

SCU-NEWSLETTER No. 2-16
Saturday, March 12, 2016

1. Words from Sir John Scarlett - Chairman of the Bletchley Park Trust.

In an article in the Bletchley Park Magazine - Sir John said inter-alia “...*millions of messages were intercepted and often situations were very fast-moving. That made a big impression on me, actually. In this place, work was done which made a critical difference to whether we won or lost battles in North Africa, whether we successfully invaded Sicily, or how quickly we won the Battle of the Atlantic. The relationship between code-breaking and the battle is absolutely direct.*” [my emphasis]

Exactly so - Sir John!

In the case of land battles, North Africa, Sicily and the later re-entry into Europe – on and after ‘D-Day’ – then Richard Gambier-Parry’s Signals Liaison Units (SLUs) were of absolutely paramount importance. They ensured that ULTRA was speedily put “*absolutely direct*” into the hands of Allied Military Commanders in the Field! See SCU-Newsletter 1-16 and below!

2. He - ‘Let-the-cat-of-the-bag!’

Wing Commander Frederick Winterbotham was the first to let the ‘cat-out-of-the-bag’ - when in 1974 - he told an astonished world - about Bletchley Park and ULTRA. At first, in some quarters, the story in his ‘The Ultra Secret’ was largely disbelieved. However, it explained what Ultra was, and revealed Winterbotham’s role, particularly with regard to the dissemination and use of Ultra.

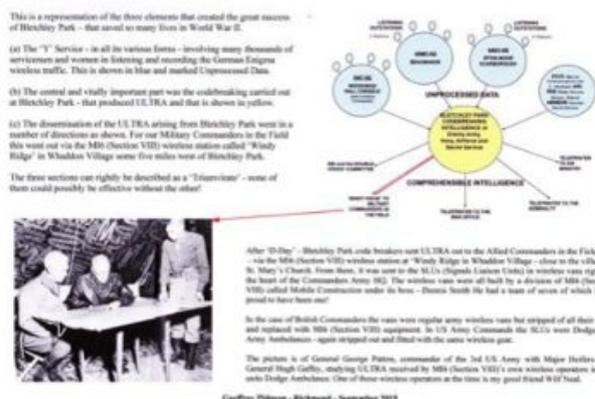
In his book, and writing about Sicily on page 108 he says: “....*Patton, taking full advantage of the move of the panzers to hold Montgomery, and knowing from ULTRA that there was nothing to stop him, was already making his famous high-speed left hook towards Palermo and Messina and by August the eighth, Kesselring reported to the OKW his withdrawal from Catania, followed shortly after by his decision to withdraw all units to the Italian mainland.*” Here yet again, we see the huge benefit of ULTRA when placed immediately into Commanders hands - via the MI6 (Section VIII) SLUs!

3. Back in 2007 -

I decided to make a ‘pictorial’ display of the whole Bletchley Park operation - the Triumvirate to make it clearer to readers. I sent a sketch to the late Mavis Batey the famous cryptographer, to Kelsey Griffin at Bletchley Park and Simon Greenish then the CEO of Bletchley Park. I asked for comments from others including Wilf Neal who was a wireless operator with Patton’s 3rd US Army. Kelsey, then a Director at Bletchley Park, ‘tidied-it-up’ for me. We all agreed it was an accurate portrayal of Bletchley Park’s hugely successful operation. I originally put green circles round the areas of ‘Comprehensible Intelligence’ – but it began to look a little too colourful!

This is the ‘wheel’ as I earlier called it and last year I added the text you see here. Because of its increasing importance - and for the first time ever - I have made a full-page attachment. It is important to show how the **whole** Bletchley Park operation functioned.

Do please print it out - then the Triumvirate nature of the operation will become clear.



4. No -No - No!

A friend visited Bletchley Park last year and followed his appointed guide around the site - taking in the many points of interest. He later told me that when in the garage at the back - and gathered round the Packard there - the Guide explained that a fleet of Packards were available at Bletchley Park to drive 'Executives' around - using FANY drivers. No!

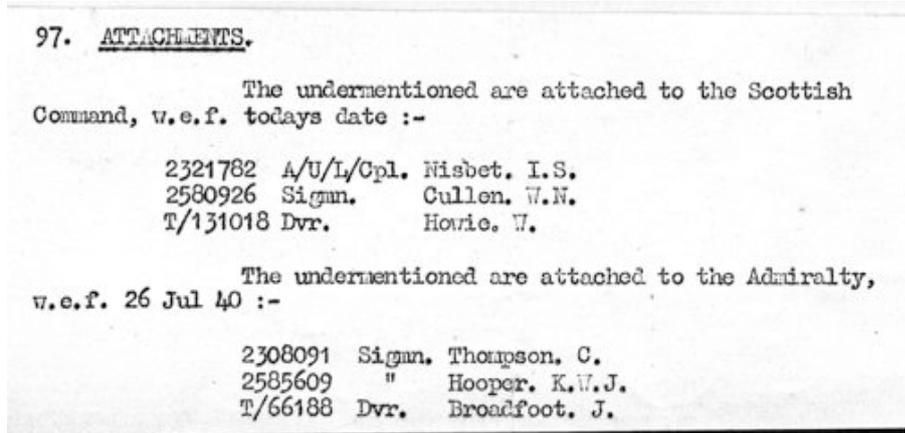
Perhaps it was his first day but let me put the record straight. The Packard there is one of the sixty+ purchased by MI6 (Section VIII) in the near-chaotic days immediately following the evacuation of Dunkirk. They came from the British distributor for Packard Motor Cars - Leonard Williams & Co. of Brentford - in West London. The 'Sedans' (*Saloons* to you and me) were his entire new stock of that model. We also purchased 3 limousines, two drop-head coupes and three 'Business' Coupes (fixed head).

