

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

E & E REPORT NO. 314
EVASION IN FRANCE

JANUARY 6, 1944
(Date)

John W BURGIN T/Sgt 34257794

(Name) (Rank) (ASN)

350 100

(Squadron) (Group)

AGE: 25
LENGTH OF SERVICE: 1 yr - 9 mo
HOME ADDRESS: Route #2
QUITMAN, TEXAS

MIA: 17 August 1943
Arrived in Spain: December 13, 1943
Arrived in Gibraltar: December 31, 1943
Arrived in UK: JANUARY 4, 1944

MEMBERS OF CREW: (This information checked with PWIB)

				Official Disposition	Narrators Disposition
PILOT	0-415307	1st Lt	Roy F CLAYTOR	E&E #120	
CO-PILOT	0-738012	2d Lt	Raymond J NUTTING	NARRATOR	
NAVIGATOR	0-735962	2d Lt	Oscar C AMISON	MIA	
BOMBARDIER	0-734714	2d Lt	Kenneth R LORCH	MIA	
RADIO OPERATOR	6391477	S/Sgt	W M QUINN	MIA	
TOP TURRET GUNNER	15324472	S/Sgt	William M HINTON	MIA	
TOP TURRET GUNNER	34257794	T/Sgt	John W BURGIN	NARRATOR	
R WAIST GUNNER	36152366	S/Sgt	Charles K BAILEY	MIA	
L WAIST GUNNER	11065720	S/Sgt	Edward A MUSANTE	MIA	
TAIL GUNNER	36189601	Sgt	Clifford STARKEY	P/W	

Were you wounded?

*one small flack wound in left knee
not serious*



By coincidence I came over a book in which the crash of "Alice from Dallas" was mentioned. I will send you as soon as possible a translation from these pages. There was one photo in that book, please find it in the attachment. From left to right John Burgin, the engineer from "Alice from Dallas", Frans Vangronsveld a Belgian who worked for an escape line and S/Sgt George Mikel bombardier from a B-17 92 BG who was shot down the same day in that area.....Alain Rosseels

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EUROPEAN THEATER OF OPERATIONS

P/W and X Detachment

Military Intelligence Service

17 January 1944

E & E REPORT NO. 314

EVASION IN FRANCE

John W BURGIN, T/Sgt, 34257794
350 Bomb Squadron, 100 Bomb Group

TARGET REGENSBURG

MIA: 17 August 1943

Arrived in UK: 4 January 1944

MEMBERS OF CREW: (This information checked with PWIB)

PILOT	0-415307	1st Lt	Ray F CLAYTON	E&E RPT 120
CO-PILOT	0-738012	2d Lt	Raymond J NUTTING	E&E RPT 313
NAVIGATOR	0-735962	2d Lt	Oscar C AMLSON	MIA
BOMBARDIER	0-734714	2d Lt	Kenneth R LORCH	MIA
RADIO OPERATOR	6391477	S/Sgt	W M QUINN	IN NEUTRAL COUNTRY
TOP TURRET GUNNER	34257794	T/Sgt	John W BURGIN	NARRATOR
BALL TURRET GUNNER	1532472	S/Sgt	William M HINTON	MIA
WAIST GUNNER	38152388	S/Sgt	Charles K BAILEY	IN NEUTRAL COUNTRY
WAIST GUNNER	11065720	S/Sgt	Edward A MUBANTE	MIA
TAIL GUNNER	36189601	Sgt	Clifford STARKEY	P/W

BALE OUT ORDER

When the flak hit us, I noticed the fire in the right wing. As we started to loose altitude almost immediately, I turned my turret to the front. When I turned it back again, an FW 190 was coming in on us, and I could hear the 20-mm's bursting in the bomb-bay. The bale out order was given at the same moment, and I snapped on my chute. I kicked out the nose escape hatch. To clear the way to the hatch, I threw out all the heavy flying equipment, blankets and ammunition that were stacked there. The bombardier was now waiting behind me, so I jumped at 12000 feet, loosing my escape aids as I did so.

DELAYS JUMP

My jump was delayed to 7000 feet. When I pulled the ripcord, I could see the aircraft circling, and thought it was coming back on me. I counted eight chutes to the north of my position. Then I took off my glasses, helmet, and oxygen mask, and crammed them into my coveralls. When I looked to the south I could see the Germans getting ready for us. I was over a forest. The Germans were placing a man on each road, that went through the forest. I immediately planned to go in the opposite direction from the sentries.

