

S E C R E T

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

SECRET  
By Authority of  
AC of S, G-2  
Initials. *W.A. 24* WSH:  
Date.. 13 August 1944.

13 August 1944

E & E REPORT NO. 917  
EVASION IN FRANCE

TARGET: DIVE BOMBING  
MISSION

William Henry BANKS, 1st Lt. O-748874  
(32 Missions)  
429 Fighter Squadron, 474 Fighter Group

MIA: 27 July 1944  
Arrived in UK:  
10 August 1944

COLLISION

Over LAVAL about 50 ME 109's appeared. We dropped our belly-tanks and bombs and prepared to attack. I made a left turn to follow my squadron leader, and at that moment a yellow nosed P-38 came from below. I saw him too late, and his right wing hit my right wing as he passed. Part of my wing was torn off, and my aileron controls were knocked out. My ship fell, went into a spin, and I told my leader that I was bailing out. I got my canopy off; but my dinghy caught on the radio canopy, and I couldn't get out. Finally, as I hit the clouds at about 5000 feet, the dinghy tore free, and I fell out. I pulled the ripcord at once, blacked out, and came to as I broke through the base of the clouds at 1500 feet. My chute settled over two pine trees in a forest, and I swung between them 30 or 40 feet from the ground. I tried to swing myself to one of the trees; but, since my shrouds began to tear, I stopped that attempt, unloosened my harness, and hanging by my hands let myself drop.

BLACKOUT

HUNG UP  
IN TREE

BAD FALL

ARTIFICIAL  
RESPIRATION

FOUND BY  
HELP

I landed on my back. The wind was knocked out of me and my ribs were injured. For 20 minutes I was unable to move; but at last brought myself around by massaging my diaphragm. I then went eastwards, dropping my mac west and helmet at intervals of 50 yards, back-tracked to my chute, and then moved off to the north-west. I passed two farmhouses in the woods, and as I approached the third I saw five farmers who were obviously searching for some one. Not knowing whether they were friendly or not, I dropped in my tracks. They soon found me, however; and when they asked whether I was American I declared myself and by means of my phrase-card asked them for clothes. These they brought me from the house; and then, since we heard voices and the barking of dogs not far away, they led me some six miles through the woods to another house. There they told me that I should have to remain until the war was over. I protested and asked for some one who could speak English.

OFF ON A  
BICYCLE

That evening they brought an English-speaking man who took me to his home in a village not far away. He wanted me to remain with him, but I told him that I had to get back to duty. For two days I stayed in bed. On the morning of the third day I saw from my window two German soldiers prowling about the street; and so I decided that it was time for me to go. That afternoon my host gave me a suit of clothes, money, some food, and his bicycle, and I set out.

At 2000 hours my rear tire went flat just as I was passing through a town which was full of SS troops. I went into a shop on the outskirts of town which I had mistaken for a tire shop. As soon as I told the people there that I was an American they sent for a woman who spoke some English. She took my tire out to have it repaired, and the people in the shop fed me and then put me into a garage where I spent the night on a pile of straw.

MORE TIRE  
TROUBLE

I left my helpers at 0700 hours the next morning and cycled all day along a road that was being used by German columns. I had trouble with my tire all day, and at 2000 hours it went flat beyond repair. I went into a farm by the side of the road, and the farmer when I declared myself fed me and took me to another farm in the hills. There I was put up for the night. The next morning I walked into town and at a repair shop persuaded the proprietor to sell me the tire from his own bicycle, the only tire he had, for which I had to pay heavily.

STILL MORE  
TIRE TROUBLE

Without further incident I rode until 1400 hours. Then as I was entering a large town my rear tire blew out again. I walked through the town and on its southern edge stopped at a service station where I saw that the attendant was alone. When I told him that I was an American aviator he closed the door and shook hands with me. He repaired my inner tube; but the casing of the tire was ripped, and he could do nothing with it. So I told him to hold the bicycle while I went for another tire.

