

DUDLEY W. CLARKE, THE BIRTH OF "A" FORCE, AND ALLIED DECEPTION OPERATIONS IN WORLD WAR II: THE REMEMBRANCES OF DAVID MURE

by David Mure (1912-1986)

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This paper is addressed, altogether, to four subjects, all based on the Writer's experience in World War II.² Expressed in the form of questions, these broad subjects are:

1. Do military organizations fully appreciate the contribution of deception to the support of military operations, and, if not, how can that attitude be changed?
2. Should deception operations be run by officers experienced in staff work, operations and planning, or by intelligence officers or *special Commands*?
3. What is the best organization for management of deception operations (Who should be responsible for organizing deception operations? Where should such a Unit be located as far as administration is concerned? Who is to be recruited?)
4. Are counter-deception operations likely to be successful: can deception be avoided?

These four questions will be examined primarily in the context of the work of one man—Brigadier Dudley Wrangel Clarke, the man chosen by Lord Wavell to set up "A" Force— the military deception organization in Cairo in World War II.

This author has endeavored to answer the four questions, not from a theoretical point of view, but by way of a detailed study of the manners, merits and convictions of the key man, Brigadier Clarke. It is my hope that this study will assist some future Command to seek and find, if necessary, obviously not an individual, but

the kind of man who can undertake, in the future, what Wavell's choice carried out successfully from 1940 to 1945.

And, this also is the story, told in some detail, of how "A" Force proliferated and of how Brigadier Clarke's efforts eventually made possible the organization of the final World-wide Cover Plan—a plan which fatally deceived the Germans in 1944 and helped to enable the Allies successfully to invade Western Europe against what seemed at the time to be heavy odds. These few preliminary remarks lead to the discussion of the following main points mentioned among the subjects to which this paper should be addressed.

Early Deception Efforts in the Middle East

The father of strategic deception in World War II was Field Marshall Lord Archibald Wavell, the British Commander in Chief in the Middle East (1939-41). During World War I Wavell had served as a senior officers on the staff of General Lord Edmund Allenby, the Commander of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force. It was in Palestine that Wavell learned firsthand the value of deception operations. In 1917 in the third battle of Gaza and in 1918 in the battle of Megiddo, deception played a decisive role in Allenby's defeat of Turkish forces. In his history of the Palestine Campaign, first published in the late 1920's, Wavell strongly emphasized the contribution of deception to Allenby's achievement of victory.³

In 1940, faced with Italians to his west and south, it was Wavell's turn to rely on deception. After deception efforts led to the British victory at Sidi Barrani, Wavell decided to organize his deception operations along more formal lines. The man he chose as his master of deception was Colonel Dudley Wrangel Clarke.

Dudley Clarke does not claim to have set up "A" Force until December 1940 and, even according to the recollection of Colonel A. C. Simmonds, Clarke did not reach Asmara where the two met until early October, 1940.⁴ It is, therefore, clear that the initial deception steps for the battle of Sidi Barrani must have been carried out by Wavell himself—no doubt ably and intelligently assisted by Brigadier John E. Shearer and General O'Connor. Shearer was Wavell's Director of Military Intelligence.

O'Connor was commander of the two British divisions opposing Marshall Rudolfo Graziani when the 250,000-man Italian force entered Egypt on 13 September 1940.

The opposite impression about when Clarke began his work in Egypt stems from two main sources: (1) Anthony Cave-Brown's *Bodyguard of Lies*;⁵ and (2) an account given to this author by Major Oliver St. M. Thynne (reputedly received by him from Clarke) when I took over Advanced HQ "X" Force in 1942, and confirmed by Thynne in 1978 after I published *Practice to Deceive*.⁶ However, there is no doubt that the early physical deceptions was carried out -- though perhaps with more rudimentary materials than either Cave-Brown or I suggested—and not by Clarke.

Johannes Eppler (claiming to have been spying in Cairo in 1940, using his Egyptian name of Hussein Gafaar) states that he saw inflatable rubber tanks being blown up in the Courtyard of the house behind Groppi's Swiss Tearooms.⁷ He has written several book in different languages and it seems that he tends to suit his experience to his audience. On balance I do not now believe that inflatable rubber tanks were available at this stage. The same applies to my accounts of dummy parachutists used against the Siwa Oasis which I related in *Practice to Deceive*.⁸ The raid at Siwa actually took place a year later—at the start of the CRUSADER offensive.⁹

A further double agent case is one which continued until the capture of Bari in November 1943 and this, initially, had nothing to do with "A" Force or Dudley Clarke. It was the work of Brigadier John Shearer, Wavell's first D.M.I. and is described in detail in *Masters of Deception*,¹⁰ and also in *Ronald Lewin's Life and Death of the Afrika Korps*.¹¹

John Shearer was the first of the Directors of Military Intelligence in the Middle East and easily the best.¹² Shearer played a great part in setting up the Intelligence Staff in Cairo and was instrumental in the creation of Security Intelligence, Middle East (S.I.M.E.). Headed first by Brigadier Raymond Maunsell, and later by Brigadier Douglas Roberts, S.I.M.I. was a marvelously successful amalgam of all security intelligence affecting the Middle East. It was an organization where officers of M.I.5 and M.I.6 worked together irrespective of the original allegiance. S.I.M.E. formed a

pattern by which the heads of what tended otherwise to be "private armies" became the personal staff of the Commander in Chief and answered directly to him. This was later of the greatest value to "A" Force and its commander and assisted him in establishing an "Ops" not "I" organization. "A" Force consulted from the start in planning and was an integral part of "Ops." Certainly, as should all properly planned operations, the deception staff made the fullest use of Intelligence channels, even if these were of a somewhat different nature from the more usual ones.

Dudley Clarke -- The Man Himself

One of O. G. Wodehouse's famous characters was Jeeves, extinct as the dodo today, but a remembered character in 1939—the perfect gentleman's gentleman.¹³ Jeeves never stepped out of line until such time as the Young Master was in trouble or difficulty. Then Jeeves came into his own and, for a quite limited period, assumed unquestioned authority.

While it is hardly apposite to describe Generals Wavell, Auchinleck, Alexander, Montgomery, Wilson as "Young Masters," it is fair to say that Dudley Clarke was a military "Jeeves." Clarke, in his various military assignments, invested himself with considerable and welcome short-term power as the need of the situation required. Nowhere was this truer than in the way he ran the rather esoteric deception operations branch in Cairo.¹⁴

Here is as good a place as any to explain that Clarke would have liked, with his theatrical instinct, to have received some recognition for his efforts but rather sadly admitted that "I have always opposed being identified in public on the principle that those engaged in secret work had better remain secret."¹⁵ Yet, Field-Marshal Alexander stated of him that he was "an officer who did as much to win the war as any other."¹⁶

[W]ithout any conscious effort, whether he personally was there or not, whether at Headquarters or in the remotest "A" Force station, everything was always funny. This extraordinary quality not only made employment in "A" Force a joy: it has an extremely value since it took the drama out of nail-biting

operations and ensured the phlegm so necessary to their successful accomplishment.¹⁷

Colonel Dudley Wrangel Clarke, was the son of Sir Ernest Clarke.¹⁸ The elder Clarke was the organizer of hospital trains in the First World War and was knighted for his services in 1917. He had come from South Africa (where Dudley was born) and Sir Ernest had ridden against Jameson in the famous raid in the Boer War. Dudley was but one of a clever family. His brother Tom is a well-known scenarist being responsible for several of the Ealing comedies while his sister was a successful journalist.

In 1917, Dudley managed to get a job as a draft conducting officer and endeavored, without the escape-clause which he afterwards introduced in all his deceptions, to get himself posted to the 66th Divisional Artillery.¹⁹ Here is Clarke's own account of what happened.

That night I was once again aboard the heaving Channel steamer, and the following evening I was creeping back with my tail between my legs into the Brighton Barracks.

It is sad to relate, but the keen young gunner subaltern who had set out with such high hopes three days before had vanished now—for good. Those ten minutes in the Adjutant's office at Harfleur had drained away every ounce of my enthusiasm, leaving me only bitter and resentful. "What did you do in the Great War, Dudley?" they would ask and my reply would be that I spent two days in France seeing off gunners going to the Front—which was 150 miles away. I still had fourteen months to go before my nineteenth birthday, and the thought of having to flog it out on the gun parks and barrack squares of Britain seemed intolerable. . . .

(Many years later, I did in fact get a chance to represent these views. By then the Germans certainly, and I think the R.A.F. as well, had come to realize that there were few better fighters in war than their teenage boys. They were usually quick learners, and mostly had a fearlessness which came in part

from a complete lack of domestic responsibility. In 1939, I learned that a War Office Committee was discussing this very thing and I asked to be allowed to tell them of my own experience. I reduced my pleas to the simple one of reducing the age for oversea service from nineteen to eighteen. Don't take a boy away from school, I said, and turn him into a fully trained officer if you are not prepared to let him join the battle. If you deprive him of the ultimate aim of all his months of training, you will break his heart—as they broke mine in 1917. But the arguments went against me. For the soldiers it was said—disregarding the close parallel of the naval midshipman—that a boy of eighteen was too young to be entrusted with the lives of a platoon of men; while it was left for the politicians to clinch the matter on the grounds that the Mothers of England would never stand for it. Were they right? I think not.).²⁰

So they broke Dudley Clarke's heart as a leader. Thank goodness they did. Quite apart from the fact that Clarke might have been killed, if they had not sent him home he might have ended up as an ordinary Brigadier—as it was, he became, according to Alexander, a very extraordinary one.

After his unsuccessful attempt to serve in France with the 66th Divisional Artillery, he joined the Royal Flying Corps in October, 1917 and was posted to the School of Military Aeronautics, at Reading, where he flew D.H.6's and Avro Monoplanes. From April, 1918 he served with the Royal Flying Corps in Egypt, returning home in January, 1919.²¹ He was promoted to Lieutenant (Aeroplanes) in July, 1919, but two months later transferred back to the 13th Brigade of the Royal Field Artillery.

It was in the Middle East, at Aqaba, the nearest he ever got to the fighting that Clarke encountered the famous Colonel Lawrence and his rather disappointing recollection of him was "that he wore an untidy drill uniform with the insignia of a Lieutenant-Colonel on one shoulder and that of a Second Lieutenant on the other."²²

In November, 1919 Clarke was posted to Mesopotamia where he had his first brief taste of an Arab revolt. In the course of this, showing considerable initiative, the twenty year old officer, took possession of, and delivered 72,386 rupees, the total

cash reserves of the Bank of Amara to the Head Office in Basra, safe from the marauding Arabs.²³

Returning to England, at age 21, Clarke started on "his special way with generals." The chance came through the Staff Captain of the Woolrich Sub-area, Captain W. H. B. Mirrless, one of the Regiment's most formidable characters. "Out of the blue I was one day summoned to his office and went there in fear and trembling. The general in command had authorized him to take on an assistant, and would I like the job.?"²⁴ Dudley Clarke seized it with both hands. Thereafter he confessed that he was more cut out for a staff officer than a regimental gunner.

The appointment also brought him two life-long friendships, both with generals because that was what Mirrless became in the Second World War when he added two D.S.O.'s to the Military Cross and the Legion d'honneur. Then Clarke had to be interviewed by General Goffrey White, commanding the Woolrich Sub-area. He was thirty years Clarke's senior but also became not only a life-long friend but a Jeeves' "Young Master" in the bargain.

General White had been handed what he regarded as an intractable problem, putting on an Artillery Pageant for the Royal Tournament of 1925. As recorded in *Master of Deception*, he told Dudley Clarke "who had never before put on so much as a charade" to do it for him.²⁵ The result, which activated in Clarke a theatrical instinct, proved such a success that it has remained a feature of the Royal Tournament ever since. There is no doubt that this remarkable success marked Clarke down as an officer of entrepreneurial character, since White himself was a vivid personality and said to be the best Coachman in England. When, years later, they went together as a retired general of nearly 90 and a retired Brigadier, to the funeral of an old friend, Clarke was glad to be treated as a junior member of White's staff.²⁶

After the 1925 pageant, General White gave Clarke two months leave which he spent—as a War Correspondent for *The Morning Post*—in covering the attempts by the French and Spanish armies to capture the brigand, Abdel Krim. This marked a further stage in his progress as a staff officer of wide and unusual experience.

