

3, Arundel House,
Courtlands,
Sheen Road, Richmond, Surrey
TW10 5AS.
Telephone: 020 8940 3223
email: geoffrey.pidgeon@virgin.net

SCU-NEWSLETTER No. 2-11
January 1st 2011

1. Mona De Witte.

In SCU-Newsletter 4-10, I mentioned the brilliant thesis by the French student Mona De Witte who had just received her Master's Degree in British History from the Diderot University in Paris – *magna cum laude* ! For her subject, she had chosen the story of ULTRA and Bletchley Park. Her dissertation is entitled “**The Ultra Secret: Security of the British Codebreaking Operations in World War II.**”

I must point out it is *not* the story of Bletchley Park per se but the rather more complex subject of its *security* and that makes Mona's work all the more remarkable. However, it inevitably crosses over into other spheres including SCU/SLUs and that enhances the interest. I heartily recommend it to those wishing to learn more of the history and fantastic achievements of our organisation.

May I remind you that I have given an undertaking to Mona that her Paper will not be quoted, nor used commercially in any way. I therefore I ask you to respect my commitment.

Printing. This is an Adobe PDF document so should be readable on most computers and easily printed via your copier. It is 2.2 MB so not too large overall. There are 114 pages including the cover. The options seem to be: (a) read it on your screen (b) load paper check the ink and print it, or (c) enter it onto a memory stick and have your local 'copy shop' print it for you. There is only a small amount of colour used. I put about 2 x 60 sheets in my Canon copier and it was easy.

Some of you might have problems with its size as an attachment to SCU-Newsletter 1-11, hence my sending it out as a separate SCU-Newsletter and marked 2-11.

I do hope you enjoy reading this remarkable document.

2. Weapons carried by SCU/SLUs.

In Mona's paper she mentions that:

“Some SLUs were occasionally very heavily armed, when they were very near to the frontline. They were sometimes provided with an impressive artillery. Thus, personal weapons carried were the Lee-Enfield .303 rifle and bayonet, the British Webley or US Smith and Wesson .38 calibre revolver and a 9 mm Sten machine carbine. For all round unit protection, the jeeps were fitted with a mixture of Potts 20 mm cannon, .303 Vickers 'K' machine guns on twin mountings and, in some cases, captured German MG 42 'Spandau' machine guns with their ammunition.”

This especially refers to the SCU/SLU attached to **2nd SAS** with John Lloyd as one of our operators. John only joined MI6 (Section VIII) in August 1944, a real latecomer, and then sent to France just before Christmas 1944. There he joined the existing SCU/SLU attached to the 2nd SAS – a part of the **SAS Brigade** – under Brigadier R. W. McLeod. The unit was in a Guy 15-cwt wireless van fitted out Whaddon by our Mobile Construction team.

This particular SCU/SLU had already been in France since 'D-Day' +3 – long before John Lloyd joined. Its role was quite different to other SLUs from Whaddon, as it was in very close contact with forward mobile intelligence units such as Phantom, and independent troops of the SAS.

The column was well armed, and protected by the elite troops of SAS – not surprising considering its mobile and 'near-front-line' role. Our Guy van was part of the mobile column that included a number of Jeeps with machine guns mounted as cover against air attack, and others containing SAS troops, to provide defence for the unit.

This level of protection was not the case with the majority of our units who were usually ensconced right in the middle of the HQ of an Army General – like Wilf Neal with Patton’s 3rd US Army. There, the only weapons our chaps had – *somewhere nearby* – was their .303 Lee Enfield rifle and 20 rounds of ammunition. John and our other operators with him, also merely carried the usual army rifles.

Quite apart from any other consideration, it was clearly essential to preserve the integrity of the Ultra secret that might be jeopardised – with catastrophic results – if overrun by enemy troops.

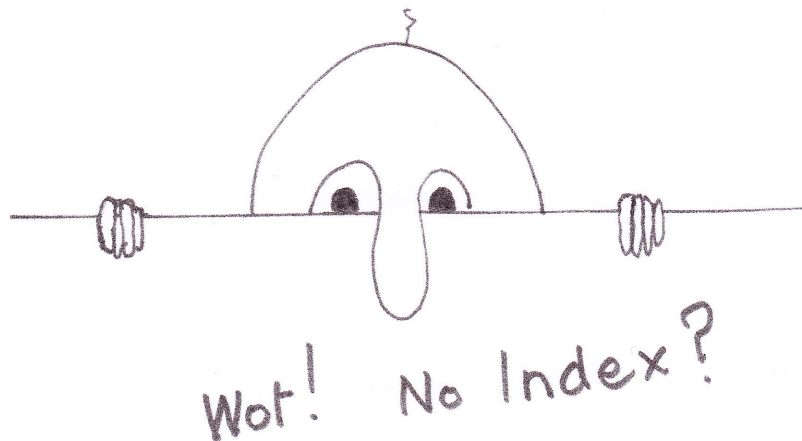
The **SAS Brigade** was made part of Lieutenant-General Frederick (‘Boy’) Browning’s British 1st Airborne Corps. Much to the irritation of the SAS members of the newly formed corps, they had to give up their distinctive SAS sand-coloured berets and exchange them for the Airborne maroon berets.

John joined the SCU/SLU just in time to be caught up with the German counter-attack through the Ardennes, known as the Battle of the Bulge. He quickly found himself working as an operator with the SCU/SLU in close proximity to the actual fighting. We should note that the 2nd SAS went in close support of Patton’s Third Army during the battle.

3. Kilroy was here !

One of the abiding memories of many wartime service men and women is the frequency that the cartoon figure of ‘Kilroy’ appeared. It was an American export but the British Forces had already adopted ‘Chad’ drawn in the same way and mostly used – like Kilroy – to complain. Others merely recorded that they had passed through – ‘*Pfc Bill Jones was here !*’

Many ended up in the relative privacy of the public toilets where one could complain anonymously about absolutely anything. The village of Whaddon had then (as now) only one pub called the ‘Lowndes Arms’ after the local land owning family – the Selby-Lowndes – incidentally owners of Whaddon Hall. The pub had a ration of beer that was likely to run out before the next delivery – in which case we referred to the Lowndes Arms as the ‘Lousy Arms.’ Then no doubt yet another ‘Kilroy’ was added to its toilet wall ‘*Wot ! No Beer ?*’



Note: My skill in drawing the above Kilroy does not indicate any wartime experience !

Wot! No Index ?

In the early days following the launch of ‘The Secret Wireless War’ at Bletchley Park back in 2003 – I had a number of complaints about the lack of an Index. I did apologise but it being my first book several things were done in a hurry with the pressure of the up-coming launch. One of the casualties was an Index. However, that was only in the first print run. We later made a number of corrections to the text, added pictures and – most important of all – an Index. I am glad that we were also able to add a picture of Richard Gambier-Parry, in his uniform as a Brigadier, as part of the Epilogue.

**Happy New Year from Jane and from me.
Geoffrey**