



*Sub*

*Rosa*

*Newsletter of the*

## FRIENDS OF THE INTELLIGENCE CORPS MUSEUM

E Newsletter 08 - Summer 2014

### A WARM WELCOME TO YOUR SUMMER *SUB ROSA*!

#### MUSEUM NEWS: WWI INTERACTIVE DISPLAY COMMISSIONED

This important display has been made possible by the most generous donations of: Mr Julian Barnard & Trusthouse Forte, arranged with the kind assistance of Lady Balfour of Burleigh.



WWI Display.

Photo: JQ

Firstly we would like to congratulate Museum Curator – Sally Ann Reed, Archivist – Joyce Hutton and all the team for presenting the much refreshed museum displays in time for Corps Day (19th July). This was a truly Herculean effort all round and was much appreciated by those who were able to attend on the day and will surely impress all visitors to the museum in the coming months and beyond.

We hope that many FICM members and their guests will take the opportunity to attend the trust's open day and reception to be held on 11th September (Templer Day) in the museum, thus affording an excellent opportunity to appreciate the new layout and features, such as the brand new interactive WWI display (made possible with substantial support from Julian Barnard). You are urged to register for this event as soon as possible, please. We also draw your attention to the opportunity to visit the priory on October 11th to attend the Priory Friends' study day, which marks the 850th anniversary of Archbishop Thomas Becket's visit to the priory! (See planned events).

In addition to contributions from the "usual suspects" this edition features fascinating articles from Derek Hawker, Angus Southwood and museum volunteer, Andy Cole – our thanks to you all! Thankfully we are beginning to see an increasing flow of new articles of interest and anecdotes from former Corps personnel, which are truly valued by readers of *Sub Rosa* – so do, please keep them coming in!

**John Quenby, Chairman**

#### PLANNED EVENTS

**12 August 2014** – Corps parade and ceremonial near Rouen in France.  
(Further details may be obtained from the Corps Secretary.)

**11 September 2014** – FICM open meeting and Friends museum visit. At the Museum, Chicksands from 14.30 to 16.30 hrs.

**This event is open to all FICM members and their guests, however early registration by mail or email is essential and certainly not later than 4th September for catering planning.**

**11 October 2014** – Friends of the Chicksands Priory Study Day, (£15.00 including buffet lunch). Introduced by Lester Hillman, this fascinating event will mark the visit to the priory by **Archbishop Thomas Becket** 850 years ago.

**Registration is open to FICM members who should contact Julie Benson – FCP Tour Co-ordinator, 72 High Street, Clophill, Bedfordshire. MK45 4BE. email: [juliebenson@aol.com](mailto:juliebenson@aol.com)**

**29 October 2014** – (Date and venue TBC) ICA AGM in London.

#### DISTRIBUTION GUIDANCE

While this newsletter does not include any classified information, it is intended for the personal use of FICM members, their families and close friends only. Your co-operation in observing this guidance is much appreciated!

# LUNCH WITH LECTURES 2014

## *Special Forces Club report by Tony Hetherington*



Dr Jim Beach

Photo: JQ

April the 10th saw the second of FICM's highly successful and popular Lunch with Lectures gatherings at the Special Forces Club in London. Following last year's themes of Korea and Cold War Berlin, this year fittingly marked the hundredth anniversary of the start of World War One. Two dozen members were welcomed to the SFC with a plentiful supply of coffee, before John Quenby took the opportunity to introduce our two new trustees, René Dee and Dave Farrell, who is now FICM's treasurer.

Then Dr Jim Beach, senior lecturer in history at the University of Northampton and author of *Haig's Intelligence*, gave an enlightening talk on the formation and work of the Corps in the Great War.

His first revelation was that initially, Corps personnel were seen as "mere assistants" to the "real" intelligence staff officers. This was partly because in 1914, he explained, the Corps attracted "very talented but rather eccentric individuals" who were then misemployed. Some recruits were ordered to act as chauffeurs for senior officers, and one found himself supervising Belgian ditch diggers.

The concept of an Intelligence Corps sprang from David Henderson, head of intelligence in the Boer War, who spread the idea of intelligencers who would work in the field alongside local scouts. No enlistment forms survive from the first

intake in August 1914, but Jim Beach told how one would-be officer reported for duty, only to be turned away because he had a German name! It does not seem to have occurred to anyone that in some circumstances, this might be an advantage. Another officer in the early days was sent home from France because he had "literary ambitions", and had taken to sending articles to the Daily Mail.

The Corps hit a rough patch when the task of interpreting was taken over by the French, and officers dispersed into a variety of regiments. Some later found their way back to the Corps, and by 1916 there were about 300 personnel in France.

