

BRONZE STAR WITH "V" DEVICE
RECOMMENDATION FOR

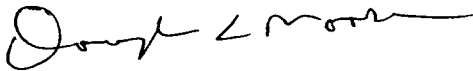


U.S. ARMY SPECIALIST FOURTH CLASS
CHARLES EARLE CRAFTS

LTC Stephen Harmon
Assistant Chief, Army Awards Board
U.S. Army Human Resources Command

Contained herein is our recommendation for a Bronze Star Medal w/"V" Device recognizing the valor of SP4 Charles Earle Crafts for smuggling out messages written by Captain Donald G. Cook, USMC, Senior Prisoner of War in a number of POW camps they shared together.

- **Tab 1.** This tab contains the DA Form 638 recommending the Bronze Star Medal w/V Device for valor, its narrative justification, and a proposed citation.
- **Tab 2.** Included at this tab are appropriate sections taken from a series of lengthy debriefing statements collected at Fort Devens, Massachusetts by the US Army's 108th Military Intelligence Group following SP4 Crafts' return to US control. They provide a detailed description of two messages written on cigarette paper by Captain Cook once he learned SP4 Crafts would be released from captivity. Captain Cook asked SP4 Crafts to smuggle these messages out of the POW camp and instructed him to surrender them to proper US military authority. By agreeing to accept this challenge, SP4 Crafts willingly risked his own life or continued confinement. He surreptitiously cut a tiny slit in his eyeglasses case and used that method to secret the messages. Fortunately, they were not discovered by his captors when he was released.



Douglas E. Moore
Colonel, US Army Retired
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RECOMMENDATION FOR AWARD

For use of this form, see AR 600-8-22; the proponent agency is ODCSPER


For valor/heroism/wartime and all awards higher than MSM, refer to special instructions in Chapter 3, AR 600-8-22.

| | | |
|--|---|----------------------|
| 1. TO Chief, Military Awards Branch, US Army Human Resources Command, Hoff II, 200 Stovall St., Alexandria, VA 22332 | 2. FROM LTC James E. Behnke, US Army (Ret) | 3. DATE 15 Mar 09 |
|--|---|----------------------|

PART I - SOLDIER DATA

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 4. NAME Charles Earle Crafts | 5. RANK SP4 | 6. SSN [REDACTED] |
| 7. ORGANIZATION Ranger Advisor, Military Assistance Advisory Group, Detachment 95, III Corps Tactical Zone, Republic of Vietnam | 8. PREVIOUS AWARDS POW Medal, GCM, Expeditionary Medal, Republic of Vietnam Service Medal, National Service Medal, Sharp Shooters Badge | |
| 9. BRANCH OF SERVICE United States Army | 10. RECOMMENDED AWARD BSM | 11. PERIOD OF AWARD a. FROM 12 Feb 67 b. TO 23 Feb 67 |
| 12. REASON FOR AWARD | | 13. POSTHUMOUS |
| 12a. INDICATE ACH, SVC, PCS, ETS, OR RET | 12b. INTERIM AWARD YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IF YES, STATE AWARD GIVEN | YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

PART II - RECOMMENDER DATA

| | |
|---|---|
| 14. NAME James E. Behnke | 15. ADDRESS [REDACTED] |
| 16. TITLE/POSITION Senior Advisor, 33rd Vietnamese Ranger Bn | 17. RANK LTC |
| 18. RELATIONSHIP TO AWARDEE Immediate Supervisor/Commander | 19. SIGNATURE  |

PART III - JUSTIFICATION AND CITATION DATA (Use specific bullet examples of meritorious acts or service)

| |
|-----------------------|
| 20. ACHIEVEMENTS |
| ACHIEVEMENT #1 |
| ACHIEVEMENT #2 |
| ACHIEVEMENT #3 |
| ACHIEVEMENT #4 |
| 21. PROPOSED CITATION |

NARRATIVE JUSTIFICATION FOR AWARD OF THE BRONZE STAR "V"

I recommend the Bronze Star with "V" Device be awarded to former SP4 Charles Earle Crafts, US 51479671, for distinguishing himself during the period of 12 February 1967 until 23 February 1967 by valor in connection with military operations while being held as a Prisoner of War (POW) in Vietnam.

As my narrative and supporting documents will show, SP4 Crafts risked continued captivity or perhaps his own life by willingly smuggling out documents written on 12 February 1967 by the senior POW in his camp, Captain Donald Gilbert Cook, USMC. Knowing he would be thoroughly searched prior to his release, SP4 Crafts cleverly concealed the documents in a tiny slit he cut in his eyeglasses case and kept them there until he reached American control.

To set the stage for his actions, SP4 Crafts was part of a three man team assigned by the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV) to the 33rd Vietnamese Ranger Battalion. I served as the Senior Advisor, SSG Harold George Bennett was our Light Weapons NCO, and SP4 Crafts served as our team radio operator.

Unfortunately, SSG Bennett and SP4 Crafts were captured when an overwhelming force estimated to be 5000 Viet Cong attacked our 350 man battalion during the Battle of Binh Gia on 29 December 1964. SSG Bennett was later murdered by his captors, the first American POW to lose his life while being held captive in Vietnam.

Since there are no other American survivors who witnessed this particular episode, I have included parts of an intelligence debriefing document prepared at Fort Devens after his release. This information and other documents I have obtained from the Joint POW/MIA Command and other sources substantiate this information as being accurate.

After spending more than two years in captivity, SP4 Crafts learned in late January of 1967 that he might be released during one of those goodwill gestures by the North Vietnamese Government in their attempt to influence world opinion against the American involvement in Vietnam. Seizing that opportunity, Captain Donald G. Cook, USMC, senior American POW in his camp, asked SP4 Crafts to smuggle out several documents, including personal notes to his wife and award recommendations for other POWs. SP4 Crafts accepted that mission, but nearly missed freedom when he lapsed into a malarial coma four days before his release.

