

Secret.

E. & E. REPORT No. I.S.9(WEA)/8/108/585

TOP SECRET.
I.S.9 (WEA)

(Applies to all BRITISH, CANADIAN, U.S. & ALLIED PERSONNEL)

EVASION CAPTURE/ESCAPED FROM (Name of Country) FRANCE

For All Personnel.

REF # 1002

1. No. 16119390 Rank Sgt. Name Harold A. POTTER
(U.K.: Acting, Temp. or W/S)
2. Decorations: (U.S.A.A.F.: No. of missions) 2d Mission
3. Were you wounded? Give details Hurt back
4. Ship (Navy), Unit (Army), Sqn. (Air Force) 668 Sq
5. Div. (Army) or Gp. (Air Force) 416 Bomb Gp 6. Job (Pl. Comd., Rfn., etc.) Engr gunner
7. Date of Birth Feb. 21, 1922 8. Length of Service 16 mos
9. Peace time occupation Machine operator 10. Private address 1620 S. Jefferson St
Hastings, Michigan
11. Did you carry any form of identification, or photograph? Dogtags only
12. Do you speak French, or any other foreign language? No

FOR R.A.F. ONLY.

13. No. and location of O.T.U. //
14. No. and location of Conversion Unit //

FOR ALL AIR FORCE PERSONNEL AND/OR AIRBORNE OR PARACHUTE TROOPS

WHO BALE OUT

15. Post in Crew Engineer gunner - A-20
16. Other members of crew, and information about what has happened to them.
N.B.—Airborne and Parachute Troops: list below names and units of other occupants of plane, including R.A.F. and U.S.A.A.F.
- PILOT F/O Bruce Baxter Probably killed
- CO-PILOT
- NAVIGATOR
- BOMBARDIER
- RADIO OPERATOR
- TOP TURRET GUNNER Sgt. Reed Ernstrom Probably killed
- BALL TURRET GUNNER
- WAIST GUNNER (R.) (I bailed out first, plane was in
bad shape, Germans said both others
were killed.)
- WAIST GUNNER (L.)
- TAIL GUNNER
17. Type of aircraft, place, date, time of departure A-20, June 29, 1944. From England
at about 1500 hrs.
18. Where and when did you come down? Few miles S. of St. Lo, at 1800 on 29 June
19. How did you dispose of your parachute, harness and mae west? Captured immediately by
Germans.
20. Were all secret papers and equipment destroyed? Escape kit taken by Germans.

Secret.

Secret

E&E Report No. 8/108

(Applies to all BRITISH, CANADIAN, U.S. & ALLIED PERSONNEL)

CAPTURED
NEAR ST. LO
29 JUNE

I was picked up by members of a German infantry regiment as soon as I touched the ground after bailing out of my flaming plane near St. Lo on 29 June. They took me to the nearest Luftwaffe Hq, in a farmhouse about 10 miles away to the south. I was interrogated there, and searched, but was well treated and fed. I was kept there until 8 August, when I was sent by truck to Vire with 2 American infantrymen who had been brought in as PW's shortly before.

IN PW
TRANSIT
CAMP

From Vire we were marched to Alencon and put in the big PW transit camp there. There were 8 or 9 barracks full of Allied prisoners. There was little food and no sanitary facilities. The guards were slack and lots of men escaped while on work details.

ESCAPES

I stayed there until 4 August, when I decided to make a break. About 75 men were sent that day to Sees to unload some railroad cars. With an Australian named Lyall I jumped off the truck on the way back. A Lt. Fahrenwald had escaped shortly before and the guards had been doubled. Two shots were fired at us, but we got away into the woods.

HIDDEN IN
WOODS

We stayed there for the next few days, moving around only at night and getting food from the French. We meant to head for Spain eventually. We were chased twice by German patrols but got away.

HELPED BY
FARMER

The last four days we stayed with a Frenchman in his house near St. Pierre. He was a poor farmer. We did not get his name. Finally on 13 August he came and said the U.S. troops were in the village. We went out in civilian clothes and contacted the patrol. Later we were sent to 90th Div Hq in Alencon, where the G-2 talked to us, and then sent us on to XV Corps.

