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FILE NO. 0245-41
3-MAY-44-28-FEB-45

ESCAPE - EVASION - REPATRIATION

455 B. GP.

3 MAY 1944

To

28 February 1945

EXCLUDED FROM AUTOMATIC
REGRADING; DOD DIR 5200.10
DOES NOT APPLY

455

455th BG
E&E Reports Beginning

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26 Dec 44 - 455 - Agathon

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USA/S.K.P/577

SECRET
AUTH: CG 15AF
Init.
12 Feb 45
D-GAY-lf

file

HEADQUARTERS FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE
APO 520, U. S. Army

12 February 1945.

ESCAPE STATEMENT

1. Agathon, John C., 2nd Lt., 0-2057830, 2nd Lt., 455 Bomb Gp., 742 Bomb Sq.

Born - 25 June 1924 Enlisted - 30 Oct 41.

Home Address - Long Island City, NY.

Peacetime Profession - Real Estate Salesman

MIA - 26 Dec 1944 RTD - 11 Feb 1945 Sorties - 20

2. Refer to USA/SKP/461 (Capt. Kelly).

3. Never in hands of enemy.

4. Source bailed out and landed about 20 km north of Szekzard, Hungary, and reached the area where other members of the crew landed but was unsuccessful in locating them. Darkness was setting - it was foggy and cold. He located a cornfield and spent the night in a pile of corn stalks. The next day went to a farm house - the farmer took Source to a Partisan who gave him a place to sleep for the night and next day took him to Szekgard for medical treatment - his foot having been injured when he landed. The Partisan Captain Stevo (a Yugoslav) told Source that one of their airmen had been shot by a Hungarian but he wasn't able to get his identity. At Szekgard met the rest of his crew who had brought in the wounded navigator, 1st Lt. Raymond Klotz. Klotz and Source were hospitalized while the rest of the crew were evacuated. On 5 January Lt. Klotz died of wounds. On the 6th of January the cast was removed from Sources leg and after talking to Major General Korsakoff, C/S Russian Air Force he was promised prompt evacuation. On 21 January was taken to Szabadszallas. On 30th to an airfield at Dobrica, Yugoslavia. On January 31st taken to Bucharest till 10 February and was flown to Athens, Greece. From Athens flown to Foggia, Italy - arriving on 11 February.

GEORGE A. YOKICH
1st Lt., A.C.
Interrogator.

3 Incls:
Incl 1 - Ltr. 383.6 (1)
2 - App. B.
3 - App. F.

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USA/SKP/577 (Lt. Agathon)

APPENDIX B

Captain Stevo (a Yugoslav Partisan at Szekzard)

Charles Kohanji - Szabelly - Szekszard, Hungary.

Captain Koichenko - Russian Army - Szabatszallas.

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USA/SKP/577 (Lt. Agathon)

APPENDIX F

Raymond Kotz - 1st Lt. Died of wounds. Szekszard air crew hospital and buried by Russians.

Suggests that some method for clearing parachutes be perfected for water landing.

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29 Dec 44 - 456 - Hague

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AUTH. CG, 15 AF
Init.
9 February 1945
D-JGR-lc

HEADQUARTERS FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE
APO 520, U.S.Army

ESCAPE STATEMENT

9 February 1945
USA/3KF/554

1. Hague, Robert F. F/O T-5700 742nd. B. Sqdn. 455th. B. Group.

Born - 11 April 1925 Enlisted - 3 April 1943

Home Address - 46 South Maple Ave., East Orange, N.J.

Peacetime Profession - Rate Clerk

MIA - 29 Dec 1944 RTD - 8 February 1945 Missions - 2 Sorties - 2

2. Both primary and secondary targets were covered by clouds, and in looking around for target of opportunity too much gas was expended. Fuel would not transfer from auxiliary tanks. On way back to Italy pilot gave order to bail out. Partisans told source, variously, that all men bailed out O.K. or that all except one bailed out O.K. Source knows nothing of where about of A/C?

3. Never in enemy hands.

4. Source landed about five miles north of Laurana, Italy (4517N - 1417E) on top of a mountain. About an hour and a half later he met friendly peasants, who took him to some Partisans. With Partisans guides source walked north around Fiume crossing north railroad tracks in the night. After a days rest, he walked all one day to Gernova (4532N - 1438E). Traveling by day, source walked to Skad, 4526N - 1454E). Source stayed there a week, then in company with other Americans with a Partisan guide walked south two days, then made a long night march through Ustachi territory near Ogulin, 4516N - 1514E) They then went by sleigh to Slunj (4507N - 1535E). Two weeks later source went by truck to Zara, 4507N - 1514E) then by C-47 to Italy.

J. C. RAMSEY, JR.
Capt. A.C.
Interrogator.

5 Incls.
Incl. 1 - Ltr. 383.6 (1 copy)
Incl. 2 - 5, Appendix B,C,D,F

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ESCAPE STATEMENT, USA/3KP/554. Continued.

APPENDIX B

British Missions at Skrad 4526N - 1454E), Topusko 4518N - 1558E), and Korenica, 4445N - 1543E).

Partisan cook with American supplied at Lwinac 4424N - 1542E) feeds evaders.

OSS (American) mission at Topusko, 4518N - 1558E),

Frank Turk, of Gerovo, 4532N - 1438E), arranged fro quarters and rations for source, at house of Klepae, Clyerovo, Yugoslavia. Klepae Jeareuko M 55, Gerozo, Jugoslavia. Place very nice and clean, unbelievably so in contrast to the usual accommodations.

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APPENDIX C

Source did not take escape kit with him out of A/C. GI shoes were invaluable for comfort and wearing quality, but gave very poor traction on hard-packed snow.

Group policy of checking gunout just before each mission and cleaning and checking same back in immediately afterwards tends to keep men from carrying guns on missions, as being too much trouble.

A knife would be helpful.

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ESCAPE STATEMENT, USA/SKP/554, Continued.

APPENDIX D

Ustachi territory near Ogulin (4516N - 1514E)

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ESCAPE STATEMENT, USA/SKP/554 Continued.

APPENDIX F

Partisan told source that Lt. William V. Fertig, O-119609, had been captured by Ustachi.

Source was given dog tags of co-pilot Albert M. Edelstein and told he was badly hurt. Source saw Edelsgein, in a coma and bleeding from ears and mouth, before Edelstein was taken to a nearby hospital in vicinity of Laurana, 4517N, 1417E. Another man of crew , nose gunner, was later told that Edelstein died.

Partisan told source that one member of crew broke one or both legs and was captured by Germans. Description indicates radio operator.

Partisans also told source that one member of crew fell in the sea and was drowned. If true, it was either pilot or engineer, as they were last two in the A/C and it was headed out over the water.

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29 Dec 44 - 456 - McClain

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AUTH: CG 15AF
Init.....
8 Feb. 1945
D-ELM-lf

HEADQUARTERS FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE
APO 520, U. S. Army

8 February 1945.
USA/SKP/556

ESCAPE STATEMENT

1. McClain, George D., Cpl., 13175086, 742 Sq., 455 Bomb Gp. (Source 1)

Born - 23 June 1925 Enlisted - 28 April 43

Address - Germantown, Penn.

MIA - 29 Dec. 44 RTD - 8 Feb. 45 Sorties - 3

1. Ferguson, Thomas M., Cpl., 35297212, 742 Sq., 455 Bomb Gp. (Source 2)

Born - 23 June 1925 Enlisted - 11 Dec. 43.

Address - Sidney, Ohio

MIA - 29 Dec. 44 RTD - 8 Feb. 45 Sorties - 3

1. Richman, Ivan W., Cpl., 17153978, 742 Sq., 455 Bomb Gp. (Source 3)

Born - 16 Jan 1924 Enlisted - 26 Oct. 1942.

Address - Minneapolis, Minn.

MIA - 29 Dec. 44 RTD - 8 Feb. 45 Sorties - 2

2. Sources had to abandon plane because of lack of gas, due to fuel transfer not working. Aerial engineer attempted all methods of transfer and could not accomplish task. Original supply of fuel had been used up in attempt to bomb the primary target in Austria. The plane was undamaged by flak as the little flak seen was not near Sources. Bail out order wasgiven approxi ately 10 minutes after Udine A/D has been bombed. Crew abandoned ship in general area of Pisino, (4515N 1356E).

3. Never in enemy hands.

4. Source 1 landed in rocky, hilly country on his back. His chute was tangled in a small tree and couldn't be extricated, so he left it there and, taking his 1st aid kit, ran towards cover. After wandering about for a couple of hourshe met an old man who wouldn't go with Source 1 but did point in the direction he should travel. He walked along for a while and met a man and two women, herding a flock of goats. He made the man understand that he was an American and the man took him to a straw lean-to near his house and hid him under some hay. Source 1 slept here the first night and the next day was fed and quartered in the man's house. The 2nd night he slept in the man's barn, again under some hay. 31 Dec. 44, Source 1 was taken by this man along a road until they met a Partisan soldier who took over the guidance of Source 1. Source 1 walked for seven days with various Partisan guides, stopping in out of way huts and mountain tops for rest at night. All this time the food

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USA/SKP/556 (Cont.)

consisted of a pasty dough and mush diluted with tea. On the 7th day, 8 Jan 45, Source 1 and his guides caught up with Source 2 who was with another party resting alongside a road, in the town of Gerovo (4532 1438).

Sources 1 & 2 left Gerovo on 8 Jan 45 and walked for 5 or 6 hours to town of Delnice (4524N 1448E) where they remained over night. 9 Jan 45, Sources were taken to British mission in Skrad (4526N 1454E), after a walk of about 4 hours. Here they met their bombardier and other American airmen.

Source 1 and 2 remained in Skrad for 2 days and left the afternoon of 11 Jan. 45. The party walked along that day until they reached the town of Vrbovsko (4523N 1505E) where they stayed for two nights.

13 Jan. 45 party (6 Americans and guides) walked to village of Ogulin (4516N 1514E) where they spent the night. 14 Jan 45 party walked for about 12 miles to a cluster of huts and rested until night when they again walked on. This night walk was due to the presence of roving bands of Ustachis. The morning of 15 Jan. 45 the party came to a cluster of houses and remainedthere for two days and nights.

17 Jan. 45 party walked to little town at Veljun (4516N 1533E) where they met a British and an American pair of Corporals who were from mission at Topusko, (4518 1558).

Following day the Allied Mission corporals took one of party who was hurt in their jeep to Topusko and the rest of party walked to Slunj (4507 1535). (here they met Source 3).

Sources left Slunj on 5 Feb. 45 by truck to a new mission at Korenica (4445 1543) remained over night there and went by GI truck, belonging to 15AAF, to Lovinac (4424N 1542E). Stopped there for food and continued to Zara. Taken aboard British cruiser "Columbo" and slept overnight. Following day put on British destroyer Wilton and brought to Bari, arriving on 8 Feb. 45.

Source 2 landed OK in a canyon, slightly jarred, in some brush. He walked until about midnight in SW direction, using map and compass from kit. Slept in some brush till day and walked for a while until he came to a sign post which read 20 kilo to Pisino (4515N 1356E). Locating this on map, he oriented himself and walked toward Yugoslavia. Walked all day and night until dawn. Coming to outskirts of a small town, Source 2 waited until someone came by. He stopped this villager and identified himself. The villager took him into his house and fed him. Shortly thereafter a villager came in who had been to America and who could speak English. This man was the town butcher, who claimed to have aided many evading airmen. He put Source 2 up in various houses of the village, named Bogliuno (4517N 1407E) until 1 Jan. 45. On that day Source 2 had to leave because some informer had tipped off the Germans. The butcher, who was a Partisan, arranged for Source 2 to be taken by Partisan soldiers. These Partisans took Source 2 along out of way paths and huts to little village of Gerovo. Here they were joined by Source 1 and traveled along together for rest of trip.

Source 3 lit in a clump of trees and was suspended about 5 feet above ground in a little valley. He managed to extricate himself and got down, leaving chute in tree. Source 3 crawled to a nearby shack, being unable to walk as his left foot had been strained when it was caught in the shroud lines on the way down. When Source 3 reached the shack he found it to be abandoned, with some refuse and straw being the only objects around. He stayed here for two days and nights, resting.

31 Dec. 44 he walked to another shack which was also deserted and remained there for the third night. The following day he encountered a goat herd who took him to his shack and gave him what little food he had.

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USA/SKP/556 (Cont.)

On the night of 2 Jan. 45, Source 3 was taken to another sympathizer's home where he remained for three days and nights. During the days he'd stay in the house, and in the evenings would retire to the barn.

Following is Source 3's itinerary after leaving here on 5 Jan 45 with Partisan guides.

Jan 5 - Walked 6 hrs. to Partisan station in snowstorm, remaining 2 days.
Jan 6 - Walked 5 hrs. to another station through snow.
Jan 8 - " 18 hrs " " " " " (2 days).
Jan 10 - " 12 hrs to Gerovo. Remained 3 days.
Jan 13 - Taken by sleight to Brad (4527N 1458E).
Jan 14 - Walked to Skrad, met group of Englishmen.
Jan 17 - Walked to Moravice (4527N 1500E).
Jan 18 - Walked to Vrbovsko (4523N 1505E).
Jan. 19 - Walked 19 hrs. to Jelenje, stayed there till Jan. 24.
Jan. 24 - Walked to Slunj, where he met Source 1 & 2. From here Source 3 is with Sources 1 & 2 referred to in Source 1's story.

L. L. MATHE
1st Lt., A.C.
Interrogator.

4 Incls
Incl 1 - Ltr. 383.6
2 - App. B
3 - App. D
4 - App. F.

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USA/3KP/556 (Cont.)

APPENDIX B

1. Missions:-

a. Korenica (4445 1543) Br. Mission, short of food and supplies. Major Breen, British, the CO, was very kind and helpful.

b. Topusko (4518 1558) British and American mission which kept in touch with Partisans at Slumj. British Major Churchill and American Major Lindsey the C.O's.

2. Yugoslav helper, Frank Turk, at Gerova, Yugoslavia. Spoke pretty good English and had spent time in the States, aided evaders.

3. Yugoslav Partisan soldier, guide who led Source I through mountains: - Antonia Rosovic; Katarlovran, Istra; Yugoslavia.

4. The butcher of Bogliuno, benefactor of Source 2, "Guiseppina Consech" (card enclosed).

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USA/SKP/556 (Cont.)

APPENDIX D

A garrison at Bogliuno, Italy (4517N 1408E) with approximate 300 German Soldiers, mostly older men.

5 miles NW of Gerova was a Chetnik encampment, with a short airfield near it in good condition (Seen by Sources 1 & 2 - ((4532 1438))

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(US4/SKP/556 - Cont.).

Appendix F

1. F/O Robert Hague, bombardier, last seen in Slunj, Yugoslavia going in jeep to Topusko mission. (18 Jan. 45).

2. 1st Lt. Edelstein, co-pilot, reported killed on landing when chute collapsed in vicinity of Fiume, Italy (29 Dec. 44).

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26 Dec 44 - 456 - D'Agostino

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USA/SEP/490

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AUTH. CO, 15AF
Init.
21 January 45
D.JOR'lm

HEADQUARTERS FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE
APO 520, U.S.Army

21 January 1945

ESCAPE STATEMENT

1. D'Agostino, Anthony 2nd. Lt. O-720682 740th. Sqdn. 455th. B. Group.

Born - 5 December 1916 Enlisted - 19 Sept. 1942

Home Address - New Hartford, New York

Peacetime Profession - School Teacher - Insurance salesman

MIA - 26 December 1944 RTD - 19 January 1945 Missions - 10

2. Lost #3 engine on bomb run and salvoed bombs in target area. Lost #2 engine near Bratislava, 4810N - 1710E. Source not sure of what caused engine losses. Pilot said something about prop running away. Formation turned too early, turning over Gyor. A/C turned due east toward Russia, went over Budapest at 10000 feet, much flak, then turned south. Plane crashed landed three miles northwest of Kerekegyhaza Hungary, 4656N - 1923E. Plane bounced on a slight knoll, turned left into a row of trees. Nose was entirely twisted off.

3. Never in enemy hands.

4. See interrogation of crew members - USA/SEP/475

J.J.RAMSEY, JR.
CAPT. A.C.
INTERROGATOR.

1 Incl.
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17 Dec 44 - 456 - Richards

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AUTH: CG, 15 AF
Init. [redacted]
19 January 1945
D-CNK-fs

HEADQUARTERS FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE
APO 520, U. S. ARMY

19 January 1945
Ref: USA/SKP/502

ESCAPE STATEMENT

1. Richards, William V., Jr., O-825985, 1st Lt., 743d Sq., 455th B. Gp.
   Born - 10 Dec 1923 Enlisted - 13 Nov 1942.
   Home Address - 20 E. Dixon Ave., Dayton, Ohio.
   Peacetime Profession - Student.
   MIA - 17 December 1944 RTD - 18 Jan 1945 Missions - 11.

1. Hewit, Leroy H., 2d Lt., O-723974, 743d Sq., 455th B. Gp.
   Born - 20 July 1922 Enlisted - 12 December 1942.
   Home Address - 5339 N. 15th St., Philadelphia Pa.
   Peacetime Profession - Salesman.
   MIA - 17 December 1944 RTD - 18 Jan 1945 Missions - 11.

1. Amundson, Elden G., S/Sgt., 37557373, 743d Sq., 455th B. Gp.
   Born - 27 Sep 1924 Enlisted-29 March 1943.
   Home Address - 3508 - 15th Ave., So., Myles, Missouri.
   Peacetime Profession - Draftsman.
   MIA - 17 Dec 1944 RTD - 18 Jan 1945 Missions-8.

1. Papia, Gerald C., S/Sgt., 32929559, 743d Sq., 455th B. Gp.
   Born - 21 Nov 1922 Enlisted - Mar 1943
   Home Address - 149 Chenango St., Buffalo, N.Y.
   Peacetime Profession - Aircraft Mech.
   MIA - 17 Dec 1944 RTD - 18 Jan 1945 Missions - 8.

1. Czerwionka, Fred C., T/Sgt., 6912548, 743d Sq., 455th B. Gp.
   Born - 5 Oct 1916 Enlisted - 18 April 1939
   Home Address - 2541 Carmen Ave., Chicago, Ill.

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Escape Statement, Hq, 15 AF, 19 Jan 45, Ref: USA/SEP/502, Richards, William W., Jr., 0-825985, 743d Sq., 455th B. Gp. & Crew, cont.

Peacetime Profession - Soldier

MIA - 17 Dec 1944 RTD - 18 Jan 1945 Missions - 9

1. Slomski, Henry, Sgt., 26168467, 743d Sq., 455 Bomb Gp.

Born - 12 July 1923 Enlisted - 30 Nov 1942

Home Address - 3016 West 41st Place, Chicago, Ill.

Peacetime Profession - Laborer

MIA - 17 Dec 1944 RTD - 18 Jan 1945 Missions - 3

2. Lost No. 3 engine due to oil line, which occurred at bomb run. Could not feather runaway prop. Lost formation and altitude. Finally feathered engine north of Budapest at 12,000 ft. Lost above undercast; passed over NE Budapest which was thought to be Vienna. Intense, accurate and heavy flak hit A/C but did not knock it down. One-half minute after flak, three (3) ME-109's and one FW-190 hit A/C on individual attacks. First pass hit No. 1 engine, putting it on fire. Crew claimed that enemy A/C destroyed. The other fighters nearly cut the A/C in two. No. 2 had run away turbo. Crew started to bail from 10,000 feet. Sources left A/C at 3500 ft. A/C broke in half after pilot left it.

3. Never in enemy hands.

4. Were shot at in air and swung chutes. Hid in swamp south of Budapest between Russian and German lines. Could not walk because of sprained ankle. Pulled out of swamp by party of seven men who took all persnal possessions. Did not appear friendly. Party finally decided from U.S. flag as shoulder patch that subject was an American. Put Source 1 (Lt. Richards) in horse and carriage and took him to small village south of Budapest. Examined ankle and groin. Had medic look him over. Met navigator, Lt. Rockett, here. He had broken leg. Arrived at 1500.

Captors became more friendly. Fed captives. Put sources in carriage and drove them to body of co-pilot, Lt. Jacobson, who had opened chute. Sources took body back to village after dark. Sources and navigator spent night of 17 December at this village.

Morning 18 December sources, navigator, and body of Lt. Jacobson taken on truck to hospital at Abony, Hungary (4712N/2000E). There sources met bombardier, Lt. Hewit, S/Sgt. Roberts, and T/Sgt. Czerwionka. Spent day at hospital. S/Sgt McGuire was operated on as was Roberts. During day following came in: S/Sgt Papia, S/Sgt. Amundson, Sg. Slomski. Slomski had operation. Spent night at hospital with Prussian major.

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Escape Statement, Hq. 15 AF, 19 Jan 45, Ref: USA/SKP/502, Richards, William V., Jr., 0-825985, 743d Sq., 455th B. Gp., & Crew, contd.