Through it, he met not only General Cartroux, who was later General De Gaulle's right-hand man in the Middle East, but also Harry Noel Havelock Wild (hereinafter Noel Wild), who became his best friend and the Deputy of "A" Force. Later, on Clarke's recommendation, Wild was placed in charge of the deceptions for the Second Front putting into practice all the lessons which he had learned from Clarke at "A" Force. Curiously enough, on the same ship, Clarke also met Michael Crichton, who succeeded Wild as Deputy Commander of "A" Force in 1944.

Then, after, "the end of a romance which meant everything in the world to him," Clarke transferred from Adjutant of the Surrey & Sussex Yeomanry to the Transjordan Frontier Force and, in 1932, at the fifth attempt, passed the final examination for the Staff College.

The Commandant of the Staff College was General Dill, who later, as Sir John, became the notable Chief of the General Staff. At the end of his first year, Clarke learned that there had been a change in government policy and the Army, still training to meet an un-named Asiatic enemy, was to prepare for a full-scale war on the Continent of Europe in alliance with the French. Concerning the announcement, Clarke wrote:

I don't think [Dill] . . . even mentioned either Nazi Germany or Fascist Italy, but of course we all knew what he meant, and our training in the second year . . . became all the more practical and realistic. I decided then that when the next long vacation came round I would pay another visit to Germany and take a closer look at (what was then) this strange new breed of Nazis.²⁷

Clarke had his first glimpse of the new Germany in August 1934 while on his way to Austria via the Black Forest. The old Field-Marshal von Hindenburg, the last President of Germany, had just died and Hitler had demanded a national plebiscite to confirm him in supreme power and Clarke had chosen the very day that it was being held.²⁸

From the Black Forest, Clarke drove to Innsbruck and passed from Austria into Italy on his way to the Brenner Pass. Less than a month before, Austria's

Chancellor Dollfuss, had been murdered by the Nazis. Mussolini, fearing a German descent on Austria, had moved troops to the Brenner. Clarke was not impressed with the Italian soldiers he saw:

They were a sorry sight, straggling all over the road with little signs of discipline It was the fashion at that time to decry any previous ideas about the Italian Army. We must now recognize, it was said, that under Mussolini, the new Italian Army would be a far more formidable force. To this I always begged to differ I believe I was vindicated at the end of 1940, when General Wavell, with his scanty forces drove all the Italians out of Cyrenaica and captured 125,000 of them in the process. I saw many of their prisoners at the time and they looked to me very much like the unhappy soldiers I had seen struggling up the mountain six years before.²⁹

After Brenner and the Italians, it was the first great rally at Nürnberg and the Nazis that were the focus of Clarke's attention. He observed:

There were column after column of marching and singing men headed by their bands. You would see them everywhere as nearly 500 special trains spewed them out from the railways The whole thing was splendidly organized and I was much impressed. . . . It was 11:10 before the Führer eventually made his appearance, and meanwhile, I was fascinated by the security precautions. At first there were several decoy cars at which the S.A. troops started the people cheering, and the crowds began to surge forward. Then Hitler suddenly passed, standing up in a big Mercedes car, going very fast and flanked on either side by car-loads of bodyguards, alternately driving past or falling back so that it would be almost impossible for a marksman on either side to get in a shot.³⁰

and,

Hitler himself gave the perfect performance of the practiced actor. Here was none of the bull-frog arrogance of Mussolini; instead in those few fleeting

seconds he managed to convey, in a quite remarkable, way the "little man" who was just like one of us.³¹

The end of the Staff College course at Camberly was marked by the Senior Division mounting of a pantomime. Dudley's reputation, stemming from the Royal Tournament, caused the whole burden of putting on the shows to fall on him, with the script of two and one-half hours and ten lyrics set to well-known tunes. It was a great success and Clarke remarked shrewdly, especially considering his later essential rôle in the coming war, "There was also the element, I believe, that the mounting of a theatrical entertainment and the mounting of a battle had several things in common."³²

Dudley was sure that his military destiny lay in the Middle East.

By diligent research I had discovered that in one year's time there would be a vacancy for a Brigade Major in Palestine. In my own mind I felt I was well qualified for the post, and I was determined to make it my one ambition.³³

In this situation, Clarke displayed that deviousness (in a good cause) which was to prove such a feature of his conduct during the ensuing turbulent years.

Supposing I volunteered for Coast Defense, I asked the man at AG6 in the War Office, by which I have had some experience?

If you are really serious about that, he replied, it can only mean one place, Aden.

Aden, which had usually been regarded as a punishment station. But it was, after all, an Arab country in the Middle East

I have never, said the man from AG6, known a Staff College graduate to go to Aden in all my time, but if that is what you really want, you can have it.³⁴

Clarke secured the assignment.

Before he left for Aden, Clarke visited Germany again -- going this time to the Saar, where the plebiscite as to whether it should return to the fatherland was being held.

I have never forgotten one group, combined of women and young girls in National costume, who carried banners which read "WE LOST HUSBANDS AND FATHERS IN THE LAST WAR. WE ARE READY TO LOSE SONS AND BROTHERS IN THE NEXT."

General Dill told me several years later, when I was serving on his staff, that he had long believed there would be no second world war as long as those who had served in the first one still held power. Then he had gone . . . to those celebrated Olympic Games in Berlin in 1936 and came back with the firm conviction that Nazi Germany was set on war. I felt much the same after what I had seen in Nürnberg and Saarbrücken.³⁵

Clarke started in Aden with arranging an open-air tableau of invasion to celebrate King George V's Silver Jubilee repelling the insurgent by the Aden-armed police, the local levies, some gunners and the sole armored-car section of the R.A.F. It was clear to the British spectators that the battle was won, but not—alas—to the indigenous population, who fled with anguished cries: "The Italians are here!"

Soon afterwards, on 23rd August, 1935, following the decision of the Council of the League of Nations to apply sanctions on Italy, those fears were almost realized. Clarke was sent for by Air Commodore Portal, commanding all the forces in Aden, and told to repel an invasion. In Clarke's own words the situation was this:

The whole resources of the Army were concentrated on the defense of the harbour, and beyond them there were only the rifles of the Levies, the Police and the machine guns of the one section of the R.A.F. armored cars [A]ny Italian landing . . . would be covered by the guns of their ships and (it seemed) we had no guns on our side

Then I thought of the only movable artillery we possessed -- the Salute Battery of six worn-out 13 pounders which served the R.H.A. in 1914. But they were provided with nothing but blank ammunition. I got a signal through to Cairo to an old friend who was Adjutant of the Horse Artillery there, begging him to send us a supply of live ammunition. How he arranged it I will

never know, but in little more than a week it reached us piled on the decks of a mail-ship. Lorries of the R.A.F. towed the guns to the positions I had chosen; we had plenty of regular [army] gunners to man them, and soon we were in business³⁶

and,

Later we were able to add to our artillery resources in a manner so fantastic that I have to pinch myself . . . to be quite sure I did not dream it. By the roadside . . . I would daily pass an old 6" gun half buried in the sand which . . . could have been used against a Turkish drive on Aden in the First World War. Could it possibly play another part in the defenses of Aden? I remembered how Captain Percy Scott had taken the heavy guns out of HMS Terrible during the Boer War and devised land carriages which had brought them up to Ladysmith. So I got the Coast Battery artificers on the job. They dug [the gun] . . . out, cleaned it and soon had it back in working order It was dragged into a position . . . from which it could command both likely landing places. What effect it would have on the Italian Navy, goodness knows, but it would certainly have confounded their Intelligence Service.³⁷

The crises in Aden lasted for two months, and Clarke and the Air Commodore saw each other daily and, with each meeting, their appreciation of each other increased. Instead of Portal, the youngest Air Commodore, being the first to lose a British Colony since the unfortunate Admiral Byng, he was spared to become Chief of the Air Staff in World War II. Reinforcements arrived and by the 24th October, 1935 the danger to Aden had passed.

Perhaps it is no coincidence that, during his time with Portal in Aden, Clarke heard that his great personal gamble had paid off—he had been appointed to be the next Brigade Major Palestine. Clarke's first Chief in Palestine was Jack Evetts who later was knighted as a Lieutenant-General. Clarke and Evetts were a different from each other as chalk from cheese, but they became the closest of friends. A visiting General once asked Evetts: "How do you get on with Dudley Clarke?" Evetts replied: "Splendidly I work all day and he works all night."³⁸

Clarke had only been in his new job for a few weeks and was happily settling down when the whole thing blew up in his face but not to the disadvantage of his subsequent career.³⁹

The Arab revolt had started and, by the 3rd September, the 1st Division under Lieutenant-General Dill had been sent out as an Emergency Force to put into operation martial law which, in fact, never got completely promulgated.

My account of Clarke's service during that period, which I relate in *Master of Deception*,⁴⁰ is based on *A Quarter of My Century*. It tells how Clarke nearly fell out of an aeroplane piloted by the A.O.C. and how he was saved by his General clutching his ankles; and how he became, in effect, Chief of Staff of the 1st Division since General Dill realized that he was, of all his officers, the most talented and how he reached the top of the Arabs' assassination list.

It was during the six months that Wavell was in command in Palestine in 1936 that he first encountered Clarke and quietly appreciated his qualities, as did a number of others, several of whom attained high command.

When Clarke returned to Palestine after some leave he was temporarily to say "good-bye" to Sir John Dill, who was replaced by General Archie Wavell, the third of his masters and patrons, perhaps the one for whom he had the greatest respect and admiration.

I gradually became imbued with an abiding affection for the man himself and was overjoyed when he later asked for me by name to be flown out from England to join his staff at G.H.Q., Middle East.⁴¹

General Wavell left Palestine on 7th April. He had been promoted to Lieutenant-General to take over what was, in effect, the 2nd Corps of our Expeditionary Force which might be sent to a major war. He was succeeded by General Haining, himself

to become Vice-Chief of the General Staff. He and Clarke became fast friends and in the summer of 1938, he said: "I reckon you've had about enough of Palestine. Well I have a letter from Jack Dill. It asks if I would be willing to release you early. He thinks it is time you had a spell at the War Office."⁴²

This spell at the War Office resulted in Clarke becoming the soldier on the first-ever team of Joint-Planners. It was whilst he held this position, that he completed the first of the "seven assignments" in his book by that name. Later, in 1939, Clarke received from Wavell the first of "seven assignments" which he chronicled in the book he wrote by that name, and to which Lord Wavell wrote the Introduction.⁴³

The task given to Clarke by Wavell in 1939 was to reconnoiter an "overland route from Mombasa to Cairo as one of the means of reinforcing Egypt should the Mediterranean and Red Sea become temporarily closed as a result of enemy action."⁴⁴ Clarke reported to Wavell on the results of his assignment on 10th February, 1940 but did not go back to England until 14th March. Before he left Egypt Wavell asked: "Would you like to come back to my Staff again" and Clarke accepted.⁴⁵

The Easter break from the War Office in 1939 came early in April, and Clarke took the opportunity for a last (ever) visit to Berlin. His old friend, Kenneth Strong,⁴⁶ was Assistant Military Attaché at the British Embassy and kindly, extended an invitation to stay. Of this stay Clarke made the following cryptic statement:

I was able to meet several Staff Officers of the German War Office, most of them from the Intelligence Department; and this was not without some profit

for two, at least, were to cross my path again before very long -- on the other side of the fence.⁴⁷

During Clarke's stay with Kenneth Strong, the Italian Army invaded Albania, and this apparently came as a complete surprise to the German people.

Strong, who a month before, had driven with the German Army in their occupation of the rump of Czechoslovakia, told Clarke: "If they choose, those *Panzers* will go in one end of France and out the other in six weeks."

There is also an account in *Master of Deception* of how, in London in the summer of 1939, Clarke entertained one of the German he had met in Berlin.⁴⁸ Gerhard von Schwerin, later commander of *Panzerdivision 16* in France in 1944, was on an unofficial visit to England.⁴⁹

In June 1940, General Sir Edmond Ironside received the first really notable "bowler hat" of the war, and his place as Chief of the General Staff was taken by Clarke's old Chief, General Sir John Dill. General Haining was Vice-Chief and told Clarke that he was to be Dill's personal assistant.

