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

E & E REPORT NO. 934
EVASION IN FRANCE

Thomas A Matassa, P/O, T-2893
(2 Missions)
750 Bomb Squadron, 457 Bomb Group

MEMBERS OF CREW: (This information checked with PWB)

PILOT
0-748253 2d lt Gerald B Ross

CO-PILOT
T-2623 P/O Samuel W Sayer

NAVIGATOR
0-720035 2d lt Chester R Trinell

BOMBARDEUR
T-2896 P/O Thomas A Matassa

RADIO OPERATOR
15327541 Sgt Halitt O Kinghart

TOP TURRET GUNNER
11026102 T/Sgt Carille H Blais

BALL TURRET GUNNER
Sgt Thomas S Maultsby

WAIST GUNNER
33581949 Sgt Richard J Burdett

WAIST GUNNER
12061558 Sgt John L Collins

T/A GUNNER
37554345 Sgt Carl A Adolsson

PILOT OVER TARGET
Flak over the target hit our number three engine, and a few minutes later number four quit. Off the coast of Brest the pilot took a heading inland and ordered me to see that all the men had bailed out. I reported the ship clear and then went out myself. I jumped at 10,000 feet and pulled the ripcord at 5000.

I landed in a hay field. It was several minutes before I recovered my wind, and by the time I had taken off my chute I was surrounded by Frenchmen who kept repeating "comrade." They led me to a small house where I met a man who could speak a little English. From there my journey was arranged.

IMMEDIATE AID

Compiled by

J WHT Fitet
JOHN P WHITE, JR
Cpt, AC

Approved by

W S HOLT
Lt Col, AC
Commanding

APPENDIX "D"

1. AIDS BOX: I used the Horlicks tablets, chocolate bar, matches, adhesive tape, chewing gum, and compass.

2. PURSE: I had a red purse. I used the maps and the compass, and turned in all the French francs to American Intelligence Officers.

3. PHOTOGRAPHS: I had nine photographs but had no need for them.

4. LECTURES: I heard my S-2 officer lecture on evasion. The lectures were helpful.

DISTRIBUTION:
D No Appendix "D"
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HEADQUARTERS
EUROPEAN THEATER OF OPERATIONS
UNITED STATES ARMY
OFFICE OF THE A. O. OF S., G-2

DATE: 14 August 1944

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

I, IRVING A. STONE, 2nd Lt., AC, O-576420

HEREBY CERTIFY that I have known and have been associated with

THOMAS A. MATASSA, F/O, AC, T-2898

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

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

[Signature]

THOMAS A. MATASSA

RIGHT THUMB PRINT:

[Thumbprint]

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

THOMAS A. MATASSA, F/O, AC, T-2898, 457 Bomb Group, 750 Squadron

previously reported missing in action over enemy territory.

[Signature]

F. S. VERNIT, SPECIAL AGENT, O.I.O.

CONFIDENTIAL
F/O Metassa came down on 10 August near St Gilles les Bois (Cotes du Nord). He was picked up at once by a number of Frenchmen who took him to the schoolmaster of the village, a short, slight young man with a small moustache who could speak English only haltingly. This man was taking Metassa to his home, but on the way they met an automobile carrying a French flag in which were riding three men who wore F.F.I. brassards. One of these men spoke English fluently and was some sort of commissaire of public utilities. He told Metassa that the Maquis was rounding up the Germans in the region, and that he had seen a convoy of American trucks in a town in the district. They drove around the countryside looking for the rest of Metassa's crew but could not find any trace of them. Then they went into a town where they met five American trucks and a jeep under the command of a 2nd lieutenant from the Provost Marshal of the III Army. Metassa went with this convoy to Montour where he met Col. John C. MacDonald, the Provost Marshal. Form here he was sent to the XIX Tactical Wing Advanced H.Q. where Col. Brown, the A 2, questioned him for unit and identity and took him to see Gen. Patton and Gen. Geay who asked him for his whole story. Metassa was then taken to IX Air Force H.Q. Capt. Lurie there gave him a security talk, cut orders for him, and on 13 August sent him to an air-strip whence he was flown to London. He reported at 69 Brook St. on the evening of 13 August.
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

THOMAS A. MATASSA  F/  2/L38
(Name)  (Rank)  (ASN)

2
(No. of missions)

750 BANG  4/57-4/58
(Squadron)  (Group)

TARGET: BREST
Date mission in action: 01 JAN 44
Date arrived in UK: 12 FEB 44

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

PILOT  2/LT GERALD B. ROSS

CO-PILOT  F/SAMUEL S. SAYER  BAILED OUT

NAVIGATOR  2/LT. CHESTER R. TINGLE

BOMBERDIER  F/S THOMAS A. MATASSA

RADIO OPERATOR

TOP TURRET GUNNER  T/S BLAISE

BALL TURRET GUNNER  ST. J. MAULESBY

WAIST GUNNER  ST. BURGER

WAIST GUNNER  QM. COLLINS

TAIL GUNNER  SGT. ADOLPSON

Decorations:  NONE

Date of Birth: 12 JAN 40

Private Address: 629 PORTOLA AVE. GLENDALE 6, CALIF.

