

## SCU-NEWSLETTER No. 3-13 Sunday, October 27, 2013

### 1. Bletchley Park.

Three men, Roger Bristow, Ted Enever and Tony Sale were instrumental in creating the original concept of the Park as we see it today but their idea was wider than the narrow field of codebreaking. The various 'Group' activities they encouraged helped the interest in the Park grow – and thus its income. Now they enjoy large Heritage Lottery Funds.

Its main thrust from the beginning was rightly in codebreaking. However, there was little to show how the Enigma messages were received and nothing whatever to describe how ULTRA intelligence was disseminated. Joan Nicholls, an ex-ATS wireless operator, started to bring the importance of the 'Y' Service into prominence with her book *'England Needs You: The Story of Beaumanor Y Service in World War II.'*

Admittedly, it dealt just with the various ATS 'Y' Service units across the country but her description of the difficulty of reading – often very weak Enigma wireless traffic in a cacophony of Morse – drew attention to the work of the 'Y' Service as never before. At the same time, there were thousands of WAAF and WREN wireless operators carrying out similar work across the British Isles. One should add they often worked under atrocious conditions in winter – with usually little heating in their work place, sometimes having to operate in their greatcoats and even a scarf over the earphones !

That was in addition to the invaluable work – *the vital work* – of the Radio Security Service (RSS) many of them volunteers, handling the Abwehr traffic.

*A few years ago, the Trust felt the various components of Bletchley Park's work could be set down in a clearer way. Several who had served during the war were involved – including Mavis Batey.*

*Between us this 'wheel' evolved and a large version placed in the major improvements then taking place in the museum in 'B' Block. It was correct then and is correct today – in demonstrating that there were three interlocking components.*

***A 'Triumvirate' if you will !***

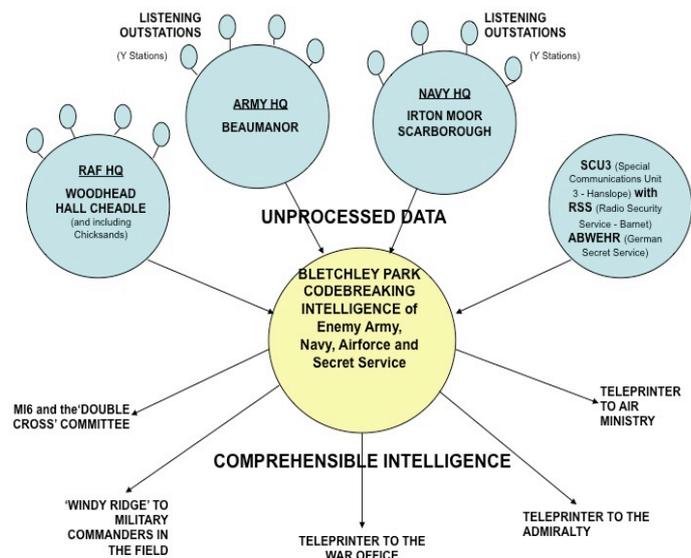
***1<sup>st</sup> The 'Y' Service in all its forms  
'Unprocessed Data'.***

***2<sup>nd</sup> Bletchley Park with its  
'Codebreaking Intelligence' function.***

***3<sup>rd</sup> Dissemination in all its forms  
'Comprehensible Intelligence' including dissemination out to Allied Military Commanders in the Field – via the Windy Ridge wireless station in nearby Whaddon Village.***

One other field of wireless traffic was dealt with at Bletchley Park – that from SIS agents across Europe and beyond. SIS had agents wireless stations at Nash and Weald – both near Whaddon Hall and 'Main Line' at the Hall itself.

Despatch riders constantly ferried the messages from Nash and Weald (Calverton) to Hut 10 at Bletchley Park – where Miss 'Monty' Montgomery ran the entirely self-contained code operation on behalf of SIS. It was felt that this was too complex to add to the 'wheel' as well as being 'off line' so to speak !