During this sixth assignment, the evacuation of the British Expeditionary Force from France, Clarke acted as Jeeves to the Prime Minister when Churchill was speaking directly to Lord Gort, the Commander of the hard-pressed British army. Lord Gort had been protesting against his recall, leaving the rearguard in the hands of the future Field-Marshal Alexander. The scene is better described in Clarke's own words:

The Prime Minister was halfway through [a tele-phone conversation with Lord Gort] when suddenly I heard him start upon a sentence which filled me with

horror. He had been speaking guardedly of plans for future co-operation with the French in carrying out the fight in the west after Dunkirk and we all knew he was planning another visit to M. Reynaud and General Weygand. But at the moment the skies of Northern France were none too safe for the flights of important personages, and such journeys had to be shrouded in the most intense secrecy. Even the cross-Channel telephone must be treated with suspicion, and here was Mr. Churchill saying, "I am going to fly with the C.I.G.S. to" On a quick impulse, I put out my hand and switched off the call and the Prime Minister looked up with a gesture of surprise. "Please sir," I said, quite severely, "it is not safe to speak of these plans on the telephone." For a second Mr. Churchill regarded me as though he could not conceive what I was doing in this distinguished gathering, and then the enormity of the action swept over me.⁵⁰

Unfortunately, this not only correct but essential action by the Military Jeeves did not meet with the approbation which other "young masters" had shown. Churchill never forgave Clarke for what he chose to regard as an insult. To refuse to admit to oneself -- or, indeed, to anyone else -- that one has been wrong is, perhaps, the most prevalent of all human weaknesses. Unfortunately, sometimes the great and powerful indulge it, as do lesser mortals.

It was during Clarke's service with Sir John Dill, that the conception of Combined Operations—the Commandos—came to him and constituted the seventh assignment. Clarke found it hard to resign himself to the whole of the British Army being relegated to a purely passive rôle for the first time in its history.

With Clarke's background, he had naturally been interested why, after Roberts and Kitchener had defeated the Boer Army in 1900, "a quarter of a million British troops were to be harried up and down the country by loosely organized bands of horsemen who totaled little more than one-tenth their own strength—the Boer Commandos."⁵¹ Clarke lost no time in jotting down his ideas and, next day, his Chief said to him: "We shall have to find some way of helping the Army to exercise its offensive spirit again," and his assistant put forward his suggestion for the British Commandos. It was thought by Sir John to be of great enough importance for him to release his military Jeeves to get the Commando concept into being. Clarke started to work on the project on 4th June; on the 24th, the Commandos had been formed, their loose organization worked out, their boats obtained, their weapons collected and the first strike launched on a target near Le Touquet.⁵² On the morning of 25th July, 1940, Combined Operations H.Q. and the Ministry of Information issued the following communique:

In co-operation with the Royal Air Force, naval and military units yesterday carried out successful reconnaissances of the enemy coastline. Landings were effected at a number of points and contact made with German troops. Casualties were inflicted and some enemy dead fell into our hands. Much useful information was obtained. Our forces suffered no casualties.⁵³

The last sentence of the press report was not quite true. In fact, Dudley Clarke, not without difficulty, had obtained permission to accompany the raid, and although he was not permitted to land, he nearly lost his ear. Like General Carton de Wiart, who fought an entire night action unaware that he had lost an eye, Clarke was so

intensely interested in the first result of his brainchild that he didn't notice that his ear was hanging by a thread, until the Commando party had reached home. As the Naval Petty Officer in charge of the Sick Bay on the Depot Ship put it: Gawdalmighty, Sir! It's almost coming off!"⁵⁴

Sadly, Combined Operations, having scored the minor offensive successes which, at that time, could be attributed to the army were taken up by the Prime Minister who weighted them down hopelessly from the top. In the end the confusing and frustrating conditions caused were straightened out and everyone knows the results which flowed from Dudley Clarke's inspired idea.

Jeeves in his apprenticeship had not made too bad a start, having, in four years quite fortuitously, made himself indispensable to three of the great British leaders of the war for which he had set out to train himself—the Chief of the Air Staff, the Chief of the General Staff and the Commander-in-Chief, Middle East.⁵⁵ Clarke, therefore, had gained the reputation of an original and resourceful staff officer who could be counted upon, in Lord Wavell's words to "tackle any emergency with calmness, almost with unconcern."⁵⁶

Deception in Abyssinia

Happily, in the late summer of 1940, Clarke was sent for by General Haining and the eighth assignment had begun. Clarke did not organize Advanced Headquarters "A" Force in Cairo until December 1940. As a prelude to his work for Wavell in Cairo, Clarke worked briefly with Wingate and Simmonds in Abyssinia. There "ghost armies" menaced the Italians, with mixed results to be sure.⁵⁷

In his draft memoirs,⁵⁸ Clarke described the first deception plan he ever tackled, and he referred to it again in a short paper he wrote in 1972 in which he reflected on the practice of deception in the Mediterranean Theater during World War II (entitled "Some Personal Reflections on the Practice of Deception in the Mediterranean Theater From 1941 to 1945.")⁵⁹

He wrote:

(5) In the first Deception Plan I ever tackled I learned a lesson of inestimable value. The scene was Abyssinia General Wavell wanted the Italians to think his forces were about to attack them from the south in order to draw off from those opposing him on the northern flank. The Deception went well enough—but the result was just the opposite to what Wavell wanted. The Italians drew back in the South and sent what they could spare from there to reinforce the North, which was of course the true British objective.¹⁶⁰

Clarke goes on to remark, apropos the foregoing:

After that it became the creed in "A" Force to ask a General, "What do you want the enemy to *do*," and never, "What do you want him to *think*." It was surprising how difficult they often found it to produce an answer (Monty was the best at it).⁶¹

The brief "Personal Reflections" embody Dudley Clarke's totally considered view as to the practice of "Strategic Deception" and it may be valuable to take individual items and apply them to the subjects encountered in the preparation of this paper. Following up on the importance of the necessity of encouraging the enemy General into "doing" rather than "thinking," Clarke writes:

(6) In the case of Nazi Germany -- whose rival Intelligence agencies were rent by intrigues -- it usually paid well to provide fabricated evidence to support any false notions they themselves might have formed. The classic examples, of course, was Hitler's obsession with a landing in the Pas-de-Calais.

(7) Finally, I cannot over-stress the importance of building up the false Order of Battle. This must be the first task of all for the Deception staff, and it must go on unceasingly. It is dull, hard slogging business, but it gets its reward from time to time in the shape of captured documents which show exactly what the enemy believes to be our own Order of Battle.⁶²

To emphasize the importance of building the false Order of Battle, Clarke noted:

However unspectacular, this grinding job will in fact provide the base for all Deception plans. As the General can only influence the battle by the use of his reserves, so the Deception Staff can only implement its planning by the employment of its notional forces.

It is clear that, from the very beginning of his service with Wavell, Clarke set about the building up of the false Order of Battle, and at the very end of his paper, he remarks:

Too few British Generals are blessed with adequate reserves— if any at all— and the gap will have to be made good by Deception. This is the measure of the importance of the false Order of Battle. General Wavell once asked me [-- in the very early stages of the War --] "what my "A" Force was worth to him," and I was able to reply quite accurately on the evidence of captured

documents (though I can only count on the figures from memory of long ago):

"Three Divisions, One Armoured Brigade and two Squadrons of Aircraft!"⁶³

The Founding Of "A" Force

In August 1940, Major M. C. C. Harrison joined Wavell's with the mission of setting up M.I.9.⁶⁴ This organization's was given the mission of "the recovery of prisoners of war and stragglers."⁶⁵ In December 1940 Harrison's staff became "N" Section of "A" Force. As such, the work of "N" Section—M.I.9—still was "the training of fighting men in escape and evasion" and this work was a "cover for [Clarke's] . . . still more secret work on deception."⁶⁶ On 1 September 1940 Lieutenant-Colonel A. C. "Tony" Simonds took command of "N" Section.⁶⁷ The efforts of M.I.9 eventually recovered over 2,000 prisoners.

At the time that Clarke founded "A" Force, he did not have some of the advantages which were available to the embryo deceivers in Great Britain—the W. Board and its later XX or Double-cross Subcommittee under the Chairmanship of Sir John Masterman. In the early days of the Middle East, there was, unfortunately, competition for any double agents due to the genuine agents which infested the Koubbeh Palace [in Cairo]. This unfortunate state of affairs continued for a year.

At Christmas 1941, it had been decided that enough was enough. Sirry Pasha, Farouk's compliant Prime Minister, was sacked and Mustafa Nahas Pasha, of the Waft party, substituted. Tanks then surrounded the Palace. Afterwards it was possible, in Egypt, for a double agent to operate without any undue competition. Possibly, in the end, out of Evil came good, since, from the start, it was absolutely necessary to build up the bogus order of Battle without which, as was proved not

only in "A" Force plans but in the final "crucial deception" to be absolutely essential for the double agents themselves. As the double agents played a greater and greater part in "A" Force operations.

Between the end of the campaign in East Africa and March 1941, there began for "A" Force a period of consolidation. After the Greek campaign, when the Imperial Army in Africa was so grievously weakened, there was little scope for a Cover Plan because General Wavell's forces were not only in retreat but in confusion. In *The Double-Cross System*, J. C. Masterman recorded that a famous double agent in the Middle East appeared to have been "blown" in 1941 but was built up again and became "once more effective in the summer of 1942."⁶⁸ Masterman gives the name of the agent as CHEESE, but in 1942 this covername was a conglomerate, encompassing several agents. In all probability, he is referring to Stephan who was the first component of CHEESE. It might have been Lambert and, less likely, the *Gauleiter* of Mannheim, who was not originally an "A" Force agent and, therefore, might not be covered then by CHEESE.

Clarke and the London Controlling Section

Despite their early disadvantages, by March, 1941 "A" Force had proved its worth, and Wavell recommended that a Controlling Authority be set up in London to co-ordinate deception operations in all theatres of war, each of whose commands should have its own deception unit. Clarke was sent to represent Wavell at this meeting in London. Admiral of the Fleet Dudley Pound asked Clarke if he would take on the job of controlling all deception planning from London. To this query Clarke replied in true Jeeves' tradition:

Sir, I am a staff officer of Archie Wavell who alone is conducting active operations at this time. You can't pinch a man's butler when he has only been lent you for the night.⁶⁹

The first Controlling Officer for Deception was an ex-War Minister, Colonel Oliver Stanley.⁷⁰ The hopelessly "sticky handle" which Stanley was given is instanced by the fact that he was not permitted to know of the existence of the double-agents—only that M.I.5 possessed the means of planting information on the enemy. Half-way through 1942 he resigned his post, due to dissatisfaction with an attempt to involve S.O.E. agents in deception plans. He was replaced by his Deputy, Colonel John Henry Bevan.

"A" Force In Operations

During the period between Clarke's visit to London in March 1941 and Auchinleck's CRUSADER offensive in November 1941, it the main activity of Clarke's staff was the building up of the "Ops" effort and the camouflage side of "A" Force and, in particular, the introduction of the bogus Order of Battle.

In *Deception in World War II*, Cruickshank gives an interesting account of the physical deceptions which preceded the CRUSADER offensive in November 1941.⁷¹ It was between September and December, 1941 that "A" Force produced large numbers of dummy tanks, fighting vehicles, lorries and "sunshields," an invention of General Wavell—special covers for tanks in the form of dummy lorries. Much of this was manufactured by "A" Force itself, including a "submarine" which broke loose and terrorized the Royal Navy in the Persian Gulf and the BIGBOBs to simulate landing craft which owed their name to their originator, Noel Wild, having been at Eton where

the name originated.⁷² There also had been subsidiary deceptions. "A" Force was called upon to protect the railhead at Capuzzo by building a dummy one at Misheifa.⁷³ "Later, a map found in a German aircraft brought down near Misheifa showed the dummy as the real terminus of the Desert Railway."⁷⁴

Cruickshank makes two judgments about the retreat from Gazala which, while correct in fact, so far as they go, do not give full credit to "A" Force. It is quite true that "[a]n army on the run has only enough time to implement the most elementary measures."⁷⁵ In fact, during the retreats of June and July, the CHEESE conglomerate had kept up reports of preparations in Cyprus for a diversionary descent on Crete. A large detachment of the Italian fleet which had been ruthlessly blockading Malta was diverted to Crete to intercept the notional invasion of Cyprus. The expected threat to the vital convoy for Malta never materialized; "a high proportion got through to Malta and enabled it to remain a thorn in the side of Rommel's supply services."⁷⁶

Entirely correctly, Cruickshank, in describing the last minute measures taken to delay Rommel's forces should he break through at Alam Halfa, states that it is unlikely that "their progress would have been slowed by the threat of 30,000 non-existent Allied troops."⁷⁷ But he goes on to say with much, but not entire, truth that "[t]he victory of Alam Halfa—no less crucial than the victory at El Alamein—was won not by deception"—this part is not quite true—"but by [General] Montgomery's brilliant generalship and the fighting qualities of the British and Commonwealth forces under him"—which is entirely true.⁷⁸

Of course, very few battles are won entirely by deception which is a lesson which might have been learned by the B.B.C. and its broadcasters, on the

anniversary of D-Day in 1984. In the case of Alam Halfa, there was a masterly deception which misled the German through the "expendable" reports of *KONDOR*—the *Abwehr* codename for Eppler—contrasting with the correct and unspectacular reports from the other elements of CHEESE.

