SubRosa

Newsletter of the Friends of the Intelligence Corps Museum

No.30, Winter 2021

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year to all Friends and Readers

NATIONAL CENTRE FOR MILITARY INTELLIGENCE PLANNED FOR BLETCHLEY PARK

By Alistair Sommerlad, Chair of Museum Trustees

Some image examples of how the museum is hoping to develop.

A large and more accessible display of our history and collection has long been an ambition, and long in gestation too. We have good reason to hope that the birth is near. No part of the heritage or charitable sector has been spared the setbacks of the Covid years. The trust has done better than most and has made good use of the time to re-examine our plans, find new backers and partners, and raise our ambition to the maximum that is practicably possible. That work has borne fruit.

The good news I want to share with the Friends is that we are now in detailed negotiations to take over a large slice of property at Bletchley Park. There we will build the National Centre for Military Intelligence (NCMI) with the range of facilities that such a prestigious and internationally unique place should have – somewhere to display the permanent collection, host temporary exhibitions, support education, manage conferences, assist researchers and both celebrate and commemorate the achievements of intelligence and intelligencers. NCMI will be independent, but we will work with the existing Bletchley Park Museum to ensure that visitors have a seamless and coherent experience at the whole site. They support us in that vision. Our arrival will significantly add to the story told there today, in breadth, depth and time. Around 200,000 people paid to visit Bletchley Park in 2019. That enviable level of proven footfall is what gives us and our supporters the confidence to aim high. It is also key to developing and upgrading the part of NCMI which will remain in Chicksands to support researchers, the Intelligence Corps and British intelligence professionals worldwide. Success in Bletchley supports success in Chicksands.

What will it feel like to visit the NCMI in Bletchley Park? Vibrant and exciting. An experience as well as an education. A place of contrasts where a quiet researcher will be as welcome as an excited schoolchild. You'll learn of the history and tools of intelligence, and you will hear, feel, watch and try them too. You will learn how to tell fact from fiction, turn the mass of modern data into understanding what matters (and when). You will hear how all the skills of intelligence, from imagery to agents, surveillance to electronics and interrogation to languages, have developed throughout history right up to current operations. Protecting secrets and countering espionage will be explained. Individual units and branches, wars and operations will be examined in detail. Above all, the stories of the people who have worked for, or worked with our intelligence organisations will be the focus. Those who lost their lives or have suffered in their duties will be commemorated. NCMI Chicksands will feed into and feed from the whole menu. With permanent and temporary displays, archive access and direct input into training, we will continue to record the history and heritage of the Intelligence Corps and support the ethos it encourages and inspires. Our online plan will support training and operations across the globe.

Any such project is complicated, lengthy and fraught with hurdles. There are many tricky choices to be made, alliances to be built and maintained, and some daunting process to negotiate. I anticipate plenty of twists en route. Your ideas, enthusiasm, expertise, advice and support have always been crucial to the success of the museum – even more so now and over the next few years.

More details of the plans will emerge and we will keep you both included in the thinking and informed on the detail, but for now I would appreciate it greatly if you maintain a degree of confidence to help give space to our negotiations. We will launch a national public appeal in 2022 and I will warn you of that in advance so that you can help it take off.

I am excited and hope you are too. ■

TEASER

Who wrote this of his service in theBritish armed forces?

'By the spirit of the group and one's integration with it, one is largely relieved by the burden of individual life'

(Answer on p.3)

What's inside?

SubRosa

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Museum Staff Drinking on the Job!

By Bill Steadman, Curator

What? What? what? Before we are judged too harshly, let me explain. Ever since the museum was incepted all the way back in 1969, the collection has grown considerably, mostly in a very ad hoc manner, and then been accounted for in a similar way. But, since the provision of modern, linked computer systems, generously funded by the Friends, we are finally able to properly and completely identify, describe, record, organise and manage what we have.

So, why the bubbly? Well, for the first time in our history we can look at a particular segment of the collection, our communications equipment, and say 'It is done, finished, sorted, organised, Endex!' This is an important milestone as it allows us to move on to other segments of the collection, with weapons, ammunition and explosives (all safe!), optical equipment, operational equipment and our radioactive object collection, all soon to surrender their secrets to the same flurry of activity.

Les Smith, a past curator with the Royal Artillery Museum, and now a most capable volunteer with us, has been tackling this project and his skills at label-making are the stuff of legend!

So, that is why we have raised a small glass to celebrate a momentous moment in the life of the collection, a moment that we intend will be the first of many.

