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SECRET

M.I.9/S/P.C.(G) 2950.

ESCAPED FROM WORKING PARTY (TOST)  
ATTACHED TO STALAG VIII B (LANSBROFF)  
AND JOINED POLISH PARTISANS. FINALLY  
MADE CONTACT WITH RUSSIAN FORCES.

The information contained in this report is to be treated as  
SECRET

# ACCOUNT OF ESCAPE OF

J.94368 P/O. H. BROOKS, R.C.A.F., 419 Sqn., Bomber Command, R.A.F.

Captured: LEER, 9 Apr 42.

Escaped: TOST, 10 May 43.

Left : ODESSA, 7 Mar 45.

Arrived: In U.K., 19 Mar 45.

Date of Birth : 29 Dec 21.

Private Address:

R.A.F. Service : Since 14 Aug 40.

6964 Drolet Street,

Post in crew : Navigator/Bomb aimer.

MONTREAL, Canada.

## Other members of crew:

P/O. CREIGHTON (RCAF) (pilot) (last heard of at Stalag Luft III)  
 P/Sgt. McWILLIAM (RCAF) (2nd pilot) (last heard of on march  
 near GORLITZ)  
 P/Sgt. PATON (RCAF) (wireless operator) (last heard of on  
 march near GORLITZ)  
 P/Sgt. PARKER (RCAF) (front gunner) (last heard of on march  
 near GORLITZ)  
 P/O. HOWARD (RCAF) (rear gunner) (killed in crash (German  
 report)).

## 1. CAPTURE:

We took off in a Wellington aircraft from  
 MILDENHALL about 2100 hrs on 8 Apr 42 to bomb HAMBURG.  
 On approaching the target the starboard engine caught  
 fire and all efforts to extinguish the fire failed. The  
 bombs were jettisoned and shortly afterwards the port  
 engine also burst into flames. We were then ordered to  
 bale out.

9 Apr 42,  
 Baled out near  
 OLDENBURG.

I landed in a field close to a farm-house about  
 two miles North of OLDENBURG (GERMANY 1:250,000, Sheet N 54,  
 R 3205) and injured my knee on landing (about 0100 hrs  
 /9 Apr 42). ....

INTERVIEWED BY: I.S.9(W).  
 O.R.S., Bomber Command, R.A.F. } 19 Apr 45.

M.O.1(S.P.), P.I.D., F.O., M.I.5., M.I.3c .. Apr 45.

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Historical Section, Air Ministry (Mr. J.C. Nerncy).  
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## APPENDIX A.

Distribution: M.I.5.  
 (Lt.-Col. Seymer). I.S.9,  
 M.O.1(S.P.). I.S.9(W) (File).

## APPENDIX C.

Distribution: D.D.M.I. (P/W).  
 I.S.9. I.S.9(X). M.I.5 (Lt.-  
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 MIS, ETUSA. M.O.1(S.P.).  
 I.S.9(W) (File).



Captured  
near LEER.

9 Apr 42). I tore my parachute canopy into strips, and hid the harness etc. I then started walking in a North Westerly direction and at about 0800 hrs arrived on the outskirts of LEER (Q 8115). Due to my injured knee I was unable to walk any further so approached a house where I asked for help. The occupant called the police and shortly afterwards I was escorted to the local police station by a civil policeman and a soldier.

In the afternoon I was taken in a police car to Police H.Q. in OLDENBURG. Here I met the remainder of my crew with the exception of P/O. HOWARD whom the Germans stated was killed in the crash of the aircraft. We were then taken to a G.A.F. airfield on the outskirts of OLDENBURG. Here we were searched and had our personal belongings - watches, lighters etc. confiscated. We were questioned by a G.A.F. Hauptmann who threatened and shouted at us for about an hour. We were then placed in the Detention Barracks where we remained until about 1500 hrs on 10 Apr when we were taken to the railway station. Accompanied by two officers and three guards we went by train to Dulag Luft, arriving in the afternoon of 11 Apr. We were each put into a separate cell, stripped to the skin, and, after about half an hour had our clothing returned to us. They found our special fly buttons and collar studs but I managed to retain a compass which I kept in my mouth. We were then taken to the interrogation centre and given the bogus Red Cross form. The interrogator told us that mess bills and a 1250 had been found in HOWARD's clothing, from which he had established our squadron, number and our base. He appeared to be most interested in Group Captain EVANS-EVANS, our base commander. We maintained that we had never heard of him. We remained at Dulag Luft for two more days then went to LAMSDORF. P/O. CREIGHTON going to SAGAN. We arrived in LAMSDORF about the 16 Apr, after a rail journey which took three days.