Record-keeping was poor, though. One member of the Corps was captured after just two weeks in post, and held by the Germans as a prisoner of war until 1919. When he arrived back in Britain he was told the Army had no record of him, and he struggled to prove his identity and rank.

Vetting in the early days was equally haphazard. One recruit named McQueen was convincing enough to get into the Corps and then to be transferred to the fledgling SIS. He was sent to Rome, ran up huge hotel bills, managed to meet the Pope, and attracted so much attention that he was returned to London under escort. He was found to be a mental patient with a lengthy history.

By 1915, Beach related, vetting was improving and included MI5 or Special Branch checks. And by 1916 it was better still. Training seems to have been sketchy though. Early recruits were left to sink or swim, and many had no previous military experience. Later recruits often had the military experience, but not in intelligence; they were taken on for their language skills. It was not until the closing stages of the war that training became recognisable in modern terms. Basic intelligence skills were taught, and recruits then split off to specialise in signals intelligence, counter intelligence and so on. By 1918, training was at Harrow School and lasted all of eight weeks!

After lunch in the recently refurbished SFC dining room, and a few drinks at the bar, we returned to the club's lounge to hear Nicholas Watkis speak on the Origins of Air Photo Intelligence in the First World War. Nicholas served in the Corps in the

1970s and 1980s, and is the author of *Western Front from the Air*.

His talk was as fascinating for its tales of early photography, as for its stories of intelligence gathering. From the first photograph he described, dating from 1827, he took us to aerial shots that included a very clear picture of Boston taken in 1860 from a balloon.

The first military use of aerial photography was in 1862, during the American Civil War and the Union siege of Richmond, when pictures were used as aides for artillery guidance. And in 1890 in Britain, the Royal Engineers formed a balloon section based at Lydd in Kent, though during the Boer War, Nicholas related, balloons were used for observation but not photography.

World War One marked the start of real, large-scale photographic intelligence. Small pictures were put together to form a battlefield mosaic that was then re-photographed to produce a single large image. Early cameras used by the Royal Flying Corps were unstable in slipstream though, and only months into the conflict new cameras with a fixed lens were introduced that were more successful.

In March 1915 the first trench map was produced, showing miles of trench lines at Neuve Chapelle, all based on aerial photographs. The task of taking those photographs should not be underestimated. The pilot was in an open cockpit, with temperatures well below freezing, and had to fly in a straight line, making him a target for German artillery.

Stereo pictures did exist but were not widely used. Nicholas showed his audience a stereo print of Ypres in 1917, but explained that the technique was not widely employed because of a shortage of the necessary glass plates.

By 1918 the various photographic sections had produced about six million prints of photographic intelligence images. Glass negatives from the war are now stored at Duxford, and there is a card index at the Imperial War Museum.

Lunch with Lectures has been a very popular move, combining history relevant to the Corps and its museum with the chance to get together. Here's to 2015 and the next opportunity!

AH, July 2014

# FROM OUR ARCHIVES

## *Nazi General Theodor Eicke's "Sword of Honour" by Andy Cole, museum volunteer*

### The Artefact

#### **Sword of Honour. (ASFIC\_2239)**

The Nazi Honour Sword has been identified with Nazi General Theodor Eicke and was found, minus its scabbard, by Dr Hans Hers (Dutch Intelligence Officer) under the bed in the main bedroom of Eicke's home. The house near the Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp was built by the inmates of the camp. Eicke lived at the house for the period when he was head of the WVHA, prior to his redeployment as a front line officer, initially in the invasion of France and then onto the Eastern Front. The WVHA was responsible for setting up and running the Nazi concentration camp system in the 1930s. The sword is one of a number of items presented to the British Military Intelligence Museum in 1995 by Dr. Hers.

The hiltclasp of the sword features oak-leaves indicating the rank of General. Dr Hers in his provenance documentation describes the pommel as showing a panther with emerald green eyes. This however is the head of a male African lion with one of the eyes missing (It is possible that this was stolen by a servant or a retreating German soldier, during the hurried clearance of the house when it was overrun by the Russians late in the war).

The hilt is formed by a downward facing snake with prominent head and the grip is made from an artificial ribbed black material set off by twisted silver strings. One of the side sheets features the German Eagle with swastika and a wreath of laurels. The black and silver colours are symbolic with the SS and the rest of the adornment is typical of the Nazi German style.

The emerald green eyes of the panther/lion and the small snake amongst the leaves were symbols of the Gestapo and the SD (Sicherheitsdienst) of the SS.

