

HEADQUARTERS  
82ND FIGHTER GROUP  
APO 520

22 February 1944

SUBJECT: Interrogation of Evaders.

TO: Commanding General, Fifteenth Air Force, APO 520. THRU CHANNELS.

1. Enclosed herewith official interrogation and story of evasion from Greece of:  
2nd Lt. Clayton A. Bennett, 0-743305, 95th Fighter Squadron, 82nd Fighter Group.  
2nd Lt. Edwin R. English, Jr., 0-742988, 96th Fighter Squadron, 82nd Fighter Group.

DAVID WELD  
Captain, Air Corps  
Intelligence Officer

2nd Incls:

- Incl 1 – Interrogation, Lt. Bennett (5).
- Incl 2 – Interrogation, Lt. English (5).

1st Ind.

D-5-rwh

HQ, FIFTH WING (US), A.C. of S., A-2, APO 520, 22 Feb 1944.

TO: Commanding General, 15th Air Force, APO 520. ATTN: Escape Intelligence Officer

1. For your information.

For the Commanding Officer:

ARTHUR M. CLARK,  
Lt. Col., Air Corps,  
A.C. of S., A-2

2 Incls:

- Incl 1 – Interrogation, Lt. Bennett (in quint)
- Incl 2 – Interrogation, Lt. English (in quint)

HEADQUARTERS  
82ND FIGHTER GROUP  
APO 520

19 February 1944

Subject: Interrogation of Evader 2nd Lt. Clayton A. Bennett, 0-743305, 95th Fighter Squadron, 82nd Fighter Group.

To: Commanding General, Fifteenth Air Force, APO 520.

1. Personal history.
  - a. Age, 24
  - b. Service, commissioned 12 April 1943.
  - c. Missions, 17 over Italy, the Balkans, including convoy patrol, dive bombing, strafing and bomber escort.
  - d. Duty, pilot, P-38 type aircraft.
  - e. Shot down, during raid on Athens Eleusis Airdrome, 8 October 1943 by enemy fighters at 300 MPH flat on the water
  - f. Wounds, flak hit in leg, serious injuries on face, legs and back. Spent nine weeks in bed without moving.
2. Members of Crew.
  - a. Single-seater plane.
3. Additional prisoners.
  - a. Joined Lt. English, also of 82nd Fighter Group, during latter part of evasion. Also ran into many British and American evaders and escapers during long walking trip out of Greece, names unknown.
4. Assistance.
  - a. Major Gordon of British Army.
  - b. All inhabitants in town of Galaxhidion.
  - c. Miss Effie Condos in town of Galaxhidion.
  - d. Greek doctor.
  - e. Numerous guerillas and Greek villagers.

All Greeks were unanimously helpful to Lt. Bennett – many of above mentioned were risking their lives. British officers from various missions organized the escape trip out.

5. Escape Aids.

Purse useless because only contained French and Italian money.

Escape kit – fell in water.

First Aid kit – of great value.

Lt. Bennett states escape purse should contain minimum of ten gold sovereigns to be of value in Balkans. Recommends every pilot carry first aid kit. Pistol very helpful in giving evader self-confidence and assurance.

6. Interrogation.

Never in hands of enemy.

7. Evasion.

Catapulted out thru canopy of P-38 when shot down over Gulf of Corinth by enemy fighters while going 300 MPH. Picked up by Greek fishermen just after finally succeeded in climbing into dinghy. Sheltered in make-shift hospital, a private house in Galaxhidion for nine weeks before able to get out of bed. Finally made escape in party organized by British officers conducted by local guides and Greek guerillas, walking about 200 miles before injuries were completely healed. Party boarded Greek caique [sic] at Volos, reached Turkey safely, and returned to Italy via Syria and Cairo.

8. Lt. Bennett's courageous performance in aerial combat and his successful escape before full recovery from serious injuries deserve the highest commendation. A decoration such as the Silver Star would be eminently suitable in view of Lt. Bennett's gallant conduct throughout.

*David Weld  
Captain, A/C  
Intelligence Officer*

Attach to Lt. Stillman's interrogation.

1. Leslie, Walter T., 2nd Lt., 0-816823, 95th Ftr. Sq., 82nd Ftr Gp.

Born – 24 February 1923.