ONE WAY TO  
GET A TIRE  
IN FRANCE

I walked back into the town and waited outside of a cafe until a German soldier rode up on a bicycle and entered the building. Then I took his bicycle and rode back to my service station. There I found to my disgust that the German's tires were the wrong size for my bicycle. So I went to another cafe and sat on a stop waiting for another German. After five minutes one drove up and parked his bicycle, but instead of entering the cafe he came over and spoke to me. I hadn't the slightest notion what he was saying; and so I shrugged my shoulders and said "non compris", which was about the full extent of my French. He thereupon took out a cigarette and flicked the end of it. I pulled a box of matches out of my pocket, struck one, and holding the match and the box in my cupped hands reached up to light his cigarette. Only then did I notice "Made in England" staring at me from the cover of the box. I expected the German to see the label which I was holding before his face, and I was poised to kick him in the groin and run if he should make a movement of recognition; but he finished lighting his cigarette, said "merci", and went into the cafe. I waited until I thought that he would be safely settled with his beer. Then I took his bicycle and rode back to my service station.

JOURNEY  
ARRANGED

When I reached the station I found several other men there with the proprietor. He told me that I needn't try to ride on to Spain, for he had found help for me. From there my journey was arranged.

Compiled by

*Harold F Cherniss*

HAROLD F CHERNISS

S/Sergeant

Approved by

*W S Holt*

W S HOLT

Lt Col, IC  
Commanding

"A" DISTRIBUTION

APPENDIX "D"

1. AIDS BOX: I used the chocolate bar, the milk (as salve), the matches, adhesive tape, chewing gum, water bottle, and sewing kit. The water bottle was unsatisfactory.
2. PURSE: I had a red purse. I used the map of France, spent the 2000 French francs for bicycle tires, food, and wine.
3. PHOTOGRAPHS: I had 12 photographs, but they were not used, because I had no papers made.
4. LECTURES: I heard S-2 officers of Wing, Group, and Squadron... lecture on evasion during the months from March to June 1944.

S E C R E T

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

13 August 1944

APPENDIX "B" TO E AND E REPORT NO. 917

1. The following information has been obtained in an interview with an officer who evaded capture in enemy occupied territory.

2. Further circulation of this information may be made, but in that case it is important that any details as to the source are not divulged.

Statement of information covering period from 27 July 1944  
to 10 August 1944

- a. Informant saw a Panzer division parked on RN 159 between SABLE and TOURS on the morning of 31 July while a P-38 group was engaged in dive-bombing between LA FLECHE and CHATEAU-LA-VALLIERE. There were 50 five-ton trucks, 30 scout cars, and 25 tanks pulled over to the side of the highway, all very well camouflaged with boughs and a great deal of fern. No guns were manned, and all the personnel had dismounted and taken cover in slit trenches which had been dug all along the highway. The column was not observed by the P-38.
- b. At 1300 hours on 31 July informant saw in LA FLECHE five mobile machine shops of a Panzer division all painted with the Red Cross. There were also two scout cars painted white with Red Crosses superimposed. The soldiers in these scout cars were not Red Cross personnel. They wore the regular field-grey uniforms and were carrying infantry weapons.
- c. On 1 August TOURS was full of SS troops and Milice Francaise. All the bridges were guarded at either end by German soldiers armed with light machine guns and hand-grenades. The bridge which carries RN 159 from CHATEAU-LA-VALLIERE into TOURS (i.e. PONT WILSON) was blown out and all traffic, both military and civilian, was detoured westwards on a road along the northern bank of the LOIRE to cross at ST CYR SUR LOIRE. On the banks of the CHER near the bridge which carries RN 10 out of TOURS there were a great many AA emplacements both heavy and light. (Observation, 1 August 1944)

M. VIAN is about 5'2", 50 years old, ##### has dark eyes and a wrinkled face; Mrs. VIAN is in her early forties, has dark hair and eyes, and is very attractive; they have a daughter of 15 and a son of 8 years. At their house a man ## and his wife who were dinner guests. They took Banks by car to BARROU ( 18 kms ESE of Chatellerault) to the farm of a man who is administrator of dairy products in the district. He and his wife have a 20 year old son who is in the maquis, and they told Banks that they would take him to that maquis. They kept Banks until 3 August and then took him to the farm owned by the mother of the woman who with her husband had brought him from LA HAYE DESCARTES to BARROU. After a few hours here the dairy products ##### administrator led Banks a mile up the road and there hid with him. Presently a car drove up. There were in it six maquisards dressed in British battle dress and armed with a bazooka and five Sten guns. They took Banks to the camp where he met the French captain and the interpreter, BERNSTEIN, who has lost two fingers and the thumb of his left hand. From here Banks was taken to the maquis H Q ## on the western outskirts of ST BARBANT (22 kms NE of CONFOLENS). There he met Capt. Samuels and was taken to the British SAS camp. On 6 August Banks went with Capt. Samuels and his party to level a field NE of VILLEMORT, and after Capt. Samuels and the group with him left by A/C Banks and the others who had to wait stayed with Capt. Gill at a maquis camp 15 kms S of Villemort. On 10 August at 0115 hrs a C47 landed at the same field and picked up Banks, four other Americans, and three Britons. They arrived at Northampton at 0500 hrs and Banks proceeded to 63 Brook St., London.