OBSERVES GERMAN'S

When I landed on my feet at the edge of the woods, a Belgian was waiting for me. He wasted no time in conversation. As I pulled off my equipment, he pulled my chute out of the tree branches. There were a lot of shell holes here that had been made in 1940. I hid my equipment in one, while he put my chute in another. Then we pulled up the grass and brush that had grown on the sides of these holes, and arranged it so that every trace was well concealed.

EQUIPMENT WELL CONCEALED

HIDES IN OPEN AS ADVISED BY I.O.

We could hear the German pick-up truck coming. He ran to the road for a clear view, and then motioned to me in which direction I was to run—and run fast. He took the opposite direction. I took off through the woods as he had directed. As I left I heard the truck stop, and the soldiers yell as they got out. I ran for three miles. When I came to a clearing in the woods, I remembered my I.O.'s advice to hide in open fields, rather than woods, and stopped. There was a ditch in the middle of this little field. I crawled into it and pulled the high grass, which I found matted on the bottom, up all around me. Here I stayed for two or three hours.

GERMANS YELL TO STARTLE AIRMEN

When I felt very cramped, I raised up to a position which allowed me to look around. The first thing I could see was two Germans coming toward me. I ducked. One of them came straight into the opening. He stepped over me and stopped about eight feet on the other side of the ditch. He yelled to the other soldiers, and then went on. Then I noticed that the German soldiers I yell every ten or fifteen yards, as they search. I believe this is to make the airman think they have been spotted and reveal himself by a sudden movement.

DOGS USED IN SEARCH

As they moved on I raised up again, and watched them safely out of sight. I stayed in my ditch until 1900 or 2000 hours. I had crawled in at 1040 hours. Then I moved over into the woods. I could hear dogs all night, but they never came near me. The next morning I started to walk south toward France. That after I reached a farmhouse.

OBSERVES UNTIL FRENCHMAN IS ALONE

Two men, who looked poor, were working in the fields. I was very hungry so I stopped and watched until one of the men went away. I called to the remaining farmer over to me and told him, in sign language, I was hungry and thirsty. He looked all about to make sure we were not observed. Then, with the aid of his pitchfork, he slowly but surely "worked" his way to the house. When he came back he brought food and wine.

LOANED AIDS BOX

I stayed hidden on the edge of this woods until 19 August. The farmer and his son brought me food and wine at regular intervals. They also brought two men to see me. These men gave me an aids box which they had on hand. They had helped an American once before, and when he left them his aids box, as a souvenir, they had kept it to help someone else at a future date. I was to keep the box, in case the Germans forced me to take off before my journey had been arranged, otherwise I was to return it to them when I set off with my guide.

USES EQUIPMENT TO CHECK IDENTITY AS ADVISED BY I.O.

The next day
The day morning the two men returned, and told me I would be leaving that night. That afternoon, I hid my heated suit. I had lost my dog tags in the aircraft, as they were not around my neck. I wanted to be sure and have something that would prove I was not a spy if the Germans caught me, and the Belgians might have collected my chute by this time. I had been given this idea by our I.O. at the P/W lectures. We were told that the Germans would escort me back to ones hidden equipment, if it could be produced and thereby clear a captured airman of charges of being a spy.

JOURNEY ARRANGED

The men came that night as arranged. They had a bicycle for me, and civilian clothes. I put on the clothes, and gave them my coveralls. I was catching the flu, but they produced a litre of wine, and made me drink it all then and there. Then they put me on a bicycle to sweat it out. From here on my journey was arranged.