I first visited Bletchley Park in 1996 to try to find the clinic where my mother had worked. Later that day, I met David White in his original DWS Wireless Museum. On hearing I had worked in MI6 (Section VIII) at Whaddon Hall, he explained that the dissemination of ULTRA, like the 'Y' Service before it, had not been promoted or even understood.

I met Christine Large a number of times. She was then the CEO of BP and she agreed **(1)** that dissemination of intelligence had not been dealt with at all **(2)** that such an important personage as Richard Gambier-Parry should be recognised. Later Jane and I presented his portrait and the accompanying Eulogy at a ceremony in the ballroom of BP. This was attended by Christine Large, chaired by Peter Westcombe with many veterans of our communications units among the audience. Sadly, there are very few of that audience left. Incidentally, Edgar Harrison who was Winston Churchill's ULTRA wireless operator helped me to unveil the portrait. It was in the hall of the Mansion for a number of years but sadly recently removed.

I had already been encouraged to write about the work of MI6 (Section VIII) in **'The Secret Wireless War'** where I explained that its work was much wider than the vital work of the dissemination of ULTRA. Richard Gambier-Parry's 'empire' also included a vital part of the 'Y' Service with his SCU3 (RSS) based at Hanlope and Barnet with wireless stations across the country with RSS VI's listening to the Abwehr amongst others. Many of our station names are cast into the Memorial unveiled by Her Majesty The Queen.

However, if the full and proper story of the operation now usually known 'The Codebreakers of Bletchley Park' – that played such an important role in winning the war – then all parts of the triumverate need to be acknowledged. It is unfair to the thousands of others involved – and very misleading – to merely glorify the codebreakers. I quote from **'MI6 the Official History of SIS'** by Keith Jeffery: *'...For Menzies ['C'] it was not simply of carrying the signint golden eggs to the Prime Minister. The 'goose' had to be cared for as well and it is clear that without the combination (eventually) of a light touch superintendent over the internal organisation of GC&CS with a readiness to represent its interest vis-à-vis other government departments and to provide essential administrative and technical support (the latter from Gambier-Parry's inestimable Section VIII) the signal intelligence organisation could not have functioned as marvellously as in the end it did.'*

Brigadier [Sir] Richard Gambier-Parry [KCMG] recruited in 1938 as SIS Controller of Communications, by Admiral Sir Hugh Sinclair, several months before Sinclair went on to purchase Bletchley Park. Gambier-Parry is described as 'Brilliant' in **'MI6 the Official History of SIS'** – and the huge part played by his organisations in the success of Bletchley Park – should be recorded as part of the Trimuverate.

## **2. The 'Sharp end' of dissemination and putting ULTRA to work !**

The sharp end of dissemination – taking ULTRA intelligence where it could be exploited against our enemies in the field - leads you to the SLUs devised by F. W. Winterbotham Head of the Air Section of SIS. I am delighted to tell you that the new SLU display in the garage of Bletchley Park is up and running – though for the moment – it only displays the Packard Sedan.

*Apart from the two cars sent to the BEF in France in early 1940, our fleet of 60 Packard sedans (as on display) were the first SLUs carrying 'ULTRA' to military and other commands.*

*Things moved on but the great "D-Day" assault was supplied with ULTRA via British Army Guy 15cwt vans fitted with our own wireless gear to British and Canadian Generals and to the US Army Generals such as Patten, Bradley, Simpson etc was - via converted Dodge Ambulances. The work was carried out at Mobile Construction based at Whaddon Hall.*



### **The Packard Sedan – what a magnificent machine !**

**Here is our Packard its all-new setting. Full marks to those at Bletchley Park concerned with creating the display. I should add that they were first camouflaged in 1940 at Tickfords in Newport Pagnell. The factory later became the home of Aston Martin motor cars.**

I see with satisfaction, the use of the descriptive boards and my pictures around the Packard - let us hope that soon we will match it with a final SLU - that belonging to General George S. Patten the Commander of the 3rd US Army. He used ULTRA to devastating effect in his drive through France and Germany. For guidance, we have myself who helped fit it out – and Wilf Neal – wireless operator in Patten's 3rd Army Dodge, receiving ULTRA from Bletchley Park. It would be sad to lose our knowledge and input.