Enlisted – 20 June 1942.

Home Address – 242-26 131st Ave., Long Island, N.Y.

Peacetime Profession – Finisher.

Interrogated – 11 August 1944.

MIA – 10 June 1944.

RTD – 10 August 1944.

Missions – Seven.

2. Never in enemy hands.
3. While on a dive bombing mission in the vicinity of Bucharest on 10 June 1944, plane caught fire possibly due to a leak in the crossfeed.

Pilot bailed out at 0722 and landed ten miles north of Prokepljgg. Upon reaching the ground, due to his burns, peasants carried him for two hours in a northeast direction to a small village where a doctor gave him medical treatment for his burns. After the medical treatment he was moved into the hills where he met Lt. Stillman and party of evaders.

EVASION FROM GREECE  
2nd Lt. Clayton A. Bennet, 0-743305  
95th Fighter Sq., 82nd Fighter Gp.

On October 8th, I took off from San Pancrazio A/D, Italy, with the 95th and 96th Squadrons escorting 48 B-25s of the 321st Bomb Group (M) on a mission to the Athene-Eleusis A/D, Greece. We didn't have a bit of trouble going out and it looked like it would be a peaceful trip. As we approached the target, we saw a lot of enemy fighters assembling north of the A/D and well above our formation. The bombers went into their bomb run and flak began coming up very heavily at them. As soon as we saw the enemy fighters, we flew right through the flak to attack them. My flight chased one ME 109 away from the bombers and down to 5000 feet from our original 10,000 feet, then climbed up through some very accurate flak to protect the bombers as they turned left off the target. Just at that instant, a burst of flak hit my left engine throwing oil against my cockpit and a piece tore a big hole in my right leg below the knee. I didn't know I had been hit until I reached down and my hand came up covered with blood. My cockpit began filling up with smoke and I knew the left engine was on fire, although I couldn't see outside to the left because of the oil and smoke.

I tried to drop my belly tanks then, and should have dropped them before, but everyone else in the flight had kept theirs on until that moment. While I was tinkering around finding out what was wrong with my airplane, I had lost my flight, so I joined the nearest which was Lt. Muir's flight, a flight of four P-38s, with mine making the fifth plane. Hardly had I joined that flight when I heard 20 mm's exploding all around me. Then I knew that the Jerries were on my tail. I didn't have a rear view mirror on my ship, so couldn't see them. We were way behind the bombers by this time, and were the last fighters off the target. When those Germans fired at me, I immediately was going to hit the deck, even if I had to go down by myself, but Lt. Muir took his flight down at the same time I did. We were diving at a good 450 MPH and leveled out at that speed, and I thought we had shaken off the Jerries. I didn't think they would come down on us on the deck. I straightened out and was trying to catch up with the rest of the flight again, but my left engine was spluttering and it was getting hotter than hell in my cockpit from the fire. I flew straight for awhile and then all of a sudden I looked down at the water and saw a spray of bullets hit, so I looked back and saw two ME 109s directly behind me, side by side, and I could see all of their MGs firing. I saw another ME 109 just about 500 feet above those two, but it wasn't shooting. Some of the fellows said there were four enemy planes on my tail, but I saw only three.

I immediately began evasive action. Luckily I could still use my leg, although it was bleeding badly. When I was taking this evasive action, I was going at a hell of a speed, over 300 I would say. Then my props hit the water accidentally. There was an explosion in the cockpit and I just threw my hands up in front of my face. The next thing I knew, I was in the water, paddling feebly with my hands to keep my head up. My parachute was still on and everything was very peaceful. There were no planes around, or anything, and nothing was left of my plane but three or four oxygen bottles floating about 100 yards from where I was, and a fire on the water behind me. I had been thrown clear of the fire. The water was very calm and warm, and I was about a mile and a half from shore. I didn't realize anything was wrong with me until I began vomiting, and felt blood running down my face. I had a hell of a time getting my parachute off and wouldn't pull the dinghy out, I was so weak. My Mae West wouldn't inflate and I don't know what kept me up, but I kept paddling my hands. I was really felling desperate then, and I realized it was a fight for life right then and there. When I couldn't get the dinghy out, I paddled my way very slowly over to those oxygen bottles and hung onto one for about 45 minutes to an hour. While hanging there I saw two ME 109s going back to Athens, and thought they might come down and strafe, but they didn't. What was left of my plane was still burning on the water, but the ME 109s must have been low on gas. As they passed over, I let myself as low in the water as I could by hanging my arms around the oxygen bottle.