19 December - Funeral of co-pilot, Town was bombed. Stayed all night.

20 December - Russian woman interpreter took source to Russian H.Q set-up and five others to see German prisoners. Left at hospital: Lt. Puckett, S/Sgt. McGuire and S/Sgt. Roberts, who were all injured.

21 December - Left in truck for Braks (4505N/1913E). Spent night there.

22 December - met 56 U. S. and British Officers and men.

23 December - same.

24 December - about 80 left by truck for Subotica, Yugoslavia. Spent night there under Russian supervision.

25 December - Left Subotica (4606N/1940E) for Timiscara (4546N/2115E), Rumania. Not fed. Bad bugs.

26 December - At 0700 left by train and went to Caranesbes (4525N/2213E), Rumania. Fed.

27 December - Left for Bucharest by train. Heat put in car. No window glass. Three days and night on train.

29 December - Arrived Bucharest and left train at 1300. No food for three days. Taken to Fifteenth Air Force mission. Food, clothing, delousing. Mission needs clothing, cigarettes, Rumanian speaking personnel, medical supplies and pro station. Spent night and rest of stay until 18 January in school building.

18 January - Bucharest to Bari.

Sgt. Slomski (Source). Fighters knocked out wires to turrets and interphones. Gunner in waist ordered "Bail out". Source hit by 20 mm. S/Sgt. Amundson bleeding from mouth, bailed first. S/Sgt McGuire bleeding. Source had leg bleeding and passed out on way down. Came to on ground. No shoes. Hid. Picked up by two Russian soldiers but source did not know they were Russians. Hit on back with stick by a Russian soldier. Taken to front line hospital where he met Russian officers. Russians provided soldiers to carry sources to a few houses. Fifty (50) soldiers and civilians there. Searched. Could not prove himself American. Took all personal property and cut uniform. Took clothes off. Gave first aid. Fed. Taken to Russian colonel. He was still unidentified and suspected of being a German. Put to bed. Awakened at 2100 and taken to Russian Division Command Post. Source met S/Sgt Papin there. Next day both left by cart and reached hospital at 1350 that day.

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Escape Statement, Hq. 15 AF, 19 Jan 45, Ref: USA/SEP/502, Richards, William V. Jr., 0-825985, 743d Sq., 455th B. Gp., & Crew, contd.

Lt. Hewit (Source). Landed in hay-field. Hurt neck. Could not talk. Moved southeast. Picked up by Russian patrol of three men. Was identified. Was between Russian and German lines. First aid given. Saw plenty of U.S. equipment: tanks, jeeps, etc. Drove 12 kilometers to Adony. Horse driven cart, moving war supplies. Interrogated by Russian woman S-2.

S/Sgt Davis (Source). Guns were not harmonized. Had to use tracer method of firing. Turret not harmonized. GI shoes tore loose from harness.

(Ed.) Whole crew landed between lines and were shot at. Source landed 300 yards from German lines and was shot at. Hit ditch and crawled away. Picked up by Russians.

S/Sgt Amundsen (Source). Cut but not badly hurt by shell explosion in A/C. Hole torn by 20 mm large enough to jump through. Flight deck hit. Shot at in air. Landed in swamp, near small village. Walked away from firing and into Russians. Taken to house by officer. Checked by medico. Taken in evening to command post underground. Fed. Taken by truck to hospital at Adony. Russians friendly but inquisitive and cautious.

T/Sgt. Cornelius (Source). "Pilot and co-pilot did excellent job, and kept their heads. Used evasive action in flak."

Source landed in water. "The West" held face under water. Wind in chute pulled him towards shore. Russians picked him up in boat.

LEIGH M. LOTT,
Major, A. C.
Interrogator

2 Incls:
Incl 1 - Ltr 383.6 (6)
Incl 2 - Appendix F

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Escape Statement, Hq, 15 AF, 19 Jan 45, Ref: USA/SKP/502, Richards, William V., Jr, 0-825985, 743d Sq., 455th B. Gp., & Crew, contd.

APPENDIX F

Lt. Jacobson (co-pilot of this crew), killed 17 Dec 44 when chute failed to open. Buried Adony, Hungary, 19 Dec. 1944.

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26 Dec 44 - 456 - Kelly

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:AUTH: CG 15 AF :
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:19 Jan 45 :
D-LLM-1f
USA/SKP/457
461

HEADQUARTERS FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE
APO 520, U. S. Army

ESCAPE STATEMENT

19 January 1945.

1. (Source 1) Kelly, Henry C., Capt., 0-684873, 742 Sq., 455 Gp.
   Born - 13 Oct. 1917 Enlisted - 16 April 1942.
   Home Address - Lansing, Mich.
   Peacetime Profession - Coal Salesman
   MIA - 26 Dec 44 RTD - 18 Jan 45 Missions - 32 Sorties

1. (Source 2) Fotheringham, Donald K., 2nd Lt. 0-775850, 742 Sq., 455 Gp.
   Born - 11 Jan. 1919 Enlisted - 23 Oct 42.
   Home Address, - Beaver, Utah
   Peacetime Profesaion - Aircraft Loftsman
   MIA - 26 Dec 44 RTD- 18 Jan 45 Missions - 11 Sorties

1. (Source 3) Goan, Charles, 1st Lt, 0-772940, 742 Sq., 455 Gp.
   Born - 20 Dec 1920 Enlisted - 16 Sept. 42
   Home Address - Ventura, California
   Peacetime Profession - Meter Reader
   MIA - 26 Dec 44 RTD - 18 Jan 45 Missions - 27 Sorties

1. (Source 4) Krueger, Robert J., 2nd Lt., 0-2060313, 742 Sq., 455 Gp.
   Born - 13 March 1916 Enlisted - 25 Sept. 42
   Home Address - St. Paul, Minn.
   Peacetime Profession - Salesman
   MIA - 26 Dec 44 RTD - 18 Jan 45 Missions - 11

1. (Source 5) Keller, Elmer E., T/Sgt., 6920263, 742 Sq., 455 Gp.
   Born - 2 Oct 1920 Enlisted - 28 Nov. 1939
   Home Address - Chicago, Ill.
   Peacetime Profession - Machinist
   MIA - 26 Dec 44 RTD - 18 Jan 45 Missions - 32

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USA/SKP/~~459~~ 461 (Cont.)

1. (Source 6) Phelan, William A., S/Sgt., 12043847, 742 Sq., 455 Gp.
   Born - Nov 17, 1920 Enlisted - 27 Jan 42.
   Home Address, - Brooklyn, N. Y.
   Peacetime Profession - --
   MIA - 26 Dec 44 RTD - 18 Jan 45 Missions - 46

1. (Source 7) Mason, Robert G., S/Sgt., 35537922, 742 Sq., 455 Gp.
   Born - 11 Nov 1922 Enlisted - 19 Dec 42.
   Home Address - Toledo, Ohio.
   Peacetime Profession - School
   MIA - 26 Dec 44 RTD - 18 Jan 45 Missions - 46

1. (Source 8) Sturnield, Thomas A., S/Sgt., 3288907, 742 Sq., 455 Gp.
   Born - 1 April 1913 Enlisted - 14 April 1943.
   Home Address - Brooklyn, NY.
   Peacetime Profession - Welder, Mach.
   MIA - 26 Dec 44 RTD - 18 Jan 45 Missions - 48

1. For, Stephen, (Source 9), S/Sgt, 32037448, 742 Sq., 455 Gp.
   Born - 9 Dec 1915 Enlisted - 14 April 1944
   Home Address - Cleveland, Ohio
   Peacetime Profession - Mechanic
   MIA - 26 Dec 44 RTD - 18 Jan 45 Missions - 48

1. (Source 10) Jablonski, Harry R., S/Sgt., 35312308, 742 Sq., 455 Gp.
   Born - 22 Jan 1921 Enlisted - 7 March 42
   Home Address - Cleveland, Ohio
   Peacetime Profession - Laborer
   MIA - 26 Dec 44 RTD - 18 Jan 45 Missions - 46

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USA/SKP/~~459~~ 461 (Cont.)

2. Plane was OK until target. - Flak hit plane in numberous places on the bomb ru, evidently damaging fuel lines or cells to #2 engine, as fuel pressure dropped to z zero. Source 1, feathered engine and checked for damage. Found gas leaks and gas shortage. Transferred fuel to #2 engine via cross-feed but visual gauges showed no increase. Soon pilot noticed that engine was more a liability than asset, so he feathered again. All this time they had fallen behind their formation and were being protected by roving P-38's. Engineer reported 350 gallons of fuel left in plane and they were still in the Vienna area. Source 1 decided to head for nearest friendly field at Pecs, Hungary (4605N 1813E). They were taken there by mickey naviator and upon arrival found field closed in by ground fog. So Source 1 tried for another field about 45 miles northeast at Pecs. This field was also closed in and the aerial engineer told Source 1, that the plane had only a few minutes of fuel left. Pilot gave order to bail out, when #1 engine also quit. The nose navigator, who had been wounded, was out 1st and then the rest of crew left. Pilot went last and #4 quit as he jumped. Plane crashed, nose and flight deck burning up.
Approximate bail out position was - 4610N - 1830E.

3. Never in enemy hands.

4. Source 2 landed in a flat meadow about 15 miles south of Szekszard, Hungary, (4621N 1841E). Within a few seconds after hitting ground. Source 1 was surrounded by Hungarians who took his chute and led him into a little village of 15 or 20 houses where he met 2 Russian soldiers who were stationed there. He was fed and kept there overnight. The following day 27 Dec 44, he was taken to another Hungarian village, (Szerdes), where he met a Russian captain who was the district commandant. This Captain took Source 1 with him in a truck back to the plane and looked it over. While they were examining plane, a native came up and told them about another American nearby. They drove to this house and found the co-pilot, Source 2. The Russian captain took sources 1 and 2 to Szekszard, Hungary (4621N 1841E) later in the evening. Here they were fed and bedded down for the evening. The following afternoon the pilot heard of a hospital in Szekszard where there were Americans, so he and Source 2 went there. Here they met the rest of the crew - one of them severly w wounded by flak in the shoulder, and another with a sprained ankle. (28 Dec 44).
The Russians threw a big party for the Sources and the following day they took them to a village called Gunakonlod (4640N 1900E), where they met 27 other Americans and 6 British who were also awaiting a means of transportation out.
Here the Sources were put into a common group under the nominal leadership of a RCAF Sq. Leader Wells, who succeeded in screwing everything up and holding up the evacuation of Americans and British because of his refusal to use an interpreter and insistence on going to Belgrade. Finally a Br. Captain Coates arrived who could speak all those languages well and the following day (5 Jan 45) the entire group of 44 men were put on trucks and taken out. The Sources went through Szekszard and stopped off at the hospital to see their two injured comrades. They found that the wounded man had died only a few hours before - the man with the sprained ankle was expecting to leave within a week. They spent the night at a little town about 8 or 9 miles south of Jaja (4610N 1858E). The following day (6 Jan 45) they went by truck to Timisoara, (4546N 2115E) where they spent 2 days and nights. (Billet in private homes).

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USA/SKF/~~459~~ 461 Cont.

They went by train from Temesvoar to Bucharest (taking 4 days & 3 nights) stopping off in little towns for food. Arrived in Bucharest on 11 Jan. 45. Taken to Mission where Major Molrehill arranged for bailleting and further details. Arrived in Bari by C-47 on 18 Jan. 45.

Source 2 landed in a misty meadow and set off towards the direction of where he believed Source 1 was. He couldn't see well, so he decided to hidecut for the rest of the day. He crawled into a haystack and slept there the rest of the night. The following day he went to a little village where some Hungarian peasants took him in and fed him. One of them apparently went off and notified the authorities, as he was picked up shortly afternoon by Source 1 and a Russian captain.

Source 3 landed in field and made his way to a house where he stayed for a little less than an hour when all the rest of the Sources came walking in with the wounded naviagotr. Two of the men walked into a nearby village (Kaldocz) (4620N 1840E) and got a doctor who administered rough 1st aid and bandaging to wounded man. They remained here till the next day when they moved the wounded man and the rest of the Sources into the village aforementioned. They remained here until the following day when they were taken to Szekszard by wagon. (28 Dec. 44) Here they took the wounded man to the hospital where Russian surgeons gave him immediate attention. Here they also saw the missing "mickey" naviagotr who was there with a sprained ankle. A little afternoon the Pilot and Co-pilot came on.

Source 4 to 10 inclusive landed within a few hundred yards of each other and had made contact almost immediately. They fanned out and soon located the wounded man who was crawling along. Source 4 gave 1st aid and they then carried wounded man to a farm house where they met Source 3. -

From here on refer to Source 1.

LEWIS L. MATHE
1st Lt., A.C.
Interrogator.

4 Incls:
Incls 1 - Ltr 383.6 (10)
2 - App. B.
3 - App. C.
4. - App. F.

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USA/SKP/459 Cont. (Capt. Henry C. Kelly & Crew)
461

APPENDIX B

1. a. The unknown, short, Jewish, mustached doctor at Koldocz who gave treatment to wounded man.
   b. Capt. Coates - British - valuable contact man.
   c. Sq. Ldr. Wells - RCAF - consensus says "jackass".

Escape money used by Source 1 for defraying expenses of crew.

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USA/SKP/~~459~~ 461 Cont. (Capt. Henry C. Kelly & Crew)

APPENDIX C

Recommend firearms

One of escape kits had money removed - Could use cigarettes.

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USA/SKP/459 - (Capt. Henry C. Kelly & Crew).

APPENDIX F

1st Lt. Raymond Kotz., died in Szekszard hospital on morning of 5 Jan 45 of wounds received in battle.

2nd Lt. Agathon, sprained ankle, last seen in hospital at Szekszard on 5 Jan 45.

An unknown B-24 had crashed in the immediate vicinity of Koldocz (4620 1840) about a week before Sources. The last 4 numbers of tail were 7944 and there was a large 55 pained just forward of the waist windows. The local civilians claim to have seen 5 chutes come out of plane before it crashed, but did not know what happened to crew.

Civilians told sources that there were 3 American airmen in hospital at Sziget, Hungary. Names unknown.

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26 Dec 44 - 456 - Boucher

USA/SRP/475

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AUTH: GO: 154
Init.
19 January 1945

HEADQUARTERS FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE
APO 520, U.S.Army

ESCAPE STATEMENT

L.CRM-lc
19 January 1945

1. Boucher, Arthur R., S/Sgt., 11131540, 740th. B. Sqdn. 455th. B. Gp.
Born - 7 Jan 1926 Enlisted - 8 Sept 1943
Home Address - 34 Whittlesey Ave., Waterbury, Conn.
Peacetime Profession - Student. Duty - Asst. Eng.
MIA - 26 Dec 1944 RTD - 18 Jan 1945 Missions - 25 - 39

1. Brown, Paul E., S/Sgt., 37533431, 740th. B. Sqdn., 455th. B. Gp.
Born - 12 April 1924 Enlisted - 9 July 1943
Home Address - Albany, Mo.
Peacetime Profession - Printer, Duty - Armor Gunner
MIA - 26 Dec 1944 RTD - 18 Jan 1945 Missions - 39 - 25 Sorties

1. Kelleher, Dana L., S/Sgt., 31400632, 740th. B. Sqdn., 455th. B. Gp.
Born - 30 Oct 1918 Enlisted - 19 Jan 1944
Home Address - South Pairs, Maine.
Peacetime Profession - Leather Worker and Farming Duty - Tail Gunner
MIA - 26 Dec 1944 RTD - 18 Jan 1945 Missions - 25 - 39

1. Scerbo, Eugene B., S/Sgt., 31417032, 740th. B. Sqdn., 455th. B. Gp.
Born - 23 July 1919 Enlisted - 12 Jan 1944
Home Address - North Adams, Mass.
Peacetime Profession - Tool and Die Maker Duty - Asst. Radio Operator and Waist Gunner.
MIA - 26 Dec 1944 RTD - 18 Jan 1945 39 Missions 25 Sorties

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ESCAPE STATEMENT, Boucher, Arthur A., S/Sgt., USA/ASN/475, Continued.

1. Belcher, Henry S., T/Sgt., 11103792, 740th. B. Sqdn., 455th. B. Gp.

Born - 4 Feb 1917 Enlisted - 11 Dec 1942

Home Address - 90 E Main, Clinton, Conn

Peacetime Profession - Truck Driver Duty - Radio Operator

MIA - 26 Dec 1944 RFD - 18 Jan 1945 39 Missions - 25 Sorties

2. Target was Oswiecium, Poland. On the bomb run the prop on #3 engine ran away and was feathered. Bombs were dropped. Plane detoured around flak area and got back in another formation. Plane was dropping back through different formations. In fifteen or twenty minutes #2 engine ran away and was eventually feathered. Asst. engineer, Boucher, believes prop governors were at fault. Headed for Russian lines, losing altitude. No escort, although it was requested. At Gyor, 4740N, 1735A, black and white puffs. All loose stuff was thrown out. Passed over Budapest at 11000 - 13000 feet. Flak intense but inaccurate. White puffs, but dont know whether Russian or German. Crashed landed in field, Kerekegyhaza, 4636N, 1928A, hit slight knoll, in slight patchy ground fog. Plane bounced fifteen or twenty feet up, then hit again, left wing low and nose down. Nose crumpled, and #1 prop dug in, swinging plane 90 degrees into row of trees, which stopped plane. Nose was entirely ripped off, from wing forward; probably when the plane hit second time.

3. Never in enemy hands.

4. Source, with five men, including navigator, got out of waist with no trouble. They got the bombardier out of wreckage of nose. Other four men were killed. Natives closed up at once. Had no way of moving bombardier, except short distance to house. Hungarian doctor and Russian Captain arrived. Russians came back next day and moved bombardier in truck to hospital at Orkeny, 4707N, 1926A. Russians took rest of men there and next day to Szentes, 4640N, 2015A. Were interrogated there by Russian Colonel. Next day by truck to Arid, then by C-47 to Bucharest. From there the five men were evacuated by C-47 to Bari.(navigator stayed at Bucharest.)

CHARLES N. KALOGEROS,
1st. Lt., A.C.
Interrogator.

5 Incls.
Incl. 1 - Ltr. 383.6 (5 copies)
Incl. 2, 5 - Appendix B, C, D, E

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ESCAPE STATEMENT, Boucher, Arthur R., S/Sgt., USA/SN/ 475 Continued.

APPENDIX B

Mester Zoltanne, a girl at Kerekegyhaza, 46½N, 19°E, where the men spent the first night, was very helpful, staying up all night to nurse the bombardier, etc.

A neighbor, Shubert (?) Peterie, also brought in food.

All this neighborhood very friendly.

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ESCAPE STATEMENT, Boucher, Arthur R., S/Sgt., USA/SN#/475. Continued.

APPENDIX C

Used candy and money from escape kits. No German maps in kit. All Morphine ampettes except one, out of two kits plus individual packages, had been used and replaced in kits. This was very bad, as more was needed for bombardier, etc. Life raft was used for litter, but would not inflate from Co2 tubs. Had to be hand pumped.

End of morphine packs had not been torn open. Morphine was taken either before packs were made up, as in U.S. or else packs had been re-sealed.

All men had guns. Useful to command respect from Russians.

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ESCAPE STATEMENT, Boucher, Arthur R., S/Sgt., USA/EP/475, Continued.

APPENDIX D

Jewish restaurant keeper in Bucharest told navigator Germans very rough on Jews.

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ESCAPE STATEMENT, Boucher, Arthur R., S/Sgt., USA/SRP/475. Continued.

APPENDIX F

Walter L. Gunn, Pilot, 1st. Lt., Walter H. Barton, 1st. Lt., Co-Pilot, William J. Fregde, 1st. Lt. navigator, Charles H. Crowley, T/Sgt. Engineer, burried at plane in coffins by Russina. Marker put up there.

Allen C. Johnson, 1st. Lt., bombardier, left in Russian Hospital at Orkeny, Hungary, 4707N, 1926E, with broken pelvis.

Anthony D'Agostino,(spelling ?) 2nd. Lt. Mickey navigator, still at Bucharest. RAF

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Init. [redacted]
23 December 1944
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HEADQUARTERS FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE
APO 520, U. S. Army

23 December 1944
AAF/327

14 Oct 44 - 455 - Polando

42-78359

ESCAPE STATEMENT

1. [redacted] Polando, O-825271, 741st Sq., 455 Bomb Group.

Born - 5 November, 1921
Enlisted - 12 November, 1942
Home Address - 1930 Morris Ave
Lincoln Park, Mich.
Peacetime Profession - Inspector of Cameras

Interrogated - 23 Dec. 1944
M.I.A. - 14 Oct. 1944
Returned to Duty - 20 Dec. 1944
Missions - 6
Duty - Pilot

2. F/O Clin H. Moore, T-62834, 741st Sq., 455 Bomb Group.

Born - 15 February 1921
Enlisted - 6 September 1942
Home Address - Elkhart, Ind.
Peacetime Profession - Gear Cutter

Interrogated - 23 Dec. 1944
M.I.A. - 14 Oct. 1944
Returned to Duty - 20 Dec. 1944
Missions - 4
Duty - Flying Co-Pilot

3. 2nd Lt. Robert E. Basala, O-7060455, 741st Sq., 455 Bomb Group.

