

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

hs  
P/W  
hs

E & E REPORT NO. 848  
EVASION IN FRANCE

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

Charles W ROOF, 2d Lt, O-810224  
(Name) (Rank) (ASN)

TARGET: MANHEIM<sup>N</sup>

12 Missions  
(Number of Missions)

MIA: 25 April 1944  
Arrived in UK:

31 July 1944

75<sup>th</sup> Bomb Squadron, 457 Bomb Group  
(Squadron) (Group)

MEMBERS OF CREW: (This information checked with PWIB)

				Official Disposition	Narrators Disposition
PILOT	0-742065	1st Lt	John H COMBS, JR	MIA	
CO-PILOT	0-810224	2d Lt	Charles W ROOF		NARRATOR
NAVIGATOR	0-682183	2d Lt	Eugene M HOAG		E&E #769
BOMBARDIER	0-688166	2d Lt	Charles G BIEBER	MIA	
RADIO OPERATOR	36435582	T/Sgt	Robert O BEHRENS		E&E #770
TOP TURRET GUNNER	33580391	S/Sgt	Anthony B MCKEON		E&E #771
BALL TURRET GUNNER	37314739	S/Sgt	Clayton L MILLER	MIA	
WAIST GUNNER	32557920	S/Sgt	Harry L TAMBOER	MIA	
WAIST GUNNER	18119298	T/Sgt	Joe WAGNER	MIA	
TAIL GUNNER	32745523	S/Sgt	Richard O MCCARTHY	MIA	

Were you wounded?

Sgt MCKEON:

When I left the ship ~~ROOF was on the ground~~ the copilot was behind me and the pilot ready. I was out around 18000 feet and delayed my jump down to 2000 feet or thirty seconds <sup>from</sup> ~~off~~ the ground. ~~There was one chute above but near me.~~  
for

I landed in a hard swing and was knocked breathless <sup>a</sup> few seconds. ~~But then~~ I stuffed my chute under some brush and raked leaves over it. I saw two chutes landing in the distance and started in that direction, but there was a wood between us. I ~~change~~ changed my direction as two more came down nearer and ran into Lt ROOF who was hopping toward the wood with a broken ankle. I helped him hide <sup>to a hiding place in the wood.</sup> his chute and then supported him enough ~~to get into the wood and in hiding.~~  
<sup>sticks, and</sup>

We made splints for his foot out of strips cut from a mae west, ~~and ordinary~~ sticks. He had his shoes which we had taken from his chute harness before hiding it.

A dog found our hiding place and brought a young Frenchman, <sup>who</sup> ~~with~~ to us. He wouldn't give us help but directed us to a place and left. We started there but Lt ROOF ~~couldn't make it,~~ <sup>so</sup> we went back into hiding. After dark I went out looking for help but could not find a house. We were near a road but rather than get lost from Lt ~~Roof~~ ROOF I waited until the next morning. I was afraid to get out on the road so I went toward the fields where we had entered the wood. ~~There were three men plowing~~ I sneaked up close to watch three men who were plowing. They were poorly dressed, ~~and~~ and ~~because~~ because I was too desperate to go much further without help I approached them. They listened to my explanation about being an American airman and having an injured comrade with me and then talked it over. I hid in the brush while one went off across the fields. I had decided to trust them and waited until he came back, bringing food. This man went with me to Lt ROOF who could understand French

DELAYS  
JUMP

MEETS  
INJURED  
CREW MEMBER

SPEND NIGHT  
IN WOODS

FINDS HELP

better, than I. The man said he would come back to see us later in the day.

SECON D NIGHT WOODS  
He brought ~~with him~~ more food and a new helper who stold us to stay hidden in the wood that night. During the rest of the day we were visited by many Frenchmen who had heard about us.

The following day we had more visitors and by the end of the day they had ~~worn out~~ <sup>beaten</sup> a path to our hiding place. Once when we <sup>were</sup> talking to a large ~~number of Frenchmen~~ crowd a Frenchman rushed up in great excitement and indicated we should hide. The crowd melted away and we crawled into the brush but nothing happened. One man told us to stay in the wood another night and we would be moved the next day. He told us that he knew Lt HOAG, so we felt we had gotten in <sup>to</sup> the right hands at last. ~~That~~

Towny arranged  
Our journey was arranged when this man returned the next day to take us out of the wood. Later I joined Lt HOAG.

