

RESTRICTED

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Inquiry at Grenoble revealed no information so this team proceeded the same day to Chambéry (Bourget De Lac) France which is a French Air Force Base under command of Lt. Colonel Janicot.

7. At Chambéry, US personnel received a most cordial welcome and unlimited cooperation from the French Air Force personnel. A 24 hour guard was provided for the aircraft, billets were secured for the crew, meals were furnished at a nominal fee, transportation was provided free, and personnel for assistance were placed at the disposal of Capt. Parker. Commandant Jean du Luzanne and Lt. Georges Bel were most helpful at Chambéry in providing transportation, communication facilities and interpreting for US personnel.

8. On Monday, 4 August 1947 the team proceeded by French Military staff car, furnished by Lt. Colonel Janicot, to Bourg St. Maurice, France, Headquarters of the 99th Bataillon D'Infanterie, Alpine, where it was learned that Commandant Chalandon was at the mountain base of operations, Les Chapieux which is located approximately six miles north of Bourg St Maurice. The US team proceeded by noon of that day to Les Chapieux.

9. Upon arrival at Les Chapieux it was learned that Commandant Chalandon, Lt. Mollard and the S.E.S. (Elite Mountain Troops of the Bataillon) were making an ascent of the mountain. The US personnel proceeded on foot to meet the French teams coming down the mountain, returning to Les Chapieux at 1800 hours.

10. In cooperation with Lt. Bockstahler, AGRC, Capt. Parker studied results of searches and discussed plans with Commandant Chalandon and Lt. Mollard for further searches of the mountain area. Due to the heat of the summer the glacier had become so dangerous to cross that Commandant Chalandon refused to allow anyone to accompany the S.E.S. except experienced mountain climbers who could speak French, therefore the only US representative who was allowed to go to the scene of the accident was Mr. George A. Geno, Civilian employee of AGRC.

11. The work done by the French Alpine troops in these searches deserve the commendation, recognition and sincere appreciation of the United States. These courageous troops made five ascents of Aiguille des Glaciers without regard for their own safety. At one time Lt. Mollard and two of his men narrowly avoided death when a snow bridge across a deep crevasse gave way. This normally dangerous work was made more difficult because the unusually hot summer had made the glacier's snow and ice very soft. The crevasses were unusually deep (sometimes over 300 feet deep) and the snow bridges which must be used to cross the