As Cruickshank wrote in *Deception in World War II*:

The success of the Eighth Army's deception and cover plans [for the Battle of El Alamein] surprised even their authors. When allowance had been made for the fact that the German Intelligence services were poor, it seemed remarkable that such a vast deception should have succeeded on such a limited front, which in many respects resembled "the highly-organized, heavily concentrated, and continuously observed battle-fronts of 1914-18." Captured enemy documents and statements by prisoners-of-war provided concrete evidence to the extent to which the German Command had been fooled. They had no idea that the Xth Armoured Corps was assembling in the Northern Sector. The Commander of *Panzerarmee Afrika*, General von Thoma, who was taken prisoner in battle, said that German reconnaissance had failed to observe any increase in the number of heavy vehicles in the north—the only visible increase had been in the south. This was supported by statements from captured Italians, and by an enemy map, which placed three British armoured divisions in areas where fake concentrations of motor-transport had been deliberately displayed.⁷⁹

and,

Von Thoma confessed that he had been certain the attack would come in the South; and as a result two Axis Armoured Divisions had been retained in the southern sector four days after the genuine attack had been launched in the north. Further, the Eighth Army was able to put into the field one whole armoured division more than the Germans thought possible. The deceptive measures at El Alamein had the effect of shifting the balance of forces in favour of the British; and in doing so there can be no doubt that they contributed significantly to the Eighth Army's famous victory.⁸⁰

In fact, the Commander of "A" Force had written the original Cover Plan BERTRAM for the El Alamein battle but, before the battle started, he was called away to America. The conduct of the plan, therefore, devolved on his Deputy, Lieutenant-Colonel Noel Wild. This was no sinecure, since on 6th October, the plan had to be comprehensively changed in its "most important component parts." following an alteration to the main operational plan LIGHTFOOT.⁸¹ The way in which the Deputy took such vital disturbances in his stride probably convinced Clarke that, when he had to find, a "conductor" for the most crucial Deception of all, this "conductor" was at hand in his Chief of Staff.

It is probable that Plan BERTRAM had been greatly assisted by the formation of the Persia and Iraq Command (PAIFORCE) under General Sir Henry Maitland Wilson, who had been replaced at Ninth Army for this purpose. Quite fortuitously, this had the effect of giving essential continuity to "A" Force's Deception Plans right up to the time of the opening of the Second Front. This had been due to the successes of the German Armies in Russia which were only stemmed by the marvelous defenses

of Stalingrad. An account from the writer's point of view is given in some detail in *Practice to Deceive*.⁸²

PAIFORCE absorbed Tenth Army and the then embryo and untrained Polish Army of the East. With two divisions from Syria, it had a factual strength of five to six divisions, made up notionally to ten or eleven. This was done by exaggerating the state of training of the Poles and the creation by Advanced H.Q. "X" Force (a subsidiary of "A" Force eventually commanded by the writer) of four bogus divisions. These four divisions and their fate are dealt with in *Practice to Deceive* and *Master of Deception*.⁸³

The main point, at present, particularly with the establishment of two wireless double agents in the Ninth Army, was that it was possible greatly to exaggerate the exodus of forces from Egypt, giving the impression that an attack in the Western Desert was most unlikely. Ninth Army could, therefore, be established as a staging areas with a full staff from which it was possible to report a continual flow for what turned out in the end to be notional plans for the invasion of Greece (Plan BARCLAY)—instead of Sicily—and for the Balkan invasion preceding the Second Front in Western Europe, Plans ZEPPELIN and TURPITUDE. Ninth Army had, of course, already been built up as a proper Army -- the distinction of its first Commander had seen to that -- and it will already have been observed how its off-shoot in Cyprus had come to the relief of Malta during the retreat from Gazala.⁸⁴ It had always been a convenient area of mystery, especially since through it, passed large quantities not only of notional but also factual troops. It had, of course, for long been used in this way and, indeed, during the build-up for the CRUSADER offensive in 1941, Brigadier Shearer had

submitted a plan for the use of the *Gauleiter* of Mannheim in a deception to suggest that divisions were to be withdrawn from the Western Desert.⁸⁵

By mid-September 1942, the German armies had penetrated so deeply into Russia and the pace of their advance was so great and unchecked that the oilfields at Baku and Krasnovodsk on the Caspian Sea might well become threatened. Nothing would disrupt the war effort of our "allies" so disastrously as the loss to the Germans of this vital source of essential war materials. Our preparations for General Auchinleck's CRUSADER were well advanced, and this would be impossible to conceal from the enemy. But "dumps could be fakes, as could guns and the like." Waterpoints, however, were different since, there, "vehicles create unmistakable exigency by spilling, forming wet patches of sand, etc." The Cover Plan, to be propounded by the *Gauleiter*, was, therefore, that the activity in the desert was itself a fake to cover the movement to the Caucasus via Persia to help cover the threatened oilfields.

The Cover Plan did not remain solely a story told over the wireless waves. Once the Commander-in-Chief backed by the heads of the Navy and Air Force and the Ministers of State in the Middle East, had given their approval, it began also to be put on the ground. Visits were arranged for General Auchinleck not only to Jerusalem but also to the Headquarters of the Ninth Army in Broumana, supposedly to discuss a northward move by a Ninth Army reinforced with experienced units from the Western Desert, under our most experienced field commander, General Sir Henry Maitland Wilson, who considered, should, in fact, have commanded the CRUSADER offensive instead of General Ian Cunningham, the victor of East Africa.

The results of this simple but masterly Cover Plan, making opportunist use of a half chance to create a high grade German agent, was a spectacular success. Halfway through the operation, it was reported by S.I.M.E. that so impressed was the German Commander with the accuracy of the information from the *Gauleiter* that he had ordered all Bari Bulletins to be brought directly to him. As Ronald Lewin pointed out "the despised Italians had been justifiably nervous" when Rommel brushed aside all their warnings.⁸⁶ As was to happen on a later occasion, the Commander of the *Afrika Korps* was not even present with his Army when the British attacked. On the 15th November, he was in Rome, celebrating his birthday with his wife, on the 17th in Belgrade and, on the night of the 18th when the just rechristened 8th Army moved across the wire, he was in Athens. If Rommel had temporarily turned his back so, even more felicitously had his two most famous armoured formations, *Panzer-divisionen 15* and 21. Both units were at El Daba, facing Tobruk, with their backs to the advancing Imperial Troops.

So it was that at the War Council Meeting at G.H.Q. Cairo on the morning of 19th November, the Minister of State announced to all: "Well gentlemen, I think we can say `First round to John Shearer.'"⁸⁷

Of course, with the establishment of PAIFORCE and the sudden plethora in the Lebanon (QUICKSILVER and PESSIMIST), Syria (HUMBLE and ALERT) and Cyprus (LEMONS) of links with the enemy, the importance of Ninth Army as a perpetual "staging area" was increased. The Writer who did not take over the XXXI Committee until July, 1943, only had a comparatively small part in Plan BARCLAY, which from Baghdad was the covering of the move to India of the Fifth Indian

Division, when it had come down from the Desert after Alamein and had been sent to PAIFORCE. In fact, this plan was a complete success for two reasons:

- 1). Double agents were lent from Lebanon and Syria to Iraq where none existed; and,
- 2). A factual component of the 5th Indian Division, the 7th Armoured Brigade, actually did move to the Ninth Army and this could be represented through double agents as the move of the whole division.

(The "set-up" for QUICKSILVER and PESSIMIST is described in *Practice to Deceive*).⁸⁸

In 1943 when Bari was captured, two of the main components of CHEESE were lost to "A" Force so it appears that the only one remaining of the original triumvirate was Stephan, though probably the longest serving and most important one. This may have made for an imbalance in the putting over not only of Plan TURPITUDE but also ZEPPELIN itself through double agents; or, so it would have been had not the Ninth Army been established as not only the principal clearance area by which, during the latter part of 1943, formations could be reported as coming from PAIFORCE so that the WANTAGE Plan could be implemented. Further, it was the Ninth Army under the command of General Holness who had notionally moved into Turkey with armour to support the Turkish Army in their move into Greek Thrace. It was by this means that Twelfth Army was built up for both Plans BARCLAY and ZEPPELIN as an adequate instrument for the attack on the Balkans.⁸⁹

In August-September 1943 Hungary secretly surrendered to the Allies under the terms of the "Istanbul Agreement" negotiated by Laszlo Veress, the secret representative of the Miklós Kállay Government.⁹⁰

"Although half the British Twelfth Army was a figment of Dudley Clarke's imagination, real forces nevertheless played an important part in ZEPPELIN."⁹¹ Of the original double agents, as stated two had to be discontinued as their base was over-run in the capture of Bari, leaving only Stephan in Egypt and my three wireless units in Lebanon and Cyprus, with two letter-writing ones in Syria and much information had to be put across about Twelfth Army activities through them. It was in the XXXI Committee area (i.e., Ninth Army) that the principal physical deception, the subordinate Plan TURPITUDE was carried out.

Large army and air forces, including the 87th Armoured Brigade (dummy tanks) and the 31st Indian Armoured Division (1 brigade of Indian troops) and "other genuine formation of Ninth Army" were built up in Syria. These troops then moved through Syria and concentrated in the North, ostensibly waiting to be re-enforced from other theatres before proceeding through Turkey—with the supposed blessing of the Turks—to attack Eastern Greece.⁹²

The War Office specifically congratulated "A" Force on the success of Plan TERPITUDE, and this was particularly satisfactory to this author as the "large army and air forces" were almost entirely notional. However, in my opinion, it would have been impossible to have substantiated them without the long history of factual formations which had been reported over the preceding two years of passing through the Ninth Army area. Some help was given through the hinterland of Iraq and Persia

where the remnants of Tenth Army, following the dissolution of PAIFORCE were situated.

As Cruickshank points out in *Deception in World War II*:

The most striking evidence of the success of "A" Force's deceptive planning was found in captured German documents which proved that the enemy had been completely taken in by the consistent exaggeration of Allied strength in the Mediterranean theatre.⁹³

There were 38 Allied divisions in the Mediterranean theatre; the WANTAGE Order of Battle said there were 64, but the Germans actually credited the Allies with 71.⁹⁴ In addition, though tenuously, should be considered the Turkish Army. Would a figure between a quarter and half a million enemy troops kept away from operational fronts be considered too many?

"A" Force possessed only a fraction of both the physical resources and double agents available to the Planners in London who, up to the end of 1943, had achieved precisely nothing. All that was, happily, to change during 1944 and the next section of this paper sets out to show how this change was brought about.

It may be worthwhile recalling Dudley Clarke's words in March 1941, "Sir, I am a Staff Officer of Archie Wavell's *who alone is conducting active operations at this time.*" Those nine words were the vital ones, through no-one's fault.

More Than Just A Matter of Style

Charles Cruickshank, in *Deception in World War II*, makes it entirely clear that, "[i]t was in the Middle East, where the British forces were meeting the enemy face to face, that offensive deception was first used successfully."⁹⁵ In discussion with him

on this subject, deception operations must be considered as "Ops" not "I." He even went further and declared that, up to the end of 1943, no clear-cut Deception success could be claimed by the L.C.S. or XX Committee while great damage had been done by the unsuccessful plans of 1943:

"The deceptive operations round in Britain in 1943—STARKEY, TINDALL and WADHAM—were an unmitigated disaster, so General Morgan freely admitted.⁹⁶

The only possible exceptions lie in MINCEMEAT during the Sicily deception (Plan BARCLAY) and, before that the North African landings—TORCH. Masterman himself is frank about this. About the successful concealment of the landings, he wrote:

Nevertheless it must be admitted that the success was not primarily a triumph for deception, and still less for the double agent system.