When X got enough strength again, I made my way back to the parachute that was still floating, and finally got my dinghy out. I inflated it and got up on it all right. I had no sooner got into the dinghy and was sprawled out, when a fishing boat appeared right on top of me. I had not seen it at all and may have been unconscious for a while. It was a pretty good sized fishing boat, and the men or it pulled me up and laid me on a blanket on the deck. They pulled my dinghy and parachute aboard too. They started searching me and as they pulled my knife out of the scabbard on my belt, they made as if to cut my throat with it. I said "Americano" as loudly as I could and they became all smiles. I was bleeding pretty badly, so had them take the first aid kit off my web belt, open it, and I took the sulfa powder and sprinkled it all over my face. They also got the bigger kit out of my parachute for me and I took a morphine injection to kill the pain. Instead of putting the morphine injector back

in the kit, they threw it overboard. They took everything they could find off me while taking me to shore. Maybe I wasn't conscious all the time. When we were pretty close to shore, a German seaplane came in low over the water and circled the wreck two or three times, but they didn't come close to our boat. As it was getting dark, the fishermen landed at a little village and took me on a blanket into the first house. They told me there were Germans in the town, but I had to be fixed up, so they took me there just the same. A nurse who worked in a hospital in Athens attended me. She didn't have any medical supplies, so they ripped up a sheet and bandaged my legs. They didn't have anything to put on the burns or cuts at all, but the bandages helped. I had cuts on my face, hands and arms, deep cuts down my back, the flak hole in my right calf, and bad burns on both legs, especially below the knees.

The Mayor of the town came to see me. He spoke some English and was a swell fellow. I wanted to stay there for the night, but he said it was impossible because the Germans would be searching all the houses looking for me. So they carried me back to the boat and then sailed about a mile up the coast to a cave up in the hills. They carried me in a blanket from the boat up to the cave and I slept the first night there. They gave me a lot of blankets so I kept warm. They cooked a chicken but I couldn't eat any, probably because of shock. We stayed in the cave all the next day, and the next night another fishing boat came over and took me to the town of Galaxidhion about 12 miles up the coast. There were head winds and we couldn't make very good time, so we pulled into a little cove in the side of the mountain during the next day. That night we arrived at the town about 12 o'clock, and the whole town was up waiting to see me. When they heard about an American airman coming in there, they all came down to the docks, wanting to help. However, all that most of them did was argue among themselves. Finally they took me to a private house, they called a hospital. A Greek doctor changed my bandages and had some kind of salve to put on my legs. It took two hours to change my bandages and then they put me to bed and I stayed there for eleven weeks.

The medical care was the best they could possibly give me. They even sent away to Athens for medical supplies, but for the first two weeks they didn't have any bandages. Each day they would take off my bandages, wash them, and use them over again the next day. They would only use a little of the salve at a time, because of its scarcity. The girls of the town acted as nurses and weren't very experienced, and the doctor didn't know very much more than they did, but they gave me the best they had. The girls were very nice to me. One was an American girl whose mother brought her to Greece when she was ten years old. Her father had owned a restaurant in the states, but when he died, her mother wanted to return to Greece. Her brother still lives in the U.S., and before the war used to send lots of things to them. They still get letters through the Red Cross from him occasionally, but it takes nearly a year for the letters to reach them. This girl could speak good English, and she talked with me a lot. It was her bed I stayed in, and she gave me lots of clothes. She was with me every day I was there.