APPENDIX B:

- April - May
- French source states that 4-track railway bridge over road and canal at SERMAIZE les B. ( <sup>(MARNE)</sup> MARNE ) is mined.
  - French source states that fields W of ST VRAIN were being mined as possible protection to ST DIZIER.
  - French source noted much surveying activity in fields ~~W~~ N of ST VRAIN. At first thought to be for <sup>own</sup> airfield but nothing happened.
  - ST DIZIER <sup>(MAYE MARNE)</sup> airfield was bombed week before 25 April and during that week the Germans moved to ORCONTE, then came back to ST DIZIER. A German officers' quarters was hit during this raid. ST DIZIER was raided again around 2 May and this time it took two weeks to repair. After that night fighters were active around this field, moving in and out, between 0200 hours and 0400 hours every morning. Aircraft here were Me 110s, Ju 88s and Me 109s.
  - Around the 6th or 9th MAY the RAF bombed the CHAMP DE TIR DE MAILLY <sup>(MARNE)</sup>. A large tank encampment was hit and French stated 180 tanks and 8,000,000 liters of gasoline were destroyed. Also that there were 15,000 casualties. Many tanks had been moved out before the raid but two weeks after the raid bodies were still being found in the debris.
  - ~~Evaders~~, when travelling from VITRY-le-FRANCOIS <sup>(MARNE)</sup> to PARIS counted 9 engines destroyed in one railway yards and 13 engines in another. Marshalling yards E and S of PARIS had been badly damaged. The tops were burned from most of the cars but the undercarriages were often not ~~so~~ damaged.
  - Evaders noticed heavy troop movements through SERMAIZE les B. during the month of April.
  - Evaders saw Tiger tanks travelling through the streets of PARIS. (25 May.)
  - One km S of JONZEAC <sup>(MARNE)</sup> on W side of train tracks evaders saw excavations where caves had been dug into rock. The caves were under heavy guard and French police were stationed at the corners of a surrounding wood.
  - Evaders saw the iron-rod <sup>(ampitheater)</sup> arrangement described in appendix B, <sup>(MARNE)</sup> E & E Report no. ~~66~~ 764. They locate it as being S of LABOUREYRE.
  - Evaders noticed many road blocks and tank traps on road between BORDEAUX and DAX.
  - Evaders saw approximately 100 He 177s land at MERIGNAC airfield on 25 May. This field, according to French, can handle ~~only~~ transit aircraft.

Lt Roof:

My story is exactly the same as Sgt ~~McK~~ MCKEON (E&E no 771).

Appendix B:

Evader had no military information to add to that given in E&E report no. 771.

APPendix D:

1. I used all the escape aids while hiding in the woods for 2 days and when crossing the Pyrenees later.
2. I used all the ~~purse~~ contents except the hacksaw and gave my ~~money~~ to helpers
3. I had an extra compass.
4. I used one of my escape photos for an identity card.
5. I heard lectures at my Group by ~~IOs~~ <sup>IOs</sup> and evaders. These lectures were very helpful. I ~~would suggest to evaders~~ that they make up a personal kit, ~~of their own~~, containing toothbrush, razor, etc., *would be useful.*

SECRET

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

E & E REPORT NO 048  
EVASION IN France

JULY 31 1944  
(Date)

ROOF, CHARLES W. 2ND LT. 0710224

(Name) (Rank) (ASN)

12 (No of Missions)

754 1157  
(Squadron) (Group)

TARGET: MANHEIM

Date Missing in Action: APRIL 25

Date Arrived in OK: JULY 31, 1944

MEMBERS OF CREW: (This information checked with PWIB)

Indicate what happened to each man and how you know

PILOT COMBS, J.H.  
CO-PILOT ROOF, C.W.  
NAVIGATOR HOAG,  
ENGINEER BEIBER, C.G.  
RADIO OPERATOR BEHRENS  
TOP TURRET GUNNER McKEON, A.B.  
MID TURRET GUNNER  
WAIST GUNNER TAMBOUR  
WAIST GUNNER WAGNER  
TAIL GUNNER MCCARTHY

*R. W. - told by French  
escaped  
escaped - Saboteur interg.  
Killed - told by French  
escaped - Saboteur interg.  
escaped - Saboteur interg.  
killed - told by French  
killed - told by French  
escaped - Saboteur interg.  
killed - told by French*

Were you wounded?