Everything I saw is now in U.S. hands. The airfields around Alencon were all blown up after we escaped.

Capt. Gerard W. Côté, Canadian Army, was the leader in escape activities at Alencon. He helped 35 men to escape and escaped himself, but was caught. (See E&E Report 8/170)

Secret

PILOT

CO-PILOT

NAVIGATOR

BOMBARDIER

RADIO OPERATOR

TOP TURRET GUNNER

BALL TURRET GUNNER

WING GUNNER (R)

WING GUNNER (L)

TAIL GUNNER

17. Type of aircraft, place, date, time of departure
A-20, June 29, 1944. From England
at about 1500 hrs.

Interviewed by I.S.9 (WEA)

Date 15 August 1944

Attached:

Appendix "B"

"C" None

"D" None

I grade this escape 3.

Disposal:

Returned to unit.

Theodore M. Purdy
Capt, CE Major

SECRET

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

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SERVICE PERSONNEL
EVADING OR ESCAPING FROM ENEMY OCCUPIED COUNTRIES

TARGET:

Date mission in action: _____

Date arrived in UK: _____

Harold H. Potter Sgt 16119398

(Name)

(Rank)

(ASN)

2 (No. of missions)

668

(Squadron)

416

(Group)

MEMBERS OF CREW: (Please list names next to positions)

Indicate what
happened to each man
and how you know.

PILOT PO Bruce Baxter ?

CO-PILOT

NAVIGATOR

BOMBARDIER

RADIO OPERATOR

TOP TURRET GUNNER Sgt. Reed Ernstrom?

BALL TURRET GUNNER

WAIST GUNNER

WAIST GUNNER

TAIL GUNNER

Decorations: None

Date of Birth: Feb. 21, 1922

Private Address: 1620 S. Jefferson St. Hastings Michigan

Length of Service: 16 mos.

Job as Civilian: Machine operator

From what field did you take off? Take off time: 1500

Were all secret papers and equipment destroyed?

Were you wounded? No Give details.

Did you pay your guides? If so, how much? No

Do you speak FRENCH? No SPANISH? No GERMAN? No ITALIAN? No OTHER LANGUAGE? No

Did you have identity papers? No

(over)

Have you been questioned before on your escape or evasion? No If so, where and by whom?

Have you given any one a written report on your experiences. No Where and When?

Did you report on your operations? No If so, where and to whom?

Did you sign a security certificate warning you against talking about your escape or evasion? No If so, Where and When?

Date of arrival in Spain:

Date of arrival at Gibraltar:

Place and date of departure for UK. By sea or air.

List names of American or British personnel believed to have been arrested by Germans.

List names of American or British personnel believed to be evading.

CONFIDENTIAL.

CERTIFIED THAT:

No. 16119390 Rank Sgt.

Name (BLOCK LETTERS) HAROLD A. POTTER

Unit 416 Bomb Gp 668 Sq

has been fully/~~briefly~~/interrogated by an Intelligence Officer of I.S.9(WEA) on 15 Aug 1944

and has signed a Security Certificate.

He ~~should~~/should not/be re-interrogated.

Theodore M. Purdy
Capt CE Major. inf.
for

IMPORTANT.

THIS CERTIFICATE MUST BE RETAINED AND HANDED TO (BRITISH)
AN OFFICER OF M.I.9 OR (AMERICAN), AN OFFICER OF PW. & X. DET.
M.I.S. ON ARRIVAL IN U.K. OR U.S.A.

CONFIDENTIAL

CERTIFIED THAT:

This Officer/W.O./N.C.O. has special information on the following subjects:—

None.

If returned to U.K., report to 63 Brook St., London, W. 1.

IMPORTANT.