Length of Service: 2 YRS

Job as Civilian: RANCHER

From what field did you take off? Take off time.

Were all secret papers and equipment destroyed?  YES

Were you wounded? Give details.

Did you pay your guides? If so, how much?  YES - $2

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

Did you have identity papers?

(over)
Have you been questioned before on your escape or evasion? If so, where and by whom?

Have you given any one a written report on your experiences. Where and When?

Did you report on your operations? If so, where and to whom?

Did you sign a security certificate warning you against talking about your escape or evasion? 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.

1st Lt. J. A. Ross
7th Division

2nd Lt. B. D. L. Temple
7th Division

7th Lt. E. R. Temple
7th Division

St. Adolph

St. Burt T. E.
PILOT
CO-PILOT
NAVIGATOR
BOMBERDIER
RADIO OPERATOR
TOP TURRET GUNNER
BALL TURRET GUNNER
WAIST GUNNER
WAIST GUNNER
TAIL GUNNER

Date, time and approximate location of plane crash or landing.
1800-10-26, 1944

Nature and extent of damage to plane when source bailed out. Was it on fire, etc?

At approximately what altitude did source bail out?

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

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

Did the plane explode on striking the ground?

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

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

Did source examine the wreckage of the plane? If so, what was its condition?

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

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

All bailed out and are evading
I'm trying to get the rest of the crew information and will bring down the TAG report as soon as possible.

Sgt Couch
HEADQUARTERS
EUROPEAN THEATER OF OPERATIONS
P/N and X Detachment
Military Intelligence Service

E & E REPORT NO. 934
EVASION IN FRANCE

(DATE)

Thomas A MATASSA, F/O, T-2898
(Name) (Rank) (ASN)

2 missions
(Number of Missions)

750 Bomb Squadron, 457 Bomb Group
(Squadron) (Group)

TARGET: Brest
MIA: 14 August 1944
Arrived in UK: 13 August 1944

MEMBERS OF CREW: (This information checked with PWIB)

PILOT 0-748253 2d Lt Gerald B ROSS
CO-PILOT T-2823 P/O Samuel W SAYER
NAVIGATOR 0-720035 2d Lt Chester R TINGLE
BOMBERDIER T-2898 P/O Thomas A MATASSA
RADIO OPERATOR 15327541 Sgt Hulitt O KIRKHART
TOP TURRET GUNNER 11026102 T/Sgt Camille H BLAIS
BALL TURRET GUNNER Sgt Thomas S MAULTSEBY
WAIST GUNNER 33581949 Sgt Richard J BURDETT
WAIST GUNNER 12081558 Sgt John L COLLINS
TAIL GUNNER 27564345 Sgt Carl A ADOLFSON

Were you wounded?
Flak over the target hit our #3 engine, and a few minutes later it quit. Our fuel tanks were hit also, and our gas was fast running out. Off the coast of Brest the pilot took a heading inland and ordered me to see that all the men had bailed out. I reported the ship clear and then went out myself. I jumped at 10,000 feet and pulled the ripcord at 5000, after which I saw the plane go by and one other chute open up.

I landed in a field of hay. It was several minutes before I recovered my wind, and by the time that I had taken off my chute, I was surrounded by Frenchmen who kept repeating "camarade". They led me down lanes to a small aid house where I met a man who could speak a little English. From there my journey was arranged.

APP. B.

No, military information.
Aids Box: I used the Horlicks tablets, chocolate bar, matches, adhesive tape, chewing gum, and compass.

Purse: I had a red purse. I used the maps and the compass, and turned in the all the French francs to American Intelligence Officers.

Photographs: I had nine photographs but had no need for them.

Lectures: I heard my S 2 officer lecture on evasion. The lectures were helpful.
RESTRICTED

HEADQUARTERS
NINTH AIR FORCE

APO 696, US ARMY,
13 August 1944.

SUBJECT: Orders.

TO: F/O THOMAS A METASSA, T 2898, 457th Bomb Group.

You will proceed on or about 13 August 1944 from Headquarters, Ninth Air Force to 63 Brook Street, London, England. TDN by MT, mil acft or rail. 60-114 P 432-02 A 212/50425.

By command of Major General Vandenberg:

V H STRAHM,
Brig Gen, USA,
C of S.

G R HIRSHARI,
Lt Col, A C, Asst Adj Gen.
RESTRICTED

WAR DEPARTMENT
The Adjutant General’s Office
Washington

AG 383.6 (31 Jul 49) OB-S-B-M

6 August 1949

KLS/ol-28-599 Pentagon

SUBJECT: Amended Instructions Concerning Publicity in Connection with Escaped Prisoners of War, to Include Evaders of Capture in Enemy or Enemy-Occupied Territory and Internes 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 or 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 capture of 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, escapers, or internes 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 Attache is authorized to interrogate on escape, evasion and internment matters.