*yes. Broken leg from bad parachute landing*

TOP SECRET

E & E CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

ROOF, C.W.      2ND LT. 0710224  
(Name)                      (Rank)                      (ASN)

July 31, 1941  
(Date)

457th 754th  
(Unit)

# 848

Date, time and approximate location of plane crash or landing.

April 25, 08:45 hours, town of Pothon near VITRY

Nature and extent of damage to plane when source bailed out.

Was it on fire, etc?

PLANE was out of control caused by a fighter shooting off our tail. engine was definitely out of control, the elevators, especially, being damaged beyond usefulness

At approximately what altitude did source bail out?

about 17,000 feet

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

no

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

Bail gunner and left wing did not bail out. Parachute of tail gunner was caught on plane, Bombadier delayed his jump too long (hearse)

Did the plane explode on striking the ground?

no but soon after

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

yes, four other alive

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

yes, four dead and on prisoner of war information given by the French

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

no

If the plane crashed in water how far was the plane from land and 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?

Two members in plane were possibly afraid to jump. Crew member whose parachute was caught did not delay his jump. Other member delayed too long

LT. R. V. V. V.

ANDRÉ ~~GAIL~~ GORLET.

=

SURMÂISE  
Département de la Marne -  
~~Summary.~~

## APPENDIX "D" TO E AND E REPORT NO.

No., Rank, Name:-

*Rob*

Unit:-

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".

*used the tourniquet to help find my broken leg*  
Horlicks tablets.*while in the woods*  
Chocolate or Peanut Bar.*while riding through the woods before making a contact*  
Milk (tube).*while hiding in the woods*  
Benzadrine tablets (fatigue).*while crossing the pyrenees*  
Halazone tablets (water purifier).*while in the woods*  
Matches.*used for cigarettes*  
Adhesive tape.*for rubber cuts*  
Chewing gum.*to relieve tension while crossing pyrenees*  
Water bottle. (tube)*for purifying water*  
Compass.*check your direction*  
Sewing kit.*for some buttons, sewing compass etc*

- d. Did any of the above items prove unsatisfactory?  
*no*
- e. How did you finally dispose of the box?  
*destroyed by fire in a hollow log*
- 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?  
*no*

2. PURSE

- a. Did you carry a purse? *yes*  
State color of stripes and letters.  
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?

*Spanish map of France and Spain*

Compass.

*yes*

File (hacksaw).

*no*

Foreign currency. State countries and amounts.

How did you spend the money?

*French, 2000 francs for guide and food*

d. How did you dispose of:-

Maps. *given to American Consul in Spain*

Compass. *lost*

File (hacksaw). *buried*

Surplus currency.

*for none*

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

*yes*

4. PASSPORT SIZE PHOTOGRAPHS

a. Did you carry passport-size photographs?

If so, how many?

*yes, one card of identity*

b. Did you use them?

*yes*

5. LECTURES

a. Were you lectured on evasion and escape?

State WHERE, WHEN and by WHOM.

*yes, at home base by SA officers and escapist*

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?

*Make a pack of cigarettes, a bag of candy and possibly a self-improvised large tent with rope, webbing etc an standard equipment.*

RESTRICTED

1. Because disclosures of information regarding evasion from capture, escape, details of imprisonment, release from internment, and repatriation have been made, the lives and services of fellow soldiers and those who help them have been lost or endangered. All information which you possess on these subjects, including the experiences of others as well as your own, briefings and equipment for evasion and escape, and preparations and other activities in connection therewith, constitutes MILITARY INFORMATION which is classified SECRET by the War Department.