Born - 4 July, 1923
Enlisted - 13 November 1942
Home Address - Matherville Illinois
Peacetime Profession - Stock Room Clerk

Interrogated - 23 Dec. 1944
M.I.A. - 14 Oct. 1944
Returned to Duty - 20 Dec. 1944
Missions - 4
Duty - Navigator

4. Cpl. Carl C. Case, 20652880, 741st Sq., 455 Bomb Group.

Born - 3 September 1921
Enlisted - 17 July 1944
Home Address - 824 8th St. No.
Fargo, No. Dak.

Interrogated - 23 December 1944
M.I.A. - 14 October 1944
Returned to Duty - 20 December 1944

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Peacetime Profession - None — Missions - 4

Duty - Radio Operator

1. Cpl. John A. Heltzen, 20200705, 741st Sq., 455 Bomb Group

Born - 11 March, 1920 — Interrogated - 23 December 1944

Enlisted - 3 Feb. 1941 — M.I.A. - 14 October 1944

Home Address - 4411 Bruner Ave, New York, 66, N.Y. — Returned to Duty - 20 Dec. 1944

Missions - 5

Peacetime Profession - Truck Driver

Duty - Eng. - Gun.

Interrogation

Lt. John T. Polando and 4 members of crew. Five other members of this crew were returned to duty 30 October, and were processed through AAF headquarters, returning to Italy via AIC. Lt. Polando, the co-pilot, Lt. Chin M. Moore, navigator Lt. Robert E. Masala, engineer Corporal John A. Heltzer, and radio operator Corporal Carl O. Case, remained behind to fly the plane back when it had been repaired.

2. This crew, on a mission over Blechammer, Germany, on October 14, 1944, was flying A/C 42-78359, assigned to the 455 Bomb Group, 304th Wing. Over the target the A/C was hit by flak in the No. 4 engine; this engine lost all oil pressure, and they were unable to feather it. The formation was on the bomb run. The plane was losing altitude, and veering to the right, due to the drag of No. 4 engine. The pilot felt that he could not regain the formation without danger from the falling bombs of the formation, so he continued to veer to the right. When the plane was clear of the flak, the plane was too low, and the dragging engine made it impossible to regain altitude. The pilot then decided to head for the Russian lines, the nearest apparently safe area. Flying to the north of Krakow (50 05 N - 20 E) the pilot headed north and east, keeping above the clouds, for 15 minutes. Then southeast for approximately the same length of time. Then due east. Over german lines the plane was fired upon by Germans, and in turn by the Russians. The crew began looking for a place to land. The plane was losing altitude. At 2000 feet the pilot gave additional power to maintain this altitude. The bombardier sighted a landing field to the right so the pilot made an 180 degree turn and flew over the field with wheels down. The plane was not fired on, as the plane was at approximately 700 feet. Russians showed a flare, and the pilot came in directly for a landing. The pilot had spotted the red star on the planes, and was fairly certain that he was in Russia.

3. Never in enemy hands.

4. When the plane landed, the plane was surrounded by Russian soldiers. On the ground the crew discovered that they had landed at Djekovich approximately (50 20 N - 21 30 E). This field was between 20 & 25 miles behind the Russian lines.

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(The pilot states that each time they were fired upon, he gave orders to the crew to be prepared for bail out). The crew remained at this base for approximately 2 weeks. They had asked that a message be sent to Moscow and to Italy. They were told that such a message had been sent to Moscow and to Washington. During the time that this crew was at the fighter base (LG) it was kept under constant guard. They were permitted to retain their side arms, and were told that the guard was for purposes of protecting them from the Poles. They were quartered in the Hq. building, all 10 men being quartered in 2 rooms, sleeping on straw mattresses. The local party representative took the pilot down to the field to look over the plane. The crew was not permitted to talk with the local population. At the end of two weeks, a Russian crew in a C-47 from Poltava (U.S. air base) landed and took the crew to Lwow (49 50 N 24 E) where they remained 1 day and 2 nights. Both nights were spent at Russian barracks at the airfield. They were then taken to Poltava, where they met Col. Hampton, American C.O. of the field. At the end of about 5 days, five members of the crew were sent back to Italy by ATC. The rest of the crew was detained to fly an U.S. A/C back to Italy. It was intended that the crew would fly a Mickey ship which had been landed 2 month before by Col. Clark of the 461st Bomb Group. Another plane from the same group was to be flown back by another pilot also from the 461st. When this plane was landed at Poltava, 3 tires were blown out, so this pilot (Lt. McShorter USA/SKF/183) flew Col. Clarks plane back to Italy. This crew was then told that it would await the repair of their own plane. This was about the 30th of October. It was estimated that the repair of this plane would be finsihed shortly. At the fighter field an engine was changed and the hydraulic repaired. It Polando then picked the plane up, landed it at Lwow, gased it up, and returned it to Poltava. The ship was returned to Poltava Nov. 21st. At Poltava the entire plane was overhauled, plugs changed etc. The first week in December the plane was regarded as being in shape for the flight back. It was test flown, and the crew awaited clearance from Moscow to take off. Some delay was occasioned by a wait for a Russian navigator and radio operator. All requirements were met by Dec. 13, and the plane took off from Poltava on that date. From Poltava they flew to Makachkla, staying over night, and took off the following morning for Teheran. Here the Russian navigator and radio operator were dropped. The crew then proceeded to Cairo thence Italy via Benghasi, landing at San Geovanni air base on Dec. 20.

ALVIN H. CROOM,
Major, Air Corps,
Interrogator.

7 Incls:
5 Ltrs. 383.6
1 Exhibit "B"
1 Exhibit "C"

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2nd Lt. John.T. Polando, O-825271, 741st Bomb Sq., 455th Bomb Group
F/O Olin H. Moore, T-62834, 741st Bomb Sq., 455th Bomb Group
2nd Lt. Robert E. Basala, O-7060455, 741st Bomb Sq., 455th Bomb Group
Cpl. Carl O . Case, 20552880, 741st Bomb Sq., 455th Bomb Group
Cpl. John A. Heltzen, 20200705, 741st Bomb Sq., 455th Bomb Group

EXHIBIT "B"

At Poltava, the crew was permitted to go into town, to shower, quartermaster, etc. Most contact with the Russians was on the base at Poltava. At Poltava the crew was quartered in American Barracks. Col. Hampton at Poltava was particularly helpful to the crew. Capt. Johnson, Engineering officer at Poltava did a good job on the plane.

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2nd Lt. John T. Polando, O-825271, 741st Bomb Sq., 455th Bomb Group
F/O Olin M. Moore, T-62834, 741st Bomb Sq., 455th Bomb Group
2nd Lt. Robert E. Rasala, O-7060455, 741st Bomb Sq., 455th Bomb Group
Cpl. Carl C. Case, 20552880, 741st Bomb Sq., 455th Bomb Group
Cpl. John A. Waltzen, 20200705, 741st Bomb Sq., 455th Bomb Group

EXHIBIT "G"

1. In approaching Russian lines, A/C should fly at low altitudes.

2. Crew members should carry guns. This impresses the Russians, and is a protection to the men.

3. Russians are suspicious of the maps in escape kits.

4. Escape kits should include insect powder, soothing for G.I.'s, tooth brush.

5. Emergency rations should be inspected and replaced at specific intervals. The emergency rations of this crew were spoiled and worthless.

6. Some type of passport or identification card, signed by someone in authority should be carried. (In Russian, Polish, Yugoslav).

7. Crews should be given a general or specific briefing on the location of Russian airfields.

8. Stay away from large cities.

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2nd Lt. John T. Polando, O-825271, 741st Bomb Sq., 455th Bomb Group
F/O Olin H. Moore, T-52834, 741st Bomb Sq., 455th Bomb Group
2nd Lt. Robert E. Basala, O-7060455, 741st Bomb Sq., 455th Bomb Group
Cpl. Carl C. Case, 20652880, 741st Bomb Sq., 455th Bomb Group
Cpl. John A. Heltzen, 20200705, 741st Bomb Sq., 455th Bomb Group

EXHIBIT "D"

Observations:

When the crew members went into town they were advised to carry their side arms for protection. (The desirability of so doing was emphasized by the fact that the pilot was set upon by 2 Russian soldiers and 2 guards who stole his watch and dumped him into atrench.) In casual conversation with the Russians the crew observed an intense nationalism among the Russians and a feeling that they were doing most of the fighting of Germans. Few of them seemed to be aware of the extent of American supplies that Russia is getting. It was also noted that the Russians would attempt to get them drunk for purposes of talking. Frequently the bout resulted in the Russians getting too much and talking themselves. During these drinking bouts the men gained their impression of the Russian thinking. They tended to be slightly suspicious of the motives of both American and British. They appeared to resent the fact that more had not been done sooner, to defeat Germany.

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AUTH: CG, 15AF
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23 December 1944
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HEADQUARTERS FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE
APO 520, U. S. Army

23 December 1944
USA/SKF/327

ESCAPE STATEMENT

1. 2nd Lt. John T. Polando, O-825271, 741st Sq., 455 Bomb Group.

Born - 5 November, 1921
Enlisted - 12 November, 1942
Home Address - 1930 Morris Ave
Lincoln Park, Mich.
Peacetime Profession - Inspector of Cameras

Interrogated - 23 Dec. 1944
M.I.A. - 14 Oct. 1944
Returned to Duty - 20 Dec. 1944
Missions - 6
Duty - Pilot

1. F/O Clin H. Moore, T-62834, 741st Sq., 455 Bomb Group.

Born - 15 February 1921
Enlisted - 6 September 1942
Home Address - Elkhart, Ind.
Peacetime Profession - Gear Cutter

Interrogated - 23 Dec. 1944
M.I.A. - 14 Oct. 1944
Returned to Duty - 20 Dec. 1944
Missions - 4
Duty - Flying Co-Pilot

1. 2nd Lt. Robert E. Hasala, O-706045S, 741st Sq., 455 Bomb Group.

Born - 4 July, 1923
Enlisted - 13 November 1942
Home Address - Matherville Illinois
Peacetime Profession - Stock Room Clerk

Interrogated - 23 Dec. 1944
M.I.A. - 14 Oct. 1944
Returned to Duty - 20 Dec. 1944
Missions - 4
Duty - Navigator

1. Cpl. Carl C. Case, 20652880, 741st Sq., 455 Bomb Group.

Born - 3 September 1921
Enlisted - 17 July 1944
Home Address - 824 8th St. No.
Fargo, No. Dak.

Interrogated - 23 December 1944
M.I.A. - 14 October 1944
Returned to Duty - 20 December 1944

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- 1 -

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Peacetime Profession - None — Missions - 4

Duty - Radio Operator

1. Cpl. John A. Heltzen, 20200705, 741st Sq., 455 Bomb Group

Born - 11 March, 1920 — Interrogated - 23 December 1944

Enlisted - 3 Feb. 1941 — M.I.A. - 14 October 1944

Home Address - 4411 Bruner Ave, New York, 66, N.Y. — Returned to Duty - 20 Dec. 1944

Missions - 5

Peacetime Profession - Truck Driver

Duty - Eng. - Gun.

Interrogation

It. John T. Polando and 4 members of crew. Five other members of this crew were returned to duty 30 October, and were processed through AAF headquarters, returning to Italy via ATC. It. Polando, the co-pilot, It. Olin H. Moore, navigator It. Robert E. Basala, engineer Corporal John A. Heltzer, and radio operator Corporal Carl C. Case, remained behind to fly the plane back when it had been repaired.

2. This crew, on a mission over Blechammer, Germany, on October 14, 1944, was flying A/C 42-78359, assigned to the 455 Bomb Group, 304th Wing. Over the target the A/C was hit by flak in the No. 4 engine; this engine lost all oil pressure, and they were unable to feather it. The formation was on the bomb run. The plane was losing altitude, and veering to the right, due to the drag of No. 4 engine. The pilot felt that he could not regain the formation without danger from the falling bombs of the formation, so he continued to veer to the right. When the plane was clear of the flak, the plane was too low, and the dragging engine made it impossible to regain altitude. The pilot then decided to head for the Russian lines, the nearest apparently safe area. Flying to the north of Krakow (50 05 N - 20 E) the pilot headed north and east, keeping above the clouds, for 15 minutes. Then southeast for approximately the same length of time. Then due east. Over german lines the plane was fired upon by Germans, and in turn by the Russians. The crew began looking for a place to land. The plane was losing altitude. At 2000 feet the pilot gave additional power to maintain this altitude. The bombardier sighted a landing field to the right so the pilot made an 180 degree turn and flew over the field with wheels down. The plane was not fired on, as the plane was at approximately 700 feet. Russians showed flare, and the pilot came in directly for a landing. The pilot had spotted the red star on the planes, and was fairly certain that he was in Russia.

3. Never in enemy hands.

4. When the plane landed, the plane was surrounded by Russian soldiers. On the ground the crew discovered that they had landed at Djekovich approximately (50 20 N - 21 30 E). This field was between 20 & 25 miles behind the Russian lines.

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(The pilot states that such time they were fired upon, he gave orders to the crew to be prepared for bail out). The crew remained at this base for approximately 2 weeks. They had asked that a message be sent to Moscow and to Italy. They were told that such a message had been sent to Moscow and to Washington. During the time that this crew was at the fighter base (LO) it was kept under constant guard. They were permitted to retain their side arms, and were told that the guard was for purposes of protecting them from the Poles. They were quartered in the Hq. building, all 10 men being quartered in 2 rooms, sleeping on straw mattresses. The local party representative took the pilot down to the field to look over the plane. The crew was not permitted to talk with the local population. At the end of two weeks, a Russian crew in a C-47 from Poltava (U.S. air base) landed and took the crew to Lwow (49 50 N 24 E) where they remained 1 day and 2 nights. Both nights were spent at Russian barracks at the airfield. They were then taken to Poltava, where they met Col. Hampton, American C.O. of the field. At the end of about 5 days, five members of the crew were sent back to Italy by ATC. The rest of the crew was detained to fly an U.S. A/C back to Italy. It was intended that the crew would fly a Mickey ship which had been landed 2 month before by Col. Clark of the 461st Bomb Group. Another plane from the same group was to be flown back by another pilot also from the 461st. When this plane was landed at Poltava, 3 tires were blown out, so this pilot (Lt. McShorter USA/3KF/183) flew Col. Clarks plane back to Italy. This crew was then told that it would await the repair of their own plane. This was about the 30th of October. It was estimated that the repair of this plane would be finished shortly. At the fighter field an engine was changed and the hydraulic repaired. Lt Rolando then picked the plane up, landed it at Lwow, gassed it up, and returned it to Poltava. The ship was returned to Poltava Nov. 21st. At Poltava the entire plane was overhauled, plugs changed etc. The first week in December the plane was regarded as being in shape for the flight back. It was test flown, and the crew awaited clearance from Moscow to take off. Some delay was occasioned by a wait for a Russian navigator and radio operator. All requirements were met by Dec. 13, and the plane took off from Poltava on that date. From Poltava they flew to Makachkla, staying over night, and took off the following morning for Teheran. Here the Russian navigator and radio operator were dropped. The crew then proceeded to Cairo thence Italy via Benghasi, landing at San Geovanni air base on Dec. 20.

ALVIN E. COONS,
Major, Air Corps,
Interrogator.

7 Incls:
5 Ltrs. 383.6
1 Exhibit "B"
1 Exhibit "C"

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SAFETY FILE

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2nd Lt. John T. Polarido, O-825271, 741st Bomb Sq., 455th Bomb Group
F/O Olin H. Moore, T-62834, 741st Bomb Sq., 455th Bomb Group
2nd Lt. Robert E. Hasala, O-7060455, 741st Bomb Sq., 455th Bomb Group
Cpl. Carl C. Case, 20552880, 741st Bomb Sq., 455th Bomb Group
Cpl. John A. Heltzen, 20200705, 741st Bomb Sq., 455th Bomb Group

EXHIBIT "C"

1. In approaching Russian lines, A/C should fly at low altitudes.

2. Crew members should carry guns. This impresses the Russians, and is a protection to the men.

3. Russians are suspicious of the maps in escape kits.

4. Escape kits should include insect powder, somthing for G.I.'s, tooth brush.

5. Emergency rations should be inspected and replaced at specific intervals. The emergency rations of this crew were spoiled and worthless.

6. Some type of passport or identification card, signed by someone in authority should be carried. (In Russian, Polish, Yugoslav).

7. Crews should be given a general or specific briefing on the location of Russian airfields.

8. Stay away from large cities.

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12 Sept 44 - 456 - Moritz

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:AUTH: CG, 15 AF :
:Init. [illegible] :
:11 October 1944 :
D-AAB-fs

HEADQUARTERS FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE
APO 520, U.S. Army

11 October 1944
REF: USA/SKP/113

ESCAPE STATEMENT

1. Moritz, Paul F., Sgt., 12089249, 742d Sq., 455th B. Gp.

Born - 1 June 1922 Enlisted - 30 June 1942

Home Address - 215 Manhasset Ave., Manhasset, New York

Peacetime Profession - Student.

MIA - 12 Sept 1944 RTD - 11 Oct 1944 Missions - 13

2. On 12 September 1944, source was flying as tail gunner on a B-24, piloted by Lt. Riddle. Target was Munich. On the bomb run, Nos. 3 and 4 engines had mechanical failure. No. 4 was feathered and No. 3 engine ran away and began to smoke. At that time the ship had only 1½ hours' gas remaining. The pilot decided to head for Switzerland. The ship was escorted by two P-47's to the border where two Swiss fighters picked it up and escorted it to Dubendorf. Both of these Swiss airplanes were Swiss built. Flak suits, ammo, bombs, camera, bombsight, etc., had been jettisoned by the B-24 after the engines had gone out, in order to lighten the ship. When the ship landed at Dubendorf, two chutes were spilled, one out of each waist window to act as brakes, as the main gears were inoperative.

3. Never in enemy hands.

4. That night was spent at Dubendorf and the following day, source was sent to internment camp at Adelboden (4630N-730E) and put up in hotel. Eight days later source escaped and went to Frutigen with a Sgt. David Whitman (of Eighth AF). The next day, they went by train to Lausanne (4632N-633E). Source had traded G.I. clothes for civilian clothes and, with help of a befriended native, they were able to get these R.R. tickets to Lausanne. They had also managed to procure a faked pass and used this pass once with no trouble. At Lausanne, a British Major was contacted and he helped them to contact an F.F.I. representative. They then proceeded to Vallorbe (4642N-628E), by private car and that night attempted to get across the border. The party had just reached the border but the Swiss border patrol caught source, F.F.I. man, Sgt. Whitman and an American Lieutenant who had joined the party. They were searched and questioned on the spot and then were taken to town and lodged in jail. The next morning they were taken to Lausanne prison and stayed there three days.

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On 26 September 1944 source, the unknown Lieutenant and Sgt. Whitman (of the Eighth AF), and two Swiss Guards entrained for the Swiss concentration camp at Wasl Wilermoos. At Aarburg (4718N-52E), source and Sgt. Whitman jumped off the moving train. They had befriended guards and were conniving an escape. The Lieutenant would not go with source. As they were standing in the train vestibule, just after it had left Aarburg station, both shoved the two guards into a compartment, locked the door, and leaped from the moving train, thus effecting their escape once more. Emergency cord, pulled by the guards, stopped the train immediately but sources eluded capture. Source and Sgt. Whitman headed for Berne (4658N-725E) thru woods, arriving the next morning. It had rained all night and both men were soaked. Source ate 23 apples and several bunches of grapes by morning.

They went to Berne station and bought tickets for Neuchatel (470N-650E) arriving in the afternoon. Called by phone a British Major who had helped them before Laussanne and he told them to come to him. They arrived there about 1800 hours same day. Two days later, 29 September, they went to Geneva by train, where they stayed under cover for two days. That night two F.F.I. men helped Sgt. Moritz and Sgt. Whitman thru barbed wire into France, all border guards being successfully evaded. The next day, two British Officers were contacted and they took them to chateau at Annecy. Stayed two days there and then went to Lyon where they were put on a plane for Naples.

A. A. BATES,
1st Lt., A.C.,
Interrogator.

2 Incls.
Incl 1 - Ltr 383.6
Incl 2 - Appendix B

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ESCAPE STATEMENT, Moritz, Paul F., Sgt., 12089249 (Ref: USA/SKP/113) Cont'd.

APPENDIX B

1.) Youleck Armand - Annemasse.
An F.F.I. lad about 21 yrs. old.

2.) Bill R. Baissonnos
British American Tobacco., Ltd.,
14 18 Ronte des Acacias, Geneva,

3.) Major Freldhouse
Golgate, 30
Near Lancaster.