. . . The real triumph of TORCH from our angle was not that the Cover Plans were successfully planted on the Germans, but that they were not disclosed or guessed. In other words it was a triumph for security.⁹⁷

With regard to MINCEMEAT, this plan had received immense publicity, after the publication of Ewen Montagu's book, *The Man Who Never Was*. We, in the Middle East, were convinced that Plan BARCLAY had successfully convinced the Germans of the Cover Plan, in particular the invasion of Greece.⁹⁸ Dudley

Clarke was always wary of "plants"—false-going maps, and the like—and probably the apparent spectacular success of MINCEMEAT may well have been merely the "gilding of the lily."

The surviving threats -- that the next major Allied operations would be against either Corsica, Sardinia, the South of France, or Greece -- were planted by "A" Force to the German Intelligence through agents and double agents within the triangle contained by Gibraltar, Teheran and Cape Town. (This show how vast "A" Force's parish had become).⁹⁹

There also was the similar information from General Ferenc Szombathelyi.¹⁰⁰ Colonel T. A. "Tars" Robertson wrote to me when I was finalizing *Master of Deception* for publication,¹⁰¹ saying:

It must be remembered that we in the U.K. and you in the Middle East were fighting two entirely different wars. Ours' at the start was passive and yours' was active. You operated in foreign and largely hostile countries, we operated in a friendly and spy-conscious country. Your efforts were largely directed towards deceiving the enemy operationally, ours were concentrated primarily towards ensuring that the only spies operating here were under our control. Ultimately, we were in a position to use our agents in the knowledge that there were no competition and that the information they conveyed was accepted by the enemy as genuine. As you know we called upon your expertise in operational deception to launch the final blow The gathering of Intelligence and the security of this country were the two primary functions of B.1.A and despite what you say about our failure before FORTITUDE, I think we did rather well.¹⁰²

The writer would certainly agree and the only difficulty arises during the unavoidable translation of a penetration double agent into that of a deception one.

This occurred in April 1944 when TRICYCLE's friend in the *Abwehr*, Jebesen "was arrested by the Gestapo:

[I]t was a pound to a penny that, under torture, he would blow TRICYCLE's role in the deception plan. This near disaster illustrates the continuing and fatal confusion of penetration with deception.¹⁰³

It is all too easy to see how the difficulty arose and was, in effect inevitable in the translations from penetration to deception. Both GARBO and BRUTUS were better placed, though to someone, like the writer from "A" Force, it terrifies me to think of deception agents free to wander about at liberty.

The other contributor to Master of Deception from the ranks of the XX Committee, the Honorable Ewen Montagu was, I think, on this point less perceptive than Colonel Robertson. He wrote:

The objective of "A" Force was the support and protection of our fighting forces in an actively operational command—a command which controlled almost continual active operations. For that purpose A-Force's set-up may well have been ideal and indeed, as Mr. Mure records, when for the first time a major operation was likely to be mounted from London, a similar set-up with London Controlling Section was established here to coordinate the XX Committee's work."¹⁰⁴

But, Unfortunately, this is just what did *not* happen.

The XX Committee remained an entirely "Intelligence" Committee which could suggest, and indeed, insist on links through which messages should be passed, but it had no power to order that necessary items for the implementation of cover plans

should be carried out. An obvious case in point was the thorough operation of the bogus Order of Battle, the king-pin of Plan BODYGUARD, which took no discernable shape until 1944. In fact, the XX Committee was not part of the operational command, nor, in point of much more important fact, was the London Controlling Section. This probably was one of the main causes of the total failure of Plans STARKEY, TINDALL and WADHAM designed to retain thirty German divisions in the West of Europe and ended up with eight.¹⁰⁵ It also is a miracle that GARBO, supposedly the doyen of all the London double agents, was not blown as, through him, was passed the bulk of those unhappy plans.

Ops (B) To The Rescue

It was, of course, the `A' Force plan which had reaped the substantial dividends during the North African campaigns and, clearly, it was at this point that Bevan appealed to Clarke to assist him. No doubt he observed how `A' Force had become an integral part of the staff in Egypt and North Africa and was clear that a similar set-up was absolutely necessary in London. Ops (B) would become a part of SHAEF and its chief would implement deception plans in exactly the same way as a Chief of Staff would implement the real ones. That is, deception would become a part of the operations plan and would be implemented simultaneously. No doubt, Bevan realized that this would mean that he would virtually be `hoisted upstairs,' and become not so much the Controller but the Coordinator of deception, and perhaps he hoped that Clarke himself would take over the vacant position at Ops (B).

On 24 December 1945, John Bevan, just demobilized, wrote this in a letter to Noel Wild:

My dear Noel: You wrote me an incredibly nice letter which you asked me not to answer. You may be a scarlet Colonel but I am a bowler hatted blimp and can take the liberty of ignoring your instructions. Honestly I could not possibly let your epistle go unanswered.

Yes, the game is over and there is really nothing to be done about it. We've had some gay and some grim moments, haven't we? I shall not easily forget the post mortem on Garbo's affairs at about D-30 when we had such qualms on his state of health.¹⁰⁶

(Then, I think, follows the really important part),

When Dudley and I recommended that you should go to SHAEF [to take up the command of Ops (B)] and for many weeks after you got there, I felt I owed the deepest apology for having landed you with such a job. Nobody has ever been stuck with such a sticky handle. There was literally no organization in existence—you had to develop it and make it work—in doing so you were faced with some very unattractive characters. I longed to be able to help you but from the tin pot pedestal, on which I was perched, it was almost impossible. The truth is that you succeeded in spite of all difficulties to make the machine; make it work and finally produce what will always be known as a miracle.¹⁰⁷

It is worthwhile to take in order the important parts of this letter from Bevan and have a look at them:

(a) "*There was literally no [deception] organization in existence—you had to develop it and make it work*"

Up to the end of 1943, the L.C.S. had absolutely no control over the various components making up deception. They had, in fact, to ask the XX Committee for help *who were using their agents for counter-espionage as well as Deception, this laying them open to the risk of subversion or being blown.*

Worse still, the L.C.S. had no authority to order the practical implementation of the bogus Order of Battle—to order, for example, that the XYZ Area would be renamed the XYZ Division, its vehicles painted with an appropriate divisional sign and with the XYZ Division not XYZ Area appearing on all of the relevant documents. This was accomplished, in effect, by transferring the control of Deception in Britain not from the L.C.S.—they never had it—but from the assortment of interested parties, to "Ops (B)," the SHAEF deception section.¹⁰⁸

Without the notional Order of Battle, it would have been impossible to operate Plan B) BODYGUARD. In June, 1944, First United States Army Group (FUSAG) was made up of eleven real divisions. By 16th June, there were six real and two bogus. By 26th August, the time of the "crucial" deception, there were two real divisions and a brigade and eleven bogus divisions grouped into two bogus armies and four bogus Corps.¹⁰⁹

To achieve this result, the Head of Ops (B) had the right, and also the duty, to order through Staff channels that the XX Committee, the Staff of SHAEF, 21st and 12th Army Groups make their necessary contributions. This was a task that did not achieve much popularity, especially when the power wholly delegated and impersonal—but power nonetheless—was in the hands not of a Lieutenant General but a mere Colonel imported from overseas.

(b) "[I]n doing so, you were forced to work with some very unattractive characters."

This author first thought that Bevan must have been referring to Kim Philby, Anthony Blunt, and their friends. Wild did not support this view. "This was," he said, "a result not unrelated to his task which did not achieve much popularity, especially as it came from those who should have been old friends."¹¹⁰ As a Staff officer of 21st Army Group explained to Wild, "Down in the East End, you can't expect Queensberry rules."¹¹¹

(c) "*I longed to help you but, from the tin pot pedestal on which I was perched, it was almost impossible.*"

This is, surely, a moving admission that he, Bevan, had been given an impossible job and that the result up-to-date had been failure. It is the measure of his courage and the largeness of his heart that he had recognized this failure in time and of his humility that he should have called on his ostensible rival to help him.

Bevan probably had hoped that Clarke would be able to come to SHAEF and assume control, not only of Ops (B), but to be on hand to advise on global planning as well. It would have been impossible at that stage for Field Marshall Alexander (who was Bevan's brother-in-law) to have released Clarke from his duties in the Mediterranean and the next-best-thing was done in sending Wild, his Deputy and, virtual, Chief of Staff. In fact, through Wild, Clarke did take ultimate control of the global planning as well.

(d) "*The truth is that you succeeded in spite of all difficulties to make the machine; make it work and finally produce what will always be known as a miracle.*"

A new machine—a new deception organization—had to be created at short notice and made to work. It had to be based on the practical system evolved in the Mediterranean. The tribute was not directed to Noel Wild, nor yet to Dudley Clarke except in so far as they represented logical, impersonal and—above all—operational planning.

Is the Value of Deception Appreciated?

I come at last to the questions I set out to answer for the reader. First, do military organizations appreciate the contribution of deception to the support of military operations?

Progressively, G.H.Q., Middle East, almost from the start and in fact, irrespective of the deceiver (Shearer was another one) did appreciate the value of deception. Later, so did A.F.H.Q. in Algiers and, later still, SHAEF. This author thinks, if a negative attitude exists -- which the writer does not believe existed when the deception efforts were part of the staff's operational planning -- it can only be altered by a staff-trained regular officer as part of the operational and planning staff. In the end, this is what did happen right through World War II.

William J. Casey, who was the head of the O.S.S. office in London in 1943, records in a most interesting and, alas, unpublished paper titled "The Grand Deception," that "General Devers in command of the U.S. forces in England had seen it, he didn't like it and it had failed."¹¹² Casey goes on to say:

"But, Eisenhower and the American officers coming from North Africa with their British colleagues to staff SHAEF had a far more positive attitude toward deception. They had seen it work and had reaped substantial dividends."¹¹³

Who Should Run Deception Operations?

In 1972, reflecting on the course of deception in the Middle East Theatre, Dudley Clarke wrote:

(3) It follows, therefore, that the [staff] officer in charge of Deception should be trained a "Ops" officer, able to meet the Planning Staff on equal terms.¹¹⁴ His place must be under the Director of Operations and, as he has to deal with all three Services, it is a great advantage if he can have direct access to the Commander-in-Chief.¹¹⁵ I enjoyed this under Wavell, Alexander, Auckenleck and Wilson, who would sometimes range around the map and think aloud about the possible future. To me this was an invaluable experience, if only to warn me off conceivable deceptions plans which might turn too near the real ones.¹¹⁶ At A.F.H.Q. I seldom saw Eisenhower . . . but I had daily access to his very bright Chief of Staff, Bedell-Smith.¹¹⁷

Certainly, this author argued in *Master of Deception* that deception should be run by officers experienced in Staff work, operations and planning.¹¹⁸

Wavell referred to two officers, Clarke and Wingate, in some ways unconventional but of a type which he would require to employ in wartime. So, in answer to the question, who should be responsible for organizing deception operations, the reply must be: Any Staff -- trained regular officers who had, from time to time, produced unusual and original ideas and had been able to use them in an obvious effective way. The "Commando" was just one of those unusual ideas, as was the organization of deception, and both give a clue to the type of man needed. After all, in another war, some quite different idea might be required such as, for

instance, the Special Air Service in the formation of which Clarke, in fact, had a hand. Curiously enough, with leaders like Dill, Portal and Wavell, men like Clarke do get noticed and their unique talents are recognized.

While on the subject, it may be worth noticing that Noel Wild described himself as no more than a "Conductor." However, in an Orchestra, no musician, however talented, can give their best without the Conductor, who is *ipso facto*, the most important man in the Orchestra. It may be that the same would apply to Dudley Clarke and, going back, twenty-five years, to another "Blinker," Admiral Sir Reginald Hall.¹¹⁹

In *Room 40* by Patrick Beesly, it is recorded that "despite all it owed to Ewing, and to the brilliance of men like Denniston and later civilian recruits, it would never have achieved so much without the leadership of three regular naval officers, Hall, Hope and Rotter."¹²⁰ Perhaps, in World War II, the same can be justly said if we substitute the names of Shearer, Clarke and Wild.

It is perhaps curious the amount which the new device of deception in 1940 owed to the new device in 1915 of cryptography. In 1918,¹²¹ the United States Ambassador, Walter Hines Page, wrote to President Wilson about the first "Blinker":

"Hall is the one genius that the war has developed." There are quite a few, Field Marshall Alexander included, who could well say the same of Dudley Clarke.