Lt. Banks  
App C.

*Cypped*

Lt. Banks landed on 27 <sup>July</sup> ~~August~~ 1944 near STE SUZANNE ( 28 kms N of SABLE SUR SARTHE. Five farmers picked him up and turned him over to DR. LENORMAND of STE. SUZANNE . The doctor is about 25 years old, 5'2", 130 lbs., has brown hair and light grey or blue eyes. Dr. Lenormand took banks to his home in Ste. Suzanne and wanted to keep him until the Allies overtook him; but Banks insisted on making his way back at once, and when Dr. Lenormand brought two men from the underground organization who said that they would get in touch with an English colonel who would arrange to get Banks out by air Banks refused to give them more than two days to bring him an answer though they said that they would need four. On 30 August, since Banks insisted on trying to make his way to Spain, Dr. Lenormand gave him a new suit of clothes, 5000 francs, some food, and a bicycle. #####  
SABLE SUR SARTHE  
Banks then cycled to ##### where he stopped at a shoe shop and was taken in by a couple about 50 years old (the man was 5'5" tall, weighed about 240 lbs., and had a goatee and moustache). This couple fed him, let him sleep in their garage, and got a woman who lived near to them to take his bicycle tyre out to be repaired.

With some further occasional aid Banks cycled on to TOURS. There he stopped at an automobile service station in the ##### southern part of the city on the road to POITIERS. The proprietor, a member of the resistance movement, called in a group of six men, who took Banks by automobile to the home of M. & Mme. VIAN in LA HAYE DESCARTES (21 kms NE of Chatellerault, Vienne) . ~~M. F.~~

TOP SECRET

E & E CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

Banks, William Henry, 1<sup>st</sup> Lt - 0-748874  
(Name) (Rank) (ASN)

10 August, 1944  
(Date)

429<sup>th</sup> Ftr Sq, 494<sup>th</sup> Ftr Gp  
(Unit)

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

1540, 27 July 1944, 5 mi west of St. Suzanne, France

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

Was it on fire, etc?

Midair collision with another P-38 - Ten feet of Right wing gone and ailerons froze - Ship went into spin

At approximately what altitude did source bail out? Started at 11,000' - Got out at 5,000' - Dinghy caught on radio canopy

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

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

Did the plane explode on striking the ground? Yes - completely burned

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

Did he receive any information from others as to whether any other members of the crew were dead or alive? If so give detailed furnished by his informant and whether the other crew members were identified by name or otherwise.

Did source examine the wreckage of the plane? If so, what was its conditions? No, but received reports from Frenchmen of complete destruction.

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

What is source's opinion as to the fate of the other crew members and his reason for his opinion?

Lt. Banks

App. D

Aids Box: I used the chocolate bar, the milk( as <sup>Salve</sup> ~~unguent~~ ), the matches, adhesive tape, chewing gum, water bottle, and sewing kit.

The water bottle was un<sup>s</sup>tisfactory.

Purse: I had a red purse. I used the map of France & spent the 2000 French francs for bicycle tires, food, and wine.

Photographs: I had 12 photographs, but ~~###~~ they were not used, because I had no papers made.

Lectures: I heard S 2 officers of Wing, Group , and Squadron lecture on evasion during the months from March to June 1944.

