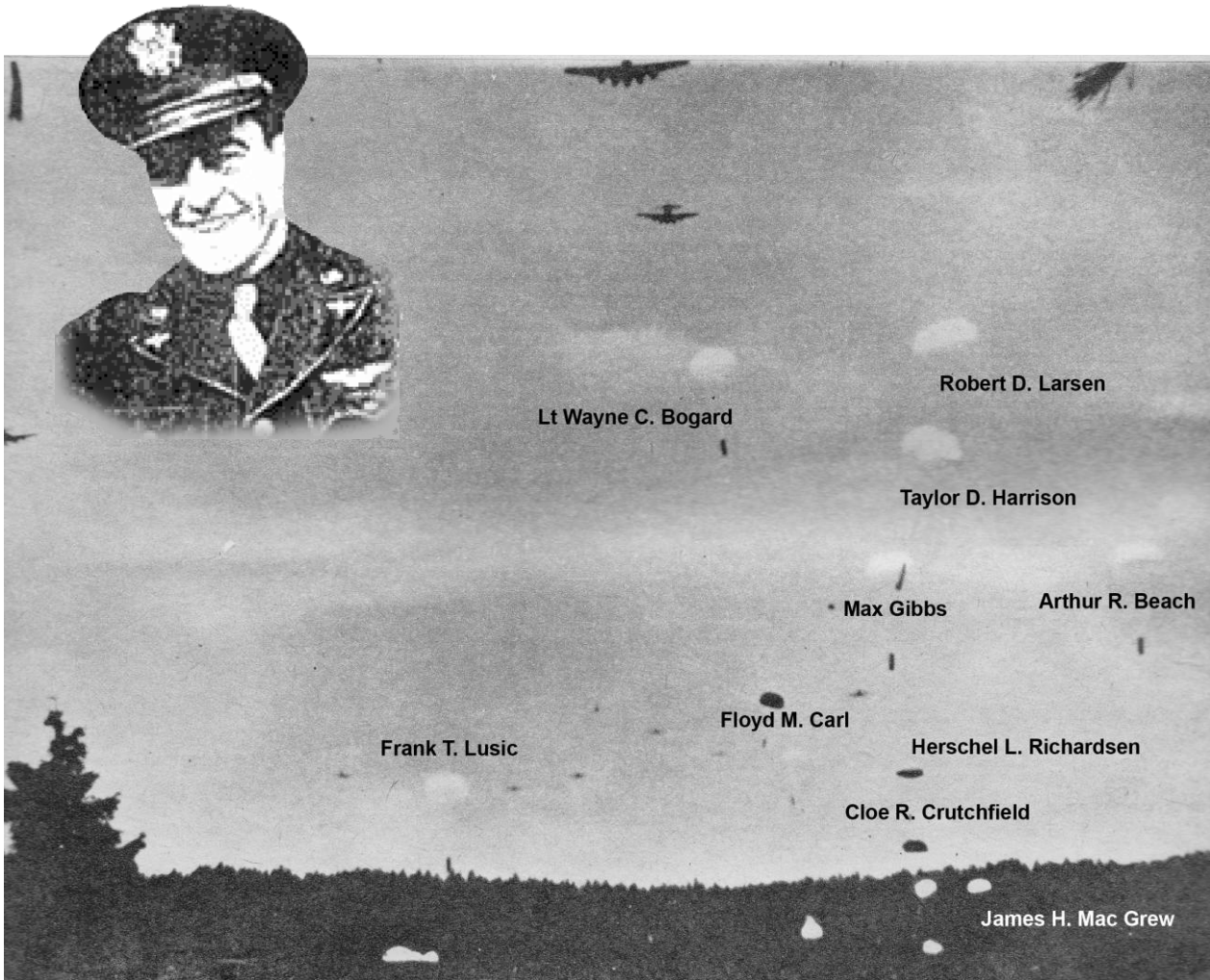


# James Mc GREW In the Resistance in Burgundy



**Juillet 2010 - Lyon – Los Angeles.**

**Family McGrew and Family Harpet-Bon**



*We were going to the Othe Forest, to the Taboo underground,  
the parachutes opened silkily in the Burgundy night.*

Jorge Semprun,  
The long voyage, p 31,  
Tusk Ivories,  
New-York, 2005.



*In memory of the fighters friends,*

*James, Julien*

*and their companions of the Resistance,*

*A message for present*

*and future generations...*



# Foreword

## Tabou, the memory of a maquis

This story is based on true facts, told by many witnesses and actors of the events at the time or taken from works of historians. The names of the characters have been maintained for the time being;

Some simple farmers, students and youngsters against the STO (obliged work Service) organised themselves to lead a struggle against the occupying army from 1942. Châtillon and its surroundings hasn't been marked by important acts of resistance reported in literature, yet, the history of these fighters echoes the great movement of the army of shades.

Their youth, happy-go-lucky attitude, joviality, clumsiness, cunning spirit, their straightforward and practical turn of mind turned them into ordinary heroes;

Those figures hardly prepared to handle weapons had to undergo the hardships of occupation, the injustice, the treason and the fights.

But this story also highlights friendship bonds, an open and generous fraternity between immigrants, foreigners, underground fighters and Allies.

In the heart of Burgundy, life keeps its flavour even during wartime, wild nature and undergrowth fragrances, the song of water running down fountains and springs, the smell of captured game or the perfume of blossoming young girls. But it's to face more easily the rigorous winter that people in villages cultivate the art of good life around the table and in the fields.

The descendants of these adventurers went back in time: it took them exactly 50 years to set into order and figure out the history of these men and women.

James Mc Grew, a radio-navigator, on a bomber B17, makes an emergency jump with his crew and survives the crash of his plane hit by the German fighters. Saved by a farmer in Aube, in September 1943, he was led by a young underground fighter from Côte d'Or, names Julien Bon, to the Tabou group and joined the Buckmaster network. He was meant to go back to England thanks to a repatriation network. The complete destruction of the Tabou group in the Châtillonnais in December 1943 will make of him one of the unique survivors to have witnessed the shooting of 11 of his companions of arms.

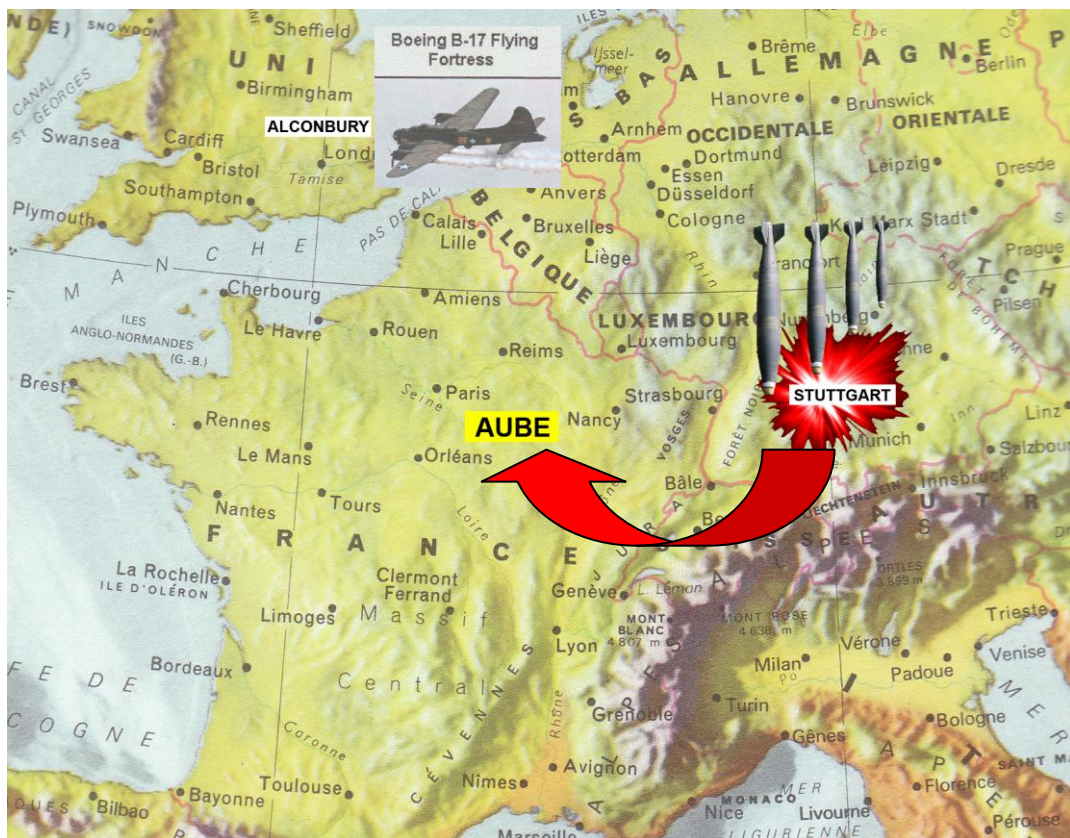
Deported to Germany, and then freed in 1945 from the camp of Barth by some Russians, James Mc Grew, once back home, tells his story to his 2 sons just before he dies. Unable to thank himself the people who had saved him, Gwilym and Jamie will trail back their father in Aube. In 2006, a Press article of Troyes tells about the Mc Grews and their visit to revive the memories of the past; The Millot family and some underground war veterans will guide the Americans to the Tabou group. It's in this resistance group that Mc Grew stroke up a friendship with Julien Bon, the air mechanic, alias Al Capone, and with Casse-Cou, with the Raillard brothers, with 11 other comrades of arms shot by the SS, with Jacqueline Gambiez, the young student and interpreter.