Risking certain retribution including either being shot or retained in captivity, SP4 Crafts cut a small slit in his eyeglasses case to secret two documents that had been hand written on cigarette paper. Captain Cook wrote another note on regular paper, but it proved to be too bulky to be hidden in the slit in his eyeglasses case, so SP4 Crafts memorized its contents and that message was destroyed to prevent the enemy from learning its contents.


At a release ceremony held in the POW camp on or about 16 February 1967, SP4 Crafts asked the senior Viet Cong official present to release Captain Cook instead of himself. He explained that Captain Cook was a Catholic family man with a wife and four children while he was not married. The Viet Cong official firmly rejected that humanitarian offer.

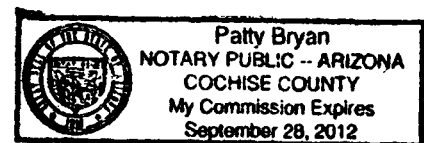
Later that day, SP4 Crafts and another prisoner began a tortuous, week long, journey through the jungle until they and their Viet Cong guards finally reached a road north of Lai Khe on 23 February 1967. The guards then stopped a southbound bus and put the POWs aboard. When the bus reached a military checkpoint in the vicinity of Lai Khe, SP4 Crafts was taken under American control again.

After being flown to the United States, SP4 Crafts underwent medical care and was thoroughly debriefed by several military intelligence officers. At that point, he released the notes that had been given him by Captain Cook and provided invaluable information concerning other POWs that were held with him in South Vietnam and the conditions of the camps they lived in. Appropriate sections of his debriefing statements are included in this packet and describe in detail the items he brought out of captivity and the circumstances in which he received them.

Unfortunately, no one in the military system took any action to recognize SP4 Crafts for the concern he showed when he asked the Viet Cong to release Captain Cook instead of himself or for the valor he demonstrated when he agreed to smuggle out the messages written by Captain Cook. I hope to rectify that oversight through this effort and strongly believe he deserves the Bronze Star with "V" device for his courageous actions.

As stated on the DA Form 638, none of the officers in my higher supervisory chain of command during this timeframe are still living; consequently, I had to sign the immediate authority block myself.


James E. Behnke
LTC, US Army (Ret)
Senior Advisor, 33rd Vietnamese Ranger Battalion



Notary: Patty Bryan

PROPOSED CITATION FOR THE BRONZE STAR WITH “V” DEVICE

The Bronze Star w/“V” device is awarded to SP4 Charles Earle Crafts for distinguishing himself by valorous action during the period 12 - 23 February 1967. After being held for more two years as a Prisoner of War (POW) in Vietnam, SP4 Crafts learned that he might be released in an attempt by the North Vietnamese Government to influence world opinion against the war. Seizing that opportunity, Captain Donald G. Cook, USMC, Senior American in their camp, asked SP4 Crafts to smuggle out several documents, including personal notes to his wife and award recommendations for another POW who had been murdered by their captors. Despite suffering from malaria and other jungle maladies, SP4 Crafts quickly accepted that mission. Risking death or continued captivity, he cut a tiny slit in his eyeglasses case to conceal two documents that had been written on cigarette paper and memorized another that would not fit into his eyeglasses case. During a release ceremony at the camp, SP4 Crafts asked a Viet Cong official to release Captain Cook instead of himself because Captain Cook was married with four children while he was not married. SP4 Crafts’ request was firmly rejected, so he and his guards began a week long, circuitous journey through the jungle before reaching a road where he was placed on a Vietnamese bus that was later stopped at an American checkpoint. During his extensive debriefing, he surrendered the smuggled documents to proper military authority. SP4 Crafts’ valorous acts were in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Army and reflect great credit upon him and the military service.

EXHIBIT COVER SHEET

SUBJECT: CRAFTS, Charles Earle, PFC E3, US 51 479 671
DPOB: 11 August 1942, Livermore Falls, Maine

File Number:

Preparing Unit: 108TH MI GROUP (III)

Agent Report dated: 5 March 1967

DESCRIPTION: Receipt for personal articles in possession
of SUBJECT, dated 2 March 1967, signed by
Allen G. Mews, Cpt, AIS

EXHIBIT III

RECEIPT

2 March 1967

I, Allen G. Mews, Captain, AIS, 04 004 319, Hqs, USAINFC, Fort Holabird, Maryland, do hereby, on 2 March 1967, accept from PFC Charles E. Crafts, the following listed items: PFC Crafts has been advised by the undersigned that I can in no way insure or guarantee the return of these items:

1. Yellow gold plain wedding band, with inscription: "Hunselove 13.9.58" belonging Captain Schumann. One each.
2. Letter dated January 13, 1967, two pages, written by Douglas Ramsey, to his parents. One each.
3. Letter undated from Captain Cook, USMC, to his wife. One sheet.
4. Facts and recommendations in handwritten format dated 12 January 1967 for the US Government, appropriate agencies concerned, written by and signed by D. G. Cook, 03, regarding Bennet, Schumann, Schuman's last wish, Crafts, general recommendations and desires and allst miscellaneous comment. One each.
5. Razor blade with wrapper. One each.
6. Two Vietnamese postage stamps.
7. Three food labels.
8. Unsigned undated note from Viet Cong concerning search. One each.
9. Two cigarette wrappers.
10. One bottle of miscellaneous pills.
11. One Readers Digest Magazine dated October 1966.
12. Two plastic bags with tobacco.
13. One flour sack Viet Cong carrying pack.
14. One canvas dispatch pack.
15. One pair rubber-tire thongs (Viet Cong shoes)
16. One pair chop-sticks.
17. One tooth brush, Perlon.
18. One aluminum spoon.
19. One aluminum cup.
20. One deck playing cards, US made, w/plastic wrapper.
21. One nativity set consisting of approximately fifteen pieces wrapped in plastic
22. Three items of clothing.
23. Three miscellaneous pieces of plastic.
24. One plastic glasses case MH

|||||/NOTHING FOLLOWS/|||||

Allen G. Mews
ALLEN G. MEWS
Cpt AIS

Paul M. Stahl
CPT AIS
2 March 67

Pino

AGENT REPORT
(AR 381-130; FM 30-17)

