

Major Herbert R. Brucker SF Pioneer

Part III: SOE Training & "Team HERMIT" into France

by Charles H. Briscoe

THE pre-World War II and Office of Strategic Services (OSS) training experiences of Major Herbert R. Brucker, a pioneer in Special Forces, were discussed in *Veritas* (Vol. 2, No. 3).¹ While American-born, he was raised from infancy in the bilingual provinces of Alsace and Lorraine in France. His father brought him back to the United States in 1938. It was 1940 when Brucker joined the U.S. Army. Knowledge of English was not critical for radio operators then because Morse Code (CW) was an international language. Brucker excelled in a skill that was critical in the Army, but more so in the OSS. Technician Four (T/4) Brucker volunteered for "dangerous duty" to escape training cadre duty and his language skills made him a natural to become an OSS special operative. After completing OSS/SO training in the United States, he was detailed to the British Special Operations Executive (SOE).

This article chronicles T/4 Herbert Brucker's SOE training in the United Kingdom and ends with the airborne insertion of "Team HERMIT" into south central France on 27 May 1944. Team HERMIT supported the French Resistance conducting unconventional warfare missions north of the Loire River until mid-September 1944. During those operations in France, Second Lieutenant (2LT) Brucker was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for extraordinary heroism. After duty with SOE/OSS in Europe, Brucker volunteered to serve in OSS Detachments 101 in Burma and 202 in China. He was a "plank holder" in the 10th Special Forces Group (SFG) with Colonel Aaron Bank (an OSS Jedburgh), served in the 77th SFG, taught clandestine operations in the SF Course, and went to Laos and Vietnam in the early 1960s.² Brucker's real special operations training began in January 1944.

British SOE had been putting agents into the German-occupied countries of Europe since 1940. This was almost three years before the United States formed the Office of Strategic Services.³ As such, British field training for special operatives far surpassed anything that the OSS could provide. Colonel Charles Vanderblue, Chief,

Special Operations Branch, OSS, knew this because he had detailed one of his training officers, Captain John Tyson, to evaluate SOE instruction. Tyson reported on 30 July 1943: "The training any prospective SO agent has received in our Washington schools prior to his arrival in this theater is entirely inadequate and no trainees should be considered for field operations until they have had further training in this theater, which in many cases will involve a period of three months."⁴

Spread thin by constant operational requirements, the SOE had agreed to joint training and covert activities with the OSS. Highly-proficient bilingual CW radio operators (capable of sending and receiving more than twenty words a minute) were always needed by the SOE. Hence, a trilingual OSS/SO operative (T/4 Brucker) with these radio skills was a real bonus.⁵

OSS/SO T/4 Brucker, during his SOE training, would be detailed for service with a British special operations team in south central France prior to D-Day, somewhat as a *quid pro quo* for the joint OSS/SOE arrangement.⁶ His team, HERMIT, was to replace "PROSPER." That team had been "rolled up" along with the Resistance network, when their female Hindu radio operator, Noor Inayat Kahn, codenamed "Madelaine," was captured by the Gestapo in late March 1944. This article will chronicle the SOE training received by T/4 Brucker and his team from January to May 1944 because there are numerous similarities with Special Forces assessment, qualification ("Q" Course), specialty, and advanced skills courses today. Unknown to Brucker at the time,



SOE special operative Noor-un-nisa Inayat Khan, RTO for Team PROSPER. She was posthumously awarded the George Cross MBE and Croix de Guerre with Gold Star.

the SOE training was specifically tailored for the HERMIT mission team members.

Traveling in uniform from Washington to New York, T/4 Herbert R. Brucker, the newly-minted Special Operations (SO) operative "E-54," was accompanied by another OSS soldier. There, Brucker and his escort, Andre, boarded a troop carrier (a former Australian cattle boat) bound for England. "When we got aboard that night, the vessel was virtually empty. The city was supposedly under 'brownout' conditions, but I remember a large red neon *Coca-Cola* sign blinking away in the night. Troops were billeted from the bottom to the top deck and from the rear to the front. Naturally, since we got on first, we ended up in the bottom rear. I grabbed a lower bunk and went to sleep. When a lot of noise woke me up in the morning, I realized that I was above the propeller," said Brucker.⁷

"We were underway and there were troops jam-packed everywhere. All of the triple-stacked bunk beds were filled with men. I was issued a cork lifebelt, but where I was bunked, I didn't have a chance if we got torpedoed. There was only one stairway to the deck in my section. Besides, we never practiced lifeboat drills," mused Brucker. "We were in a convoy and the boat zig-zagged back and forth."⁸ The dining area for the enlisted on the ship was so small (capacity for fifty) that meals were served twenty-four hours a day. Each soldier received a colored card that indicated his eating shift. Food was served in buckets (boiled potatoes filled one, beef stew another, and bread a third). Soldiers doled out what they wanted. Whoever emptied a bucket had to get it refilled. "The meals were very simple, but there was plenty because a lot of guys were seasick. The North Atlantic in winter was rough. For those 'hugging their bunks' in the bay, five dollars for a 'K-ration' meal was a good deal," said Brucker.⁹

Life aboard the cattle boat was crude. There was one latrine on each deck. That was the only place where smoking was permitted. "An MP limited access; one man out . . . one man in. It was always packed. Once inside you stumbled about in a thick cloud of cigarette smoke that reeked of human waste and vomit. It was terrible. Despite the cold of winter (mid-December 1943), some soldiers slept on deck because it was so hot in the crowded bays below and they figured that they could jump overboard if torpedoed. They wouldn't have lasted ten minutes in the cold water. It was a big relief when we finally docked at Glasgow, Scotland, on 23 December 1943," remembered the OSS operative.¹⁰

Once ashore, T/4 Brucker and Andre, his OSS escort, boarded a troop train for London with railway cars that were half the size of American ones. When the train arrived in London, "blackout" was in effect. Brucker recalled that "it was pitch black outside . . . so dark that you couldn't see the man in front of you. We were formed into 'chain gangs' and marched to the U.S. Army Replacement Center ('Repo Depot' in soldier parlance). We dropped our duffle bags in an assigned room. Out-



Destruction caused by the German Luftwaffe's nightly "blitz" of London.

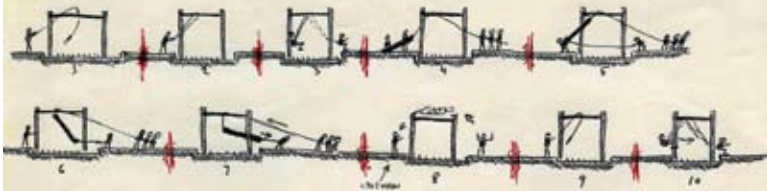
side we formed another 'chain gang' and shuffled off in the dark to a messhall. 'Blackout' in London made the 'brownout' in New York ridiculous."¹¹

The two OSSers discovered that the war was real the next morning. Both men were awed by the devastation caused by the Luftwaffe bombing "blitz" of London each night. Once T/4 Brucker had been in-processed at the Repo Depot, Andre disappeared. The day after Christmas 1943, Brucker was picked up by car and taken to a headquarters in London. There, he was informed that he would be attending SOE training and to report back on 2 January. "That came as a shock. I had already been trained by the OSS. I felt that I was ready for combat."¹²

No one in Washington, including his OSS/SO handler, George F. Ingersoll, had ever explained why he was being sent to England, nor that Brucker was going to be detailed to the British SOE. When he protested to the Director of F-Section (France), Major Maurice J. Buckmaster replied that "it would simply be murder to send you on an operation with just OSS training."¹³ Brucker was one of sixty-five Americans waiting to attend SOE schools at the end of 1943.¹⁴ Later, he had to admit that "SOE training was far superior. It made most of my OSS/SO stateside training seem amateurish."¹⁵ Not happy to undergo more schooling, Brucker, the professional soldier, did as he was ordered.