In batches they were driven from Brentford to Whaddon Hall in all their various factory colours - then taken over to Tickfords - the famous coachbuilders at Newport Pagnell. There, they were sandblasted and camouflaged - so they looked a fairly bedraggled lot on their return. As soon as they arrived back at Whaddon Hall, they were 'pounced upon' by anyone the slightest knowledge of wireless. They fitted each car with early versions of our MkIII transmitter and any model to hand of the American receivers - just arriving in my father's stores. Then out they went as soon as they were ready. For the full Packard story see SCU-Newsletter 2-13 - ask me for a copy if you missed it.

They were placed in strategic locations across the country to receive HUMINT and the infant SIGINT now called ULTRA. Two examples can be found in my book 'The Secret Wireless War' on page 56 'Daily Orders Part One' of the newly formed cover as a 'Signals Unit' - dated 25th July 1940. Here is a list of men - most of whom like my father (half way down the list) - were civilians in MI6 - moved into wearing army uniform as security. Most, like father and myself later, were enlisted as soldiers 'Not Paid Army Funds' - but actually paid by MI6 (Section VIII). On that same document are details of the team of two such Packards - ready to move to its 'strategic station' with a team of driver and two operators one of which was in MI6 (Section VIII).

We can see the first team is heading from Whaddon Hall to Scottish Command in Edinburgh.

The Army had these permanent Commands across the country and they proved to be invaluable in helping to bring order into the chaos following Dunkirk.



The lower one we can see, is going to the Admiralty in London as its wireless facility, if the Admiralty had to move out of London in the event - *the likely event* - of a German invasion. Their victorious army now faced Britain across the Channel after the defeat of the Allied armies, Dunkirk and Hitler's successful Blitzkrieg. My father was at Whaddon but we were still living in Surrey during the Battle of Britain being fought overhead - I can tell you the threat of invasion was very much in everyone's mind.

How do I know that one of the operators in each of these Packards was actually in MI6 (Section VIII)? His army number gives the game away since any 'special enlistment' to the Royal Corps of Signals being in MI6 had an Army number beginning with 258xxxx As did my father's in the same year. By the time I joined in December 1943, the numbers began with 260xxxx. However, that does not mean that there were many thousands of such numbers - as only the first three figures counted and in my case - 2602902Po

4. On display.

In the garage towards the rear of Bletchley Park Mansion is the Packard Sedan mentioned above. It is one of our original 60 purchased in those fearful days after Dunkirk – now restored to its original glorious showroom finish. It is well worth a visit before the garage is closed and becomes a restaurant?

The panels on the wall behind - depict our Signals Liaison Units (SLUs) that carried ULTRA out to Allied Generals in the field used in North Africa, Sicily and later in the great 'Overlord' re-entry into Europe.

By this time, Packard's had served their purpose and were now being used for more mundane tasks - like taking Dennis Smith and me - or another of his team to Tempsford airfield - or to Dartmouth working on the Motor Gun Boats (MGBs). Packards provided almost a taxi-service for MI6 (Section VIII) staff. One, I am sorry to say was used to pull our fire tender!



6. Jerusalem - Jer-uu-salem!

The wonderful music to the poem "**And did those feet in ancient time**" by William Blake was composed by Richard Gambier-Parry's uncle - Sir Hubert Parry in 1916 - and is a serious contender for the 'English Anthem' under consideration. It is a favourite with so many choral societies and indeed with many of us across the land.

7. The US - British 'Special relationship' in World War II.

There has just been a meeting at Bletchley Park to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the meeting that began the 'Special Relationship' in exchanging intelligence. This was back in 1941 and the United States were not then in the war - just four or five officers came here but both sides seemed to keep each other at arms length. However, gradually over the following years confidence built up but it was almost as if they were 'sparring' with one another. The underlying truth was - we were guarding ULTRA that most wonderful of secrets - and we could not be sure it would be secure in their hands - rude, as that must seem now. Even the actual handling of the wireless traffic and ciphers – remained in British service hands right to the end of the war. These US Army SLOs (Signals Liaison Officers) were only handing their Army Commanders ULTRA messages - that were *already* in plain language!

As I said in the SCU-Newsletter 1-16: To begin with there were only four or five US Officers here but in late 1943 a larger party came over and 25 or so were selected from that party. Ambrose says in Ike's Spies' they were "...selected for brains and ability rather than rank or background..". They were to be the US Army 'in the Dodge Ambulance wireless vans fitted out at Whaddon Hall and staffed exclusively by our wireless operators. The accompanying RAF cipher staff came from the RAF's No. 5 Radio School at Oxford where they were trained to be code and cipher specialists. The whole British SLU was often referred to as the '**Secret Limeys**' a total of a mere twenty British servicemen - right in the very centre (in the case of the 3rd US Army) consisting of tens of thousands of US troops!

With warm regards and best wishes,

Geoffrey

Richmond - March 2016