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

1. NAME OF SUBJECT OR TITLE OF INCIDENT

CRAFTS, Charles Earle
PFC, E3, US 51 479 671
DPOB: 11 Aug 1942, Livermore Falls, Maine

2. DATE SUBMITTED

3 March 1967

3. CONTROL SYMBOL OR FILE NUMBER

REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED

ON DEC 18 1980

BY DEP CDR USAINSCOM FOIPO

Auth Para 1-6J3 DoD 5200. 1-R

4. REPORT OF FINDINGS

On 2 March 1967, Charles E. CRAFTS, PFC (E-3), US 51 479 671, formerly assigned to Advisor Team 95, MACV, was interviewed under oath at Fort Devens Hospital, Ayer, Massachusetts, concerning HIS detention and subsequent release by hostile foreign elements (Viet Cong) in the Republic of Viet Nam (RVN). CRAFTS was duly sworn and advised of HIS rights under Article 31, Uniform Code of Military Justice, and the Fifth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States was read and explained to HIM. CRAFTS stated that HE understood HIS rights concerning this matter. SUBJECT was advised of HIS right to the advice and/or presence of counsel. SUBJECT, after indicating that HE did not desire the advice or presence of counsel, stated substantially as follows:

At the time of HIS release by the Viet Cong (VC), the following items of equipment and materials were in the possession of SUBJECT:

One pair of VC rubber-tire shoes which were given to SUBJECT by the VC in October 1966. This type of shoe is a typical VC shoe issued to POWs. The rubber tire is cut to the shape of the foot. 2h(2)(b)

One aluminum cup, which was given to SUBJECT by the VC in June 1965. The cup was used to eat and drink out of and was a part of HIS mess gear. The cup is approximately four inches high and four inches in diameter. The markings consisted of a fish and the letters MYTA and either CC or OO stamped on the bottom. Surrounding the fish was some foreign writing which is illegible. SUBJECT's name was scratched on the bottom. The handle was covered with a piece of nylon cord. 2h(2)(b)

One spoon, bearing the marking C-R-A-F-T-S, approximately eight inches long and crudely made of aluminum; allegedly made out of material from a downed United States aircraft. This was a typical practice of the VC. 2h(2)(b)

One pair of black work shorts with an elastic waist and two rear pockets. 2h(2)(b)

One pair of VC maroon pajamas consisting of a shirt with buttons in the front and bell-bottom pants with an elastic waist. This type pajama is the standard clothing worn by POWs. At any time an individual is seen in this type and color it can be assumed that the individual is a POW. SUBJECT has seen VC in green, black, and blue pajamas and/or uniforms but has never seen a VC in a maroon-colored pajama or uniform. SUBJECT, while in captivity had three of the aforementioned uniforms. Prior to HIS release by the VC, HE had to turn in two of HIS uniforms. 2h(2)(b)

One glasses case issued by US Army. SUBJECT had this case in HIS possession prior to capture and used it to conceal three items of correspondence which were in HIS possession at the time of HIS release. A concealed pocket in 2h(2)(a)

UPGRADED AT 12 YEAR INTERVALS
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JOSEPH L. BATES, 108th MI Group (III)

57

6. SIGNATURE OF SPECIAL AGENT

Allen L. Gann

FORM 1 APR 52

341

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AGENT REPORT
(AR 381-130; FM 30-17)

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

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CRAFTS, Charles Earle
PFC, E3, US 51 479 671
DPOB: 11 Aug 1942, Livermore Falls, Maine

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BY DEP CDR USAINSCOM FOIPO

Auth Para 1-603 DoD 5200. 1-R

4. REPORT OF FINDINGS

the glasses case was affected by removing the partition, bending the case to an open flat position and with a razor blade slitting the inside, plastic covering. Upon the repositioning of the partition and the returning of the glasses case to its normal shape, the concealment method was not detected. With the modification the case could function in its normal use.

One typical VC satchel or bag similar to a flour bag. The name Volcano or Volcan was stenciled on the side of the bag. This bag was used to carry a hammock, mess kit, blanket and clothing. The bag has cotton straps with plastic padding in the shoulder area and is worn on the back like a pack sack. SUBJECT was issued this bag in January 1967, prior to HIS release. Each time SUBJECT moved to a different camp HE was issued a bag. When HE arrived at a new camp the bag would be taken away by the VC for their use, such as the transporting of rice. The strap, which held the pack on the back of the wearer, could be detached and used as a rice sock. When the VC wanted to travel light, one end of the strap would be tied and rice would be poured into the strap. The other end of the strap would then be tied and the strap would be slung over the shoulder and serve as the VC's field ration.

2h(2)(b)

One Reader's Digest (English edition) dated October 1966. This magazine was given to SUBJECT after HE got on a bus outside Lay Khe (phonetic) by a Vietnamese. This individual spoke to SUBJECT in French and asked HIM if HE understood French. SUBJECT understood a little French but answered the Vietnamese in English, and said that HE did not understand French.

N/A

One brown satchel pouch, approximately one foot square, with flap and carrying strap. This is the type of bag the VC use to carry all of their personal papers and other important documents. SUBJECT stated that this bag is used as a dispatch pouch.

2h(2)(b)

Two Vietnamese brown plastic tobacco pouches, approximately 14 inches long and six to eight inches wide. Each pouch contained small amounts of crude tobacco. SUBJECT removed a small amount of tobacco that HE was going to give to HIS father.

2a(2)(b)

One cigarette lighter which was on the person of SUBJECT at the time of capture. The lighter was taken by the VC at the time of capture and returned prior to HIS release.

2h(1)(b)

One brown bottle containing three different types of colored pills. The pills were given to SUBJECT prior to HIS release. The blue pills are vitamin B1 and SUBJECT took five per day. The big white pills were also vitamin B1, and so marked; SUBJECT was instructed to take one per day but

2a
(medica

(continued)

5. TYPED NAME AND ORGANIZATION OF SPECIAL AGENT

JOSEPH L. BATES, 108th MI Group (III)

6. SIGNATURE OF SPECIAL AGENT

58

John K. Gane Jr

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BE USED.