### The Man

Good shooting by Russian AA gunners on 26th February 1943, brought an end to the life of SS-Obergruppenfuehrer (General) Theodor Eicke, commanding officer of the 3rd Division (Totenkopf) Waffen SS. They downed a German Fieseler Fi 156 Storch light aircraft killing all three occupants on board including Eicke, the pilot and another Nazi officer Hauptsturmfuehrer (Captain) Friedrich. The aircraft was on a reconnaissance mission behind Russian lines during the opening stages of the Third Battle of Kharkov in the Ukraine. Had the unstable, ruthless and fanatical Nazi survived the war,

he would undoubtedly have been hunted down by the Allies for an appearance in front of the War Crimes Tribunal.

Theodor Eicke came into this world on 17th October 1892 and was the son of a station master in Hampont, Alsace-Lorraine. The family was lower middle class where he was the youngest of 11 children. He was not academically gifted and dropped out of formal schooling before graduation at the age of 17.

In WWI he served in the German Army (23rd Barvarian Infantry Regiment, before transferring to the 3rd Regiment as paymaster, ending the war as paymaster in the 22nd Regiment.) He was awarded the Iron Cross, second class and then first class for bravery in 1914 and resigned from the army in 1919.



*Theodore Eicke sword handle detail*

**Photo: SAR**

He recommenced his studies but continued to demonstrate his lack of resolve and dropped out again in 1920 to take up a position in the police force. He worked initially as an informer and then as a regular police officer. His time as a policeman came to an end due to his extreme hatred of the government of the day (Weimar Republic). He frequently participated in violent political demonstrations. A brief term of employment at IG Farben also came to an end when the employer learned of Eicke's excessively violent anti-government protest activities.

At this time, Eicke was arrested for planning

and preparing bomb materials for attacks on political enemies and in July 1932 received a two-year prison sentence. However he was "spirited" out of Germany to Italy by his Nazi friends.

He returned to Germany in March 1933, just three months after Hitler came to power, but was immediately arrested and incarcerated in a mental asylum for a few months, before being released, promoted by SS Chief - Himmler to the rank of SS-Oberfuehrer and in June 1933 to the position of camp commandant at Dachau Concentration Camp close to Munich. This apparently was not a promotion, but used by Himmler as a means of getting the unstable and troublesome Eicke out of the way.

In early 1934 Hitler in company with Himmler decided to clip the wings of the Sturmabteilung (SA) and its hierarchy. The Night of the Long Knives saw the arrest of SA leader Ernst Rohm and all of his senior henchmen. Eicke and his adjutant Michael Lippert entered Rohm's Stadelheim prison cell in Munich and summarily executed him with their sidearms.

Eicke's role was extended to Concentration Camps Inspector and he embarked on a regime of training the camp guards (SS-Wachverbaende) to be utterly ruthless, sadistic and unsympathetic to the conditions of the inmates. Other pre-war camps followed at Sachsenhausen, Buchenwald and Ravensbrueck in Germany and also Mauthausen-Gusen in Austria, all being based on the format established by Eicke at Dachau.

When Eicke was re-assigned to combat duty, he assumed command of the SS-3rd Division (Totenkopf) which was mainly manned by former concentration camp guards. Totenkopf earned a dreadful reputation for brutality and infamy in many war crimes, including the murder of 97 British PoWs at Le Paradis in 1940.

One of Eicke's subordinates in the SS-Wirtschafts-Verwaltungshauptamt (WVHA) at Dachau was Rudolf Hoess who later became commandant of Auschwitz and has a connection with the Chicksands Museum in the engraved German Police handcuffs (ASFIC\_1416.1, ABC501) which restrained him when he was captured by the Allies in 1946. Hoess was hanged in Warsaw in 1946. Source for much of the data in this article: The archived provenance documentation of Dr. Hers and Wikipedia

**AC, March 2014**

# HISTORICAL NOTE

## *Incident on Havel Lake in West Berlin by Angus Southwood*



*Firebar recovery operation*

Photo: Corps BRIXMIS Archive

Some of you may be old enough to remember the nine days' wonder when at the height of the Cold War on 6 April 1966 a Soviet aircraft crashed in the British Sector of West Berlin. When the aircraft suffered a flame-out the pilot was refused permission to eject by his controllers, was ordered to ditch in that part of the Havel Lake in the East, but mistakenly put the aircraft down in the Havel in the British Sector of Berlin; sadly both crew were killed.

An operation was swiftly mounted to salvage the aircraft and strip it of every item of possible intelligence value. It was equally of great consequence to the Soviets, for within an hour they had a busload of armed troops under the command of a Soviet Air Force major general, at the lakeside.