4.) Louis Shiron
Geneva - Well Known.

Re: - 1.) Aided source in trip thru border from Geneva, and has done same to 8th A.F. and British before. Deserves much credit.

2.) Harbored source while in Geneva also others passing thru. Above is business address. Didn't want to give home address in Geneva.

3.) British Major who made contacts with F.F.I. men.

4.) Known to have aided escapers before.

NOTE: * - Rest of crew at Adelboden when source escaped.

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13 Sept 44 - 456 - Powell

File
304th Wing

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USA/SKP/316

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:AUTH: CG, 15 AF :
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:16 December 44 :

HEADQUARTERS FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE
APO 520 U. S. ARMY

DeWJF-ag

16 December 1944

ESCAPE STATEMENT

1. Powell, Wesley, 2nd Lt., O-710508, 740 B. Sqdn, 455th B. Gp.

Born - 12 January Enlisted - 9 November 1942

Home Address - Clarendon

Peacetime Profession - Engineer

MIA - 13 September 1944 RTD - 15 December 1944

Missions - 10 Duty - Pilot

1. Hill, William A., Sgt., 33803919, 740th B. Sqdn, 455th B. Gp.

Born - 27 September 1917 Enlisted - 17 October 1943

Home Address - 1419 Lardner St., Philadelphia, Pa.

Peacetime Profession - Steel work

MIA - 13 September 1944 RTD - 15 December 1944

Missions - 10 Duty - Tail gunner

1. Boehme, Richard H., 1st Lt., O-795547, 829th B. Sqdn, 485th B. Gp.

Born - 13 October 1921 Enlisted - 19 January 1942

Home Address - RFD #1, Copley, Ohio

Peacetime Profession - Millwright

MIA - 17 November 1944 RTD - 16 December 1944

Missions - 7 Duty - Flying as Instructor pilot.

2. Source 1, Lt. Powell; Source 2, Sgt. Hill; Source 3, Lt. Boehme.

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Powell, Wesley, 2nd Lt., O-710508, 740th B. Sqdn, 455th B. Gp.
Hill, William A., Sgt., 33803919, 740th B. Sqdn, 455th B. Gp.
Boehme, Richard H., 1st Lt., O-795347, 829th B. Sqdn, 485th B. Gp.

Mission was to Blechhammer O/R. Supercharger on No. 3 engine went out at I.P.; bombs were dropped on target and immediately afterwards flak knocked out No. 2 engine, nicking the fuel line. No. 3 propellor ran away but pilot got it under control, though this engine would pull only 20 inches. No. 4 engine began surging. Falling behind the formation and losing altitude at 1,000 feet per minute, pilot signaled for bail out near Sibenik (4343N - 1555E) at an altitude of 10,000 feet. The entire crew of nine men cleared plane which crashed on mountain at 4413N - 1608E).

3. Never in the hands of enemy.

4. Source 1, landed in tree at (4411N - 1610E) and suffered a wrenched knee. He tried, but could not remove chute which was snarled in the branches. When an unknown person began firing from a nearby ridge, source retreated down the slope to a cave where he hid the rest of the afternoon and night. Next morning source discovered himself pinned between the Partisan and German lines with a full-scale battle raging. He remained in the cave without food or water until the afternoon of 15 September, when he started westward through the hills. Source wandered through German-infested territory until late afternoon of the 19th September without food or water, when he stumbled across a small village, Vagana (4401N - 1610E). Here a Chetnik peasant picked him up, gave him water and food for the first time in 7 days. After one day in Vagana he was turned over to the C.O. of a Chetnik brigade who carried source to Otric (4415N - 1605E). Chetniks dressed him in civilian clothes and carried him to a small village (4412N - 1345E) where he spent the night. With source posing as a Chet, the C.O. bought gas from German station enroute. The following day source and companions walked to Knin (4402N - 1612E), that night moving on to Golobic (4405N - 1613E), four miles north of Knin. On arrival he met an English Spitfire pilot who had been held there for four months previously; both were placed in the local railway station where they remained for two and one half months. On 20 October, "the Duke", C.O. of Chetniks in the Golubic district, visited them, said he had sent a telegram to Maihailovich requesting permission to use the two as an Allied Mission with him. (This group of Chetniks had been cut off from the main body for some time). Source and companion saw no advantage in arguing, about this time source succeeded in contacting Partisans through deserting Chets. The propaganda chief for the Chets brought a letter to source 1 from source 2 in October, establishing the first contact between the two since going down. The propaganda minister also told Source 1 that "the Duke" was building a comfortable home in Markaivic, 20 miles south of Knin, to house all the Allied fliers. (However, Partisans captured

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Markaivic before this place was completed). On 8 November the Chetniks brought three other Americans to join them in the valley, along with all their refugees. About this date, the propaganda minister picked up a direct contact with Partisans and with him the fliers began plans for escape. On 17 November, Source 2 joined the party, and 20 November the Chetniks brought in another airman, bringing the party to seven.

Source 2, landed 2 miles north of Otric in a tree, injuring his leg on a sharp rock. Burying his chute and flying clothes, he started moving westwards, until he ran into machine gun fire, half an hour later. Firing stopped after an hours time and source began moving again, searching for a peasant's house, later finding a peasant's home he was fed and later turned over to the Chetniks at Otric. They interrogated him in a general way, bandaged the wound. Source remained here three days. When Germans moved a Headquarters into Otric the Chetniks moved source 2 to Gracac (4403N - 1551E) where he remained for two months. Once during his stay a Chetnik girl turned his name in to the Germans but with aid of other Chetniks he evaded them. About 1 November the Chetnik C.O. of Lika Province told him about an officer member of his crew and source 2 wrote a note which was delivered to source 1. Source 2 asked to join Source 1 but request was denied. About 13 November Chetnik Division Headquarters at Kosovo (4357N-1613E) ordered all Chetniks to valley of Zrmanja (4415N - 1604E) where Germans, Chets and Partisans were fighting and Source was sent to Ortic, then a German transportation center. His party missed the German convoy, so Source had to walk south with German soldiers and Chetniks to Knin. On 17 November the party reached Golubic to join Source 1.

2. Source 3 (Lt. Boehme). Mission was to Blechhammer south O/T. No. 1 turbo was fluctuating before the I.P. Bombs were dropped on target by P.F.F. Pilot does not know whether flak hit the plane but when formation was south of Lake Balaton, the engineer reported the plane almost out of gas. Source (3) cut the R.P.M. down, notified formation leader and fell behind, continuing to follow. When engines be an sputtering, bail-out signal was sounded, and all cleared plane successfully, source leaving last. His chute caught on plane projection momentarily, swinging his foot against bomb bay; making a delayed jump, he pulled the rip cord at 800 feet.

3. Never in the hands of the enemy.

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4. Source 3, landed on roucky ledge, cutting hands badly. His right foot was badly cut, possibly from contact with plane. Discovering no 1st Aid packet on chute, he hid the chute and placed foot in stream to help possible sprains. While sitting here Chetniks found him, took his heavy flying suit, pistol, watch and knife. They helped him to Strnica (4410N - 1615E) where he was forced to remain two night because of his injuries. Afraid that Germans would find him, the Chets moved him to the Golubic area where he joined Sources 1 and 2 on 19 November. 25 November, the Partisans captured Knin and the following day made an attack on Golubic which was repulsed. On the 28th Partisans held the high ground overlooking the railroad station where sources were hidden with other Americans. Sources left station under constant Partisan fire, retreating with Chetniks to the West of Knin. With the propaganda department and refugees, Sources moved further west to Padene area (4405N - 1608E) and by the 30th of November the group had moved up a railroad to Otric. There Sources told the propaganda minister they were going to the Partisans; but Chets asked them to wait three days for "The Duke" to arrive, at the end of which time if the "Duke" didn't show up the local leaders would get them to the coast anyhow. 6 December "The Duke" was in Otric, and he decided to turn all Americans over to the Partisans. The transaction was completed the night of 7 December, at 4415N - 1600E) Partisans carried them to Kutstanja (4358N - 1558E) on the 8th, where all were searched and their German and Chet passes taken away. Under strict guard, sources' party with seven German Officers and other assorted prisoners, journeyed to Luksic, near Split (4531N - 1628E). Here they stayed as "prisoners" for five days, evidently because their "captors" were verifying their identity by outside means. Partisans refused to notify the local British Mission. On the 13th, after undergoing a delousing process by the Partisans, they were turned over to the mission at Split, thence to Vis on the 14th, then Bari via plane 15 December 1944.

WILLIAM J. FOREHAND
1st Lt., Air Corps,
Interrogator.

7 Incls:
Incl 1 - 3, Ltrs 383.6
Incl 4 - 7, Appendix B, C, D, F.

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APPENDIX B

Golubic: Mili, Vukadic. Propaganda professor for Chetniks in Dalmatia. Sources believe he joined Partisans after they left. Exercised general supervision of Allied flyers.

Marko Rados, Strmica: formerly King Peter's forester in Dalmatia. Has extensive knowledge of Dalmatian mountains and valleys.

Sako Rados, Strnica: brother of Marko. These two saw that Sources received good treatment, cigarettes, etc.

An American family, The "Mekitches": Treated Sources very well. At last report had moved into Knin after Partisans had captured it.

Lozo Vuklic: Source 2 lived with him in Gracac for 2 months was well treated and protected from Germans.

Capt. Godgan Drogac: Chet Captain at Graca: helped Sources Evade Germans.

"Marac", Chet C.O. at Otric

"Djujic", Chet C.O. in Golubic valley area; a selfstyled duke; helped sources to Partisans.

British Mission at Split.

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APPENDIX C

1. Escape kits good, but short on maps. Suggest lice powder, atabrine, more minor 1st Aid equipment and band-aids, in place of gum. Scratches in Yugo easily infected.

2. Shoes - - All rubber heel desireable.

3. With Chets, AGO pass very handy; chets need pictures of evaders in civilian clothes so that German pass may be forged.

4. Night travel without Partisan or chet escort most dangerous. Both shoot first, investigate later.

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APPENDIX D

Dortrinka, Yugoslav girl who informed German of Source 2.
Lives in Cracac.

German Colonel, C.O. at Knin, captured by Partisans, claimed reason for defeat there was "no ammunition, and overwhelming number of Partisans". Claimed he had most of guns destroyed before Partisans came in. The German Chief of transport said there were 80 German trucks and four tanks at Knin. Told Source 1, Patisans claims of over 500 trucks captured was fantastic. Source 1 states, however, that Germans lost many more trucks and guns at Knin battle than admitted.

Sourcesstates German soldiers retreating from south rapidly then Knin when he was there, that many were benefit of shoes.

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APPENDIX F

Source 2 states one American crew member of B-24, from Butte, Mont., age 28, married, was in hospital at Gracac, his legs injured too badly to walk. His crew jumped near Otric on 23 October and two others beside himself landed in Chet hands; source 2 heard that these other two went to Partisans. According to Chets, two other American flyers in Chets hands were turned over to Germans in Knin because both were injured badly and Chets had no facilities. Identitie of flyers unknown. Sources have no knowledge of when plane went down, etc.

Sources 1 and 2 know nothing of rest of Crew:

Curtis O. Kell
Joe L. Parkin
Charles Oltawzevski
George Harvey
Michael Stohlman
Robert Belding
Lawrence Ritterhouse

Source 3 has no idea of what happened to rest of crew. Chets told him two were captured by Germans.

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7 Oct 44 - 456 - Corbe

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HEADQUARTERS FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE
APO 520 - U.S. Army

[redacted]
AUTH: CG, 15 AF
Init.
26 November 1944
D-JTM-lf

26 November 1944
Ref: USA/SKP/256

ESCAPE STATEMENT

1. Corbo, Nicholas, J., Sgt., 32856518, 741 Sq., 455 B. Gp.
Born - 3 Oct. 1924 Enlisted 12 April 1943
Home Address - Witherbee, N. Y.
Peacetime Profession - Student.
MIA - 7 Oct. 1944 RTD - 24 Nov. 1944 Missions - 7

1. Dupree, Arnold D., Sgt., 34625254, 741 Sq., 455 B. Gp.
Born - 1 May, 1924 Enlisted 6 March 1943
Home Address - 828 S. 4th Ave., Laurel, Miss.
Peacetime Profession - Student.
MIA - 7 Oct. 1944 RTD - 24 Nov. 1944 Missions - 7

1. Cunningham, Elliott L., Sgt., 37556877, 741 Sq., 455 B. Gp.
Born - 1 Feb. 1925 Enlisted - 26 March 1943
Home Address - 1539 Miller St., Worthington, Minnesota.
Peacetime Profession - Student.
MIA - 7 Oct. 1944 RTD - 24 Nov. 1944 Missions - 7

1. Wheeler, Robert F., Sgt., 19186701, 741 Sq., 455 B. Gp.
Born - 16 March, 1924 Enlisted - 12 Dec. 1942
Home Address - Rt. # 1, Box 366., Yucaipa, Calif.
Peacetime Profession - Student.
MIA - 7 Oct. 1944 RTD - 24 Nov. 1944 Missions - 7

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ESCAPE STATEMENT, Gorbo, Nicholas, J., Sgt., (Ref: USA/SKP/256) Cont'd.

1. Johnson, Arthur R., S/Sgt., 19203369, 741 Sq., 455 B. Gp.
   Born - 1 June, 1923 Enlisted - 15 Dec. 1942
   Home Address - R.F.D. #1, Sterling, Colorado.
   Peacetime Profession - Student.
   MIA - 7 Oct. 1944 RTD - 24 Nov. 1944 Missions - 26

1. Keith, Edward, 2nd Lt., O-773417, 741 Sq., 455 B. Gp.
   Born - 2 June, 1924 Enlisted - 14 Dec. 1942.
   Home Address - 2416 So. Hope St., Los Angeles, Calif.
   Peacetime Proffesion - Crane Operator.
   MIA - 7 Oct. 1944 RTD - 24 Nov. 1944 Missions - 7

1. Maas, Donald, 2nd Lt., O-713522, 741 Sq., 455 B.Gp.
   Born - 18 Nov. 1921 Enlisted - 24 Sept. 1942
   Home Address - 120 E. Dodson, El Monte, Calif.
   Peacetime Profession - Machinest.
   MIA - 7 Aug. 1944 RTD - 24 Nov. 1944 Missions - 22

1. Rudolph, Grover C. Jr., 2nd Lt., O-874023, 741 Sq., 455 B. Gp.
   Born - 21 July, 1921 Enlisted - 17 Sept. 1942.
   Home Address - 505 Maine Ave., Aldan, Pa.
   Peacetime Profession - Student.
   MIA - 7 Oct. 1944 RTD - 24 Nov. 1944 Missions - 7

1. Merritt, John I. Jr., 1st Lt., O-440442, 741 Sq., 455 B. Gp.
   Born - 15 April, 1920 Enlisted - 26 June, 1942
   Home Address - 1518 N. Halifax Ave., Daytona Beach, Fla.
   MIA - 7 Oct. 1944 RTD - 24 Nov. 1944 Missions - 8

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ESCAPE STATEMENT, Gerbo, Nicholas, J., Sgt., (Ref: USA/SKP/256) Cont'd.

2. Target Vienna, date of mission 7 Oct. 1944, source flew B-24 to target area without incident. Flak 1 AH. Bombed oil storage, dlames seen, result good. After rally flak hit #4 engine, was feathered; #2 supercharger out; losing altitude fast. Equipment jettisoned. Interphone out, oxygen system out, many flak hits. At 4000 ft. rate of descent slowed but plane could not clear moutains. Pilot ordered bailout.

3. Never in hands of the enemy.

4. Source saw ten chutes. All landed in area of Koprivanica, 46o 10'N - 16o 40'E. Small arms fire heard after they hit ground; probably accounts for tail gunners missing. Partisans picked up nine of crew and they assembled in local headquarters. The next day walked to Provanitz - not on map. They were treated well, the men gave their 45's to Partisans. Walked that night 8 Oct. 1944 to another Partisan headquarters, then with carts to Krizevci 46o 02'N -16o 31'E, passed thru Rayen 46o 00'n - 16o 30'E spent night at Vrbovec 45o 55'N - 16o 25'E. On 10 Oct. 1944 went to Dubrava, 45o 50'N - 16o 15'E, proceeded to Chasma 16o 35'E - 45o 46'N, treated well, had good food and lodging in Partisan Headquarters. Next night went to English Mission. Treated well in mission. On 22 Oct. 1944 left with Partisan 3rd Brigade to San Moritz; next morning went to town near German lines, trying for a few days to infiltrate across a German held Railroad between Belgrade and Zagreb. Stayed in barn houses. Source under fire from German pot shots. Stayed in small town 30 miles from Glina 45o 25'N - 16o 04'E where the Partisan Army left them. Two days later wagons were provided and took source to a British Mission . Stayed at British Mission where supplies were obtained. On 19 Nov. 1944 crew went with some other crews by truck to Zara, sleeping en route at farmhouses. In Zara stayed on a British Light Cruiser, came to Ancona in motor launch, arriving 24 Nov. 1944.

J. T. MCWHORTER
1st Lt., AC
Interrogator

12 Incls.
Incl 9 - Ltrs. 383.6
Incl 10 - Appendix B
Incl 11 - Appendix C
Incl 12 Appendix - F

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ESCAPE STATEMENT, Corbo, Nicholas, J., Sgt., (Ref: USA/SKP/256) Cont'd.

APPENDIX B

Joe Tompik - American Born, Partisan acted as interpreter.
Wants to get back to America but Germans had destroyed his papers.

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ESCAPE STATEMENT, Cerbo, Nicholas, J., Sgt., (Ref: USA/SKP#256) Cont'd.

APPENDIX C

Escape Kits not used.

Escape purses, maps, compass, good.

Suggestions:
Band Aids and Sulpha drugs in parachute first aid kits necessary.
In Droppings to Partisans to Partisans suggest underwear, socks, Medical supplies.
Inform crews of Ustachi treatment and politics prior to missions. Suggest delayed jumps in parachutes.
Crews should be briefed to keep their guns until just before leaving Yugo.
Suggest leggings be worn by air crews.

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ESCAPE STATEMENT, Corbo, Nicholas, J., Sgt., (Ref: USA/SKP/256) Cont'd

APPENDIX F

Carver, Harry G., Sgt., Last seen in parachute, reported by Partisans to be Ustachi captive.

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14 Oct 44 - 456 - Weinberger

42-78620

304

[redacted]

HEADQUARTERS FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE
APO 520 - U.S. Army

[redacted]
AGAR: CG, 15AF
Init. [redacted]
16 November 1944
D-CNK-fs

16 November 1944
Ref: USA/SKP/208

ESCAPE STATEMENT

1. Weinberger, Jerome, 2d Lt., O-776840, 740th Sq., 455th B Gp.

Born - 31 Dec 1916 Enlisted - 15 Dec 1942

Home Address - 1119 E. Genesee #162, Saginaw, Mich.

Peacetime Profession - Credit Mgr.

MIA - 14 Oct 1944 RTD - 21 Oct 1944 Missions - 6.

2. Mission was to bomb marshalling yard at Odertal. On the way to target, they developed a leak in hydraulic system and lost all their fuel. Had to burn a tremendous amount of gas in getting forward as the entire formation was in a terrific muddle due to overcast. Dropped bombs on bomb run, peeled off and started back alone, as formation had left them behind. On way back, gauges indicated insufficient gas to reach base, so pilot ordered every one to jump.

3. Never in hands of enemy.

4. Peasant picked up source and helped him make a crude splint for his leg. Source was carried by Partisans until they reached a place where they found a horse. Put source on the horse and brought him to a neighboring hut. Was fed and treated well. Stayed here overnight and the next day source rode to a small village where he met five other members of the crew.

They were then taken to the village of Petrovac (44°34'N - 16°22'E) by cart, where a local doctor immobolized his foot. Stayed here over night and the next morning, left for Sanski Most (44°46'N 16°41'E). While on the way, they were met by other Partisans who re-routed them over the mountains to another town where they stayed over night on the outskirts. The next morning, they were put on a train and were brought to Sanski Most where source was taken to a Yugoslav hospital. Stayed here until 21 October when he was evacuated by a Russian C-47, arriving in Bari the same night, 21 October 1944.

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Escape Statement, 16 November 1944,
Weinberger, Jerome, 2d Lt., O-776840, 740th Sq., 455th B Gp.

CHARLES N. KALCOUNOS,
1st Lt., Sig C.,
Interrogator.

4 Incls:
Incl 1 - 383.6, Ltr
Incl 2 - Appendix B
Incl 3 - Appendix C
Incl 4 - Appendix F

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Weinberger, Jerome, 2d Lt., O-776840, 740 Sq., 455th B Gp.

APPENDIX B

Dr. Martinac, Pavle - Doctor in Sanski Most.

Dr. Karl Arnsteni - Doctor in Sanski Most.

Dr. Leo Wilf - Also in Sanski Most.

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Weinberg, Jerome, 2d Lt, O-776840, 740 Sq., 455th B Gp.