Patrick Beesly also writes about the first "Blinker": "Perhaps the most remarkable thing of all was the way in which he instinctively and immediately threw himself into 'The Great Game,' using all the weapons of deception, disinformation, double

agents, bribery, blackmail and general skullduggery, which we now associate with intelligence."¹²²

So, this author does believe that deception should be run by officers experienced in staff work, operations and planning. Now this is not, as perhaps *Master of Deception* may seem to do, to decry the use of civilians in deception, or even to suggest that the way it developed in England could have been avoided and that the method was, therefore, at fault. As Robertson pointed out, until 1942, Deception had to be developed in a "friendly and spy-conscious Country."¹²³ Perhaps this shows Clarke's wisdom in remaining "*a staff officers of Archie Wavell's who alone is conducting active operations at this time.*"¹²⁴

This author was a civilian and by no means the brightest of those recruited;¹²⁵ but the way I came into "A" Force and the disciplines there forced me to use whatever imagination and open-mindedness that I chanced to have in the service of a master plan and according to fixed rules: We had evolved a method by which we were able to feed our plans to our opponent piecemeal, unobtrusively, without dramatic touches.¹²⁶

Felix Cowgill, the head of the Iberian Section of M.I.6 recounted for me how in 1941 he had reviewed two civilian candidates for service in that organization. The first was the journalist Kim Philby, then age 28, whose only qualification was that he had two recommendations. The first was from the Deputy Head of the Service, Colonel Vivian who was a good friend of Philby's brilliant but unbalanced father. The second was from Thomas Harris, who had gone to work for M.I.5 after being

employed as housekeeper (with his wife who was the cook) at Brickdownbury Hall, the Section D, M.I.6 (S.I.S) training center.¹²⁷

The other was Michael Ionides, then age thirty-eight, the engineer largely responsible for the irrigation of Iraq. He spoke five languages perfectly, including Greek, Arabic and Turkish and his local knowledge and contacts made him an ideal intelligence officer in the Middle East. To him as much as anyone else must be attributed the success of the double agent deception in Syria and Lebanon. After the war, he returned to a civilian life which included, among other things, directorship in the Iraqi Petroleum Company and Imperial Airways. The contrast between the wrong kind of intelligence officer recruited by the wrong methods and the right kind recruited by the right method is striking.¹²⁸

Two distinguished civilians who were co-opted for Intelligence work and, later became practitioners of Deception, were the Honorable Ewen Montagu and Sir John C. Masterman of Worcester College, Oxford. Their activities are very fully discussed in *Master of Deception* and, perhaps, the discussion was unfair. Certainly, Montagu who was a nominee of the D.N.I., Admiral Godfrey, a worthy successor to "Blinker" Hall, as, indeed, "imaginative and open-minded" and when brought into contact with it, "receptive to the use of Deception." When the XX Committee was formed, under the Chairmanship of Sir John Masterman, he became as Naval representative, easily its most effective member. Masterman's chief claim to fame—and here I quote from Colonel Robertson's contributions to my own book—He had a very wide range of friends in the academic world and the world of sport. He was in a position to approach almost any Ministry at the highest level if need be, because he happened

to know someone (an old pupil) there.¹²⁹ Somehow, I don't think such qualifications suit the Chairman of a Committee whose main object was to select double agents to put across to the enemy vital disinformation.

There is of course, an obverse side to imagination and open-mindedness, such as bossiness and indiscipline. Masterman seemed often to neglect one favorite precept of Dudley Clarke's which is "To get your object clear" and, to this writer, his book *The Double-Cross System* has always seemed a hodge-podge of cases some of them, apparently, pursued for their own sakes and not necessarily for a clear object, least of all deception. On the subject of indiscipline, Sir John's publication of his book in the United States after he had been firmly refused permission in Great Britain was, in this writer's opinion, wholly indefensible. No doubt he thought he was right to do so.¹³⁰

Both Masterman and Montagu suffered from a disease all too common with Intelligence Officers, that is, of being always right. Both of them were convinced that they had an enormous superiority over their German opposite numbers; and this seemed to blind them to the possibility that many of these people, such as Canaris, Oster and Bonhoeffer in the *Abwehr* were working not quite on the side of the Allies but against Hitler and the *Nazis*. Therefore, to this extent, they could have been regarded as Allies and not as opponents:

For a considerable time [prior to the spring of 1944] . . . I had been utterly convinced that "A" Force operations were dependent on the goodwill of their ostensible opponents. That is to say, I was sure that Admiral Canaris was, and had been, from the very beginning, our fairy godfather!¹³¹

The chapter entitled "Soundings Abroad" in Hoffman's History of the German Resistance 1933/45 describes inter alia, the effort with Oster made to disclose the exact date of the German offensive against France in 1940.¹³² As he remarked to Major Sas, the Belgian Military Attaché:

People may well say I am a traitor but in reality I am not. I regard myself as a better German than all those who are trotting along behind Hitler. It is both my purpose and my duty to liberate Germany, and with her the world, from this plague.¹³³

Both Masterman and Montagu may have been unaware of this "duty" but they were concerned with a double agent TRICYCLE, who they agreed was totally reliable and, for whose book, *Spy/Counter Spy* Montagu wrote the forward. This book made it crystal clear that both Oster and his assistant, John Jebson, were working against Hitler, both of them contrived to ignore this evidence, unlike "C," the Head of M.I.6.¹³⁴ Therefore, no doubt unconsciously, and in the interest of being always right, they allied themselves with Kim Philby.¹³⁵

This writer gives little space to the incidence in the *Abwehr* of members of the Resistance since, here, we are concerned with the deception of the whole enemy, not just of individual officers, however important their position may have been.

It certainly is not fair to judge all civilian deceivers by comparisons with Masterman, while most displayed more imaginative humility than did Montagu.

It must be confessed that much of this author's judgement is based on the fact that I saw deception from a Middle Eastern rather than a London perspective. It does seem, as both Robertson and Montagu quite fairly point out, it was, in the end, a

disadvantage from the point of view of deception to have started "in a friendly and spy-conscious country" where the early efforts of the double agents were directed to obtaining Intelligence and penetrating hostile Intelligence Organizations. Both these activities are anathema so far as deception is concerned and Dudley Clarke expressly forbade any agent employed in Deception from taking part in them. For a correct method of Deception, as far as it appears to the writer, it must either start as an operational plan, like anything else—SD, Q. Intelligence etc. or, if the original non-operational base later becomes an Operational one, then what, on Clarke's advice, occurred in London must again occur on this new occasion.

It may be considered that this writer is over-critical of Montagu. Obviously, one must admire his talents and ingenuity, but one also has to wish that such fine qualities were operated more as an integral part of a "Master" Plan with the accent on "Master." In *Beyond Top Secret U*, Montagu ruthlessly criticizes his boss, Admiral Godfrey, in connection with the former's trip to America in support of TRICYCLE's American adventure. Could it be that Godfrey, a very great Intelligence officer, was right and Montagu, wrong?¹³⁶

Richard Heuer clearly is right:

[W]e are more often on the side of being too wedded to our established views and thus too quick to reject information that does not fit these views.¹³⁷

And yet, from Montagu, this:

"We had no illusions about the efficiency of the German *Abwehr* so we had to make sure that the puzzle was not too difficult for them to solve!"¹³⁸

This arrogant view of Montagu may have prevented him and others from discerning then, that, on the other side, there were gallant and intelligent men ready to become the deceiver's allies, if to do so would help to unsettle the *Nazis*.

The foregoing example illustrates an occasion where Montagu seemed too eager to misjudge his opponents. He also was over-keen to know better than his own operational staff. He discusses the reception to his proposal for a detailed deception plan intended to ease the pressure on the Russians by creating a notional threat for the Germans in the Bay of Biscay coastal area:

[T]he plan had to go to the Chiefs of Staff and they turned it down flat on the grounds that an attack on the Biscay Coast was so impossible that the Deception would be incredible. With great respect, that last point usurped our function—we were the experts on deception; they were wholly ignorant about this art

Their reason was that *they* knew that the Biscay Coast was outside the range of our fighter aircraft, so that the necessary cover could not be given for a prolonged invasion, and *they* knew we hadn't got enough aircraft carriers to spare to give fighter cover even for an "in and out" operation of real magnitude—all of which was, of course quite correct. But they couldn't make themselves *think as Germans*.¹³⁹

The point is that Montagu should not be concerned with what the Germans would think, but what the German would do—how would they react—in the face of such a notional threat. And why build a plan around an unsound basis of what we think the Germans did not know? It all sounds a bit too much like STARKEY, TINDALL and WADHAM to this writer.¹⁴⁰ Could it be that it was never proven that one of the main reasons for the success of deception operations was due to the assistance of senior

Abwehr officers, because members of our XX Committee were far too toffee-nosed to try to find out!¹⁴¹

Where Does Deception Belong In The Organization?

It is at the beginning of his 1972 "Personal Reflections" paper that Dudley Clarke lays down what is, perhaps, the most important element of his creed—a creed which throughout the war, and perhaps most notably in the preparation made not directly through him but through his former Deputy, Wild in London, was essential for the crucial deception. He wrote:

(1) Deception is essentially a matter for the "Operations" Branch of the Staff and not [for] the "Intelligence" [staff].

There is a popular misconception that because Deception involved some "cloak-and-dagger" business, it must be under the control of "I[ntelligence]." I found this a grievous handicap, first in the early days, and later when I had to argue fiercely with the Americans, when we came under Eisenhower's command at A.F.H.Q. in Algiers.¹⁴²

and,

(2) The "I[ntelligence]" Branch, of course, provides Deception with two of its most valuable weapons -- a means of direct communication with the enemy's Intelligence [Service], and an evaluation of his reaction to our own deceptive efforts. But first of all there has to be a Deception Plan, and this is just as much a function of "Ops" as the real plan. Secondly, Deception has to be implemented by many more sources than those under the control of "I" -- movement of troops and

ships, targets for the R.A.F. and many others which are under the exclusive control of "Ops."¹⁴³

Can Deceptions Be Detected?

Lastly, how can an effective defense against deception be devised. Obviously, the first thing is to determine whether, in fact, the enemy is using deception against you; and, if he is, to what extent is he working to a consistent plan?

In devising deception Plans, Clarke was guided by "Crow's Law," as suggested by R. V. Jones: "Do not think what you want to think until you know what you ought to know."¹⁴⁴

This point is well illustrated by a colloquy between Colonel Shamus Arbuthnot (the "A" Force cover name for Colonel Douglas Roberts) and Major Galveston (Dudley Clarke operational name) in Beirut in late July 1943.¹⁴⁵ Arbuthnot said to Galveston:

You've always maintained, I think, that the best way to mislead the Germans is to decide what they themselves would like to believe -- and then feed it to them.

What, in your opinion, do they still want to believe?

Galveston answered with this rhetorical question:

Who do you mean by "they," the Germans or the *Nazis*?

Without waiting for Arbuthnot's reply, Galveston continued:

You of all people must appreciate that the answer might be different. In fact, curiously enough, I think it is the same—the Balkans. You tell the company why, you would do it so much better than me.

With that, Colonel Arbuthnot, took his cue:

All right. First, the Generals. A Balkan invasion would enable us to protect them, not to mention their oil from the Russians whilst they let us reoccupy the West unopposed. The *Nazis* also hope for the Balkans. They think, probably rightly, that they can more easily keep their people united against the Russians and against us in a joint attack that if we appear as an alternative and more civilized enemy to whom a surrender could be made without complete annihilation.¹⁴⁶

Clarke and Roberts were old friends and Roberts had a deep admiration for Clarke. Roberts always maintained that, even allowing for the needs of security, Clarke should have been a Major-General with a knighthood. It is, perhaps, worth referring here to Colonel Roberts' (Arbuthnot's) words to the 31 Committee when this author first visited Beirut, in March 1943.¹⁴⁷ Clarke is also quite open about his acquaintance with several senior members of the *Abwehr* before the war started and those two instances may have some bearing on any held which deception operations may have received from Hitler's enemies in the *Reichswehr*.

Both the *Nazis* and the *Generalen* were taken in yet again, despite their very different outlook. This is because both had persistently disregarded the increasingly obvious facts in favor of:

(a) what both hoped for, for different reasons, and (b) what they believed an adversary favoured, e.g. Churchill's preoccupation with Eastern Europe in World War I and still, possibly in World War II, a personal preference.

This is not to say that the Germans should not have evaluated the facts from Eastern Europe and the Levant; but that they should. Surely, in the Autumn of 1943, when their own divisions in the Balkans were building up from sixteen to twenty-six,

they should have noticed that the large Forces against which they were building up such a defense were unable to capture and hold a single Dodecanese Island and thus bring Turkey into the war. Instead, they accepted one feeble excuse after another—like the November political crisis in the Lebanon—and continued to build up their own division in the Balkans until, on 4th March 1943, their division strength had reached twenty-nine!