2. CAMPS IN WHICH IMPRISONED:

DULAG LUFT (WETZLAR)	11 Apr 42 (for a few days).
STALAG VIII B (LAMSDORF)	16 Apr 42 - 10 May 43.

Working camps attached to Stalag VIII B.

BOBREK (on Polish Frontier)	Jun 42.
ZWITTAN (Sudetenland)	Sep 42.
TOST	10 Nov 42 - 10 May 43.

3. ATTEMPTED ESCAPES:

(a) First Attempted Escape:

On about 28 May, after learning something about the camp routine etc. I changed my identity with a Private in the New Zealander Army. Under this assumed name I went out of the camp with a Pole named Joseph KRAWIEC on a working party. We were sent to BOBREK about 3 km. from the Polish frontier and went to work in a coal mine.

May 42,  
Escaped from  
Working Camp  
at BOBREK.

On the night of 8 Jun a heavy storm was raging and I decided that it would be a good opportunity to get out. The camp in which we were billeted was surrounded by two barbed wire fences with flood lights at each of the four corners. The windows of our huts were also covered with barbed wire. There was only one gate with an armed ....

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an armed guard on the gate and another guard who patrolled the perimeter between the two fences. Pte. CROSS, an Irishman in my room, elected to make the attempt with me and we had been saving up biscuits, chocolate, butter and cheese from Red Cross parcels.

I had managed to steal a pair of pliers from the coal pit. Shortly before midnight we got our kit of food etc. ready and cut the barbed wire on the window with the pliers. At midnight the night shift returned to camp from the mine and it was the custom of the guard patrolling the perimeter to go to the gate to assist the gate guard in checking the P/W into the camp. While he was doing this we got out of the window, cut our way through the wire of the first fence at a point as far from the gate as possible and in shadow. We jumped over the second fence and ran down the embankment of the railway which ran past the camp. We followed the line for a short distance in a South-Easterly direction, then made our way across country to the main highway leading to KRAKOW. We made our way along the roads by night, sleeping during the day. We rationed our supply of food to 6 biscuits and butter or cheese and one small piece of chocolate per 24 hours.

16 Jun 42,  
Recaptured  
KRAKOW.

Travelling thus we arrived in KRAKOW (GERMANY 1:250,000, Sheet Q 51, Z 24) about 16 Jun. I went to a house for food where unfortunately the Polish occupants were pro-German. They got the police and we were taken to the station, where we remained in a cell until the following morning. From here we went to Gestapo H.Q. where we were questioned and then sent to a P/W camp which was just being started on the outskirts of the city and contained about 200 Russians. We were here for three days and I made several attempts to get out via lavatory windows without success. We were then sent back to LAMSDORF where we got 14 days solitary confinement on bread and water as a punishment. After being released from solitary confinement I was returned to the working party compound, but as I had blistered my feet badly while at liberty I had to report sick and was in the camp hospital for a month and a half. While in the hospital I met W/Cdr. BADER. He had been out on a working party with 6 other airmen all posing as privates and had made an unsuccessful attempt to escape.

#### (b) Second Attempted Escape:

I remained in camp for about 3 weeks after discharge from the hospital then got out on another working party. This time ten of us went to ZWITTEAN in the Sudetenland to reinforce a party working there on the railway. We arrived on 8 Sep and were billeted in a two-storey house with the guards on the ground floor. On 10 Sep I managed to steal a hacksaw and while the boys sang and made a row I cut the bars on the window. Our trousers and boots were taken from us each evening and locked in a small room leading off our sleeping quarters. We got the hinges off the door of this room, got our trousers and boots and went out of the window on a rope made out of blankets. 6 of us escaped, leaving in pairs. I went with Cpl. Joseph SIDI, a Jew. We walked to LUNENBURG about 30 miles South of BRUN (GERMANY 1:250,000, Sheet N 49, U 41). Here we went to the marshalling yards and got on a coal train bound for VIENNA. On the ....