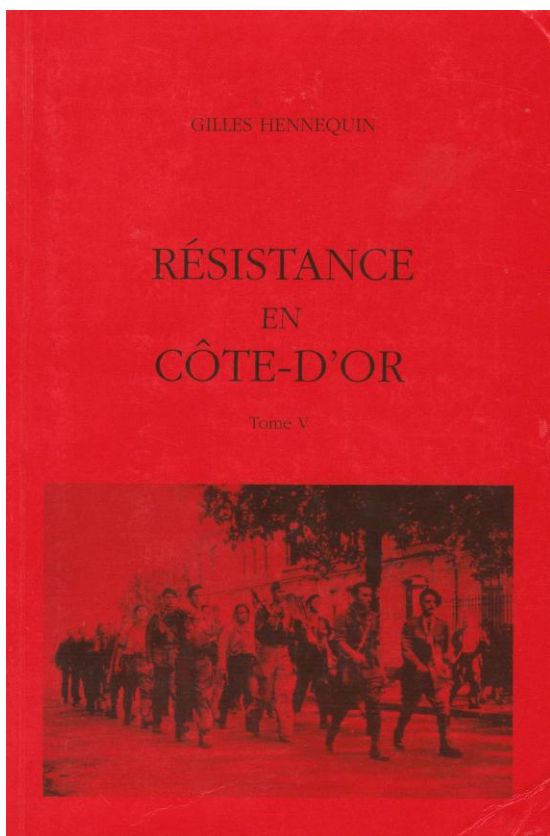




6 Septembre 1943 - 327<sup>ème</sup> - Bombe Squadron  
92<sup>ème</sup> Bomber Command, above Aube.





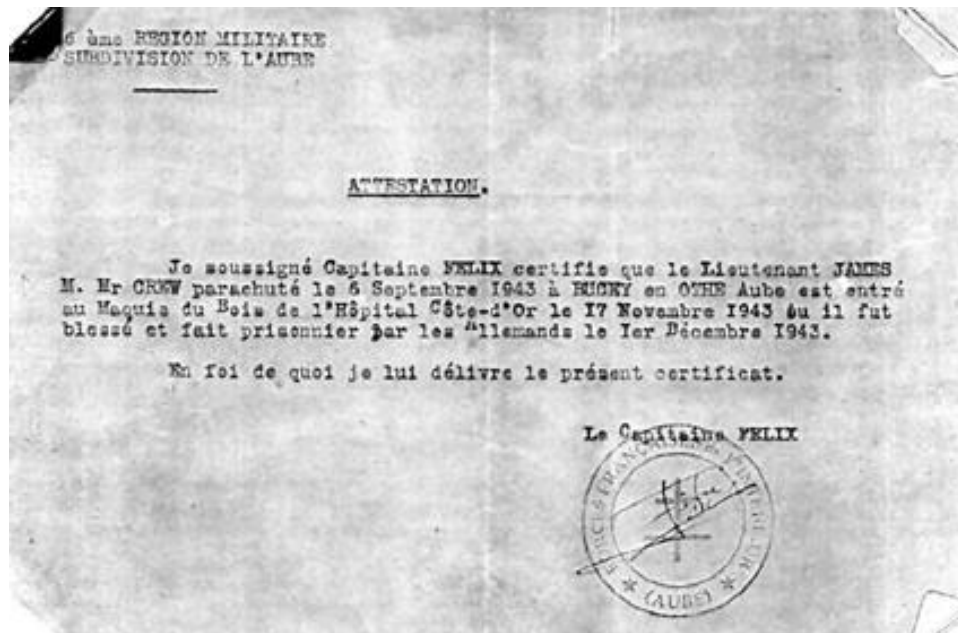


## James Flawit/James Mac Grew

Navigator on board of a Bomber B17 Flying Fortress of the USAAF belonging to the 327th Bomb Squadron of the 92nd Bomb Command, James H. Mac Grew was the true name of the pilot. September 6, 1943, at night, his plane falls near Estissac, on its return from a bombing raid near Stuttgart. A murderous raid since out of the 262 planes engaged, 45 were destroyed above the target or on their way back to England.

Based in Alconbury, (Cambridgeshire), Mac Grew's B-17, serial 42-30000code UX-D, attacked by enemy fighters, is quickly deprived of command rear and must be abandoned. The crew, they all manage to parachute themselves and land safely on the ground. Out of the 10 pilots, 3 will be captured. Here is the list of the crew: Lt Wayne C. Bogard (pilot), Robert D. Larsen, Taylor D; Harrison, Max Gibbs, Arthur R. Beach, Floyd M. Carl, Frank T. Lusic, Herschel L. Richardsen, Cloe R. Crutchfield and James H. Mac Grew.

James' parachute lands about one kilometre from Fontvannes. He is rescued by Charles DECREON who cures him and hides him in his farm of Grand Chaast. There, he shares their family life, meets the neighbours Mr and Mrs Bauser as well as an English teacher, Mr Sugac.



I, undersigned captain Felix, certifies that lieutenant James Mc Grew parachuted on September 5, 1943 in Bucey-en-Othe- Aube joined the resistance group "bois de l'hôpital- Côte d'Or" on November 17, 1943 where he was wounded and arrested by the Germans on December 1, 1943. On behalf on that I can deliver this certificate to him.



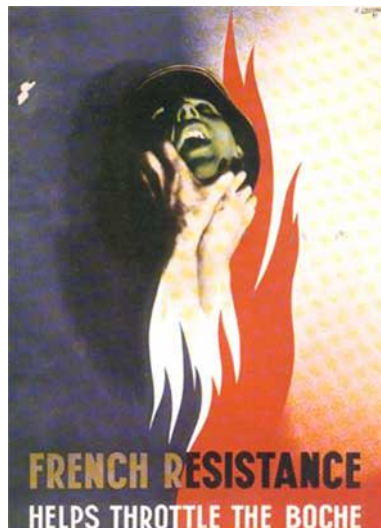
"In 1943, in the heart of the Resistance, M. Charles Decréon took huge risks in hiding in his farm of Grand Chaast an American lieutenant from the Air Force named James McGrew. Thank you my dear friend". Gwilym McGrew.



Chaast farm of Decréon supplied the Resistance group

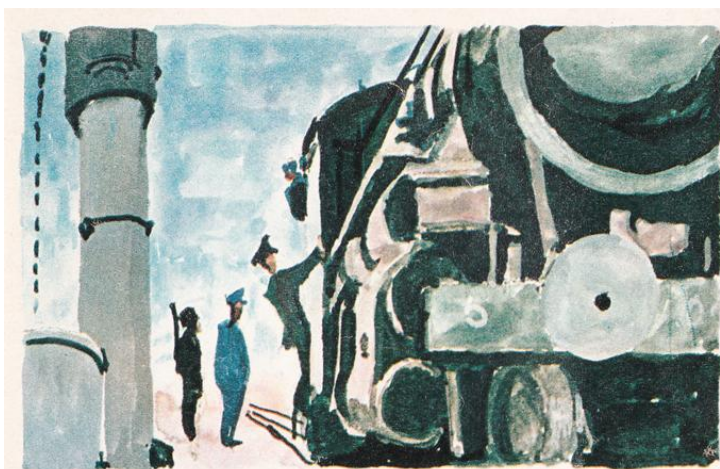
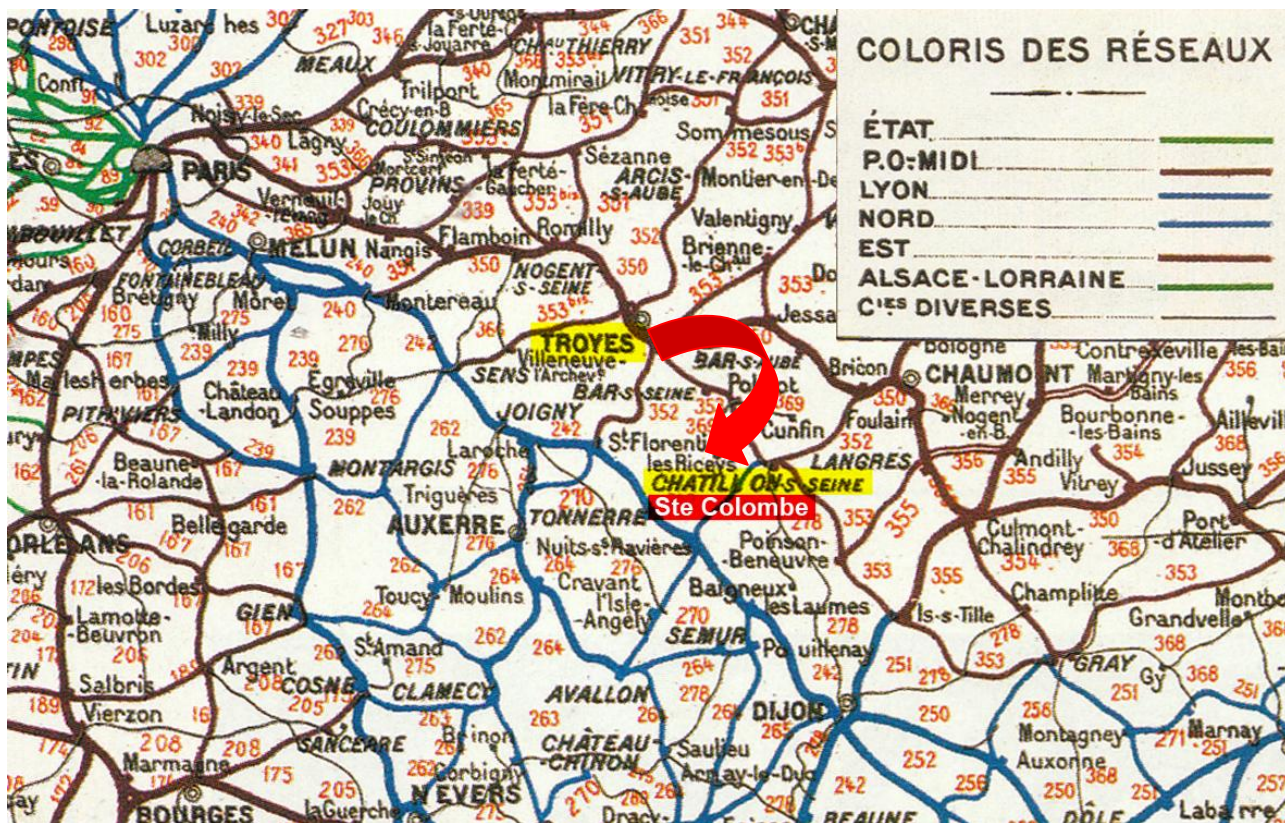