APPENDIX C

Did not have an emergency first aid kit on harness. Only two on the ship and the morphine in one had been used.

No maps of Yugoslavia.

Gave gun to Partisans.

Had old type ration kit and did not find it practical.

SUGGESTS:

(1) German-American dictionary.
(2) Cigarette papers and tobacco.
(3) Morphine.

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Weinberg, Jerome, 2d Lt., O-776840, 740th Sq., 455th B Gp.

APPENDIX F

All crew members are back.

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PARACHUTE INFORMATION

Jerome Weinberger (Name)	2d Lt. (Rank)	740th Sq., 455 B Gp (Organization)

1. Any pertinent medical data relative to the parachute jump.

   (a) Altitude at which jump was made. 12,000 ft.

   (b) Difficulties, if any, encountered in escape from plane. None.

   (c) At what approximate speed was the plane travelling when the jump was made. 160 MPH.

   (d) At what approximate altitude was the rip-cord pulled? 11000 ft.

   (e) How was the landing made? Chute was out of control.

2. Injuries, if any, incurred as a result of the parachute jump. Broke left ankle.

3. If injured, what emergency treatment was necessary?

4. Was the parachute first aid kit of value? Did not have one. There were only two for the entire crew.

5. What treatment was given by rescuers? Put ankle in splint about 30 minutes after landing.

6. How long in enemy territory? 7 days.

(a) Date of jump: 14 Oct 1944. (b) Date of return: 21 Oct 44

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13 Sept 44 - 456 - Kell

[redacted]

HEADQUARTERS FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE
APO 520 - U.S. Army

[redacted]
AUTH: CG, 15AF
Init.
16 November 1944
D-JTMcW-fs

16 November 1944
USA/SKP/211

ESCAPE STATEMENT

1. Kell, Curtis O., 2d Lt., O-720522, 455th B Gp., 740th Sq

Born - 21 Aug 1922 Enlisted - 26 Sept 1942

Home Address - 977 Columbia Dr., Decatur, Ga.

Peacetime Profession - Salesman.

MIA - 13 Sept 1944 RTD - 21 Sept 1944 Missions - 13

2. Mission 13 September to Blechhammer oil refinery in B-24. Airplane had been grounded 45 days for gas leaks; was released 13 Sept for flight. Test flight data not known. Twenty minutes before target, gas leak from behind engine discovered; No. 4 supercharger (oil type) lost over I.P. No enemy action yet. Bombs were dropped successfully. Heavy accurate flak encountered.

At rally point, alt. 21,000 ft. all engines stopped, sputtered intermittently as airplane dropped to 10,000 ft. (no reason for condition known). Lost formation. Flew for one hour and a half under another group formation. No E/A encountered. Friendly fighter escort was unable to be contacted. No one injured in the airplane. Airplane equipment jettisoned, ball turret brought up. No. 1 and No. 3 started again, cutting out over mountains in Yugoslavia at 9,000 ft. Lost excessive altitude and could not clear mountains. Copilot was ordered to ring bell, pilot called on interphone immediate order to bail out. Parachute of source ribboned out and shroud lines crossed, finally popped to hold air just before landing. Bailed at 9000, pulled rip-cord at 8500. Landed in rocks and tumbled on head. Lacerated scalp, back injury, sacral spine injury.

3. Never in enemy hands.

4. Source walked to clearing and four hours later contacted two Partisans on a path. South east of GRACAC (44°18'N - 15°51'E) was location. The Partisans provided stolen German horse and took source to company headquarters and hospitals made from supply parachutes. Italian doctor shaved head and stitched wound with escape kit needle and thread. Morphine styrette was empty in kit.

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Kell, Curtis O., 2d Lt., O-720522, 455th B Gp., 740th Sq.
Escape Statement, 16 Nov 1944, contd.

Engineer was there. On 14th navigator and nose gunner, and radio operator arrived (latter with badly sprained ankle. Engineer had broken leg). On September 14th, the group went by horse -- navigator and radio operator walked -- to division headquarters. By oxcart to corps headquarters, southeast, and to Tiveco (44°12'N - 15°53'E) (not on 45000 map). Stayed overnight at house.

On 15 September went to mountains to evacuation place. Treated swell, good food, met ball turret gunner. On 17 September, top turret gunner arrived; had been rescued from a Chetnik village. Pilots chute reported found but he may have taken a direction into German hands. No word of tail gunner. Two C-47s arrived. Subject returned in American plane to Bari, good connections by 6x6 to hospital provided for all.

J. F. McWHORTER,
1st Lt., A.C.,
Interrogator.

5 Incls:
Incl 1 - Ltr, 383.6
Incl 2 - Appendix B
Incl 3 - Appendix C
Incl 4 - Appendix D
Incl 5 - Appendix F

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Kell, Curtis C., 2d Lt., O-720522, 455th B Gp., 740th Sq.

APPENDIX B

Capt. O'Mara at Corps Hq (American captain) helful, got guide, got horses, passed out cigarettes.

Velco at evacuation center; took care of men.

Dr. Engel, Yugo., at evacuation center.

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Kell, Curtis C., 2d Lt., O-720522, 455th B Gp., 740th Sq.

APPENDIX C

Escape aids are adequate. Did not like malted milk tablets, gave rest away. Suggests other and more food.

Gave Partisans maps and compasses and pistol -- very valuable as gifts.

Partisans use parachutes for tents.

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Kell, Curtis C., 2d Lt., O-720522, 455th B Gp., 740th Sq.

APPENDIX D

German ground raid on Sept 19th after supplies had been dropped. Raid beaten off.

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Kell, Curtis C., 2d Lt., O-720522, 455th B Gp., 740th Sq.

APPENDIX F

2d Lt.	Powell, Wesley	Pilot	Missing
2d Lt.	Kell, Curtis O.	Co-Pilot	
2d Lt.	Perkin, J. L.	Nav.	
Sgt	Olszewski, C.J.	Eng.	
Sgt	Harvey, G.F.	R.	
Sgt	Rittenhouse	G (N)	
Sgt	Stohlman, M.	G (TT)	
Sgt	Belding, R.L.	G (B)	
Sgt	Hill	G (T)	Missing

Seven men checked in with source at Bari - two missing.

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PARACHUTE INFORMATION

Kell, Curtis C. | 2nd Lt | 455th B Gp., 740th Sq.

1. Any pertinent medical data relative to the parachute jump.
Back Pack.

(a) Altitude at which jump was made.
8,000 indicated.

(b) Difficulties, if any, encountered in escape from plane.
None. Left front bomb-bay.

(c) At what approximate speed was the plane traveling when jump was made?
135. Throttle back, full flaps, no auto.pilot.

(d) At what approximate altitude was the rip-cord pulled?
7500.

(e) How was the landing made?
Chute ribboned instead of opening due to crossing shroud lines. It finally popped and he hit in rocks, butt first, then tumbled onto head.

2. Injuries, if any, incurred as a result of parachute jump.
Lacerated scalp. Back injury, sacral spine.

3. If injured, what emergency treatment was necessary?
Bandage, sulpha powder.

4. Was the parachute first-aid kit of value?
Yes - Morphine syrette was empty.

5. What treatment was given by rescuers?
Italian doctor shaved around head wound and sewed it up with escape kit needle and thread.

6. How long in enemy territory?

(a) Date of jump
13 Sept 1944

(b) Date of return
21 Sept 1944

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9 June 1944 - 455 - Paurice

41-29271

[redacted]

:AUTH: CG, 15AF :
:Init. :
:5 November 1944 :
D-JGKK-fs

5 November 1944
Ref: USA/SKP/168

ESCAPE STATEMENT

1. Paurice, James M., 2d Lt., O-891594, 743d Sq., 455th B Gp
Born - 22 Oct 1922. Enlisted - 18 Sept 1942.
Home Address - 35-20 94th St., Jackson Hts., L.I., N.Y.
Peacetime Profession - Antique Silver Dealer.
MIA - 9 June 1944 RTD - 24 Oct 1944 Missions - 11

1. Mattson, Arthur W., Sgt., 19050515, 743d Sq., 455th B Gp
Born - 4 April 1920. Enlisted-13 Nov 1940.
Home Address - 1157 Yuill St., Medicine Hat, Alberta Canada.
Peacetime Profession - Grocery Clerk.
MIA - 9 June 1944 RTD - 24 Oct 1944 Missions - 9

2. On 9 June 1944, source was flying in a B-24 piloted by 2d Lt. Almon Catlin, on a mission to Munich. Before the target was reached, Nos. 2 and 3 engines would not pull. The ship, however, remained in formation, dropped bombs on the target and sustained flak hits, knocking out No. 4 engine, which would not feather.

The ship dropped 8000 ft. almost at once. No. 1 engine was then pushed to 60 ins., to keep the ship flying, and ran like this for 1½ hours. The pilot crossed over Switzerland, heading for Corsica. Over Switzerland they were fired on and sustained flak holes in the fuselage and when crossing Lake Guardia were fired on again. Height was reduced to avoid Radar interception, No. 1 engine was eased off but cut out. All crew had been standing by and when the order was given to bail (600 ft), all but the pilot got out. Area between Guastalla and Reggio, N. Italy. The pilot went down with the ship which crashed.

3. No prison camps.

4. Lt. Paurice was the ninth man out of the ship. He landed near Guastalla, injuring his ankle and back, and went at once to assist his tail gunner, Sgt. Robert Skinner, who had broken his leg.

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After giving him morphine from his chute kit, he carried him to a nearby tool shed, where Italian peasants helped him to splint his leg. Source was joined by Sgt. Linneweh,who went off to look for another crew member, with whom to make an escape into the hills.

Source and Skinner remained hidden while Alpine troops searched the countryside. On 10 June, Italians contacted the local hospital who sent an ambulance and took Skinner away. Source believe this man would have gone to hospital under Fascist control, in Reggio or Guastalla, but as his leg was painful and developing boils, there was nothing else he could do. Source watched, from a hiding place, the ambulance arrive, first aid men splint up Skinner's leg and take him away.

Sgt. Mattson landed in the same area as Lt. Paurice, also spraining his ankle and knee. After hiding his clothes and chute (by burying them), he contacted an Italian civilian, who spoke some English, left him hiding in some wheat and returned with Sgt. Linneweh. Both remained in hiding until dusk, when the Italian returned with food and civilian clothing. Both spent the night in the open and on 10 June were taken to join Lt. Paurice.

On morning 11 June, the three Americans cycled to area S. Polo, where they spent two nights with a Fascist Captain and were joined on 13 June by Sgt. Mazoros. The four then travelled on foot to a farmhouse nearby, where they remained for sixteen days.

On 29/30 June, source and his companions joined a party of Russians and Italians who took them to join a Partisan H.Q. in the Area of M. Cusna (44°18'N-10°25'E). Here source (Lt. Paurice) contacted a British Major, with whom he worked in this area. The others of his party remained at the H.Q. On 30 July 1944, about seven thousand Germans entered Villa Minozza and Ligonchio to "clean up" all Partisans in the area. All Partisans disbanded, threw away arms and uniforms and scattered into the hills. During this round-up of Partisans, source and his three companions went into the hills and lived on food they took with them, later killing some sheep when rations were exhausted.

About two weeks later, the Americans returned to the Area of Mt. Cusna, where all houses were evacuated. Civilians drifted back gradually. Source (Lt. Paurice) made arrangements, in a nearby village, for food, and lived in a barn with Sgt. Mattson. At this time Sgt. Mazaros and Linneweh left to head for Allied lines (both repatriated) 15 August 1944.

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Escape Statement, 5 Nov 1944, contd.
Paurice, James M , 2d Lt., O-891594, 743d Sq., 455th B Gp.
Mattson, Arthur W., Sgt., 19050515, 743d Sq., 455th B Gp.

Source and Mattson remained in Mt. Cusna area and were constantly in touch with the British Major. On 21 October 1944, the Major sent word that an Italian guide would lead them to Allied lines.

On 22 October 1944, both set off in a party of evaders and escapees with two guides. The party included:

Pte. A. Venturi (Glasgow)
Pte. Graham Smallman (Bristol)
? Hugh Douglas (Pretoria, S.A.)
Denis N. Oakley (Cape Town, S.A.)
S/Sgt Geo. D. Merrill (Twelfth Air Force, U.S.A.)
S/Sgt Leo J. Martin " " " "
2d Lt. John Denman " " " "
2d Lt. Wm. Wyley " " " "
F/O Locke (Canadian Pilot)

The parties changed round from time to time, but all reached Allied lines. Route travelled was via Frassinoro, Boccassvolo (where a Partisan leader joined them), Santona (23 Oct.), east of Mt. Cimone, along mule trails in hills west of Fanano, Mt. Lancio to Cutigliano, where they contacted British Infantry Troops (Capt. Bingham is the only name known) on evening 24 Oct 1944.

J.G.K. KENNEDY,
Lt., I.S.9.,
Interrogator.

5 Incls:
Incl 1 - Ltr, 383.6
Incl 2 - Appendix B
Incl 3 - Appendix C
Incl 4 - Appendix d
Incl 5 - Appendix F

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Paurice, James M., 2d Lt., O-891594, 743d Sq., 455th B Gp
Mattson, Arthur W., Sgt., 19050515, 743d Sq., 455th B Gp

APPENDIX B

9-14 June 1944	Jules Massoni, Italian Civilian Student, Gusatella, Reggio Amena.	Food and accomodations for source and two companions. Hid them during German and Fascist search and ran great risks in guiding them. Provided them with cycles.
16 Days June-July, 1944	Mario Fontenezzi (Farmer) S. Polo, Reggio Amelia.	Food and accommodations for four Americans.
3½ days July 1944	A Fascist Captain Mori (?) (name spells Brown in English) Ares S. Polo, Reggio Amelia.	Food for four Americans.
8 - 31 July 1944	Italia -- (An Italian woman) Monteosaro, Villa Minnoza, Reggio Amelia.	Food and accommodations for source and companions (four in all)
Mid July 22 Oct 1944	Domenico Zamboni (Shepherd) and relatives, Monteosaro, Villa Minnoza, Reggio Amelia.	Food and accommodations both sources.
July - Oct 1944	Major Johnson (I.S.O), Reggio Amelia.	Maintained contact with sources from early July until they left. Provided guide through lines.

Doing very good work. Well known and respected by all Italians. Is the only reason the Partisans hold together.

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Paurice, James M., 2d Lt., O-891594, 743d Sq., 455th B Gp
Mattson, Arthur W., Sgt., 19050515, 743d Sq., 455th B Gp.

APPENDIX C

Escape kits were used and very good. Maps excellent. Water purifying tablets take twenty minutes to dissolve. Food tablets too unpleasant to eat.

Morphine "surettes" in chute case were squashet and only one in three is any use.

In N. Italy it is dangerous to carry side arms in the flat country. Germans shoot anyone carrying them.

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Paurice, James M., 2d Lt., O-891594, 743d Sq., 455th B Gp.
Mattson, Arthur W., Sgt., 19050515, 743d Sq., 455th B Gp.

APPENDIX F

S/Sgt William R. Lycan (source's crew)

Killed 9 June 1944, Guastalla area.
His chute only partially opened and he was very badly injured. A Fascist Captain (working under Fascist Major Betoni) came up, shot him in the head and stole all clothing and valuables.
(Information from four Italian civilians)

2d Lt. Almon Catlin (pilot)

Crashed with plane and was reported by Italian civilians to have been killed (9 June 1944)

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Paurice, James M., 2d Lt., O-891594, 743d Sq., 455th B Gp.
Mattson, Arthur W., Sgt., 19050515, 743d Sq., 455th B Gp.

APPENDIX D (See Appendix F also)

On 9 June 1944, a Fascist Captain shot S/Sgt William B. Lycan (743 Sqdn., 455th Gp) in the head. (Guastalla Area, Italy). Lycan had bailed out and his chute only partially opened. He was badly injured, when the Fascist came up to him, shot him and stole his clothes and all valuables.

Fascist Captain works under Major Betoni (Fascist) in Guastalla, N. Italy.

Information from four Italian sources to 2d Lt. J. M. Paurice and Sgt. A. W. Mattson.

* * * * *

In October 1944, Germans surrounded a house in area of Cuara in which there was one British soldier (working with I.S.S) and ten Partisans. The Germans set fire to the house and as the Partisans ran out they shot seven of them and hanged three. The British soldier remained in the house, getting slightly hurt and escaped when the Germans had gone, leaving him for dead. (Information from British soldier himself).

An Italian school teacher was hung and his body cut open by Germans in Minnozza Village (end July-1944) because Germans said he looked British.

General ill treatment and murder of Partisans and civilians by Germans and Fascists.

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14 Oct 44 - 455 - Bach

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:AUTH: CG, 15 AF
:Initials
:4 November 1944:
D-GNN-fs
Ref: USA/SRD/165

HEADQUARTERS FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE
APO 520 - U.S. Army

4 November 1944

ESCAPE STATEMENT

1. Bach, John E., 2d Lt., O-2056316, 455th B Gp., 741st Sq.
Born - 3 July 1924 Enlisted - 10 Aug 1942
Home Address - Campbell Hall, N.Y.
Peacetime Occupation - Student
MIA - 14 Oct 1944 RTD - 31 Oct 1944 Missions - 5

1. Jonker, John, Cpl., 32[illegible]0468, 455th B Gp., 741st Sq.
Born - 23 May 1921 Enlisted 9 July 1942
Home Address - 117 Halstead Ave., Wallington, N. J.
Peacetime Occupation - Draftsman
MIA - 14 Oct 1944 RTD - 31 Oct 1944 Missions - 5

1. Oakes, Alfred Le Roy, Cpl., 33804606, 455th B Gp., 741st Sq.
Born - 13 March 1919 Enlisted 8 November 1943
Home Address - 311 Fifth Avenue, Huntington, W. Va.
Peacetime Profession - Retail Merchandiser
MIA - 14 Oct 1944 RTD - 31 Oct 1944 Missions - 7

1. KRUPSKI, Arthur S., Cpl., 42021640, 455th B Gp., 741st Sq.
Born - 8 June 1925 Enlisted 20 August 1943
Home Address - 236 Townsend St., Buffalo, N.Y.
Peacetime Profession - Student
MIA - 14 Oct 1944 RTD - 31 Oct 1944 Missions - 5

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(Escape Statement, Bach, John E., 2d Lt., O-2056316, 455th B Gp., 741st Sq., and 4 crew members, cont'd).

1. Maisano, Jerome J., Cpl., 36987825, 455th Bomb Gp., 741st Sq.

Born - 18 Mar 1925 Enlisted - 1 Nov 1943

Home Address - 15813 Lappin, Detroit (5) Michigan

Peacetime Profession - Butcher

MIA - 14 October 1944 RTD - 31 October 1944 Missions -5

2. Mission was to bomb oil refineries in Odertal. Due to an overcast, the ship lost its group and attached itself to the 54th Group. The mission of the 54th Group was to bomb oil refineries at Blechhammer.

While over the target, the No. 4 engine was hit by flak. Because of the overcast, the pilot did not feel that they could make their base so they headed due east. Tried to find a field in Russia and finally landed in Poland, about 40 miles north of Tarnow. No one was hurt in the landing.

3. Never in the hands of the enemy.

4. Cpl Krupski and the pilot went to the C.O. at the field where they gave the C.O. full particulars. The entire crew was fed and all received real good treatment. They had no trouble in identifying themselves as Cpl. Krupski knew enough Polish to carry on a conversation using a Polish civilian who spoke Russian.

Stayed here for 4 days and were then taken to another fighter strip in a C-47 piloted by a Russian. This place was 20 kms south of Jaroslav. Stayed here overnight and then were flown to Lwow. Stayed there for 2 days and were then flown to Poltava. Stayed here 8 days and were flown from there to Teheran, where they remained overnight. An A.T.C. plane picked them up in Teheran and flew them to Cairo and thence to Bari.

Charles N. Kalcoulos,
1st Lt., Sig. Corps,
Interrogator.

3 Incls:
Incl 1 - Ltr, 383.6
Incl 2 - Appendix C
Incl 3 - Appendix F

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[redacted]

Bach, John E., 2d Lt., O-2506316, 455th B Gp., 741st Sq.
Jonker, John, Cpl., 32390468, 455th B Gp., 471st Sq.
Oakes, Alfred Le Roy, Cpl., 33804606, 455th B Gp., 741st Sq.
Krupski, Arthur S., Cpl., 42021640, 455th B Gp., 741st Sq.
Maisano, Jerome J., Cpl., 36887825, 455th Bomb Gp., 741st Sq.

APPENDIX C

The K rations aboard the ship were found to be spoiled. They did not have maps of Russia. Suggest that maps be done in English and in language of country. Could use more cigarettes.

Sources claim that their supply sergeant took over their clothing 3 days after they were reported missing. Feel that more time should be allowed for return before this be done.