Initial SOE training, like Special Forces assessment and selection, was to determine the physical conditioning and psychological suitability of candidates. This was accomplished at STS 7 (Special Training School 7) near Pemberley, twenty miles to the west of London. Activities were sometimes done singly and other times in teams, but obstacle courses were used regularly. "Since we were a 'mixed bag of nationalities' having different levels of English language skills, you had to quickly determine physical abilities and agree on a leader. The instructors were always looking for those with initiative, risk takers, and clever innovators," remembered Brucker.¹⁶ They assessed how the physical obstacles were tackled, how

How To DEAL WITH THE "MINE FIELD" OBSTACLE



T/4 Herb Brucker, stumped by the minefield obstacle, later figured out a better way to get men across than trying to "tip-toe" across barbed-wire stakes in the pit. The sketch reveals that the team also had to carry a log across.

problems or puzzles were solved, and the number of details remembered during memory tests (maps, pictures, photos, critical steps of a process, or after reading instructions). Stress was a constant companion. "Hurry up! Do something!" were regular commands of the instructors. The trainees never got feedback. So, Brucker did his best all the time.¹⁷

"Speed was not necessarily critical. It was how you solved the challenges. I failed the barbed wire and minefield obstacle because I crawled under the wire and tried to wiggle around the mines. I found out later from a buddy that the best solution was to walk across using the barbed wire stakes," said Brucker. "Often numerical values were assigned to an obstacle and success was measured by how fast you or your team could get fifty points. Tough ones might be worth twenty-five points each, while simpler ones would have less value. You had to calculate how to meet the standard before your agility waned and strength failed."¹⁸ The team problem solving tests were much like those encountered in Army Leader Reaction Courses in Basic Non-Commissioned



The farm at Garramor, Inverness, Scotland, site for STS 25 (Paramilitary Training).

Officer Courses (BNCOC) and SF assessment and selection. After the psychological and physical evaluations, Brucker returned to London.

In the British capital, Brucker lived in an attic room of a private boarding house for the elderly. During air raids, he slid his blackout curtains aside to get a panoramic view of the bombing. Then, he would hear "the anti-aircraft ack-ack gun shrapnel tinkling down on the roof like sleet."¹⁹ His "control" headquarters was in the top floor suite of an old, fancy hotel. "This was the routine," Brucker explained. "You knocked on the door. A peephole was opened (like a 'Roaring 20s speakeasy') by Herbert, the security guard. The female receptionist, sitting at a desk in the center of a living room, checked the list of trainees. She told you to go to a particular room for a meeting, or gave you your next assignment with specific instructions."²⁰

T/4 Brucker, in his U.S. Army uniform, joined a group of American servicemen and a British officer at the Pennington train station to go to para-military training (STS 21-25) in northern Scotland. A British "conducting officer" accompanied all trainee groups. Since he went through all training, this officer was an evaluator as well.²¹ The group was housed at a hunting estate in Inverness-shire. British battle dress uniforms were worn during basic commando training. "The weather was miserable . . . cold and foggy. Midway through the course we were assigned a sabotage mission and provided a map. All twelve of us had a specific task and we had to prepare plans of action and brief them to the others. Then, a few days later, the instructor chose the team leader and we had to execute the mission without notes or doing a rehearsal. Once done, our 'commando' was critiqued. The mission was repeated until accomplished successfully," recalled Brucker.²² At Aberdeen, Scotland, the northwest railway terminus, his group was taught to "drive"—start and stop—a steam locomotive and how to place explosives on the railway tracks to insure that it derailed.

After learning the basics of engineering a steam locomotive, they were given explosives training. In a darkened room, the men learned how to quickly place "808" plastic explosive and timers by touch and feel. To derail



T/4 Herb Brucker's hand-drawn Christmas 1943/New year's 1944 card depicting training at STS 7 near Pemberley, England.



An SOE trainee crossing a two-rope bridge at STS 25.

an oncoming locomotive and railcars, two saboteurs, working directly opposite one another, had to place their explosive charges on the rails when the train was so close that the engineer could not stop it in time. Brucker said, "I remember how hard the rails were vibrating from the weight of the oncoming locomotive. Looking up, I saw the engineer pulling the steam whistle cord and trying to reverse the train wheels. By then, the locomotive was a mega-ton monster skidding towards us. Clouds of steam were blowing

out the air brakes, the whistle was shrilling, and the piston arms driving those huge steel wheels were screaming in protest. Thank heavens my partner and I did it right the first time. We managed to jump clear of the onrushing train just in time. Believe me, that was scary, but it was typical of how realistic SOE training was."²³ After that hair-raising experience, the OSS operative returned to London for new instructions from "control."

SOE schools were all numbered by specialty: STS 3, STS 7, etc. No "set" curriculum existed.²⁴ "Some people learned how to ride motorcycles, to drive trucks and cars,

F.A.N.Y.

FIRST Aid Nursing Yeomanry (F.A.N.Y.) "girls" of The Princess Royal's Volunteer Corps and Women's Auxiliary Armed Forces (W.A.A.F.) filled numerous A.T.S. (Army Transport Service) requirements. More than half of the F.A.N.Y. strength was dedicated to the British SOE. F.A.N.Y.s "were recruited by invitation and were mostly of 'good family.'"¹



F.A.N.Y. insignia

¹ M.R.D. Foote, *SOE in France: An Account of the Work of the British Special Operations Executive in France, 1940-1944* (Frederick, MD: University Publications of America, 1984), 48.



Numerous F.A.N.Y.s worked at the Beau lieu estate, located southwest of Southampton. The SOE used this facility for intelligence training.



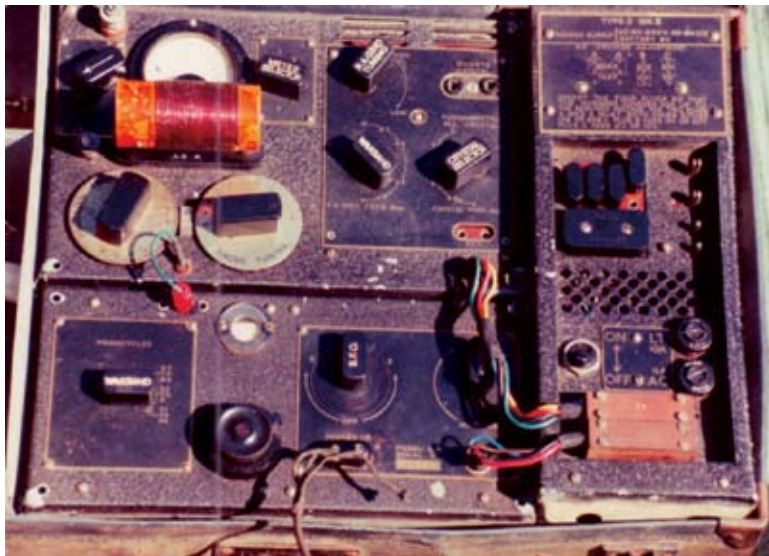
Two SOE trainees simulate setting explosive charges to derail the onrushing steam locomotive near Aberdeen, Scotland.

Selected SOE Schools for Special Operatives	
STS 3	Foreign Weapons
STS 7	Agent Student Assessment Board
STS 17	Industrial Sabotage
STS 21-25	Para-Military School
STS 31-37	Security and Finishing School
STS 39	Propaganda School
STS 40	Reception Committee
STS 47	Special School in Foreign Weapons, Booby Traps, Mines, and Sniper Course
STS 51	OSS Parachute Training
STS 52	Wireless Training School
STS 54	Advanced Radio and Wireless Operator Training
STS 61	Lysander and Dakota Course ¹