~~WARNING: NOTICES AND METHODS INVOLVED~~ SOURCES

AGENT REPORT

(AR 381-130; FM 30-17)

CONFIDENTIAL

1. NAME OF SUBJECT OR TITLE OF INCIDENT

CRAFTS, Charles Earle
PFC, E3, US 51 479 671

DPOB: 11 Aug 1942, Livermore Falls, Maine

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4. REPORT OF FINDINGS

BY DEP CDR USAINSCOM FOIPO

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did not take any. SUBJECT could not identify the small white pills and did not take any. SUBJECT was given the above-mentioned pills on 18 February 1967. Prior to this time, the interrogator dispensed the pills and SUBJECT was never allowed possession of pills during HIS period of detention. Although the interrogator dispensed the pills, a VC doctor maintained custody of the pills. During HIS period of detention SUBJECT was given this type of pills frequently.

One pair of chopsticks. SUBJECT whittled the chopsticks with a razor blade from bamboo. In an effort to break the monotony SUBJECT would on occasion eat with chopsticks rather than a spoon.

2h(2)(a)

One cross, made by SUBJECT from bamboo with a razor blade. SUBJECT was allowed to retain these two sticks which made up the cross.

2h(2)(a)

One razor blade, double edge, manufactured in Solingen, Germany, and bearing the trade name Sun of Araby. SUBJECT stated that this was the best of all the razor blades issued to HIM by the VC. Most of the razor blades issued to HIM by the VC would not cut.

2h(2)(a)
(sometimes)

One tooth brush, trade name Perlon stamped on the handle. The tooth brush, issued to SUBJECT by the VC, was manufactured in the Cholon area of Saigon.

2h(2)(b)

One leather wallet in the possession of SUBJECT at the time of HIS capture. SUBJECT was allowed by the VC to retain this wallet in HIS possession during the entire period of detention. SUBJECT retains possession of the wallet.

2h(2)(a)

One deck of playing cards manufactured in Cincinnati, Ohio, given to SUBJECT by the VC. At one period before Smith and McClure left, they had two decks of cards and Smith taught SUBJECT how to play pinochle. Due to the lack of a pinochle deck the existing cards had numbers written on them raising the value to conform with a pinochle deck. SUBJECT was given the playing cards in June 1965.

2h(2)(t)
(unknown if to a)

One Nativity scene consisting of fifteen pieces with the marking "made in Italy" inscribed on the figures. The Nativity scene was given to SUBJECT by the VC in December 1965. During the move from Tay Ninh and Bien Hoa some of the figures were broken. The figures were made of plaster of Paris and were quite brittle.

2h(2)(t)
(sometimes)

SUBJECT, at the time of HIS release, had in HIS possession two small bamboo crosses, one of which had been made by Captain Cook and

2h(2)(t)

(continued)

5. TYPED NAME AND ORGANIZATION OF SPECIAL AGENT

JOSEPH L. BATES, 108th MI Group (III)

59

6. SIGNATURE OF SPECIAL AGENT

Allen D. G...

DA FORM 341 1 APR 52

341

DO NOT WRITE IN THESE SPACES

WARNING NOTICE - SENSITIVE SOURCE AND METHODS INVOLVED.

AGENT REPORT
(AR 381-130; FM 30-17)

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

1. NAME OF SUBJECT OR TITLE OF INCIDENT

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PFC, E3, US 51 479 671
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2. DATE SUBMITTED

3 March 1967

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4. REPORT OF FINDINGS

the other by SUBJECT. CRAFTS gave both crosses to HIS father.

AGENT'S NOTES: End Part 1, Agent Report 1st debriefing period, 2 March 1967. All references right margin relate to appropriate SICR Message, DIA, May 66, paragraphs.

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ON DEC 18 1980

BY DEP CDR USAINSCOM FOIPO

Auth Page 1-603 Doc 5200 1-R

5. TYPED NAME AND ORGANIZATION OF SPECIAL AGENT

JOSEPH L. BATES, 108th MI Group (III)

60

6. SIGNATURE OF SPECIAL AGENT

DA FORM
1 APR 52

341

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BE USED.

WARNING NOTICE - SENSITIVE SOURCES
AND METHODS INVOLVED.

AGENT REPORT

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

1. NAME OF SUBJECT OR TITLE OF INCIDENT

CRAFTS, Charles Earle
PFC, E3, US 51 479 671
DPOB: 11 August 1942, Livermore Falls, Maine

2. DATE SUBMITTED

5 March 1967

3. CONTROL SYMBOL OR FILE NUMBER

REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED

ON DEC 18 1980

BY DEP CDR USAINSCOM FOIPO

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4. REPORT OF FINDINGS

Part 2, Agent Report 1st debriefing period of Charles Earle CRAFTS, PFC (E-3), US 51 479 671, conducted 2 March 1967. CRAFTS stated substantially as follows:

On 12 January 1967, SUBJECT and Donald Ramsey witnessed CPT Donald G. Cook write three letters, two of which were in SUBJECT's possession at the time of release. The two letters, one identified as "Pertinent Facts and Recommendations", and the other as a personal letter to Cook's wife, were written on thin cigarette paper. The third letter, also a personal letter to Mrs. Cook, was written on regular note paper. Cook had to write very rapidly because a VC guard was nearby. Cook read the contents of the letter entitled "Pertinent Facts and Recommendations" and the letter written on note paper, to SUBJECT. Cook wanted CRAFTS to know the contents of the letter concerning his recommendations as he thought his writing was not legible. SUBJECT promised Cook that HE would not read the letter written on cigarette paper to Mrs. Cook, but HE would memorize the contents of the letter written on note paper because HE might have to destroy it because of its bulk. SUBJECT used a razor blade to slit the inside covering of HIS glasses case and inserted the two letters written on cigarette paper into the slit in the case. The contents of the letter to Mrs. Cook, written on note paper, was memorized and destroyed because its bulk prevented insertion in the glasses case. CPT Cook directed SUBJECT to give the letter concerning his recommendations to the personnel who debriefed HIM after HIS release.