The RMP had quickly mounted an armed cordon around the area. The Soviet party were being held outside the cordon by the RMP so a potentially serious situation was developing.

I was given a letter from GOC Berlin (British Sector) to deliver to the Soviet general saying that Soviet armed troops must be removed from the British Sector "within the hour". The general read the letter and then said to me "Go back to your general and ask him if he is threatening the Soviet Union!" Nevertheless, the armed troops were removed but the Soviets were allowed to keep a body of observers at the lakeside and BRIXMIS set up a 24-hour

roster of Russian speakers for liaison.

As it grew dark, the BRIXMIS Air Operations officer went out to the wreck where he took flash photographs of the tail sticking out of the water. Judging by the Soviet's quick reaction it was of some importance. The aircraft was identified by the two aerals on the tail, matching a photo – supplied only a few days previously by the American Mission – of one of the Soviet Union's latest interceptor aircraft. Not seen outside the Soviet Union it was a Yak-28 nicknamed Firebar by NATO. It was of the highest intelligence interest to the Western Allies.

The Royal Engineers Squadron in the Berlin Brigade were also quick off the mark and by the next morning had divers and a heavy ferry at the site. Russian observers on the bank of the lake watching through binoculars as parts of the aircraft were being recovered, quickly became enraged; even with the naked eye it was possible to see pieces being sawn off or photographed. For the first three days or so of the operation an extremely tense and unpleasant situation existed between the Soviet observers and the BRIXMIS liaison officer; the Russians constantly protested vehemently about the activities on the raft and being denied access to their aircraft, while the poor liaison officer had to develop a Nelsonian blind eye, claiming that he could not see the activities the Russians were complaining about! General Bulanov, who remained at the lakeside the

whole time was shadowed by a large colonel wearing tank badges, who every 15 minutes or so would tell the general to give the BRIXMIS liaison officer a protest to take to the British GOC.

Meanwhile, Brigadier Wilson, Chief BRIXMIS, was summoned to the Soviet commander-in-chief of the Soviet Forces in Germany at their HQ at Zossen south of Berlin, who protested violently about British obstructionism. He insisted that his protest should be passed on immediately to the C-in-C BAOR. Brigadier Wilson assured him that it would be done but warned that the Easter break might mean that the British C-in-C could not be contacted until after that. On leaving Soviet HQ, the brigadier and the BRIXMIS interpreter accompanying him were stopped at gunpoint by two Russian soldiers in Zossen village. After about an hour under arrest the interpreter managed to locate a phone in the village and rang the Soviet HQ to report their arrest. Shortly after, a Soviet jeep roared up at high speed. A Soviet colonel leapt out and having hit one of the soldiers allowed the brigadier to proceed.

Back at the lakeside, after a couple of days it seemed that the Russians realised that they were not going to prevail. Relations became less strained; it was possible to find more normal subjects to discuss. Bulanov appeared quite interested to find out more about life in both the West and the British armed forces. On one occasion he asked

me about British Army rates of pay and as I was telling him, the tank colonel made his customary dig in Bulanov's back and said, "Protest." Bulanov then said to me, "I must protest that we are not being allowed access to our aircraft. How much did you say your pay was?"

While all this was going on, most BRIXMIS members were completely unaware that another highly secret operation was being conducted by the divers: lifting the engines and part of the radar equipment and floating them under the surface to about a mile away. This equipment was then lifted onto a jetty and taken to RAF Gatow nearby, where they were flown to UK for evaluation. Within 48 hours they were returned to Gatow and floated back again under water to the crash site, where the divers were able to declare that the engines had been "found" and lifted onto the ferry. Negotiations were then conducted with the Russians concerning the handover of the bodies of the two airmen which had been recovered; they were handed over at the lakeside in the presence of senior Soviet officers, a party of Soviet Air Force officers in ceremonial dress acting as bearers, a band

and thirty Motor Rifle Division soldiers. The Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers provided an armed guard of an officer and twelve fusiliers with a piper.

After considerable further negotiation, dates were agreed for the main parts of the wrecked aircraft to be handed over from the British ferry to a Russian one in Lake Havel exactly on the dividing line between the British and Russian Sectors, on 13 April and 2 May.

By about day four they had become more accepting of the situation, and when I went down to the lakeside for my night's liaison duties it was clear that there had been a thaw in relations. Intent on relieving the officer who had been on duty all day, I was surprised that the BRIXMIS car windows were misted up. Inside I found the BRIXMIS officer slumped between two Soviet Air Force colonels. He raised a bleary eye to me saying, "Am I glad to see you!" From the appearance and smell of the occupants, they had clearly found comradeship in testing the merits of Scotch.