Lt. Banks:

App. B

- A) Informant saw a Panzer division parked on RN 159 between SABLE and TOURS on the morning of 31 July while a P 38 group was engaged in dive-bombing between LA FLECHE and CHATEAU-LA-VALLIERE. There were 50 five-ton trucks, 30 scout cars, and 25 tanks pulled over to the side of the highway, all very well camouflaged with boughs and a great deal of fern. No guns were manned, and all the personnel had dismounted and taken cover in slit trenches which had been dug all along the highway. The column was not observed by the P-38s.
- B) At 1300 hrs on 31 July informant saw in LA FLECHE five mobile machine shops of a Panzer division all painted with the Red Cross. There were also two scout cars painted white with Red Crosses superimposed. The soldiers in these scout cars were not Red Cross personnel. They wore the regular field-grey uniforms and were carrying infantry weapons.
- C) On 1 August TOURS was full of S S troops and Milice Française. All the bridges were guarded at either end by German soldiers armed with light machine guns and hand-grenades. The bridge which carries R N 159 from CHATEAU LA VALLIERE into TOURS ( i.e. PONT WILSON) was blown out and all traffic, both military and civilian, was detoured westwards on a road along the northern bank of the Loire to cross at ST CYR SUR LOIRE. On the banks of the CHER near the bridge which carries R N 10 out of TOURS there were a great many A A emplacements both heavy and light.  
(Observation, 1 August 1944)



ONE WAY TO  
GET A TIRE  
IN FRANCE

I walked back into the town and waited ~~#####~~ outside of a cafe until a German soldier rode up on a bicycle and entered the building. Then I took his bicycle and rode back to my service station. There I found to my disgust that the German's tires were the wrong size for my bicycle. ~~#####~~ So I went to another cafe and sat on a step waiting for another German. After five minutes one drove up and parked his bicycle, but instead of entering the cafe he came over ~~#####~~ and spoke to me. I hadn't the slightest notion what he was saying; and so I shrugged my shoulders and said "non compris", which was about the full extent of my French. He thereupon took out a cigarette and flicked the end of it. I pulled a box of matches out of my pocket, struck one, and holding the match and the box in my cupped hands reached up to light his cigarette. Only then did I notice "Made in England" staring at me from the cover of the box. I expected the German to ~~#####~~ see the label which I was holding before his face, and I was poised to kick him in the groin and run if he should make a movement of recognition; but he finished lighting his cigarette, said "merci", and went into the cafe. I waited until I thought that he would be safely settled with his beer, <sup>Then I</sup> took his bicycle, and rode back to my service station.

When I reached the station I found several other men

there with the ~~#####~~ proprietor. He told me that I needn't try to ride on to Spain, for he had found help for me.

JOURNEY  
ARRANGED

From there my journey was arranged.

*S/Sgt Chernis*

E&E RPT #

Lt. Banks.

~~We were on a dive-bombing mission to Tours and Poitiers. Over~~  
Laval about 50 ME 109s appeared. We dropped our belly-tanks and  
bombs and prepared to attack. I made a left turn to follow my squadron  
leader, and at that moment a yellow nose P-38 came from below  
COLLISION ~~climbing into the sun.~~ I saw him too late, and his right wing hit  
my right wing as he passed. Part of my wing was torn off, and my  
aileron controls were knocked out. My ship fell off ~~on the left~~  
~~wing and ~~started into a spin~~~~ <sup>and</sup> went into a spin, I told my leader that  
I was bailing out. I got my canopy off; but my dinghy caught on the  
radio canopy, and I couldn't get out. Finally, as I hit the clouds at  
about 5000 feet, the dinghy tore free, and I fell out. I pulled the  
BLACKOUT ripcord at once, blacked out, and came to as I broke through the  
base of the clouds at 1500 feet. My chute ~~settled~~ settled over two  
HUNG UP pine trees in a forest, and I swung between them 30 or 40 feet from  
FROM TREE the ground. I tried to swing myself to one of the trees; but, since  
my shrouds began to tear, I stopped that attempt, unloosened my  
harness, and hanging by my hands let myself drop.  
BAD FALL I landed on my back. <sup>The</sup> My wind ~~was~~ was knocked out of me and  
my ribs were injured. For 20 minutes I was unable to move; but at last  
ARTIFICIAL brought myself around by massaging my diaphragm. I then went  
RESPIRATION/ eastwards, dropping my ~~maewest~~ <sup>mask</sup> and helmet at intervals of 50 yards,

back-tracked to my chute, and then moved off to the north-west. I passed two farmhouses in the woods, and as I approached the third I saw five farmers who were obviously searching ~~###~~ for some one. Not knowing whether they were friendly or not, I dropped in my ~~#####~~ tracks. They soon found me, however; and when they asked whether I was ~~American~~ I declared myself and ~~##~~ by means of my phrase-card asked them for clothes. These they brought me from the house; and then, since we heard voices and ~~##~~ the barking of dogs not far away, they led me some six miles through the woods to another house. There they told me that I should have to remain until the war was over. I ~~#####~~ protested and asked for some one who could speak English.