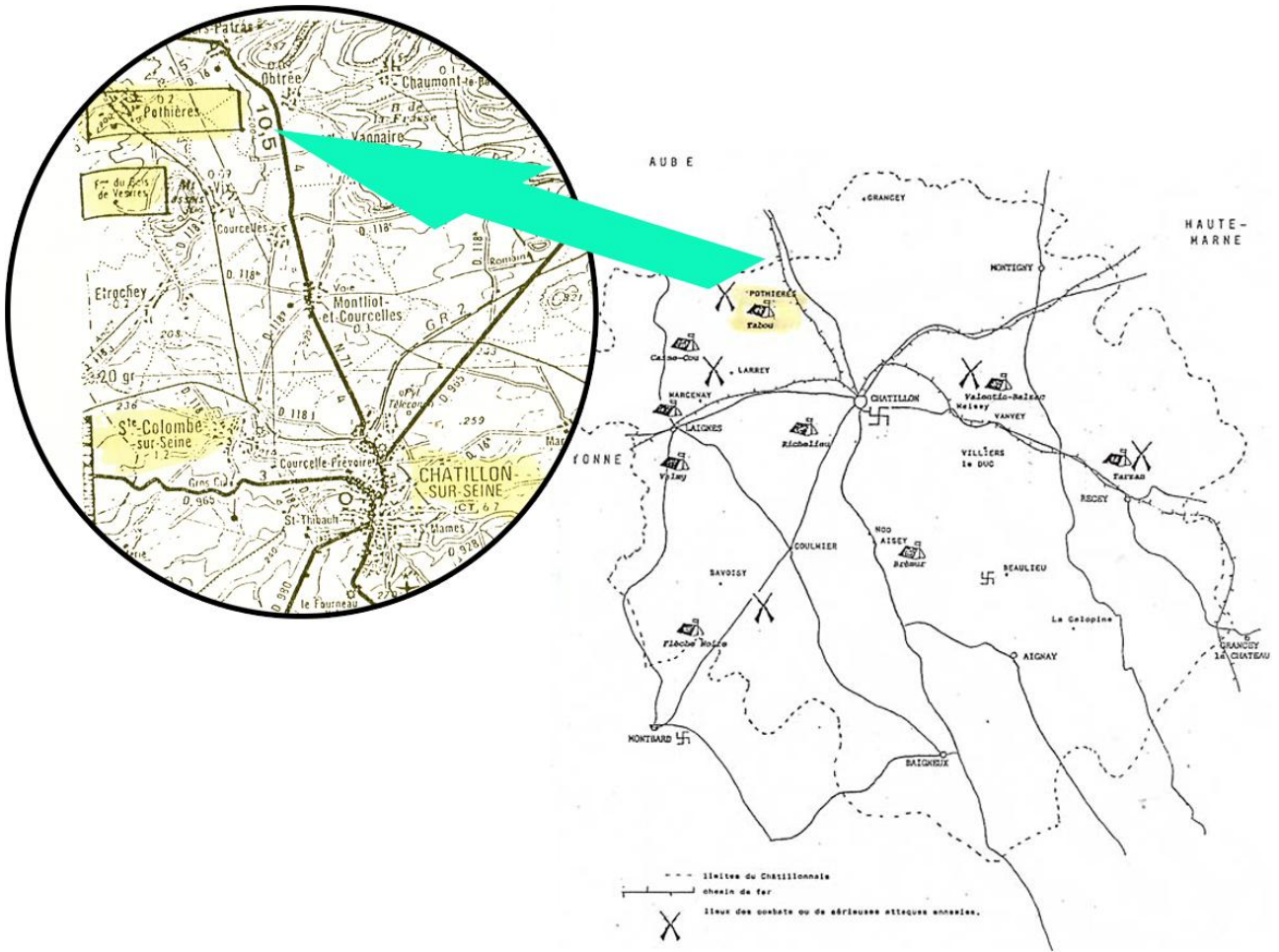
# Travel by train of James and Julien

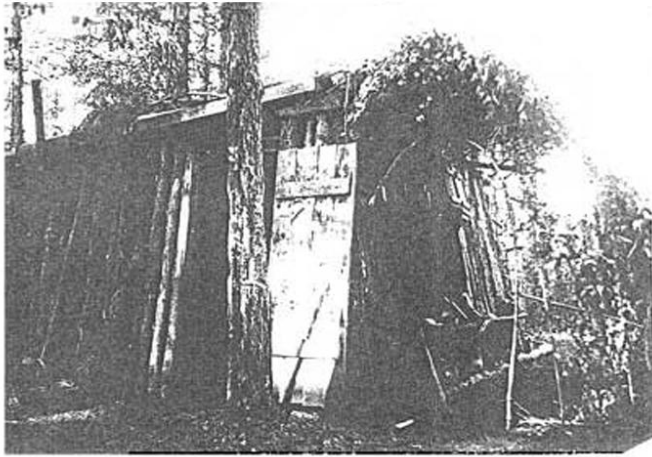


When the train arrived in Sainte-Colombe train station, Robert RAILLARD was waiting for them to take them to the Resistance group TABOU. Jacqueline GAMBIEZ-PACE Will be the interpreter for the Resistance group.



# The first maquis of Châtillonnais from 1940 to 1944





## CAMP

## TABOU

Cabane qui abrita James, durant son séjour au maquis TABOU

ce qui concerne James, officier américain, j'ai été exact que Julien Bon sort aller le chercher à Estissac, il est arrivé le soir à la gare de St Colombe sur Seine - Seine où je les attendais. Dans un premier temps James fut hébergé chez l'épouse d'un instituteur qui était finlannais de guerre -

Le lendemain matin, j'ai été parti à pied avec James en longeant la ligne du chemin de fer Châtillon-Troyes jusqu'à la barrière de Pothières et de là j'ai conduit au maquis Tabou, je ne me souviens plus de la date exacte, mais je peux vous préciser que le lendemain de son arrivée au maquis, j'ai été remonte avec une camarade étudiante qui a fait l'interprète. Il s'agit de Jacqueline Gambiez. Lors de sa conversation avec James, celui-ci lui a dit de nous transmettre quelques consignes de sécurité à savoir le camouflage de la cabane et des véhicules trop visibles des avions - Je vous signale que cette interprète est toujours vivante, elle est professeur, mariée à un américain, vit aux Etats Unis et vient fréquemment en France notamment dans le Châtillonnais

Id'aille militaire pour faits de Résistance -

Croix de guerre avec étoiles de bronze  
Id'aille de la Résistance avec rosette  
" des Volontaires 39/45  
" des Eto Volontaires de la Résistance -

RAILLARD Robert  
Co-fondateur du "Tabou"  
Ancien FTP, F.N  
Membre du Réseau Jean Marie  
membre des Services Radios clandestins  
-ims et BCRA -  
Membre actif des BOA -

Concerning James, the American officer, Julien BON did go get him at Estissac, he arrived at Sainte Colombe-sur-Seine train station in the evening where I was waiting for them. First, James was hidden by the wife of a school teacher who was a war prisoner. The following morning, we left on foot with James, along the railroad toward Châtillon-Troyes, we walked up to the barrier in Pothières. From there, I led him to the Maquis Tabou. The next day, I came back with a student who was our interpreter: her name was Jacqueline GAMBIEZ (maiden name) who became PACE (married name). In the conversation, James gave security advice to set a camouflage on the log house and on the vehicles which were too visible for planes. Jacqueline is married to an American teacher/professor in the states but she comes back once in a while to Châtillon and its surroundings.