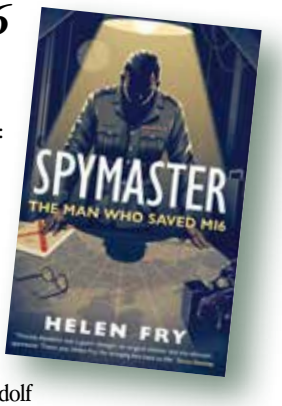
If you would like to consider volunteering with the museum, please check the website: www.militaryintelligencemuseum.org/ Now, where is that second bottle? ■

BOOK REVIEW

By Fred Judge, Intelligence Corps Historian

Spymaster: The Man Who Saved MI6

by Dr Helen Fry



If one could sum up this latest work by Dr Helen Fry it would have to be: 'James Bond, eat your heart out!'. The only difference being that this was real life, and nothing like James Bond's improbable one. Thomas Kendrick was, of course, well known to the Intelligence Corps; however, other than some details of his professional life, we knew very little about him.

This account covers Kendrick's life and times in great detail. Helen tells us how his professional career, as an intelligence officer starting during the Boer War, continued for over half a century. She takes us through Kendrick's life in South Africa; his time as a Secret Service officer during WWI; his thirteen years as the Passport Control Officer in Vienna; how he recruited sources with access to some of Germany's military secrets up until his arrest and expulsion by the Nazis. Of considerable interest is the account of how, following Nazi Germany's *Anschluss*, Kendrick managed to arrange for so many Jewish families to escape from Austria. There is also the question of why the Nazis expelled him instead of imprisoning him or worse, as he had no diplomatic immunity. It could be argued that this 'failure' helped in their own defeat, as Kendrick went on to form and command the immensely successful POW interrogation centres at Trent Park, Latimer House and Wilton Park. His sympathetic command of over one hundred listeners, nearly all of whom were Jewish of German and Austrian ethnicity, was instrumental in obtaining the intelligence which provided War Office planners with accurate and timely information. Helen also describes the activities of others such as Kim Philby; the 'defection' of Rudolf Hess and the fascinating disclosure of his mental breakdown and failed suicide attempt in detention; the collection of vital V-weapon information; reports from the Russian front and later, following D-Day. She describes the close links Kendrick and his listeners had with Bletchley Park (whose information they paralleled) and War Office intelligence staff as well as MI5, MI6 and Allied intelligence officers, and the lengths he and his staff went to in order to ensure that virtually all parts of these interrogation facilities were covered by covert listening devices. All in all, the intelligence garnered by the three sites was far more than what had been hoped for.

Helen's style and choice of words is refreshing, a delight to read. Her research has been meticulous and has undoubtedly resulted in a book about one of MI6's most successful intelligence officers which is not just interesting, but also exciting. It is highly commended. ■

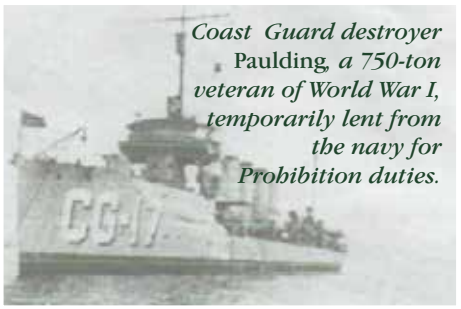
Intelligence Versus the Rum Runners, *By Antony Baxter*

Rum-running speedboat

It is becoming increasingly common to see raids on criminal premises being described as 'intelligence-led', but the use of targeted intelligence in pursuit of a given objective is not new. It may seem hard to believe now, but the production, distribution and sale of alcoholic beverages was constitutionally prohibited in the United States between January 1920 and December 1933. Prohibition failed, however, since the possession and consumption of liquor was not forbidden and there was thus a demand to be satisfied. Better quality alcohol had to be imported, and thus the United States Coast Guard (USCG) would become involved.

The prohibition movement had a long history in the US, led principally by the Anti-Saloon League (the 'drys'). Saloons were the main form of liquor outlet. The drys aimed to enshrine Prohibition in the Constitution which, it was hoped, would make it both permanent and accepted, but Congress did not vote enough funds to effectively enforce it. National prohibition ended after 13 years, 10 months and 20 days.

The USCG is one of the oldest of the US Armed Forces, founded for revenue collection and prevention of tax evasion, but over the years, saving of life and property at sea became its main purpose. Prohibition brought smuggling firmly back on the agenda. The USCG polices some 12,352 miles of US coastline, covering two oceans and the Great Lakes. When Prohibition began, they had only 75 commissioned vessels but by 1924 had 290 rum-running vessels. The use of intelligence was thus essential if the USCG were to have any chance of success against the smugglers.



Coast Guard destroyer Paulding, *a 750-ton veteran of World War I, temporarily lent from the navy for Prohibition duties.*

By 1925, smuggling operations had assumed the form that would categorise it until repeal. Several sources for illicit alcohol existed: British Columbia and Mexico in the West, Nova Scotia, British Honduras and the West Indies for the East Coast. Liquor cargoes, ostensibly destined for legal import elsewhere, were taken by smugglers to a rendezvous for transfer to fast boats for the run ashore. These points were outside the 12-mile limit, so boats could not be seized by the Coast Guard.