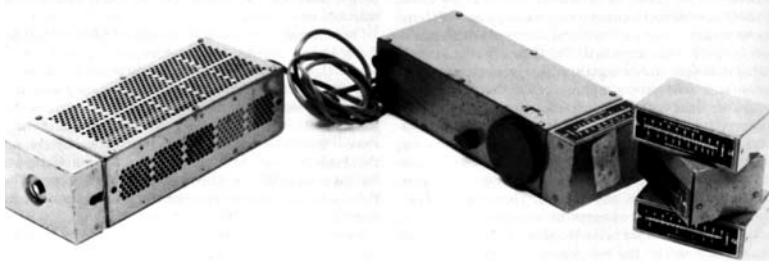
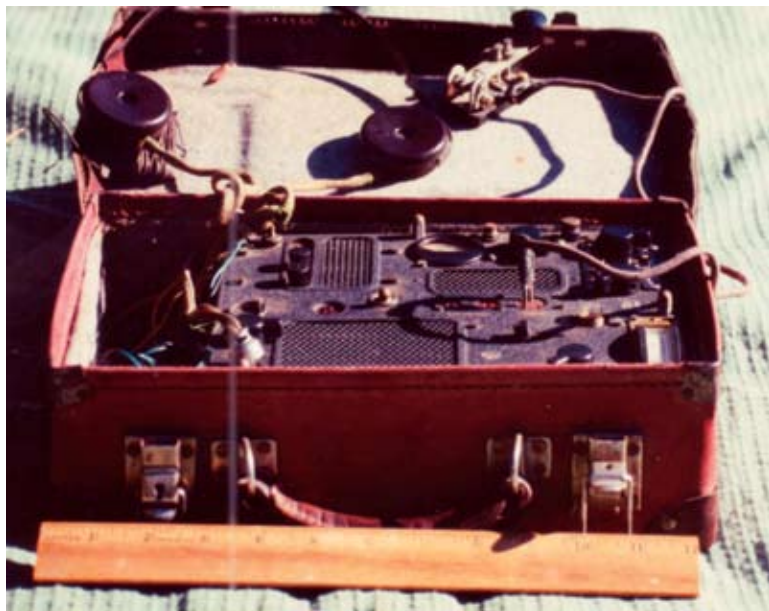
¹ *War Diary*, SO Branch, OSS London, Vol. 9: Training, 41.

to operate power launches and sail boats, and to drive streetcars and locomotives. I went where they told me, but I always wondered how success was measured in the various courses. It wasn't like marksmanship training where you were supposed to hit the bull's eye. They did monitor us to determine natural strengths and special skills."²⁵ Brucker's next training was at the Special Radio and Wireless School at Thames Park, Oxfordshire (STS 54).²⁶

At the radio school, most of the instructors were ATS



Large Type 3 Mark II radio above and the small Type A Mark III radio below in suitcase containers.



The cigarette pack-sized "Biscuit" AM radio receiver with ear plug.

"girls." Students of all nationalities, male and female, attended. Some were taught the basics of CW . . . simply enough to communicate (five words per minute) in an emergency. Other RTOs like Brucker were given advanced training. Small one-room sheds with a door and a window were scattered all over the grounds. The shed was just big enough for table, chair, electric lamp, and radio transmitter and receiver. Antennas were set up to limit transmissions to a couple hundred yards. "Because I sometimes had trouble understanding the English spoken by the instructors, I wanted to read the messages to make sure that I got them right. According to assigned schedules, we transmitted and received using the large Type 3 Mark II suitcase radio (fifty pounds with transformer), the little Type A Mark III radio, and the cigarette pack-sized "Biscuit" receiver with an earplug," said Brucker.²⁷

Radio training was tailored to specific missions. Special Operations (SO) and Special Intelligence (SI) operatives received different classes. "I learned field expedient repairs ('Rube Goldberg' fixes) for my assigned radios, similar ones, and generators. Male maintenance 'experts' created problems that we had to identify by listening to malfunctioning sets. We had to limit transmissions and move constantly to make direction-finding by triangulation difficult. Germans also used airplanes to locate transmitters. The airplanes' noses bristled with antennas. Photos of German ground mobile units and their special planes were shown to help us recognize them," said Brucker.²⁸

By the time an RTO had finished the course, the ATS radio monitor had "fingerprinted" his transmission style. It was usually established by how a specific letter was keyed by the operator. That fingerprint, referred to as his "fist," was recorded on a gramophone disc. Brucker's personal security trait was to send only a single letter when a word contained paired sets. If forced to transmit under duress, his preamble was to contain a deliberate error. But, the RTOs never practiced the duress signal.



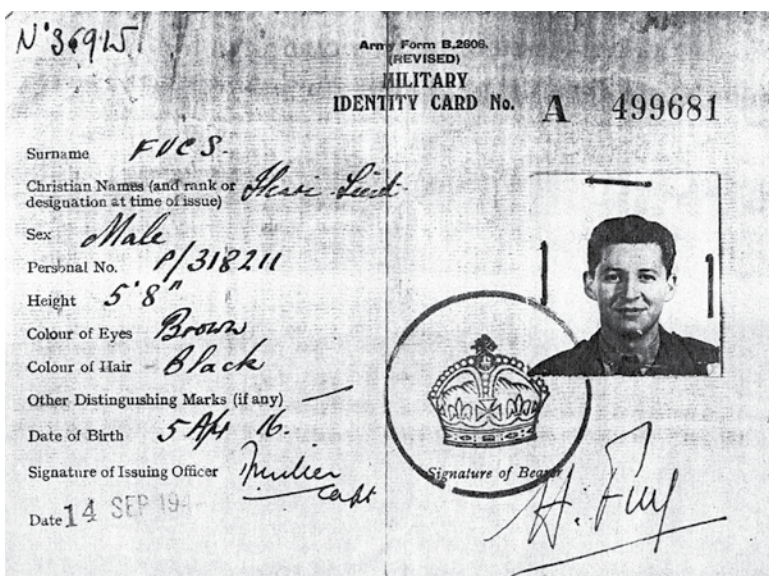
Top: German Junkers JU88G night bomber in flight; Left: Nose of the JU88G night bomber bristled with antennas; Right: German Messerschmitt Me110G4 night fighter with nose antennas.



U.S. Army ID photo of 2LT Roger B. Henquet.



OSS/SOE sketch of "Roland" = Henquet.



Herbert Fucs' ID card

The OSSer ended his messages with the popular jingle, "Shave and a haircut." He never received the corresponding "Two bits" response until he was ordered back to England when the HERMIT mission was complete. "Supposedly, my gimmick 'flagged' me as an American. But, many German Army radio operators typically ended their transmissions with two '8's'. Decoded they were two 'H's' that meant 'Heil Hitler!'" retorted Brucker.²⁹ After completing the radio and wireless school, T/4 Brucker was teamed up with his mission partners.

It came as a surprise when French-speaking Roger B. Henquet (pronounced "On-Kay"), a former vice president of Schlumberger Oil Company in Texas, and surgeon Henri Fucs (pronounced "Fooks"), a German Jew who spoke French, corralled Brucker at "control" headquarters on 11 March 1944, to announce the partnership.³⁰ "During training, many of the students were British. Though Americans were going through, we weren't billeted together, and I did not socialize with anybody in particular. I kept to myself," explained Brucker.³¹ Henquet and Fucs liked training with him and thought that



Highlight showing Mailaig and Arasaig, Scotland.

he was a superb radioman. British special operations teams were usually composed of an American or British officer, a Frenchman, and an RTO. "The daily CW training was 'play' for me. That's why they picked me," said Brucker.³² From then on, they worked together as a team, starting in northwest Scotland.

Some SOE field training was conducted at a hunting and fishing estate in northwest Scotland, near Arisaig. The escorted SOE trainees went by train from London to Mailaig, Scotland, the rail line terminus, and then by motor launch to an estate near Arisaig. In STS 47, they trained in British uniforms.³³ After a hot tea and milk at wakeup, everyone ran a two to three-mile course through the moors that ended at a small lodge. On a table at the door were daggers. "Running up to the table, you had to grab a dagger and rush inside to attack a sand-filled 'dummy.' First, thrust at the face to cause the defender to shield his eyes. Then, with the chest exposed, you made your major knife thrust. Daily PT ended with ju-jitsu 'chop chopping' exercises to harden the heels of your hands," explained Brucker.³⁴ After cleaning up, they went to breakfast. Then, training began; classroom instruction preceded practical exercises and training was always progressive. Three constants in every course were CW, codes, and cipher practice; hand-to-hand combat, and explosives training. "It was at Arisaig that we learned to set off explosives underwater using a waxed

“fusee” match,” stated Brucker.³⁵

Instead of using a facsimile shooting facility like the “House of Horrors” created by British Major William F. Fairbairn for OSS trainees in America, the men practiced instinctive firing against pop-up targets on different trails around the Arisaig estate. Allied and Axis small arms were used. Trainees were given the merits, limitations, and typical problems of every pistol, rifle, and sub-machine gun, types of ammunition, and silencer used. Brucker recalled “that the German Luger pistols always shot low, the silenced Sten gun simply made a clack-clack-clack sound, and the bullets a ‘phfft—phfft—phfft’ popping sound as they hit the ocean, and they were given a ‘lot of garbage information’ to forget (details and specifications).”³⁶ Good camouflage was demonstrated afterward at the beach. “Before my eyes, well-concealed support troops began popping up all over the place,” said Brucker.³⁷

Land navigation was more like orienteering done day and night. “We had one compass, were given an azimuth, distance, and a readily identifiable terrain feature . . . an old oak tree, crumbling wall, small bridge, etc. When we found the feature, it became a treasure hunt to find the hidden message telling us where to go next. Henquet and Fucs were my partners. Usually, I ferreted out the note. At night, we read our instructions by flashlight, set an azimuth, and measured the distance by keeping a pace.”³⁸ Another time, the Arisaig trainees were taken by launch to Loch Nevis for boat work. A fisherman taught them how to sail. They learned to tack against the wind and to hold position in rough seas with a sea anchor.³⁹ Instructor-led parlor games involving alcohol were another assessment, much as they had been in OSS training.⁴⁰ Intelligence agent training followed this team-building effort in northwestern Scotland.

