

E&E 932 - Thornton Bline

Also see E&E 933

App C

Robert Hall, was killed in the crash and is buried at MAMERS.

On 12 August Bline and Deatrigh walked down the road and met a reconnaissance patrol of the 106 th Cavalry. This patrol took the evaders back to ~~their~~ its squadron, whence they were sent to III Army H Q where they were questioned for military information. They were then taken to IX Air Force HQ and saw Capt Luria who gave them orders. They flew to England on 13 August and reported to 63 Brook St., London.

Handwritten: LUR

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

Handwritten: by
P/W
by

E & E REPORT NO. 932-933
EVASION IN FRANCE

(Date)

Thornton BLINE, 2d Lt, O-815813 - 20 missions
LaVERNE H DEATRICH, T/Sgt, 13157962 - 15 missions
(Name) (Rank) (ASN)

Handwritten: Target: ?

(Number of Missions)

MIA: 25 June 1944

Arrived in UK:

13 August 1944

418 Bomb Squadron, 100 Bomb Group
(Squadron) (Group)

MEMBERS OF CREW: (This information checked with FWIB)

				Official Disposition	Narrators Disposition
PILOT	O-806987	2d Lt	Kenneth L HOUGHTON	E&E #	
CO-PILOT	O-815813	2d Lt	Thornton BLINE	NARRATOR	
NAVIGATOR	O-1103660	2d Lt	Stanley B GREEN	MIA	
BOMBARDIER	O-757664	2d Lt	William LICHTENSTEIN	MIA	
RADIO OPERATOR	13157962	T/Sgt	LaVerne H DEATRICH	NARRATOR	
TOP TURRET GUNNER	15340157	T/Sgt	James E MARION	MIA	
BALL TURRET GUNNER	?	(Extra man - from 390 Bomb Group - Neither FWIB nor Maj Sedgwick have his name listed as part of this crew)			
WAIST GUNNER	NONE				
WAIST GUNNER	13091275	S/Sgt	Malcolm K ECKLEY	E&E #	
WAIST GUNNER	34663791	S/Sgt	Warren G MOORE	MIA	
TAIL GUNNER					

Were you wounded?

E & E Rpt
Lt. Bline and Sgt. Deatrich

FLAK

Lt. Bline: Four bursts of flak blew off our chin-turret, hit the ~~radio~~ radio room, and set our left wing afire. The ~~ailerons~~ ailerons were burnt off and the ~~and of the left wing flapped loosely in the air.~~ Everyone was ready when the ~~order~~ order to bail out was given; but, after I had checked the ship to see that all the crew had left, the engineer still hesitated, ~~afraid to jump.~~ The pilot ~~standing behind him looked at me; I nodded and he~~ ^{from} ~~shoved the engineer out,~~ ^{and} the pilot and I then left the ship together.

SHIP CLEAR

IMMEDIATE
AID

~~EXPLANATION~~
CAUTION

JOURNEY
ARRANGED

I delayed my jump and landed near a house. A woman came up to me as soon as I struck the ground. She helped me gather up my chute, and two boys then led me to a ~~farm~~ barn where they gave me civilian clothes and told me to remain until their return. All this occurred within ten minutes of my landing. Since I was still not sure whether I should trust my helpers, I left the barn and dug myself into a briar patch from which I could observe the door of the barn. That afternoon the boys returned with food and alone, and so I crawled out to meet them. I remained in the barn that night, and the next day I was visited by two men who arranged ~~the~~ my journey. Within a ~~few~~ few days Sgt/ Deatrich joined me.

FOUND
BY
HELPERS

JOURNEY
ARRANGED

Sgt/ Deatrich: I delayed my jump about 5000 feet and landed in ~~an~~ an abandoned orchard. I got my chute off and ran with it into a deep, well covered gully. As I was hiding my chute under the bank three Frenchmen came up the gully looking for me. They led me to a farmhouse, fed me, and then took me to another gully where they told me to remain hidden. I got into the middle of a wheat-field where I could watch the gully without being observed myself. ~~That~~ That afternoon the wife of the farmer ~~at whose house I had been fed that morning~~ came out and took me back to the house. From there my journey was arranged. Three days later I joined Lt. Bline.

APP. B

No ~~M~~ military information.

932
Lt. Bline and Sgt. Deatrich 933

App. C

932
typed

Lt. Bline and Sgt. Deatrich came down on 25 June 1944 N W of NOGENT LE ROTROU. Lt. Bline was picked up at once by a woman and two young men, one of whom was 20 years old, 5'10" tall, well built, spoke English, and had been a University student. This young man hid Bline in a barn for two days. On the second day he told Bline that the top turret gunner, Jame Marion, had been killed when his chute failed to open and that the French ~~RRR~~ were burying him in NOCE(Orne). On the afternoon of the second day two chiefs of resistance came to the barn to interview Bline and Lt. Kenneth Houghton who had been brought into the barn that morning. In the evening the son of the chief of police of NOCE (11 kms NW of Nogent le Rotrou), a 16 year old boy who spoke some English, took the two Americans down the road to a rendezvous with DR. GIRAUD of NOCE. DR. Giraud took them in his Ford car to a deserted farm which was the H Q of the resistance organization of NOGENT LE ROTROU. THE next morning Sgt. Malcolm Eckley ~~and Sgt.~~ was brought here and in the afternoon Sgt. Deatrich.

