

April 19, 1943

The Préfet Délégué of Aisne
To Monsieur the Préfet Délégué of the Ministry of the Interior
61 rue de Monceau
PARIS

Subject : Aircraft Crashes

I have the honor to inform you about aircraft crashes that occurred on the territory of my Department during the night of the 16 to 17 of April last.

-A Canadian aircraft crashed into a wheat field located in the Commune of Septmonts. Five burnt bodies were recovered.

-Towards 4 o'clock, an English aircraft crashed at Vesles et Caumont. Seven bodies were recovered of which 5 burnt inside the fuselage.

-Another burning English aircraft fell at St-Pierre Aigle. We were not able to determine the number of burnt aviators.

-Another crashed at the place known as "L'Abbaye" in the Commune of Commenchon. Two wounded aviators were located at the crash site and two others in a neighbouring village.

-At 4:45 a.m. a heavy English aircraft crashed at Lesquielles-St-Germain following an aerial battle. The aircraft was still burning at 7 o'clock. Human remains were recovered but we could not determine the number of victims.

-An English aircraft fell near the de Navary farm, Commune of Brunehamel. Only one body was recovered intact but additional body parts were recovered scattered in the fields.

-Finally, an English aircraft crashed into a house in Pontavert. The building was destroyed but the three people living there were rescued.

-Elsewhere, a four-engine English airplane landed on the territory of the Commune of Missy-les-Pierrepont. The aircraft is intact and the aviators escaped.

-One aviator was seriously wounded and descended by parachute, was found in a house in Evergnicourt and was turned over to the occupying authorities.

All of these occurrences were brought to the attention of the pertinent Feldgendarmeries.

As well, during this same night of April 16, at 2:05, a low flying aircraft machine-gunned the train station at Laon. No members of the S.N.C.F. were injured but a German soldier was wounded in a train parked at the station.

At 1:45, aircraft coming from the west and heading east also machine-gunned a train full of German soldiers on leave at the Maizy level crossing (Arrondissement of Château-Thierry). Information obtained from the station employees indicate some soldiers were wounded and disembarked at the Epernay station. No details concerning the number of wounded or possible dead was available. There was some minor damage to the house of a railway worker living near the Maizy station.

Le Préfet Délégué
(at this time it was likely Gaston Mumber)