2d(2), but no subparagraph applies.

SUBJECT gave the following narrative reading and explanation of the contents of Cook's letter of "Pertinent Facts and Recommendations":

"1. Bennett: Silver Star, 20 March 1965. The Silver Star was recommended for Bennett's attempted escape.

: Purple Heart, 20 March 1965. During Bennett's attempted escape VC bit his finger half off.

: Bronze Star, 29 December 1964, date of capture. Item in parentheses is "V" for Valor.

: Purple Heart, the PH in parenthesis indicates posthumous, July 1965. The date 28 May 1965 is the last day SGT Bennett was seen by SUBJECT.

2. Schumann: Bronze Star, "V" for Valor, 15 May 1965, his date of capture.

(continued)

5. TYPED NAME AND ORGANIZATION OF SPECIAL AGENT

ALLEN G. MEWS, HQ, USAINTC
JOSEPH L. BATES, 108TH MI Group (III)

61

6. SIGNATURE OF SPECIAL AGENT

Joseph L. Bates
Allen G. Mews

DA FORM 341

1 APR 52

REPLACES WD AGO FORM 341, 1 JUN 47, WHICH IS OBSOLETE

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

AGENT REPORT
~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

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: Purple Heart, the "PH" in parentheses indicates posthumous, 7 August 1966. 7 August 1966 is the date of death of CPT Schumann. SUBJECT was holding Schumann in HIS arms when he died. Schumann's death was verified by Cook, Ramsey and a VC doctor. Cause of death was cited as pneumonia and a kidney infection.

3. Schumann's last wish: Three NCOs in CB (Cia Bhen)(phonetic), Bronze Stars. Schumann was local advisor at Cia Bhen prior to capture. SUBJECT recalled two of the NCOs names referred to by Schumann as SGT Bell and SGT Ward. Neither Cook nor SUBJECT could recall the name of the third NCO.

4. CRAFTS: Promoted E4, 28 May 1965.

: Fell, 29 August 1966. Guilty, Mitigation; frightened and dense. Recommendation: no action be taken in accordance with UCMJ.

5. General Recommendations and Desires: Push POW exchange. We'll stick it out.

6. CRAFTS will fill in whys and wherefores. This statement was signed, Very Respectfully, D. G. Cook 03."

SUBJECT recalled that the contents of the letter from Cook to his wife indicated how close he had come to God; that his children grow up with the outlook towards life to do what they believed in all of their lives; the simplicity of life; his desire for his wife to live in an apartment or a house large enough for the family; and not to worry about money as that was the least of his worries. The great possibility that he would not return; but even though he had a desire to return to his family he would not let his country down. SUBJECT desires to visit Mrs. Cook, accompanied by a military representative if necessary.

SUBJECT was in possession of a gold wedding band, a former possession of CPT Schumann, inscribed on the inside "Honey Love 13/9/58". SUBJECT wanted to deliver the ring personally to Mrs. Schumann but agreed to turn it over to military control. SUBJECT removed the ring from Schumann's hand at the time of HIS death.

In February 1967, SUBJECT received from a VC interpreter three documents, the property of Douglas Ramsey. The three documents were Ramsey's last Will and Testament, Power of Attorney, and a letter to the First National Savings Bank regarding transfer of a bank account. SUBJECT and Cook both witnessed the documents and they were returned to the VC. (continued)

5. TYPED NAME AND ORGANIZATION OF SPECIAL AGENT

ALLEN G. MEWS, HQ, USAINTC
JOSEPH L. BATES, 108th MI Group (III)

62

6. SIGNATURE OF SPECIAL AGENT

Joseph L. Bates
Allen G. Mews

DA FORM 341

1 APR 52

REPLACES WD AGO FORM 341, 1 JAN 57, WHICH IS OBSOLETE

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

A: Basically, most of the things pertain to the POWs, Schumann's last request to me, general recommendations and desires. I will fill in on the whys and wherefores of certain details.

113. Q: What is the date of it?

A: 12 January 1967.

114. Q: And who wrote it?

A: Captain Donald Cook, U. S. Marine Corps.

115. Q: Now, this is very important. Did you observe Captain Cook writing this?

A: Yes, I did.

116. Q: What were the circumstances when you saw him write it?

A: The circumstances?

117. Q: The circumstances. When did it occur? The time of day. Where did he get the materials?

A: The material is cigarette paper which is issued to us with tobacco. We use this because it was very thin, very light, it could be folded up very small and at this time, we did have a pen.

118. Q: What kind of a pen?

A: It was a ball-point. I have one back in my room, the same thing, Bic, the blue Bic pens. I think you have probably seen them and I have one in my room. It was this type of pen. He used it.

119. Q: The exact time of day?

A: It was light.

120. Q: Whereabouts in the camp did he write it?

A: In the house we lived in.

121. Q: Was there light enough inside?

A: Yes. There was a VC guard standing outside, and I was sitting in the hammock. Cook was on his bed. Douglas Ramsey was on his bed, and Ramsey and I were watching the VC guard to make sure he didn't come towards the house. Captain Cook was writing out this and his letter to his wife. I can't even remember how long it took. Now, I am almost positive it was in the afternoon, but I cannot say positively. But it was the day, in the day time. It was not at night.

122. Q: Now, what did he do with it when he completed it?

A: He gave it to me.

123. Q: What did you do with it?

A: I had, in the meantime, while I was watching the VC guard, got a razor blade and slit my glasses case. He finished, passed it to me, folded up. I watched the guard. He wanted me to read this and came over on the bed. Said he had to write it in a hurry. He read it over to me and said that where he had to write it in a hurry, if nobody could understand it, that he would read it, and that I could remember the words. I told him I could read his writing and he said this was very important that I understood exactly what it said. He said he was not worried about his letter to his wife because his wife could read his handwriting, but this, he wanted

DEPONENT'S INITIALS:

PAGE 10 OF 172 PAGES.