# The Long Voyage

a novel  
Jorge Semprun

TV/K IVORIES

But we emerge into the clearing where the camp was, and I don't have a chance to tell him that he's beginning to get on my nerves.

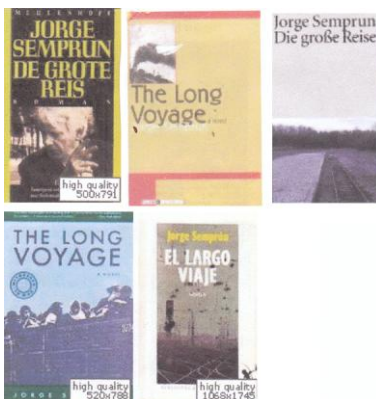
The huts, I recall, were half underground. The boys had hollowed out a good-sized pit in the ground and shored up the walls with boards. No more than three feet of boards and thatch were above the level of the ground. There were three of these huts set on three apexes of a possible triangle, each of which was big enough to house at least ten men. Farther away, at the edge of the clearing, they had built a kind of garage for both the 402 Peugeot sedan and the small truck. The fuel drums were also over on that side of the clearing, covered with canvas and a network of branches; the whole thing must have gone up in flames the night of the Taboo.



MARDI

TV 1<sup>re</sup> chaîne

4 novembre 1971



20.20

## LE GRAND VOYAGE

Vous pouvez voir aussi sur la chaîne : TELESCOP COEURS et FOX SECRET

JAPRES LE ROMAN DE JORGE SEMPRUN ADAPTATION ET RÈGLES EN ON DE JEAN PRAT

AVEC LA PARTICIPATION DE FILM POLSKI ET DU GRENIER DE SOURODOU

Manuel (voix) ..... Rolando DUBILLARD  
Le gars de Semur ..... Jean LE MOUËL  
L'Espagnol ..... Roger IBANEZ

Henri ..... Olivier MARTIN  
LABUSSIÈRE ..... Gérard FELAPRAT  
Raymond ..... Jean-LoUIS ROLLAND  
Paul ..... Dominique ROLLIN  
Jean-Paul ..... Louis FALAIGNA  
FRANKIEUR ..... Liliane PONZIO  
Alain ..... Roger TRAPP  
FRÉROT ..... Gaston VACCHIA  
Maurice ..... Jean-FRANÇOIS VACCHIA  
Pierro-André ..... Oskar FREITAS  
Claude ..... Tony ROEDEL  
LEVEQUE ..... Astid FRANK  
Bernard ..... Serge SPIRA  
MONGOURIN ..... Michel AUGUSTE  
Serg ..... Pierre BAILLET  
Sera ..... Patrick BUINAND  
Françoise ..... Gilles LÉGER  
Christiane ..... Christiane TISSOT

**L'EPOQUE ET LE LIEU**  
De 1936 à 1968, mais surtout en 1943, à Paris, à Compiègne, en Bourgogne, en Alsace et en Allemagne.

**LE THEME**  
Cette « dramatique » ne raconte pas une histoire, au sens traditionnel de ce terme. Elle fait se succéder, dans un cadre bien chronologique, mais qui obéit à certaines associations d'images ou de thèmes, des fragments importants de la vie du narrateur, Manuel, un réfugié politique espagnol mêlé à la Résistance française pendant l'Occupation. Bien que toujours présent par la voix (dialogue ou commentaire), le héros ne se



Après la Libération, une AFAT visite le camp de concentration. D'abord insouciant, elle se rompra le trapèze des épaules.

La répression nazie sévit terrifiamment. On voit ici un résistant « venir d'être torturé. Manuel engage le dialogue avec un soldat.

Manuel se souvient de 1941. C'est

montré que je me à l'écran. Il revit et commente en voix « ce » le grand voyage au bout de l'horreur qu'il effectua, avec un groupe de déportés entassés dans un wagon plombé, à destination d'un camp de concentration en Allemagne.

**SI VOUS AVEZ MANQUÉ LE DABET**  
La gare de Compiègne, les wagons de marchandises, sur une voie de garage.

**DIRECTEURS DE LA PHOTOGRAPHIE :** ANDRÉ LECUVRE

**DÉCORÉS DE GÉRARD LEVY ET JACQUES ATALLI**

**COSTUMES DE JACQUELINE GUILBERT**

dans un wagon pareil à celui-là qu nous avons fait ce voyage : cent vingt hommes dans chaque wagon, pendant cinq jours et cinq nuits... »

Sous les coups de crosse des S.S., Manuel s'est trouvé près d'un jeune paysan bourguignon, plein d'un solide bon sens qui s'est précipité vers l'étriole ouvert de la wagon. « Respirer, c'est ce qu compte le plus », dit-il. Autour d'eux debout, serrés à ne pouvoir bouger, 120 hommes de tous âges, en tenue de parates, l'anglaise au fond des yeux,



House of Bon Family in Larrey

DÉPARTEMENT  
DE LA CÔTE-D'OR  
ARRONDISSEMENT  
DE  
MONTBARD  
CANTON  
DE CHATILLON-SUR-SEINE  
MAIRIE  
DE  
POTHIÈRES

Pothières, le 4 avril 1972

Department (county) Côte d'Or  
City centre of Pothières

April 4, 1972

Monsieur,

Après quelques recherches, je ne peux que confirmer ce qui vous avait été relaté lors de votre passage à Pothières.  
Au moment de la prise du camp "Cabou", il semble qu'il n'y ait eu qu'un blessé, l'aviateur américain. Les jeunes gens qui étaient à "la baraque" à ce moment-là ont été pris et fusillés à Chaumont. C'est un aumônier allemand, je crois, qui a permis de retrouver l'emplacement où ils avaient été enterrés.

Sir,  
After some research, I can only confirm what you have been told when you came to Pothières.  
When the "Tabou" camp was taken, it seems that there was only one person wounded, the American pilot. The young people who were in the log cabin at that time were taken (the others spread in nature) and shot down in Chaumont. It's a German chaplain, I think, who gave the information allowing to find the place where they were buried.



# Association des Amis



## du Châtillonnais

Courrier : D. MASSON  
123, rue Docteur Robert  
21400 CHATILLON-SUR-SEINE

Siège social :  
21400 CHÂTILLON-SUR-SEINE

C.C.P. 5987 30 G DIJON

Trésorière : R. DIEY  
15, rue Jean Cocteau  
21400 CHATILLON-SUR-SEINE



**Julien BON**



**James Mc Grew**

## Association: the friends of "Châtillonnais"

What had happened to "James", an American pilot officer after the German attack of camp "Tabou" on the first of December 1943? Had he been kept prisoner or had he been shot dead? Had he managed to escape and to go back in the scrubland?

James had been led to the scrubland Tabou by Julien Bon. We lack information but we think that the group might have been infiltrated by the German SD as it happened sometimes at the time. After camp Tabou was taken, some vouchers of requisition for gas, tobacco and food were found signed by "James", as the survivors were running away towards the Jura mountains.

In the Hymn written in memory of Julien Bon, James is referred to, associated with his friends shot in Chaumont. Some air of mystery was planning on this figure.

Mary Lallemand gave light to this in an article in the EST ECLAIR of June 21, 1998 relating the arrival in the Aube country of James Mc GREW's children. They came on the tracks of their father (who died in 1990) whose plane had been shot down and who had been saved by a farmer.

It's Charles Decreon who hid James in his farm of the Grand Chaast in Bucey-en-Othe. Two months later, Julien Bon, responsible of the resistant group Tabou, took him by train to Sainte Colombe train station. There, Robert Raillard and Jacqueline Gambiez-Pace (a young student who was an interpreter) both took care of him. This young girl married an American and lives now in the Connecticut, USA. While he was staying with the group Tabou, James was also hidden for a while in Larrey, by the family Bon.