There wasn't much food in this town, but they gave me what they had. For the first eight days I couldn't eat a thing and must have lost a lot of weight. Possibly I would have eaten the food pills in the escape kit, but it was lost while I was in the water. Bread was their chief food, and a little fruit. There was absolutely no meat except, for a few chickens which were very expensive. All their food was fried in olive oil, and didn't taste very good. There were a few sheep in the hills, but none were killed until Christmas time. Red Cross shipments weren't allowed to come to this town because the Germans knew there was a British mission there. Once in a while a little flour would be brought in. There were no wild animals or birds to be hunted in the mountains around there. A few olive trees grew in the vicinity, but most of the hills were covered with dense brush. Not even enough forage for sheep. The people in the town couldn't but food, but they did catch some fish, and I ate lots of that. Sometimes a boat would take a load of clothes, furniture, or anything they could spare and go off to trade at another village for food. The town had no industries at all and the people are barely able to live. The women were the only ones to do any work, going into the mountains and bringing back loads of brush for firewood.

German patrols had been through the village before, so the Greeks burned my parachute and dinghy. I kept my uniform and insignia beside my bed at all times for identification in case any Germans found me. While I was in bed there, German patrols came through the town on three separate occasions. My friends would look up the house I was in and hide in the hills. One German patrol went right by my window and I saw them plainly. They wore green uniforms and flight caps, and everyone carried a machine gun. There were five officers in the party and between thirty and forty soldiers. The townspeople always had three or four hours notice before the Germans arrived, and the Germans always came on foot. They could have driven there in cars, but they knew that

if they came in by surprise, the Greeks would massacre them. So they gave plenty of notice. Usually all they wanted was some food and water, and usually there were Greeks who would give it to them. The first party that came in saw a fishing boat just leaving the harbor, and they fired machine guns at it to make it turn back. They wanted to search the boat. The first time they came, I was very much afraid they were searching for me, but they never came into the house.

It was five days before the British Major came to see me. He had been away with his crew on a sabotage job. They were blowing up bridges. This particular Major had won a very high British medal for blowing up a big railroad bridge there in Greece. The bridge was very heavily defended with machine guns, but this Major and his party got to the abutments under mater at midnight. They set dynamite and got away safely before it blew up. Just about every bridge on the main roads and railroads have been blown up. One time they blew up a railroad just before a prisoner-of-war train came along, and 600 British prisoners got away. Most of them were recaptured, however.

This British Major was very nice to me. He gave me money - about 50 British sovereigns in all - while I was there, to buy food with. He took my escape kit away. It wasn't worth anything anyway - it had a map of Spain and France and the money was French francs and Italian lire. The kit was given to me just before I took off. You need money to pay the people for food, and gold is the only money of any value. For a gold sovereign, we got 1,600,000 drachmas (Greek). A chicken costs 300,000 drachmas, a package of cigarettes costs 1600 drachmas. You could get all the Greek or Turkish cigarettes you wanted. They would give you a sore throat if you smoked too many, but they weren't so bad. These Greek cigarettes are packed flat, and you had to round them out with your fingers.

The British missions were supplied by parachute drops. There would be 4000 gold sovereigns in every drop. At first, the British used to supply the Greek guerrillas, but after they broke up into parties and started fighting among themselves, it was stopped. The British wanted to help the party of the King, but the Communist Party didn't like it, and fought them. The Communist Party had even killed one British officer because he wouldn't supply them with arms and ammunition. While I was there, these guerrillas even stole some of the supplies dropped by British planes. I hear now that these different parties have made up, and are fighting the Germans together. While I was in Greece, they weren't doing any good at all.

The British Major who helped me had bought a fast boat and had it supplied, ready to leave if the Ellas (Communists) ever came for him. He told me to be ready to leave at a moment's notice and to come with him and fight if the Guerrillas attacked him. The British want the Greek King to return, but the people want a President like the U.S.

It was nine weeks before I got out of bed at all. They used to change my bed sheets every two days, and they just lifted me off the bed and lifted me back on while doing it. I had to do all my bodily functions in bed. The doctor said I would be in the hospital at least three months and he was surprised that I healed so quickly. He wasn't a very good doctor. While I was there, they had a typhus epidemic in town. A lot of people died of it. The Red Cross sent a doctor from Athens with serum and he inoculated everybody in the town, including me. The first time I got up, I walked with crutches. The next day I was so stiff and sore that I had to stay in bed another four days. Then I got up again, and tried to walk a little bit, gradually building up from there.