139

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
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STATEMENT OF Charles E. Crafts taken at Fort Devens, Massachusetts on 2 March 1967. (continued)

to make sure that I knew what it said exactly so that if other people could not read his handwriting, I would know what it meant. I took it and put it inside of my glasses case. He had already written to his wife first. I had made the slit, put his letter to his wife in first, and he then gave me this, and we went over it, and I then folded it up and put it inside of the glasses case. I then closed it up and put it into this bag.

124. Q: Have you read Captain Cook's letter to his wife?
A: No. This was personal and I told him that I would not read it. The same as Mr. Ramsey.
125. Q: Was this material in your case and the case in your possession until your release?
A: Yes.
126. Q: Is the date on there correct, 12 January 1967?
A: Yes, I'm positive.
127. Q: Why did he write it at that time?
A: As I mentioned before, the VC first indicated that my release might be possible on the 9th of January.
128. Q: We have made arrangements to get this into the proper channels, which concerns your awards and other things. We need the actual letter itself to send to Washington.
A: Yes, I have a photostatic copy that was made by Francis M. Van Hoozer.
129. Q: Would you now take the original and go through it with us step by step because there may be some question come up? Who is Big Sam?
A: Big Sam is a code name, our code that Captain Cook set up, for the United States Government, the United States Army. Uncle Sam.
130. Q: Did he give you specific instructions about turning this over?
A: He told me that it was to be turned over to you gentlemen, the men who gave me the debriefing. Not to a PIO or anyone else I might come in contact with. This was to be turned over only to the people who gave me the debriefing. Captain Cook knew exactly who this was to go to.
131. Q: You interpreted his instructions to mean the intelligence people who conducted the debriefing?
A: Yes.
132. Q: What is the next word, the one just above?
A: That's subject, SUBJ.
133. Q: How would you read this?
A: Some pertinent facts and recommendations. Number one, Bennett, Silver Star, 20/3/65. The Silver Star was for his attempted escape. Purple Heart, 20/3/65. There is no date but it is the same date as above. Something, attempted escape, VC bit his finger half off. Bronze Star, 29/12/64. The item in parentheses is V for valor. The date is the date of our capture. The date, 28/5/65, that was the last day we saw Sergeant Bennett. The PH in parentheses means posthumous.

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PAGE 11 OF 172 PAGES.

1-R

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132

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STATEMENT OF Charles E. Crafts taken at Fort Devens, Massachusetts on 2 March 1967. (continued)

134. Q: Do you believe this?
A: Yes.
135. Q: What is the word after PH in parenthesis?
A: This I do not know.
136. Q: You believe you cannot interpret the word?
A: I cannot remember that.
137. Q: Would you read the date under it?
A: 7/65.
138. Q: All right. Now, the next item?
A: Schumann, Bronze Star, parentheses V for valor, 16/5/65. 7/7/66. The first date, 16/5/65 is the date of capture. The second date, 7/7/66, is the date of death.
139. Q: Are you personally knowledgeable of Captain Schumann's death?
A: Captain Schumann is dead.
140. Q: What were the circumstances of his death?
A: Pneumonia and kidney infection.
141. Q: Did you see Captain Schumann's body after he was declared dead?
A: Captain Schumann died in my arms.
142. Q: Did you make the determination that he was dead?
A: Yes, but we had medical confirmation also by the VC Bac Si.
143. Q: Was there confirmation by any other person?
A: Yes, Captain Cook and Douglas Ramsey.
144. Q: Would you now cover the last item on there?
A: Yes, Purple Heart, PH in parentheses, 7/7/66, cause of death, pneumonia.
145. Q: Would you proceed by reading Captain Cook's Pertinent Facts and Recommendations?
A: Yes. Schumann's last wish. Three NCO's in CB, Bronze Stars.
146. Q: What is the significance of CB?
A: That's Cia Bheth. This is the town or hamlet that Schumann was the advisor to the local commander.
147. Q: Do you know what particular NCO's he refers to?
A: I know two of their names. Sergeant Bell and Sergeant Ward. I do not remember the third.
148. Q: At the time, Captain Cook could not recall the names either, is that correct?
A: Yes, he could not recall the names either. Item 4, Crafts: Promoted E4, 28/5/65.
149. Q: Did he tell you at that time that you had been promoted?
A: Not on that date, he told me in September. The next item is Fell, 29/8/66, Guilty, Mitigation, frightened and dense; recommendation, no action be taken, IAW, which means in accordance with UCMJ.
150. Q: Would you proceed to Item 5.
A: Item 5, General recommendations and desires. a. Push POW exchange. b. Will stick it out. Crafts will fill in the whys and wherefores, Very respectfully, Donald G. Cook, O3.

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PAGE 12 OF 12 PAGES.

133

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STATEMENT OF Charles E. Crafts taken at Fort Devens, Massachusetts on 2 March 1967. (continued)

151. Q: Is it Donald G. or D.G.?
A: D. G. Cook.
152. Q: At this time, how many copies do you have of this?
A: I have the two burnt copies.
153. Q: I would like at this time to make a direct exchange; the United States Government, particularly the Army and the Marine Corps Offices of Personnel, may take appropriate action on those records. We'll give you a receipt. Have you any objections to releasing this?
A: No objections at all, as long as I have these two burnt copies.
154. Q: Let me tell you at this time about the two letters from Cook and Ramsey. We read the letters and we forwarded the contents to Washington. Cook's concerns the Marine Corps. Ramsey's concerns the State Department because he was a USOM Official. They have read them and believe it very undesirable that you should send the letters off to them. What the Marine Corps would like to do is to deliver this letter, by an officer to Cook's wife. Mrs. Cook is visited monthly by the Marine Corps. We would like to have the letter to give to the Marine Corps and have it personally delivered by them and, of course, tell how they got it and caution the family because we don't want the VC to know how it got out. As we understand it, the Marine Corps is going to be in contact with us here. Captain Cook is of great concern to them, but they would like to handle it in this manner, if you have no objections.
A: No objections.
155. Q: I received a phone call from Intelligence Command and it is believed to be in the best interests of both the Army and the Marine Corps if these were delivered personally to the parents and the spouse by a person who has had previously established rapport with the parents and the spouse concerned. A representative from the State Department will visit Ramsey's parents. An individual will turn over the letter in their presence. The same for the Marine Corps Officer who has been visiting Mrs. Cook on an as needed basis. He will also turn it over. I would advise you that the Marine Corps is presently in the process of contacting Mrs. Cook and if she so requests contact with you, I will receive a call by phone and you will be released to the Marine Corps, to the Survivor Assistance Officer, and will be transported to see and speak with Mrs. Cook.
A: Excellent.
156. Q: She must request it and you are strongly advised not to initiate a visit on your own because of the contents of the letter. This is all I can say to you.
A: I have another letter here.
157. Q: You have mentioned this and we will have to eventually get this from you.
A: The contents of this letter, I do not know.

