young or very old. Many instances are ~~sighted~~ ^{cited} of the young ones weeping during air raids. They also weep at times if dressed-down by an officer. The officer personnel appeared to be of much better quality.
- b. In February no tanks had been seen in the area of VERCHIN (Pas de Calais) in 7 or 8 months. (Hearsay)
- c. All French observed during period January-March had some arms hidden away ~~until~~ ^{against} the invasion.
- d. VERCHIN (Pas de Calais) was bombed on 24 February by B-26's. There is no military target in the town. The Chateau that was hit is used as a hospital by the Germans, so the French were much surprised by the act. When 2 days later 8 bombs were salvoed near the same chateau, nothing would convince the townspeople that the action was not deliberate. (OBSERVATION.)
- e. The informant was shown a factory in north France (which he can not locate) that was undamaged by bombs. The farms and fields around it had all been hit. The Frenchman pointing this out shrugged his shoulders and said: "Toujours la même chose".
- f. Informant was told of what the French believe to be an important secret fortification ~~is~~ located at MONCHY CAYEUX (Pas de Calais). 300 to 500 troops were garrisoned there for its construction. Much cement, many RR ties and cement mixers were shipped in when the work began in January. A tunnel was built from the RR to the fortification, which is in a woods opposite the church, at MONCHY CAYEUX. A dirt road leads into the woods. The French were not allowed to work on it as on other fortifications. A large number of AA guns were installed for the protection of the site. (SEE SKETCH ATTACHED.)
- Sketch!

APPENDIX "D" TO E AND E REPORT NO. 613

1. AIDS BOX: I used the compass throughout my trip. The sewing kit was handy to patch my pants, and the matches were used for cigarettes. I was well ~~fed~~ ^{helped} by farmers from the start.
2. PURSE: I carried a yellow purse. I used the compass and map of France and the Pyrenees. I changed the Belgian money into French. 100 francs was used to buy an old coat; the rest was spent on cigarettes and given to farmers.

(over)

3. PHOTOGRAPHS: I did not carry photographs due to my own carelessness. Those taken in France did not turn out and I never was able to get others.)
4. LECTURES: I was lectured by an evader at OTU in Alexandria, La. I wish I had known more details. Airmen should be taught to appreciate the sacrifices the French insist on making to feed them. As an example, when we had chicken I and another flier were each given a drumstick, wing and slice of breast. The family of four ate what remained. Had we not been there, the chicken would not have been killed at all.
5. SUGGESTIONS: a) Keep your GI shoes for the Pyrenees. They hold cleats well.

b) Carry your passport photographs.

c) Young people are not likely to be as helpful as middle aged or elderly people.

of my first visit to the Pyrenees. I was told that the French were not allowed to work on the road and that the French were not allowed to work on the road. I was told that the French were not allowed to work on the road and that the French were not allowed to work on the road. I was told that the French were not allowed to work on the road and that the French were not allowed to work on the road.

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Lathrop

E & E CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

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

JAN. 7, 1944 - APPROXIMATELY 14:00 ABOUT ~~15~~ 5 MILES FROM ESTREE BLANCHE

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

Was it on fire, etc? ELEVATOR CONTROL OUT - FLAMES IN BOMBAY - ONE ENGINE PREVIOUSLY SHOT OUT, UNABLE TO FEATHER, SECOND ENGINE SET ON FIRE + KNOCKED OUT AT

At approximately what altitude did source bail out? TIME WE BAILED 900 FT.

Were any of the crew injured or killed before the plane crashed? NOT TO MY KNOWLEDGE

What members of the crew bailed out? Did their parachutes open? QUITE CERTAIN ALL BAILED OUT WITH POSSIBLE EXCEPTION OF 2ND LT. C.J. ROBERTS

Did the plane explode on striking the ground? OBSERVED LARGE EXPLOSION IMMEDIATELY AFTER JUMPING

Did source see any other members of the crew dead or alive after reaching the ground? NO - ALTHOUGH SAW QUITE A FEW OF CREWS PARACHUTES CARRIED BY THE HUN

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. NO INFORMATION WHATSOEVER

Did source examine the wreckage of the plane? If so, what was its condition? DID NOT EXAMINE BUT HID IN BUSHES HALF A MILE AWAY + OBSERVED FLAMES, M.G. BULLET CONTINUED TO EXPLODE SEVERAL HOURS AFTER CRASH

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? BELIEVES ALL JUMPED SUCCESSFULLY WITH POSSIBLE EXCEPTION OF LT. C.J. ROBERTS STILL IN AIRCRAFT WHEN PILOT JUMPED AT 900 FT. —

SECRET - AMERICAN
MOST SECRET - BRITISH

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

E & E REPORT NO. 613
EVASION IN

5/2/43
(Date)

NEIL H LATHROP 1ST LT 0-802866
(Name) (Rank) (ASN)

TARGET: LUDWIGS HAYEN

MIA: JAN. 7, 1944
Arrived in UK: MAY 2, 1944

304th 305TH
(Squadron) (Group)
MISSIONS 7

MEMBERS OF CREW: (This information checked with PWIB)

	Official Disposition	Narrators Disposition
PILOT N.H. LATHROP - 1 ST LT	NARRATOR	
CO-PILOT J.R. CROOKSHANKS - 2 nd LT	P/W	
NAVIGATOR G.D. PROUT - 2 nd LT	P/W	
BOMBARDIER C.J. ROBERTS - 2 nd LT	maybe in A/C	believed MIA cleared A/C
RADIO OPERATOR J.W. GEIGER	T/SGT MIA	
TOP TURRET GUNNER E.L. ADAMS	T/SGT P/W	
BALL TURRET GUNNER E. (NMI) LEJEUNE	S/SGT MIA	called that he was out of ball turret
WAIST GUNNER G.E. AYER	S/SGT P/W	
WAIST GUNNER O.A. DAMBACH	S/SGT P/W	
TAIL GUNNER WENOT	(INITIALS + RANK ?)	MIA

Were you wounded?

many shutes
and ground

counted 4 or 5
before hitting
pumped at 900 ft

may have been
killed or injured
in A/C as an
E for shot on our
tail in last attack

Paul Pearce

William Henderson

mid Feb.