At the intelligence school near Beaulieu, west of Southampton, Brucker and his teammates Henquet and Fucs had to write plausible cover stories. They had to be a mixture of fact and fiction, but all elements had to be familiar—name, date and place of birth, parents’ names, where raised, education, and technical training. The cover explained language capabilities. The new name had to sound similar to the real one. One had to react and respond appropriately when hailed by this new name. Herbert R. Brucker therefore became Albert Brunion: “I had been in the French Army and was captured during the breakthrough in 1940. Interned as a POW at Stalag 17B, near Krems, Austria, I was later released because of stomach ulcers. In those days, no one could check for ulcers. I was discharged in Lyon,” said Brucker.⁴¹ Covers were memorized and rehearsed over and over.

Students were pulled from training and constantly rousted out of bed in the middle of the night for grueling interrogations in German, French, and English by German SS-uniformed instructors in the STS 31–37 intelligence courses.⁴² The trainees quickly learned to answer only what was asked and to stick to a sequence, otherwise another interrogator would detect a flaw and

exploit it. Pressure was a constant.⁴³ “A twenty-year-old sailor named Parent had a great solution. He broke down, crying hysterically. The instructors never got an answer from him. The instructors started their classes by reading Adolph Hitler’s edict to execute all agents,” remembered Brucker. “And, we often learned by our mistakes.”⁴⁴



Typical interrogation of an OSS Special Operations trainee.

Excerpts from Adolph Hitler’s *Kommandobefehl* of 18 October 1942

“HENCEFORTH, all enemies on so-called Commando missions in Europe or Africa, confronted by German troops, even if they are to all appearances soldiers in uniform or demolition troops, whether armed or unarmed, in battle or in flight, are to be slaughtered to the last man. It does not make any difference whether they are dropped by parachute. Even if these individuals, when found should apparently be prepared to give themselves up, no pardon is to be granted them on principle. In each individual case, complete information is to be sent to the O.K.W. (German High Command) for publication in the Report of the Military Forces.

If individual members of such Commandos, such as agents, saboteurs, etc., fall into the hands of the military forces by some other means, through the police in occupied territories, for instance, they are to be handed over immediately to the S.D. (*Sicherheitsdienst* Security Service). Any imprisonment under military guard, in P.O.W. stockades, for instances, etc., is strictly prohibited, even if this is only intended for a short time.”¹ *Note: S.D. was that part of Heinrich Himmler’s police force dedicated to the suppression of “internal resistance.”²



Adolph Hitler



SD badge

1 “Hitler’s Kommandobefehl,” <http://users.nlc.net.au/Bernie/Hitler.htm>.

2 Hermann J. Giskes, *London Calling North Pole* (London: The British Book Centre, 1953), 207.

In one scenario, Brucker, using a “dead letter drop,” had arranged to meet a “contact” in a second floor room. The drop had to be concealed so that the actions of the “dropper” and the “retriever” would not be obvious. It was easier said than done. “All Clear” and “Danger” signals did not always go right.⁴⁵

As the “contact” hurriedly passed some anti-Axis propaganda leaflets to Brucker, a squad of “German” soldiers came pounding up the stairs, shouting, “Open the doors! Open the doors!” His “contact” yelled, “Do something! Do something quick!” Brucker was dumbfounded and just managed to stuff the leaflets under his shirt. Of course, the incriminating propaganda material was found and he was taken off for interrogation. “Later I found out that the ‘best solution’ was to open the window and toss them out,” remembered Brucker.⁴⁶ However, he proved very adept as a burglar stealing documents.

Brucker and another trainee were to enter a “German” barracks at night, find a paper hidden by an informant, and escape without being detected. After several hours of surveillance from the nearby woods, the two decided to enter through a second-floor bathroom window which was “cracked” to provide ventilation. The initial approach at dusk was discovered by returning soldiers. When the two tried “to hide in plain sight” like they had been taught, a soldier began shouting, “Get the dogs!” That prompted the would-be burglars to bolt for the woods. Well after midnight, the pair tried again.⁴⁷

The second attempt proved successful. Brucker, the smaller and lighter of the two, was boosted up onto the window ledge of the bathroom. As he wedged himself on the ledge, the light inside came on. He froze in horror with his heart pounding (in his mind loud enough to be heard inside) while his partner scooted behind some bushes. A soldier had entered to use the facilities. “After some five minutes that lasted forever,” the toilet flushed and the light went out. “My heart was still racing as I pushed the window up, scrambled inside, and ran to lock the door,” said Brucker.⁴⁸

Then, he went back to the open window, leaned over the ledge, and helped his partner climb up and inside. The burglars quietly slipped down the hall, past the rooms of the sleeping “German troops.” Stepping on outside edges of each stair to avoid making a squeak, the two moved downstairs and found the office. After carefully checking the door for “booby traps,” they slid inside and locked the door. “I was under the desk when my buddy pulled open the center drawer. The hidden ‘document,’ taped to the back, flapped across my head as he pulled the drawer out. ‘Document’ in hand, we eased out the front door. While I was letting my eyes adjust to the dark, I sensed a presence on my left. I knew that it wasn’t my partner. So, I spun left raising my flashlight to eye level and flipped it on. The glaring face in the beam was our instructor. I jammed the ‘document’ in his hand and took off,” said Brucker.⁴⁹ This proved to be his last training exercise.

As luck would have it (more likely the approach of

D-Day), parachute training was Team HERMIT’s final schooling before France. SOE operatives Brucker, Henquet, and Fucs received two weeks of airborne training (STS 51) at Ringway, adjacent to the Manchester airfield.⁵⁰ They were billeted in a small “mansion” apart from other trainees. T/4 Brucker explained: “Our program was very basic. It wasn’t geared to make paratroopers out of us. Parachuting was merely a means of insertion. Wearing parachutist smocks and foam helmets, we did swing-landing training and received turning and harness release instructions inside an outbuilding on the estate. The British were already using the quick release system.” American paratroopers still escaped their parachute harness by unsnapping individual leg and shoulder straps. In the attic of a Ringway hangar was a balcony replicating the “joe hole” exit. (American paratroops exited jump aircraft from side cargo doors. The British traditionally used a three-foot by three-foot trap door hole in the belly of the aircraft to airdrop personnel and bundles. “Joe hole” was British slang for an outdoor toilet. Americans call it an outhouse.) As SOE trainees dropped down the “joe hole,” a propeller-driven wind machine gave them a “feel” for landing properly.⁵¹

According to T/4 Brucker, “Since England has a lot of fog during the fall, winter, and spring, a barrage balloon was tethered to a truck. We climbed into a large wicker basket attached underneath the balloon. A winch on the truck was released, the cable reeled out, and up we went. I have no idea how high we were, but we weren’t wearing reserve parachutes. The wind blowing through the wires holding the wicker basket made a low whistling sound as the basket creaked with our weight.”⁵²

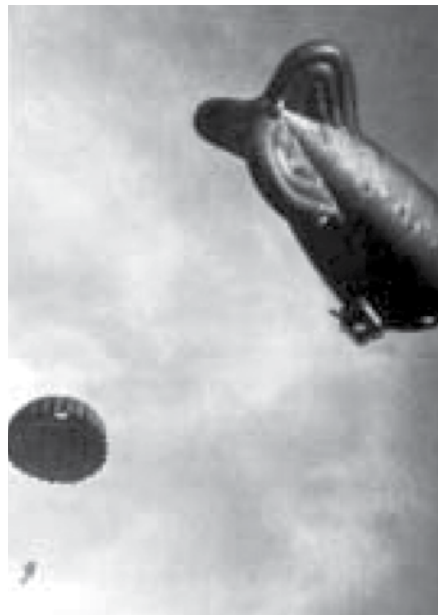
Even in heavy fog Brucker recollected that it was amazing how clear the voices of



“Bessie” the barrage balloon at Tatton Park used during parachute training at STS 51 Ringway.