That evening they brought an English-speaking man who took me to his home in a village ~~####~~ not far away. He wanted me to remain with him, but I told him that I had to get back to duty. For two days I stayed in bed. On the morning of the third day I saw from my window two German soldiers prowling about the street; and so I decided that it was time for me to go. That afternoon my host gave me a suit of clothes, money, some food, and his bicycle, and I set out.

At 2000 hrs my rear tire went flat just as I was passing through a town which was full of SS troops. I went into a shop on the outskirts of town which I had mistaken for a tire shop. As soon as I told the people there that I was an ~~American~~ they

FOUND BY  
HELP

~~EAGER TO  
GET BACK~~

OFF ON A  
BICYCLE

FOOD AND  
TIRE -REPAIRS

sent for a woman who spoke some English. She took my tire out to have it repaired, and the people in the shop fed me and then put me into a garage where I spent the night on a pile of straw.

MORE  
TIRE  
TROUBLE

I left my helpers at 0700 hrs the next morning and cycled all day along a road that was being used by German columns. I had trouble with my tire all day, and at 2000 hrs it went flat beyond repair. I went into a farm by the side of the road, and the farmer when I declared myself fed me and ### then took me to another farm in the hills, ~~three miles from a small town.~~

FOOD AND  
LODGING

There I ## was put up # for the night. The next morning I walked into town # and at a repair shop persuaded the proprietor to sell me the tire from his own bicycle, the only tire he had, for which I had to pay heavily.

~~A PURCHASE~~

### Without further incident I rode until 1400 hrs. Then as I was #### entering a large #### town my rear tire blew out again. I walked through the town and on its southern edge stopped at a service station where I saw that the attendant was alone. When I told him that I was an American aviator he closed the door and shook hands with me. He repaired my inner tube; but the casing of the tire was ripped, and he could do nothing with it. So I told him to hold the bicycle while I went for another tire.

STILL MORE  
TIRE  
TROUBLE

SECRET

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

*By  
Proof  
In*

E & E REPORT NO 928(?) 917  
EVASION IN France

10 August 1944  
(Date)

Banks, William Henry, 1<sup>st</sup> Lt - 0-748874  
(Name) (Rank) (ASN)

TARGET:

32 (?) (No of Missions)

Date Missing in Action: 27 July 1944

429<sup>th</sup> FTR, 474<sup>th</sup> FTR Gp  
(Squadron) (Group)

Date Arrived in UK: 10 August 1944

MEMBERS OF CREW: (This information checked with PWLB)

Indicate what happened to  
each man  
and how you know

- PILOT ✓
- CO-PILOT
- NAVIGATOR
- BOMBARDIER
- RADIO OPERATOR
- TOP TURRET GUNNER
- BALL TURRET GUNNER
- WAIST GUNNER
- WAIST GUNNER
- TAIL GUNNER

Were you wounded? *No, but suffered internal injuries  
in fall from parachute, believed to be broken  
ribs*

Flying on a dive bombing mission to Tours + Poitiers  
 Over Laval about 50 ME 109s attacked head on  
 above + then attacked from rear. Dropped belly tanks +  
 bombs + prepared for attack. I made a left turn to  
 follow Sq. leader. A yellow nose P38 came from  
 below climbing into sun. I saw it too late +  
 his rt wing hit my rt wing as he passed. Lost 75  
 lb of my wing + damaged my aileron controls.  
 Aileron frozen. Ship fell off on lt wing +  
 11,000ft started to spin. Told sq.ldr. I was bailing out.

3:30 PM

I got canopy off but I couldn't climb out,  
 dinghy caught on radio canopy. I hit clouds +  
 went through. Finally dinghy ripped loose  
 at 5000. I fell out + pulled cord. Blacked out.