B26 Turret gun in Paris
same crew, arrived
radio B26 on day
we left
and well off

a Bombardier & radio of turned back
in Singapore. From same Fort
lived together so long that fed up with a other
came down in Belgium

COPY

R E S T R I C T E D

MILITARY LIAISON OFFICE
AMERICAN CONSULATE
GIBRALTAR

28 April 1944

E X T R A C T

SPECIAL ORDERS)

NUMBER.....18)

1. Pursuant to authority contained in WD Cablegram, Number 45, dated 4 February 1943, the officers named below, having reported at this station on 28 April 1944, are placed on temporary duty at this station. Upon completion of this temporary duty they will proceed by first available transportation to where they will report to the Commanding General U.S. Army. In lieu of subsistence a flat per diem of \$5.00 is authorized while traveling on official business (except by belligerent or government vessel) and while on temporary duty at this station, in accordance with existing law and regulations. TDN 91-26 P 432-02 A 212/40425.

1st Lt NEIL H LATHROP 0-802866
2nd Lt MICHAEL L SMITH 0-803479

305th Bm Grp
366th Ftr Grp

2. Pursuant to authority contained in WD Cablegram, Number 45, dated 4 February 1943, the enlisted men named below, having reported to this station on 28 April 1944, are placed on temporary duty at this station. Upon completion of this temporary duty they will proceed by first available transportation to where they will report to the Commanding General U.S. Army. They will be entitled to monetary allowances in lieu of quarters and subsistence furnished, according to Executive Order No. 9386, dated 15 October 1943, for subsistence at the rate of three (\$3.00) dollars per day and for quarters at the rate of two (\$2.00) dollars per day, while traveling on official business (except by belligerent or government vessel) and while on temporary duty at this station, in accordance with existing law and regulations. TDN 91-26 P 432-02 A 212/40425.

Staff Sgt LOWELL I CREASON
Staff Sgt ARNOLD O PEDERSON

37138269
17107679

322nd Bm Grp
452nd Bm Grp

s/ HORACE W FORSTER,
t/ HORACE W FORSTER
Colonel, G.S.C.
Mil. Lia. Officer

Distribution.

Personnel concerned
File

R E S T R I C T E D

TRUE COPY

Thelma G Belford
THELMA G BELFORD
1st Lt, WAC

9 June

Ned H. Lathrop, 1st Lt 0-802866
364 Bomb Sq 305 Bomb Gp

8 Air Force

Bronze Star

2 & 2 Rpt 612

~~Jump~~ Injured his back on landing
but set out immediately. His
calmness and steady nerves saved
him from discovery by the Germans
during their search. Travelled without
help for twenty four hours
using courage and imagination.

AG 383.6

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, AGC, 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) NEIL H LATHROP Signed Neil H Lathrop
Rank / LT A.S.N. 0-802866 Date April/28/44
Unit 305TH BOMB GR. Witness Wm. W. Smith
Col. G.S.C.

Lathrop C Typed
Pt of Landing near Estrie Blanche
south of St Omer

The farm to which the woman
told me belonged to the Mueveglies-
Delaforge family of Nerchin-par-
Fruges (Pas de Calais). Here I met

Blanche Bruche who speaks English.
She acted as interpreter. Bruche is
her maiden name. She was born in
the U.S.A. & went back to France when
she was 15. Her husband is P/W. She
contacted Raymond Boulet head
of the Nerchin and Fruges ^{organization}
He was the man on the bicycle who had
questioned me on the bicycle.

That night Raymond took
me to Blanche where I spent the
night. Her neighbor brought us
lots of food. On 9 January Raymond

bought Robert Gordon Crosby RC 97
 to join me and we were better
 from then on except for two weeks
 in Paris.

That night M. Boulet took
 us to his employer. She was a
 woman with a daughter ^{twelve} ~~thirteen~~ years
 had been widowed in this war.
 If Marriott & Elftie was in bed
 here. After visiting we spent the
 night with Boulet. On 10 January
 he returned to this woman for
 two nights. Here our uniforms
 were changed and we were
 given more civilian clothing.

Genevieve's sister came
 and told Crosby & Boulet that
 I was suspected of being a spy.
 They were to tell me if I could not
 prove otherwise. Crosby, however,
 was quite positive in his view
 that I was an American
 Genevieve's father was originally

the organizer or chief of the whole region. The Gestapo got him. The women still sheltered Crosby. The Gestapo came back one day. Crosby went out the back window and they took Genevieve's mother. The girls who are 17 and 18 years old are carrying on their parents work.

Raymond Boalet lived next door to Genevieve's family. On 12 January the Gestapo called on him. Fortunately he was not at home. He was worried & decided to move so that night. He was warned on time that the Gestapo had been to the house to which he had intended to move as he slept with us in a barn that night.

Early on 13 January he

took the three of us to Emil
Patout ~~for the day~~. That night
a doctor came for Marvett, Goby
and I stayed on in the two
room house for a week. Raymond
and Blanche often visited.

About 20 January we moved
to the home of M. Auguste Debuis.
He is the mayor's gardener. We
were here four weeks. They
took excellent care of us and
were most kind and generous.
Raymond helped out with butter, meat
and more. He walked through the
snow to us every night. Blanche
was also faithful. Genevieve gave
Raymond our 10 cards and he
sent them to us.

Genevieve came and said
we were going to leave. Raymond
took us to Blanche for the night.

Major Blythe & E Rpt # and
Harrist were the only ones,
however, to go. Blanche
kept us for two weeks, during
this time the Debiur house was
wrecked by allied bombing. The
major's chateau was also hit.
It was the major who had
furnished our civilian clothing.
The ^{the effect} Delage's immediately sent
word that "C'est en guerre" and
that if the Germans were not
in France, there would be
no need for the allies to bomb.

About 4 March we
moved to the home of the Theresias
- Delage family. We had
wonderful care there for two
weeks. Two other Americans
were now in Verdun and
Raymond was going for ten weeks.

they were Paul Pearce and William
Sandinsson (the latter is now in Spain)

About 18 March Marriott's
doctor picked us up in his car
& took us to his home for the
night. Here we met John
Watson Smith ~~and~~ he was born
in South Africa and the Gestapo
was looking for him because
he had helped an aviator.
He is the doctor's brother-in-law - Caw.
and wants to get into the R.A.F.

The next day, after a
20 mi drive, we picked up another
guide & started walking (Tallrope,
Crosby & Smith) We stopped, by
previous arrangement, at a
place where we ate and at another
where we slept that night. Here
we also changed guides. We
reached Urras on foot ~~at last~~

As we caught the train to Paris.

We had to change trains at Creil. Plainclothesmen made the others open their luggage and speak a few sentences, but they skipped me. This was really thanks to the others who made their own inspections as lengthy as possible because they knew that I could speak no French.