Initially, however, US territorial waters only extended to three miles from shore. By summer 1921 a 'Rum Row' had been established off the coasts of New York and New Jersey. International treaties allowing ships to be stopped within the limit, with seven, including one with the UK, were eventually signed.

'rum-runners no longer seen as romantic outlaws or heroes'

Initial emphasis on intelligence gathering was HUMINT. Early efforts included stationing ships off foreign ports to identify potential targets. The use of radio communications by criminals only really became practical with the development of short wave, and smaller radio sets.

Most smuggling operations had been in the hands of small operators, but gradually came under the control of just a few organisations, of which Consolidated Exporters Corporation of Vancouver was probably the largest. Initially operating on the West Coast, their operations gradually spread eastwards.

The arrival of Mrs Elizebeth (sic) Friedman was a significant step. Born 1898, she was the first woman in the US to be a professional cryptanalyst and possibly the best known because of her appearances as an expert witness in several court cases.

In 1927 and 28 there were only two general cryptosystems in use on the West Coast, whereas by 1930 practically every rum-runner on the Pacific Coast had its own code or cipher. Between 1928 and 1930 the Cryptanalytic Unit decrypted 12,000 messages for a range of agencies, from an examination of some 25,000 messages each year, concerning illegal activity on both coasts. The unit consisted of Friedman and one clerk.

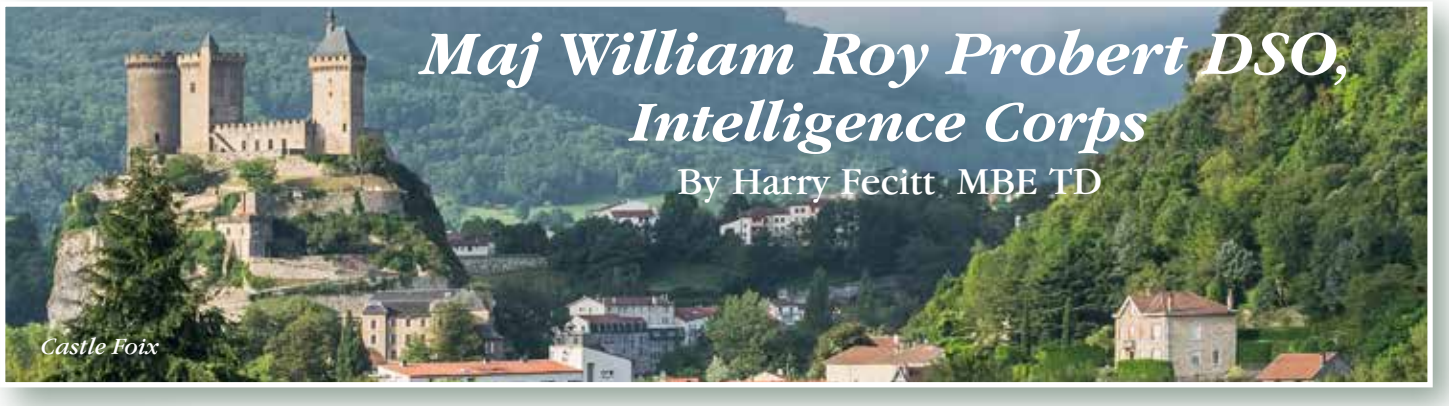
Elizebeth Friedman

Prohibition was repealed in 1933, but was not the end of the rum-runners. An expected resurgence happened, this time avoiding taxes, with as many boats off New York in 1934 as in 1928. The Coast Guard acquired larger patrol boats and more aircraft. Combined with better intelligence capabilities, this meant that rum-runners had fewer counter-measures available. The authorities now had public opinion on their side, with rum-runners no longer seen as romantic outlaws or heroes, but as criminals. Rum-running largely died out by 1936.

President Herbert Hoover described Prohibition as 'an experiment, noble in motive'. But it was not a success as it led to an increase in organised crime and loss of respect for federal law and the Constitution. These effects can be seen today. For the Coast Guard, however, it provided long-term benefits, with staff becoming better trained, and intelligence used more effectively. ■

Answer to Teaser

Richard Rumbold (1913–1961) in *My Father's Son* (1949), In WWII, he joined as a private in the RASC and later trained as a pilot in the RAF.



Maj William Roy Probert DSO, Intelligence Corps

By Harry Fecitt MBE TD

Castle Foix

From Martha Gellhorn's (1908–98) *The Undefeated* (1945): 'During the German occupation of France, the Spanish Maquis engineered more than four-hundred railway sabotages, destroyed fifty-eight locomotives, dynamited thirty-five railway bridges, cut one hundred and fifty telephone lines, attacked twenty factories, (destroying some factories totally), and sabotaged fifteen coal mines. They took several thousand German prisoners and – most miraculous considering their arms – they captured three tanks. In the south-west part of France where no Allied armies have ever fought, they liberated more than seventeen towns'.