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DEPONENT'S INITIALS: CEC

PAGE 13 OF 12 PAGES.

134

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

STATEMENT OF Charles E. Crafts taken at Fort Devens, Massachusetts on 2 March 1967. (continued)

158. Q: They are both personal letters, Ramsey is concerned a little bit about banking and this sort of thing, but they want to make a personal visit rather than have you. It may be a shock by having you personally getting in contact with them. They don't want it. It is the family's request that you not contact them. There is no guarantee that Mrs. Cook will ask for a visit. She may express a desire for no visit. They have no idea, but if a visit is desired this would be arranged and we may send someone along just to be with you, but the Marine Corps will be in charge. I cannot guarantee this, all I can say is that the Marine Corps has been contacted and has contacted Mrs. Cook regarding this matter.
- A: I would like to, because I know my folks have come in contact with certain people such as Mr. Dawson who has answered so many questions for them and helped ease the tension and the worry.
159. Q: This may be true, we are not saying whether it is advisable or inadvisable but had better think of Mrs. Cook here and also the Ramseys. They may not want to talk to you as it would be upsetting. They should make that decision. Will you go along with that.
- A: Yes.
160. Q: May we have your permission to take the letters from you? Do you agree?
- A: Yes, I agree.
161. Q: While on this subject, you have the other messages pertaining to the individual that was to receive that letter from Captain Cook. Would you object at this time to dictate them? The information is fresh in your mind, if you can dictate it out now and it becomes a matter of record any time in the future if you have to refresh your memory you can go back to the original record. Would you object to reciting the method Captain Cook told you to use to deliver? Did he tell you the method verbally?
- A: No. He gave me a letter, which I read and then destroyed.
162. Q: What was the purpose of destroying the letter?
- A: He wrote the letter, not on cigarette paper, we ran out of cigarette paper, it was on regular note paper, approximately three pages long. It was very bulky. He told me that if I thought I could speak this letter out, to try it. If I had any question that I might get caught with it, that I could not get it out, that I would and should read it and destroy it. I thought of places that I could hide it and I decided that I could not bring it out.
163. Q: You made a decision to read it and destroy it.
- A: Yes.
164. Q: Do you at this time object to reiterate the contents of this at this time.
- A: No. It was three pages long. I cannot remember verbatim what he said but the general message was to his wife. Such as not to worry; how close he had become to God; his desires for his children to grow up with the outlook toward life to do what they believed in all their life; the

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PAGE 14 OF 172 PAGES.

135

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STATEMENT OF Charles E. Crafts taken at Fort Devens, Massachusetts on 2 March 1967. (continued)

simplicity of life; his desire for her to live in an apartment or house big enough for the family; not to worry about money, that was the least of his worries; his desires to return home to his family; his love for her and the children; the simplicity of life; you either live or die; yet, you continue to believe in what you believe in and not to deviate from that; the great possibility that he might not return, even though he had the desire to return to his family; and he would not, in a general sense, let his country down. That was basically about all of it.

165. Q: Did he make any requests of his wife?
A: No.
166. Q: If you happen to come up with something later on will you agree, if possible, to write it down?
A: Yes. This is what I recall now. He gave this to me just before I was released. I only had the opportunity to read this once and I did not take the time to read it thoroughly and commit it to memory.
167. Q: Do you intend to carry through and visit Mrs. Cook.
A: At some time, I am not willing to say it will be in the immediate future.
168. Q: Then I must advise you, based upon direction of the US Marine Corps, through the US Army, that if you are so determined to make the visit, coordinate with the US Marine Corps Survivor Assistance Officer, who will ease you in. That is, if you are determined that you are going to make the visit.
A: Of course, like I said.
169. Q: What if she asks that you do not visit her?
A: Then, I will not. I did promise Captain Cook that I would visit his family, and this is the only way I would break the promise; if his wife requested that I do not visit the family, I will not.
170. Q: Then I'll restate, if you do visit the family of Captain Cook, that you request that you be accompanied by the Marine Officer who has already established the necessary rapport.
A: I agree to this. To me, myself, personally, I'm in no hurry, this I do not plan to do immediately.
171. Q: The same instructions apply to the Ramseys.
A: Yes, the same thing, of course. They live in Boulder City, Nevada, and that's a long ways away. If they request a visit, I will visit them.
172. Q: The expense will be paid for by the State Department. Why don't we hold off for the next few days and see what we hear from the State Department?
A: OK.
173. Q: Now, relative to the information concerning Captain Schumann. You have verification of his death. His death is also mentioned in the letter by Cook. Normal procedure would be to convene a board and consider all the available evidence, and you are a large part of the evidence. In fact, you and the letter from Captain Cook are about all the evidence available.

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DEPONENT'S INITIALS: CC

PAGE 15 OF 172 PAGES.