In Paris three men joined us in the street and we all went to a cafe. One was a gendarme in uniform named Michel. He separated in the metro. Michel took me to an apartment house of which Mme Soet was concierge. The apartment of which she told me belonged to a captain who is P/W and whose wife is living elsewhere. I was here two weeks. Soet rejoined me on the fourth day while

I was here I was taken to
the barbers. He was told that
I was French. We went out
quite a bit ~~and~~ one of the
cafes we frequented ~~is~~ the
Parisian of St. Francois's
Organization.

It was at this cafe that
we received new shoes &
civilian clothing, before leaving
Paris. We went to Toulouse
by train. A young student from
the University of Toulouse
was our guide. He wore dark
glasses and wore ~~dark~~ a
hat pulled low over his eyes in
mysterious fashion. Smith was
left in Paris temporarily to act
as an interpreter for the
Organization. Crosby rejoined me.

at the cafe where I also
met F/lt Goldberg, Sgt Croison
2nd Lt Rpt# and Sgt Pederson
2nd Lt Rpt#

At Toulouse we took
an electric train to Montargis
and a bus to St Girons where
we spent 8 days in a barn in
the foothills of the Pyrenees.
On the 7th day Lt Smith 2nd Lt Rpt#
joined us. The story of the crossing
is given in his report.

CONFIDENTIAL

HEADQUARTERS
EUROPEAN THEATER OF OPERATIONS
UNITED STATES ARMY
OFFICE OF THE A. C. OF S., G-2

613

DATE: 3 May 1944

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

I, GERARD J. YONKMAN, Capt., AC, O-649138

hereby certify that I have known and have been associated with

NEIL H. LATHROP, 1st Lt., AC, O-802866

prior to his being reported missing in action over enemy territory.

The person whose signature and right thumb print appear hereon is the individual referred to above.

Neil H. Lathrop

Gerard J. Yonkman

RIGHT THUMB PRINT:



=====

The individual whose signature and right thumb print appear hereon has been identified to the satisfaction of this office as GERARD H. LATHROP,

1st Lt., AC, O-802866 (364 Bomb Squadron - 305 Bomb Group)

previously reported missing in action over enemy territory.

W. F. MARANDA
SPECIAL AGENT, C.I.C.

CONFIDENTIAL

Fallrop

Over target #3 was put out by flak & waffle & feathers. Oil regulator on #1 had not been operating correctly and I could not draw full power without danger of fire. The temp on #1 was above red line at $\frac{1}{2}$ power. The vibration was so bad that I could not keep the speed of the formation and dropped out. Still could hardly hold wheel cause of vibration. Navigator called #3 on fire. TTG was looking at instruments with us when co-pilot said are we going to jump I said guess we'll have to & told TTG to go ahead. He did & was only one

~~jump after time we were already~~
~~17 told him but he bombarded called for a crash landing~~
~~over France~~ ^{we all 10} ^{put our clothes on} ^{4960 ft} ^{to keep them on}
manned in the motor & and the prop windmill
more freely. ⁰⁰ there was less vibration.

Discovered I could keep control of
the A/C at 135 mi per hr, ^{sending a res to TTG} continued
Saw another Fort alone ahead but
(Mars) Blythe & Co. Marrott

could not catch up. Fighters were
attacking it at the time they went
of clouds for cover and I was dropping
into cloud as fast as I could. After 5 or 10
min broke free of clouds. ~~that into~~
We were flying at 1500 ft & ~~was~~ ^{was} ~~was~~
asked for more altitude so that
he could get a G fix. Fighters
were called & attached as we
tried to climb. Attacks were all
from 3 to 9 o'clock. I tried
to use evasive action but could
accomplish little at my speed.
Number 2 was saddled with holes
& started to smoke a ft. seemed
to be sitting on my tail so that I
gunner had been shot. The
was an explosion directly
behind the cockpit. Something happened
to the elevator controls & right aileron
~~lost~~ I had to crank full trim &
hold the stick fully forward & keep
the A/C from shooting straight up. I also
had to hold the aileron full & keep from
banking sharply. No time to feather #2.
The bomb bay was filled with
flames. I told the co-pilot to jump
and called the bailout order to
the crew on the inter-com. When
hit the alarm bell. When the
PTB reached the waist he called his

in as previously trained & told
 him to jump. after that I called
 Jack if there were anyone left
 but there was no answer. The
 elevator control cables snapped and
 there was no response to elevator pressure
 by the started to climb into a stall.
 I ~~unhooked~~ ^{released} my belt and crawled
 down the marginalis hatch where
 I found Roberts sitting. I told him
 we were only ones left & he must
 jump. He said: just a minute. I went
 out at 900 ft.

I pulled the rip - cord immediately
~~or~~ not much of a jerk, silence was
 noticeable. When chute opened I
 was sitting straight up. I saw a
 str circling ⁴⁰ chutes in the distance
 as he came toward me heard
 a loud explosion that on turning
 toward to A/C I saw a huge mass of
 flames whether it had hit the ground

Or not was not clear. I was still
swinging when I hit the ground.
I swung into a little hill
which jolted my back slightly.

I unhooked my chute quickly
& saw a farmer 10 or 15 yds
away. I ran up to him & shook
hands. I tried to ask the
whereabouts of the G. soldiers in
partments. He pointed in one
direction so I ran in the other
~~that~~ He evidently wanted me
to run where he pointed for I ran
into the G. soldiers. Small town
in trees at foot of hill didn't realize
I was town. A large tree
ran toward it. Saw a cow path
tree - I cut a tree down it digging
my flying equipment as I went.
As I turned a corner the path
went into a road on which a
carful of G. was parked 5 yds
away. I about faced and ran
back as fast as I could. I kept
didn't see me must have heard
me as I burst onto road.
I began to hear shots and bullets
that they might be shooting at
me, so I jumped over some bushes
and ran 20 to 30 yds across a field

I found a bush deeper than the
rest on the edge of a field &
jumped right into it. A few seconds
later 2 Germans ran past jumping
during next 2 or 3 hrs arrived &
& kept on passing me within
2 feet as my bush was on the edge
of their path. Once ~~they~~ 6 or 7
stopped close enough to touch and
dropped a pile of our clothes &
equipment. Then they stood there

arguing. Search lasted about
one hour I could never see one stare me in the eyes. I thought
it was one but did not know. In 4 1/2 hrs it was dark
star just faded. Two converged on me, poking sticks in
at them & making me all the bushes but like good G.I. gold bricks
come out & I never stopped to take 10 yds from me & then went
back to. on without looking any more.

I could still see flames and
hear the forts bullets exploding.