Franco and his Nationalist troops, including many Arab soldiers brought over from North Africa, won the Spanish Civil War in 1939. As a consequence of Franco's victory, many Spanish Republican fighters who had opposed him sought exile in France, where they were housed in camps by the French authorities. After the German invasion and occupation of northern France in 1940, the French Vichy Government, sympathetic towards the Axis cause, encouraged the Spanish camp dwellers to go and work in French factories or on the defensive 2,700 km-long Atlantic Wall that German military engineers were constructing along the French coastline. This provided opportunities for many Spanish Republicans to escape into the mountainous and wooded areas of France where they joined up with French Maquis resistance fighters. It is believed that up to 10,000 Spaniards escaped and took up arms against the German forces and their local French allies.

Britain's Special Operations Executive took an interest in the Spanish groups, and the following citation for the appointment of a Companionship of the Distinguished Service Order awarded to Maj William Roy Probert, Intelligence Corps, is self-explanatory; it also tells the tale of a brave, resourceful and determined British officer:

'This officer, having volunteered for a mission to train, organise and coordinate Maquis groups in France, was parachuted into [the department of] Ariège on 8 August 1944. In the absence of competent leaders amongst the Maquis forces in the area, Maj Probert took over the active command of the troops and directed the main operations against the enemy.

On 19 August 1944, Maj Probert led an attack on Foix with 50 Spanish Maquis troops. The Germans, with two well-sited machine guns, covered the bridge leading into the town, and held up the advance of the maquis force. Selecting a party of four, Maj Probert forded the river and led them into the streets of the town, taking the Germans in the rear. In the fierce street fighting which followed, Maj Probert's gallantry and leadership were largely responsible for the withdrawal of the Germans to a block of buildings in the centre of the town. Learning of the imminent arrival of a trainload of German reinforcements, Maj Probert entered the buildings alone and succeeded in obtaining the surrender of 25 officers and 120 men together with their lorries and important material.

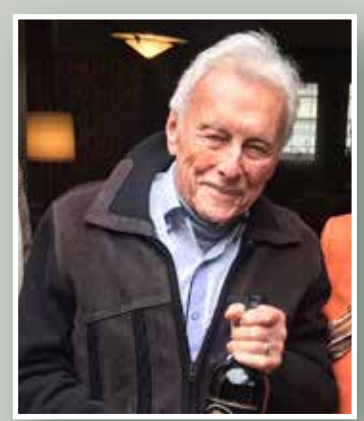
With captured German equipment, Maj Probert was able to build up his forces, and when the department was finally liberated, more than 2,000 Germans had been accounted for'.

He was recommended for the award of the Distinguished Service Order by Maj Gen C.M. Gubbins, Head of SOE.

After the war in France ended, many exiled Republicans crossed the border back into Spain as guerrilla fighters to confront Franco's troops, but the people's uprising that they hoped for never materialised, and the guerrillas were either eliminated or pushed back into France. ■

Veteran of the Intelligence Corps Rudi Haymann Turns 100

By Dr Helen Fry



In August this year Rudi Haymann, one of the last surviving interrogators of the Second World War, celebrated his 100th birthday with family at his home in Chile.

Originally a German–Jewish refugee from Berlin, he served as a sergeant in the Intelligence Corps during the war. Recruited into the British forces from British-mandated Palestine, to where he had fled the Nazis, he was eventually posted in 1942 to North Africa with Combined Services Detailed Interrogation Centre (CSDIC) to interrogate German prisoners captured on the battlefields of North Africa. The interrogations conducted by Rudi and fellow interrogators were secretly recorded in the 'M Room' (M for 'miked') and the intelligence sent back to CSDIC headquarters in England, which was under the command of Col Thomas Joseph Kendrick (see p.2), Int Corps. From North Africa, Rudi then served with CSDIC in Italy as Allied forces advanced through the country, and was quartered first at Cinecittà, then Rome and Florence. He and fellow interrogators oversaw high-ranking prisoners held in a villa in Florence, including Herbert Kappler, the Nazi police chief of Rome; Karl Woolf, commander of SS forces, Italy; and civilians like the wife and daughter of Heinrich Himmler. Rudi served also with the Intelligence Corps in Greece and Klagenfurt, Austria.

I had the privilege of interviewing Rudi during the pandemic, thanks to the support of FICM in being able to use its professional Zoom account. His oral testimony is now with the museum archives. After the war, Rudi emigrated to Chile to join members of his family who had escaped the Holocaust and went on to become a highly successful pioneer, of modernist interior design.