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Bach, John E., 2d Lt., O-2506316, 455th B Gp., 74lst Sq.
Jonker, John, Cpl., 32390468, 455th B Gp., 47lst Sq.
Oakes, Alfred Le Roy, Cpl., 33804606, 455th B Gp., 74lst Sq.
Krupski, Arthur S., Cpl., 42021640, 455th B Gp., 74lst Sq.
Maisano, Jerome J., Cpl., 36887825, 455th Bomb Gp., 74lst St.

APPENDIX F

Left the other five members of crew at Poltava. They were ordered by an American Colonel to fly a B-24 back here. Ran into another crew in Lwow. They belonged to 465th Bomb Group, 780th Squadron. 4 members of this crew came with source and others stayed behind to bring back their own plane which is being repaired. When sources left Poltava, American mechanics were send to the fighter strip to try and repair their plane.

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14 Oct 44 - 455 - Lachinsky

42-78620

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HEADQUARTERS FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE
APO 520 - U.S. Army

304

: AUTH: CO. 15 AF:
: Init. [redacted] :
: 2 November 1944:
D-AAB-lf

2 November 1944
Ref: USA/SHP/169

ESCAPE STATEMENT

1. Lachinsky, Francis J., Sgt., 42048283, 740 Sq., 455 Gp.
Born - 23 Sept. 1924 Enlisted - 10 Nov. 1943
Home Address - 370 S. 2nd St., Brooklyn, N. Y.
Peacetime Profession - Asst. Elec.
MIA - 14 Oct. 1944 RTD - 2 Nov. 1944 Mission - 7

1. Taylor, William H., S/Sgt., 14161828, 740 Sq., 455 Gp.
Born - 1924 Enlisted - 1942.
Home Address - Ducktown, Tenn.
Peacetime Profession - Mechanic.
Mia - 14 Oct. 1944 RTD - 2 Nov. 1944 Missions - 7

1. King, Craig F., S/Sgt., 33413360, 740 Sq., 455 Gp.
Born - 9 June, 1923 Enlisted - 22 Dec. 1942
Home Address - 1908 Constitution Bvld.
Peacetime Profession - Steel Mill Riveter.
MIA - 14 Oct. 1944 RTD - 2 Nov. 1944 Missions - 7

1. Iverson, Stanley, H., 2nd Lt., O-709148, 740 Sq., 455 Gp.
Born - 15 July, 1923 Enlisted - 21 Sept. 1942
Home Address - 526 -6th St. S.W., Waseca, Minnesota.
Peacetime Profession - Carpenter
MIA - 14 Oct. 1944 RTD - 2 Nov. 1944 Missions - 8

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ESCAPE STATEMENT, Lashinsky, Francis J., Sgt., (Ref: USA/ETO/163) Cont'd.

1. Brezelton, Charles M. Jr., 2nd Lt., O-2058404, 740 Sq., 455 B. Gp.

Born - 18 Sept. 1943 Enlisted - 12 Dec. 1942

Home Address - 2900 Gorman Ave., Waco, Texas.

Peacetime Profession - Draftsman.

MIA - 14 Oct. 1944 RTD - 2 Nov. 1944 Missions - 7

1. Colton, Arthur S., S/Sgt., 36641501, 740 Sq., 455 Gp.

Born - 5 Sept. 1923 Enlisted - 13 Feb. 1943

Home Address - 1708 N. Lorel Ave., Chicago, Ill.

Peacetime Profession - Photographer.

MIA - 14 Oct. 1944 RTD - 2 Nov. 1944 Missions - 9

2. Mission was to Odertal on 14 Oct. 1944 on ship piloted by Lt. Von Schriltz.

3. Never in the hands of the enemy.

4. About halfway to the target the engineer reported a hydraulic leak in one of the accumulators. The ship continued on to the target. They were flying #10 position and pulled nearly full power to hold position. No. 1 engine was hot and about 10 minutes from I. P. #3 engine began to throw oil and #2 supercharger lost power. Eased off some power but lost ground. The formation moved into column of boxes but this ship because of loss of power gradually went from A Box to B - C and D, and were flying the tail end position in D-Box at the start of the bomb run. Dropped bombs 1½ minutes later after peeling out of formation altogether, the bomb doors being manually opened and closed. At this time a heading for home was taken. This course took them 30 miles E. Vienna, down the Danube to avoid briefed flak areas passing near Gyor, then another home heading of 210o was picked up taking them near Lake Balton and Csurgo. It was believed there was enough gas to make the coast, this fact having been determined about 30 min. after leaving the target area. All equipment was jettisoned, but it was found there wasn't enough gas left to reach their base, but still were attempting to reach Vis. After reaching N.E. Yugo another gas check was made at which time only 30 min. of fuel was left and it was still 162 nautical miles to the Island of Vis.

The decision to bail out was then made. About 5 minutes beyond Sava River, all men in the waist bailed out followed by those in the nose and lastly the Pilot and Co-pilot.

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ESCAPE STATEMENT, Lashinsky, Francis J., Sgt., (Ref: USA/SEF/163) Cont'd.

Lt. Iverson, Lt. Brazelton, S/Sgt. Taylor landed close together and were able to join within 1½ hr. All were picked up by Partisans (44o 35'N 16o 15'E). That night they stayed in a nearby farm house and the following afternoon went to Petrovac where Sgt. Hipps the T.G. was found with a broken rib. The next day the four crew members, with Partisan guidance went to Sanski Most by train, and from there to they went to Senica.

Sgt's Colton, Lashinsky, King all joined soon after landing near Krupa (44o 53'N - 16o 12'E) which was German occupied (also Sgt. Beauchemin, who returned and was interrogated on 22 Oct. 1944) and after two days traveling by cart had arrived at Sanski Most where they met the three other crew members and went with them to Senica. The cart trip was made possible thru Partisan help.

A total of 51 men were then at Senica awaiting evacuation, 17 of whom including Lt. Von Schriltz because of his injury, were flown out the following night, having been there longer than any of the others. On the 1st the remain 34 were evacuated to Bari.

A. A. BATES
1st Lt., AC
Interrogator

8 Incls
Incl 6 - Ltrs. 383.6 (6)
Incl 7 - Appendix C
Incl 8 - Appendix E

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ESCAPE STATEMENT, Lashinsky, Francis J., Sgt., (Ref: USA/SEP/160) Cont'd.

APPENDIX C

On 22 Aug. 1944 P-38 #172675 went down between Primasjas and Banja Luka in a village of Pribinick. Crash landed, cleared ship, - a Chetnik hopped him before he stopped rolling, cut his throat and cut his legs off. Some Partisans passed by in a car and shot Chetnik and took his knife. Partisans burned ship that night. No details on burial.

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ESCAPE STATEMENT, Lashinsky, Francis J., Sgt., (Ref: USA/SKP/163) Cont'd

APPENDIX E

No Maps of Yugo or of any place in vicinity.

Food no good.

No First aid equipment - Main Bitch.

More $1.00 bills.

Add bug powder and dysentery tablets.

NOTE: This was an old type purse.

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13 Sept 44 - 455 - Newberg

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:AUTH: CG, 15AF :
:Init._____ :
:8 October 1944 :
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HEADQUARTERS FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE
APO 520 U. S. Army

8 October 1944

ESCAPE STATEMENT

1. Newberg, Robert Eugene, 2d Lt., O-713841, 743d Sq., 455th B Gp.
Born - 1 Nov 1923 Enlisted - 2 Nov 1942
Home Address - 809 Virginia Ave., Des Moines, Iowa
Pescetime Profession - Student
MIA - 13 Sept 1944 RTD - 8 Oct 1944 Missions - 15

1. Fuchs, David, 2d Lt., O-723098, 743d Sq., 455th B Gp.
Born - 8 June 1924 Enlisted 27 Nov 1942
Home Address - 160 E. 3d St., N.Y.C.
Pescetime Profession - Student
MIA - 13 Sept 1944 RTD - 8 Oct 1944 Missions - 17

1. Batteen, Edward John (Jr), 2d Lt., O-768426, 743d Sq., 455th B Gp.
Born - 8 Aug 1923 Enlisted - 30 Oct 1942
Home Address - Route #1, Van Dyne, Wisconsin
Pescetime Profession - Farmer
MIA - 13 Sept 1944 RTD - 8 Oct 1944 Missions - 18

1. Campbell, John Palmer, 2d Lt., O-772824, 743d Sq., 455th B Gp.
Born - 1 Sept 1923 Enlisted-8 Dec 1943
Home Address - 10 E. 85th St., New York, N.Y.
Pescetime Profession - Student
MIA - 13 Sept 1944 RTD - 8 Oct 1944 Missions - 17

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(Escape Statement, 8 Oct 1944, Lt. Newberg, O-[redacted]13541, 743d Sq., 455th B Gp, and crew, contd.)

1. Bivens, Frank E., Sgt., 35749877, 743d Sq., 455th B Gp.
Born - 2 March 1918 Enlisted - 2 March 1943
Home Address - Rupert, West Virginia
Peacetime Profession - Farmer and Clerk
MIA - 13 Sept 1944 RTD - 8 Oct 1944 Missions - 12

1. Pittman, James Foster (Jr), 34804315, Sgt., 743d Sq., 455th B Gp.
Born - 16 Dec 1915 Enlisted - 27 April 1943
Home Address - 1 Lexington Road, Montgomery, Alabama
Peacetime Profession - Grocery Clerk
MIA - 13 Sept 1944 RTD - 8 Oct 1944 Missions - 17

1. Sheheen, Jacob A., Sgt., 18138483, 743d Sq., 455th B Gp.
Born - 25 Feb 1921 Enlisted - 19 June 1942
Home Address - 320 Lawrence St., Lake Charles La.
Peacetime Profession - Grocery Clerk
MIA - 13 Sept 1944 RTD - 13 Sept 1944

1. Madsen, Clarence Le Roy (Jr), Sgt., 39015655, 743d Sq., 455 B Gp
Born - 16 Feb 1925 Enlisted - 4 June 1943
Home Address - 3163 Porter Avenue, Ogden, Utah
Peacetime Profession - Student
MIA - 13 Sept 1944 RTD - 8 Oct 1944 Missions - 17

2. On 13 September in a B-24 on a mission to Odertal, one engine became inoperative. The aircraft continued on to the target, salvoing the bombs and turned for home. On the route back, they experienced further mechanical difficulties. A run away and low oil pressure caused

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(Escape Statement, 8 Oct 1944, Lt. Newberg, O-713841, 743d Sq., 458th B Gp, and crew, contd.)

the aircraft to lose altitude. They continued to fly until the aircraft was no longer airworthy, when the order was given for bail-out and the entire crew bailed out successfully.

3. No prison camps.

4. The entire crew landed in an area of about five (5) miles and were immediately aided by civilians who gave them food and shelter. The pilot hid, with a helper, for a day and a half and then the other seven crew members were brought to him. From here they were guided to a Partisan Camp in the hills where they remained for two (2) days, then by truck to a nearby village. They left here and started walking with members of the Partisan band to the evacuation point. After walking five (5) days, they reached the vicinity of the evacuation A/D and hid out here until evacuation.

T. A. PELL,
1st Lt., A.C.,
Interrogator.

4 Incls:
Incl 1 - Ltr, 383.6
Incl 2 - Appendix B
Incl 3 - Appendix C
Incl 4 - Appendix D

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Newberg, Robert Eugene, 2d Lt., O-713541, 756th Sq, 459th B Gp
Fuchs, David, 2d Lt., O-723098, " "
Pateen, Edward John, 0768426, " "
Campbell, John Palmer, 2d Lt., O-772824, " "
Bivens, Frank E., Sgt., 35749877, " "
Pittman, James Foste r (Jr), Sgt., 34804315 " "
Shaheen, Jacob, Sgt., 18138483, " "
Madsen, Clarence Le Roy (Jr), 39915655, " "

APPENDIX B

Pavel Valach, Pastor at Tura Luka. Gave help willingly; hid the crew and aided them to contact the Partisans.

Ludvic Budin, at Banskabystrica. A high ranking official in the CPI.

Martin Trencin. This man started the crew on their way to safety.

****

Treatment as a whole was excellent. Russian Partisans attempted to get the airmen to join their bands and refused aid if the offer was not accepted. Help from Protestants can be expected more so than from Catholics in this area.

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Newberg, Robert Eugene, 2d Lt., O-713541, 756th Sq, 459th B Gp
Fuchs, David, 2d Lt., O-723098, " "
Bateen, Edward John, O-768426, " "
Campbell, John Palmer, 2d Lt., O-772824, " "
Bivens, Frank E., Sgt., 35749877, " "
Pittman, James Foster (Jr), Sgt., 34804315 " "
Shaheen, Jacob, Sgt., 18138483, " "
Madsen, Clarence Le Roy (Jr), 35918655, " "

APPENDIX C

This entire crew wore G.I. shoes. They found their side arms of no use and claimed a .45 calibre pistol too large. Escape maps were excellent and the money of great value. Suggested more one dollar ($1.00) bills.

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Newberg, Robert Eugene, 2d Lt., O-713541, 756th Sq, 459th B Gp
Fuchs, David, 2d Lt., O-723098 " "
Bateen, Edward John, O-768426, " "
Campbell, John Palmer, 2d Lt., O-772824, " "
Bivens, Frank E., Sgt., 35749877, " "
Pittman, James Foster (Jr), Sgt., 34804315 " "
Shaheen, Jacob, Sgt., 18138483, " "
Madsen, Clarence Le Roy (Jr), 39915655, " "

APPENDIX D

At Bratislava (hearsay), the bombing caused extensive damage. The oil storage is supposed to be under the river bed and, therefore, was not destroyed. A Belgian deserter said that in Munich, the bombings had caused severe damage.

A JU-52 would fly overhead at 1100 hours, heading east to west. This was observed at Brezova. A FW-190 and JU-87 bombed Banskabystrica and also the airdrome, but the attempt was unsuccessful.

The radio operator was believed killed due to parachute failure.

The natives claim that, in Hungary, treatment of airmen is extremely bad.

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8 Sept 44 - 455 - Crawford

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:AUTH: CG, 15AF:
:Init 38:
:18 Sept. 1944:

HEADQUARTERS FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE
APO 520, U. S. Army

D-AEC-em
Ref. No. USA/SKP/56

18 September 1944

ESCAPE STATEMENT

1. Crawford, William B., 2nd Lt., 740th Bomb Sq., 455th Bomb Gp.

Born - 4 March 1924 — Interrogated - 18 September 1944

Enlisted - 13 April 1943 — M.I.A. - 8 September 1944

Home Address - 1724 26th St., Lubbock, Texas — RTD - 17 September 1944

Peacetime Profession - Student — Missions - 14

Duty - Co-pilot

1. Porter, Leland, Sgt. 35875667, 740th Bomb Sq., 455th Bomb Gp.

Born - 14 June 1919 — Interrogated - 18 September 1944

Enlisted - 30 September 1943 — M.I.A. - 8 September 1944

Home Address - 1445 S. Limestone St., Lexington, Ky. — RTD - 17 September 1944

Missions - 19

Peacetime Profession - Cabinet maker

Duty - Tail Gunner

1. Ford, Howard O., Sgt., 35273214, 740th Sq. 455th Group.

Born - 8 June 1917 — Interrogated - 18 September

Enlisted - 27 February 1941 — M.I.A. - 8 September 1944

Home Address - 27 West State St., Springfield, Ohio. — RTD - 17 September 1944

Missions - 19

Peacetime Profession - Machinest helper

Duty - Ball gunner

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1. Schmidt, Rudolph C., S/Sgt., 35793101, 740th Sq. 455th Gp.

Born - 4 February 1923 — Interrogated - 18 September 1944

Enlisted - 3 October 1943 — M.I.A. - 8 September 1944

Home address - 124 Piedmont Avenue, Cincinnati, Ohio — RTD - 17 September 1944

Missions - 19

Peacetime Profession - Aero Engine Tester

Duty - Engineer

1. Wagner, Gerald Edwin, Sgt. 13121537, 740th Sq. 455th Gp.

Born - 17 March 1924 — Interrogated - 18 September 1944

Enlisted - 28 November 1942 — MIA - 8 September 1944

Home Address - RFD 6 Box 62, Roanoke, Virginia — RTD - 17 September 1944

Peacetime Profession - Rayon mill — Missions - 18

Duty - AR Right Waist Gunner

1. Curtis (NMI) Diles Jr., Sgt. 35774779, 740th Sq. 455th Gp.

Born - 15 July 1925 — Interrogated - 18 September 1944

Enlisted - 20 September 1942 — MIA - 8 September 1944

Home Address - 3153 Walnut Street, portsmouth, Ohio — RTD - 17 Sept. 1944

Peacetime Profession - Student — Missions - 19

Duty - Nose Gunner

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2. Were never in a prison camp. Evaded the enemy.

3. All members of this crew except the radio operator, S/Sgt. James E. Barker, 34579761, were picked up by the Chetniks. (Sgt. Barker was reported by Chetniks to have been captured by the Germans).

Plane was hit by flak over the target, controls were knocked out, the C-1 was not working, and the plane went into a tight spiral. Both accumulators, hydraulic reservoir, and electrical system shot out.

Pilot gave orders to bail out. All crew members successfully abandoned ship at 18,000 feet, south and east of Belgrade. Pilot was wounded in the right leg. Lt. Koo, bombardier was wounded in the nose and hand. Ship crashed and exploded. Five crew members got together within two hours. Pilot was wounded and was placed in a hospital. Co-pilot and bombardier were one day behind the rest of crew. The crew was taken by the Chetniks to an American mission.

4. Were not interrogated.

5. Were picked up by Fifteenth Air Force planes. German garrison at Beograd reported as approximately two divisions. Germans moving out.

Most German movements early in the morning or late at night. Henschel observation planes and glider tow planes observed over Beograd.

No pro-axis personalities encountered.

No casualty information.

ALVIN H. COONS,
Major, A. C.,
Interrogator.

7 Incls:
1 - 6 Ltr. 383.6
7 - Appendix B

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S/Sgt. Rudolph C. Schmidt, 35793101, 740th Sq. 455th Gp.
Sgt. Gerald E. Wagner, 13121537, 740th Sq. 455th Gp.
Sgt. Curtis Diles Jr., 35774779, 740th Sq. 455th Gp.
Sgt. Howard C. Ford, 35273214, 740th Sq. 455th Gp.
Sgt. Leland Porter, 35875867, 740th Sq. 455th Gp.
2nd Lt. William B. Crawford, 740th Sq. 455th Gp.

APPENDIX B

Helpers were Chetniks in area east and SE of Beograd in vicinity of Ripanj. Commander at Ripany was helpful.

Wife of a Prof. Vere, who spoke English, was particularly helpful.

The crew arrived at the American Mission near city of Ub, Murgas.

Dr. Lalovic Boza - Chief civilian surgeon to Chetnik forces - Belgrade. Gave medical attention to U. S. evaders.

Private address: Princa Pavla 27, Dedirife.

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21 Jul 44 - 455th BG - Nixon

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[redacted] OG, 15 AF
Unit [redacted]
21 August 1944
D-90-hrf

HEADQUARTERS FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE
APO 520, U. S. Army

21 August 1944

ESCAPE STATEMENT

1. Nixon, Lewis D., 2nd Lt., O-761173, 741st Bomb Sqdn., 455th Bomb Group.

Born -7 February 1921 at Kenefick, Oklahoma.

Enlisted - 30 July 1942.

Home Address - 1150 Kagawa Street, Pacific Palisades, California.

Peacetime Profession - Statistician, Experimental Section, Douglas Aircraft Company.

Missions - Forty-three. Duty on A/C - Pilot.

2. Never in enemy hands.

3. On mission of 21 July 1944, to BOHN, GERMANY, aircraft was hit by flak, damaging right rudder controls. No. 1 supercharger began surging. No. 2 engine prop governor damaged, and could not feather this engine. No. 3 engine received direct hit, causing faulty operation and vibration of entire aircraft. Gas cells in right wing leaked.

Again hit by flak in vicinity of GIENGEN in northern ITALY, wounding Lt. Bankmaskus, bombardier, in left arm, and knocking out all controls. Pilot used A 5, tried to head for YUGOSLAVIA. A5 then went out and crew was ordered to bail out at 1345 hours on 21 July 1944, just west of LJUBLJANA, YUGOSLAVIA. Source saw three chutes blossom. Partisans later reported seein a total of eleven chutes opening. (A photographer was on this aircraft in addition to the regular crew).

Source in descending struck a tree near river and was knocked unconscious. When he recovered, he hid parachute and line West, headed down stream in water to avoid leaving tracks. Observed enemy plane, similar in type to U.S. P-5, circling overhead at low altitude, presumably attempting to spot evaders. Source walked through mountains heading in southeast direction for about six hours, under impression he was still in Italian territory. At about 2030 hours, still believing he was in Italy, approached lone farmer who, source was surprised to discover could not speak Italian. Source identified himself as American and showed escape map. Farmer indicated that he was in the vicinity of LJUBLJANA, YUGOSLAVIA, and took him to his home. Farmer's son then brought partisan guide who took source to another home for a conference with three others. He left this place at about 0200 hours, July 22 1944, with a guide who hid him in a barn some miles distant. Next afternoon German soldiers searched this barn and adjoining house but did not find hiding place near roof.