Wicker gondola basket with “joe hole” attached to barrage balloon.



Parachutist descending after jumping from the moored barrage balloon.



Major Herbert Brucker's British Special Forces (SF) parachute badge.

told you. Keep your feet and knees together.' Our third was a day jump from a bomber and the fourth, from a bomber at night. We didn't jump equipment or weapons. These were strictly 'Hollywood' jumps. Our graduation jump . . . as it turned out—was for real . . . a night combat jump."⁵⁴

Sometime in early May 1944, Brucker, wearing his custom-made civilian clothes to "season" them, reported in to "control" in London. The receptionist instructed him to wait in Room #3. A U.S. Marine Corps Major William F. Grell came in and asked for a training report. When Brucker finished, Grell told him to get his duffle bag packed and to prepare a separate overnight bag with uniform trousers, shirt, field jacket, dog tags, and toilet kit. Then, he was to join his teammates Roger Henquet and Henri Fucs at a basement flat "safehouse" to prepare for a mission. That turned out to be his SO mission alert.⁵⁵

"At the safehouse, it was pure bedlam. Every room, including the bathroom, was being used by teams to review documents, codes, [and] ciphers, and to look over the assigned operational areas on maps. ID cards and ration coupons were spread on the floor getting 'seasoned' by foot traffic," recalled Brucker.⁵⁶ Team HERMIT was to be Henquet, Fucs, and Brucker. Their mission was to organize a resistance circuit in the area between the Sarte and Loire Rivers.⁵⁷ The operations area was delineated: north of the Loire River in the Departments of Loir

the instructors using bullhorns below came up. "When given 'Action Station No. 1, Stand by!' you scooted on your butt over to the 'joe hole' and dropped your feet into it. On the command, 'Go!' you lifted your butt with your hands and pushed away. We received commands to turn, to slip, and keep your feet and knees together all the way down. I can't remember how long it took the parachute to open. I wasn't counting. The second jump was the same."⁵³

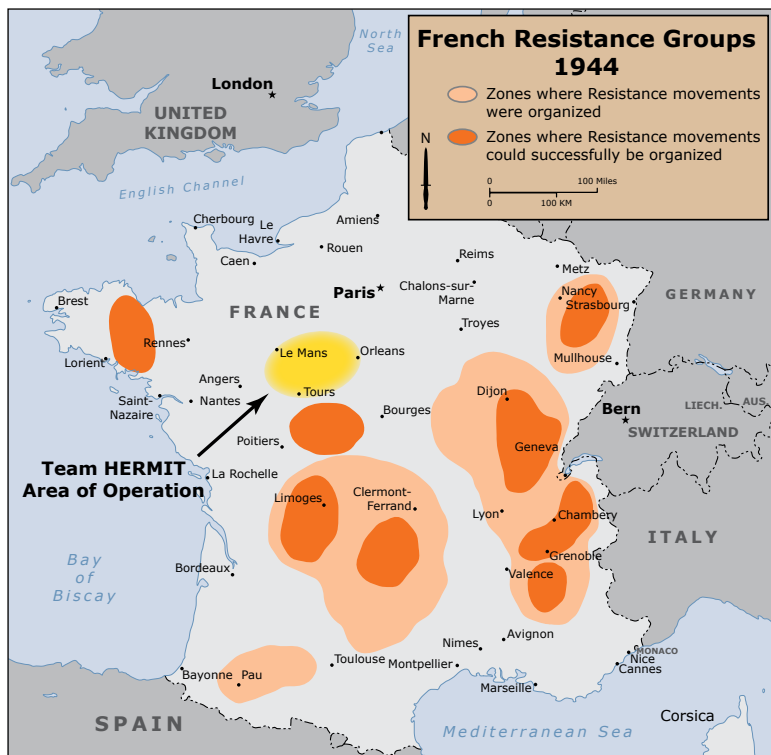
British instructors were clever. They sometimes put a woman in the No. 1 position on the airplanes to insure that the men would jump. Brucker recalled that "an instructor kept saying to one woman, 'Remember what your mother always



Map of the Area of Operations (AO) in central France for SO Team HERMIT.

et Cher and Indre et Loire. However, targets were given both north and south of the Loire River.⁵⁸

The two-weeks mission preparation period was filled with mandatory activities. One day, the teams were escorted to a pistol range below the Baker Street Underground station. A British sergeant reviewed instinctive firing with the M1911 .45 cal. automatic pistol. He won numerous bets by "plugging" the large English pence with a single shot. This proved to be HERMIT's last marksmanship practice. Afterward, the group of operatives was taken to a "lost and found" facility of the public transportation system. The men were allowed to pick whatever items they needed to support their civilian "cover"—wallets, glasses, umbrellas, briefcases, hats, etc. Afterward, Henquet and Fucs took their RTO to a fancy restaurant in Piccadilly. They enjoyed a good meal. "But, I was shocked when my bill came. For someone of my



Map showing French Resistance Groups in July 1944.

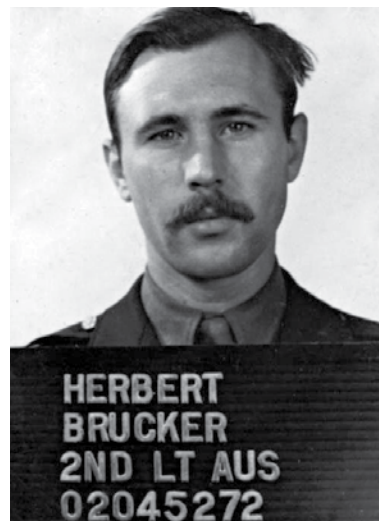
SO, SI, OGs, and Jedburghs

"THE SO operatives of OSS, unlike OSS Jedburghs and OSS Operational Group (OGs) assigned to France, had to speak the language fluently (100 percent like a Frenchman), to understand linguistic nuances, slang, and recognize various regional dialects. The OSS/SOs had to be familiar with the culture in the different regions as well as social customs, traditions, how to dress, eat, smoke 'European-style,' to write numbers with the right marks and money using decimals based on knowledge gained by living there, not from a book. Surviving an interrogation was critical. SI operatives were the 'real spooks.' They received more intelligence training and it was very sophisticated. The SOs got a lot of demonstrations. What we learned in the schools was to enable us to make suggestions to the Resistance leaders," stated Brucker. "Jeds" and OGs had to be able to speak some French and know a little culture. Most of them came from second or third generation immigrant families. The SO and SI operatives wore civilian clothes while the OGs and Jeds wore uniforms," said Brucker. "Everything in the OSS and SOE was compartmented and actions taken different from the normal routine attracted attention and raised suspicions. When I declined a pass to finish training sooner, that refusal triggered an interrogation by Major Buckmaster. They grilled me hard. It turned out that an old Fort Jackson, South Carolina, buddy was on a team that had gone missing in France in early 1944. After that, I did exactly as instructed," said T/4 Herbert R. Brucker.¹

1 Brucker interviews, 30 November 2005, 30 May 2006, and 15 February 2007. When T/4 Herbert Brucker filled out his background questionnaire for the OSS, he had no real references except his parents. He had no idea what his mother's address was in the United States. Corporal Maurice A. LePage at Fort Jackson had suggested that Herbert use his wife Yvette and her employers, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Benchley (the son Peter Benchley authored *Jaws*) as references. Thus, the Benchleys unknowingly co-sponsored Brucker by *de fault*. Brucker interview, 27 March 2006. The Germans managed to capture an agent in Holland in late 1942 before he could destroy his codes. "Having broken" the codes, the Chief of Military Counter-Espionage in Holland, Belgium, and Northern France, Oberleutnant H.J. Giskes, managed to decoy nearly two hundred drops of men and equipment into that region through the Anglo-Dutch Secret Service that was attached to the British Special Operations Executive. H.J. Giskes, *London Calling North Pole* (London: The British Book Centre, 1953): 86. Before the British SOE realized what was happening in the autumn of 1943, the so-called *Englandspiel* had caused forty-three of fifty-six dispatched agents to fall into enemy hands. Thirty-six were executed. All supplies dropped into German hands. David Stafford, *Britain and European Resistance, 1940-1945: A Survey of the Special Operations Executive, with Documents* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980): 94.

background, it was exorbitant, so I kept the receipt as a souvenir," said Brucker.⁵⁹ The final day before departing on their mission was filled with last minute administrative details.