4. Should the services of escaped prisoners of war, evaders, or internes 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, escapers, and internes in the provisions of this directive which supersedes letter, AG 383.6 (31 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. G. 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.
   (1) Any other facts concerning your experiences.

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 conversations, except as specifically directed in Par. 4.

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

G ertificate

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. G. 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) THOMAS A. MATHES
Rank E/2
A. S. N. 7-2098
Unit 457 Bn. 8th Inf. 750 Cpl. 50

Signed ________________________________
Dated 14 Aug. 1944
Witness ________________________________

RESTRICTED
SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT OF ESCAPE EQUIPMENT AND TRAINING OBTAINED FROM THOSE WHO MADE USE OF THEM. YOUR REPORT AND COMMENTS WILL HELP OTHERS TO EVADE CAPTURE OR TO ESCAPE.

1. AIDS BOX
   a. Did you use your aids box? 
   b. If not, why?
   c. If you used it, state briefly the circumstances in which you used each item, for example, "While hiding in woods for two nights".
      Horlicks tablets.
      Chocolate or Peanut Bar.
      Milk (tube). 
      Benadryl tablets (fatigue).
      Halezone tablets (water purifier).
      Matches.
      Adhesive tape.
      Chewing gum.
      Water bottle.
      Compass.
      Sewing kit.
   d. Did any of the above items prove unsatisfactory?
   e. How did you finally dispose of the box?
   f. Can you suggest any way in which the contents of the aids box might be changed to make it of greater use, bearing in mind that the size of it cannot be larger?

2. PURSE
   a. Did you carry a purse? 
   b. Did you use the purse?

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

- Maps. Which ones? Y or N
- Compass. Y or N
- File (hacksaw). Y or N
- Foreign currency: State countries and amounts. How did you spend the money?

d. How did you dispose of:

- Maps. Burned the various office
- Compass.
- File (hacksaw).
- Surplus currency.

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

4. PASSPORT SIZE PHOTOGRAPHS

a. Did you carry passport-size photographs? Y or N

b. Did you use them? N or Y

5. LECTURES

a. Were you lectured on evasion and escape? State WHERE, WHEN and by WHOM.

b. Did you find the lectures of value? Y or N

c. Do you have any suggestions to make which, from your experience, you feel will help other evaders and escapees? Y or N.
trapped him to our target. There was fire +
8 new holes in #3 engine. 4 few rounds =
14 guns fired. + reserved us a couple
#3 oil down to zero. Fuel tanks hit. Guns
firing out far. Off coast of Brest. Pilot
asked for heading inland on 2280. Pilot
ordered me to see Brest. All men bailed
out. I reported clear + then bailed out.

delayed jumps about 5000 feet. Then saw
plane go by + one more chute opened up.
Hit ground at 1811 hrs. near town
St. Gilles. Handled in hayfield. Wind backed
not. Tank of chute. Heard people running to
me from man up with bottle of wine.
People calling Camarade. I asked about
Germans. They motioned me to follow. We
walked along house to a small school
house + they took me to schoolmaster
who could speak English. His English was
(Young neat, short, slight, small mustache.)
very slight. We started towards his place. An
auto drove up with French flag. I was one of 5 who spoke fluent English a
Commissionaire. They wore FFV armbands.
Said that requisites was surrounding up the
Germans. We drove around looking for
rest 17 crew but didn't find any of them. He said he'd seen a convoy of American trucks as we drove to town where he'd seen them. He called French army men + a convoy of 5 trucks + jeeps + 2 CTs from 74 Army Provost Marshall (Col. MacDonald) outpost at Montmore. This convoy had come for Germans whom French had captured. I went back with this convoy to Montmore where I met Col. John E. Macdonnel. Here another prisoner camp he put me up for rest of night. Next morning I was sent to 19 Tactical Wing A.D. H.Q. Here I met Col. Brown, A.D. officer. He questioned me about unit + identity. He said Gen. Patton + Gen. Gage wanted to see me & took me over to them. They asked me my whole story. Then Col. Brown had me send to F.A.T. Fig. in jeep full of mail. Got there at 8 P.M. that evening + finally found Capt. Lucia. He told me not to talk to anyone + gave me place to sleep. Next morning (13 Aug) he sent me + several others to airbase + got a C-47 to London evening of 13 + reported here at 63 Brook St.
TO WHOM IT MAY Concern:

I, [Name], 2nd Lt., AC, O-576429

HEREBY CERTIFY that I have known and have been associated with

[Name], W/O, AC, T-2092

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

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

[Signature]

[Name]

RIGHT THUMB PRINT:

[Stamp]

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

[Name], W/O, AC, T-2092, 437 Bomb Group, 750 Squadron

previously reported missing in action over enemy territory.

[Signature]

F.S. Verity, Special Agent, O.I.C.

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