The British major planned our trip to the next mission, which was two days away. I actually started my trip back sooner than I should have. The British major didn't want me to go and the doctor said absolutely not to go. He gave me all the bandages he had and some of that salve, and I dressed my wounds all along the road. Lt. English had come to the village about two weeks before we started. He waited there until I was able to go. The day we started was the 23rd of December.

The night before Lt. English and I started, they gave us a big going-away party and hold a dance. The British Major bought a sheep to barbeque and sent to Athens for whiskey and champagne. It was a nice party, although I wasn't able to dance. The Greeks had some old American records and a victrola. There was cake, sandwiches, the barbequed sheep and drinks. We played games such as "Spin the Bottle" and "Post Office" and things like that. The Greek houses were built of stone, but were kept very clean and are nicer than the Italian



homes. But of all the cities and towns I went through, there wasn't one worth living in as far as I could see. Boy, I sure missed the States.

For the first week, it hurt like hell to walk, but I was so determined to get out of that country I just kept walking. We walked from daylight to dark and sometimes after dark. It was slow going, up and down mountains, by trail and cart track, most of the way we walked through snow or slush, and it was damned cold. I had lost my shoes in the water, but didn't even think of them until the eighth week in the hospital. Then the British Major bought me shoes, and a British battle dress. We carried passports, and would go to the Mayor of every town we passed through. He would furnish guides for us, and sometimes mules. Once in awhile we really got tired and tried to ride the mules, but it was better walking than riding those things. About half-way on the trip, we picked-up nine or ten escaped British prisoners of war. They had escaped from a prison train going from Athens to Germany. One fellow had a key be put in between the strands of barbed wire holding the door of the freight car closed and twisted until it broke. The prisoners then jumped out, one at a time, while the train was going slow up hill.

There were German Guards with machine guns at each end of the cars, but the British jumped out at night and get away with it. They said a lot of the British prisoners didn't want to escape, they had been prisoners for three years. At first the Germans had treated them very badly, but now they are treating them very good, with excellent medical care and all the things they can give them.

We met several parties along the way going to the same place we were, but we didn't want our party to get too big, so it was never more than 12. Too large parties would have trouble finding food, and places to sleep. We slept by twos in private houses in the villages where we stopped for the night. Usually we slept on the floor with a few blankets, as close to the fireplace as we could get. Once we had to cross a main line of railway tracks, the Germans had a trolley with automobile tires and once we had barely got across the tracks when it came along. It was a beautiful moonlight night, but they didn't see us, as we hit the dirt and lay still till they passed. All twelve of us crossed the tracks at the same time. Everyone was running but me - I could hardly run at all. This trolley carried machine guns and searchlights, but they never saw us.

There are very few German soldiers in the wilder regions of Greece. I believe I have talked to Gestapo men - Greeks who are under German pay. I believe the Germans knew I was there, but it would have taken an army to come out and get me. The guerillas don't fool with the Germans. If they catch a few lone Germans or a Greek they suspect of treachery, they capture them and torture hell out of them. Then they slit their throats. They have the nicest ways of torturing, They caught some women who had given information to the Germans, stripped them, tied them to posts in the main square of the town, slit their breasts and poured hot oil in them, then whipped them a long time before slitting their throats.

My pistol had been lost when I crashed, but I wished I still had it on that trip. Maybe it wouldn't have done me much good, but it builds up your morale a hell of a lot.

A wrist watch on my right wrist was lost in the crash, also my rings. I still have the watch on my left wrist.

I got the dog (Dick) from the doctor. We fed him the same things we ate, everybody shipping in, mostly bread and cheese on the trip out. He was quite thin then, but has fattened up since. The Greeks kicked him around so I asked If I could have him, and the doctor gave him to me.

We saw a lot of funerals in the villages we passed through. In some places, typhus was killing the people off faster than coffins could be made for them. The funerals were really something to see! The Greeks carry the body thru the center of town in a coffin with the lid off, and you can see the dead person lying there with folded arms. The relatives and immediate family follow behind the coffin, all screaming and yelling, crying like everything. It's a morbid sight.

