

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

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E & E REPORT NO. 468
EVASION IN FRANCE

18 March 1944
(Date)

TARGET: CHARTRES

Charles B WINKELMAN, 2d Lt, O-738320
(Name) (Rank) (ASN)

2 Missions
(Number of Missions)

MIA: 3 September 1943
Arrived in UK:

17 March 1944

349 Bomb Squadron 100 Bomb Group
(Squadron) (Group)

MEMBERS OF CREW: (This information checked with PWIB)

				Official Disposition	Narrators Disposition
PILOT	0-738320	2d Lt	Charles B WINKELMAN		NARRATOR
CO-PILOT	0-801345	2d Lt	Ralph D SMITH		E&E #271
NAVIGATOR	0-800093	2d Lt	William H BOOTH		E&E #272
BOMBERDIER	0-676325	2d Lt	Howard M HARRIS		E&E #258
RADIO OPERATOR	37426256	T/Sgt	Jean E RAY		MIA
TOP TURRET GUNNER	14134640	T/Sgt	Thomas E COMBS		E&E #303
TAIL TURRET GUNNER	32437605	S/Sgt	Thomas L CUCCARO		MIA
WAIST GUNNER	31042353	S/Sgt	Alfred J ZEOLI		E&E #259
WAIST GUNNER	32443852	S/Sgt	Michael F DARCY		E&E #167
TAIL GUNNER	38220710	S/Sgt	Ennis M BANKHEAD		MIA

Were you wounded?

Yes. Knee and hand, by ~~front~~ gun fire.

March 20, 1944
1.

E & E REPORT
EVASION IN FRANCE

Charles B. Winkelman, 2d Lt., O-738320
349th Bomb Squadron, 100th Bomb Group (H)
2nd Mission

TARGET: VILLACOUBLAY

MIA: 3 September 1943
Arrived in UK: 17 March 1944

~~We had three possible targets [redacted]. One was the airbase at VILLACOUBLAY, another a factory on the outskirts of PARIS making ~~ME~~ parts, and the third was the airfield at CHARTRES. We left at 0610 hours. [redacted] As we reached the ~~Paris~~ area heavy flak came up. No. 2 supercharger was hit and the pressure was lost, but as oil pressure did not fail, I did not feather the prop. I saw a few small holes in the fuselage as well. Cloud was so heavy we could not bomb either of the PARIS targets, so we went on in formation to CHARTRES. By boosting my engines I managed to keep up, but a lot of flak came up and about half way there, while flying at 23,000ft. No. 1 engine ~~hit~~ and went out completely. We dropped behind, and flak or an incendiary started a fire between No. 1 and No. 2. I saw fighters to right and left but they did not attack. As the fire spread in our ship, I saw Major WELLES ship go down. He was flying No. 1 position. We still had our bombs aboard, so I decided to get out of formation and go down. I had already told the crew to stand by to bail out.~~

FLAK
AT CHARTRES

As we glided down two ME 109 fighters ~~attacked~~ from 11 o'clock and high. ~~They made one pass.~~ The engineer reported a fire in the bomb bay, so I had the doors opened and prepared to drop the bombs. The copilot, navigator, bombardier, and engineer then bailed out, and the radio man went out the back door. ~~I called the other positions on the interphone, which was still working, but there were no answers. I looked back through the ship and saw nobody. Engines were now going through the ship and No. 3 engine was kicking up. As I was snapping on my chute the whole bottom was shot out of the pilot's cabin. I dropped out the trap door as the ship went into a spin at 19,000 ft.~~

CREW
BAILS
OUT

I pulled my chute open at about traffic-pattern altitude. There was quite a jerk and I lost my maps, escape kit, and everything else in my pockets except 21.8s. ~~While falling, I looked around and saw 3 chutes, 3 of them above me. I heard firing from the ground and later noticed two holes in my chute. I could see the ship burning and exploding on the ground, near where I came down a few minutes later.~~