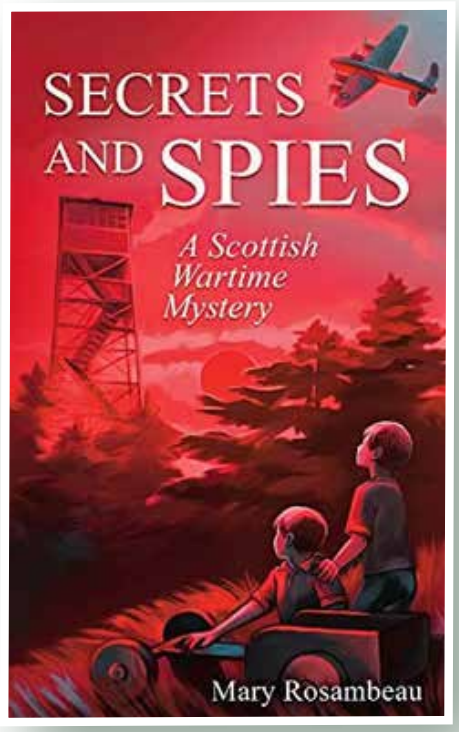
Rudi remains deeply proud of having served in the Intelligence Corps. Still fit and very active at the age of 100, he hopes to come over to England with his daughter to visit the Military Intelligence Museum as soon as travel restrictions permit. ■

AN INTRIGUING ADVENTURE INTRODUCING CHILDREN TO THE WORLD OF SOE

By Sarah Waite, Assistant Curator

Secrets and Spies: A Scottish Wartime Mystery (2018)

By Mary Rosambeau



Published in 2019, *Secrets and Spies* follows the journey of ten-year-old Rory, growing up in Scotland during the Second World War. Ever curious, Rory finds himself caught up in a dangerous mystery when his mother suffers a strange accident. With the help of his friend, Paul, Rory must take on the sinister forces which threaten his town. Mary Rosambeau's debut novel for children is a pacey and exciting read. Darker than one would expect from a children's novel, Rosambeau does not gloss over the brutalities of wartime life. She sensitively captures the interior world of the lead character, Rory. We see him overcome his fears and do what is needed to protect the town and the people whom he cares about.

I spoke with the author.

There aren't many children's books which explore Britain's military intelligence heritage. What drew you to write about the Special Operations Executive (SOE) presence in Scotland during WWII?

The best advice for authors is: 'Write what you know'. I was approached by a pupil in my slow readers group for a book recommendation about the war that wasn't about the London Blitz or evacuees. I began to wonder if I could weave some of the stories from my childhood into an Enid Blyton-type adventure for him.

The isolated Scottish fishing village where I was born, though far from the major areas of conflict, was chosen in 1940 as an ideal place for several secret operations. The sand on our shore had the same texture as that of the Normandy beaches, so made an excellent area for practice. 'Keep out' signs lined the access to the beach and we were warned that it could be mined. Soldiers were billeted everywhere, the community hall became a canteen and tanks rolled into the village.

No one really knew what was going on at the time, but the fact that three German spies were arrested at our railway station, and another pair, disguised as women, were caught in nearby Elgin with their suitcase radio, indicated that the enemy was interested.

Two Norwegian spies, subsequently known as Mutt and Jeff, who had agreed to spy for the Nazis, surrendered on arrival at our police station and asked to spy as doubles for the allies instead. Their false reports of an attack through Norway meant Hitler kept a division there, which might otherwise have gone to France.

A project known as the Shetland Bus ran from our village. The SOE approached Norwegian fisherman who sold their catch locally and proposed they take arms to the Resistance in their homeland. They agreed and on return trips they also brought refugees. We later discovered some refugees had been billeted in our church hall, although we knew nothing of this at the time.

Prior to becoming an author, you worked as a primary school teacher, and you still volunteer to help pupils with their reading at your local school. What do you think are the benefits of introducing children to history through fiction?

The school curriculum for Key Stage 1 and 2 in history suggests themes 'to develop children's chronological understanding and to focus on observable change so they can draw effective comparison with their own experience'.

One of my aims was to show how childhood in the 1940s differed from that of today. The only electricity we had was for light. Kettles were boiled on the fire or on a paraffin stove. The washing boiler was fired with live coals. We made our own toys, whereas now you would buy one from a shop. In *Secrets and Spies*, Rory and Paul make their own go-kart. In *Norwegian Girl: A Secrets and Spies Adventure* (2020), the sequel where the Norwegian Resistance help a spy who has stolen research papers about the V-2, the children make a kite.

Your book doesn't skim the brutalities of war. The main character, Rory, endures some harrowing experiences. Do you see fiction as being a good way to convey the hardships and the emotional cost of conflict to children?