Apart from the above, it is difficult to comment on the possible steps to be taken against other peoples' deceptions. In my time, the bogus Order of Battle was the most important part of the offensive deception. One obvious point would be to check up how long enemy formations are represented as having stayed in any one place. To be sure, deception may never happen again in the form it took in 1942-45, but it will never hurt to keep an eye on the Order of Battle charts.



EPILOGUE

The editors of the *Times* have graciously consented to the reprinting of the obituary of Mr. David Mure.

Mr. David Mure, a small but effective cog in the wartime machine of anti-Nazi deception, died recently at his home in Chelsea. He was 73.

David William Alexander Mure was born in Eglinton Castle, Ayrshire, on October 25, 1912. His father, Colonel William Mure, who dies that year, was a grandson of the first Lord Leconfield and head of his sept, the Mures of Caldwell.

He left Wellington early in the Great Depression, among whose many casualties were the fixed incomes of small landed families such as his own. A venture into film-making did not improve his fortunes.

When the war began, he enlisted in the Royal Norfolk Regiment and found himself guarding London's dockland. He was soon picked out for officer training and commissioned in the 60th Rifles. With them he served in the Western Desert until he was shifted from the ardors of the front line to staff work in the Levant.

He joined the tiny, efficient team known as A Force, whose ostensible work was to train soldiers in methods of escape. Their actual work, far more secret and more intricate, was to play back to the German Abwehr in Athens and Istanbul the radio sets of captured spies, without letting the Germans know that the spies had been captured.

It was thus possible substantially to deceive the German high command, and to divert many divisions from the Russian front to guard the Balkans against invasions that never took place.

*After the war Mure kept silent, as ordered, for years. When at last he could put some of this into print, he wrote three books: *Practice to Deceive* (in paperback as *Phantom Army*), his own war story; *Master of Deception*, a life of his boss, the*

enigmatic Brigadier Dudley Clarke; and The Last Temptation, a mock autobiography of Guy Liddell, long a senior figure in MI5.

This book, which maddened many readers by naming those in it after characters in Lewis Carroll, gave fascinating insights into the workings of the security service and the English class system.

Behind a rather bumbling exterior Mure concealed a sharp eye and a warm heart. He tried his hand at various business ventures, ending as head of a small textile firm.

He was twice married and leaves a son by each marriage.

The foregoing appeared in the 9 October 1986 issue of the *Times*, at p. 18, c. 6.

[*Editors Notes: First Draft - 13.III.88; Finalized - 8.VIII.88 - Re-Formatted 25.VIII.15*]

Endnotes:

¹ * David Mure delivered this paper in April 1986 at the First Annual U.S. Army War College Conference on Intelligence and Military Operation. Several months later, and before he had finalized his paper for publication, David died. Sally, his wife, gave this editor (who met David at the conference) her permission to finalize the paper. With only minor changes that are too insignificant to note, the words and ideas expressed here are those of David Mure (herein referred to as "this author"). Where this editor felt the need to intrude into David's storyline, it was done by way of footnotes identified with the introductory legend "[Editor's note]".

² [Editor's note] In September 1942 David Mure went out to the Middle East as an intelligence officer on the staff of the Persia and Iraq Command (PAIFORCE) in Baghdad. Several months later, he was named commander of Advanced Headquarters "X" -- a part of the vast "A" Force deception effort in that theatre of the war. An account of Mure's recruitment into the British deception organization may be found in David Mure, *Practice to Deceive* (London: William Kimber & Co. Limited, 1977), pp. 46-49.

³ See A. P. Wavell, *The Palestine Campaign* (3rd ed)(1927; London: Constable, 1931), pp. 106-108, 200-203, 241-42. [Editor's note] For an excellent account of Allenby's deception operations, See Michael I. Handel, "Introduction," in *Intelligence and National Security 2* (July 1987): pp. 6-17; *reprinted* in Michael I. Handel (ed.), *Strategic and Operational Deception in the Second World War* (London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1987), pp. 6-17.

⁴ David Mure, *Master of Deception: Tangled Webs in London and the Middle East* (London: William Kimber and Co. Limited, 1980), p. 63. Clarke, according to Simmonds, was in Khartoum in September, 1940. Id.

⁵ Anthony Cave-Brown, *Bodyguard of Lies* (London: W. H. Allen, 1975; New York: Harper & Row, 1975; New York: A Bantam Book, 1976), pp. 49-50.

⁶ Mure, *Practice to Deceive*, pp. 21-22.

⁷ E.g. John Eppler, *Operation Condor* (London: Macdonald & James, 1977), pp. 189, 191. Eppler also claims to have seen three-foot tall dummy parachutists in the same courtyard. *Id.*, pp. 191-92.

⁸ David Mure, *Practice to Deceive* (London: William Kimber & Co. Limited, 1977), pp. 21-22.

⁹ [Editor's note] Operation CRUSADER, the first British counteroffensive in North Africa was launched on 18 November, 1941. Robert Goralski, *World War II Almanac: 1931-1945, A Political and Military Record* (New York: Bonanza Books, 1984), p. 181.

¹⁰ Mure, *Master of Deception*, pp. 71-78.

¹¹ Ronald Lewin, *Life and Death of the Afrika Korps* (New York: Times Books, 1977), pp. 78-79.

¹² It is a tragedy that in the spring of 1942, very much against the wishes of the Commander in Chief Middle East, General Auchinleck, he was replaced. Thereafter, retiring to a civilian life, he immediately became the Managing Director of the United Kingdom Commercial Corporation.

¹³ [Editor's note] See e.g. *Carry On, Jeeves* (1925) or *Very Good. Jeeves* (1930), two of Wodehouse's best works from his over ninety-five books.

¹⁴ [Editor's note] Some readers, especially in the English audience, may find Mure's reference to Clarke as a Wodehouse Jeeves to be in bad taste. In defense of Mure, I think this reference, read in context, was intended to be one of flattery. Mure saw Clarke, I am convinced, as a "can do" officer who was there with amazing skill for his superiors when they needed him. There is hardly a better tribute to a staff officer than that.

¹⁵ Letter from Clarke to Peter Fleming in 1969.

¹⁶ *The Times*, 14 May 1974.

¹⁷ Mure, *Master of Deception*, p. 40.

¹⁸ Dudley Clarke had an Austrian Grandmother. The "Wrangel" in his name came from the great Scandinavian tribe of Wrangels once headed by Field Marshall Herman Wrangel, an Estonian nobleman who had settled in Sweden in the 16th Century.

¹⁹ Dudley Clarke, *A Quarter of My Century* (manuscript seen in draft by the author), p. 49. Clarke's unpublished work is the sequel to *Seven Assignments*: kindly it was lent to me by his sister, Miss. Dorothy Clarke, when I wrote *Master of Deception*.

²⁰ *Id.*

²¹ *Dictionary of National Biography*

²² Clarke, *A Quarter of My Century*, p. 125; Mure, *Master of Deception*, p. 43.

²³ Clarke, *A Quarter of My Century*, p. 201-207.

²⁴ *Id.*, pp. 217-18.

²⁵ Mure, *Master of Deception*, p. 47.

²⁶ Clarke, *A Quarter of My Century*, p. 219.

²⁷ *Id.*, p. 499.

²⁸ [Editor's note] On 19 August 1934 Adolf Hitler was confirmed in his new rôle as president and chancellor of the German people. Eighty-eight percent of the voters approved giving Hitler full executive power as *Führer*. Goralski, *World War II Almanac*, p. 29.

²⁹ Clarke, *A Quarter of My Century*, p. 501

³⁰ *Id.*, p. 503.

³¹ *Id.*, pp. 503-504.

³² *Id.*, p. 505.

³³ *Id.*, p. 506.

³⁴ *Id.*, p. 507.

³⁵ *Id.*, p. 508.

³⁶ *Id.*, p. 521.

³⁷ *Id.*, pp. 521-22.

³⁸ *Id.*, p. 546.

³⁹ *Id.*, p. 547 ("[B]lew up in my face.").

⁴⁰ Mure, *Master of Deception*, pp. 53-56.

⁴¹ Clarke, *A Quarter of My Century*, p. 589.

⁴² Dudley Clarke, *Seven Assignments* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1947). Clarke also is the author of *The Eleventh at War: Being the story of the XIth Hussars (Prince Albert's own) through the years 1934-1945* (London: Michael Joseph Ltd., 1952).

⁴³ *Id.*, p. 25.

⁴⁴ Fortunately for Wavell, he never had to rely on the over-land route. In fact, it was admitted that the only practical route—the one reconnoitered by Clarke—could never have carried one tenth of the supplies required. *Id.*

⁴⁵ Mure, *Master of Deception*, p. 58. This author suspects that it may have been at this time that the "eighth assignment"—that of deception master—may have been discussed and even begun.

⁴⁶ Later, Kenneth Strong became General Eisenhower's Chief of Intelligence at SHAEF.

⁴⁷ "Cryptic" because it was, in the *Abwehr*, that the most effective resistance to Hitler was found. Also, referring in a paper dated 6th September, 1972, Clarke wrote:

It is a tremendous advantage if the officer in charge of Deception has a good personal knowledge of the enemy. In this I was lucky that the Germans some of whose up-and-coming officers I had known in Berlin.

This also tied in with a remark made to this author by Lieutenant-Colonel A. C. Simonds who served under Clarke in the Middle East as the Head of M.I.9 there. He said: One thing I can't understand was how you ever got security clearance for *Practice to Deceive*," and I referred to the end of the thirty-year rule. "No., No.," was Simonds' reply, "I don't mean that. I mean all that part about Canaris and the German resistance. You know Dudley knew all those people before the War."

⁴⁸ Mure, *Master of Deception*, pp. 22-23.

⁴⁹ Von Schwerin had been recommended to David Astor by Adam von Trott zu Solz, a conspirator in the German resistance movement who was executed following the attempt on Hitler's life on 20th July, 1944. Astor put Clarke in touch with Von Schwerin. *Id.*, p. 22.

⁵⁰ Clarke, *Seven Assignments*, p. 195

⁵¹ *Id.*, p. 206.

⁵² [Editor's note] See Chapter 1, "The Commando Idea," in James Ladd, *Commandos and Rangers of World War II* (New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1978), pp. 12-23.

⁵³ Clarke, *Seven Assignments*, p. 238.

⁵⁴ *Id.*, p. 236.

⁵⁵ Mure, *Master of Deception*, p. 57.

⁵⁶ Lord Wavell, in Forward to Clarke's *Seven Assignments*, p. 7

⁵⁷ Mure, *Master of Deception*, p. 63.

⁵⁸ Anticipating how these memoirs would read, Lord Archibald Wavell said:

If he is ever able to tell the story of his work in the last five years of the war the book will be, as Kipling once said of another story "well-worth buying but even more-worth suppressing.

⁵⁹ Clarke, "Some Personal Reflections on the Practice of Deception in the Mediterranean Theater From 1941 to 1945" (dated 6 September 1972), reprinted in full in, Mure *Master of Deception*, Appendix, pp. 273-75.

⁶⁰⁶⁰. Clarke, "Personal Reflections," in Mure at p. 274.

⁶¹ Clarke, "Personal Reflections," in Mure at p. 274.

⁶² Clarke, "Personal Reflections," in Mure, *Master of Deception*, p. 274. No proper attempt was made in Britain until the end of 1943 to introduce this vital on-going plan and, perhaps, this, more than all else at the root of their failure to produce viable results.

⁶³ *Id.* See Chapter 12 "The Crucial Deception," in Charles Cruickshank, *Deception in World War II* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979; New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), p. 179. In this last and most numerous Order of Battle of the Fourth British and Fourteenth U.S. Army, all is notional.

⁶⁴ M.R.D. Foot and J.M. Langley, *MI9: Escape and Evasion 1939-1945* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1979), p. 77. [Editor's note] Harrison, with H. A. Cartwright, co-authored *Within Four Walls* (London:, 1930), said by M. R. D. Foote to be one of the best escape books of the 1914-14 war. Letter to Editor, 6 June 1988.

⁶⁵ Cruickshank, *Deception in World War II*, p. 20. In North Africa this was done largely "through Arab agents who were paid *per capita* for the men they brought back to the British lines. *Id.*

⁶⁶ Foot and Langley, *MI9*, p. 77.