Sgt. Deatrich had been found ~~at~~ outside of ST JEAN DE LA FOREST (4 kms W of NOCE) by three men, one of whom was ROGER BELLINGER, 22 years old, of LE GUE DE LA CHAINE (4 kms W of BELLEME), Orne. These men took him to the farm of the oldest of the three, fed him and hid him for the day; and then ROGER BELLINGER ~~to~~ brought him civilian clothes and took him to the farm where he was staying. There Deatrich was put into an improvised room in the barn. The next day a young man and woman came with a dictionary and interrogated him, and two days later DR. GIRAUD and his brother-in-law (who was later captured by the Germans who killed the Doctor's father) arrived and took him by car to the farm where Bline, Houghton, and Eckley were already assembled.

The chief of this resistance group was ANDRE DUCLOS, and his second in command was ROBERT TAPIER, a dentist from NOGENT LE ROTROU. Most of the members were professional men and intellectuals from NOGENT. The four Americans lived here for a week. Then the Germans located the retreat; and so Dr. GIRAUD, his brother-in-law, and ROBERT TAPIER took the

Americans to another resistance camp. The chief of this unit was called ANDRE; he was about 50 years old, 5'6" tall, fairly heavy, and wore a small moustache. MOHELLE, the French bicycle champion, was a member of this group, all the members of which were ex-soldiers who had escaped from German prison camps. They had some of the munitions and arms dropped by the mission on which the present evaders had been shot down: seven Garand rifles, 1000 rounds of ammunition, a Browning Automatic Rifle, and a number of Sten guns.

After four days here the Americans were again moved. Houghton and Eckley were taken out together to a farm unknown to the present evaders who were later told that they had been captured by the Germans in the following manner. A Frenchman and two Gestapo agents dressed in the uniforms of American officers appeared at the farmhouse where the two Americans were being kept and asked for entrance. The Frenchman sheltering the Americans supposed that ~~the~~ American troops had reached the neighborhood and admitted the spurious American officers who then took the two evaders prisoner, burned down the house where they had been staying, and killed the family which had sheltered them.

Bline and Deatrich were taken from the second resistance unit by ROBERT CHOUANARI, a former lieutenant of infantry in the French army (26 years old, 6'1" tall, 200 lbs., blonde) who lives in the home of LT. AVELINE (now a P/W) between NOCE and VERRIERS. It was to this house that CHOUANARI took the two Americans. There a schoolmistress of VERRIERES (26 years old, married) ~~CAME FOR THEM AND TOOK THEM TO ANOTHER~~ came for them and took them to another resistance group near ST. COSME DE VAIR (10 kms SE of MANERS). There they were put into the house of HENRI JANVIER who lived with his parents one mile N of ST COSME DE VAIR. Here they lived for five weeks, during which time they met and were helped by the following people:

Mme. RENEE MOREAU, 200 RUE CHAMPIONNET, PARIS XVIII, sister of HENRI JANVIER. ~~SRS~~

Mme. ODETTE TESSIER, 142 AVENUE DES BATIGNOLLES, ST. OZEN, SEINE.

ROGER BOZAGE (spelling?) whose home is in Paris.

A wealthy woman and her daughter who live in a large chateau in the district of ST COSME. This woman's husband is the owner of a large factory in Paris and was the ring-leader of the resistance movement around ST. COSME. He is now a prisoner of the Germans.

While Bline and Deatrich were living here a P 51 crashed in the neighborhood; the pilot,

App. D

Lt. Bline:

Aids Box: I used the Horlicks tablets, chocolate bar, chewing gum, compass, and sewing-kit.

Purse: I had a red purse. I used the map of France and the compass and gave the 2000 French francs to my helpers.

Photographs: I had six photographs but had no occasion to use them.

Lectures: I heard lectures on evasion given at my base ~~in the U. K.~~ They were very helpful.

Sgt. Deatrich:

Aids Box: I used the chewing gum and the razor. Immediate aid made further use of the box unnecessary.

Purse: I forgot to take the purse on my mission.

Photographs: I forgot to take my photographs.

Lectures: I heard my Group ⁵⁻² ~~Intelligence Officer~~ lecture on evasion. The lectures were very helpful.

R E S T R I C T E D

HEADQUARTERS
NINTH AIR FORCE

APO 896, US ARMY,
13 August 1944.

SUBJECT: Orders.

TO : 1ST LT WILLIAM A SMITH, ✓ 0725095, 306th Fighter Group.
2ND LT THORNTON BLINE, ✓ 0815813, 100th Fighter Group.
T/Sgt Laverne H Deatrich, ✓ 13157962, 100th Fighter Group.
S/Sgt Herman P Ehrhard, ✓ 17081672, 300th Fighter 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.

OFFICIAL:

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

R E S T R I C T E D