

S E C R E T

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

SECRET
By Authority of
ACofS, G-2
Initials W A H WSH
Date 23 August 1944

23 August 1944

E & E REPORT NO. 934
EVASION IN FRANCE

Thomas A MATASSA, F/O, T-2898
(2 Missions)
750 Bomb Squadron, 457 Bomb Group

TARGET: BREST

MIA: 10 August 1944
Arrived in UK:
13 August 1944

MEMBERS OF CREW: (This information checked with PWIB)

PILOT	0-748253	2d Lt	Gerald B ROSS	RTD
CO-PILOT	T-2823	F/O	Samuel W SAYER	RTD
NAVIGATOR	0-720035	2d Lt	Chester R TINGLE	E&E 961
BOMBARDIER	T-2898	F/O	Thomas A MATASSA	NARRATOR
RADIO OPERATOR	15327541	Sgt	Hulitt O KIRKHART	E&E 985
TOP TURRET GUNNER	11026102	T/Sgt	Canille H BLAIS	E&E 982
BALL TURRET GUNNER		Sgt	Thomas S MAULTSBY	MIA
WALST GUNNER	33581949	Sgt	Richard J BURDETT	E&E 983
WALST GUNNER	12081558	Sgt	John L COLLINGS	E&E 984
TAIL GUNNER	37554345	Sgt	Carl A ADOLPSON	E&E 986

FLAK 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.

IMMEDIATE AID

I landed in a hay field. 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 to a small house where I met a man who could speak a little English. From there my journey was arranged.

Compiled by

John F White Jr
JOHN F WHITE, JR
Capt, AC

Approved by

W A Holt
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:

B

No Appendix "B"

CONFIDENTIAL

HEADQUARTERS
EUROPEAN THEATER OF OPERATIONS
UNITED STATES ARMY
OFFICE OF THE A. C. 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.

Thomas A. Matassa

Irving A. Stone

RIGHT THUMB PRINT:



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.

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

CONFIDENTIAL

F/O Metassa
App. C.

934 typed

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 commissionaire 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. From here he was sent to the ~~IX~~ 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. Gay who asked him for his whole story. Metassa was then taken to IX Air Force H. Q. Capt. Luris 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 63 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/O T-2798
(Name) (Rank) (ASN)

2 (No. of missions)

750 BOMB 457 BOMB
(Squadron) (Group)

TARGET: BREST

Date mission in action: 10 AUG 44

Date arrived in UK: 13 AUG 44

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

Indicate what happened to each man and how you know.

PILOT	<u>2ND LT. GERALD B. ROSS</u>	_____	?
CO-PILOT	<u>F/O SAMUEL - SAYER</u>	_____	BAILED OUT
NAVIGATOR	<u>2ND LT. CHESTER, R. TINGLE</u>	_____	" "
BOMBARDIER	<u>F/O THOMAS A. MATASSA</u>	_____	" "
RADIO OPERATOR	<u>?</u>	_____	" "
TOP TURRET GUNNER	<u>T/2 BLAISE</u>	_____	" "
BALL TURRET GUNNER	<u>Sgt. MAULESBY</u>	_____	" "
WAIST GUNNER	<u>Sgt. BURDET</u>	_____	" "
WAIST GUNNER	<u>Sgt. COLLINS</u>	_____	" "
TAIL GUNNER	<u>Sgt. ADOLPHSON</u>	_____	" "

Decorations: NONE

Date of Birth: 12 JAN. 44

Private Address: 624 PORTOLA AVE GLENDALE 6, CALIF.

Length of Service: 2 YRS

Job as Civilian: RANCHER

From what field did you take off? Take off time. GLATTON 1430

Were all secret papers and equipment destroyed? YES

Were you wounded? Give details. NO

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

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

Did you have identity papers? NO

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

Colonel John C. McDonald, Gen. Patton, Gen. Jay, Colonel Brown, Capt. Price

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

No

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

*YES Gen. Patton
Colonel J.C. McDonald, Gen. Jay*

Did you sign a security certificate warning you against talking about your escape or evasion? If so, Where and When?

No

Date of arrival in Spain: _____

Date of arrival at Gibraltar: _____

Place and date of departure for UK. By sea or air. *9th Air Force strip #2*

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

NONE

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

2nd Lt. Earl C. Ross

T/S Dominick Sawyer

2nd Lt. Chester R. Temple

T/S Blaise

Sgt. Collins

Sgt. Tom Maultsby

Sgt. Adolphson

Sgt. Burkett

S E C R E T

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

REPORT FOR THE ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE

THOMAS A. MATASSA *FA* T-2498
(Name) (Rank) (ASN)

14 AUG 1944
(Date)

457 Bomb. Gr. 750 Bomb. Sq.
(Unit)

MEMBERS OF CREW

PRESENT
OFFICIAL STATUS

PILOT
CO-PILOT
NAVIGATOR
BOMBARDIER
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, AUG, 1944

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

3 + 4 engines out; fuel tanks punctured no fire

At approximately what altitude did source bail out?

12000 - 8000

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

?

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

all except 1st pilot Could not see all chutes.

Did the plane explode on striking the ground?

?