As a schoolteacher, I believe children learn most when the subject is related in a story where they can empathise with a hero. Children learn a lot from reading about others of their own age and may be surprised that those in the story are experiencing the same anxieties that they had thought were only felt by themselves. Anxiety in a story gives a safe distance for a child or adult to examine something they may have experienced and have had difficulty processing.

What has been the reaction to your books? Have you received feedback from young readers?

My first positive reaction was from a bright lad I was tutoring who read it as a last edit. After pointing out some missing commas in the script, he said 'Oh yes! All the boys in my class would love this!'

My biggest surprise was when giving a talk to a care home where, of course, the audience recognised so much of the story from their own childhood. When I sell my books at market stalls, people love to tell me their wartime childhood experiences and often buy the books so their grandchildren can discover what life was like for them. ■

Mary Rosambeau's books are online and at Waterstones. More about the author at https://ww2secretsandspies.co.uk/

What Got the Corps to St James Garlickhythe?

By Lester Hillman

Some of the last warriors to leave London's Roman Wall, untidy nineteenth-century hostilities in North America, modern-day imagery analysts and the good offices of the Worshipful Company of Painter-Stainers, all have a part in the Corps link to St James. In the 1960s, on the line of the City's ancient Roman wall near Devonshire Square at 'Borer's Passage' (now swept away), there was a drill hall. 'Borer' was a scene of conflict in the War of 1812 which unfortunately played out before the belligerents in North America could be advised that hostilities had ceased. The drill hall was home to a Corps Territorial Army photographic-interpreter unit. The Painter-Stainers at that time were seeking a formal bond with a military unit. Introductions were made and from these flowed a link to the Livery Company and with it to the Church of St James. A plaque in the churchwarden's pew and the Corps banner aloft, echo the military links. The Burma Star banner opposite adds a further dimension, one reflected in some of the names and locations in the Roll of Honour. Over the years, Corps associations have been reinforced to embrace the wider Corps and the Regular Army and nurtured through training awards, gifts, social visits and commemorative occasions.

On the first Sunday of most months, services at St James begin with the Turning of the Roll. Representatives from the Intelligence Corps, in uniform and wearing medals, turn the page of the Roll set amongst wreaths and tributes. The glass display cabinet is positioned beneath the pulpit and fierce heraldic beasts guard the sword-rest close by. A plaque to Robert Chichele, a mayor and contributor to military campaigns six centuries ago, reminds of the time of Agincourt in 1415.

Representatives come from Corps locations around the country including Lincolnshire, Wiltshire and Bedfordshire as well as London. The links with 3 Military Intelligence Battalion (3 MI Bn), based just on the northern edge of the City of London, are especially strong. In November when the page-turning moves to Remembrance Sunday, a greater presence can be seen, along with a dramatic drop in the average age of the congregation, swelled as it is with serving officers, other ranks, reservists, regulars and family members. In 2017, the fiftieth anniversary of 3 MI Bn and its predecessor unit was commemorated. On occasion, colonels commandant, former commanding officers, veterans, retired members of the Corps, friends and family can be amongst the congregation. Corps members may get married and mark family occasions at St James, memorial services are held. The passing of Corps members is remembered in services and candles lit.

St James is kept advised of life and times in and around the Corps which is spread throughout the world. The London-based battalion supports occasions such as the Lord Mayor's Show. In 2016, a guard of honour was mounted for Lord Mayor Alderman Sir Andrew Parmley and Lady Mayoress Wendy Parmley, and the City bestowed affiliated status to 3 MI Bn on 1 September 2017. A badge is displayed at the west end of the Guildhall alongside those of units similarly recognised.

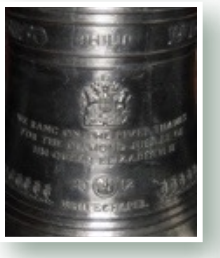
Since 1997, the main home of the Corps has been in Bedfordshire in a magnificent medieval Priory setting at Chicksands, dedicated to St Gilbert of Sempringham, dating to the twelfth century. The garrison church has a similar Roll of Honour to that housed in St James. Yet within walking distance of Garlickhythe are much closer links to Chicksands, celebrated in the streets of Whitechapel and Spitalfields. The Osborn family who lived at the Priory owned estates at Whitechapel and Spitalfields, hence Chicksand Street and Osborn, Old Montague, Finch and Heneage place names and businesses. Almost within sight of 3 MI Bn's home at Worship Street, this area is rich in cultural, literary, social and historical associations. Residents and those who worked in the area number amongst today's worshippers at St James.

After the Great War, the Corps was gradually reduced but in 1940 it was re-formed – a rebirth that is celebrated each year, appropriately enough, around the Feast of St James. The WWII re-formation is reflected in the global reach of the fatal casualties recorded in the Roll and sadly that now extends down to the present day.