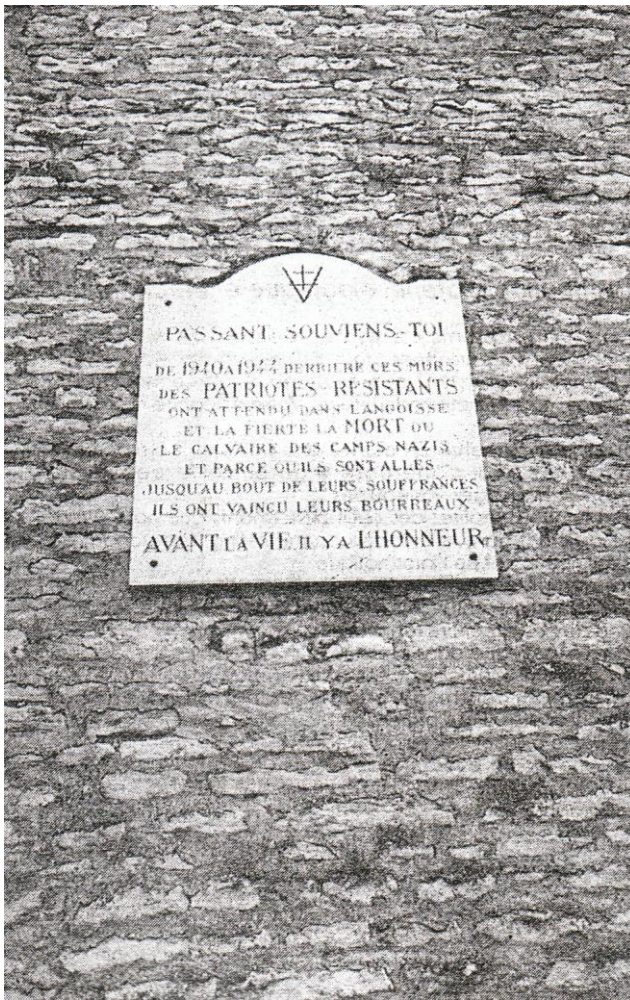
On December 1, 1943, James was captured and sent to jail in Chaumont. He was judged, because he had a military status, and wasn't shot. He was then sent to a prisoner's camp in the north of Germany in Barth.

James Mac Grew went back to the United-States in September 1945 and started over his career as a radio presenter and a scenarist in Hollywood.

The family Bon never forgot this fearless pilot who had offered his watch to Julien. Father Mégaradémy who blessed Julien's body on March 13, 1944, didn't notice this watch which must have been taken along with his boots by the owner of "Café des Chiens" of Laignes".







Passer-by remember.

From 1940 to 1944 behind those walls

Some Resistant Patriots waited in the fear of a death full of pride or the ordeal of Nazi Camps. Because they pushed their sufferings till the end, they eventually overcame their torturers.

Above life, there is Honour



A la Vendue, aérodrome de Chamarandes... Tous fusillés le 14 janvier 1944

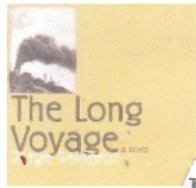
On January 11, they were condemned to death, they were executed on the 14 in great mystery.

I'm sorry to let you know that I haven't found any traces of James Mc Grew's imprisonment in the files 1571w38 and 42 in the jail in Chaumont. (the German Army must have taken or destroyed those military documents when they left) – **Departmental Archives**



## Writing or life

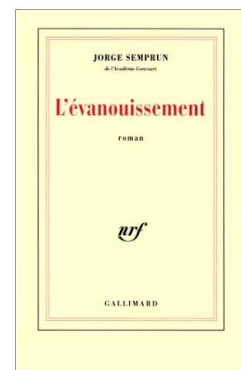
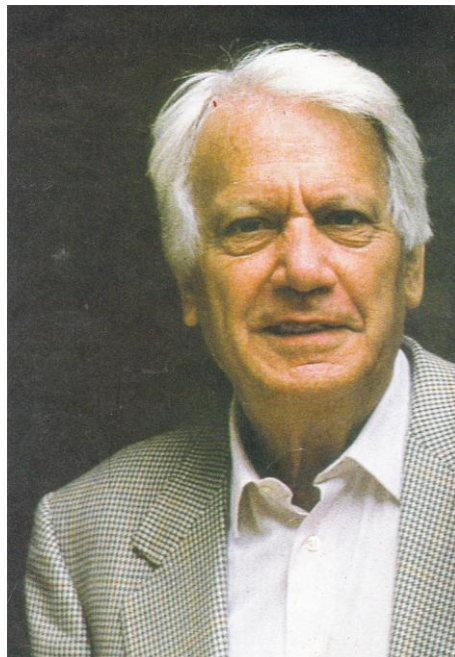
The testimony is the same as James's in the jail of Chaumont: " They were about to hang me from a tree and to release the dogs" Semprun Jorge of jail of Auxerre.



Ils m'ont conduit vers un arbre, dans le jardin, à côté du parterre de roses, et je

savais déjà qu'ils allaient me suspendre à une branche, par une corde passée entre les menottes, et qu'ensuite ils lâcheraient le chien contre moi. Le chien grondait au bout de sa laisse, tenue par le grand blond qui avait l'air de se poudrer. Plus tard, beaucoup plus tard, j'ai regardé les roses à travers ce brouillard devant mes yeux. J'ai essayé d'oublier mon corps et les douleurs de mon corps, j'ai essayé d'irréaliser mon corps et toutes les sensations bouleversées de mon corps, en regardant les roses, en laissant mon regard se remplir de roses. Juste au moment où j'y arrivais, je me suis évanoui.

They took me to a tree in the garden, beside the bed of roses, and I already knew that they were going to suspend me from a branch by slipping a rope between the handcuffs, and then loose the dog on me. The dog, held in tow by the tall blond who looked as though he used make-up, was growling and straining at his leash. Later, a lot later, I looked at the roses through the fog in front of my eyes. I tried to forget my body and the pain that racked my body, I tried to make an abstraction of my body and all the feelings convulsing my body, by looking at the roses, by filling my eyes with roses. Just as I succeeded, I passed out.



Among those who fought in the Resistance Group Tabou, there was Jorge SEMPRUN, a Spanish writer who spoke French and did his studies in Paris. He was known as "Dunkeyman" and with Julien BON, he would provide weapons for the group. He was deported to Germany, in Buchenwald. He wrote in 1964 "Le grand voyage" (The long voyage), in 1967 "L'évanouissement" (Fainting), in 1994 "L'écriture ou la vie" (Writing or life). He was Minister of Culture in Spain.

# Your friends, the Resistance fighters

George Chancel, alias "Big", a Parisian student, nephew of the resistance fighter Mrs Moeller de Marcenay, wrote a very moving poem about Julien. This poem was quoted by the historian writer Barbara Conrad, in her work on the resistant group Tabou. He enclosed a word for his family : "Julien passed away. It's a turning point in the local drama we are living. Bristly hair, shortcut then long again, small eyes. He never stopped; most of the time in a car, with guys he had taken along. He didn't know slowness and was welcome everywhere. I feel so much pain because of his loss: he was a man from another time, passionate, not violent but curiously dynamic. He had really something: a lot of bluff (but isn't it needed in wartime?) some bravery, some guts and a lot of going. I would like to hear the sound of his voice which contributed greatly to his personality

A poem to JULIEN

- 1) In Larrey, your village  
In the centre of France  
On your way  
You planted hope
- 2) Your suffering was tremendous  
When on a wicked day  
Your camp ready for France  
Felled under horrors
- 3) Heroes, DOSSE, RAILLARD  
BRIBANT, COLONIAL, MARIN  
RENE, GABY, HEZARD  
**JAMES**, ROGER, TINTIN
- 4) Your friends, the Resistance fighters  
Honour your memory  
Repeating to themselves  
Honour, Homeland and Glory
- 5) The eternal rest for a son of France  
Be your glory immortal  
Son of the Resistance
- 6) Lieutenant Julien BON  
Faithful to your memory  
We celebrate your name  
With honour and glory
- 7) In your beloved village  
a street bears your name  
it's the highest honour  
to Lieutenant Julien BON





## Liberation of Châtillon / Seine – September 1944



André MOULINIER was known as "Casse-Cou" in the Resistance. He received from the General De Gaulle in 1945 the highest distinction, "Compagnon de la Libération" (companion of the liberation) , a distinction given to 1061 members of the Resistance. He was one of Julien BON's fighting companion in the Châtillonnais.



## Châtillon sur Seine, its surroundings and the Resistance movement

Written by Miss Gabuet and some of her friends.

The first Resistance movement I have known is the one of Pothières, here is its story. It was created by Edmond Raillard, helped by his father. At first, it was located about 2 kilometres from the Beaujour Farm and named TABOU. For its own safety, the small group left for a while in Aube, and then settled near Grancey-sur-Ource. By mid-November, TABOU got back to Pothières. 17 men left to prepare the cabin and 7 stayed. As soon as the first group had left, the Germans caught 4 men out of the 7 left among which, Raymond RAILLARD and Maurice MARIN who were sent to Chaumont.

Two days later, the resistant group of Pothières, betrayed, was also attacked. At the time, the group was on the hill where it had been before, but this time, on the way to the Duhamel farm, about 2 km from it, in a pine forest that could be reached by the Duhamel way or the Bouix way. This group was composed of 17 French people, lead by Martin DOSSE, TITO (a teacher and reserve officer) and an American pilot whose plane had been shot down during the second bombing of Romilly and who had been rescued in Estissac (Aube)

The group was informed that it had been located and therefore in danger. They started packing and preparing their departure on the first of December. In the beginning of the afternoon, as they were about to leave, the group was attacked by two columns of Germans: one coming from the Bouix and the other from Duhamel. Surprised, our young people fight with grenades during 20 minutes; Two of them are injured, a Parisian named FRANK who, will die on the way to Chaumont and an unknown person. Some manage to escape, but 11 of them are caught and taken to the Feldgendarmarie in Châtillon. From there, except for the American (we don't know what happened to him,) the prisoners are taken to Chaumont.

