

SECRETM.I.9/S/P.G.(-) 2625.EVADING CAPTURE IN FRANCE.

The information contained in this report is to be treated as

SECRETSTATEMENT BY

1565790 Sgt. BATEY, Alan Christian, 298 Sqn. Fighter Command, R.A.F.

Left : CHERBOURG, 27 Sep 44.

Arrived: HESTON, 27 Sep 44.

Date of Birth : 29 Jun 23.

Peacetime Profession: Farmer.

R.A.F. Service : Since 16 Oct 42.

Post in crew : Gunner.

Private Address: Kipperlynn Farm,
STOCKSFIELD-ON-TYNE.Other members of the crew:

F/O. SMITH	(pilot)	} Killed.
F/Sgt. CHRISTIE	(wireless operator)	
F/O. SOLOMON	(navigator)	
F/Sgt. LAVERICK	(bomb aimer)	
Sgt. ROYLE	(engineer) (S/P.G.(-) 2626).	

11 Sep 44,
Crashed near
EPINAC-LES-
MINES.

We left TARRANT RUSSETON on 10 Sep 44 at 1022 hrs in a Halifax Mk V on a special mission. At 0040 hrs as visibility was poor we came down to 1100 feet and crashed into the side of a hill near EPINAC-LES-MINES (FRANCE 1:250,000, Sheet 23, N 62).

I scrambled out of the aircraft and threw my gear into the flames which had at once broken out. I then found Sgt. ROYLE (S/P.G.(-) 2626) and pulled him out. I could not find the other members of the crew. As ROYLE had cuts on his knees and head we rested in nearby woods.

Later we moved South by our compass and hid when day broke. At about 0600 hrs on 11 Sep I approached a farm and declared myself to the farmer. He asked for my "papiers". The only means of identifying myself I had was an English cigarette packet. This satisfied him. He took me into his house where I was embraced by all present. His son went to fetch some members of the Maquis.

/Some F.F.I.

INTERVIEWED BY: I.S.9(W).
O.R.S., Bomber Command, R.A.F. } 28 Sep 44.

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Some F.F.I. men came in a car, and took us to the aircraft where we found the bodies of the four others. We then went to ROULE who was given first aid and taken to the hospital at EPINAC-LES-MINES.

An English speaking Frenchman then brought along two ladies who offered to look after us. I accepted, but first went to EPINAC to see that ROULE was properly settled in hospital. I then helped to take the four bodies to EPINAC town hall where they lay in state. They were buried on 13 Sep. in EPINAC cemetery with civic honours. 7000 people attended their funeral.

I lived quietly in MOLINOT (N 72) with my two helpers for a couple of months. There were no Germans about as they had left the district on 9 Sep. I was given no papers.

On 24 Sep Sgt. ROULE left hospital and joined me at MOLINOT. We then got in touch again with the F.F.I. at EPINAC who, on 26 Sep, took us to DIJON where we contacted American troops.

We left CHARENTON on 27 Sep by air for the U.K.