M.I.5 ON ARRIVAL IN U.K. OR U.S.A.
AN OFFICER OF M.I.5 OR (AMERICAN), AN OFFICER OF P.W. & X. DET.
THIS CERTIFICATE MUST BE RETAINED AND HANDED TO (BRITISH)

8281002

RESTRICTED

WAR DEPARTMENT
The Adjutant General's Office
Washington

AG 383.6 (31 Jul 43) OB-S-B-M

KLS/el-2B-939 Pentagon

6 August 1943

SUBJECT: Amended Instructions Concerning Publicity in Connection with Escaped Prisoners of War, to Include Evaders of Capture in Enemy or Enemy-Occupied Territory and Internees in Neutral Countries.

TO: The Commanding Generals,
Army Ground;
Army Air Forces;
The Commander-in-Chief, Southwest Pacific Area;
The Commanding Generals,
Theaters of Operations;
Defense Commands;
Departments;
Base Commands;
The Commanding Officers,
Base Commands;
Director, Bureau of Public Relations.

1. Publication or communication to any unauthorized persons of experiences of escape or evasion from enemy-occupied territory, internment in a neutral country, or release from internment not only furnishes useful information to the enemy but also jeopardizes future escapes, evasions and releases.

2. Personnel will not, unless authorized by the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, War Department General Staff, publish in any form whatever or communicate either directly, or indirectly, to the press, radio or an unauthorized person any account of escape or evasion of capture from enemy or enemy-occupied territory, or internment in a neutral country either before or after repatriation. They will be held strictly responsible for all statements contained in communications to friends which may subsequently be published in the press or otherwise.

3. Evaders, escapees, or internees shall not be interrogated on the circumstances of their experiences in escape, evasion or internment except by the agency designated by the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, War Department General Staff, or the corresponding organization in overseas theaters of operations. In allied or neutral countries, American Military Attaches are authorized to interrogate on escape, evasion and internment matters.

4. Should the services of escaped prisoners of war, evaders, or internees be deemed necessary for lecturing and briefing, such services will be under the direct supervision of the agency designated by the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, War Department General Staff, or the corresponding organization in overseas theaters of operations.

5. Commanding Officers will be responsible for instructing all evaders, escapees, and internees in the provisions of this directive which supersedes letter, AG 383.6 (5 Nov 42) OB-S-B-M, 7 November 1942, subject: Instructions concerning Publicity in Connection with Escaped Prisoners of War and other previous instructions on this subject.

By order of the Secretary of War:

/s/ J. A. ULIO
J. A. ULIO
Major General,
The Adjutant General.

1. Information about your escape or your evasion from capture *would be useful to the enemy* and a danger to your friends. It is therefore **SECRET**.

2. a. You must therefore not disclose, except to the first Military Attache to whom you report, or to an officer designated by the Commanding General of the Theater of Operations, or by A. C. of S., G-2, W. D.

- (1) The names of those who helped you.
- (2) The method by which you escaped or evaded.
- (3) The route you followed.
- (4) Any other facts concerning your experience.

b. You must be particularly on your guard with persons representing the press.

c. You must give no account of your experiences in books, newspapers, periodicals or in broadcasts or in lectures.

d. You must give no information to anyone, irrespective of nationality, in letters or in conversation, except as specifically directed in Par. 4.

e. No lectures or reports are to be given to any unit without the permission of A. C. of S., G-2, W. D., or corresponding organization in the theater.

CERTIFICATE

I have read the above and certify that I will comply with it.

I understand that any information concerning my *escape or evasion* from capture is **SECRET** and must not be disclosed to anyone other than the agency designated by A. C. of S., G-2, War Department, the corresponding organization in overseas theaters of operations, or to the Military Attache in a neutral country to whom I first report. I understand that disclosure to anyone else will make me liable to disciplinary action.

Name (Print) Harold A POTTER
Rank Sgt A. S. N. 16119390
Unit 416 Bomb Group

Signed Harold A. Potter

Dated Aug. 17, 1944

Witness John S. White, Capt AC

AG P BR HQ SOS

122472

RESTRICTED

DISTRIBUTION:

I.S. 9 (WEA) Hq.3
P/W & X Det. MIS ✓
G-2 Div., SHAEF
 (Less App. "C" & "D")
File

If any further information is required concerning this report detailed application should be made to I.S. 9 (WEA) G-2 Div. S.H.A.E.F. giving the E and E Report No.