At dark I returned to pt
of landing & went the way the
former to pt. I walked several
hrs in the sheet & back ached so
looked for easy tracks but no luck

Took some hay from a turnip
shelter but it was too cold & sleep
passed time a town & saw a light in
a stable. I climbed over a fence
& looked in. There was a ~~man~~
~~old~~ a boy who looked smaller than
self. I opened the door and said
all which nearly scared him
& death. It took a lot of arm
flapping to convince him that I was
a friend and thirsty. He finally believed
me & brought beer. Viciously still
frightened of me and didn't know
what to expect always did what
I asked with a look of amazement.
He had a bed in the stable and where
he went to sleep in it I just crawled
in beside him.

About 05 00 5th Jan got up
& traded him my A 2 jacket and 100
francs for an old coat coated in
manure that came down to
my knees. We were both very pleased
with the deal. Taking compass &
escape map (He had pointed out
me at Estree Blanche south
of St Omer) I tried to walk toward Paris
against which I shall not bear
bored & thought it a great deal
to find org. Somehow I luckily got

lost and went west. I walked
 down the road jumping into ditches
 whenever traffic passed. Finally
 I turned a corner & find several
 trucks whose troops were sitting
 up in the middle of the road. I thought
 I would look suspicious if I turned
 around so I walked towards them & to
 my surprise was not stopped. Green
 shirt & o.d. trousers & o.d. boots under
 the black coat. This gave me heart.
 At the bottom of a hill I could see
 a camp of foreign workers on one
 side of the road. The guards were
 huddled up in a truck. By now I
 was an advocate of nonviolence &
 went on as I reached them they were
 debucking & going formation. I walked
 through them easily. A few 100 yds
 on I saw a solitary Belgian
 worker & I told him who I was &
 was hungry. He indicated that I

he could give me was tobacco

Two hours later saw what I
thought was a red-headed goshawk
flying a field I went over, it was a
hoop. He was so surprised that he
was also of no help I went on to
doubt houses trying an effort to
contact the one, I went to the poorest
house in the camp and approached
a soldier, elderly man chopping wood
in the yard. He soon understood to
take me into the house for wine,
bread & butter & what I later learned
was his month's supply of meat. His
wife & servant were surprised
but pleased. Give me pants &
put over O.D. & and scarf & cover
short. Told me way to

~~Fantome~~ Fanguemberegues on whose
tutelage they were. I passed through
it without my stirring but in
middle of town did foolish thing
in center of stopped flood of 10
& by fantome turned to tell him
that I was U.S. & surgeon but
he evidently thought me a foreign
worker & would only say he comprehended
me. He left & he immediately started
talking to the G. soldiers & I hurried
away. Beyond the town

4.

A G truck & trailer ^{Cement bags} heavily loaded
passed slowly up hill. As tired
of walking jumped on back of trailer
where driver & armed guard could
not see me. After several miles
realized he might end up in
a camp & fast for me to jump
off. So I got off on the next hill
which wrenched my back some
more. It was now quite a bother.
I reached Fringes as left
town saw slow old G truck
loaded with trucks & ~~with~~ ^{with} difficulty
cause of back got on the back.
~~But~~ thought jumping trucks would
be common but later found I don't
ride on G. trucks. As I was on the
bus a 42 cyclist hooked on to ask
some questions which I could not answer
& he left irritated. Later he turned
out to be local chief & recognized
me as man lying on a G truck &

therefore suspected me of being a
C. Rode to Nerchinsk and saw a woman
and girl ^{pretty} on street. jumped off of that
question. Young girl would have
nothing to do with me but elderly
woman asked if I were hungry and
took left me at a ^{house} at which
she arranged that I be fed.

This is home of the Mueveglise -
Delaforgue of Nerchinsk - part of Fruges
Pas de Calais. They called in all
their friends & indicated that a
girl who could speak English would
come. She said Blanche Bruche later

is maiden name, her husband is P/W
she was born in U.S. & lived there till
15. Had difficulty getting out of back
wanted to get doctor (but I said
no. She sent someone to contact

Raymond Boulet ^{the man of the bicycle}
I did not recognize him, he did
not shake hands like to die
but stood & watched me. Finally
when the friends had left Blanche
told me to remain until night when
Raymond would take me to her
house. He did. Her whole
family was there spent the night

Her neighbor brought me lots of food.

here. On 9 Jan M. Boulet
 met with Robert Gordon Crosby
 RCA & Typhoon & we travelled
 together except for two weeks in
 Paris. We stayed all day

That night M. Boulet took
 us to his employer, a woman on
 a nearby farm with daughter of 12
 her husband had been killed during
 the war. Paul Mariott in bed
 here. We visited him & then went
 to M. Boulet's for a night.

On 10 Jan he took us back
 to Mariott's for 2 nights. He
 brought ^{our uniform} ~~our uniform~~ the people
 with whom Crosby had stayed before
~~square me~~ Genevieve's sister
 came and told Crosby & Boulet
 that I was suspected of being German
 & that they were not positive. Crosby
 a Canadian was quite positive.
 The girl's father was originally

Also on 10 Jan
 and Mariott's

for whole region
~~back of head~~ ^{the} ~~the~~ was
taken, mother was taken by
Gestapo while Crosby was here, he
went out a back window. The
girls 17 & 18 gave away &
carried on in the cry for their parents.

Boulet lived next door on day
of 12 Jan Gestapo called on him
but he was not there. He was
told that ^{said we would be} ~~he~~ moved ~~that~~ That
night he came to do so when a
man told him Gestapo was at
house we were going. We
left in 4 am been that night
while he found another place. Left
with us as his own home was safe.

Early on 13 Jan took us while
at bark to Emil Latout ^(Marnott) ~~Crosby~~
here for day. That night he
doctor Marnott later stayed with
came for him. Crosby & I stayed on
for a week in the two room house
Raymon & Blanche after visited
& brought food. ~~But~~ moved about 20 Jan

^{August} ~~her~~ moved about 20 Jan
to M. Debuir's house, here
had wonderful care for four weeks
He is gardener & the ~~major~~ ^{major} ~~Crosby~~ ^{Crosby} ~~was~~ ^{was} ~~given~~ ^{given}
much more than our share of the food.

Brunswick slice of breast & wing
each. remainder for family of 4.
Tea every day at 4 alt though I had
additional salary from pre-war.

In the meantime Boulet brought
kitchen meat & money. Visited her
every night a long snowy walk
Blanche also wonderful beautiful
wine.

