

163, New Barn Lane
Prestbury

Ch 52 3614

Thursday 22 Jan 97.

Dear Margaret, Thank you for your card and news. I am intrigued by the pattern of fish, Greek keys and crowns. Do please explain them to me!

- We were both very sorry about the sudden death of Fay. - Days when he rang me was quite incoherent so we have decided to leave for a month - the enquiry about his welfare - they have both had a rough time over the last few years and there is so little that we can do to ease the pain that he is suffering - I am sure that Bob is as upset as we are about it.

I am enclosing Xerox copies of the relevant parts of the document sent to me by Yves Bernet (the schoolboy who was scrambling over the smoking wreckage of PM-8 until he was chased away by German Feldpolice

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The book is titled:

LIBÉRATION
des Côtes de Meuse
et des environs
TOME 1 (volume 1)

as far as 31 August 1944

and was produced by:

Collège Louis PERGAND
FRESNES - EN - WOËVRE
1996

It is, of course, in French and gives details of the Occupation and a diary of events and activities of the Resistance by eye witnesses and official reports of the Occupation of the MEUSE area.

The detail stories of our crew are given because - (I translate)

"The story of these women is of great

interest. notably it throws light on their difficulties of finding contacts necessary to enable them to achieve their return to England.

The seven women successfully jumped out by parachute before the crash of their aeroplane "

So we have been used as an example of how a complete crew escaped from the MEUSE area.

There are other stories of other isolated aircrew who also were helped - but we were a complete crew all separated before we landed in France.

There is a map of the area and I have marked in red the places where we landed and the probable route of the aircraft. You can see the difference in landing places when Bob returned to collect "Jae" the knitted doll from the P4 compass bracket - He landed not far from Bill Milburn as the aircraft turned in a great circle

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with only 2 engines running (on the right hand side) and no pilot to hold the plane steady on a level course!!

The places marked in black were towns or villages where I stopped before being picked up by the Maquis and handed on to REGINA (MME KRICK) who also had passed on Bob and Bill!

I have translated for you the story by Rene Boulanger of the escape of Bob and Bill - I am certain that the details were not known to either of them for we certainly never spoke of them!

I hope that you find the information of interest to you all.

If you write to the College I am sure that they will be too pleased to let you have a copy.

kindest regards
Dickie

Page 20 - Rene Boulanger -
account of escape of Bill and Bob

Mr Boulanger (code name THEVENON)
was head of the Resistance in the house!

--- a short time afterwards the priest
had a visit from a young lady - the
daughter of Louis MOURLOT (écuyer?)
at ROEURS near to St MIHIEL sent
by a schoolmistress of GORIEUX who
had entrusted the young lady with her
problem.

Her parents were hiding in their
barn under a heap of faggots, two
airmen - Bob Cant and Bill MILBURN
whose aircraft had been shot down
the previous night. The parachutists
had fallen in the region of the bridge
located on Route Nationale No 64
between St MIHIEL and SAMPIGNY.
The parachutes had been hidden under
an arch of the bridge behind a
large broken-off stone. The aviators
were lucky that night for they

were fortunate enough to have fallen into friendly hands. There, well hidden, they waited for the routine (German) search to finish.

The Germans however, after their crack down, retired empty handed.

A resistance worker already mentioned Andrée CATTANI was sent to BANNONCOURT with a mission to produce two bicycles.

The following night he went looking for two men, who by way of the meadows were making their way on foot towards LES ROEUS BANNONCOURT. Exhausted they effectively depended upon the bicycles to get as far as BANNONCOURT - VERDUN.

Do not speak (talk?) of the surprises during the night because they would be numerous and above all, dangerous.

Finally they arrived at the priest's house towards 1 o'clock in the morning and were then conducted to the house of M^{lle} MME POTHIER

They spent about a fortnight there and were then put into the care of REGINA (Code name for MME KRICK) they were then led into the safety of SWITZERLAND in the same way as HARRY EVANS.

Note: - by E.D.D

During their stay with Fern. POTHIER Bob and Bill were closely interrogated by the Resistance about the other members of the crew. They gave a lot of personal details which must have been passed on to M. BOULANGER, so that when I was picked up and interrogated in the Butcher's slaughterhouse near to LIGNY-EN-BARRAIS the interrogators knew all the answers to their questions. This detailed knowledge I found most unnerving - especially as REGINA also knew my details. I had always assumed that she had spoken to Bob and Bill about me

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but now I believe that she got her information from M. BOUHAMGER.

It would be an interesting historical note - to find from Bob if he can recall it - who were the people who - interrogated them while they were staying with the POTHIER family.

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3 June 1944 (3 days before D Day landings)

ST. DIZIER - L'ÉVÊQUE (BELFORT AREA)

Then when she was crossing a further time across to the Swiss Frontier Suzanne KRICK (Alias REGINA) was brought down by a German Patrol.

Suzanne KRICK brought down on the Frontier.

Suzanne Krick, alias REGINA of the PANTHER is a legend among the female resistance members in LORRAINE.

Born at the beginning of the century, living at TOUCH, she had been a nurse and interpreter during the 1st World War.

From 15 June 1940 she advised her son Jacques (18 years old) to re-join the Touaves in Algeria. Her husband had enlisted so she travelled around the

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Barracks of Touch to relieve the sufferings of French prisoners who were suffering from hunger. Using a "FREE PASS" as a correspondent of the NATIONAL HELP she was able to slip in everywhere and established one of the most efficient rescue lines and herself accompanied the fugitives across the demarkation lines and the Frontiers (i.e. those of Occupied France and Free FRANCE. E)

Intelligent, she sent some of them as recruits to Gen de GAULLE. She would have assisted some 2,500 Frenchmen to obtain their freedom. These trips of Suzanne are filled with amusing stories - and tragic ones too. One day sensing that she was being followed, she contacted two gendarmes who put handcuffs on her and then escorted her past the GESTAPO agents and allowed her to escape.

On 3rd June 1944 when she was passing across the Swiss frontier by ST. DIZIER

L'ÉVÈQUE (Belfast DISTRICT): she was brought down by a burst of machine gun fire, she managed to pass a folder with which she had been entrusted to another "ferry man" (Cowan).

Her husband continued the struggle and escaped from the Germans, who had come to arrest him, by jumping out of the window and then joining the MAQUIS at PORT-A-MOUSSON.

His daughter MICHELINE, 15 years old, was arrested in his place and subjected to torture before being rescued by the Americans from CHARLES III Prison.

NOTE. I gave Micheline my last piece of chewing gum when she visited her mum and self in a hideaway while her mother was changing her disguise (E).