Came to just breaking thru base of clouds  
 at 1500ft. Forest below. Missed a field by 30  
 ft. Chute caught between 2 Pine trees. I hung

30 or 40 ft from ground. Tried to swing to  
 tree but shrouds began to break. Unloosened  
 harness + hung on by hands. I fell on my  
 back. Wind knocked out of me + ribs injured  
 perhaps broken. It was 3:50. I lay there about

Had  
 seen  
 plane  
 crash  
 to W  
 about  
 2 miles

20 minutes unable to move. I finally worked my diaphragm + in a few minutes came around. I went E., dropped m. w. 75 feet away, went 50 yds, dropped helmet, then backtracked to cluck + went off NW. I couldn't run because of ribs - walked 1/2 hr., passed 2 farmhouses, staying in woods. I reached the 3rd one + 5 men were in field looking for me. I dropped in my tracks. They found me.

(6 miles from Ste Suzanne N of town)  
known to Dr Lenormand.

Asked me if I was an American. I said yes, using card, + asked for civ. clothes. They went into house + brought civ. clothes + I put them on. We heard voices in woods 1/4 mile to the East + dogs barking. Two of the farmers took me ~~to~~ S about 6 miles + took me to farm house + told me I'd have to stay till war was over. I asked for someone who could speak English. At 8 PM Dr Lenormand came. The doctor then took me in to his house (by bicycle) in STE SUZANNE

(Lives there with a maid, Simone, 19 yrs old. He's about 25. Black hair, dark comp., black eyes, slightly hooked nose, slightly built, wears glasses). He wanted me to stay with him but I said I had to get back. (My ears + eyes were purple + bloodshot.)

5'2", 130 lbs, brown hair,  
1. Eight grey or blue eyes, upturned  
facial hair, one had trout tooth  
facial hair, eyes not looking round in Paris



Sunday at P47 started a German car, but the next P47 killed 4 French girls

At 2 that morning 2 Fmen from underground came in + told me they had contact with an English colonel who could get me out by air. They said it would take 4 days to get an answer from him. I told them if they couldn't let me know in 2 days I was moving out on my own. Next day they came back + gave me a 45 with 3 clips + 50 rounds. I stayed in bed Friday + Sat (went for walk in town that afternoon by following Simone at 150 yds). The morning of 30<sup>th</sup> I saw 2 Germans scouting around town; so that afternoon the dr. gave me his bike + 5000 francs + some food + I started + complete set of clothes, out for town of SABLE (35 kms due S of STE SUZANNE). I got there at 8 PM. There were lots of SS troops here, my tire was flat. I stopped in S part of town on road to LA FLECHE in a shoe shop. I declared myself + they took me in right away (old lady + old man about 50 yrs; woman 5'5", 24 lbs, had goatse + moustache). They got hold of a woman about 45 who lived a few houses from them. She could

31  
July

speaks a little English. She took tire + had it repaired. I was fed + put me into garage for the night when I slept on straw. Trucks going through N. all night. Bridge had been sabotaged 2 nights before + Germans holding 60 hostages. She complained about fortress bombings + preferred dive bombing. At 7 AM I left Sable + headed towards La Fleche. On road my tire went bad again. From La Fleche to Chateau Lavalliere a P38 gp was live bombing <sup>N</sup>NE of TOURS + a panzer div. with 50 x 5 ton trucks, 30 scout cars, + 25 tanks was parked on road bet. SABLE + TOURS (Pulled to side of roads + all men got into slit trenches beside roads + no guns manned. Lots of fern used for camouflage. P38 did not see the division).

RN  
159

31  
July

Got to La Fleche at 1 PM + passed 5 mobile machine shops for panzer painted with red + also 2 scout cars painted white with red + (soldiers not red, carrying arms)

I got to Chateau Lavalliere at 8 PM. Tire flat. I went to a farm just S of town. The farmer fed me + took me to a town 6 miles SE named ~~Chateau~~ Souvigne. I stayed at a farm about 3 miles in the hills. I stayed here the night + next morning I walked into SOUVIGNE + went to a tire repair shop + bought a new tire.

