

Escape Report SPG 791.

Benjamin landed in a cornfield, and he hides his equipment under a hedge. He crawled under six barbed wire fences and fell into a stream. He knocked on a farm and says "RAF". The farmer opens the shutter, pulls him inside and kisses him. He then shows him on a map where he is. Through a dictionary, Goldsmith asks him for shoes and offers him money. As he wants to go to Brussels, where he heard that an escape route works, he is taken to the gendarmerie where he is poured coffee and sleeps in a bed, before eating. The farmer takes him to a village (Grèz-Doiceau?) where he sleeps at night in the home of a man (LEBLICQ) who says he is in contact with the Belgian Legion (future Secret Army).

On June 7th, he was taken to Wavre, where he spent the night in a technical institute, at the home of an Englishwoman (Daisy Charlton KENDALL) married to a Belgian (Désiré GAIN). The whole family speaks English. He has forgotten their names, but this woman's sister is Mrs LOVEJOY, 268 The Broadway at Hendon. He was the first English aviator they saw.

On the 8th June, their daughter Raymonde takes him to Brussels by tram. Her father and another man take him to a boarding school for girls (at a BODART). He is also the first aviator hosted there. He receives an identity card and is taken to a photographer. He stays for about five days in the boarding school.

Marguerite Van Lieg "Miss Mitchell" then leads him to a radio operator where he remains pending his departure, from 11 to 23 June. This is Carl SERVAIS from 28-30 Stevens Delannoy Street in Laeken. He stayed there from June 12 to 24, with William Griffiths .

Benjamin leaves Brussels for Paris on June 23, guided by "Miss Mitchell" and a man, accompanied by William Griffiths, Reginald Collins and a Polish sergeant named Marian (Zawodny). They buy tickets in France (in Valenciennes?) and rations for Paris en route. The group travels in first class in a reserved compartment.

Frédéric DE JONGH is waiting for them and takes Benjamin, Goldsmith and Collins to Léon VIOLETTE at 2 Rue Émile Dequen in Vincennes, while René COACHE takes Griffiths and the Polish Marian for six days. After four days, they are joined by two soldiers of Argyll & Sutherland: "Jimmie and William" James Goldie and William MacFarlane , who had escaped from a Stalag in Germany. Griffiths and the Pole then go to the district of the Château de Vincennes, "at the headquarters of the organization in Paris" (in the villa of Frédéric De Jongh at 6 Avenue des Érables in Saint-Maur-des-Fossés, in Val-de-Provence. -Marl). There they meet two Canadians and an Englishman and see William McFarlane again.

On July 4th, Andrée DE JONGH and Elvire MORELLE lead Griffiths, Goldsmith, Collins and Waczan Czekalski from Gare du Nord to Saint-Jean-de-Luz, again in a reserved compartment in 1st class. They arrive there on the 5th of July around 9 o'clock. In Bayonne, Albert "Bee" Johnson , an Englishman and two young women board the train. They lead Collins and Czekalski through the turnstile while Griffiths

and Goldsmith exit through the washroom and a service exit. The group lodges one night and one day in a flat, at Ambrosio SAN VICENTE, at 07 Rue Salagoïty.

This was the 16th passage of Comet by the road of Saint-Jean-de-Luz. The group leaves on July 6th but stays the day in Urrugne, at Maison Bidegain Berri, at Françoise HALZUET's wife ISANDIZAGA. They cross the Pyrenees with Bee JOHNSON and two Basque guides. In a Spanish village, they make contact with the consulate which takes them on July 9 in Vittoria, from where they are taken to Madrid by car.

Benjamin left Gibraltar on July 21st, 1942, and arrived at Gourock on the 30th.

Thanks to Rob Moffitt for this information.