^{Raymon}
^{degenerate} ^{out I cards} ^{degenerate them to us}
Genevieve came one night
and said we were going to leave
Raymon took us to Blanche's for
the night. However Blythe & Warrall
left so we remained with Blanche
for two weeks (about 20 Feb) also
~~and~~ excellent care. While here
we would watch the bombing &
one day to Delvoir's was ~~blown~~
badly damaged & ruined. They
fortunately were not hurt. The
24 chateau of the mayor (who furnished
Feb clothes etc) was also hit. Word
sent immediately that C'est Ca guerre
& no hard feeling if not in fact no
need to bomb.

About 4 March we went to

to the village - Delaforges home
for two weeks. Wonderful
care. ~~He was~~ all we wanted

(Paul Pearce & William
Henderson were now in Mercur
& we would visit Henri Raymond
was going to have them fed.

About 18 March Mariott's
doctor came by in his car &
took us to his house where we
stayed here that night &
met John Watson Smith a British
subject born in S.A. looked for
by Gestapo for having helped a war
his sister was married to the dr.

19
Next day we were driven
20 mi to another guide and
started walking. We had
lunch at a ~~colliery~~ ^{at town} by
arrangement while Smith & guide
ate at another place.

We walked all the afternoon
stopping by arrangement for dinner
at a ~~deep~~ ^{deep}. The next day
we walked in Arras. At home
had picked up new guide

20 March

7

I with him caught train to Paris. We changed trains at Amiens and plainclothesmen made all the others open their luggage and talk. They took as long as possible & were successful in that they did not bother me.

In Paris we met 3 men in the street & went to a café. One was Michel a policeman who was in uniform. They took me to the apartment. I went with Michel to the apt house. Marie Soet was the concierge & she took me to the apt of a Capt who was P/W & whose wife lived elsewhere tho the lease was still good. Here two weeks & rejoined on 4th day by Soet. Got my haircut while here. Barber was told that I was French. He kept wanting to go out so Michel took us to

cafe that was our meeting
place ~~for~~ (Françoise or)
Plenty of food. The police along with
us was in heat of hearing other
drop in the diff cages always
attracted attention. Once dark
at a cafe when I entered Smith
said in my at top of lung for the
SOB's the Germans were too only
best under trees and all around
us move. ~~that~~ used to my tipperary
in public.

At the end of 2 weeks ^{we} were
given brand new clothes &
shoes at the cafe and set off at
end of March. I took train
to Toulouse with a young student
from U de T as guide. ^{dark glasses at low angle}
Smith kept in Paris as interpreter ^{for the moment}
at cafe picked up Goldberg, Crossby
Crenson & Pederson. <sup>Everyone must
have known who
we were.</sup>

At Toulouse took train
to Montescieu & then bus ^{deduce} St Giron
Walked to a barn in the foothills
& were here 8 days on 7th day Smith
joined us.

Set out on 7th met another party
at ~~Montescieu~~ & waterfall ^{coming down to meet us}
where we would have to retrace

SECRET - AMERICAN
MOST SECRET - BRITISH

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

E & E REPORT NO. 613
EVASION IN FRANCE

2 May 1944

(Date)

Neil H LATHROP, 1st Lt, O-802866

(Name) (Rank) (ASN)

7 missions

364 Bomb Sq, 305 Bomb Group

(Squadron) (Group)

TARGET: LUDWIGSHAVEN

MIA: 7 January 1944

Arrived in UK:

2 May 1944

MEMBERS OF CREW: (This information checked with PWIB)

				Official Disposition	Narrators Disposition
PILOT	O-802866	1st Lt	Neil H LATHROP		NARRATOR
CO-PILOT	O-808793	2d Lt	Jesse R CROOKSHANKS		P/W
NAVIGATOR	O-809715	2d Lt	Gordon D PROUT		P/W
BOMBARDIER	O-749790	2d Lt	Charles J ROBERTS		MIA
RADIO OPERATOR	13154135	T/Sgt	Joseph W GEIGER		MIA
TOP TURRET GUNNER	38192286	T/Sgt	Earl L ADAMS		P/W
BALL TURRET GUNNER	38483001	S/Sgt	Elmer LE JEUNE		MIA
WAIST GUNNER	15334566	S/Sgt	George E AYER		P/W
WAIST GUNNER	12203831	S/Sgt	Otto A DAMBACH		P/W
TAIL GUNNER	35348358	Sgt	Alfred E WENDT		MIA

Were you wounded?

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

CHANGED BELGIAN MONEY FOR FRENCH - USED THE FRENCH MONEY
Maps. Which ones?

MAP OF FRANCE + PYRENEES

Compass.

YES

File (hacksaw).

NO

Foreign currency. State countries and amounts.

How did you spend the money?

cigarettes on
black market

d. How did you dispose of:-

Maps. GAVE TO FRENCH WOMAN

Compass. GAVE TO PYRENEES GUIDE

File (hacksaw).

Surplus currency. GAVE IT TO LAST FRENCH FARMER

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

4. PASSPORT SIZE PHOTOGRAPHS

a. Did you carry passport-size photographs? NO - MY OWN CARELESSNESS
If so, how many?

b. Did you use them?

First set taken in France no
good ~~and~~ never could take another

5. LECTURES

a. Were you lectured on evasion and escape?

State WHERE, WHEN and by WHOM YES - BY NAVIGATOR AT
O.T.U. IN ALEXANDRIA, LA. evader picked up in 2 hrs.

b. Did you find the lectures of value? YES ~~Hide your date was not of value~~
in my case. ~~approaching young people~~ not good in my case, needed more details

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

CARRY PASSPORT PHOTOS -
KEEP G.I. SHOES FOR PYRENEES THEY HOLD
CLEATS VERY WELL

Lathrop

After target number three
engine had been knocked out
by flak and could not be
feathered while the temperature
on number one was above
red line at half power. The
vibration forced me to leave
formation ~~and~~ ^{but} we were over
France when the top turret
gunner jumped on my orders.
Ten seconds later something
snapped in the motor allowing the
prop to windmill more freely and
again giving me control of the aircraft.
Told the ~~crew~~ ^{climber} to ~~climb~~
~~but~~ ^{climb} deep their own and we
flew in cloud cover at
1500 ft. As if we ~~left~~ cleared
cover the fighters came in. Number
two was nudged and started to
smoke. ~~Something~~ ^{Scum} exploding back
of the cockpit set the bomb

bays aflame. The elevator
 controls and right aileron
 were lost. I called for bail-
 out order over the inter-com
 and hit the alarm bell.
~~I waited until the ball-turret~~
 gunner called in from the
 waist. ~~as per procedure~~ trained
 on them. I called to see if
 any one was left in the ship. There
 was no answer. The elevator
 control cables snapped and
 the aircraft started to climb
 into a stall as I left my seat.
 When I reached the hatch
 I found a crew member
 sitting there. I told he must
 just go which he replied "just
 a minute". I jumped at 900 ft.
 I pulled the rip-cord
 immediately and saw a light
 cording crew chutes in the distance.
 As I turned toward the aircraft

I heard a loud explosion
 and saw a mass of flames.
 I was still emerging when
 hit the ground. I fell into
 a little shell which forced my
 back slightly. I unhooked my
 chute and ran to shake
 hands with a nearby farmer.
 I asked he whereabouts of
 the Germans. When he pointed
 in one direction and I ran
 in the opposite. We had evidently
 misunderstood one another. He
^{as things quickly turned out} must have meant me to run
 where he pointed.