Source left with guide at 1800 hours same day 22 July 1944, and was taken

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Nixon, Lewis D. (continued.)

to uniformed partisan officers who assumed responsibility for him. That night Source was chased by German patrols. At about 0300 hours on 23 July 1944, while resting near top of mountain, Germans again closed in. Partisan officer hid source among rocks, and went down to road where he engaged patrol with hand grenades, later being joined in this fight by four other partisans. Enemy patrol was beaten off and partisan officer rejoined source. Rested here until 25 July, waiting for search of area to die down, then departed.

General route followed: SENTURJE to ZUMBERK to SEMIC to landing strip near TUK arriving there on 29 June 1944. Evacuated in C-47 on 1 August 1944.

STRATFORD CORBETT,
Captain, Air Corps,
Interrogator.

4 Incls:
Incl 1 - Ltr., 383.6.
Incls 2, 3 - Appendix B, E.
Incl 4 - Personal Diary.

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Nixon, Lewis D., 2nd Lt., O-761173, 741st Bomb Sqdn., 455th Bomb Group.

APPENDIX B

From 22 July to 26 July 1944, JOSEPH, last name unknown but pronounced phonetically like KAUM, a partisan officer, apparently a lieutenant, met in vicinity of LJUBLJANA, guided and protected source well, at one time fighting off German patrol with utter disregard for his own personal safety.

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Dixon, Lewis B., 2nd Lt., 0-761173, 741st Bomb Sqdn., 455th Bomb Group.

APPENDIX E

Did not use food in kit. "Candy bar" tasted bad and made him sick. Compass and water bag were both extremely useful. Used money to buy food, and as gift to poor helpers.

Strongly recommends that escape kit include detailed map of YUGOSLAVIA. Also that "jungle kit" for parachute harness be reissued because of value to evaders traveling through rough country.

Had received good briefing on escape and evasion. However, believes those familiar with Infantry scouting and patroling or "hunter's craft" have best chance of successful evasion.

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Personal Diary

Nixon, Lewis D., 2nd Lt., O-761173, 741st Bomb Sqdn., 455th Bomb Group.
Pilot of the Liberator shot down on 21 July 1944.

21 July 1944

Was awakened at 0330. Breakfast from 0345 to 0415. Briefing from 0430 to 0550. Our position is deputy-leader on Col. Cobl and our group is leading the wing and the second wing in the 15th Air Force over the target. We are flying a Secret Radar ship, termed "Mickey" number 887. The crew consists of; C. P. Major Lanford - nose navigator gunner, Lt. Braiak - bombardier, Lt. Haakmaakus - head navigator, Lt. Grim - top turret gunner, T/Sgt. Loiacano - radio operator, T/Sgt Simon - mickey operator, Lt. ------,- left waist gunner, S/Sgt. Ludwig - right waist gunner, S/Sgt. Curtiss - tail turret gunner, S/Sgt. Markoski - ---.

We are carrying 4700 rounds of .50 caliber ammunition, 2700 gallons of gaoline, and only six 21,000 pounds of bombs. Made a successful take-off at 0700. Formed and made a good rendevevous at 0755, and headed out. Weather was good up the Adriatic Sea, over the Alps, over northern Italy, and Germany. Our target was a synthetic oil plant at BOER, GERMANY, very deep in enemy territory and quite heavily protected. On the bomb run we were hit repeatedly, putting the right rudder out, Number 1 engine supercharger surging from 30 to 45 inches, Number 2 engine leaking oil and prop. governor leaking, Number 3 engine well hit and causing very bad vibration of entire aircraft, Number 5 and 6 or both gas cells leaking. Managed to stay with the formation until bombs away, then fell below and behind our formation. We managed to clear the Alps and were forced to take a direct route back to the Adriatic Sea and try and get as far as possible. Over northern Italy clouds obscured the ground making our exact position unknown. Ran into heavy, intense and very accurate flak, very many hits were scored on our plane, damaging Number 4 engine slightly and weakening the left wing. One burst hit in the Bombardier's compartment, wounding him in the left wrist, also hitting my rightrudder pedal, cutting open the heavy flying boot and spending itself in the seat, this also cut the remaining controls of the plane, turned in the Auto-pilot which handled the plane badly, suspect this too has been hit. We staggered along for approximately ten minutes, turning the aircraft by using the throttles. Finally the Auto-pilot went out entirely and the plane began to pitch and roll. Ordered the men to bail out. The aircraft went into a slow spiral to the right, directly after leaving the aircraft, it went into a steep spiral to the right, then the left wing blew off between Number 2 engine and the fuselage, immediately the remainder of the plane fell to the ground exploding upon contact. Drifting down in the chute, observed a large town drifting away, about three miles distant. Could only get the chute half turned around before striking a tree, first with the right leg, then forehead and jaw, the contact knocked me unconscious. When consciousness was regained, I was suspended by my chute in water up to my shoulders, this saved my life or I would have drowned. Managed to swing to the bank of the stream, got the chute down from the tree and hid it, also the Mae West. Waded downstream for approximately 200 yards, in order to leave no footprints. Struck out

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Nixon, Lewis D., 2nd Lt., O-761173, 741st Bomb Sqdn., 455th Bomb Group.

Personal Diary (continued).

over the hills away from this town. Estimate the plane crashed at approximately 1345. Traveled in a southeast direction until 1830. Could hear Germans in pursuit about half a mile away at times. Came out of the woods upon a farmer in a cornfield, spoke in Italian, and he did not understand. Finally got him to understand that I was an American aviator and wanted the Partisans. He lead me to his house and sent his son for the Partisans while I dried out my clothing. The boy returned about 2030 with a large farmer who seemed quite intelligent, but spoke no English. Around 2200 we walked through woods for about five miles, using no light as the Germans were still in the vicinity. He had a conference with two other Partisans until 0100. We then walked back through woods for about seven miles and he hid me in a barn in the third story. Went to sleep around 0330. Have a splitting headache and my right leg is hurting some.

22 July 1944

My friend awoke me at 0800 with some bread and milk. Slept until 1230. Approximately 1300, two Germans came to the farmhouse on a motorcycle and a sidecar. They searched the house and then searched the first and second stories of the barn, they seemed satisfied and then left. A pretty close call. My friend brought some bread and soup around 1700. About 2000 we again set out, after traveling for about two hours we meet our first Partisan in uniform. He was pretty heavily armed. Said good-bye to my friends and the soldier and I set out through the woods. He used a light around 2200, evidently the Germans were in the woods waiting for this and again took chase. We then traveled in darkness as fast as possible. The Germans must have orders to kill on sight, they were continually gunning any spot we could have been hiding in, but we managed to stay ahead of them, usually a half a mile. Reached the hideout atop a mountain around 0130. Made our beds on leaves and straw in the open. Around 0300 the Germans closed in, my friend hid me in some rocks and left. He went down the hill and to one side and started a small war. Grenades and fire was exchanged for about one and a half hours. He then returned and said everything was good. Back to bed about 0500.

23 July 1944

During the night or rather early dawn four more Partisans joined our group, found out they too had helped out in persuading the Germans to leave. Dawn near from trying to sleep. Up around 0700 and spent the day trying to make them understand how and why I came near them. The Germans still searching the woods but not quite so vigorously. This is a hideout for five Partisans who go out every night and distribute Partisan propaganda and get food for the next day. Their weapons are few, old and nearly all of the Partisans have bullet or grenade wounds. They needs shoes and clothing very badly. Their cause is great but their cause is hopeless unless aid is given, mainly weapons and supplies. Found out we bailed out and our plane crashed just inside the Yugo-Italian border in Yugo., near LJUBLJANA. One stayed with me while the others went out for their evening of work. We went to bed around 2200.

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Mixon, Lewis D., 2nd Lt., O-761173, 74lst Bomb Sqdn., 455th Bomb Group.

Personal Diary (continued).

24 July 1944

Couldn't sleep because of the mosquitoes and the cold. Got up around 0530. This day practically the same, lying around waiting for the Germans to stop their search and just resting. Four of the Partisans have malaria here, so I'll be very lucky if I don't get it. Am taking every precaution possible, pant legs inside socks, jacket on, and sleeping with gloves on, but already have many bites on the legs, arms, and neck. They stole a rabbit last night, so I had my first real meal since leaving Italy. American bombers flew overhead today, they sure looked good. To bed around 2230. My headaches are gone now, so am ready to go on as soon as the Partisans decide for us to start.

25 July 1944

Same old story, mosquitoes and cold. Up at 0600. My friends say we are leaving this afternoon. Around 1400, five new Partisans came over and six Partisans and myself left around 1430. We traveled through woods until around 1700, then rested and waited until dusk to pass near a town. We traveled as fast as possible only stopping to rest now and then. Stopped once to get some bread and soup from a farmhouse. Made our beds beside a barn on some straw around 0030. Am very tired but feel alright. To sleep around 0130.

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21 Jul 44 - 455th BG - Siemen

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HEADQUARTERS FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE
APO 520, U. S. Army

[redacted]
AUTH: CG, 15 AF
Date: 17 August 1944
D-AAA-hrf

7 August 1944

ESCAPE STATEMENT

1. Sieman, Vincent F., T/Sgt., 32517219, 741 Bomb Sqdn., 455 Bomb Group.

Born - 1 October 1912.

Enlisted - 1 October 1942.

Home Address - 1533 Ocean Parkway, Brooklyn, New York.

Peacetime Profession - Welding Engineer.

MIA - 21 July 1944 RTD - 2 August 1944.

Missions - Thirty

2. Never in enemy hands.

3. In attack on Brux, Czechoslavakia, July 21, 1944, the aircraft received a direct flak hit on No. 3 engine while over the target. On return route flak was encountered at Klogenfurt where controls and left wing aircraft were shot away. The aircraft after having lost its left wing, blew up.

T/Sgt Sieman bailed out in the vicinity of Ljubljana, Yugoslavia, and made a safe descent, but landed in a tree causing injuries to his legs. After cutting himself out of his chute, Sieman headed north through the brush for about 1½ hours. At this time he stopped to study his map. Finding that he had been traveling in a northerly direction, the evader decided to follow the river which was nearby, and did so traveling southwest for a distance of about ten miles which brought him to a canyon. Here Sieman altered his course and traveled eastward through the hills. About three-quarters of the way up the hill he came upon a path which was marked by a solid white circle with a red dot in the center. This path was followed in a southerly direction until Sieman drew near Ljubljava. At this point, without warning, the evader was fired upon by a German patrol which was some fifty yards in front of him. Sieman hit the ground and crawled into a cornpatch. Very shortly two German soldiers approached with flashlights. Fearing detection, Sieman shot the two Germans and moved off eastward to the hills. All that night and until 0700 the next morning he traveled through belly terrain. At 0700 he arrived in the area of Polbraje. Sieman then stopped to check his maps. About this time he noticed a sign post which indicated the way to Videm. Sieman started toward Videm, and traveled along this route until he neared the village of Mirka. Feeling that he was getting nowhere, Sieman decided to contact a

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peasant and try to reach the Partisans. Sieman then approached a peasant who did not speak English, and had some difficulty understanding him. Finally Sieman made his identity known and asked the peasant if there were any Germans in Kerka. The peasant said there were not any there. Sieman remained there while the peasant went into Kirka to get a Partisan who could speak English. In a short while the peasant returned with an English speaking partisan. After being fed at the posant's home, Sieman went to English speaking Partisan home in Kirka. After remaining a few hours there, Sieman and the guide went into the hills to find the Partisans. Upon finding the Partisans, the guide turned Sieman over to a Partisan mayor. Sieman was fed and rested for an hour or so and then he and the Major went to Novo Misto where they slept in a barn. Next day they traveled by horse to Suzenbeck where they arrived about noon. In the afternoon a courier took Sieman to Mist where he spent the night. The following morning about 9 o'clock they went to Toplice where they arrived about 1400 hours and steyed until 1600 at which time another courier took him to Semic when they arrived about 2200 hours. Here Sieman contacted a British mission and remained for two days. On the morning of the second day a truck took Sieman to Nettick where he remained for ~~two~~ days. On the morning of the second day a truck took Sieman to Nettick where he remained for four or five days until evacuated 1 August 1944.

A. F. ANDERSON,
First Lieutenant, AC,
Interrogator.

4 Incls:
Incl 1 - ltr. 383.6.
Incls 2,3,4 - Appendix B,C,D.

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Siemon, Vincent F., T/Sgt., 32517219, 741 Bomb Sqdn., 455th Bomb Group.

APPENDIX B

23 July 1944 - Lorenzo Kerka Yugoslavia.

Led evader to Partisans.

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Siemon, Vincent F., T/Sgt., 32517219, 741 Bomb Sqdn., 455th Bomb Group.

APPENDIX C

Pilot of Siemons ship was not at Hotlich. He was the only evader seen.

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Sieman, Vincent F., T/Sgt., 32517219, 741 Bomb Sqdn., 455th Bomb Group.

APPENDIX E

Escape purses were very valuable as maps were needed and the money was of benefit in paying for rent, etc.

Food kit proved to be of no value.

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: Au CG, 15th AF :
: Initials _____ :
: 22 July 1944 :

HEADQUARTERS FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE
APO 520, U. S. Army

16 Jun 44 - 455th BG - Snider

22 July 1944

ESCAPE STATEMENT

(All men listed below are from the 455th Bomb Group, 741st Bomb Squadron. They were interrogated 22 July, and returned to duty 21 July 1944.)

1. Snider, Harley D., 2nd Lt, O-1703138

Age - 24

Home Address - 316 Abbey Ave, Dayton, Ohio

Missions - 39 Duty on A/C - Pilot

1. Durant, Anthony Pl, 2nd Lt, O-819504

Age - 22

Home Address - 1264 E. Main St, Bridgeport, Conn.

Missions - 16 Duty on A/C - Co-pilot

1. Vince, Earl J., 2nd Lt, O-703017

Age - 23

Home Address - 228 N. Robertson St, New Orleans, La

Missions - 11 Duty on A/C - Navigator

1. Johnson, William G., 2nd Lt, O-704213

Age - 26

Home Address - 327 So Spring, Independence, Mo.

Missions - 16 Duty on A/C - Bombardier

1. Murchison, Harold A., Sgt, 34606765

Age - 21

Home Address - 900 Elwell Ave, Greensboro, N.C.

Missions - 16 Duty on A/C - Nose Gunner.

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1. Fisher, Joseph E., S/Sgt, 32672908

   Age - 26

   Home Address - 141 Glenwood Ave, Buffalo, NY

   Missions - 47 Duty on A/C - Gunner

1. Richardson, Robert J., S/Sgt, 34624241

   Age - 21

   Home Address - R.F.D.#3, Louisville, Miss.

   Missions - 16 Duty on A/C - Engineer

1. Van Sickle, John T, S/Sgt, 35631899

   Age - 21

   Home Address - Somerset, Ohio

   Missions - 16 Duty on A/C - Radio Operator

1. Brigalli, Carmie J., Sgt, 31317117

   Age - 21

   Home Address - 13 Peluso Sq, Millinocket, Maine

   Missions - 16 Duty on A/C - Gunner

1. Wright, Earl T., S/Sgt, 14027120

   Age - 24

   Home Address - 1018 Magnolia St, New Smyrna, Florida.

   Missions - 16 Duty on A/C - Ball Turret Gunner

2. Never in enemy hands.

3. On June 16th while over the target of Vienna, the ship was hit by 4 direct bursts of flak. Hydraulic System was shot out; co-pilot controls useless; and all engine instruments were put out of commission. Pilot & Co-pilot were injured however, pilot was still able to fly. Lost sight of formation, however, pilot managed to keep plane flying general direction. Soon they notice a formation up ahead, wasn't sure if it was theirs or not. The formation was letting down and so did they. This fact of losing altitude is the only thing that kept the flying speed up. During this time Navigator tried to get radio message back. Approximently 45 minutes off target, they lost power on #1 and #2 engines and partially on #3 and 4 engines. Then #3 engine went completely out so pilot ordered crew to bail out. Everyone got out O.K. and

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they saw the plane blow up and burn when it hit the ground in area of 44°24'N-16° 41'E. All landed in are (44°24'N-16°41'E) of about one mile. Pilot contacted peasant who took him to a house and he no sooner arrived, than Lt. Johnson, Sgt Wright, Sgt Brigalli, and Lt. Vince came in with a Partisan, who had met them right after they landed. They then searched and found Lt. Durant, who was wounded and hadn't moved upon landing. They brought him back to house. Sgt Van Sickle, who was injured on landing. Sgt Richardson, and Sgt Murchiesan were picked up by Partisans who were out searching for them. Couldn't locate Sgt Fisher so returned to house. Started on road to Partisan field hospital when Sgt fisher approached them on the road. Next day arrived at hospital and from there started toward English mission and arrived at Sanica the next day. Major Milbanke, was in charge and Lt. Durant and Sgt. Van Sickle remained there for medical aid. The rest continued and in 2 days arrived at Partisan camp. Padruchi - 8N of Palanki. They spent one month there, then returned to Sanica and picked up Lt. Durant and Sgt Van Sickle. After 2 days started toward Glamoc and arrived there after 3 days. Had to leave right away as the Germans were attacking, so went to Ticivo (44°13'N-16°31'E) where American Mission, Captain O'Mera, and an airstrip were. Were picked up by C-47 on the day of 21 July 1944 and returned to Bari.

ARTHUR SHERMAN,
1st Lt., Air Corps,
Interrogator.

11 Incls:
Incl 1 thru 10 - Ltr 383.6
Incl 11 - Appendix E

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Snider, Harley D., 2nd Lt, O-1703138	455th Bomb Gp, 741 B Sqdn
Durant, Anthony, 2nd Lt, O-819504	" "
Vince, Earl J., 2nd Lt, O-703017	" "
Johnson, William G., O-704213	" "
Murchison, Harold A., Sgt, 34606765	" "
Fisher, Joseph E., S/Sgt, 32672908	" "
Richardson, Robert J., S/Sgt, 34624241	" "
Van Sickle, John T., S/Sgt, 35631899	" "
Brigalli, Carmic J., Sgt, 31317117	" "
Wright, Earl T., S/Sgt, 14027120	" "

EXHIBIT E

Briefing was good, however, they thought crews in the future should be briefed on Ustachis and Chetniks. Thought escape maps not detailed enough to really be of much use while walking through country. Used the money to buy necessities and to aid aiders. Thought G.I. shoes absolutely necessary to keep the walking pace.

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15 Jul 44 - 455 - Brown

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AUTH: CG, 15AF
Init.
21 July 1944
D-JDB-sec

HEADQUARTERS FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE
APO 520, U. S. Army

21 July 1944

ESCAPE STATEMENT

1. Brown, William R, 2nd Lt, O-693250, 455th Bomb Group
   Home Address - 152 Oakland Drive, Atlanta, Ga
   Age - 23
   RTD - 20 July 1944
   Duty - Co-Pilot
   Missions - 19

1. Kieffer, Raymond L, F/O, T-123766, 455th Bomb Group
   Home Address - 3905 Paseo, Kansas City, Mo
   Age - 26
   RTD - 20 July 1944
   Duty - Navigator
   Missions - 12

1. Vochatzer, Herbert G., Pvt, 37499443, 455th Bomb Group
   Home Address - 340 Bellefontin St, Kansas City, Mo
   Age - 21
   RTD - 20 July 1944
   Duty - Nose Gunner
   Missions - 10

1. Kosinski, Hipolit P., Pvt, 35527801, 455th Bomb Group
   Home Address - 825 South Prospect St, Savanna, Ohio
   Age - 22
   RTD - 20 July 1944
   Duty - Tail Gunner
   Missions - 10

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1. Eddingfield, Russell D., S/Sgt, 16122855, 455th Bomb Group

   Home Address - Hull, Illinois

   Age - 23

   RTD - 20 July 1944

   Duty - Engineer

   Missions - 10

1. Morris, Charles H., Sgt, 14159103, 455th Bomb Group

   Home Address - Fayetteville, Tenn., Route #1

   Age - 22

   RTD - 20 July 1944

   Duty - Waist Gunner

   Missions - 10

1. Frank, George W., S/Sgt, 35621115, 455th Bomb Group

   Home Address - Greenville, Illinois

   Age - 22

   RTD - 20 July 1944

   Duty - Radio Operator

   Missions - 13

2. Never in enemy hands.

3. On 15 July 1944 on the mission to PLOESTI, B-24 A/C reached target and was hit severely by flak. When the aircraftreached Yugoslavia, only one engine remained in operation and decidion was made to bail out.

4. One crew member, waist gunner, when found on the ground, was dead although his cute opened. Tried to hide chutes, but the Partisans came up. Took them to their homes where they stayed overnight, and gave them medical treatment. Next morning travelled by horses for 18 miles to another town. After two days went by truck to another town, mar airdrome from which they were evacuated. German planes (27) bombed them while here.