10 Sep 42,  
Escaped from  
ZWITTEAN  
Working Camp.



Recaptured  
LUNENBURG.

On the outskirts of VIENNA we left the train and spent the day hiding in the woods. We then decided to go to ITALY and returned to the marshalling yards at about 2130 hrs. After spending about half an hour looking for a suitable train we found one loaded with lumber bound for TRIESTE. We shifted the lumber in one of the cars, making a hideout just big enough for the two of us to squeeze into. About midnight a yard engine shunted us about the yards making up a train. After the train was made up it was shunted to an illuminated part of the yard and inspected. The inspector apparently had his suspicions aroused by the timber we had shifted as he shifted it back and found us. We were arrested by railway police and taken to their cells. From here we went to the local police H.Q. and then to a French P/W camp about 80 km. South of VIENNA at a place called LAMERSTADT. This camp contained a large number of French, Poles and Serbians. We were confined in a sort of a dug-out with a barred door for 8 days. I tried to get out of here but was caught loosening the bars by a guard. He summoned an M.C.O. who beat me for attempting to escape. We were then sent back to LAMSDORF and served another 14 days' solitary confinement.

#### 4. FINAL ESCAPE:

Shortly after being released from prison I got on another working party. This time on 10 Nov 42 I was sent to TOST (Sheet Q 51, Y 29) to work in a saw mill. I was accompanied by Sgt. DUNCAN (S/P.G. (G) 2951) 51st Highland Division, and we planned to escape from the working party together. On our arrival we were warned by a Feldwebel that he knew that Sgt. DUNCAN, myself and 5 others were planning to escape and if we attempted it we would be shot. As a result of this we were specially watched. Obviously information was leaking out and by 15 Dec we had established without doubt that two British P/W were giving the Germans all the information that they could get. We beat them up and told them that if they did not report sick we would take more stringent measures. They reported sick and returned to LAMSDORF.

About 10 Jan 43 there was some trouble with the mill boss and most of the Ps/W went on strike, with the result that 14 were sent back to LAMSDORF and were replaced by 14 Canadians captured at DIETPE. Sgt. DUNCAN was put in charge of us and I got myself a job as a lorry driver. I left the mill daily, delivering lumber to places in the vicinity. This enabled me to get a good idea of the geography of the district and make a few contacts with the Poles. I managed this by putting dirt in the carburettor and each time the engine stalled, which was quite frequently, I told the guard that I would get help from the Polish civilians to start the lorry again. About this time I was again warned not to attempt an escape and we became suspicious of another British P/W whom we believed was acting as an informant, but we were never able to catch him.

As a result of my numerous breakdowns with the lorry I had managed to get and conceal 2 large maps of Europe and four  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch maps of the TOST district. We had also accumulated a good supply of Red Cross biscuits, chocolate etc., a hand-saw blade and some spare clothes which we stole from the camp stores. On 10 May /with this ....

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10 May 43, with this gear made up into two bundles, Sgt. DUNCAN  
Escaped from and I sawed the bars off the window of our room and got  
Working Camp at away. We travelled by night, slept by day, walking  
TOST and along the highway. We went to LANGENDORF (Sheet P 51,  
reached POLAND. H 83) from here to LUBLINIEC, from here to HERBY  
(Sheet Q 51, T 83) and from there to CZESTOCHOWA (T 63),  
May 43 - Jan 45 Poland. In CZESTOCHOWA I contacted a member of the  
Worked with Polish underground on about 15 May 43 at an address given  
Polish partisans. me by a Polish airman in LAMSDORF. From this date  
onwards I remained with the Polish underground until  
Jan 45, the arrival of Russian troops. I embarked at ODESSA  
Contact with aboard the S.S. MORETON BAY on 7 Mar 45 and arrived in  
Russian forces. the U.K. on 19 Mar.

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