Aug

I got to Tours at 2 PM on my bike. On road into town back tire blew out (1 bridge

The bridge which carries RN 159 from Chateau La Valliere into Tours (i.e. <sup>Tout Wilson</sup> on road from Chateau La Valliere to Tours is blown out). I walked into Tours which is loaded with SS + Milice. All bridges have a guard at each end with Lt machine gun. On outskirts of town 4 farmers refused me help. I got into town at 2 PM + B17s bombed at 2:30. In last <sup>bridge vehicle carries</sup> R.N. 10 over the <sup>CHER</sup> SE of bridge. There are lots of AA placements both heavy + light. One B17 hit + 4 bailed out + ship spun in. In town I asked one civilian for help + he walked away from me. On the road to Poitiers just S of main part of Tours is an auto station. There I declared myself. The man closed door + shook hands. He repaired tire tube but tire blew. I went back into town + outside of a cafe + stole a German soldier's bike + went back to station. Tires wrong size. I went to different cafe + waited outside on a step. After 5 minutes a ferry parked his bike + came over + asked for a match. I lighted his cigarette from my British box. He went into cafe, I stole his bike +

went back to auto station. <sup>had</sup> bought dinner in  
cafe. The man at the auto station  
told me no need to go to Spain, that I'd  
be taken to the Maquis. One of the group  
now gathered at auto station gave me note  
to M. & Mme Viane. La Haye Descartes.  
~~But I didn't go there. I was taken here by~~  
car. Got there at 8.30 P.M. (M. is small,  
5'2", med. build, dark eyes, about 50 yrs old,  
wrinkled face; Mme is about 5'2", about 42  
yrs old, very attractive, dark hair & eyes;  
have a daughter about 15 yrs old & a  
son about 8 or 9). Two friends (a couple)  
were at dinner. After supper this couple  
took me <sup>by truck</sup> to ~~BARRÉAU~~ BARROU. The  
man who is administer of milk & dairy products  
(farm outside of town) & his wife took me  
in (Their son is 20 yrs & is in maquis), and  
told me they'd get me to maquis. I stayed inside  
the house all 2 Aug. 3 Aug. we left &  
rode for an hour to a farm owned by the  
mother of the woman of the couple met  
at the Viannes. Stayed until 10 AM & then  
~~with~~ the father of the maquis boy & I walked  
about a mile & waited in bushes till 10.30.  
Then a Ford car pulled up with 6 maquisards  
in British battle dress (Had 1 bazooka &  
5 Stenguns). They took me to the  
maquis camp west of Le Torat. I met the  
captain of the maquis & the interpreter.  
He told me they needed uniforms, ammo,

1 Aug.

monitors + if possible Am. cigarettes. They had killed 80 Germans + lost 5 in last battle + had 16 collaborators in baked wine pen. (Among them a baron + baroness who spoke English.) Then they took me to the main Maquis HQ <sup>an outstrip W</sup> in town of STI

Thurs. 3 Aug BARBANT There I met Capt. Samuels + was taken into British SAS camp + put me into Maquis uniform.

On ~~Monday~~ <sup>Sunday</sup> 6 Aug. we went up to field (N of HAIMS) <sup>22 kms N.E. of Comblains</sup> N.E. of VILLEMORT + worked on airstrip Sunday evening + all day Monday. Capt. Samuels + party took off Tuesday morning at 1.30 + we stayed with Maquis 15 kms due S of this under Capt. Gill.

(Sunday night Germans shot 100 people in ~~Maquis~~ <sup>BOUSSAC</sup> + burned farms as reprisals).

On 9 Aug a collaborator who was an informer for both sides came into Maquis camp, came into Maquis camp + was shot.

On 10 Aug at 0115 a C47 landed + picked up ~~you~~ me, 3 British, + 4 other Americans + you landed at Northampton at 0500 hrs.

# 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) William Henry Banks  
Rank 1st Lieut. A. S. N. 0-749874  
Unit 474th Ftz Gp.

Signed William Henry Banks  
Dated 10 August 1944  
Witness \_\_\_\_\_

AG P BR HQ SOS 2-44/2M/224-72

# RESTRICTED

SECRET

APPENDIX "D" TO E AND F REPORT NO.

No., Rank, Name:- *1st Lt William Henry Banks, 0-748874*  
Unit:- *474th Ftr Gp, 429th Ftr Sq*

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".  
*Used money and*  
Horlicks tablets. *No need,*

Chocolate or Peanut Bar. *While bicycling to Tours - OK*

Milk (tube). *To cool itch from lice - OK*

Benzadrine tablets (fatigue). *No need.*

Halazone tablets (water purifier). *No Need*

Matches. *To light cigarettes - OK*

Adhesive tape. *To tape puncture in bicycle tire - OK*

Chewing gum. *Gave to children*

Water bottle. *Used on entire cycle trip to Tours. Unsatisfactory because of No top and holds too little water - Difficult to carry.*

Compass. *No need - had Road map*

Sewing kit. *Sewed trouser seams*

- d. Did any of the above items prove unsatisfactory? *Water Bottle.*
- e. How did you finally dispose of the box? *Gave it to Frenchman*
- 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?  
*water bottle could have screw top like hot water bag.*

2. PURSE

- a. Did you carry a purse? *Yes*  
State color of stripes and letters. *- Red - Letter "F"*  
If NOT, State why not.