It now fell to me to continue this new-found friendship with the Soviet Union; it

continued well into the small hours. When my whisky ran out we repaired to the Russian's GAZ-69 jeep to tap their store of vodka and East German brandy. To my relief the well finally ran dry but the Russians had one further test for me: a dirty cardboard box containing cold liver and cloves of garlic, which in the interest of good relations I had to consume. Finally escaping, I crept back to the BRIXMIS car where the driver was asleep, and abandoned myself to the arms of Bacchus. In the morning I said to the driver, "I hope I didn't wake you getting into the car last night." He replied, "It wasn't the noise, sir. It was the smell. You didn't half stink of alcohol and garlic!"

**AS, June 2014**

A detailed account of the Firebar operation appears in Tony Geraghty's official history of BRIXMIS entitled *Beyond the Front Line: The Untold Exploits of Britain's Most Daring Cold War Spy Mission*, ISBN 0002556162.

## MEET A VOLUNTEER

*"The King desires no Man's Service but what is purely Voluntier", Daniel Defoe, Memoirs of a Cavalier, 1720.*



Tony Last with newly supplied cabinets (partly funded by FICM)

Photo: CIGY

*The museum is indebted to its volunteers who support the full-time staff. Each issue of Sub Rosa introduces a volunteer to the Friends.*

Meet Tony Last, who has been a museum volunteer for two years and every Monday travels from Huntingdon. He is married to Pat his wife of 46 years; they have two children and three grandchildren. As a 14¾-year-old schoolboy, from Sible Hedingham Secondary School in north Essex, he was impressed by an RAF presentation at school, and as soon as was able, signed up for the RAF Boy Entrant scheme. Tony served in the UK at RAF Stradishall, Coltishall, Brize Norton, Honington, Lossiemouth, Lyneham and Brampton. Overseas took him to Aden, Berlin and Hong Kong (where he received a GOC's commendation). He saw active service in the Aden Emergency and later in the First Gulf War at Al Jubayl in Saudi Arabia. Tony was also part of UKMAMS (United Kingdom Mobile Air Movements Squadron) working in over 40 countries. Working initially in supply and then air movements trades, and reaching the rank of warrant officer, Tony served just three months short of 40 years. A keen coarse angler, he fishes mainly commercial carp venues; interestingly in the

late 1960s, he fished the River Flit at Chicksands with their fishing club. What brought Tony to be a volunteer? Pat was already a regular, when Tony was (unwillingly) retired at 65 from his later civilian career, he accompanied her to see how he might help. From then he has happily thrived on anything from setting up racking, redesigning museum locations and stores, and anything else useful designated by our peerless curator, Sally Ann. Asked what task he liked the most, his face opened to a fine smile, 'Handling, identifying and recording the myriad medals won from the Boer War the present day makes me very humble and exceptionally lucky.' In fact, Tony became so interested in medals that his daughter gave him the 2014 edition of World Medals, which he greatly treasures. Tony tries not to see his volunteering as 'another job' enjoying it because he is not ' beholden to anyone' as he was in his 'proper' working life. Finally, he said, that for him Chicksands had always been a special RAF camp, a beautiful place and one of the nice plusses about Mondays.

Thank you. Tony Last!

**CIGY, July 2014**

# ARCHIVE NEWS

## *Fred Judge installed as Senior Researcher*



Senior Researcher - Fred Judge

Photo: JQ

It's an interesting title, isn't it: "senior researcher"? Well, assuming the mantle of Alan Edwards, the former Corps historian, was not an option; his was an impossible act to follow. Still, senior researcher sounds OK and, by definition, it means that all the other researchers are juniors, although I have yet to receive any sort of obeisance from them.

So what does my job entail? First and foremost is keeping on the right side of our archivist, Joyce Hutton, who has a reputation for eating visitors to the archives, no matter what their rank or station. I have found that regular supplies of chocolate hobnobs, agreeing with everything she says, supplying the occasional shoulder to cry on and a cautious hug – avoiding the talons when things get really bad, seem to work OK.

I then have the responsibility of reading through all the queries we get from other researchers and the descendants of former members of the Intelligence Corps asking for information about great-uncle Horace's service in the Corps, his medals, where, when and with whom he served (I have had only two queries about lady members/"attachees" of the Corps, and they were both at Bletchley Park). Other correspondents have included the Imperial War Museum, National Army Museum, the BBC, other local museums, the national press, current members of the Corps engaged on research projects and a variety of overseas correspondents researching everything to do with intelligence and security from the Boer War onwards. The archives have been blessed by the presence of assorted authors such as Dr Michael Occleshaw, Helen

Fry, Colonel John Hughes-Wilson (one of ours, of course), David Stafford, Dr Jim Beach and Dr Janet Morgan – Lady Balfour, amongst many others.

