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ROBERTS, ANNA FRIDA

ROBERTS, G.

INTERVIEW

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'A' Detachment

BRITISH INTELLIGENCE POOL BERLIN
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BERLIN : 93 4384.
'A' Det : 93 4206.

Officer Commanding
BRITISH INTELLIGENCE POOL BERLIN
British Forces Post Office 45.

BRIP/0/11/354.

9 Dec 57.

Subject : Mrs. Anna Frida ROBERTS, nee BURKHARDT,
widowed UDOLPH. (Wife of 23221775 Pte
ROBERTS, G., returned BRITISH defector
from the ROZ.)

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Ref BRIP/0/11/354 dated 23 Oct 57 :..... 'A'.

PART ONE

PREAMBLE.

1. During the morning of 2 Dec 57, we were informed that Mrs ROBERTS was in WEST BERLIN. She was contacted during the same afternoon and arrangements made to interview her on 3 Dec 57. (Ref 'A' is the interrogation report on Pte ROBERTS upon his return from the ROZ in Oct 57.)

PART TWO

PERSON CONCERNED.

2.	Surname	: ROBERTS, nee BURKHARDT, UDOLPH.
	Christian name(s)	: Anna Frida.
	Date of birth	: 29 Apr 1915.
	Place of birth	: REINHARDTSGRIEMMA, Kreis DIPPOLDISWALDE. (ROZ).
	Last address in ROZ	: BAUTZEN/Sachsen, Bleichstrasse 7e.
	Present address in WEST BERLIN	: Bahnhofs-Mission, BERLIN-TIERGARTEN, Franklinstrasse, 28.
	Date of marriage (to Pte ROBERTS)	: 21 Jan 1956.

7 .../to sheet 2 (para 2 continued).

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2. (Continued)

(NOTE: Mrs ROBERTS was in possession of the 'Familien-Stamm-Buch' (Family Genealogical Register) referring to her ROBERTS marriage. Owing to paper shortage, a total of only 5 photostat copies of this book could be obtained, however, we have the negative and additional copies can be produced; should this be instructed by higher authority. The photostats show the front cover and pages 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. Pages 6 to 24 were not photostatted as they contained no entries. Attention is invited to the notice on page 2 to the effect that the entries in the book (Marriage Certificate on pages 4 and 5) are valid as legal proof that the events described have taken place.)

3. Brief life-history.

Date of birth	: 29 Apr 1915.
1921 to 1929	: Attended the Volksschule in REINHARDTSGRIMMA.
1929 to 1933	: Worked on a farm in REINHARDTSGRIMMA.
21 Jun 34 to 23 Sep 40	: Employed as a metal-worker with the firm of LUDWIG & KOPHAHN in SCHOTTWITZ.
9 Oct 40 to 12 Apr 52	: Employed as a metal-worker with the firm WILLI TÖPFER, REINHARDTSGRIMMA. (At the end of the Second World War, the name of this firm was changed by the SOVIET occupation authorities to 'Einkaufs und Lieferungs-genossenschaft, DRESDEN, Hoyerswerderstrasse, 27, Betrieb REINHARDTSGRIMMA'.)
15 Apr 52 to 24 Oct 53	: Employed as a metal-worker with the firm of GUNTER WEIDIG, REINHARDTSGRIMMA.
30 Nov 53 to 29 Jul 54	: Employed as a laundress with WÄSCHEREI PORSCHE'S BLEICHE, BAUTZEN.
11 Aug 54 to 11 May 56	: Employed as a kitchen-help by MITROPA-SCHIFFSGASTSTÄTTEN, DRESDEN.
10 Sep 56 to 28 Aug 57	: Employed as a turner at VEB FÖRDERANLAGEN, BAUTZEN.
2 Sep 57 to 1 Dec 57	: Employed as a post-woman at the HAUPTPOSTAMT, BAUTZEN.

PART THREE

CASE HISTORY.

