

SECRET

M.I. 9/S/P.G. (C) 2951.

ESCAPED FROM WORKING PARTY (TOST)
ATTACHED STALAG VIII B (LAMS DORF) AND
JOINED POLISH PARTISANS. FINALLY
MADE CONTACT WITH RUSSIANS.

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

ACCOUNT OF ESCAPE OF

2873963 Sgt. DUNCAN, John. Gordon Highlanders, 51 (H) Div.

Captured: ST. VALERY 12 Jun 40.
Left : ODE SA, 7 Mar 45.

Escaped: 10 May 43.
Arrived: In U.K., 30 Mar 45.

Date of Birth : 8 May 10.
Army Service : Since 3 Dec 28.

Peacetime Profession: Reservist -
Telephone Engineer.
Private Address: Craig Mills,
STRATHMARTIN,
Dundee.

1. CAPTURE:

I was captured several hours after my regiment had
surrendered on 12 Jun 40 at ST. VALERY EN CAUX.

2. CAMPS IN WHICH IMPRISONED:

Political prison (ROUEN) 11 Sep - 1 Dec 41.
Stalag VIII B (LAMS DORF) Dec 41 - May 43.

Working camps attached to Stalag VIII B:

TRAUNTEHAU May 42.
TROFFAU -ON-ODER Aug - Sep 42.
TOST Nov 42 - May 43.

3. ATTEMPTED ESCAPES:

(a) First attempted escape and evasion for 15 months.

12 Jun 40,
Escaped from
guards at
ST. VALERY-EN-
CAUX.

I was taken to an apple orchard in the town of
ST. VALERY after I had been captured, where a German
regiment was quartered. During the evening my guards began
drinking and I seized the opportunity when they were not
watching, of slipping off under cover of darkness and got
away. I climbed over the hedge surrounding the orchard and
walked up the road. On the way a German sentry called on
me to halt, but I shouted out "Comrade" and he let me go by.
/I hid

INTERVIEWED BY: I.S.9(W).) 1 Apr 45.
M.O.1(S.P.).)

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APPENDIX C.

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15 Jun 45,
FECAMP.

I hid that night above a hen house and then continued on my way to ST. PIERRE EN PORT (N.W. EUROPE 1:250,000, Sheet 4, L 85). The next evening I met a Frenchwoman who gave me some food and directed me to FECAMP (L 65) which I reached on 15 Jun. Here I hid in a shed in the electricity works, where I found some civilian clothing which I put on, and left again the same evening, walking in the direction of LE HAVRE (L 42).

17 Jun 45,
LE HAVRE.

I reached LE HAVRE on 17 Jun and hid in empty houses in the town for the next two days. During this time I collected a bicycle, a pistol and ammunition and some binoculars. Armed with these, I cycled to ST. GILLES DE CRETOT (L 83), where I had been stationed for a short while during the earlier part of the year, and where I had several French friends. Here I was given civilian clothing and told that it was impossible to cross the river SEINE. I spent the night at the house of one of my friends' relatives and then moved to another house near the woods the next day.

21 Jun 40 -
11 Sep 41.
ST. GILLES DE
CRETOT.

I remained in the district of ST. GILLES DE CRETOT from 21 Jun until 11 Sep 41. During this time I joined a small group of people who did a certain amount of sabotage in the district. I did not try to make my way to Spain, as I thought that the second front would be starting and I did not want to risk being picked up and interned in Unoccupied FRANCE. I trusted my French friends implicitly and considered that it was wiser to remain where I was than to continue my journey.

While I was living in ST. GILLES DE CRETOT I met two British soldiers, Opl. STAMPER and Pte. WOODBURN, whom I believe were both from the Border Regiment. They stayed with me until May 41 when, at their request, I put them into contact with an organisation which was able to send them through to Unoccupied FRANCE. I warned them that they would have to make their own way to SPAIN once they had crossed the demarcation line and that there was considerable risk of being interned, but they insisted on going. I heard later that they had both been interned.

11 Sep 41,
Recaptured and
imprisoned at
ROUEN.

On 11 Sep my presence was given away to the Gestapo by two women. The house in which I was staying was surrounded and I had no opportunity of getting away. I was taken to the political prison at ROUEN where I was interrogated on many occasions and kept there for 80 days. I was severely beaten up because I would not give the names of those with whom I had been in contact. I was also given very little food.

On 1 Dec 41 I was sent to Stalag VIII B (LAMSDEORT) (GERMANY 1:100,000, Sheet 117, 6703) where I was put into a Straflager until 2 May 42.

(b) Second Attempted Escape.

At the beginning of May I volunteered to go out in charge of a Working Party near TRAUTENAU (Sheet 115, 6403). On 8 May I escaped at night with the intention of making for FRANCE. I took with me some bread and vitamin tablets. I walked to PRAGUE where I was recaptured five days later.

/I was

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I was sent back to Stalag VIII B where I was given 10 days' solitary confinement.

(c) Third Attempted Escape.

After I had been back in Stalag VIII B for two months, I volunteered to go out in charge of a wood-cutting party near TROFFAU-ON-ODER (Sheet 127, 9333). I escaped from here in Sep 42 with Pte. FROST, a New Zealander. In preparation for this I dyed my uniform with indelible pencil. We walked 8 kms to the railway where we jumped on to a goods train; which was moving slowly, and hid in an empty waggon. We jumped off at daybreak and slept in some woods. We continued walking for the next two or three days, when we were captured by the police in AUSTRIA near the Austro-Czech border. We were taken to VIENNA and then to ZLIN in CZECHOSLOVAKIA (GERMAN 1:250,000, Sheet P 50, O 21), where we were imprisoned in a civil prison for two weeks. After that we were sent back to Stalag VIII B where we were given 21 days' solitary confinement.

4. ESCAPE FROM WORKING PARTY NEAR TOST.

While I was serving my sentence for my attempted escape in Sep 42 in Stalag VIII B, I met W/O. BROOKS (S/P.G. (G) 2950) who had exchanged names with an Army Private who had taken BROOKS' place in the R.A.F. compound. Together we planned another escape.

We arranged to go out on a Working Party near TOST (Sheet Q 51, Y 29) of which I was in charge and escaped from here on 10 May 43 by sawing through the bars in our hut and cutting the wires round the camp. We had been saving up food for six months and had acquired a compass from a Bavarian woman. BROOKS had obtained some maps and we stole articles of clothing from the camp stores. Armed with these we set out for the Polish border. From this point my story is the same as that of W/O. BROOKS.

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APPENDIX C.
M.I.9/S/P.C.(G)2951.

The following information was obtained from BRITISH personnel who have been repatriated.

If further circulation of this information is made, it is important that its source should not be divulged.

ESCAPER'S NAME, etc:- 2873963 Sgt. DUNCAN, J.,
Gordon Highlanders, 51st Highland Division.

DATE OF INTERVIEW :- 1 Apr 45

While W/O BROOKS (S/P.C.(G)2950) and I were working for the Polish Home Army I was told by Major BOROWI who was a Brigade Commander of the A.K. that I had been given the rank of Lieutenant in the Polish Home Forces.

I.S.9(W).
16 May 45.

R.T. Smith 2/0
FD Captain, I.O.

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