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

(over)

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

Maps. Which ones? Map of France

Compass. No, gave to Maguis Forces

File (hacksaw). No, gave to Maguis Forces

Foreign currency. State countries and amounts. France - 3500 Francs

How did you spend the money? Bicycle tire, food and wine

d. How did you dispose of:-

Maps. Gave to Maguis Forces

Compass. " " " "

File (hacksaw). " " " "

Surplus currency. None

3. Were you issued any extra compasses or further aids to evasion? No

4. PASSPORT SIZE PHOTOGRAPHS

a. Did you carry passport-size photographs? Yes

If so, how many? Twelve

b. Did you use them? No

5. LECTURES

a. Were you lectured on evasion and escape? Yes

State WHERE, WHEN and by WHOM

Wormwell Airborne, March, April, May, June, 1944, by  
Wing 5-2, Group 5-2, Squadron 5-2

b. Did you find the lectures of value? Yes

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

Believe all airmen should be informed of Maguis Forces and their immense aid to Airmen. Positive identity necessary. Believe general locations of Maguis Forces should be made known to all Airmen.



Highgate

Have a for B course  
starting.

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. *Banks, William Henry, 1<sup>st</sup> Lt - 0-748874*
2. Decorations. *Air Medal and (?) 3 Oak Leaf Clusters*
3. Unit or Squadron. *429<sup>th</sup> FTR Sq.*
4. Division (Army) or Group. *474<sup>th</sup> FTR Gp*
5. Date of Birth. *February 3, 1920.*
6. Length of Service. *Six years, two months.*
7. Private Address. *728 Sheridan Avenue, Roselle, New Jersey*
8. Job as civilian. *Clerk*
9. From what field did you take off? *RAF Station, Warmwell, Dorset*
10. Take off time. *Approximately 1430 hours*
11. Date and target. *27 August 1944 - Poitiers to Tours*
12. Where did you land? *Ste Suzanne, France*
13. Were all secret papers and equipment destroyed? *Yes*
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? *Dog Tags only*
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?  
*No*
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*
22. Date of arrival in Spain. *None*
23. Date of arrival at Gibraltar. *None*
24. Place and date of departure for U.K. By sea or air. *Air - Bourbon Airfield, Vilmonte, France*  
*10 August 1944*
25. Place and date of arrival in U.K.  
*North Hampton RAF Station, 10 August 1944*

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

DATE: 9/7  
20 August 1944

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

I, DAVID GEORGE KING, Flying Officer, RAFVR, 130371

HEREBY CERTIFY that I have known and have been associated with

WILLIAM HENRY BARKS, 1st Lt., AC, O-748874

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.

William Henry Barks

B. King Flo

RIGHT THUMB PRINT:



The individual whose signature and right thumb print appear hereon has been identified to the satisfaction of this office as \_\_\_\_\_

WILLIAM HENRY BARKS, 1st Lt., AC, O-748874, 474 Fighter Group, 429 Fighter Sq.  
previously reported missing in action over enemy territory.

B. Verity  
SPECIAL AGENT C.I.O.

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

917

DATE: 10 August 1944

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

I, DAVID GEORGE KINO, Flying Officer, RAFVR, 138371

HEREBY CERTIFY that I have known and have been associated with

WILLIAM HENRY BANKS, 1st Lt., AC, O-748874

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.

*D. G. Kino F/O*

*William Henry Banks*

RIGHT THUMB PRINT:



The individual whose signature and right thumb print appear hereon has been identified to the satisfaction of this office as \_\_\_\_\_

WILLIAM HENRY BANKS, 1st Lt., AC, O-748874, 474 Fighter Group, 429 Fighter Sq.  
previously reported missing in action over enemy territory.

*F. S. Verity*

F. S. VERITY, SPECIAL AGENT, C.I.C.

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