136 copy of 1

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STATEMENT OF Charles E. Crafts taken at Fort Devens, Massachusetts on 2 March 1967. (continued)

- It is important that all phases and aspects be considered. The ring is a part of it.
- A: I have proved that this is his ring.
174. Q: How did you prove it?
- A: On the inside of the ring is written "Honey Love 13/9/58", the day of their marriage. She could identify that.
175. Q: We would like to have this ring as evidence.
- A: I would like to keep the ring.
176. Q: Even considering that the ring is an extremely important item to the US Army, and to Mrs. Schumann? This is evidence of his death, everything else is so meager. You are the first to corroborate from informational standpoint. This is valid concrete evidence.
- A: The only thing is that I, personally, want to return that ring to his wife.
177. Q: Again, we have to consider and understand that she may not want that. She may not want contact with you. I don't know, but, we have to consider that possibility.
- A: Then I would like to return it to his family. To some other member of his family.
178. Q: Would you make the ring available as evidence of his death?
- A: Yes.
179. Q: This would substantiate the fact that he is deceased. We will stipulate that when it is returned to the spouse of the deceased, that you be available to return it along with a representative of the military.
- A: I would want to be accompanied.
180. Q: We want this to be done in a manner least upsetting to the family.
- A: This would be the most upsetting situation. There is another, Sergeant Bennett.
181. Q: I wish to make a statement on behalf of ourselves as your interviewers that we need custody of the ring to assist the US Army in seeing that Mrs. Schumann receives all monetary and military assistance due her as the widow of a deceased US Army officer. Whereas you are going to give us custody of the ring, we in turn cannot guarantee, in response to your request to return this ring, personally, we cannot guarantee that you will ever see this ring again.
- A: Yes, I understand. It's just that I want the Government to be aware of my request.
182. Q: It is quite possible that you may have to appear before a board.
- A: I'm willing.
183. Q: There is money involved, insurance companies, and this is of tremendous significance to the Schumann family. I'm sure you understand this. Do you have any objections to turning this ring over to us if we give you a receipt?

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DEPONENT'S INITIALS: CEC

PAGE 16 OF 172 PAGES.

~~SECRET~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

137

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

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STATEMENT OF Charles E. Crafts taken at Fort Devens, Massachusetts on 3 March 1967. (continued)

- A: No objections.
184. Q: Did you bring out any other items which you may have turned over to anybody, or which you still have in your possession and may be of interest to US Army Intelligence?
- A: No.
185. Q: May the US Government take possession of the items before you on the floor which will be used to possibly help other POWs, and for examination. They may be returned at your request. I cite the Comacho case where the items he had were turned over voluntarily, and he requested that they be placed in a Special Forces museum at Fort Bragg. To the best of my knowledge, that is where they reside now. Would you be willing to turn them over?
- A: Yes.
186. Q: In other words, you release these items to US Army Intelligence, and you have the option of requesting their return. However, I can not make any guarantee of their return.
- A: Does that also include those you have in the envelope?
187. Q: Yes, all the material. I don't know if you know what is in the package, remember I told you it was a cigarette pack, a label from food and various other little items.
- A: Some of those are personal things, things which were with me when I was captured.
188. Q: We will give you a signed receipt for everything. In the letter to Mr. and Mrs. Ramsey, there is mention of a Power of Attorney. What is the story on that?
- A: Just before I was released, Mr. Ramsey wrote a last Will and Testament, Power of Attorney, and a letter to the First National Savings Bank; three letters were signed and witnessed by myself and by Captain Cook. I had the feeling at the time these were to be given to me upon my release to deliver, they were never given to me. I witnessed them, but that was all. In his letter it says, "it was not included".
189. Q: This is very important for the record. Did you have knowledge of the contents of the documents that you witnessed?
- A: Yes. I read them before I witnessed them. Number one was his last Will and Testament. Number two, was a Power of Attorney to his parents, and number three was a letter transferring his savings account to a joint savings account, the second party being his father.
190. Q: Concerning the questions as to what happened to this Power of Attorney. You state that you do not have it; you did not bring it out with you; and you did not ever have it in your possession. Is that correct?
- A: The only time I saw it was when I witnessed it. It was given to me by the VC interpreter and taken back by them.
191. Q: They knew he wrote it then?

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DEPONENT'S INITIALS: CC

PAGE 17 OF 72 PAGES.

138

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~SECRET~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

STATEMENT OF Charles E. Crafts taken at Fort Devens, Massachusetts on 3 March 1967. (continued)

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- A: They knew he wrote it, but they did not know he wrote the ~~will~~.
192. Q: Why did they allow him to write it? How did they expect to transport it out?
- A: They talked to him shortly before he wrote these. Of course, I do not know what they said. Whether they told him they would give it to me and that I would deliver it, or whether they would mail it or what. I do not know. At that time they would not let us speak to Ramsey or Cook.
193. Q: When was this?
- A: I do not know the date. It was just prior to my release, not more than a week before my release, in February 1967.
194. Q: You mentioned Ramsey's Will. Is this part of the documents you brought out?
- A: No. I received it only for a short while from the VC interpreter and it was given right back.
195. Q: Also, the Power of Attorney; these were two separate documents we are talking about?
- A: Three. Three documents, the Power of Attorney, his last Will and Testament, and the transfer of the bank account.
196. Q: Do you recall the contents of the Will?
- A: Yes. In his last Will and Testament, it stated that in case of his death, everything was to go to his father. If his father was deceased, it was to go to his mother. Concerning the changing of his savings account, the second party was to be his father, and in case his father was dead, the second party was to be his mother. The third one was the Power of Attorney, and that was the same way.
197. Q: Were there any other special requests?
- A: There was one. I think it was his last Will and Testament. In case both parents were deceased, it was to go to another relative; but who, I cannot remember. I do believe it was ~~a man~~. ~~was given to me~~.
198. Q: What was the intention? Were you to deliver this information to his family?
- A: I do not know. All they asked me to do was to witness it.
199. Q: What else do you remember about this?
- A: At that time, I thought I would have these three documents to bring out with me, but they never did give them to me. I never thought of it in any other way.
200. Q: What do you intend to do with the information you have concerning them?
- A: I think it should be related to his folks, what his desires are.
201. Q: Then it is your desire that this information be made a matter of record?
- A: yes.
202. Q: Have you any other items that you brought out?
- A: No.

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PAGE 18 OF 172 PAGES.

Copy 1 of 1

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139

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