Then there is the ever-ongoing task of studying the contents of countless boxes containing files, documents, assorted memorabilia such as badges, mementos, SOXMIS toilet paper and the F6 reports about the real whereabouts of Adolf Hitler's love children, Stalin's false teeth and Winston Churchill's cigars, which outlying headquarters and individuals keep sending us. (One enterprising member of the Corps, the actor Michael Pertwee, really did rescue two of Churchill's cigar butts at one of the OVERLORD meetings in London. Allegedly; they were subsequently auctioned at Sotheby's). Although our museum and archives have been in existence since WO2 Moses released the dove on its aerial recce (well, 1948 actually), we still have not managed to accession every item. The first step on the way to doing this is to study all the files ranging from Unclassified to Top Secret to make sure that none of them merit the classification – sorry, protective security marking – they still bear. It is also a trip down memory lane for me. Frequently I come across reports bearing the signature of A. F. Judge, (Sgt, Ssgt, WO2) as well as the names of many other former colleagues, several of whom have since made the trip for their terminal interview with the Great Interrogator – not to mention those others who were the recipients of my benevolent questioning.

As it is well known that I am a pushover for almost anything, I have also been awarded the questionable honour of compiling the obituaries. Here I must allow myself a few words of nagging advice to you all. Despite what many of you may think, we do NOT have access to MI5, MI6, 10 Downing Street, Department of Social Security, SCIT (A, B, C, D), Conservative Party Central Office nor the records office of the Great Interrogator himself (except through those who may already have gone down this latter path and offer to help us via reputable, DV-cleared mediums). Obituaries are based on the records held by ICA/ICC, the archives, our own research material and what you tell us. I agree that it is unfortunate, to say the least, when the obituary of somebody you knew well appears to have nothing of substance in it, but now you will know the reason why. If you are submitting information on somebody who has passed on, we need full name, date and place of birth and death, details of service, post-service careers and any honours he/she may have been awarded. I do understand that it is not always possible to supply these, and we would also need to speak to the relatives, of course, but please do your best.

On the other hand, if you want to make sure you get a good write-up when your own terminal invitation eventually arrives, there's no reason why you shouldn't write your own obituary now, send it in to me and I will put it in the "pending death" tray until the appropriate message arrives from your family (or creditors). Of course, if I snuff it first, there is always the danger that an aspiring ICA secretary might come across my pending tray and decide to publish the contents anyway, thus causing your nearest and dearest extreme despondency.

I visit the HQ once each week to carry out these duties. However, most of the actual work itself, especially correspondence, and Internet and database searches are carried out at "Judge Towers" in the fens. I am happy to try and answer questions from individuals on my home email address – [fredjudex@btinternet.com](mailto:fredjudex@btinternet.com), but in the case of obituaries and subjects of Corps interest it is essential that you keep ICA/ICC and our archivist informed as well.

AFJ, May 2014

# HISTORICAL NOTE

*First In, Last Out by Derek Hawker*

My company commander at Sandhurst was Major John Read, DSO (later QMG) and with his support, on commissioning early in 1951 I joined the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry (43rd and 52nd). I served with them in Cyprus, Egypt and Germany together with three officers who had been in the gliders in the coup de main seizure of the Canal Bridge and the Orne Bridge on D-Day (as had my first platoon sergeant). In 1956 I qualified as a Russian interpreter, but at the subsequent medical my hearing was found to have been damaged by blast and I was downgraded. So, after a short spell as adjutant in our Oxford depot, I was posted to GCHQ and, when the regular cadre of Intelligence Corps officers formed in 1958, transferred to the Corps serving till 1976. So I have two army “families”; three, if you include my stepson’s Royal Regiment of Fusiliers, recalling that the Corps in 1914 started as 10 Br (Int B) Royal Fusiliers.

My wife Carol and I joined the Ox & Bucks party at the D-Day 70 celebrations in Normandy in June 2014. At 0016 hrs on 6 June 1944, a 6-platoon, 6-glider coup de main force of 180 with 12 pilots, engineers to remove demolition charges, and a doctor landed to achieve maximum surprise and seize both the Canal and River Orne bridges (gaining the battle honour “Pegasus Bridge”). Later that morning they were relieved by 7 (Lt Inf) Para<sup>1</sup>.

