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SCU-NEWSLETTER No. 1-12
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1. Sad News.

It is only right and proper that I should start a SCU-Newsletter by recording the passing of those who were members of this most secret of organisations during World War II.

Eric Sherratt: He was born in 1925 and rare amongst us, came from the RAF where he trained as a wireless operator/mechanic. He reached 20+ words at the RAF School and posted to RAF Chicksands then a 'Y' Station, listening to German Enigma traffic. Later Eric was one of a party of RAF wireless operators transferred to Little Horwood, the military camp for nearby Whaddon Hall. They worked at our Windy Ridge wireless station at Whaddon from where ULTRA (teleprinted from Bletchley Park some five miles away) went out to our Commanders in the Field such as Montgomery, Dempsey, Bradley, Patton and Simpson.

Phil Luck: Those with a copy of 'The Secret Wireless War' will know of Phil's work (Chapter 29) and know Phil started work for the BBC at Daventry one of its main transmitting stations. From there he was recruited in 1943 into MI6 (Section VIII) and worked at the Black Propaganda station at Gawcott – near Whaddon.

Doreen Luke: Although working in Bletchley Park, Doreen attended several of our SCU/RSS gatherings at Stony Stratford and at Bletchley Park. Doreen joined the WAAF (the Women's Auxiliary Air Force) in January 1942 and chose to go on a special wireless operator's course in Chiswick in West London. German bombing raids often interrupted her training as the 'Blitz' was at its height. There she mastered Morse slip reading in conjunction with touch-typing. She was posted to Bletchley Park and worked for the next three years in the Auto Room in 'E' Block.

2. Admiral Sir Hugh Sinclair – why is his name not more widely known and acclaimed ?

Most of you know his name but – apart from being the man who purchased Bletchley Park and recruited Richard Gambier-Parry in 1938 to run SIS Communications – not much else !

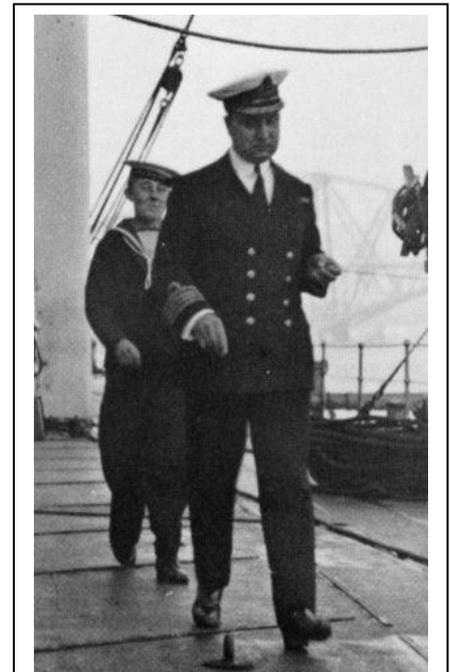
You may know he was – 'C' – the Chief of Secret Intelligence Services (SIS or MI6 if you prefer) but how many know that he was also Director of the Government Code and Cypher School (GC&CS) – later more widely known as the 'Code Breakers' ?

Bletchley Park's historians and guides, go to great lengths to mention just about everyone of importance at Bletchley Park – 'Dilly' Knox, Denniston, Turing, Flowers, Travis, Tutte, Harry Hinsley et al. However, when will Hugh Sinclair also be given similar treatment and the wide acclaim due to him ?

I was recently in touch with Dr. Diana Henderson who is a Fellow of Queens' College Cambridge. She is also a qualified Scottish Solicitor and her many interests include Scots Law and Scottish Military History, being a graduate in the subject from the University of Edinburgh.

She is a Trustee of the British Legion but most surprising given a such a mix of interests – Diana was a Lieutenant Colonel in the Royal Logistics Corps !

Back in 2009 - Diana gave a paper entitled "The man who bought a Country Park" as a presentation at the Cambridge University Study Day at Bletchley Park. It was under the aegis of the "Scots at War Trust" another of her many interests. Diana has kindly given permission for me to pass on her complete paper to you. I think it is a super read, particularly for those in the 'front line' responsible for the correct telling of the story of Bletchley Park – like its historians, guides and volunteers.



Visitors to the Museum – will always pay great attention to the words of the Bletchley Park Guides during their tour. So, it is especially important they give a correct and balanced history and to acknowledge BP's creation by this one man – Admiral Sir Hugh Sinclair. In 1938 he had the vision to build a 'War Station' for both SIS and GC&CS away from potential bombing in the event of war with Germany that he knew was inevitable.

Hugh Sinclair died in November 1939. However, he already knew the secrets of Enigma could be unravelled. We must bear in mind the Bletchley Park organisation he created led to the huge success of ULTRA that shortened the war and saved hundreds of thousands of Allied servicemen's lives – quite apart from the lives of many thousands of Axis troops facing them. Dr. Henderson's Paper "The man who bought a Country Park" is an important addition to our knowledge of the man. You will find it at: <http://www.scotsatwar.org.uk/AZ/whybletchley.htm>

**Admiral Sir Hugh Sinclair KCB – Chief of the SIS 1923 -1939
– a truly great man and full recognition of his role is overdue –**

3. A visit to Hanslope Park after 65 years !

A couple of weeks ago, Jane and I were invited to an event at Hanslope Park – which I last visited in March 1947. That was to collect my final cheque from Charlie Crocker the MI6 (Section VIII) paymaster, by then in charge of the finances of the DWS (Diplomatic Wireless Service), the communication arm of the Foreign Office.