Maresfield in Sussex became the Corps' home from 1948 when it was linked to the local St Bartholomew Church. From the mid-1960s until 1997, the Corps was at Templer Barracks, Ashford in Kent, establishing links to the town through grants of freedom and with the Church of St Mary. Since 1997, the Corps has been at Chicksands but relocation and reorganisation regularly loom on the horizon.

Turning the Page, 5 July 2020

2020 was the 80th anniversary of the re-formed Corps and St James played its part. Greetings were sent to the Corps, and the church was able to ensure the Roll of Honour formed part of the commemorations. The Royal Jubilee Bells (commissioned from the Whitechapel Bell Foundry on the doorstep of the Chicksand estate up the road) rang out. The seven-hundredweight bell, 'Philip', is named after the late Corps Colonel-in-Chief HRH Prince Philip Duke of Edinburgh. Two centuries ago, the Osborn family commissioned a bell for their estate. Today it is housed alongside the Corps Memorial Wall at Chicksands. Whitechapel must surely be a strong contender as the source of the Osborn bell. ■



The 'Philip', Royal Jubilee Bells, St James Garlickhythe

'Sir John Osborn, Bt 1822' bell reflection, Priory Memorial Wall

First published in a recent St James Garlickhythe newsletter.

POEM *By a former member of the Corps*

Not so Much a Street, More a Way of Life

By day alike any other;
a street with little to record
outside the grey monsoon ditch of normality
where scurrying cockroaches clitter-clatter *en masse;*
their antennae picking up the impending doom
as swathes of swirling, gurgling,
rushing torrents of water
engulf each battalion in their tidal formations
to be deposited elsewhere in smarter suburbs
or to rise again from main street manholes –
like aliens in the city.

This street, so serene by day,
transforms each night; a chameleon of life,
home to other creatures of the darker world
that blinker into light like moths around a flame,
their delicate wings in danger of burning,
to disappear in the flicker of a wing beat
plying their trade for all to see
but not what it seems and there are no rules
in the opium den, only those to be broken,
as pedlars cheat and beggars bleat, in Singapore,
in Bugis Street.

From *Parallels: Selected Poetry of René Dee and Chris Yates*, The Conrad Press (2021)

Born 1948 in Switzerland, LCpl René Dee joined the Intelligence Corps as a Junior Leader in 1962 and left in 1966. One of the first Corps soldiers selected for marine commando training, he served in the Marine Commando Brigade, Singapore. After the army, he led and marketed worldwide adventure travel expeditions, then in senior management with the Royal Horticultural Halls and its Westminster Halls (on which he has published a book), and the creation of The Westminster Collection. From 2014 to 2020, he served as a trustee, first with the Friends then with the MIM.

LETTER

Why Was Green Chosen for a Corps Colour? The Spoof of the Baize Mess Jacket

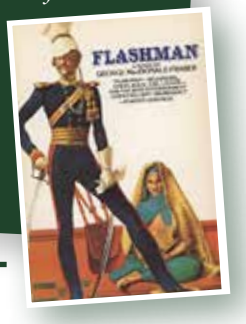
Last year's An Intelligence Corps Miscellany *describes this spoof and you can blame the late Hamish Eaton. He was an inveterate practical joker whose stories were always plausible until you got to the final sentence, when you realised you had been had.*

As I remember it, the green baize jacket story was set in the time of the Indian Mutiny when an officer of the Corps' predecessors was working undercover to ascertain the mutineers' next move. On gathering this intelligence, he hotfooted it to the nearest garrison to impart the news. In keeping with his undercover role, he was dressed in a dhoti to blend with the indigenous population. When he arrived at the garrison, he imparted his vital intelligence to the commander and was told that he would be expected to attend a formal officers' mess dinner that evening. In order that he be properly dressed for such an occasion, the ladies of the garrison stripped the baize off the billiard table in the mess and made a suit of it. And that is the origin of the green mess jacket.

Hamish wrote that as a result of his undercover work, the officer was decorated with a 'secret' Victoria Cross by Queen Victoria herself, with the proviso that only she could authorise the publication of the gallant officer's name. Hamish said it could now be revealed and his name was Lt Col Harry Flashman.

He produced this story for The Rose and The Laurel. *Fast forward to 1998 and I was asked to be the guest speaker at the US-led Joint Analysis Center Molesworth annual dinner. After the dinner, my wife Valerie and I were in the company of two Corps WO2s and some Americans. The Americans asked why the Corps mess jacket was green. The two WOs answered with Hamish's story. One up for Hamish – his spoof had now become Corps lore. Valerie asked me how I kept my composure; the answer was, 'With great difficulty.'*

Peter Jefferies, 2021



Looking for Poets of the Intelligence Corps!

A Unique Contribution to the Literary History and Heritage of the Intelligence Corps

We are putting together an anthology of published poetry by former and current members of the Intelligence Corps. With a draft title of *Quickening Sprit of Grace: Selected Poems by Members of the Intelligence Corps*, it is being compiled and edited by Chris Yates. Already, we have over 20 poets including familiar names such as John Buchan, Robert Conquest and Enoch Powell, in addition to others equally worthy.