It is often claimed that ULTRA 'won the war' ! However, if that is the case, then it happened due to the intelligence gleaned by the 'Y Service' – being processed by the superb codebreaking team in Bletchley Park – then given to those Generals in the field who could act upon it. And *that* was handled by Windy Ridge in Whaddon Village relaying ULTRA from Bletchley Park on to those vehicles. They were, of course, an intrinsic part of the entire operation. One might ask what good was the ULTRA codebreaking operation without it being put to use in the field ?

### 3. Lost and Found.

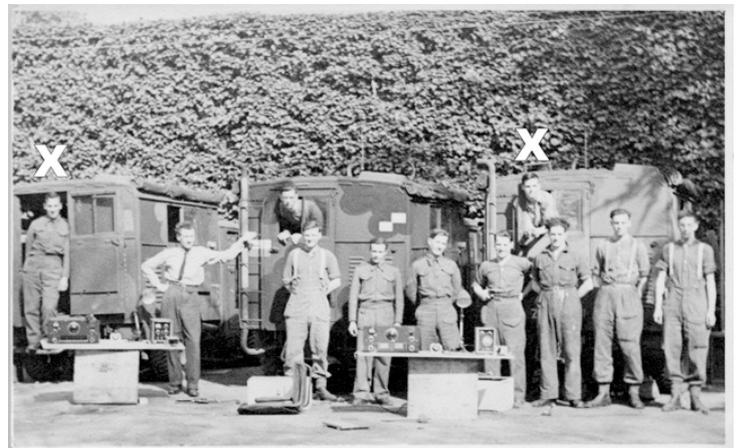
In the 'The Secret Wireless War' there are a number of references to Norman Stanton who worked alongside me in Mobile Construction at Whaddon Hall. You will find his picture several times in my own story – set out in Chapter 38. Norman was one of the three of us who worked on the 'Most Secret' MFU in the dockyard at Teignmouth over Christmas 1944. The third being our boss Dennis Smith – undoubtedly one of the most talented wireless engineers in the whole MI6 (Section VIII) organisation.

A year or two ago – out of the blue – I had a Christmas card from Norman and responded immediately. We have kept in touch since but not met since the hectic days of 1944/5. He is living with his daughter and her family who operate a large caravan/mobile home/camping site in north Wales near the Llanberis Pass. In July, Jane and I were on holiday in neaby Llandudno but despite the aid of a sat-nav, I still managed to get lost in the mountains before finding the site.

*Here we are working on three of the six or seven Guy 15cwt vans, intended for use by such as General Montgomery, General Dempsey 21<sup>st</sup> Army Group, General Crerar commanding the Canadian Army and so on.*

*Norman is standing in the doorway of the left-hand van and I am looking out of the window of the right hand one. We were Section VIII along with Wallace Harrison (centre with his head to one side) the brother of the famous Edgar Harrison.*

*Edgar was ULTRA wireless operator to Winston Churchill when the great man was in the Middle East*