PILOT
FOLLOWS

I landed in a plowed field about 100 yds/ from some woods. I found my knee and hand were bleeding, and I could barely hobble. I dragged my chute into the woods, cut it off, and left it in some brush with my helmet and oxygen mask. It was 0900 hours, according to my watch. I tied my belt around my leg to stop the bleeding, and a handkerchief around my hand, and destroyed my 65-1 card and other papers. Then I started S/ through the woods. I came to an open field where there were a few people looking into the woods, so I ~~turned back into the woods~~ and decided to sweat it out ~~until~~ until dark. Half an hour later 32 Germans, spread out in a line about 10ft/ apart, came into the woods

I bandaged
my wounds

HIDING
FROM GERMANS

making a search. They missed me by about a yard. There seemed to be one officer and one NCO directing them. I know some German and understood the officer to say that in the future they must shoot down the Americans before they reached the ground. They also discussed catching one member of my crew a few moments before I think it might have been the tail gunner from the desertion.

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SLEEPS
ON
HILLTOP

I stayed there until 2030 that night, then crawled ~~SW~~ into an orchard leading down to a macadam road. I picked some apples and put them in my jacket pockets. I found it hard to walk, as my knee was stiff, and every few feet I had to stop and rest, but I managed to get down to the road and cross it. I made for a hill on the other side. Climbing it ~~took~~ ^{took} hours, but I finally made it, and lay down between some rocks near the top. It was very cold, but I stayed there that night and all next day. I saw two farmers at work in a field below, but there were Germans around looking through the woods, so I waited until I saw them go away in a truck about 1730 before I went down to try to find water and help.

SEES
ANOTHER
RAID

Although I walked 5 miles or more looking for a farmhouse, I found nothing that night. I slept a little in the woods, and next morning at 0800 I saw two young men working in a field nearby. I went over to them and asked if they spoke English or German. They didn't, but an older man came up who knew the word "Parachute" and seemed to understand that I wanted to get something to eat and drink. They hid me in the woods ~~and came back at 1000 with bread and meat and wine. Then they left after indicating on my watch that they would come back again at 1800. In the meantime, though, there was another big raid on Chartres. I saw a lot of planes go over, and then parachutes started to come down all around me. One of the Frenchmen came to me and said the Germans would be there in a minute, so I lit out through the woods as fast as I could. I saw a parachute caught in a tree. When I went to investigate, I found the body of an American Sergeant, almost cut in two by machine-gun bullets. There was nothing I could do and he did not seem to have any papers, so I went on. A German came near me, but didn't see me. I walked all that night.~~

C
R
P

GETS
FOOD

Next day I asked a man in a field for food and tried to tell him I wanted to get to Spain. He went to his house and brought me a musette bag containing coffee, chicken, bread, and wine, and hid me in the woods. That night the Gestapo came to the village nearby with dogs, and the farmer woke me and made me go on walking.

The fifth day after my descent I reached a village where I spoke to a farmer who turned out to be Dutch. He understood some German. He advised me to turn back towards Paris, so I took out my compass and started off NE. I walked for three nights in that direction, hiding during the day in the woods. I used the food in my bag and ate some tomatoes and potatoes found in the fields. I saw no Germans.

ASKS
FOR
HELP

On ~~September~~ ^{September} 11th (my birthday) I reached a town where there was an automobile racetrack. The Germans had built a radio station there. As I walked past it, some Germans saw me and came after me with police dogs. I had to take to the woods again and did not lose the dogs until I came to a brook, waded up it for some distance, and finally came out on the other side. I was so hungry and tired that I went to a farmhouse shortly after and asked for help. An older woman came out. She could not speak English

- a. The raid on Trappes marshalling yards destroyed a large number of locomotives. 253 were in the area when it was bombed. (Hearsay - March)
and power
- b. Telephone lines in Paris and other large cities have been dug up and the Germans have taken the copper, replacing the lines with alloys. In most districts of Paris power is shut off from 9:11 AM and from 2:35 PM each day. The telephone service is erratic.
(Observation - March)
- c. The CO at Chartres airfield, a Colonel, was killed in the second raid last September. The bombing was accurate and several hundred German troops were killed in their barracks. (Hearsay - December)
- d. Many of the concrete bunkers and other fortifications built by the Germans in seacoast regions have deteriorated rapidly, as the cement was not mixed properly and no foundations were provided. Work is being rushed to replace these fortifications with new ones along the beaches, particularly in Brittany and Normandy.
(Hearsay - March)