Henquet and T/4 Brucker had reported to control headquarters without Fucs because he had injured his leg learning to ride a bicycle. It turned out that Brucker was being discharged as an enlisted man and commissioned as an Army Reserve second lieutenant. While the paperwork was being completed, he had to take off his blouse and put on one commandeered from a passing lieutenant. His ID picture was taken. Then, a waiting



U.S. Army ID photo of 2LT Herbert R. Brucker.



OSS/SOE sketch of "Sacha" = Brucker.

dentist examined his teeth and filled out a dental record. After signing his discharge, he raised his hand, was sworn in as an officer, and penned his signature on a commission form. The process did not go as smoothly with Roger B. Henquet, the OSS civilian.⁶⁰

Roger B. Henquet, former Vice President of Schlumberger Oil in Texas, had volunteered to join the OSS as a civilian. He wanted no part of the military, let alone a U.S. Army commission. One after another officer explained the rationale for the commissioning, but Mr. Henquet stood his ground. By the time he finally relented, it was too late to do the administration. Brucker was issued his documents and a briefcase with his assigned radio frequency crystals (to regulate the wave lengths of radio transmissions), one-time code pad, time schedule, and his part of the money to carry. Henquet, the team leader, received a briefcase with money, his codes, and documents. "Finally, an ATS girl gave us small silver-plated flasks of rum and wished us luck in French by saying, 'Merde' ('S—t'). Then, we were ushered into a waiting room," said Brucker.⁶¹ They were being sent to France as a two-man special operations team; Fucs would follow later.

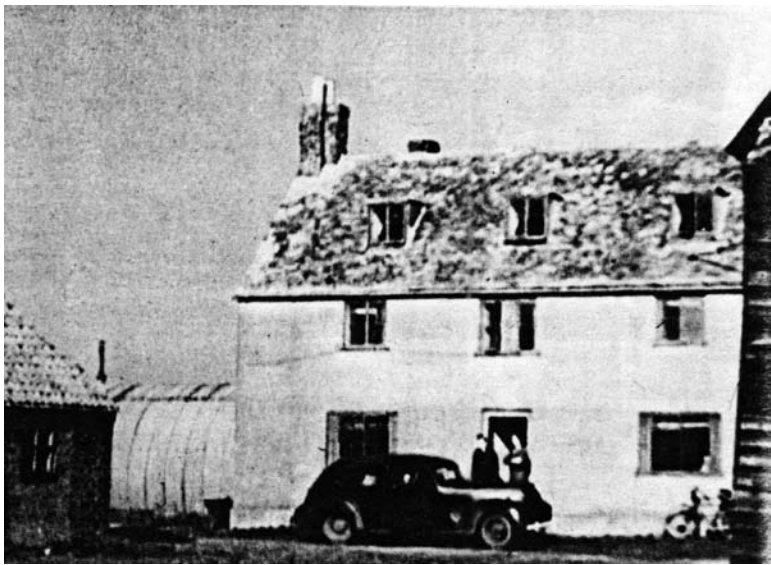
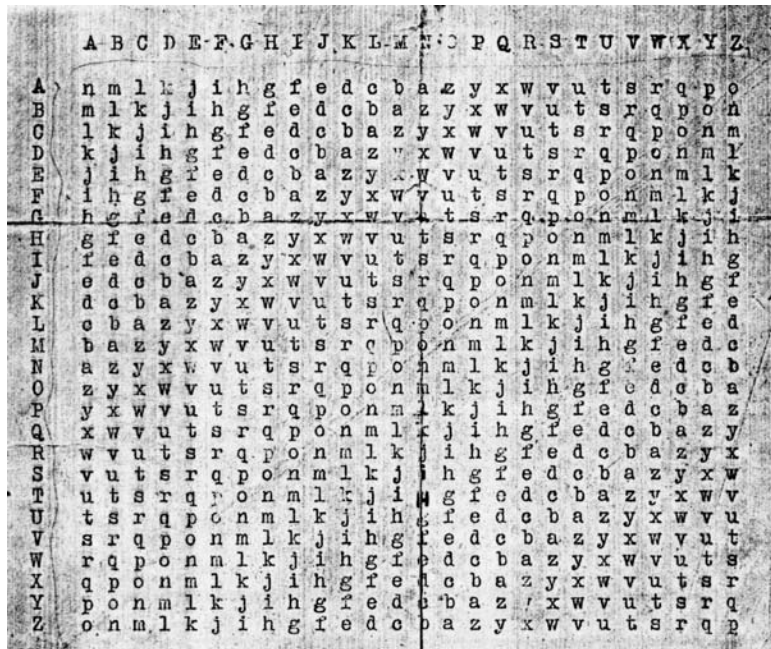
Two cars arrived at dusk on 26 May 1944.



Actual size of a frequency crystal for Type A Mark III radio.

DAY	TIME	CALL	STATUS	REMARKS			
1	APR	0700	1200	1500	1800	2100	2400
2	MAY	0700	1200	1500	1800	2100	2400
3	MAY	0700	1200	1500	1800	2100	2400
4	MAY	0700	1200	1500	1800	2100	2400
5	MAY	0700	1200	1500	1800	2100	2400
6	MAY	0700	1200	1500	1800	2100	2400
7	MAY	0700	1200	1500	1800	2100	2400
8	MAY	0700	1200	1500	1800	2100	2400
9	MAY	0700	1200	1500	1800	2100	2400
10	MAY	0700	1200	1500	1800	2100	2400
11	MAY	0700	1200	1500	1800	2100	2400
12	MAY	0700	1200	1500	1800	2100	2400
13	MAY	0700	1200	1500	1800	2100	2400
14	MAY	0700	1200	1500	1800	2100	2400
15	MAY	0700	1200	1500	1800	2100	2400
16	MAY	0700	1200	1500	1800	2100	2400
17	MAY	0700	1200	1500	1800	2100	2400
18	MAY	0700	1200	1500	1800	2100	2400
19	MAY	0700	1200	1500	1800	2100	2400
20	MAY	0700	1200	1500	1800	2100	2400
21	MAY	0700	1200	1500	1800	2100	2400
22	MAY	0700	1200	1500	1800	2100	2400
23	MAY	0700	1200	1500	1800	2100	2400
24	MAY	0700	1200	1500	1800	2100	2400
25	MAY	0700	1200	1500	1800	2100	2400
26	MAY	0700	1200	1500	1800	2100	2400
27	MAY	0700	1200	1500	1800	2100	2400
28	MAY	0700	1200	1500	1800	2100	2400
29	MAY	0700	1200	1500	1800	2100	2400
30	MAY	0700	1200	1500	1800	2100	2400
31	MAY	0700	1200	1500	1800	2100	2400

Brucker's call-in time schedule for Team HERMIT.



The farmhouse/safe house with adjacent Romney hut at RAF Hemsford used by OSS/SOE operatives Roger Henquet and Herbert Brucker in late May 1944.

2LT Herbert Brucker's "one-time" code pad as RTO for Team HERMIT.