There was a small town
 hidden amongst trees at the foot
 of the hill. I did not see the houses
 at first and ran in that
 direction down a tree-lined
 cow path. As I ran I discarded
 my flying equipment. As I

rounded a corner I burst
 onto a road. A car surrounded
 by German officers was parked
 five yards away. I hid an
 about face and ran as
 hard as I could. They must
 have seen me.

I began to hear shots,
 and realized that they might
 be shooting at me. I jumped
 over some bushes and ran
 across a field until I saw
 a bush bigger than the rest. I
 plunged into it. A few seconds later
 two Germans ran past arguing.
 During the next three hours armed
 Germans kept passing within
 2 ft of me. I found that the
~~other~~ far side of my hiding
 place bordered on a ^{well} beaten
 path. Once six or seven stopped
 close enough to touch and dropping

a pile of our clothes and equipment, stood there ~~at night~~. Once I was certain a soldier was staring me in the eyes. Although I felt sure it was all over, I never stirred as I was determined they should have to make me come out. I never had to. When, during the course of the search, the soldiers ^{systematically} started poking staves through the bushes, I was ~~convinced~~ ^{accused} of ~~the~~ ^{the} gold buxles. They should have converged on my bush, instead they stopped & talk. The search lasted $3\frac{1}{2}$ hrs. During the whole time I could see flames from the aircraft and hear the bullets exploding.

As soon as it was dark I started walking in the direction the farmer had pointed. It was sleeting,

.6

and my back soon ached
so that I started to look
for a haystack. I pulled some
hay of a twining shelter, but
found it too cold to sleep. I
walked until I saw a light
in a stable, climbed a fence
and looked in. A boy, smaller
than myself, was alone there. I
opened the door and walked
in frightening him considerably.

A straddle about flapping
my arms until he finally
understood that I was a
thirsty flier. Then he
brought me some beer. He was
still frightened and looked
anxious whenever I asked
for something. He finally went
to bed and I crawled in
beside him. At 0500 hrs

7.

the next morning ~~==~~ I traded
my A2 jacket and 100 francs
for an old black coat of his.
It was coated with manure
but it came down to my knees.
We were both very pleased with
the arrangement. Then taking
compass and escape map, I
set out alone. I had not been
warned that this ~~was~~ ^{is} a dangerous
town for an outsider when ~~one~~ still
on his own. I thought it would
be easy to find help there and
did not know how lucky
I was that I got lost that day
until much later in my
journey.

I jumped into the ditches
along the road whenever
I heard traffic. I turned a

J.

sharp corner and found
several German trucks parked
the troops from the truck
were mulling about in
the middle of the road.
~~preparation to follow into position.~~
I knew I could look suspicious
if I turned back, so I went on
through town. To my surprise
I was not stopped. This gave me
heart as I was wearing a
green shirt, O.D. trousers and
C.I. boots with my old black coat.
When I reached the top of
a hill I saw ~~some sort of~~ a workers camp
along the road in the valley. The
guards were just being driven
up. As I was now an advocate
of nonviolence, I did not
leave the road. By the time
I reached the vehicles the soldiers
were clearing them and falling into

9
situation. I elbowed my way
through them without difficulty
The first farm ~~laborer~~ ^{guard}

I approached could only help
me with tobacco, the second
was too surprised to be of any
help at all. I went on until
~~I~~ came to an isolated group
of houses. I into back yard
of the poorest looking house an
elderly man was chopping
wood. He understood me
immediately and rushed me
into the house. I was fed bread,
butter, wine and what later
I realized was a month's ration
in meat. I was given pants
I wear over my O.D.s and a
scarf to hide my shorts. They
told me he was to be nearest
town and I got half way

through it without ~~causing~~
~~attracting~~ any undue attention

Then I did a ^{very} foolish
 thing. I stopped a ^{young} man
 in the middle of the town
 square and tried to tell
 him in pantomime who I was,
 and that I wanted help. He
 just kept repeating "ne comprends
 pas". I went on thinking that
 he thought me a foreign worker.
 But he hurried. When I saw
 that he immediately approached
 the nearest German policeman.
 I had never been taught that
 the German must not look
 for organized help, but only let it
 find him. ~~Therefore I approached~~
~~him~~ As I left the town a
 German truck and trailer
 loaded with cement slowed to

down to go up hill. I was
 tired of walking and jumped onto
 the back of the trailer where the
 driver and armed guard could
 not see me. After riding for several
 miles I realized that the truck
 might turn into a camp while
 going to fast for me to jump
 off. ~~The~~ The next time we
 slowed down on a grade I
 jumped off, further jarring my back.

My back began to really
 bother me ^{as I walked} now and when I
 saw another German truck that
 was old and slow. I got on behind
 the load of bricks and waved in
 friendly fashion as we passed
 people. I did not realize
 that the French would never
 hitch a ride on a German

truck. A man on a bicycle asked me some questions which I could not answer. He thought that I simply would not ~~and~~ rode off ~~unfazed~~. I thought no more of the incident. ~~Sometime~~ Sometime after my journey had been arranged this man turned out to be a prominent patriot. He immediately recognized me as the man at ease on a German truck. I was immediately suspected of being a German stool-pigeon and my life was temporarily in danger.

I saw a woman and a pretty young girl ~~at~~ on the roadside. I jumped off the truck and approached the pretty girl. She would have nothing to do with

me. It was the oldest woman
who found out who I was, and
asked if I were hungry. She took
me to a farmhouse to be
fed, and from then on
the rest of my journey was arranged

B.