Compiled By: *Dorothy A Smith*
DOROTHY A SMITH
Capt, WAC

Approved By: *W.S. Holt*
W S HOLT
Lt Col, AC
Commanding

APPENDIX "B" TO E AND E REPORT NO. 314 - BURGIN

- a. Two gun towers guard the railroad bridge that crosses the MUSE in the southern part of the city of LIEGE. Both towers are situated on the eastern end of the bridge, between the railroad, and the RUE de PECHEREAU. One is on the end of the bridge proper, the other, 50 yards farther off. The former is approximately 50 feet high, and there is a 38.2-mm AA gun on the top platform. The first and second platforms are closed in and used as living quarters. The quarters are equipped with electric lights and telephone. The second tower, 50 yards farther off, is much larger. Two 38.2-mm AA guns are mounted on the top platform. There are four high calibre machine guns on each side of the other platform. There are no living quarters. Some sort of range locator device is on the roof-top of the apartment house on the corner of NIVAGE-en-POT and CANAL-de-l'OURTIE. It is believed to be a radar station. There is a searchlight, and a look-out post too, on this roof. The apartment is about 100 yards north of the railroad bridge.
- c. Aircraft wings, possibly for ME 109's, are manufactured at a factory in southeastern LIEGE. Wings are also repaired here. The metal brought into the factory is aluminum.
- d. There is a factory in LIEGE, on the banks of the ALBERT Canal, where submarine plates are made in quantity. They are loaded daily on to trains and barges when completed.
- e. There is a good-sized synthetic rubber factory next to the plate factory. The factory is three stories high, and ships good daily. Flexible parts (cushions, mounts, hydraulic parts) for aircraft are made here. Great quantities of shock absorbing cups, are also made here for military radios. All goods from this factory are stamped FORN.
- g. In all there are 27 factories working at peak load in LIEGE. They are in good condition, and have never been bombed. The coal mines come up the the edge of the town. They are worked by Russian prisoners. There are piles of coal beside each factory.
- All the above is personal observation between 1 September and 15 October 1943. Map attached shows the exact location of places described. The 27 factories stretch from the point marked "Officer's Quarters" south to the Railroad Yard and eastward to the end of town.
- h. There is a forest south of LIEGE where thousands of Belgians are said to be in hiding. They are avoiding forced labor in Germany, and waiting to take an active part when the invasion comes. They have, hidden here, dismantled German tanks and artillery guns. Machine guns, rifles, pistols, ammunition and dynamite are also stored here. An old castle serves as headquarters. The men hidden here have maps showing every road, railroad, stream and bridge in Belgium. Everyone appeared to work together and they seemed to be a responsible well organized group. (hearsay and observation September - October)
- i. In every railroad yard in Belgium and France, the Germans are taking railroad irons to make tank barriers. The pieces of track used are $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet long, and are welded together to form a barrier, shaped something like a tepee. They are usually piled in great stacks along a side track. (observation 19 November - 1 December 1943)



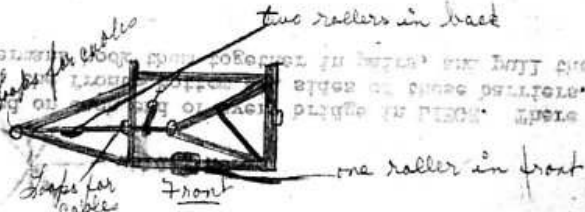
welded here

- j. Class C tank barriers have been placed on each end of every bridge in LIEGE. There are many angle iron cross bars across the front, bottom and sides of these barriers. The barriers are very strong. The Germans hook them together in pairs, and pull them

about with trucks.

THE BRIDGES ARE ALL... THE BRIDGES ARE ALL... THE BRIDGES ARE ALL...

Side view



k. All railroad bridges in Belgium are guarded at all times. There are two soldiers on either end. There are picket houses, painted in red and black stripes, on either end of the bridge. Two soldiers, other than these already mentioned, are charged with an hourly check on the bridge. The bridge is the central part of the terrain that they patrol, and every 60 minutes they must be on the center of the bridge. These soldiers never walk alone, always one behind the other. (observation and hearsay)

l. Flags on staff cars in LIEGE are red and white, with a black German eagle on the white center. (observation)

m. In LIEGE, when a railroad bridge crosses the parkland, that runs between the highways there, the whole area is blocked off so that one cannot go under the bridge, as in peace-time, but must go around it. A soldier is on guard here at night, and there is a sentry box under one end of the bridge. The whole area is illuminated night and day, by lights placed in buckets, at the center and four corners of the bridge. See sketch. (observation)



n. The German HQ and other installations, PX stores, etc., are located outside of LIEGE on the northern side. They are at a place that the Belgians used to call the CITADEL. There are barracks and officer's quarters here, but there are not great quantities of troops. The CITADEL is very well guarded. See Map. (hearsay 1 October)