2. You will therefore disclose no information whatever, beyond the fact of your return to duty from "missing in action" or "prisoner of war" or "internment", to anyone except the following military officials:

- a. The first Military Attache to whom you report;
- b. An officer designated by the Commanding General of an overseas Theatre of Operations;
- c. The Prisoner of War Branch, MIS, Washington, D.C., the interrogating agency designated by the A/C of S, G-2, War Department General Staff;
- d. Certain other officers holding written authority from the A/C of S, G-2, WDGS, to interrogate you.

3. You will particularly guard against disclosure of SECRET information to relatives, friends, representatives of the press and radio, and military officials, except as noted in a, b, c and d above.

4. In order to protect yourself against disciplinary action, any question involving publicity must be referred BY YOU PERSONALLY to the A/C of S, G-2, WDGS, Washington, D.C.

CERTIFICATE

I certify that I have read and fully understand all of the foregoing and the Directive of the Secretary of War, 6 Aug 43 (on the reverse side), and will at ALL TIMES hereafter comply fully therewith.

I understand that all information concerning escape, evasion from capture, activities and equipment in connection therewith, and details of imprisonment or release from internment, is SECRET and must not be disclosed to anyone except the military officials specifically designated. I further understand that disclosure to any other person will make me liable to disciplinary action for failure to safeguard MILITARY INFORMATION.

I realize that publicity concerning my experiences, by word of mouth or otherwise, will endanger the lives of many persons and therefore it is my duty to take all possible precautions to prevent it.

I further certify that I have received a copy of the foregoing.

Name (Print) CHARLES W. ROOF Signed Charles W. Roof

Rank 2ND LT. A.S.N. 0-110224 Dated 28 JUL 1944 Place GIBRALTAR

Unit AIR CORPS 458 BOMB GP Witness H. A. W. Foster

HORACE W. FOSTER,  
Colonel, U.S.A.,  
U. S. MIL. INT. SEC.

RESTRICTED

SECRET - AMERICAN  
MOST SECRET - BRITISH  
MIS (X)

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

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SERVICE PERSONNEL  
EVADING FROM ENEMY OCCUPIED COUNTRIES

1. Full Name, Rank, and Serial No. CHARLES WILLIAM ROOF 2ND LT, D-71624
2. Decorations. AIR MEDAL
3. Unit or Squadron. 954
4. Division (Army) or Group. 458
5. Date of Birth. MARCH 28, 1917
6. Length of Service. One year 10 months
7. Private Address. Sundel, New York
8. Job as civilian. Davis, machine operator
9. From what field did you take off? HORSHAM ST. FAITH
10. Take off time. 06:00
11. Date and target. APRIL 25, 1944, MANHIEM
12. Where did you land? PONTIGNY FRANCE
13. Were all secret papers and equipment destroyed? No, but plane exploded
14. What was your position in aircraft? Co pilot
15. Were you wounded? yes
16. Did you pay your guides? If so how much? yes 1000 francs
17. Do you speak French? Spanish? some french, no spanish
18. Did you have Identity Papers? yes
19. Have you been questioned before to-day on your escape or evasion? If so, where and when? Have you given anyone a written report on your experiences. Where and when?  
yes at Gibraltar by official British intelligence officers, no
20. Did you report on your operations? If so, where and to whom?  
no
21. Did you sign a security certificate warning you against talking about your escape or evasion? If so, where and when?  
yes at Gibraltar
22. Date of arrival in Spain. June 15, 1944
23. Date of arrival at Gibraltar. July 28, 1944
24. Place and date of departure for U.K. By sea or air. July 30, 1944 Gibraltar via Rabat by air
25. Place and date of arrival in U.K.

CONFIDENTIAL

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

DATE: 2 August 1944

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

I, JULIUS E. SPENCER, 1st Lt., AC, O-811460

HEREBY CERTIFY that I have known and have been associated with

CHARLES W. ROOF, 2nd Lt., AC, O-810224

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.

Charles W. Roof

Julius E. Spencer 1st Lt. AC

RIGHT THUMB PRINT:



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

CHARLES W. ROOF, 2nd Lt., AC, O-810224, (754 Bomb Sq., 458 Bomb Group)

previously reported missing in action over enemy territory.

J. F. Carroll  
J. F. Carroll,

SPECIAL AGENT, C.I.G.

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