One is wounded in his arm, Martin DOSSE and the other one in the foot, Marcel BRIBANT. In Chaumont, they were sent in cells and tortured. The Germans want them to give the names of those supporting and helping them. They are forced to kneel down on easels, on which the top bar, a triangle, showed its sharp side. They were beaten. None of them talked. On January 11, they were condemned to death; they were executed on the 14 in great mystery.

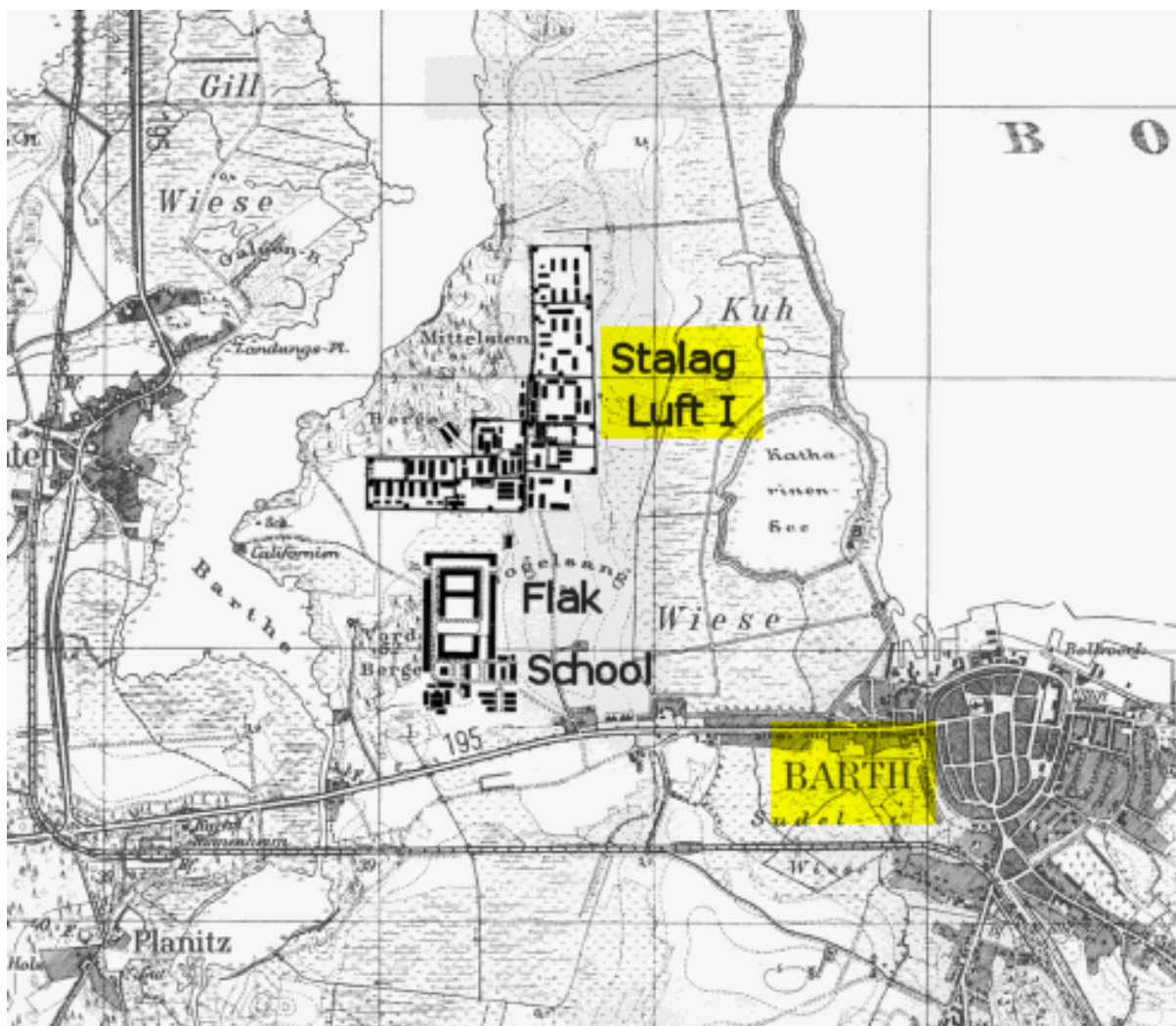
### LA REGION de CHATILLON-sur-SEINE dans la Résistance

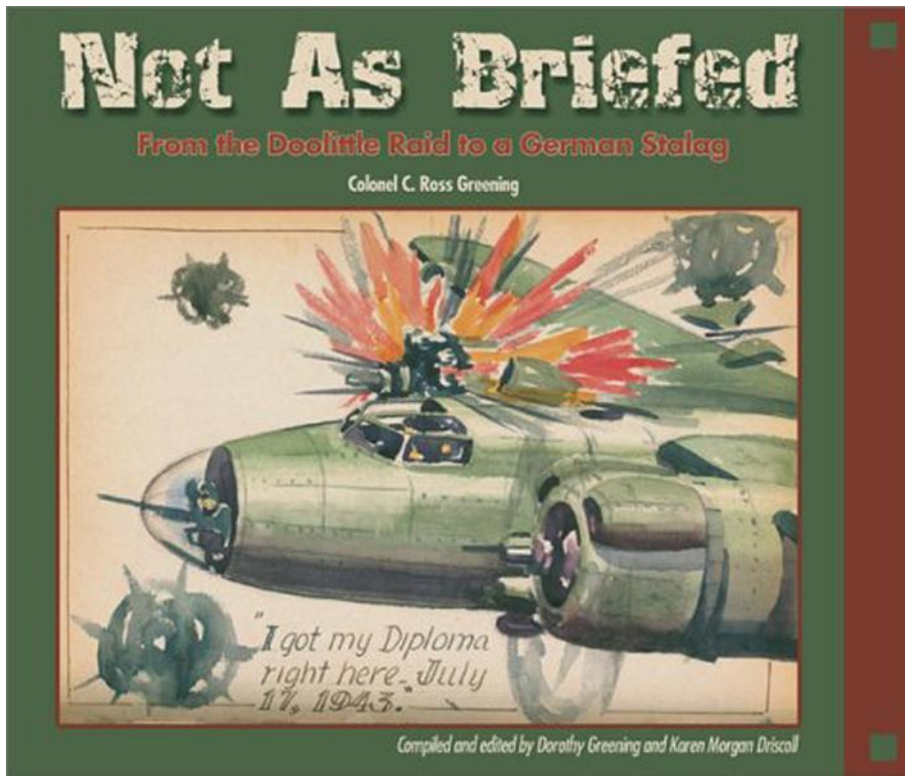
par Mademoiselle GABUET  
et quelques-uns de ses camarades

Je ne crois pas me tromper en disant que la majorité des habitants de Châtillon-sur-Seine ont été de bons Français et que les quelques exceptions qui ont été reconnues ont été ou méprisées ou châtiées. C'est pour les bons que je rappelle les faits qui permettront, aux uns de se reconnaître, aux plus jeunes de savoir ce que furent leurs pères.

J'aurais aimé que les jeunes qui furent au combat participent tous à la rédaction de ces récits. Sollicités, ils ne l'ont pas voulu, par modestie peut-être, ou par négligence. Qui sait ? Ou simplement parce qu'ils ne connaissaient qu'une petite partie du combat. A eux et à leurs enfants, je dédie ces pages auxquelles ont collaboré mes camarades René COLAS et LEONARD, Madame PAULE, les Abbés VAN HECK et GARNIER, Monsieur DUMONT.

James is sent from prison of Chaumont to Stalag Luft I in Barth





## SOURCES

### PRIMARY MATERIALS

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\_\_\_\_\_. Original paintings. Washington State Historical Society, Tacoma, Washington.

\_\_\_\_\_. "SS *President Cleveland* Diary," summer 1933.

\_\_\_\_\_. "A Wartime Log," 1944–45 [Stalag Luft 1].

Lang, Jack. Collection—manuscripts, papers, artwork, and photographs. Jack Lang, New Zealand.

Smith, Bob. "At War in 5 Armies—The Adventurous Story of W.O.2 R.J.G. Smith." Twelve installments in the monthly *Review* (Wellington, New Zealand), 1955–56.

### SOME RECOMMENDED READING

*The Doolittle Raid*—

Glines, Carroll V. *Doolittle's Tokyo Raiders*. Princeton, NJ: D. Van Nostrand, 1964.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Doolittle Raid: America's Daring First Strike Against Japan*. Atglen, PA: Schiffer, 1991.

You can find him in the book. My father is in the book and is pictured in two side by side pictures. One is of him as he looked at the time and the other is him pictured as "the first actor of Stalag Luft 1." The picture of him as an actor is him with a beard and grey hair made up for a play in the camp.

Gwilym





The Resistance Camp was attacked by the SS on December 1, 1943, 3 members were killed and 3 wounded including Lieutenant McGrew, and 11 were arrested. They were sent to jail in Chaumont where they were tortured and 10 days later, they were shot. At the last minute, James McGrew was removed from the pack but obliged to attend to the execution. He was then placed during 3 months in the secret quarter of those sentenced to death and then sent to Military Court. He wasn't told the outcome of the trial and thought death penalty had been required. 6 weeks later, 2 wardens came to take him to a prisoner camp in the North of Germany, in Barth.