For those who are not familiar with the name 'Hanslope Park' – it is now the home of HMGCC (Her Majesty's Government and Communications Centre). Hardly an aerial in sight since all the secret traffic is now by satellite. It is about ten miles north east of Bletchley Park. (*Hanslope is on Google Maps (Zip or Post code MK19 7BH).*)

Hanslope Park and nearby Bullington Lodge were requisitioned in 1941 as part of the expansion of Radio Security Service (RSS) that had just been taken over by MI6 (Section VIII) 'lock stock and barrel.'

It was then renamed SCU3 and its Controller was 'Ted' Maltby deputy to Richard Gambier-Parry. It was the main interception station and its vast aerial farm surrounded the Park in all directions. The station became fully operational in early 1942.

Alan Turing worked at Hanslope during the latter part of the war developing ideas that led to his design for the 'Automatic Computing Engine – probably the world's first detailed computer.



At the end of the war MI6 (Section VIII), with Whaddon Hall unsuitable for their new role, moved to Hanslope Park in February 1946. Wireless traffic previously handled by Whaddon now went entirely through Hanslope and in April 1947 the Diplomatic Wireless Service was born. Communication with British Embassies overseas was handled by wireless, either as Morse code for routine messages, or enciphered using 'Rockex' for the 'more sensitive' material. The Chief Signals Officer for DWS was Edgar Harrison. During the war whilst in MI6 (Section VIII) he had been ULTRA wireless operator to Winston Churchill when the great man was in the Middle East.

In 1993 – with the rapidly changing technology available – Hanslope Park abandoned wireless communication in favour of satellite and landline. Today the 60 acre site is home to a multitude of Foreign & Commonwealth departments including some of the 'more sensitive' !

One final thought:

In the latest Foreign & Commonwealth Office brochure '**History of Hanslope Park**' it states:

"Hanslope was considered such an important intelligence centre that Lord Gort, General Alexander, Field Marshall Montgomery and General Eisenhower all visited Hanslope Park together. They were shown round by Brigadier Richard Gambier-Parry who [afterwards] became the first Foreign Office Director of Communications in the latter part of 1945."

This gathering of such great Allied Generals in a visit to Hanslope – yet further demonstrates the importance of Brigadier [Sir] Richard Gambier-Parry in World War II.

Gambier-Parry's organisations here at Hanslope, his wireless stations and the Vi's of SCU3 [RSS] spread nationwide, *intercepted* vital German Abwehr and other German traffic. At the other end of the ULTRA process – after Bletchley Park – his wireless stations *disseminated* the resulting SIGINT out to the Allied Commanders in the Field – just like those in this remarkable gathering of Generals at Hanslope.

4. The next meeting of RSS, SCU members and friends at Bletchley Park.

As most of you know, Bob King has organised and chaired these annual events for fifteen years and he has now handed over the task to others. Stan Ames has kindly taken on the task for 2012 – and we all hope he will continue thereafter. He is going to be assisted by Ken Ashcroft. All Bob's wartime colleagues wish to thank him for his hard work in providing such interesting programmes over the years. I think I may add that all our guests have *also* enjoyed the 'fruits of his labours'. We should not forget his hardworking Secretary Jean King – who does so much to marshal us at these meetings. Thank you Jean.

The meeting is on 22nd April at the usual time of 11 am. Stan is preparing a good agenda. Jane and I look forward to the meeting and seeing as many of you as possible.

5. New CEO of Bletchley Park Trust.

Iain Standen has taken over from Simon Greenish as CEO of Bletchley Park. Simon joined the Trust in 2006 when it had deep financial problems. He instigated a radical recovery programme and he hands over an organisation totally transformed. Visitor numbers are up substantially and with his guidance they have received a grant of millions from the Heritage Lottery Fund. Our grateful thanks are due to him.

We met Iain during our visit to Hanslope Park and again the following day at Bletchley Park. He recently retired from the Army as a Colonel in the **Royal Corps of Signals** and he intends to continue the work of restoration of BP and its development into a world-class museum.

All the servicemen under Richard Gambier-Parry were listed as members of the Royal Corps of Signals whether they were paid by the army, or others like me, via MI6 (Section VIII). That went further since there were many hundreds – *possibly thousands* – of service women in the ATS in the Army 'Y Stations' across the country and a large number employed at Bletchley Park. These also wore the badge of the Royal Corps of Signals on their tunics.

Iain attended the Army Staff College, served in Germany and Cyprus, Saudi Arabia, and was on operational deployment in Northern Ireland, Iraq and Bosnia amongst others. His many posts include work at the Ministry of Defence in Whitehall.

He was at Manchester Business School and Cranfield University and has a Masters Degree from there in Military History as well as a BA from King's College London.



Iain has a great interest on battlefields; he is an expert on the American Civil War and lectures on the subject whilst his list of expertise includes World War I: Ypres, Somme and Verdun. This is the right time for a man of Iain's background to take over the reins as CEO of Bletchley Park where communications were such a vital part of the ULTRA process. We wish him well. He has great support from his excellent team who deserve our continued praise for their devotion and obvious passion for Bletchley Park.

6. Next SCU-Newsletter ?

I trust this will come out without such a long gap between. We all know that **Rudolph Hess** flew to meet leaders in Britain in May 1941. However, few know that **Herman Goering** met a party of leading British business men with **Hitler's express permission** at Goering's home on 7th August 1939 – in an attempt to halt the slide to war under a month before the outbreak of World War II. One of the British Party was Albert Holden whose son Ewart Holden was my father's boss at Whaddon Hall. More on this next time !

With warm regards and best wishes to you all from Jane and from me.

Geoffrey

Geoffrey Pidgeon