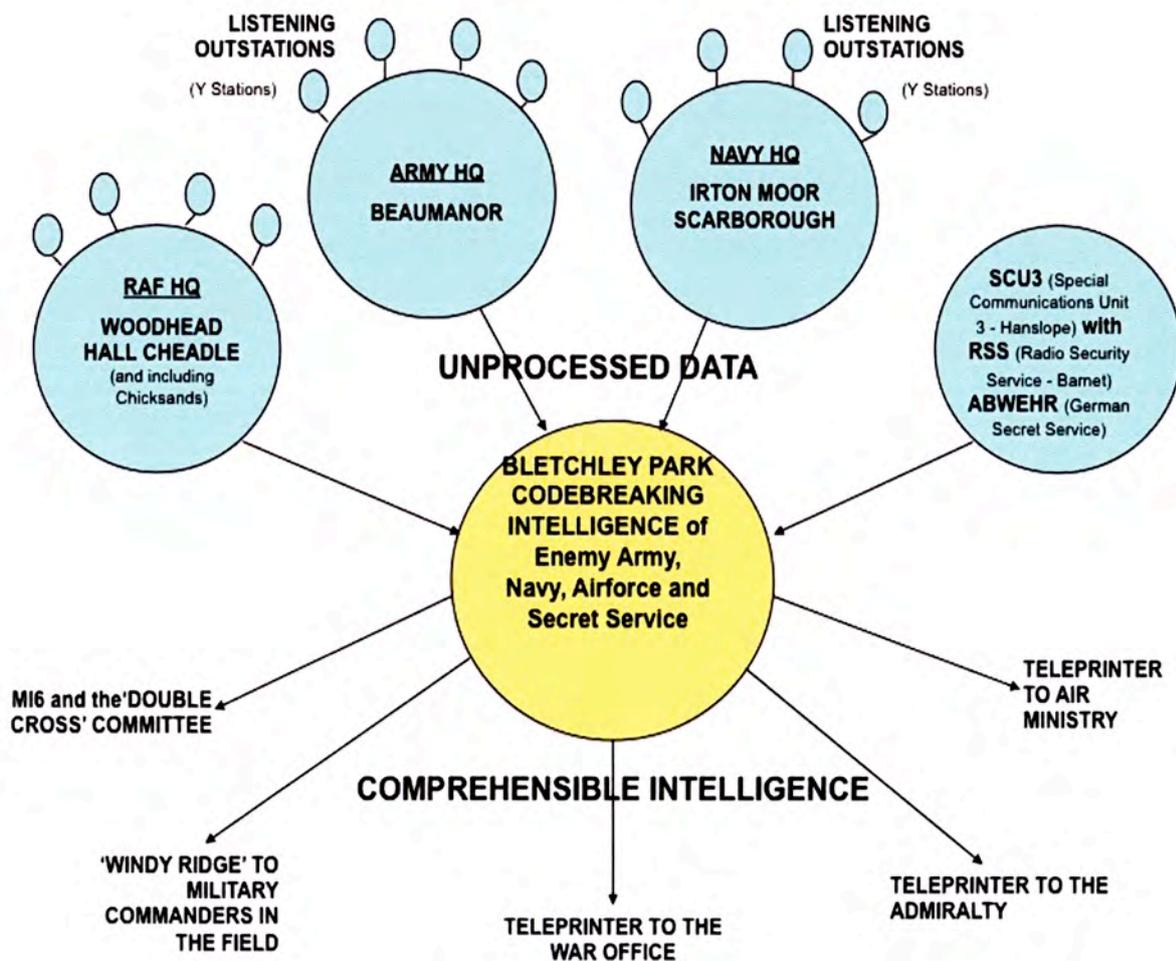
*Norman Stanton, my wife Jane and myself - some sixtyeight years since we all last met in Stony Stratford.*

*Many from Bletchley Park and Whaddon Hall were billeted in the town and in all the villages surrounding Bletchley.*

*Memories kept flooding back about those days of working on aircraft, motor torpedo boats, wireless vans ('SLUs' like that built for General Patten's 3<sup>rd</sup> US Army) as part of the Mobile Construction team of seven. A wonderful day !*



**By way of a P. S.** This is just a larger version of the Bletchley Park ‘Wheel’ as I am afraid some details on page 1 may be difficult to read. It is important as being the collective view of people who know about the wartime organisation.



### The Bletchley Park Triumvirate

I would add that MI6 the (Section VIII) wireless station on Windy Ridge in Whaddon Village – received the ULTRA intelligence from nearby Bletchley Park –via teleprinter. From there it went out in Morse to our SLUs – based right in the HQ camp of the Allied military Commanders in the field.

With best wishes from Jane and from me  
Geoffrey Pidgeon