Lots of times on the way out, we would be met at a village by someone who would say, "Get out of town. The Germans are coming." So we would have to retrace our steps and find a way around through the mountains. The villagers had a pretty good warning service. They had telephone lines from one town to another, just one telephone to a town. The men would take to the hills, but usually the women and children remained. Lots of



women, children and old people would be killed by the Germans. Whenever the guerillas stopped a truck and stole supplies, the Germans would pick out the nearest town to take revenge. They would destroy the town and kill all the Greeks they found in it. The Greek women were a lot braver than the men. There were a lot of women guerillas, too, wearing German or Italian uniforms, carrying a machine gun or rifle, with bandoliers of cartridges over each shoulder and a couple of pistols strapped on. The ones I saw looked like plenty tough customers.

We had to walk more than 200 miles getting out and it was through mountains all the way. We had to keep away from the lowlands and main roads because that is where the Germans are. We had to keep moving, too, because it is unwise to stay long in one village, due to informers. I always kept my identification card with me, because I knew if the Germans caught me without it they would kill me without a chance. We boarded a Greek caique at Voles and made the trip across to Turkey without incident, except for being stopped by a British submarine. From Turkey we went to Syria and then to Cairo.

While I was in the hospital, some Greeks from another town visited me with another British officer from another territory. These Greeks had seen Lt. Shawver's P-38 go down in flames and crash on a hilltop. They found pieces of his body and buried him on the spot. The British officer had Lt. Shawver's dog tags which the Greeks had found.

At the town of Galaxidhion lots of people used to come up to the hospital and ask me what the hell they should do about food, that they were starving, and that they just couldn't go on much longer. They said, "For God's sake, when you get back to America, tell the people there about us."

HEADQUARTERS  
82ND FIGHTER GROUP  
APO 520

19 February 1944

Subject: Interrogation of Evader 2nd Lt. Edwin R. English, Jr., 0-742988, 96th Fighter Squadron, 82nd Fighter Group.

To: Commanding General, Fifteenth Air Force, APO 520. Through Channels.

1. Personal history.
  - a. Age, 24
  - b. Service, commissioned 12 April 1943.
  - c. Missions: 18 missions over Italy and the Balkans, chiefly bomber escort.
  - d. Duty, pilot of P-38 type air craft.
  - e. Shot down - during raid on Athens Eleusis A/D, Greece, by enemy fighters at 300 MPH flat on 6 December 1943.
  - f. Wounds, 1st and 2nd degree burns on face and neck.
2. Members of Crew.
  - a. Single-seater plane.
3. Additional prisoners.
  - a. Joined Lt. Bennett, also of 82nd Fighter Group, during evasion. Encountered many other British and American evaders and escapers during long walking trip out of Greece - names unknown.
4. Assistance.
  - a. Many different Greek villagers and guerillas, names unknown. All Greeks were uniformly helpful. British officers from the various missions organized the whole journey out.
5. Escape Aids.
  - a. Escape purse lost in crash but would have been useless since should contain minimum of 10 gold sovereigns for use in Balkans.
  - b. Escape kit lost in crash.
  - c. First aid kit essential.
  - d. Lt. English recommends putting all escape aids next to skin to be sure of not losing them.
6. Interrogation.

Never in hands of enemy.
7. Evasion.
  - a. Shot down by enemy fighters over mountains west of Athens. Bailed out at 400 feet. Greek shepherds picked him up immediately and took him to small village where doctor treated his burns. A few days later he joined Lt. Bennett, also of the 82nd Fighter Group, at Galaxhidion. Both pilots escaped from Greece in party organized by British Officers and conducted by local guides and Greek guerillas. Trip was about 200 miles long. Party boarded Greek Caique at Volos, reached Turkey safely, and returned to Italy via Syria and Cairo.

8. Recommendations.

- a. Lt. English's coolness and skill in aerial combat in which he probably destroyed an ME-19, and his gallant behavior throughout this last mission and his subsequent escape, served the highest commendation. A decoration such as the Silver Star is well deserved by Lt. English.

*David Weld  
Captain, A/C  
Intelligence Officer*

EVASION FROM GREECE  
2nd Lt. Edwin R. English, Jr., 0-742988  
96th Fighter Sq., 82nd Fighter Gp.