10 Incls: Ltr, 383.6 (7)
Appendix B,C,E

JAMES D. BOOK,
Capt, Air Corps,
Interrogator

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Brown, William R., 2nd Lt, 90693250, 455th Bomb Group
Kieffer, Raymond L, F/O, T-123766, 455th Bomb Group
Vochatzer, Herbert C, Pvt, 3749943, 455th Bomb Group
Kosinski, Hipolis, Pvt, 35527801, 455th Bomb Group
Eddingfield, S/Sgt, 16122855, 455th Bomb Group
Morris, Charles H, Sgt, 14159103, 455th Bomb Group
Frank, George W., S/Sgt, 35621115, 455th Bomb Goup

APPENDIX B

Crews after parachuting, landed at MOJKOVAC. Then travelled to KOLASIN. THence to BERANE. Evacuated from here.

Doctor Baum	Partisan doctor, rated as a Colonel
Capt Armstrong	American officer at Kolasin
Lt Reid	American at Kolasin, believed connected with Intelligence
Capt Ramsey	British Weather O at Berane
Lt Wells	British Control officer returned with crew to Bari

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[redacted]

Brown, William R., 2nd Lt, O-693250, 455th Bomb Group
Kieffer, Raymond L, F/O, T-123766, 455th Bomb Group
Vochatzer, Herbert C., Pvt, 37499443, 455th Bomb Group
Kosinski, Hipolis P., Pvt, 35527801, 455th Bomb Group
Eddingfield, Russell D., S/Sgt, 16122855, 455th Bomb Group
Morris, Charles H, Sgt, 14159103, 455th Bomb Group
Frank, George W., S/Sgt, 35621115, 455th Bomb Group

APPENDIX C

Germans control - PLIEVLIA, PRIJEPOLIE, SJENICA, NOVI PAZAR, ANDRIJEVICA, VELIKA

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Brown, William R., 2nd Lt, O-693250, 455th Bomb Group
Kieffer, Raymond L, F/O, T-123766, 455th Bomb Group
Vochatzer, Herbert C., Pvt, 37499143, 455th Bomb Group
Kosinski, Hipolis P., Pvt, 35527801, 455th Bomb Group
Eddingfield, Russell D., S/Sgt, 16122855, 455th Bomb Group
Morris, Charles H., Sgt, 14159107, 455th Bomb Group
Frank, George W., S/Sgt, 35621115, 455th Bomb Group

APPENDIX E

Used money is Excape Purses to obtain aid and reward Partisans for services given.

Crews advise taking some roll bandages and adhesive tape with them.

Believe their briefing was adequate.

As yet the crews have not been photographed for passport purposes.

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15 Jul 44 - 456 - Bush

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:AUTH: CG, 15AF:
:Init :
:23 July, 1944 :

HEADQUARTERS FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE
APO 520, U. S. Army

D-HP-am

23 July, 1944

ESCAPE STATEMENT

2nd Lt. James R. Bush, O-693619, 455th Bomb Group, 742 Squadron.

1. Personal history

Duty - Pilot

Age - 28

Home address - Henryetta, Oklahoma

Missions - 10

Returned to duty - 21 July, 1944.

1. Personal history - 2nd Lt. Harold B. Dale, O-703462.

Duty - Bombardier

Age - 23

Home address - 410 N. Morris St., Gastonia, N. Carolina.

Missions - 8

Returned to duty - 21 July, 1944.

2. The aircraft was hit by flak on the bomb run to the target at Ploesti, 15 July, 1944. The No. 1 engine was knocked out, and the wing tanks were pierced, but the pilot managed to keep the ship in formation and bombs were dropped on the target. On the way back, No. 2 engine's prop ran away and had to be feathered - then No. 3 which had been acting badly also ran away. During these moments of difficulty, the pilot had reminded the navigator to track the ship's position carefully so that when it became necessary to abandon the plane they might choose to bail out over what was known to be Partisan terrain. With three engines gone, the pilot ordered the abandoning of the ship. The aircraft crashed close to the point where the fliers landed, and exploded and burned. The body of one gunner, Sgt. Karstans, was found about 100 yards from the wreck. Sgt. Karstans had bailed out; his death was believed to have been caused either by striking the ship when his chute opened, or, more likely, by being struck by a fragment when the plane exploded.

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2nd Lt. James R. Bush, O-693619
2nd Lt. Harold B. Dale, O-703462

3. The crew bailed out in the Tara River valley near Miljkovac (43°02' - 19°02') directly into Partisan hands and were led to Kolesian. Bombardier was injured slightly when he landed and had to be carried. By 18 July, they were at Berane (42°50' - 19°52') where, they report they were subjected to continual strafing and bombing by E/A. On the morning of 21 July they were evacuated from Berane.

4. They used escape lecture material. Map and money were useful. They paid peasants to bury the body of Sgt. Karstans.

5. Providing "A" Force concurs, it is recommended that these men be returned to combat operations in this theater.

HENRY PAOLUCCI,
2nd Lt., A. C.,
Interrogator.

2 Incls;
1 - Appendix A
2 - Ltr. 383.6

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2nd Lt. James R. Bush, O-693619
2nd Lt. Harold B. Dale, O-703462

APPENDIX A

Doctor Baum (famous tennis player) was very helpful to the flyers.

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:AUTH: CO, 15AF:
:Init :
:5 July, 1944 :

HEADQUARTERS FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE
APO 520, U. S. Army

D-JAB-cm

2 Jul 44 - 455 - Ramey

5 July, 1944

ESCAPE STATEMENT

1. PERSONAL HISTORIES:

2nd Lt. Thomas A. Ramey, O-541008, 455th Bomb Group, 743 Sq.

Duty - Pilot
Age - 21
Home - RFD 2, Centerburg, Ohio
Missions - 12
Returned to duty - 2 July, 1944.

2nd Lt. Mark Regan, O-686275, 455th Bomb Group, 743 Sq.

Duty - Co-pilot
Age - 25
Home - Sellersburg, Indiana
Missions - 34
Returned to duty - 2 July, 1944.

2nd Lt. Wylie A. Smith, O-752972, 455th Bomb Group, 743 Sq.

Duty - Navigator
Age - 25
Home - 3102 Gaylord Street, Denver, Colorado
Missions - 36
Returned to duty - 2 July, 1944.

2nd Lt. Stephen A. Drasco, O-731477, 455th Bomb Group, 743 Sq.

Duty - Bombardier
Age - 23
Home - 5010 Hudson Avenue, West New York, N. J.
Missions - 36
Returned to duty - 2 July, 1944.

T/Sgt. Matthew A. Spencer, 11038151, 455th Bomb Group, 743 Sq.

Duty - Tail gunner
Age - 21
Home - 14 Bay Hill, Franklin, Massachusetts
Missions - 35
Returned to duty - 2 July, 1944.

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S/Sgt. Reid B. Peck, 35576360, 455th Bomb Group, 743 Sq.

Duty - Ball Gunner, Armorer
Age - 25
Home - 460 Bond Avenue, Valparaiso, Indiana
Missions - 35
Duty - 2 July, 1944.

S/Sgt. Andrew Spewock, 33279588, 455th Bomb Group, 743 Sq.

Duty - Ass't. Engineer, gunner
Age - 27
Home - RFD 1, Box 124, Latrobe, Pennsylvania
Missions - 32
Returned to duty - 2 July, 1944.

S/Sgt. Carlyle P. Ramsay, 38458089, 455th Bomb Group, 743 Sq.

Duty - Gunner
Age - 20
Home - 400 Cumberland Road, San Antonio, Texas
Missions - 34
Duty resumed - 2 July, 1944.

S/Sgt. Arthur R. Powers, 39089689, 455th Bomb Group, 743 Sq.

Duty - Engineer
Age - 24
Home - P.O. Box 46, Hood, California
Missions - 5
Returned to duty - 2 July, 1944.

S/Sgt. Richard R. Boster, 35614356, 455th Bomb Group, 743 Sq.

Duty - Radio Operator, gunner
Age - 22
Home - 122 Third Avenue, Gallipolis, Ohio
Missions - 7
Returned to duty - 2 July, 1944.

2. Target was Budapest on 2 July, 1944. About 20 minutes before target was reached, at 0955, lost No. 1 engine; oil pressure was down and prop was feathered; shortly after, No. 2 began to run down but was not feathered. Went over target on two engines; returned with formation, pulling full power on two engines to keep up. As coast was approached, had to drop out of formation, threw out flak suits, ammunition, steel helmets, etc., to lighten load. Saw they could not make it across Adriatic, so headed for Vis. Landed on small strip on Vis at 1235 with wheels down; one chute was tied to the waist gun on each side, and as wheels hit ground they were released to slow up ship. Plane is still on Vis, no mishap on landing.

3. All ten of crew safe and uninjured, were returned to Bari on 4 July, 1944.

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3. Briefing: Pilot knew that Vis was in Partisan hands, and that a wheels up crash-landing could be made on the small strip; could not make radio contact with Vis. Navigator had "safe areas" marked for Yugoslavia and could have used one if bail out there had been necessary. Report six or seven B-24's now on Vis; further state that B-24's cannot take off from the present strip with its full crew.

4. Providing "A" Force concurs, it is recommended that these men be returned to combat operations in this theater.

JOHN A. BLATNIK,
1st. Lt., A. C.
Interrogator.

1 Incl:
Ltr. 383.6

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:Unit _____:
:3 May, 1944 :

HEADQUARTERS FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE
APO 520, U. S. Army

D-RB-e m

3 May, 1944

ESCAPE STATEMENT

S/Sgt. E. C. Kimberly, 34332229, 455th Bomb Group, 742nd Bomb Sq.

1. Personal history.

Duty - Armor gunner (Nose)

Age - 22

Missions - 9

Returned to duty - 2 May, 1944.

2. Mission 2 April, 1944 to Steyr. No. 6 aircraft in first wave, low left flight. At approximately 40 to 50 miles south of Ljubljana, flying at altitude of approximately 15000 to 16000 feet, formation attacked by enemy ME109's and FW190's. 20mm fire hit main left wing tank. All gas was lost from that tank. In a second pass the enemy A/C knocked out the No. 3 engine, the electrical, hydraulic and interphone system. Rudder and rear end of plane filled with holes. None of crew were hit. Pilot gave order to bail out. When Roberts bailed out he states that tail gunner and ball gunner were all right. Crew is certain that Gottlieb (navigator), Patterson (bombardier), Black (left waist gunner) bailed out. Believe that Hanhard (ball gunner) and Matthews (tail gunner) bailed out.

3. Never in enemy hands.

4. Crewmen interrogated think that escape maps provided in escape kit do not have sufficient detail. Believe they should show relief, more small towns, trails, streams. All members interrogated, except Warren, got their escape kits out. Italian Lire in small denominations was the most useful money contained in the escape kits. All found benzedrine very useful. Think there should be more chocolate in escape kit. Briefing should emphasize that crewmen should keep away from roads, railroads, towns, and to head for mountains as soon as possible. Suggest that best way to contact Partisans is to get into mountains and wait in

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(Statement, 15AF, 3/5/44, contd)
S/Sgt. E.C. Kimberly, 34332229

in concealed position along a mountain trail. Had not been emphasized enough in briefing to take GI shoes. Roberts states that if he had had a pistol he could have prevented two Germans from taking Black prisoner.

Interrogator

ROBERT BLYTHE,
2nd Lt., Cavalry.

2 Incls:
1 - Appendix A
2 - Ltr. 383.6

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2nd Lt. William V. Costello, Jr., O-810832
T/Sgt. John E. Warren, 15033596
T/Sgt. William B. Roberts, 16160070
S/Sgt. E. G. Kimberly, 34332229

APPENDIX A

Bailed out and landed near Litija. All fell into hands of Partisans within a day or two. Route: Litja SE to Trebinje, to Semic, to Metlika, thence in an easterly direction passing south of Zagreb. Then South to Slunj, then S and W to Petrovac.

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2 apr 44 - 455 - Roberts

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AUTH: CO, 15AF
Init
3 May, 1944

HEADQUARTERS FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE
APO 520, U. S. Army

D-RB-em

3 May, 1944

ESCAPE STATEMENT

T/Sgt. William B. Roberts, 16160070, 455th Bomb Group, 742nd Bomb Sq.

1. Personal history.

Duty - Radio Operator - Right Waist Gunner

Age - 21

Missions - 9

Returned to duty - 2 May, 1944.

2. Mission 2 April, 1944 to Steyr. No. 6 aircraft in first wave, low left flight. At approximately 40 to 50 miles south of Ljubljana, flying at altitude of approximately 15000 to 16000 feet, formation attacked by enemy ME109's and FW190's. 20mm fire hit main left wing tank. All gas was lost from that tank. In a second pass the enemy A/C knocked out the No. 3 engine, the electrical, hydraulic and interphone system. Rudder and rear end of plane filled with holes. None of crew were hit. Pilot gave order to bail out. When Roberts bailed out he states that tail gunner and ball gunner were all right. Crew is certain that Gottlieb (navigator), Patterson (bombardier), Black (left waist gunner) bailed out. Believe that Benhard (ball gunner) and Matthews (tail gunner) bailed out.

3. Never in enemy hands.

4. Crewmen interrogated think that escape maps provided in escape kit do not have sufficient detail. Believe they should show relief, more small towns, trails, streams. All members interrogated, except Warren, got their escape kits out. Italian Lire in small denominations was the most useful money contained in the escape kits. All found benzedrine very useful. Think there should be more chocolate in escape kit. Briefing should emphasize that crewmen should keep away from roads, railroads, towns, and to head for mountains as soon as possible. Suggest that best way to contact Partisans is to get into mountains and wait in

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(Statement, 15AF, 3/5/44, contd)
T/Sgt. William B. Roberts, 16160070

in concealed position along a mountain trail. Had not been emphasized enough in briefing to take GI shoes. Roberts states that if he had had a pistol he could have prevented two Germans from taking Black prisoner.

Interrogator

ROBERT BLYTHIN,
2nd Lt., Cavalry.

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1 - Appendix A
2 - Ltr. 383.6

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2nd Lt. William V. Costello, Jr., O-810832
T/Sgt. John E. Warren, 13033896
T/Sgt. William B. Roberts, 16160070
S/Sgt. E. C. Kimberly, 34332229

APPENDIX A

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:AUTH: CG, 15AF:
:Init _____:
:3 May, 1944 :

HEADQUARTERS FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE
APO 520, U. S. Army

D-RD-sm

8 May, 1944

ESCAPE STATEMENT

T/Sgt. John E. Warren, 13033596, 455th Bomb Gp., 742nd Bomb Sq.

1. Personal history.

Duty - Engineer

Age - 27

Missions - 9

Returned to duty - 2 May, 1944.

2. Mission 2 April, 1944 to Steyr. No. 6 aircraft in first wave, low left flight. At approximately 40 to 50 miles south of Ljubljana, flying at altitude of approximately 15000 to 16000 feet, formation attacked by enemy ME109's and FW190's. 20mm fire hit main left wing tank. All gas was lost from that tank. In a second pass the enemy A/C knocked out the No. 3 engine, the electrical, hydraulic and interphone system. Rudder and rear end of plane filled with holes. None of crew were hit. Pilot gave order to bail out. When Roberts bailed out he states that tail gunner and ball gunner were all right. Crew is certain that Gottlieb (navigator), Patterson (bombardier), Black (left waist gunner) bailed out. Believe that Henhard (ball gunner) and Matthews (tail gunner)bailed out.

3. Never in enemy hands.

4. Crewmen interrogated think that escape maps provided in escape kit do not have sufficient detail. Believe they should show relief, more small towns, trails, streams. All members interrogated, except Warren, got their escape kits out. Italian Lire in small denominations was the most useful money contained in the escape kits. All found benzedrine very useful. Think there should be more chocolate in escape kit. Briefing should emphasize that crewmen should keep away from roads, railroads, towns, and to head for mountains as soon as possible. Suggest that best way to contact Partisans is to get into mountains and wait in

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(Statement, 15AF, 3/5/44, contd)
T/Sgt. John E. Warren, 15033596

in concealed position along a mountain trail. Had not been emphasized enough in briefing to take GI shoes. Roberts states that if he had had a pistol he could have prevented two Germans from taking Black prisoner.

Interrogator

ROBERT BLYTHIN,
2nd Lt., Cavalry.

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1 - Appendix A
2 - Ltr. 383.6

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2nd Lt. William V. Costello, Jr., O-810832
T/Sgt. John E. Warren, 13033596
T/Sgt. William B. Roberts, 16160070
S/Sgt. E. C. Kimberly, 34332229

APPENDIX A

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Init.
3 May, 1944
D-CHK-bl

HEADQUARTERS FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE
APO 520 U. S. Army

3 May, 1944

ESCAPE STATEMENT

1st Lt. Willis J. Perdue, O-801636, 455 Bomb Group, 742 Bomb Sq.

1. Personal history

Duty - Pilot

Age - 22

Missions - 10

Returned to duty - 2 May, 1944

2. Mission 2 April, 1944 to Steyr. No. 6 aircraft in first wave, low left flight. At approximately 40 to 50 miles south of Ljubljana, flying at altitude of approximately 15,000 to 16,000 feet, formation attacked by enemy ME 109's and FW 190's. 20mm fire hit main left wing tank. All gas was lost from that tank. In a second pass the enemy A/C knocked out the No. 3 engine, the electrical, hydraulic and interphone system. Rudder and rear end of plane filled with holes. None of crew were hit. Pilot gave order to bail out. When Roberts bailed out he states that tail gunner and ball gunner were all right. Crew is certain that Gottlieb (navigator), Patterson (bombardier), Black (left waist gunner) bailed out. Believe that Menhard (ball gunner) and Matthews (tail gunner) bailed out.

3. Never in enemy hands.

4. Crewman interrogated think that escape maps provided in escape kit do not have sufficient detail. Belive they should show relief, more small towns, trails, streams. All members interrogated, except Warren, got their escape kits out. Italian Lire in small denominations was the most useful money contained in the escape kits. All found benzedrine very useful. Think there should be more chocolate in escape kit. Briefing should emphasize that crewmen should keep away from roads, railroads, towns, and to head for mountains as soon as possible. Suggest that best way to contact Partisans is to get into mountains and wait in concealed position along a mountain trail. Has not been emphasize enough in briefing to take G-I shoes.

Interrogator

C. W. KOHLER,
1st Lt., AC,
Asst. A-2.

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2 - Ltr. 383.6

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1st Lt. Willis J. Pardoe, O-801636, 455 Bomb Group, 742 Bomb Sq.

APPENDIX A

Bailed out and landed near Litija. All fell into hands of Partisans within a day or two. Route: Litja SE to Trebinje, to Semic, to Metlika, thence in an easterly direction passing south of Zagreb. Then South to Slunj, then South to Petrovac.

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:AUTH: CG, 15AF:
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:3 May, 1944 :

HEADQUARTERS FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE
APO 520, U. S. Army

D-RB-em

3 May, 1944

ESCAPE STATEMENT

2nd Lt. William V. Costello, Jr., O-810832, 455th Bomb Group, 742nd Bomb Sq.

1. Personal history.

Duty - Co-pilot

Age - 22

Missions - 6 or 7

Returned to duty - 2 May, 1944.

2. Mission 2 April, 1944 to Steyr. No. 6 aircraft in first wave, low left flight. At approximately 40 to 50 miles south of Ljublana, flying at altitude of approximately 15000 to 16000 feet, formation attacked by enemy ME109's and FW190's. 20mm fire hit main left wing tank. All gas was lost from that tank. In a second pass the enemy A/C knocked out the No. 3 engine, the electrical, hydraulic and interphone system. Rudder and rear end of plane filled with holes. None of crew were hit. Pilot gave order to bail out. When Roberts bailed out he states that tail gunner and ball gunner were all right. Crew is certain that Gottlieb (navigator), Patterson (bombardier), Black (left waist gunner) bailed out. Believe that Henhard (ball gunner) and Matthews (tail gunner) bailed out.

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(Statement,ISAF, 5/5/44, contd)
2nd Lt. William V. Costello Jr., O-810852

in concealed position along a mountain trail. Had not been emphasized enough in briefing to take O-1 shoes. Roberts states that if he had had a pistol he could have prevented two Germans from taking Black prisoner.

Interrogator

ROBERT BLYTHIN,
2nd Lt., Cavalry.

2 Incls:
Appendix A
Ltr. 383.6

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2nd Lt. William V. Costello, Jr., O-810832
T/Sgt. John E. Warren, 13033596
T/Sgt. William B. Roberts, 16160070
S/Sgt. E. C. Kimberly, 34332229

APPENDIX A

Bailed out and landed near Litija. All fell into hands of Partisans within a day or two. Route: Litja SE to Trebinje, to Semic, to Metlika, thence in an easterly direction passing south of Zagreb. Then South to Slunj, then S and W to Petrovac.

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