Hearsey and observation
that the morale of the troops
in Pas de Calais was very low
in January and February. He
told the French he will surrender
when the invasion comes. The
will listen to B.B.C. broadcasts
in French homes and acclaim
with delight over Axis reverses,
because they will shorten
the war. They all insist on
gasoline for the French in spite of
their shortage. Their food is
poor, it is mostly hash and they
complain of its all being wiped up
together. The ~~sold~~ troops are
either very young or very old. Many
instances are cited of the
young ones weeping during air
raids. They also weep at times

of ~~up~~ dressed down by
an officer. The officer personnel
appeared to be of much
better quality.

In February
Searson that no tanks
have been seen in the
area of Verdun (Pas de Calais)
in 7 or 8 mos.

All French observed during
period January - March had
the arms hidden away until
the invasion.

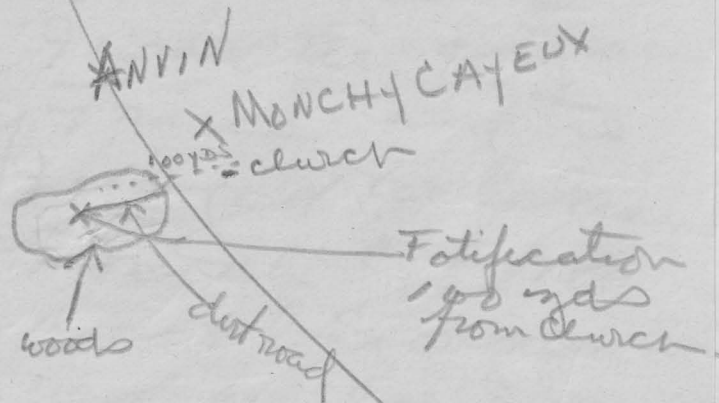
Verdun (Pas de Calais)
was bombed on 24 February by
B26's. There ~~was~~ is no
military target in the town. The
cathedral that was hit is used as
a hospital by the Germans, so the
French were much surprised
by the act. When 2 days later 8
bombs were dropped near the

same estate, nothing would convince the townspeople that the action was not deliberate.

The informant was shown a factory in north France (which he could not locate) that was undamaged by bombs. The farms and fields around it had all been hit. The Frenchman pointing this out shrugged his shoulders and said: Toujours la même chose.

^{Informant was told of}
(What the French believe to be an important secret fortification is located at Monchy Cayeux / Pas de Calais). 300 to 500 troops were garrisoned there for its construction. The French were not allowed to work on it as on other fortifications. A large number of ~~flak~~ AA guns were installed for the protection of the site.

↑ Much cement, many ~~railroad~~ ties and cement mixers were shipped in when the ~~land~~ work began in January. A tunnel was built from the river to the fortification which is in a woods opposite the church at Monchy Cayeux.
+ RUGES A dirt road leads into the woods



(see Michelin Map #51)

D.

1. Aid. Bot. I used the compass throughout my trip. The sewing kit was handy & patch my pants and the matches were used for cigarettes. I did not need the food as I was well-fed by farmers from the start.

2. Purse I carried a yellow purse. I used the compass and map of France and the Pyrenees. I changed the Belgian money into French. ~~the~~ 100 francs was used to buy ~~coats~~ an old coat, the rest was spent on cigarettes and given to farmers.

3. I did not carry photographs due to my own carelessness. Those taken in France did not turn out and I never was able to get others.

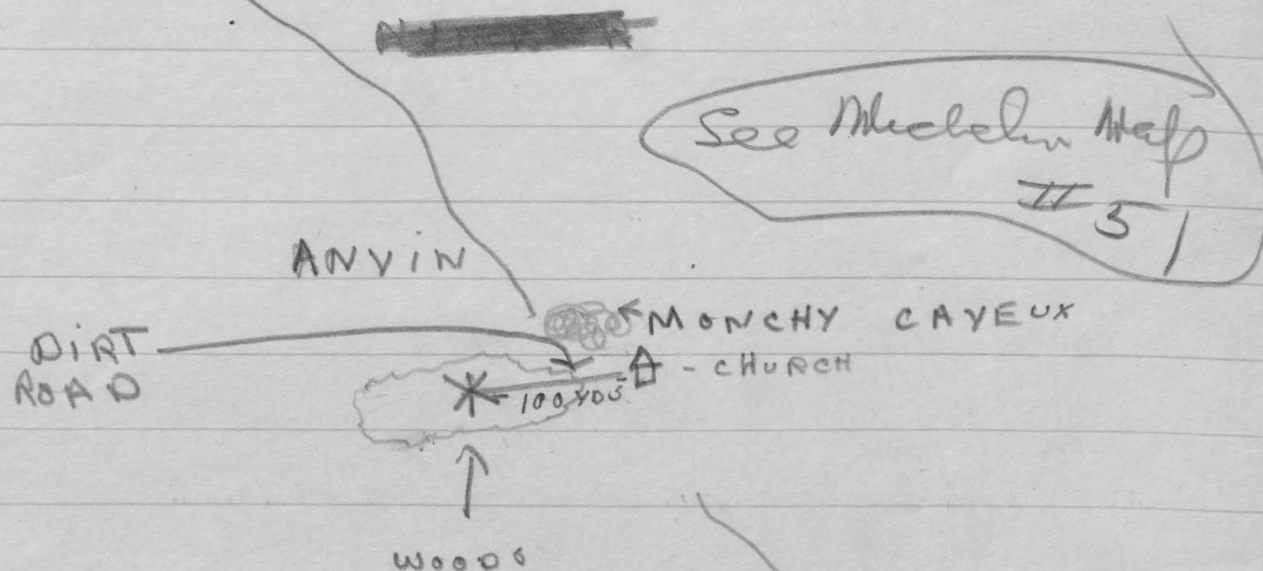
4. I was lectured by an evader
at OT.V, in Alexandria La. I was
I had known more details. Curmen
should be taught & appreciate his sacrifices
the French insist on walking & feed them. As an
example, when we had chicken and another flies were
each given a drumstick, wing and slice of breast. The
fowl of four ate what remained. Had we not been there, the
chicken would not have been killed at all.

5. In addition my experience has
taught me the following lessons which
may be of value to others

- a) I keep your G. I. shoes for the Pyrenees
They hold cleats well.
- b) Carry your passport photographs
- c) young people are not likely to
me as helpful as middle aged
or elderly people.