On May 1, 1945, before the Russian army arrived, the 9 000 prisoners took control of the camp and occupied the region. They freed 3 prisoner camps and a concentration camp. The adventure ended on May 8, 1945 and J. Mc Grew went back to the USA in September 1945.



**Stalag Luft I** was a German military-run World War II prisoner-of-war camp built near Barth, in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, Germany, for captured Allied airmen. The presence of the prison camp is said to have shielded the town of Barth from Allied bombing. Approximately 9,000 Allied Airmen (7,588 American and 1,351 Royal Air Force) were imprisoned by the Germans at Stalag Luft 1.





## Vianney's Speech on July, 9<sup>th</sup> 2007

We are finally all together **but** with a thought for Jacqueline Pace , who when she was 18, acted as an interpreter for **James** in the Tabou Maquis, because she wasn't able to join us today.

Why did it take me so long to solve what I called the Tabou Mystery ?

One day, I found a poem by Georges Chancel glorifying Julien Bon, his Maquis' friend. I noticed that he placed « **James** » with those who got killed in the Maquis on December the 1<sup>st</sup> 1943 and those who were held prisoners on that day and shot later on in Chaumont. Therefore, I first believed that **James**, the American, was dead.

But, there was a sudden twist, when I was given a document about the Maquis Tabou in which **James** is number 20 and is called Flawitt. He was supposed to have joined the « casseco » Maquis because he had escaped during the attack against the Tabou Maquis.

Twenty years later, in 1989, I happened to know that there was someone called **James** Flawitt in this Maquis but I was told it was a French man called Marceau L'Enfant who was shot in Besançon beginning 1944

Then, I was given another document, a list of war coupons belonging to the Tabou Maquis signed by **James** in 1944, which is AFTER the attack against the Tabou Maquis. So, it meant, he was alive and had escaped the attack. By the way, thanks to these coupons I found out that **James** and Julien weren't together on the day of the attack because Julien was buying gas and cigarettes in Cerilly, 5 kilometers from the camp.

Next, the head of the Maquis Mary Lallement told me that on July 24, 1944, there was a sham Canadian who tried to enter the Maquis and was in fact a German spy. It came to my mind that **James** could have been a sham American.

That's why I decided to go to Estissac to search for information about an American pilot who had been picked up by a maquis in Côte d'Or. I did find someone called **James** but there were two months between the time he landed and was hidden by some farmers and the time he was first referred to in the Tabou Maquis !! Moreover, he wasn't called Flawitt !

Finally, Mary Lallement who knew about my search/quest told me that two Americans were also searching about their father's story and their story seemed like the one of **James**. And that is reading a Press article relating his story that I realised that their **James** was also **MY JAMES** !

To conclude, I would like to add a family anecdote about this **James** who was at times hiding in our attic . In my family, it was strictly forbidden to go in the attic. But, of course, for the young boy I was, what was forbidden was very attractive and I went there. And one day, my grand mother found me chewing a gum (Can you imagine ?? ! !), she understood right away that I had got it from the attic and was terrified that people in the village had seen me chewing which could have revealed the fact that there was an American around ! ! ! ! I was grounded and since then I find gums disgusting. ( And I (your speaker) must say that my mother, Vianney's sister told me this story a few times and can't stand gums either ! ! !)

Moreover, my grand-mother told me that **James** had given his watch to Julien to thank him for the train trip, but on his dead body, it wasn't there, probably stolen along with his boots by the barman of Laigne who drank to Julien's death with some Germans. (I was told this by a neighbour who saw and heard everything, hidden behind her curtains.)

To go on with family anecdotes, we'd like you to know that Vianney's daughter Alexandra and your speaker both won the Resistance Contest. A contest held each year for

High school students to test their knowledge about the Resistance. Alexandra in 1994 in Rhône and myself (Emmanuelle Raffier-Bougette) in 1988 in Haute-Loire.

I'd like to add that I (your speaker again) come from Le Puy-en-Velay a small town next to Lafayette's Castle where you are welcome to come and I'll be delighted to be your guide.

We'd like to offer you this book By Semprun entitled « le grand voyage ». It's a novel studied by freshmen majoring in Literature at University. There is an extract relating the Tabou attack pp. 205 and one relating Julien's death pp.208. Pages 186 and 187 refer to the attack of a train on October 7, 1943 in which the writer was held prisoner and that's why he couldn't participate in the Tabou Attack, but a survivor told him about it. This writer at the time supplied regularly the Maquis with weapons. He speaks French but was a Spanish Prime minister and lives nowadays in Paris.



## **The Resistance in Northern Burgundy.**

### **On any gray November day in 1943.**

The German occupation had been going on for more than 3 long years already. We could hear every day the Allied planes coming from England passing over us several times a day to bomb either Germany or Italy (Torino and Milan particularly, 2 industrial cities). The Americans came during the day, and we could see their formations very high in the sky. The British came during the night very heavily loaded with bombs. We could hear the anti-aircraft batteries trying to shoot them down. Some succeeded. There were almost always more of them from west to east than east to west. Alas!

Some fliers were killed when their plane went down; others were able to jump with their parachutes and pray that they were in friendly territory. By that time the resistance movement was pretty well organized due to the following:

There was a decree forcing men from 18 to 50 to register to go work in Germany in the war factories to replace the forced laborers and the prisoners of war who were sick, no longer able to work due to the dreadful conditions. Those who did not want to go tried to be assigned to a French factory, and if they could not they went into hiding. Some used the wood cutters' shacks in the forest which is abundant in the Châtillon area. Many of these men joined the resistance.

The one I am most familiar with was the camp called Tabou in the hills above Châtillon. It had been started by Mr. Raillard, my neighbor, who was a woodsman, a forestry man who knew the forest very well. He had 2 sons, and one was in the age bracket targeted by the occupants. So he was one of the first to hide there. Not only did they want to hide but they wanted to use guerilla tactics to weaken the occupants. They had hidden weapons abandoned by the French army in retreat in 1940. They were supplied by air drops by planes coming from England. They were in contact with London, where General De Gaulle had retreated with a small band in 1940 saying in his famous harangue of June 18 1940: "France has lost a battle, but France has not lost the war."

Soon after the debacle of 1940 the Resistance took shape. The Headquarters of the Free French Forces (F.F.I.) gave orders from London. Secretly, men were trained in guerilla warfare and radio communications. While the Raillards operated the radio, my girlfriend and I used to stand on the balcony and watch for the German patrols that could identify the radio signals.

On that November day the younger Raillard man, Robert, 18 at the time, asked me to accompany him to the camp. He had there an American Navigator named Lt James McGrew whose plane had been shot down north of the area. He had been sheltered in a farm for 2 months in the town of Bucey-en-Othe, but it was time to move him to avoid suspicions. He was brought to Sainte Colombe by another Resistant, Julien Bon and after one night in Sainte Colombe he was brought to the camp on foot by Robert. They had to plan his return to England by the underground trail. I said yes right away; I was barely 18....I got into a car whose back seat was covered with machine guns and other weapons.

I had a nice visit with James Mc Grew, and the camp personnel made plans to have me take him somewhere to someone who would send him back to England eventually. They belonged to the Jean Marie network, a network controlled from London whose purpose was to get the aviators back to Britain. There were 2 ways: either through Spain or a pick up during a moon light by plane in France.

I did not realize the enormity of what I had done until a few days later; on December 1st 1943 the camp was attacked by the Germans. Those who were not killed in the attack were taken to the German Headquarters in Chaumont, 50 kilometers from there.

A notice appeared in the local newspaper "The Châtillonnais":

"On January 11 1944, a German war tribunal, seated in Chaumont, condemned to death 11 inhabitants of the area. The condemned were members of an armed band of terrorists stationed in a forest camp near Grancey le Chateau and Pothieres. They had committed acts of sabotage using explosives in high tension wires and on a French saw mill, had attacked German soldiers and were guilty of numerous acts of pilfering detrimental to the French inhabitants.

The Sentence was executed."

The bodies were thrown in a mass grave. The families were not able to collect them until the week before All Saints Day 1944-after the Liberation.

This would have been the end of the story, if in 2006 Vianney Harpet, the nephew of Julien Bon, one of the martyrs, had not written to me asking me for a picture of myself in 1943. I found one with four members of the Tabou camp; we had gone to a football game together. Vianney had started a history of the Resistance movement in Northern Burgundy, and sent me a copy of 2 articles concerning James Mc Grew, the Navigator I had met in the Tabou camp in 1943. The articles were from a newspaper in the area where James had parachuted in September 1943.

The articles were about a visit made in the area in 1998 by the two sons of James McGrew. It seems although he had been taken with the others to Chaumont, judged and lined up with other 11 in front of the firing squad. They were executed; he was not because of his military status. After many months of solitary confinement in Chaumont, he was sent to a prisoner of war camp in Barth Germany, and later liberated by the Russians and returned to the States in 1945.

When I read this, I immediately went to the internet to find out something about him. I started with P.O.W. camp named "Stalag Luft 1" and I found an entry by Gwilym Mc Grew concerning his father who spent the rest of the war at this camp.