If you know of, or can discover a published poet, formerly or currently of the Corps, please get in touch with Chris at editor.ficm@gmail.com

THE EDITOR'S CORPS DAY LUNCH
11 September 2021 *By Chris Yates*

My first Corps Day was in 1963 at Maresfield Depot, waiting for a posting. Then, my only involvement was with other privates to get things ready and clean up. My experience this year was very different. At this twice-postponed Corps Day lunch, the sun smiled down on the patio of the Priory on a table paraded with Pimm's and G & T, down on the flute and strings of the Brook Trio playing under an elegant tent and down on people relishing good old pre-Covid natter.

Uniformed Corps members began to move among us, gesturing us to lunch and we formed an obedient adult crocodile across the lawn and into the marquee. Of the nine at our table, two were currently serving, two were former Intelligence Corps, two were former GCHQ WAACs (not Corps-badged, but that is another story). In sum, there were over 200 under canvas, ranging in age from a scattering of children to 90-year-old Brig. (retd) Brian Parritt who had fought in Korea within yards of my Black Watch father – sorry, yet another story. Trumping all, at least in rank, was Colonel Commandant Lt Gen Sir James Hockenhull, typically referred to at these events as General Jim.

After grace, said by Chaplain Revd Clive Larrett, we sat down to raise a hearty hubbub under three

blazing, somewhat redundant, electric chandeliers, tucked in to the starter and queued for mains. All waited on by attentive and cheerful caterers – thank you all! Replete, and resplendent in his trademark, stripe-blinding Corps blazer, our corps secretary compéred the introductions, awards and prizes with aplomb. This year's winner of the Friends' Alan Edwards Award is 6 MI Bn, received by Cpl Alex Singer on behalf of her battalion; she joins the Friends with a year's complimentary membership.

On his feet, General Sir Jim said, 'Today's main course is for members of the Corps to look after each other, something the Corps demands of its people as it carries out its vital service to the country.' (The latest operation, in Kabul, had been wound down a few days earlier.) He spoke of that morning's service at the Chicksands memorial wall, where the 525 names of the Corps' fallen remind those who follow to keep to their standard of service. It had been an inspired, but he suspected accidental, choice to hold this Corps Day on Field Marshall Templer's birthday. Referring to the Corps' late colonel-in-chief, General Sir Jim told how one of HRH's last official acts was to authorise the signing of the regimental alliance between the Intelligence Corps and the New Zealand Intelligence Corps. Finishing as he started, 'Be good to each other and be kind to each other.' An uplifting and unambiguous dénouement for a splendid lunch.

'The main course is to look after each other'

For those two and a half hours, it seemed as if that was our real world: table flowers, napery, being waited on, food and wine, joking and laughing, thinking on our own relationship with this weird and wonderful branch of the country's armed forces. Then, a little suddenly, we all broke up again and filed out of the marquee back onto the lawn into a still-bright afternoon. Waiting to go in, a platoon strength of Corps trainees was being marshalled by Mrs Hazel Donald for the cleaning up (which is where I came in, forty-eight years ago). ■

FRIENDS REMEMBERED

Sadly, we report the deaths of these members in 2021

John Barham
Frank Clark
Dr Anthony Clayton
Paul Croxson
Sir Stanley Odell

KEEPING TABS ON FRIENDS – NICELY
By Richard Harper, Membership Secretary

'Update your contact info!'

When I took over as membership secretary in 2019, I was relieved to find that the task – following my former career in engineering – while not exactly a sinecure, was easily manageable. Well, that did not last long.

Very soon, the drive was on to bring FICM into the 21st century. An exercise to deal with GDPR was undertaken by a select band of trustees, and this became part of the move to create a brand-new website. The results have met with a great deal of acclaim. This work also introduced, at the beginning of 2021, a simpler way of joining FICM, with payment online by PayPal instead of the old standing order. We now have well over 200 members, the vast majority having joined in the last 10 years.

Not everyone lets us know of a change of address, telephone number or email address or, indeed, a change of all three. Curiously enough, the subscription often continues to be paid, which is very welcome. Every member is posted three issues each year of *Sub Rosa*. When we receive no change of address, these newsletters are often binned – it is unusual to have them returned, such a waste. Recently we discovered one case where this had been happening for over five years. Amazing.

All members who pay their subscriptions annually will have received a letter from me. I asked each of you to agree to increase your subscription to £20.00 p.a., and I explained why this request had become necessary. By mid-October around 70% of the membership has responded positively and I would like to thank you very much indeed. There is still a way to go; I ask those that have not responded to please do so. I will also continue to track down members who have dropped off the radar. ■