

HEADQUARTERS  
SEINE SECTION DISCIPLINARY TRAINING CENTER  
APO 887 U S ARMY

9 October 1944.

Subject: Report of Proceedings in the Death Chamber.

To: Commandant, Seine Section Disciplinary Training Center,  
Seine Section, Communications Zone, ETOUSA, APO 887,  
US Army.

1. In compliance with Section VI, Letter AG 250.47 GA, Headquarters Seine Section, Communications Zone, ETOUSA, Subject: "Procedure for Execution of Death Sentence by Hanging", dated 5 October 1944, the following report is submitted:

a. At 2202 hours, 7 October 1944, the following named persons entered the death chamber at Caserne Mortier, 128 Boulevard Mortier, Paris Seine, in the order named:

- (1) Major MORTIMER H. CHRISTIAN, 0463591, CMP, Commandant, Seine Section Disciplinary Training Center. On his left was
- (2) Captain RICHARD F. GRADY, 0508977, Chap C, Seine Section, Com Z.
  - (a) Rottenfuhrer GUNTHER OHLETZ, 21 SS Panzer Grenadier Regiment, German Army, with guards on either side:
    - 1 Technical Sergeant Charles F. Edwards, 34113676, G.O. Detachment No 4, APO 887, U.S. Army - Guard.
    - 2 Sergeant Richard A. Mosley, 39529780, G.O. Detachment No 4, APO 887, U.S. Army - Guard.
- (3) Captain EDWARD M. SULLIVAN, 0344779, Medical Corps, Seine Section DTC, Surgeon.
- (4) Brigadier General PLEAS B. ROGERS, 05170, Commanding General, Seine Section, Com Z.
- (5) Colonel EUGENE J. BLAKELY, Jr, 0172594, Chief of Staff Seine Section, Com Z, Paris Seine.
- (6) Colonel ERNEST G. BUHMASTER, 0293951, CMP, Provost Marshal, Seine Section, Com Z.
- (7) Colonel CAREY JARMAN, 0102205, CMP, Office of the Provost Marshal, ETOUSA.
- (8) Lt. Colonel NORMAN C. ATWOOD, 0214225, CMP, Office of TPM, ETOUSA.
- (9) Lt. Colonel SIDNEY MORGAN, 0114527, U.S. Embassy, London, England.
- (10) Captain THOMAS F. GUIDERA, 0885861, CMP, Hq. Seine Section, Com Z.

2. The Commanding Officer, Seine Section Disciplinary Training Center, and the Chaplain led the procession to the foot of the steps of the scaffold, where the prisoner was momentarily halted while his hands were placed together behind him and handcuffed. The Commanding

Copy/ca

(Hq Seine Section DTC APO 887 Ltr 9 Oct 44 Subject: Report of Proceedings in the Death Chamber, contd)

Officer mounted the scaffold, followed in turn by the Chaplain and the prisoner, who as assisted by the guards. The prisoner was placed on the trap at 2203 hours. The Surgeon took post facing the scaffold at a distance of about eight feet, and the witnesses were formed in order of rank from right to left at a distance of about 24 feet. The Recorder placed himself near the wall at the foot of the steps. On the scaffold were the Commanding Officer, the Chaplain, the prisoner, the two guards, and two assistants.

3. The prisoner was addressed by the Commanding Officer as follows: "Do you have any statement to make before the order directing your execution is carried out." The prisoner made a reply in a low voice and the Chaplain began talking to him. At this point General ROGERS asked: "Did the Recorder hear the prisoner's statement?" The Recorder answered: "I did not, Sir", and proceeded up the steps. The Chaplain translated the statement of the prisoner, which was as follows:

"Only that I thank the Chaplain, and I was not a spy".

4. The Recorder returned to his position at the foot of the steps. The prisoner's feet were bound with a webb strap and a black cloth hood fitted over his head, reaching down around his neck and shoulders. The noose was adjusted by an assistant who signaled to the Commanding Officer. The Commanding Officer faced about and cut the rope, releasing the weight which sprung the trap, at 2205 hours.

5. The release mechanism functioned correctly and the prisoner dropped through the trap. The fall of the weight, and the trap, and the snap of the rope were the only sounds heard. The body swayed only slightly and without jerks, tremors or convulsions, hung suspended in the lower screened portion of the scaffold. The entire procedure was efficient, quiet and orderly. None of the witnesses, officials or assistants showed any visible or audible sign that would indicate an emotional reaction.

6. There was eleven minutes of silence in the death chamber, during which time the Commanding Officer checked the time twice, and the Surgeon three times. At 2216 hours the Surgeon entered the lower screened portion of the death chamber, unbuttoned the clothing, pulled up the prisoner's undershirt, adjusted his stethoscope, and began his examination of the body. At 2218 hours the Surgeon announced: "I pronounce this man dead".

7. The Commanding Officer, the Surgeon, and the witnesses left the death chamber, leaving the Chaplain, the Recorder, and two assistants, who proceeded to cut the rope and remove the body from the lower screened portion of the scaffold. Technician 4th Grade Woodrow Kelley, and Technician 4th Grade Ray K. Stevens, Quartermaster Graves Registration Service, Seine Section, Com Z, entered the death chamber with a litter and the remains were placed thereon. The assistants were unable to remove the handcuffs due to faulty lock mechanism.

(Hq Seine Section DTC APO 887 Ltr 9 Oct 44 Subject: Report of Proceedings in the Death Chamber, contd)

8. The Chaplain administered the last rites of the religious faith of the prisoner, and left the death chamber at 2228 hours. The two enlisted men of the Graves Registration Service, assisted by the driver of their ambulance, removed the body from the death chamber and placed it in the ambulance at 2237 hours. Technician 4th Grade Woodrow Kelley, Graves Registration Service, handed the Recorder a receipt for the remains, in quintuplicate, signed by Captain WALTER B. BRADLEY, Quartermaster Graves Registration Service.

9. The Recorder then left the death chamber.

/s/ Albert M. Summerfield  
/t/ ALBERT M. SUMMERFIELD  
Captain, CMP,  
Recorder

4 Incls:

- Incl No 1 - Copy Order Mil Commission
- Incl No 2 - Statement made by Gunther Ohletz
- Incl No 3 - Certificate of Medical Officer
- Incl No 4 - Copy receipt for Remains