

Le Massacre de Pexonne. Ferme de la Fosse 19 septembre 1944

3 hommes du 2ème SAS sont fusillés puis brûlés dans l'incendie de la grange : Sgt Fitzpatrick, Pct Conway et Pct Elliott

Les 2 fermiers, Mme Jacquot et son fils Lucien, hébergeurs des 3 hommes, sont également exécutés

La dénonciatrice est Geneviève Demetz. Elle et sa sœur Yvette travaillant pour le Kdo Wenger

Documents ci après :

L'histoire : extraits du rapport « Missing Parachutists » du Major Barkworth

Photos et documents communiqués par la famille Elliott

Case 5

Pexonne

10. 9. 1944

321375 St. Fitzpatrick M. 4200829 Pct. Elliot J., 14567132 Pct. Conway J. dropped by parachute on the night 1/2nd September 1944 at map reference Sheet 36/16. 1/50,000. 356853. 6/7

They were separated from the rest of the stick, and as Elliott had fractured his thigh on landing, the other two remained to care for him in a wood adjoining the farm of La Fosse near Pexonne.

On the afternoon of the 16th September, a detachment of the S.D. Kommando Wenger arrived at Pexonne, drove to La Fosse farm and took the three S.A.S. men prisoner. A Frenchwoman, Genevieve Demetz, who was working for the S.D., accompanied them, and the inference is that she had given information on the whereabouts of the three men.

The prisoners were then taken to the house at La Neuveville occupied by this S.D. Kommando, and confined there. Yvette Demetz, the sister of Genevieve, carried food to them.

On the 19th September they were brought back to the farm La Fosse, at which they had been captured. There they were shot and their bodies burnt in the apiary.

According to the evidence of Genevieve and Yvette Demetz, who both saw the vehicles carrying the prisoners and guards leave La Neuveville for Pexonne on the 19th September, the following Germans and French Milice were among the party: —

Ustuf. Schumann
Oscha. Kester Max
Oscha. "Fernand"
"Jean"
"René"
"Bobby" (? van Hout)

Louis Perdon, a French member of Kommando Wenger, admits having been to a farm near Pexonne which was burnt, and having seen an English prisoner there resembling St. Fitzpatrick. Perdon probably knows more than he cares to admit.

Evidence from civilians at Pexonne relative to the capture of the three English on the 16th September, and their murder on the 19th September 1944, was collected in November 1944 by S.A.S. and passed to S.H.A.E.F. The S.H.A.E.F. Court of Inquiry proceedings, for which among others the witnesses found by S.A.S. in November were used, is in the main correct.

The following points should be noted: —

Part II Section I, Findings of the Court, Para 16 (b)

"That the unit of the Sicherheitsdienst or Gestapo to which the murderer or murderers belonged had its headquarters, at the relevant date, in Baccarat, used the Fieldpostnumber 03069CC, and was under the command of a higher formation in Strassburg". This is not correct as Kommando Wenger, Fieldpostnumber 03069CC, was under command of B.D.S. France which was on the date mentioned at Fraize, and received no orders from B.D.S. Alsace at Strassburg. Para 16 (d):— There is no indication that Hauptmann Stein was connected with the case; he left Badonviller at the beginning of September 1944, and did not belong to Kommando Wenger. His position was Aussenstellenleiter for the branch of the Nancy Gestapo in Badonviller (see page 32).

Hauptmann Zimmermann was the officer commanding Bataillon Zimmermann. The abbreviation "Btl" has been read incorrectly from the receipt shown on Exhibit K as his initials "BU". Also the fact that "Amann" who signed for the bicycles was an Obergefreiter rules out the possibility that Zimmermann's unit was S.D. or gendarmerie, and must therefore have been Wehrmacht.

No evidence is known to exist which connects Bataillon Zimmermann with the Pexonne case.

Finally, the evidence given by Captain Platt, in Exhibit 33, who is stated to have made an investigation lasting 3 days on the S.D. organisation in the area is completely erroneous.

Accused and Suspect Accused

Ogruf. OBERG
Ostubaf. SUHR
Stubaf. Dr. STINDT
Stubaf. KOLB
Hstuf. GUTEKUNST
Hscha. GRIEM
Hstuf. WENGER
Hstuf. RETZEK

And such other members of their units as may be involved particularly, Ustuf. Schuman, Oscha. Kester, Oscha. "Fernand", "Jean", "Rene", "Bobby" (? van Hout).

Evidence appended: -

1. Statement of Genevieve Demetz
2. Statement of Yvette Demetz
3. Statement of Louis Perdon

Les 3 parachutistes Anglais

2ème SAS squadron A. Parachutés la nuit du 6/7septembre au Pré Barbier/Pierre Percée



De gauche à droite :

Pct John Herbert Elliott, 27 ans. Pct John Joseph Conway, 19 ans. Sgt Michael Benedict Fitzpatrick, 27 ans

Leurs tombes début 1945. Cimetière de Moussey

Ce sont les tombes marquées par le groupe des 3 croix de gauche. L'aménagement est à cette date encore provisoire



Les 3 croix recouvrent en fait un cercueil unique : une « boîte » contenant des cendres recueillies dans les décombres calcinés du bâtiment

C'est ainsi qu'il a du être fait dans tous les cas où les exécutions ont été l'oeuvre d'hommes du EinsatzKommando Wenger : Le Harcholet, Saint Prayel Barodet, Moussey ferme Ferry... Les hommes étaient abattus devant ou près d'un bâtiment facilement inflammable, les corps étaient ensuite jetés dans le bâtiment auquel était mis le feu. Toute preuve se trouvait ainsi effacée