THE FRENCH BELIEVE THIS TO BE A VERY IMPORTANT & SECRET FORTIFICATION. ABOUT 300 TO 500 TROOPS WERE BARRISONED THERE FOR ITS CONSTRUCTION. FRENCHMEN ARE NOT ALLOWED TO WORK ON IT AS IN OTHER FORTIFICATIONS

FRUGES A LARGE NUMBER OF FLAK GUNS WERE INSTALLED FOR ITS PROTECTION. ~~THEY WERE~~



A TUNNEL WAS CONSTRUCTED FROM THE RAIL ROAD TO THE FORTIFICATION. MANY RAILROAD TIES AS WELL AS CEMENT & CEMENT MIXERS WERE ST. POL SHIPPED IN FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE FORTIFICATION. CONSTRUCTION WAS STARTED IN JANUARY

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.

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 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) NEIL H LATHROP

Signed Neil H Lathrop

Rank 1ST LT. A. S. N. O-802866

Dated 2 Aug 44

Unit 305TH BOMB GR 364TH SQDN. Witness Wm C. Smith Capt 619C

RESTRICTED

AG P BR HQ SOS 2-44/2M/22472

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.,.....)

Enemy morale in Paris de Calais area very low - many instances of German troops telling French civilians that when the allies invaded they would surrender immediately. The sooner the better for them. Soldiers food ^{all mixed with stew} ~~very~~ ^{to eat} poor - also observed instances as well as hearing ~~many~~ of many cases where German troops would listen to B.B.C. broadcasts in French homes exclaiming delight over axis reverses because of their effect on shortening the war. I personally observed one case & heard of many cases where German troops sold German gasoline to Frenchmen to get more money. In spite of this I saw more horse drawn military carts than trucks as well as horse drawn trucks. The german gasoline

situation is very poor. Frenchmen told me that there hadn't been a single tank in that area for at least seven or eight months. The age of the soldier was almost always very young or very old. Many instances were cited of the youngsters breaking into tears during bombing raids & sometimes crying over such trivial things as an upbraiding by an officer. Officer personnel evidently of much better quality.

They're in France seems
of some guns. Thank the
invasion will be a joke me

Nerchen bombed on
24 Feb by B25 or 26's. This
town of no military value claims
to be used as a host to
French astounded. Two
days later 8 bombs salvoed
the same claims so French
now convinced deliberate

Slow a factory (cannot locate)
factory no hit farms around
fields all hit 4 men sand
Toujours la même chose.

SECRET - AMERICAN
MOST SECRET - BRITISH
MIS (X)

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

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SERVICE PERSONNEL
EVADING FROM ENEMY OCCUPIED COUNTRIES

1. Full Name, Rank, and Serial No. NEIL H LATHROP, 1ST LT., O-802866.
2. Decorations.
3. Unit or Squadron. 305TH BOMB GR 364TH SQDN.
4. Division (Army) or Group. 305TH GR.
5. Date of Birth. SEPT. 30, 1921
6. Length of Service. 2 YEARS
7. Private Address. 1262 LYMAN PL. LOS ANGELES, CALIF.
8. Job as civilian. INSURANCE ADJUSTOR
9. From what field did you take off? CHELVESTON
10. Take off time. ?
11. Date and target. JAN. 7, 1944 LUDWIGSHAYEN
12. Where did you land? DIDN'T!
13. Were all secret papers and equipment destroyed? YES - DEFINITELY
14. What was your position in aircraft? PILOT
15. Were you wounded? NO
16. Did you pay your guides? If so how much? NO
17. Do you speak French? Spanish? NO
18. Did you have Identity Papers? YES
19. 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 AT GIBRALTER BY RAF CIVILIAN ON MAY 30, 1944
20. Did you report on your operations? If so, where and to whom? NO
21. Did you sign a security certificate warning you against talking about your escape or evasion? If so, where and when? YES - MADRID + GIBRALTER
22. Date of arrival in Spain.
23. Date of arrival at Gibraltar.
24. Place and date of departure for U.K. By sea or air. BY AIR - FROM GIBRALTER ON MAY 1, 1944
25. Place and date of arrival in U.K. MAY 2, 1944

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

CHANGED BELGIAN MONEY FOR FRENCH - USED THE FRENCH MONEY
Maps. Which ones?

MAP OF FRANCE + PYRENEES

Compass.

YES

File (hacksaw).

NO

Foreign currency. State countries and amounts.
How did you spend the money?

cigarettes on
black market

d. How did you dispose of:-

Maps. GAVE TO FRENCH WOMAN

Compass. GAVE TO PYRENEES GUIDE

File (hacksaw).

Surplus currency. GAVE IT TO LAST FRENCH FARMER

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

4. PASSPORT SIZE PHOTOGRAPHS

a. Did you carry passport-size photographs? NO - MY OWN CARELESSNESS
If so, how many?

b. Did you use them?

First set taken in France no
good ~~and~~ never could take another

5. LECTURES

a. Were you lectured on evasion and escape?

State WHERE, WHEN and by WHOM. YES - BY NAVIGATOR AT
O.T.U. IN ALEXANDRIA, LA. evader picked up in 2 hrs!

b. Did you find the lectures of value? YES. Hide your hate was not of value
in my case. Approaching young people not good in my case. Needed more

c. Do you have any suggestions to make which, from your experience, you feel details
will help other evaders and escapers? CARRY PASSPORT PHOTOS-
KEEP G.I. SHOES FOR PYRENEES THEY HOLD
CLEATS VERY WELL

SECRET

APPENDIX "D" TO E AND F 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.

Chocolate or Peanut Bar.

Milk (tube).

Benzadrine tablets (fatigue).

Malaxone tablets (water purifier).

Matches. *cigarettes*

Adhesive tape.

Chewing gum.

Water bottle.

Compass. **YES - THROUGH OUT TRIP**

Sewing kit. **YES, FOR MY PANTS**

*Gone rest away
a well fed by
freemason route*

- d. Did any of the above items prove unsatisfactory?
- e. How did you finally dispose of the box?
- 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?

2. PURSE

- a. Did you carry a purse?
State color of stripes and letters. **YELLOW**
If NOT, State why not.

- b. Did you use the purse? **YES**

(over)

bought Robert Gordon Crosby RC 97
 from me and he were better
 from then on except for two weeks
 in Paris.

That night M. Boulet took
 us to his employer. She was a
 woman with a daughter of ^{twelve} ~~12~~. She
 had been widowed in this war.
 If Marriott & Elft ~~was~~ was in bed
 here. After visiting we spent the
 night with Boulet. On 10 January
 he returned to this woman for
 two nights. Here our uniforms
 were changed and we were
 given more civilian clothing.

Genevieve's sister came
 and told Crosby & Boulet that
 I was suspected of being a German.
 They were to tell me if I could not
 prove otherwise. Crosby, however,
 was quite positive in his view
 that I was an American.
Genevieve's father was originally

Wagon