It was December 6th, and we were escorting B-24s, to bomb the Eleusis airdrome at Athens, Greece. Just before the turn over the target, the two groups of bombers split, one making a 360° turn to the right, the other a 360° to the left; this rather disorganized us, though I later found it was done in order to gain altitude. Anyhow, they reformed, made their run, and we didn't see any fighters until we were coming off the target. It was then that I saw 3 ME 109s coming down on the tail of the last group of bombers; I called them in to Andy, and we turned back. To my surprise, we found at least 15 to 20 enemy fighters coming in from above us, by twos and threes. Andy turned into two that were coming in on our left, so Dolezal and I broke off and turned into two that were coming at us from in front, leaving him and his wingman to take care of the ones from the rear. One of our two started down, with Dolezal after him; the other made a head-on pass at me. My gunsight was flickering, so I turned it off, and fired steadily by my tracers as we closed. Apparently I was hit just as we made our range, for I noticed smoke in the cockpit, but I was too busy to give a damn just then. I started hitting him just as we got in range, with my tracers pouring in, and he pushed his nose down to dodge; I kept them on with forward pressure, and saw cannon shells explode in his engine, with pieces flying off his plane; as he passed fifty feet below me, I could see the pilot slumped over to the side of the cockpit. I made a quick break to the left, and saw him start straight down, smoking heavily; I watched him fall straight down for 5,000 feet, and would have followed, but there were too many planes around. So I broke to the right and picked up Dolezal again; we started a two ship weave back towards the bombers, when I found that I was on fire. I noticed that on the leading edge just inside the right engine nacelle was a hole the size of my fist; a 20 mm shell must have exploded in there, and it was rapidly getting worse. I tried to turn off the right engine gas, but the valve was jammed; I cut the mixture control, stopped the engine and feathered the prop. I saw I couldn't get up under the bombers, and as there were still a number of fighters around, I decided the best thing to do was to hit the deck and get away, so I called Dolezal and said I was going down. I peeled off and went straight down, pulling out on one engine at close to five hundred miles an hour at about 1500 feet over the plains, and heading west for the mountains pulling 40 or 45 inches on my left engine; nobody was following me. I thought the fire might blow itself out so I could get home on one engine, but by the time I made the mountains the fire was much worse, with the hole in the wing two feet wide and three feet long, burning fiercely; there was so much smoke in the cockpit that I couldn't take off my mask. I cleared the top of the mountain at tree top level and saw a nice little valley ahead of me where I thought I might be able to land. Someone called me, asking if I was all right; I answered that I was on the deck with one engine on fire and that I might make it; I repeated this, and someone asked my heading; I told them northwest. But just as I cleared the mountain, my left engine started cutting out, and I stalled out in a spiral spin to the right, the plane being at a 45° list to the right, and about 45° nose down. I was plenty close to the ground, so I had to get out, end soon. I called "I'm bailing out," grabbed the emergency canopy release and started out, but forgot to release my safety belt; I unsnapped it, put both hands on the top and pulled myself up; maybe I even jumped up and out, but I'm not sure. I have no idea how I went through the boom, as I went straight out the top without rolling down the windows; I probably went over it. My air speed was then about 110 or 115, just above stalling, having lost my speed in clearing the mountain top. The wind and flame hit me at that instant, and I threw my hands up to protect my face; after I was out of the flame, I grabbed for the rip cord, missed it, and got it the second time. I tore off my mask and helmet, which were afire, saw the around coming right up at me, and just had time to reach for the shroud lines and pull my feet up when I hit. Luckily, I landed on the slope of the mountain aids and broke ay fall; I rolled about ten or fifteen feet down the hill, getting all tangled up. I immediately got untangled and out of my chute, for my plane crashed and exploded about 100 yards downhill from me, pointed up hill, and the guns started to go off right in my direction. I ran down past the plane. My flying suit had been burned off, with my escape kit and escape purse, and I later found that the bask strap of my harness was burned nearly through and my clothes covered with the white stuff that the nylon of my chute burning left on me, so I guess that I had a mighty close shave. The only parts salvaged out of my plane were one tire and a dyna motor, the rest being just scrap metal; all my chute was swiped except one piece I had as a souvenir, and even it was stolen from me later on. In about ten or fifteen minutes two shepherds picked me up, one coming down the mountains and the other coming from below me. I told them that I was an American, and they assured me I was in friendly hands. They took me to a small village about five miles away, where a doctor dressed my face and neck, and where they put me up for the night. The next day they started with me for a hospital, as my face was pretty badly burned where it hadn't been protected by my helmet and mask, and my neck where it had been exposed; they were first and second degree burns, and I was pretty much shaken up and