4. Subject's first husband was killed-in-action during the Second World War. In 1953 she met the AMERICAN defector PETERSON and they lived together in a marital-like state. They did NOT marry. PETERSON was dissatisfied with his life in the DDR and made several attempts to return to the WEST. On about [redacted] committed suicide by locking himself in the room gas-tap. His mistress found him upon her [redacted] By the time that a doctor arrived PETERSON was discounted the hypothesis that PETERSON was murdered met Pte ROBERTS at PETERSON's funeral and they decided to live together; they married at the registry on 21 Jan 56.

...../to sheet 3 (para 5)

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5. On 4 Oct 57, Pte ROBERTS made his successful bid to return to the WEST. He did NOT tell his wife of his intention and when she returned home from work, she assumed he had left for WEST BERLIN. She immediately informed Heinz SCHATTEL (Club-leader) of her suspicions. The reason that Pte ROBERTS did not tell his wife he was intending to return to the WEST was, she thought, because on previous occasions when this subject had been discussed she had dissuaded him from taking this step by saying that if he attempted to escape and failed, then they both would be deported to SIBERIA or sentenced to long terms of imprisonment in the DDR. Subject stated that several such discussions had taken place and her arguments against escape to the WEST were always the same.

6. On 9 Oct 57, she received a letter from her husband telling her that he had reached WEST BERLIN and surrendered himself to the BRITISH military authorities. On about 1 Nov 57, subject received another letter from Pte ROBERTS, dated 18 or 19 Oct 57, asking her to visit him in BERLIN-SPANDAU on 29 Oct 57.

7. On 1 Nov 57, she travelled to BERLIN from BAUTZEN by the recently-introduced omnibus service. She had been given an address in EAST BERLIN by Doris MÜLLER (now the wife of the BRITISH defector 23247530 Pte McLANE, W., 1 BW (RHR), AWOL wef 15 Apr 57) and told that the person living at this address would help her in reaching BERLIN-SPANDAU. (NOTE: We have been in contact with the person in the EAST sector whom she visited for some considerable time in the past and have received useful background information on BAUTZEN from this source. The source subsequently informed us of her visit.) Mrs ROBERTS was given directions how to reach BERLIN-SPANDAU and eventually found herself at a BRITISH army barracks, which from her description would appear to be identifiable as WAVELL Barracks. After some time, she was taken to an officer and a Frau/Fräulein KREITSCH or KRIETSCH (phonetic) was used as interpreter. Mrs ROBERTS was told that her husband had been sent to the UK on 24 Oct 57. She was given her husband's address. She then left the barracks and made her way to Alexanderplatz (EAST sector) where she caught the bus back to BAUTZEN.

8. A few days after her return to BAUTZEN, she was asked to visit SCHATTEL in the Club-house. Upon arrival at the Club-house, she was questioned by two persons, whom she believed to be members of the MfS, regarding her reasons for visiting WEST BERLIN. She claimed she told them it was a private family matter. She was also questioned about the contents of the letters she had received from her husband, but claimed she refused to give any information about this. She was finally asked to meet the MfS representatives at some future, unspecified, date, but refused to acquiesce to this arrangement. She was then told that they would see her again anyway and would send for her when she was required, but they never did this.

9. She was subsequently instructed to go to the Staatsanwaltschaft in the Justizgebäude, BAUTZEN. Here she was asked if she knew the address of her husband, to which question she replied in the affirmative, but refused to disclose what it was. She was also asked if she wished to divorce her husband and answered that she did not, claiming that she had no reasons for taking this step.

...../to sheet 4 (para 10).

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10. She received several letters from her husband asking her to join him. She discussed this question with Asta SHEARER (wife of the US Army defector ER 13174268 Arthur SHEARER, AWOL wef 27 Jan 57) who gave her the address of her (Asta's) aunt; Frau Magdelene HILGERT, nee PAETZPE, BERLIN-REINICKENDORF (FRENCH sector), Waldstrasse, 103. (NOTE: Our enquiries have established that this person is living with her husband, Erwin, at the above address; she was born on 26 Feb 1903 in LINGEN and the WEST BERLIN police have nothing recorded against her.) Mrs ROBERTS did not find it necessary to get in touch with Frau HILGERT.