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

no

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

no

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

no

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
landings*

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

Sgt Couch

Proof
by

HEADQUARTERS
EUROPEAN THEATER OF OPERATIONS
P/W 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)

TARGET: Brest

2 missions
(Number of Missions)

MIA: 11 August 1944

Arrived in UK:

13 August 1944

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

MEMBERS OF CREW: (This information checked with PWIB)

				Official Disposition	Narrators Disposition
PILOT	0-748253	2d Lt	Gerald B ROSS		RTD RTD
CO-PILOT	T-2823	F/O	Samuel W SAYER		RTD RTD
NAVIGATOR	0 720035	2d Lt	Chester R TINGLE		RTD EVE #981
BOMBARDIER	T-2898	F/O	Thomas A MATASSA		NARRATOR
RADIO OPERATOR	15327541	Sgt	Hulitt O KIRKHART		MIA EVE #985
TOP TURRET GUNNER	11026102	T/Sgt	Camille H BLAIS		MIA EVE #982
BALL TURRET GUNNER		Sgt	Thomas S MAULTSBY		MIA
WAIST GUNNER	33581949	Sgt	Richard J BURDETT		MIA EVE #983
WAIST GUNNER	12081558	Sgt	John L COLLINGS		MIA EVE #984
TAIL GUNNER	37551345	Sgt	Carl A ADOLFSON		MIA EVE #986

Were you wounded?

E&E RPT
F/O METASSA

~~8:15:00 AM - 8:15:00 AM - Flak over the target~~

FLAK OVER
TARGET

Flak over the target hit our #3 engine, and a few minutes later #4 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 ~~Frenchmen~~ I was surrounded IMMEDIATE by Frenchmen who kept repeating "camarade". They led me ~~to 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.

F/O Metassa
App. D

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.

R E S T R I C T E D

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.

OFFICIALS:

C R BIRBARI,
Lt Col, A.C.,
Asst Adj Gen.

R E S T R I C T E D

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.

GERTIFICATE

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) THOMAS A. MATASSA Signed Thomas A. Matassa
Rank FLG A. S. N. T-2898 Dated 14 AUG. 1944
Unit 457 Bn. Gp. 750 Bn. SA Witness _____

RESTRICTED

AG P BR HQ SCS

122472

APPENDIX "D" TO E AND E REPORT NO.

No., Rank, Name:- T-2898, F/O THOMAS A. MATASSA

Unit:- 457 Bomb Gp. 750 Bomb Sq.

Suggestions for improvement of escape equipment and training come largely from those who make use of them. Your report and comments will help others to evade capture or to escape.

1. AIDS BOX

- a. Did you use your aids box? *yes*
- b. If not, why? _____
- c. If you used it, state briefly the circumstances in which you used each item, for example, "While hiding in woods for two nights".

Horlicks tablets. *— hunger*

Chocolate or Peanut Bar. *—*

~~Milk (tube).~~ *XXX*

Benzadrine tablets (fatigue). *no*

Halazone tablets (water purifier). *no*

Matches. *yes*

Adhesive tape. *yes*

Chewing gum. *yes*

Water bottle. *No*

Compass. *yes*

Sewing kit. *No*

- d. Did any of the above items prove unsatisfactory? *no*
- e. How did you finally dispose of the box? *no*
- 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? *yes*
State color of stripes and letters. *Green Red*
If NOT, State why not.

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

(over)

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

Maps. Which ones? *YES all in*

Compass, *YES*

File (hacksaw). *NO*

Foreign currency. State countries and amounts.
How did you spend the money? *French amount unknown*

d. How did you dispose of:-

Maps. *Given to various officers*

Compass.

File (hacksaw).

Surplus currency.

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

4. PASSPORT SIZE PHOTOGRAPHS

a. Did you carry passport-size photographs? *YES*
If so, how many? *9*

b. Did you use them? *NO*

5. LECTURES

a. Were you lectured on evasion and escape?
State WHERE, WHEN and by WHOM. *Unit S-2 officer Aug
750 Cont*

b. Did you find the lectures of value? *yes*

c. Do you have any suggestions to make which, from your experience, you feel will help other evaders and escapers? *no*

Metasio

1
I dropped bombs on target. There was flick +
I saw holes in #3 engine. A few seconds #
4 quit. Scatter. 4 swerved us off course.
#3 oil down to zero. Fuel tanks hit. Gas
going out fast. Off coast of Brest. Pilot
asked for heading inland on 228°, Pilot
ordered me to see that all men bailed
out. I reported clear + then bailed out.
Delayed jump about 5000 feet. I then saw
plane go by + one more chute open up.
I hit ground at 1811 hrs. near town
St. Gilles. I landed in hayfield. Wind knocked
out. Took of chute. Heard people running to
me. 4 men ran up with bottle of wine.
People calling Comrade. I asked about
Germans. They noticed me to follow. We
walked along lanes to a small school
house + they took me to schoolmaster
who could speak English. His English was
(young man, short, slight, small mustache.)
very slight. We started towards his place. An
auto drove up with French flag. 3 men
one of whom spoke fluent English, a
Commissionaire. They wore FFV arm bands.
Said that Wehrmacht was rounding up the
Germans. We drove around looking for

Dropped
10,000
feet

rest of crew but didn't find any of them. He said he'd seen a convoy of American trucks & we drove to town where he'd seen them. Here call French army men + a convoy of 5 trucks + jeep + 2 ht. from IV Army Provost Marshall (Col. Macdonnell) outpost at Montour. This convoy had come for ~~Paul~~ Genus whom French had captured. I went back with this convoy to Montour where I met Col. John C. Macdonnell. Here adv. prison camp. He put me up for rest of night. Next morning

11 August

I was sent to XIX Tactical Wing Adv. H. Q. Here I met Col. Brown, A2 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 sent to IX A.F. Hq. in jeep full of mail. Got there at 8 PM that evening + finally found Capt. Luria. He told me not to talk to anyone. He gave me place to sleep. Next morning (13 Aug) he sent me + several others to airstrip + got a C47 to London evening of 13 + reported here at 63 Brook St.

CONFIDENTIAL

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

934

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.

Thomas A. Matassa

Irving A. Stone

RIGHT THUMB PRINT:



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.

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

CONFIDENTIAL