Our group was led by Penny Bates, daughter of the commander of D Coy 2 Ox & Bucks, Major John Howard, and General Sir Bob Pascoe. With our few remaining veterans, families including 13 Canadian relatives of an outstanding glider pilot, Jim Wallwork<sup>2</sup>, and the daughter of Lieutenant Brotheridge (the first allied soldier killed in action assaulting the bridge, two days before her birth), we were feted and photographed to exhaustion with bugles, bagpipes and fireworks in the villages of Benouville, Herouville and Escoville, all liberated at great cost. I gave a special thought to the soldier – sometimes forgotten – presumably concussed and drowned, the first to die on D-Day, when thrown from his crashed glider into the swamp, from which I dug out his loaded Bren gun in 1961<sup>3</sup> – it is now in the Pegasus Museum close to where he died. The remainder of the 52nd (as 2 Ox & Bucks was known) arrived later that day, primarily by glider, and were soon engaged

in very costly fighting opposed by 21 Panzer Division. They were later involved in the Rhine crossing with even higher casualties, and in the advance into North Germany, and were later described as “first in, last out”.

Returning on the ferry we talked to a member of an AAC Sqn Army Reserve, based in Buckinghamshire, who gave us Neil Barber’s book from which I was amazed to learn that there had been an Intelligence Corps presence at Pegasus Bridge shortly after its seizure. This was Sergeant Fraser Edwards of 317 (Airborne) Field Security Section. At about 0020 hrs, Brigadier Nigel Poett commanding 5 Para Brigade jumped with the Pathfinders, first from his plane. Immediately after him was his interpreter and escort Edwards, who on landing met up with the brigadier who could not find his radio operator, and therefore failed to receive the “Ham and Jam” mission accomplished message: “both bridges taken intact and held”. So they hastened on foot via the Orne Bridge to Pegasus Bridge to find out for themselves, being the first parachutists to arrive at the bridges. Edwards escorted the brigadier back to Ranville, where he was allowed to revert to his security role and met up with a colleague René Howse, who had just escaped capture and death when the Paras shot the driver of a German lorry, and he was thrown from the bonnet. Together they then “liberated” the German HQ in the



Pegasus Bridge

Photo: RM, Trip Advisor

Chateau Debleds in Ranville, taking four German prisoners and commandeering a useful car. A busy night, after which they made porridge for a most welcome breakfast, before exploiting the documents in the building.

317 Section mainly landed by glider, and joined by Edwards were among the first allied troops to liberate Deauville and Trouville. In one village Edwards gave his cap badge to a girl. Years later he returned and by chance met her. 317 was also involved

in Operation Varsity (the Rhine crossing). Later, Fraser Edwards, who spoke Russian and presumably other languages too, and his 317 (AB) FSS detachment attached to 3 Para Bde, crossed the Elbe in a Buffalo, and during house searches in Wismar, found that two wanted Nazi officials had committed suicide. The detachment met the Soviets but lost a motorcycle stolen by an officer (it is not clear, but I assume he means a Russian officer). As Edwards jumped into France at about the same time as the coup de main on the 6th of June and was present to the end, meeting up with the Russians, this means that he too, could claim “first in, last out”. For me, it was a “Ham and Jam” moment – a double whammy to know that the first parachutists to arrive at the bridges, letting the 52nd Light Infantrymen know they were not alone, included a member of the Intelligence Corps. It was also good to know that 7 Para which relieved them, was drawn mainly from lightbobs.

**DH, July 2014**

<sup>1</sup>Familiar to those of you who remember the film *The Longest Day*. Richard Todd, who was the first of 7 Para to jump was heavily engaged in the defence of Benouville/Le Port, played John Howard (Penny Bates’s father); having a pretty good idea of the role from his first-hand experience!

<sup>2</sup>Wallwork’s achievement was described as one of the finest examples of operational flying in World War II, and that without an engine!

<sup>3</sup>By burning some midnight oil, I was the first Corps officer to attend the Camberley Staff College, and so was on a battlefield tour in Normandy, the visit to Pegasus Bridge being led by John Howard. As my father had been involved in building Horsa Gliders (and later Mosquito aircraft, both largely of plywood), I was searching for debris where glider 3 broke up on landing, and noticed some metal protruding half an inch from the swamp – recognised as part of an inverted Bren bipod.

Sources

*Sharing the Secret A History of the Intelligence Corps*, Nick van de Bijl, 2013.