11. Mrs ROBERTS decided that she would attempt to reach WEST BERLIN and began to send her furniture to her son (by her first marriage), Helma UDOLPH, living in SOHLAND, Kreis BAUTZEN, Scheitenbach, 12. She did this as she claimed that upon her departure to the WEST the flat would be sealed by the DDR authorities and the furniture confiscated.

12. At 0030 hours on 1 Dec 57, she left BAUTZEN for WEST BERLIN, by train, arriving in BERLIN-SPANDAU at about 0900 hours 1 Dec 57. She made her way to WAVELL Barracks, the only place she knew in WEST BERLIN (para 7 above refers) and explained her case to an officer, the same woman as before acted as interpreter. The officer telephoned some-one and then advised her to go to the refugee camp in BERLIN-SPANDAU, Askaniering. This she did, but was told that she could not be taken in as this camp was but a sub-camp and she would first have to go to the main refugee camp in BERLIN-MARIENFELDE. She then made her way to the 'ZOO' railway station, where she contacted representatives of the Bahnhofs-Mission, who sent her to the hostel in Franklinstrasse, para 2 above refers. Later she contacted the BRITISH consul in WEST BERLIN, on 2 Dec 57, who informed HQ BERLIN Indep Bde who, in turn, informed this unit, para 1 above refers.

PART FOUR

COMMENTS.

13. Mrs ROBERTS claimed that she had not been a member of the FDJ or SED and had taken no interest in DDR politics and endeavoured to give the impression of one who had been opposed to communism all her life. She admitted she had often visited the Club-house, but claimed these visits were purely social and she was accompanied on these occasions by her husband. She was questioned regarding this aspect of her life, but insisted she had never been politically active. She also stated categorically that she had never acted as an informer to the DDR authorities against any other member of the renegade colony in BAUTZEN. This conflicted with previous reports we have received concerning Mrs ROBERTS activities in BAUTZEN; the returned defectors MERRIFIELD, POWELL and ROBERTS himself said they thought she did inform to SCHATTLE. She was interrogated on this but denied any such activity, on the contrary, she claimed she had never supported the DDR regime in any way and could not be shaken on this.

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...../to sheet 5 (para 14).

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14. Further to paras 7 and 12 above, it is regrettable that 1 BW (RHR) in the first instance and 1 BORDER in the second, did not inform us of Mrs ROBERTS' arrivals in WEST BERLIN when they occurred. It might have proved of value if we had been able to contact her earlier, especially on the occasion of her first visit. (We did not hear of this visit from our source, para 7 above refers, until after it had taken place and it was too late to contact Mrs ROBERTS.)

15. Interrogator's opinion of subject. She is of average intelligence and appeared to be a fairly shrewd sort of person. From what we have already heard of her, and from her own story, she would appear to have mediocre moral standards. She undoubtedly knew a lot about the defector colony in BAUTZEN, but did not volunteer information until she began to appreciate that the interrogator had a sound background knowledge of events in BAUTZEN. On some occasions she inadvertently disclosed items of knowledge which showed she knew more than she had previously said. When taxed with these 'slips of the tongue', she replied that they had occurred to her as afterthoughts. In view of her present circumstances she, naturally, endeavoured to create the impression of a person who had nothing to hide and who was willing to co-operate. In spite of this, or perhaps because of it, she did not make a good impression and there appeared to be an intangible air of doubt and mistrust about her and it is considered that no great reliance can be placed on her. The information she gave on BRITISH defectors (Annexure I refers) is thought to be generally reliable. Her alleged activities as an informant in BAUTZEN may have been exaggerated by returned defectors, but it is considered that, at least, if she heard of escape plans by defectors which involved her husband she did inform SCHATTEL, in order not to jeopardise her own personal security and way of life with her husband, para 5 above also refers. This may well have been an additional reason why Pte ROBERTS did not tell his wife of his intended escape attempt on 4 Oct 57, even taking into consideration the criminal aspect of his reasons, para 45 of ref 'A' refers.

J.B. Barklam

Sgt,
NCO i/c 'A' Detachment,
~~BRITISH INTELLIGENCE POOL BERLIN~~
Intelligence Corps.
(Sgt J.B. BARKLAM.)

/JBB.

...../to sheet 6 (Annexure I).