James was in radio and had been an actor/writer before the war. He played the lead in the plays in the camp. He appeared in a sketch book by Colonel Greening- a book of pastel drawings entitled "Not as Briefed."

In this book the author writes: Colonel Greening has portrayed the first actor of Stalag Luft 1 in his most famous and successful role. Jim McGrew would rather act than eat, a surprising statement for any "Kriegie"(affectionate name for POW) but especially for Mac who had charge of the stockroom in the Mess Hall. A navigator from Pittsburgh, Pa. McGrew knew his way around. Volatile, emotional, confident and gifted, Jim has the qualities of a successful actor and showman. He has the experience too. Professional radio work in his home town, plus several seasons with the Pittsburgh Playhouse has given him the polish he needs. A break will bring him stardom"

The son adds: needless to say he did not become a star. He acted briefly on Broadway on his return but drifted towards writing. He spent his life as a writer in Los Angeles after the war.

There is so much more to discover as James rarely talked about his war experiences. He never wrote about them either.

On January 15, 2007 I blindly sent an e-mail to Gwilym McGrew entitled “your father in November 1943 Tabou maquis”. To my surprise I received an e-mail back less than 3 hours later on the same day:

“ Thank you so much for writing and reaching out. Would you mind replying to this e-mail with your phone number as I would love to call you very much? Many thanks. Here is my complete information:”

This was followed by his address and phone number. This was the beginning of a correspondence that produced a historic meeting of the last members of the Tabou camp and Gwilym McGrew and his family. It also produced a most heart felt link between two countries, a link that due to the generosity of the McGrew family will long reverberate in a couple of small French villages.

Gwilym told me that he and his family were going to France at the beginning of July and from there on a Mediterranean Cruise for 6 weeks. He asked me to go with them for a reunion of the Tabou camp on July 7 and 8. My first reaction was to say yes, but the task was too daunting for my 82 years, and, after much reflection, I had to decline.

My first task was to try to find the few remaining members of the Tabou camp. I called Robert Raillard who was still somewhat in contact with 2 of them. One whose brother had been executed at the same time as Robert’s brother: Maurice Hezard still lived in Châtillon and although not in too good shape he agreed to be part of the reunion. Then I had to find “Aigle Blanc” (white eagle -Mary Lallemand) who had been a leader in the area. All the correspondence with France had to be done by letter and phone as none of them have a computer. I found him and he agreed to come from Troyes where he lives now.

Then I had to find a replacement for me, someone who was fluent in both languages and willing to undertake this task. I had an old friend Suzanne Mullins who had married an American and had moved back to Châtillon when her husband retired. She was willing and able and really did a wonderful job. I arranged everything from here on the east coast by e-mail with Gwilym on the west coast (3 hours difference) and by telephone with France (6 hours difference).After the Mc Grews left the U.S. They were in direct contact with Suzanne and everything went very well as you will see.

We found out from Gwilym quite a few things about James’s life after the assault on the Tabou. When he ran during the raid he broke through the forest, saw some SS in front of him and so laid down in the field to hide in the “grass” which we now know was a wheat field. As he lay there he saw a German firing a machine gun at him that eventually hit him in the chest. As he was laying down the bullet grazed him and went into his skin, then skipped off a rib and went out again which left two scars on his chest, one from the bullet entering and the other from it exiting. He was then handcuffed and taken to a truck to be taken away and a German hit him in the face and broke his nose. He was in solitary confinement, he was interrogated, but not abused, other than starving him, getting him down to about 90 pounds.

He did witness a young French man being interrogated in the same room as him. The Germans were hitting the young man trying to get information and eventually the Germans sent a waiting German shepherd dog upon the man. The dog went for the young man’s throat and killed him. Lt McGrew saw all this happen.

He was in solitary confinement on death row for several months, in the Chaumont prison. James McGrew was well read and had many poems committed to memory, he started trying to scratch the last stanza of a poem called “Thanatopsis” above the door of his cell. He got a few lines marked before the Germans stopped him. Here is the last stanza he started to carve as he said he had come to accept the belief he would be executed.

So live that when thy summons comes to join

The innumerable caravan, which moves

To that mysterious realm, where each shall take

His chamber in the silent halls of death,

Thou go not, like the quarry slave at night,

Scourged to his donjon, but, sustained and soothed

By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave

Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch

About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.

The family was unable to see his cell during their trip...unfortunately.

This is what Gwilym remembers from his father's statements.

"The Tabou camp prisoners were executed at the prison against a wall. They were lined up, including James McGrew, all 12 of them, and then they were executed after James McGrew was pulled out at the last minute. My father stated the execution was "much like in a movie" in that they lined them up against the wall. The Frenchmen were crying, many for their mothers, and the Germans were making fun of this, laughing at them and taunting them. These were SS, not German army. Just before they executed the resistance member, James McGrew was pulled from the wall but turned and saw them all killed."

No wonder James McGrew wanted to forget and did not want to talk about those days and did not write anything about this period of his life.

The McGrew family, Gwilym, his wife Peggy, their daughter Colleen and their son James, arrived in Paris on the 3rd of July 2007, went to the Eifel Tower and were thoughtful enough to e-mail me a photo of all 4 of them in front of the Eifel Tower and at the same time I received a basket of goodies to make me forget I was not there.

I did miss two extraordinary days which were recounted to me by Francoise Millot, the wife of a Châtillon historian.

On July 7th 2007, Suzanne Mullins, my old friend, took the 3 survivors of the Tabou camp to Chaumont to meet the Mc Grews. After the introductions they all went to the prison (they only were able to see the outside), then to the Stele de la Vendue where their bodies were found. It was one of the many very moving moments of the 2-day experience.

After lunch, Suzanne took them all to a commemorative stele, marking the place where another American Lieutenant was killed in 1944 during the battle to liberate Châtillon. He had been parachuted behind enemy lines.

The next stop was at the St Phal cemetery where are buried 7 Canadians and English fliers whose plane had been downed on December 11, 1942. Then they visited the church of Villiers le Duc with its admirable frescoes, and returned to Châtillon by the forest so they could see the "Monument de la Forêt", a monument erected in Memory of all the young Frenchmen slaughtered in June 1944. They thought or were ordered to gather in the forest, recuperate the arms that had been hidden and wage a guerilla warfare on the



Germans until the Allies were able to join them.....that took three months from June 6.....The forest was surrounded and the slaughter and torture took place.....Several of my friends...around 18 or 20 years of age were among them.

After a delicious meal at the home of the Millots, the Mc Grews returned to their hotel.

On July 8th, at 10 in the morning, they all met in front of the Hotel de la Cote d'Or where the mayor of Châtillon was waiting for them. A journalist accompanied them to Sainte Colombe to see the station where Robert Raillard met James McGrew. On the way they went by the house where Jacqueline Pace lived during the war and across the street they saw the house where Robert Raillard lived. They also saw the house where James McGrew slept before going up to the Tabou Camp.

Then they followed the path that Robert Raillard and James took to get to the Tabou Camp. The mayor of the two villages adjacent to the Tabou were waiting for them in front of the monument of Pothières, the monument that immortalized those who gave their lives for the liberation of France. The exact place where the camp was located is marked by a stele, far inside the forest. Again, it was a very moving moment for all present and to feel so close to those who lived these tragic moments. The tour was completed by going to the tomb of another Resistant Julien Bon, who lost his life shortly after the raid on the Tabou Camp. On several occasions Julien Bon's family had also sheltered James McGrew in the attic of their home and when Julien was eventually tracked down and killed by the SS he was wearing an Air Force watch that James McGrew had given him in appreciation for his friendship and courage.

At noon, Gwilym treated them all to a banquet at the Hotel de la Cote d'Or, a famous gourmet four star restaurant. It was an immense success like the whole week-end. At dessert time, while they were served a beautiful cake decorated with the American and French flags, 3 members of the Châtillon marching band played the American and 2 Souza marches.

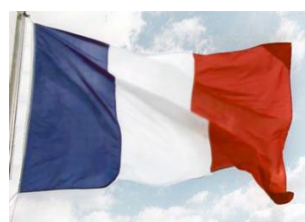
All this was accompanied by excellent Burgundy wines, of course, and champagne. The time to leave came and the adieus were again a very moving experience for all.

Suane Mullins and Francoise Millot prepared an album of stories, photographs and memorabilia and sent it to the McGrew in the fall. They were touched.

After their return to the States, the McGrew family sent 3 marvelous financial gifts back to the people who had helped their father. To Bucey-en-Othe, the little village of 400 inhabitants where James McGrew parachuted, a \$20,000 check to be used for whatever they need like equipping their school with computers...To the 2 little churches St Phal and Villiers- le-Duc, \$12,500 each for their renovation. The latter were remitted by Robert Raillard himself, as he is the one who was the most connected with James McGrew.

No need to tell you that the recipients were stunned by the generosity of the Mc Grews and will never forget them. This is the end of a beautiful story, although tragic and sad for me to recall.

Jacqueline GAMBIEZ-PACE









Julien BON



James Mc GREW

<http://harpet.free.fr>

(Résistance en Bourgogne – Un mystère du maquis Tabou enfin éclairci : James Mc Grew”)