New 2LT Herbert R. Brucker (cover name Albert Brunion on his documents and codenamed "Sacha") and Mr. Roger B. Henquet (codenamed "Roland") got into one. [*Note: Codenames were used in message traffic. Cover names were used on all personal documents.] Another unknown operative, 2LT Emile Rene Counasse, was in the second car. He was the new RTO for Team VENTRILOQUIST that would be the drop zone reception party.⁶² They were taken to RAF Tempsford, about forty miles north northeast of London. Brucker recalled that "there was nobody on the highway. When we went through a forested area, it was jam-packed with military vehicles and equipment—trucks and jeeps to tanks and artillery . . . rows and rows of them. The air reeked of the smell of gasoline." They wound up at an old farmhouse near an airstrip. In an upstairs bedroom, the two were fed a meal of bread, eggs, and wine. Then, they were told to relax and rest a bit. Blackout curtains covered the windows.⁶³

After a few hours of "relaxing," the two SOE operatives were taken to a nearby Romney hut. "It had long tables . . . like parachute packing tables. We had to stand in front of a British sergeant as he very systematically filled two suitcases with our second set of civilian clothes, item by item. He announced something, we acknowledged receipt, and so on, until he finished with *Gauloise* cigarettes. It was somewhat like clothing issue at an Army post, except our two suitcases were whisked away," remembered LT Brucker. That was when the inspector told them to empty out their pockets. He gleefully produced the Piccadilly restaurant receipt from Brucker's pile. "It made his day! I was embarrassed, but it reminded me to always double-check things. Somewhat sheepishly I took the proffered tin with its cyanide capsule, sleeping pills, and amphetamines," said Brucker.⁶⁴ The two men, still carrying their briefcases, were ushered into a small round building.

It was time to "parachute up." After taping their trou-



sers, they were issued heavy British Denison parachutist smocks, foam helmets, and parachutes . . . no reserves. They jammed the briefcases inside their suit jackets, pulled the smocks over their suits, and donned their parachutes. The unknown third SOE operative (Counasse) joined them. After inspection by a "dispatcher" (British jumpmaster), the three men waddled out into the darkness and were helped aboard a waiting bomber. They were the only passengers; the rest of the plane contained bundles and containers.⁶⁵

"About fifteen minutes after take-off, all hell broke loose! Startled, I looked to the dispatcher for an explanation. Nonchalantly offering tea from his thermos, he said, 'We're over the Channel now. They're just test firing the machineguns.' Then, the airplane began periodically changing course and altitude. The first time that the dispatcher (not wearing a parachute) opened the 'joe hole,' it was to push bundles of leaflets out. The next time he opened it, pigeons in tubular cardboard containers and several more bundles were dumped out. Then, he said that it was almost time," recalled the RTO for Team HERMIT.⁶⁶ They were really going in; it was not a rehearsal.

"The command, 'Action Station Number One' was issued. As I swung my feet down into the 'joe hole,' I began thinking, 'What am I doing here?' That was my 'wake-up call.' 'This one's for real!' Looking down it



The RAF bombers that regularly supported SOE missions were the four-engine Stirlings (top) and Halifaxes (middle) and the twin-engine Hudsons (bottom).



SOE operative sitting on the edge of the "joe hole" ready to parachute into German-occupied France.

Vaitre. One could hear the crickets chirping. Surrounded by the heavily armed partisans, Brucker was escorted to a nearby farmhouse. "Inside was a long table filled with all kinds of food . . . a virtual feast. I couldn't believe it because we had been told that the French were starving under German occupation. Obviously, that was not the case in the countryside. My stomach was in a knot. I

seemed that the ground was covered with snow (it was actually the moonlight reflecting off the trees). We were that low. Then, I noticed some lights go by below me. Then, the dispatcher was yelling, 'Go! Go!' I was so bundled up that I felt glued to the edge of the 'joe hole.' Then, out I went. My chute had barely opened when I saw treetops. I had a good PLF [parachute landing fall] amazingly and reacted automatically," said Brucker.⁶⁷

The Special Operative was reeling in his parachute when he detected a dark shape to his right. Instinctively, 2LT Brucker began grabbing to get at his pistol because he was convinced that German soldiers were behind every bush. "I was still frantically fumbling to find my gun under all those clothes when that dark shape carrying a Sten gun whispered. 'Are you OK?' in French. When I told him that I was, he spun around and started shouting loudly, 'He's over here! He's over here!' That scared me to death. There I was shaking with nervousness, covered in sweat, and this fool is announcing my 'clandestine arrival' to the whole world! It was idiotic!" recalled Brucker.⁶⁸

But, it was a beautiful, warm, moonlit night in late spring near St.

was too nervous to eat or drink anything they offered," said Brucker.⁶⁹ It disappointed his hosts, but the bizarre "covert" reception had left him emotionally-charged. All Brucker wanted to do was to strip off the parachutist smock because he was sweating profusely. When Henquet entered the farmhouse followed by LT Counasse, there was Brucker standing in the rural farmhouse in his three-piece business suit. Behind them was an unhappy "Antoine," the VENTRILOQUIST team leader. All the bundles had fallen into the lakes around the drop zone. Since that had never happened before no flotation devices had been attached. Fortunately, they still had the money. After Henquet gave "Antoine" his team's share and new instructions from London, he became friendlier and agreed to provide Team HERMIT with a radio.⁷⁰

British special operations Team HERMIT was in the war, but the French operational environment proved to be quite different from that briefed in London. "The mission for SOE from Prime Minister Churchill was to set Europe ablaze. So, hundreds of little bastards were dropped all over the place. SOE operatives had been taught to lie, burgle, steal, forge, impersonate, kill, destroy, and spy. I was a 'jack of all criminal trades and a master of none' but Team HERMIT was supposed to wreak havoc on the Germans," said Brucker.⁷¹ How the



St. Viatre Drop Zone and nearby farmhouse where Special Operatives Brucker and Henquet were "welcomed" to France.



Map of St. Viatre with Drop Zone marked.

HERMIT team accomplished its mission in north central France from late May until mid-September 1994, will be explained by OSS/SOE special operative 2LT Herbert R. Brucker in the next issue of *Veritas*.

British SOE training had been arranged for American OSS operatives in mid-1943. Despite the better quality of training offered (based on three years of combat experience), the OSS continued its stateside training of candidates. The Special Forces soldier of today should recognize that many elements of the OSS and SOE evaluation and training are still being used: psychological assessments; individual and team physical evaluations using obstacle and Leader Reaction-type courses; a constant stress environment; special skills training—from weapons to demolitions to communications to intelligence—medical is unique to SF thanks to Colonel Aaron Bank who saw the advantages provided by a medic on the OSS OG teams; advanced special operations training; small unit tactics—raids and direct action to reconnaissance; area assessments; language skills; and unconventional warfare advisor roles.⁷² The evaluations and training proved themselves in World War II and they are viable in Afghanistan, Iraq, Colombia, and the Philippines today. This account will eliminate some of the mystery that has surrounded special operations conducted during WWII; show that innovative junior officers were responsible for most tactical and operational success; and demonstrate that the stress, fear, and sweat induced in training built confidence, competence, and reduced casualties in combat.⁷³ ♣

Special thanks go to Mr. Richard Brucker, Mr. Thomas Emsminger, and Mr. Clive Bassett for their assistance with this third article on the late Major Herbert R. Brucker, former OSS/SOE special operative.

Endnotes

- 1 Charles H. Briscoe, "Herbert R. Brucker, SF Pioneer: Part II Pre-WWII-OSS Training 1943," *Veritas* 2:3, 26–35.
- 2 Briscoe, "Major (R) Herbert R. Brucker, DSC: Special Forces Pioneer: SOE France, OSS Burma and China, 10th SFG, SF Instructor, 77th SFG, Laos, and Vietnam," *Veritas* 2:2, 33–35.
- 3 The total number of OSS Special Operations (SO), Jedburghs, and Operational Group (OG) personnel working behind the lines in France during 1944 was 523; 85 were SO agents and radio operators, 83 Jedburghs, and 355 (in 22 sections) were OGs. Kermit Roosevelt, "Introduction" to the 1976 Walker and Company, New York edition of History Project, Strategic Services Unit. *The Overseas Targets. War Report of the OSS (Office of Strategic Services) Volume 2* (Washington, DC: Office of the Assistant Secretary of War, 1946), xii, hereafter Roosevelt, *The Overseas Targets II*.
- 4 *History of the London Office of the OSS 1942–1945: War Diary*, SO Branch, OSS London, Vol. 9: Training, iii–iv, hereafter cited as *War Diary*. OSS Headquarters in Washington accepted Captain Tyson's report but decided that "a short training course in the United States would, at the very least, serve as a process for weeding out undesirable personnel." *War Diary*, Vol. 9: Training, viii.
- 5 David Stafford, *Britain and European Resistance, 1940–1945: A Survey of the Special Operations Executive, with Documents* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980) 148; M.R.D. Foote, *SOE in France: An Account of the Work of the British Special Operations Executive in France, 1940–1944* (Frederick, MD: University Publications of America, 1984), 57, 207, 210.

