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Plant

GE/IMP.

27th January, 1941.

A. G. Enock, Esq.,
White Gable,
Walk Wood End,
Beaconsfield.

(Copy for Mrs. Enock,
at Wembley)

Dearest Mum,

You will be very pleased indeed to know that Marcel Fenez arrived back from Lisbon yesterday, and Connie and I went down to Baker Street to see him in the afternoon and had a very long talk with him and got from him the facts regarding Joe's experiences during the last six months.

Joe is now in a good state of health, and is in "diggings" with some French friends of Marcel's. He is being well looked after and is getting quite adequate nourishment and is in quite good spirits. He had, however, a worse time than we expected in the earlier stages.

He was actually taken prisoner on June 12th, at St. Valery, with 7,000 other Britishers and 25,000 French. This was due to a mistake on somebody's part in so far as when they went to the coast to embark, the British ships had left the day before, and instead, they met the Germans, who captured the whole contingent of them. They were subjected to forced marches towards Germany through Belgium, without proper food or rest, travelling up to 60 Kilos. each day, and this was the most difficult time that Joe had, his health being pretty bad during this spell. Fortunately, their route lay through the actual village in Belgium near Lille where Joe had been stationed before the fall of France, and when passing through this village he naturally knew exactly the locality and local conditions, and was able to make his escape by scooting off at an opportune moment.

*(Joe pretended he wanted to go to the lavatory & started
to take his trousers down & went behind a hedge)*



From Graham-Enock Mnfg. Co. Ltd.
To A. G. Enock, Esq

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He was given shelter and looked after by a French family near Lille, who also gave him identity papers. He stayed there some few days and eventually managed to foot it on to Macon, where he was very greatly assisted by the two Irish ladies we have previously heard about. They told him about Marcel, who was then in Marseilles, and who was endeavouring to get together people who were in a similar plight to Joe. Eventually Joe was able, through the good offices of the Irish ladies, to go by train from Macon to Marseilles.

There are in all 280 British and French refugees similar to Joe now in Marseilles, the majority of them being kept at a place called "The Fort", where they are on parole but are allowed out in the city. Joe did not report there, and has kept rather on his own, with a few of the others, and they spend most of their time discussing ways and means of escape. Marcel says that with all of them, the only thing that matters, and which they have in mind, is their eventual return to England.

On the whole, though, they are in quite good spirits, although they have had their ups and downs and one of their party has actually gone over to the Gestapo, who pay 2,000 francs a week for assistance rendered.

The one who has gone over to the Gestapo is Paul Durant, the nephew of the Mr. Murray that we met in London and of whom I told you. Mr. Murray, if you remember, did not reply to Paul Durant's cable asking him to confirm that he was born in Bournemouth in 1902, and under the circumstances it appears a very good thing that he did not.

The French people have been very kind indeed to our chaps, and Marcel cited one instance that shows particularly the help they give, when they gave clean handkerchiefs to the soldiers who, when they had got a little distance on their way, found 200-franc notes wrapped up in them.

It is very difficult to while away the time in Marseilles, and Marcel says that now the cold weather

P.T.O.

is on they cannot do what they did in the Summer, namely go and sit on the beach and talk things over, so they have to resort to cafes, which means spending money to buy drinks, which they make last as long as possible.

Marcel was able to get back because he had been born in New York, and was able to secure an American passport, but there is no legal way at the moment whereby the others can get away, and apparently the illegal methods are not as easy to pursue as we would imagine. Their chief hope, at the moment, lies in the British Authorities sending a ship to collect them, and as a first stage in this direction I have arranged to take Marcel to-morrow to see Major Isham at the Military Intelligence at Beaconsfield, and let him hear Marcel's story first-hand and see whether it is possible for us to persuade them to do something. As there is such a large number, it is possible they may be able to send a ship, and Marcel has made places of contact in Lisbon and in Spain, also in several addresses in Marseilles, so that, given a reasonable notice over there they will be prepared to get hold of rowing boats and go out to sea and meet the British ship's boats.

Marcel himself looks quite well, and it was very helpful being able to discuss things with him face to face, particularly as it was such a short time ago that he was last with Joe.

If opportunity permits to-morrow (Tuesday) I will bring Marcel along after we have seen Major Isham, to see you at White Gable, as I am sure you would like to have a chat with him. I am not quite certain as to whether it will be possible, not knowing what arrangements Major Isham may want to make, but perhaps you could be on the look-out for us in the early afternoon.

Marcel brought over a letter from Joe, which I am enclosing herewith. It is addressed to Marcel as a precaution in case he had been searched, but it is really intended for you, and whilst it does not contain any facts that we do not now know about, it is very nice and reassuring to see Joe's writing again and the spirit in which he says things.

Marcel was able to spend some time with Signor

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To A. G. Enock, Esq

Cunha in Lisbon, and Cunha will be part of any system of communication for the future and will be only too anxious to do anything he can to assist.

As far as we know, Joe should now have received the £50 that was sent via the Military Attache in Lisbon, so should be quite O.K. for cash, and now the great thing is to evolve some way whereby they can make their escape.

Best love as ever,

Yours,

By Eva