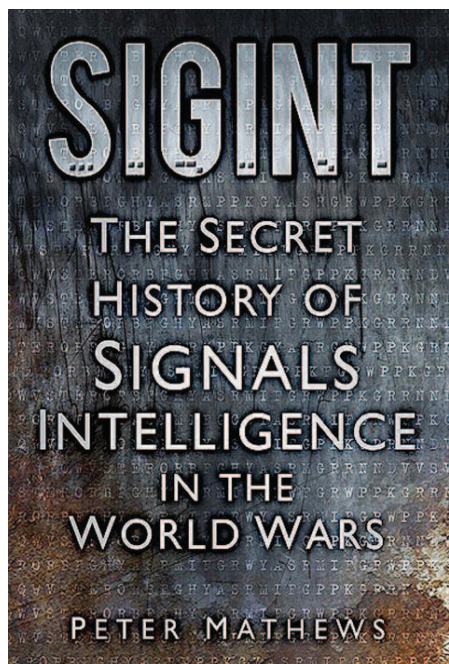
*The Pegasus Diaries: The Private Papers of Major John Howard DSO*, Penny Bates and John Howard, 2009.

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*The Pegasus and Orne Bridges: Their Capture, Defence and Relief on D-Day*, Neil Barber, 2009.

# BOOK REVIEW

*SIGINT: The Secret History of Signals Intelligence 1914-1945, by Peter Matthews, The History Press, 2013, 256pp.*



I have to start this review with a confession. I know the author and made several contributions to his book's preparation; hence his mention of me in the foreword. I hope this has not affected my judgement! The task he set himself of writing the "secret" history of the period is immense, as I know to my cost.

In a book of this size all one can hope to do is to skim the surface and it is therefore somewhat odd that the author takes the first 60 pages to begin to arrive at the actual subject matter. I wonder if there was any

need to include the interesting but irrelevant section on cyphers, for example. Probably as a result of his many years as a journalist, he manages to cover a multitude of subjects but not in any depth, but finding time and space for numerous anecdotes, which help lighten what could otherwise be quite a boring subject other than to the aficionado of Sigint.

What is at least disconcerting – if not irritating – is his habit of leaping from one subject to another, for example, the TICOM investigations. These actually took place from March 1945 and so it is odd to find an account of them nestling between pre-1939 "Polish Con-men" and the "inter-war years". What shines throughout the book was the need for a first-class editor; something the author would probably acknowledge. The pickings in this book are there for the keen reader; there are some gems which are not as far as I know to be found elsewhere. His meetings and later his friendship with Wilhelm Flicke have proved to be very fruitful as did his friendship post-war with members of the Abwehr. The document that he publishes in the appendix telling the story of sabotage at the German intercept station at Lauf is fascinating. As the author says "if true, the events he describes bear comparison with such incredible stories as the 'Rote Kapelle'

and the 'Rote Drei'". How the operation was carried out and the significance of what he tells us, sadly, may not be clear to anyone who has not been involved in similar work. This is a pity and should be remedied – if not here.

The author, due his invaluable connections and excellent memory, has revealed much on the German side of Sigint. In fact this is where the book was originally planned to concentrate and would have been an invaluable addition to the books on Sigint. Is this a "good" book? To be honest I have held back on writing this review because I have found it difficult to answer this question – not least because of my friendship with the writer, which I value. After a great deal of thought I have to say no. Although highly readable, as I said, it has this irritating (at least to me) habit of hopping all over the place in terms of time and geography, but then it is a subject in which I am well versed. However, if you just want to acquire a good – no, excellent – and sound knowledge of the world of Sigint over the period he mentions (1914-1945 and longer), this book is as good as any. And, above all, it is a good read. That is more than can be said about many books on Sigint.

PWC, February 2014

## HELPFUL ARMY PROCEDURE

### **Bags, Head 1959 Covert Fit/Air Sickness MK3A (Officers)**

Bags are to be carried on the person at all times whilst the aircraft is in flight. They are not transferable and should not be lent to other passengers. Personnel experiencing nausea should anticipate the onset of sporadic and random vomiting by reacting as follows: open bag at the unsealed end and shape opening so that it forms a close seal with the mouth. The seal should allow a 3-inch overlap between mouth and top of the bag. This will keep in splashback and absorb any recoil caused by secondary regurgitation induced by swallowing vomit. Place left hand at base of bag for support and right hand around the top of the bag, pressing closely against the mouth. Bend forward placing head between the knees. If for any reason your own knees are not available ask a brother officer for use of his batman. Finally, puke at will. If Will's not there try and keep it in the bag.

(Source: MIM, Accession no. 2988.)

Unearthed by CY, June 2014.



Refreshed museum room 2.

Photo: JQ