- 6 All OSS/SI activities were strictly American, while most OSS/SO operatives worked with the SOE. The British SOE controlled a number of circuits established in the early days of the war and maintained most of the inter-allied missions. Arthur Funk, "The OSS in Algiers," in George C. Chalou, ed. *The Secrets War: The Office of Strategic Services in World War II* (Washington, DC: National Archives and Records Administration, 1992), 181 n.10.
- 7 Major (Retired) Herbert R. Brucker, interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 3 July 2006, Fayetteville, NC, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 8 Brucker interviews, 26 September 2006 and 27 January 2007.
- 9 Brucker interviews, 3 July 2006 and 26 September 2006.
- 10 Brucker interviews, 3 July 2006 and 26 September 2006.
- 11 Brucker interview, 3 July 2006.
- 12 Brucker interview, 3 July 2006.
- 13 Brucker interview, 14 November 2005.
- 14 *War Diary*, Vol. 9: Training, xiv.
- 15 Brucker interview, 14 November 2005.
- 16 Brucker interview, 27 January 2007; Foote, *SOE in France*, 54.
- 17 Brucker interviews, 7 December 2005 and 3 July 2006; Foote, *SOE in France*, 54.
- 18 Brucker interview, 27 January 2007; The OSS Assessment Staff, *Assessment of Men: Selection of Personnel for the Office of Strategic Services* (NY: Rinehart & Co., 1948), 516–23, hereafter cited as *Assessment of Men*.
- 19 Brucker interview, 27 January 2007.
- 20 Brucker interview, 26 September 2006.
- 21 *War Diary*, Vol. 9: Training, 41.
- 22 Brucker interview, 27 January 2007; Foote, *SOE in France*, 55.
- 23 Brucker interview, 7 December 2005 and 19 January 2007; Foote, *SOE in France*, 55–56.
- 24 *War Diary*, Vol. 9: Training, 41; Roosevelt, *The Overseas Targets II*, 183.
- 25 Brucker interviews, 7 December 2005 and 7 June 2006.
- 26 *War Diary*, Vol. 9: Training, 41.
- 27 Brucker interview, 30 May 2006.
- 28 Brucker interviews, 27 March 2006, 9 May 2006, 16 May 2006, 7 June 2006, and 26 February 2007. Broken radio waves caused by the making and breaking of the keying circuit (key-clicks) in a radio transmitter could be detected by German direction finding receivers in the vicinity. H.J. Giskes, *London Calling North Pole* (London: The British Book Centre, 1953), 207.
- 29 Brucker interviews, 23 May 2006, 7 September 2006, and 15 February 2007.
- 30 *History of the London Office of OSS, 1942–1945*. Vol. 3, F-Section. HERMIT 216: Activity Report of 2nd Lieutenant Roger B. Henquet, AUS (Robert), 103, National Archives RG 226: M1623: Roll 10.
- 31 Brucker interview, 27 March 2006.
- 32 Brucker interview, 27 March 2006.
- 33 *War Diary*, Vol. 9: Training, 41.
- 34 Brucker interview, 26 September 2006; Foote, *SOE in France*, 55.
- 35 Brucker interview, 26 September 2006. The "fusee" for detonating explosives underwater most likely contained magnesium. Foote, *SOE in France*, 55.
- 36 Brucker interviews, 26 September 2006 and 9 February 2007; Briscoe, "Herbert R. Brucker, SF Pioneer: Part II Pre-WWII-OSS Training 1943," 32; Foote, *SOE in France*, 55.
- 37 Brucker interviews, 9 February 2007 and 15 February 2007; Foote, *SOE in France*, 57.
- 38 Brucker interview, 9 February 2007.
- 39 Brucker interviews, 15 February 2007; Foote, *SOE in France*, 55.
- 40 Brucker interview, 27 January 2007; Foote, *SOE in France*, 55.
- 41 Brucker interview, 27 March 2006; Foote, *SOE in France*, 56–57; Roosevelt, *The Overseas Targets II*, 186.
- 42 *War Diary*, Vol. 9: Training, 41.
- 43 Brucker interview, 27 March 2006; Foote, *SOE in France*, 57.
- 44 Brucker interview, 26 September 2006.
- 45 Brucker interview, 15 February 2007.
- 46 Brucker interview, 26 September 2006.
- 47 Brucker interviews, 27 January 2007 and 9 February 2007.
- 48 Brucker interviews, 27 January 2007 and 9 February 2007.
- 49 Brucker interviews, 27 January 2007 and 9 February 2007.

- 50 *War Diary*, Vol. 9: Training, 41.
- 51 Brucker interviews, 27 March 2006 and 9 February 2007; Foote, *SOE in France*, 56. **Jump aircraft shortages were the major reason. But, it was cheaper and faster to qualify trainees with the balloon.**
- 52 Brucker interviews, 27 March 2006 and 9 February 2007.
- 53 Brucker interviews, 27 March 2006 and 9 February 2007.
- 54 Brucker interviews, 27 March 2006 and 9 February 2007.
- 55 Brucker interview, 9 February 2007; *History of the London Office of the OSS*, F-Section, 104. **SOE tailors and shoemakers copied European styles, fabrics, tailoring, and manufacturing techniques.** Roosevelt, *The Overseas Targets II*, 162.
- 56 Brucker interviews, 27 March 2006, 7 June 2006, and 26 September 2006.
- 57 *History of the London Office of the OSS*. Organization: HERMIT CIRCUIT (P2-Area: BLOIS-VENDOME, LOIR ET CHER) Sheet 8A compiled from the file of Lieutenant Henri Fuc.
- 58 *History of the London Office of the OSS*. Report. F-Section, 104.
- 59 Brucker interviews, 27 March 2006, 7 June 2006, and 26 September 2006.
- 60 Brucker interview, 7 March 2007.
- 61 Brucker interviews, 27 March 2006 and 7 March 2007; Giskes, *London Calling North Pole*, 206; Foote, *SOE in France*, 59.
- 62 Brucker interview, 27 March 2006.
- 63 Brucker interview, 27 March 2006.
- 64 Brucker interviews, 27 March 2006 and 7 March 2007. **Personnel were offered sleeping, stimulating, and suicide tablets if they cared to take them. Each operative received one "L" or suicide tablet, six "B" or stimulating tablets, and six "K" or sleep-producing tablets.** *History of the London Office of the OSS*. Vol. 6. National Archives. RG 226. Roll 9. Target 5, 45.
- 65 Brucker interview, 27 March 2006; Giskes, *London Calling North Pole*, 206. **Lieutenants Brucker and Roger B. Henquet each carried two million French francs and Lieutenant Rene Counasse carried a million French francs.** Brucker interviews, 24 April 2006 and 2 May 2006. **138 Squadron at Tempsford in May 1944 had four-engine Stirling bombers while 161 Squadron had twin-engine Hudson bombers.** Foote, *SOE in France*, 76.
- 66 Brucker interview, 2 May 2006.
- 67 Brucker interview, 2 May 2006.
- 68 Brucker interview, 2 May 2006.
- 69 Brucker interviews, 2 May 2006 and 15 February 2007.
- 70 Brucker interviews, 2 May 2006 and 15 February 2007; *History of the London Office of the OSS*. F-Section, 104.
- 71 Brucker interviews, 9 February 2007 and 15 February 2007.
- 72 Brucker interview, 8 March 2007; Briscoe, "Herbert R. Brucker, SF Pioneer: Part II Pre-WWII-OSS Training 1943," 31-34.
- 73 **Amongst the 523 OSS Special Operations (SO), Jedburghs, and Operational Group (OG) personnel working behind the lines in France during 1944, 85 were SO agents and radio operators, 83 Jedburghs, and 355 (in 22 sections) were OGs, only 35 were killed, missing, or captured and 51 were wounded. That amounts to less than 17 percent.** Roosevelt, *The Overseas Targets II*, xii.



One of the safehouses used by Team Hermit.