upset. I rose part way on a mule, and the rest of the way on what must have been about the only motorcycle in Greece. I stayed at this hospital five or six days, until I was well enough to travel. I was very well treated; up to this time I had seen only Greeks but there always seemed to be someone around who could interpret a bit. There were two Italian doctors who treated my burns the best they could with what they had, using some stuff like alcohol that they said was the oldest known remedy for burns. It turned my hair yellow, but it cleared the pain in a couple of days, though it itched plenty when it started to heal; at least I have no scars. While at the hospital, the Greeks told me that, watching our fight with binoculars, they had seen five German planes go in that day; I also learned that they had seen a P-38 strafe two locomotives that day, both of them exploding; I found out after getting back that Dolezal was the one who had done this. From the hospital, I was taken to another small village, Galaxidhion, about three hours away, where I met Bennett. As I still wasn't in too good shape to travel, I stayed there for about ten days; at this place I found a couple of British officers and a few enlisted men, who were certainly anxious and ready to help me. After I'd been there four days, they removed my bandages, and my face was okay. On December 23rd, a British officer told us it was time to start on our Journey to this place from which we were to leave Greece. From then until about January 28th, we spent our time walking, moving along the road from one town to another, at times laying over a few days at a village or hut. We had with us just anybody who knew the trail, sometimes Greek Guerrillas, sometimes just a boy with a mule to carry our stuff. We were passed from hand to hand, and provided with passes we were supposed to have at all times. We didn't run into any Germans, though we found that we had passed within 100 yards of a guard post at one time. The Germans guard the railroads carefully, and one night as we crossed a track we had to duck a patrol car; they use them to run in front of trains, and to patrol the tracks; they mount machine guns and searchlights, have rubber tires, and are supposed to be pretty fast. At times the Greeks and their ways of living weren't too good, but I was mighty glad to have them helping me; so far as actual fighting is concerned, I doubt if they're very effective against the Germans; they're always talking about what they're doing, but you don't know how much of it to believe. They were usually fighting among themselves over political questions. Part of them were communists, and German propaganda is aimed at splitting up the different parties; there seemed to be a lot of underground parties working against each other. We tried not to talk politics, as there were too many different political opinions; some wanted a king, some a democracy, some communism and all were figuring on what was to come after the war. All of them were naturally interested in when we would invade the country. They all hated the Germans' guts, but if they hate anything worse, it's the Italians, who had actually caused more trouble than the Germans; they were in every village, town and hamlet, and had burned a bunch of villages. But we were privileged characters, and all the people cooperated splendidly with us Americans. We were not furnished with firearms, and had no need for them; mine had been lost with my plane, as had everything of any escape value, including my canteen.

After we started our Journey out, we picked up two more Americans, out of a B-24 crew that had been on the same mission with me, and some more Englishmen. On the first part of our hike, there wasn't much snow, but the last three quarters was all through snow, cold as hell, and straight over mountains; it was always either raining or snowing. I had electrically heated flying boots, with winter flying boots over them; the electric ones rubbed blisters, and the others were too heavy. The British gave me shoes, as they did everything they had, and we were lucky enough to be there at a time when they had supplies. Our food was just whatever they had to give us, sometimes a kind of mush they fix up with "auzo," a kind of white wine distilled from the residue left after making regular wine. In my opinion, they at least have enough to stave off famine. The British gave us a little money, which was absolutely necessary; American paper money was worthless where we were. British gold sovereigns were good anywhere, and I think our escape purses should have them instead of paper money, and a lot of them, as everything is expensive as hell.

So far as equipment is concerned, I'd suggest that anything a pilot wants to be sure of keeping be put underneath everything in a pair of pants next to your skin; everything I had on the outside of me was gone, but I kept my dog tag and my money belt with my AGO card. My AGO card was all I needed to prove my identification the few times that it was required. I don't know what to say about shoes; electric boots are too light to last, and wear blisters; winter flying boots are heavy and clumsy. I've already said that escape purses should contain as many gold sovereigns as possible.