⁶⁷ *Id.*, p. 79. Simonds was another of those men with ties to Wavell:

Before the war [Tony Simonds] . . . had worked in Palestine with Wingate under the watchful eye of Wavell; he and Wingate worked together again, also under Wavell, on a quasi-clandestine expedition into Ethiopia early in 1941. He was then called upon to for SOE's Greek country section; and was summoned thence by Dudley Clarke to take charge of escapes and evasions.

Foot and Langley, *MI9*, p. 79.

⁶⁸ [Editor's note] J. C. Masterman, *The Double-Cross System in the War of 1939-1945* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1972), p. 107.

⁶⁹ Mure, *Master of Deception*, p. 83, *quoting* letter from Dudley Clarke to Peter Fleming (1 June 1971). At that time Fleming was the official historian of deception (during the war Fleming, working out of G.H.Q. New Delhi, maintained a deception link with the Japanese. *Id.*, pp. 92, 203). Later, Michael Howard assumed that responsibility. [Editor's note] Michael Howard's official history of deception was sent to the Historical Section of the Cabinet Office for publication in the mid-1970's. Authorization for its release was given in 1985, but very little has been done to expedite its actual printing. Letter from Michael Howard to this editor (28 October 1986). It publication should be forthcoming in 1988. Conversation with Michael Handel, May 1988.

⁷⁰ [Editor's note] At the start of the war the Inter Service Security Board was responsible for British deception planning. Colonel Stanley was appointed Controlling Officer for Deception in October 1940. In April 1941 Colonel Stanley and his deception planning function was transferred to Prime Minister Churchill's Joint Planning Staff (JPS). In June 1942 the deception planning function was reorganized, renamed the London Controlling Section (LCS). The new LCS under Bevans (his deputy Colonel Ronald Wingate, and a staff of seven others) continued to serve as part of the JPS in the Prime Minister's underground headquarters at Whitehall. T. L. Cubbage, "The Success of Operation Fortitude: Hesketh's History of Strategic Deception," in *Strategic and Operational Deception in the Second World War*, Michael I. Handel (ed.), (London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1987), 330.

⁷¹ Cruickshank, *Deception in World War II*, pp. 22-25.

⁷² [Editor's note] There is more on Wild later in the portion of *this* article called "Ops (B) to the Rescue" at p. 76. Wild, now in retirement at age 85, was still living in the West Country in June 1988.

⁷³ *Id.*, p. 23-24.

⁷⁴ *Id.*, p. 24.

⁷⁵ *Id.* A better report of deception operations during this period will be found in Mure, *Master of Deception*, p. 108.

⁷⁶ *Id.*, pp. 108-109.

⁷⁷ Cruickshank, *Deception in World War II*, p. 26.

⁷⁸ *Id.*, p. 26.

⁷⁹ *Id.*

⁸⁰ *Id.*, p. 33, *citing* WO 201/772 ("than the Germans thought possible.").

⁸¹ Mure, *Master of Deception*, pp. 131, 139-40.

⁸² Mure, *Practice to Deceive*, pp. 43-44.

⁸³ *Id.*, pp. 184-85; Mure, *Master of Deception*, 109-110, 210.

⁸⁴ See text associated with footnote 76 above in this article.

⁸⁵ Mure, *Master of Deception*, pp. 73-74.

⁸⁶ *Id.*, p. 74, quoting Lewin, *The Life and Death of the Africa Korps*, p. 79. See also Lewin, p. 77 ("The Italian official history, *Secunda Offensiva Britannica*, says that Italian fears of an offensive were attributed by the Germans to 'an excessive Latin nervous-ness.'").

⁸⁷ *Id.*, p. 75.

⁸⁸ Mure, *Practice to Deceive*, pp. 117-18.

⁸⁹ The achievement of building up the notional Order of Battle by both Plans CASCADE and WANTAGE is worth noting:

— 13 Sep 41 (After the capture of Greece): 8 Divisions (7 German *Landwehr* and 1 Italian.).

— 4 Jul 43 (date of Sicily invasion): 16 Divisions (including 1 *Panzer* and 1 Motor.).

— 26 Dec 43: 26 Divisions (including 3 Motorized).

— 4 Mar 44 (when build-up of Twelfth Army at its peak): 29 Divisions (including 1 *Panzer* and 3 Motor.).

— 6 Jun 44 (D Day at Normandy): 24 Divisions (including 4 Motorized), while in Bulgaria, Hungary and Rumania: 10 (5 Motor.), with *SS Panzerarmee Korps II*, going from France to Hungary (but arrives too late and goes to Tarnapol in Poland).

Mure, *Master of Deception*, pp. 205, 232, 239, 241.

⁹⁰ Mure, *Master of Deception*, pp. 218-19.

⁹¹ Cruickshank, *Deception in World War II*, p. 149.

⁹² *Id.*, p. 154, citing WO 201/1196 (22.5.1944; 13.7.1944).

⁹³ *Id.*, p. 155.

⁹⁴ See *Id.*, p. 157, for the figures.

⁹⁵ *Id.*, p. 19.

⁹⁶ *Id.*, p 219.

⁹⁷ Masterman, *The Double-Cross System in the War of 1939-45*, p. 110.

⁹⁸ [Editor's note] The question of whether the deception plans BARCLAY/MINCEMEAT effected the German strategy in the Mediterranean in mid-1943 is the subject if a lively debate shaping up between several writers._See e.g.

Klaus-Jürgen Muller, "A German Perspective on Allied Deception Operations in the Second World War," *Intelligence and National Security*, Vol. 2 (July 1987), No. 3, pp. 301-316; Michael I. Handel, "Introduction," *Intelligence and National Security*, Vol. 2 (July 1987), No. 3, pp. 66-82; David Hunt, "Remarks on 'A German Perspective on Allied Deception Operations,'" *Intelligence and National Security*, Vol. 3 (January 1988), No. 1, pp. 190-94.

⁹⁹ Cruickshank, *Deception in World War II*, p. 52.

¹⁰⁰ General Szombathely's Memorandum on the military situation dated 12th February, 1943 in *The Secret Documents of Miklos Horthy* (Budapest: M. Szinsi & L. Szucs, 1972), based on papers in the Hungarian National Archives.

¹⁰¹ Letter of Colonel T. A. Robertson to the author, printed in Mure, *Master of Deception*, p. 181. [Editor's note] In June 1988 Robertson was still alive, living in retirement in the West Country.

¹⁰² So far from suggesting any such thing, this author wrote in *Master of Deception*, at p. 156: "Such an officer existed ready at hand in the person of Robertson, and he should have been Chairman of the Twenty Sub-Committee, at that stage although he doesn't think so himself."

¹⁰³ Mure, *Master of Deception*, p. 248.

¹⁰⁴ *Id.*, pp. 183-85.

¹⁰⁵ [Editor's note] For addition information on these three operations, see John P. Campbell, "Operation Starkey 1943: 'A Piece of Harmless Playacting,'" *Intelligence and National Security*, Vol. 2 (July 1987), No. 3, pp. 92-113.

¹⁰⁶ This part of the letter appeared earlier in Mure, *Master of Deception*, p. 234.

¹⁰⁷ This part of the letter appeared earlier in Mure, *Master of Deception*, p. 234.

¹⁰⁸ Mure, *Master of Deception*, p. 226.

¹⁰⁹ *See order of battle charts, Cruickshank, Deception in World War II*, p. 179.

¹¹⁰ Conversation between Wild and this author.

¹¹¹ Mure, *Master of Deception*, p. 236.

¹¹² Mure, *Master of Deception*, p. 231 (emphasis added). The "it" was the deception planning for 1943: STARKEY, etc. [Editor's note] Casey's war memoirs, titled *The Secret War Against Hitler*, reportedly will be published by Regnery Gateway Inc. In it the late CIA Director discusses the rôle that the clandestine operations played in the defeat of Hitler.

¹¹³ *Id.*, p. 233, quoting Casey.

¹¹⁴ Whilst the Controller of Deception must have the proper staff qualifications, he also must be a subtle, imaginative character into the bargain. Such a man is difficult, though not impossible to find.

¹¹⁵ This comprehensively answers the question: "Where should such a Unit be located as far as Administration is concerned?"

¹¹⁶ After 1943, at Ops (B) SHAEF this advantage also was accorded to Noel Wild, no doubt on the direct and urgent advice of Dudley Clarke.

¹¹⁷ Clarke, "Personal Reflections," in Mure, *Master of Deception*, p. 273. This also was Noël Wild's experience at Ops (B).

¹¹⁸ Mure, *Master of Deception*, pp. 198-200.

¹¹⁹ Both Clarke and Hall had several attributes in common, and one of them was *blinking*.

¹²⁰ Patrick Beesly, *Room 40*, p. 20.

¹²¹ *Id.*, p. 37.

¹²² *Id.*, p. 34.

¹²³ Mure, *Master of Deception*, p. 181, quoting Letter from Colonel Robertson written to the author in 1979.

¹²⁴ Mure, *Master of Deception*, p. 83.

¹²⁵ The details of my recruitment are detailed in Mure, *Practice to Deceive*, pp. 46-49.

¹²⁶ Mure, *Practice to Deceive*, p. 207.

¹²⁷ Mure, *Master of Deception*, p. 152. It must be admitted that Thomas Harris later made a brilliant M.I.5 case officer—it was Harris that handled the double agent GARBO who played a critical role in the FORTITUDE deception.

¹²⁸ Mure, *Master of Deception*, pp. 152-53. An interesting sidelight on the difficulty of vetting recruits for very secret organizations is, perhaps worth mentioning, from the authors experience. John Amory, the first traitor in the German interest, was my best friend at my preparatory school and, between the ages of eighteen and nineteen, I was his partner in the business of rather ill-financed films. This association was never discovered and, I am happy to report, did no harm to Britain's war effort.

¹²⁹ *Id.*, p. 182, *quoting* letter from T. A. Robertson.

¹³⁰ Many people feel that John Masterman should have been prosecuted rather than allowed to keep a proportion of his ill-gotten gains; especially since, in 1945, he had been favored by being invited back into M.I.5, as a civilian, to pursue the researches which made up the book.

¹³¹ Mure, *Practice to Deceive*, p. 202.

¹³² This author discusses Canaris, Oster and the German resistance in some detail in Mure, *Master of Deception*, pp. 29-37.

¹³³ Peter Hoffman, *The History of the German Resistance 1933-1945* (Richard Barry, trans.)(Cambridge, MA: M.I.T. Press; London: Macdonald and Jane's, 1977), p. 172.

¹³⁴ Mure, *Master of Deception*, p. 187. Jebesen eventually became the British Agent, codenamed ARTIST, and was executed by the *Gestapo*. *Id.*; Masterman, *The Double-Cross System*, p. 139.

¹³⁵ Sir Maurice Oldfield expressed the opinion to this author and others that the greatest service that Philby rendered the Russians was his successful efforts to prevent any meaningful dialogue between the Allies and the German Resistance.

¹³⁶ Ewen Montagu, *Beyond Top Secret Ultra* (1977; New York: Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, Inc., 1978), pp. 75-84.

¹³⁷ Richard J. Heuer, Jr., "Strategic Deception: A Psycho-logical Perspective," a paper presented at the 21st Annual Convention of the International Studies Association, Los Angeles, California, 1980, p. 28.

¹³⁸ Montagu, *Beyond Top Secret Ultra*, p. 61.

¹³⁹ *Id.*, pp. 139-41 (emphasis in original).

¹⁴⁰ See Campbell, "Operation Starkey 1943," *passim*.

¹⁴¹ See text with footnote 134 above in this article.

¹⁴² Clarke, "Personal Reflections," in Mure, *Master of Deception*, p. 273. The Americans later awarded Clarke the "Order of Merit" signed by the President's own hand.

¹⁴³ *Id.*

¹⁴⁴ R. V. Jones, *Most Secret War: British Scientific Intelligence 1939-1945* (London: Hamlish Hamilton, 1978; London: Coronet Books, 1979, 1985), 115, *quoting* Mr. John Crow, a reader in English at King's College, London.

¹⁴⁵ The message to Mure from Colonel Croft-Constable (the covername Clarke used for operational messages) ordering Mure to Beirut was dated 17 July 1943 and it stated that Mure was to report on 22 July 1943. Mure, *Practice to Deceive*, p. 103. Clarke evolved two Cover names: Colonel Croft-Constable for Operations (perhaps based on the middle-aged and bumbling staff officers, possible a relation of Sir Henry Page-Croft, an M.P. who suggested that the Home Guard be armed with pikes); and Major Galveston (the traditional mysterious spy-master of fiction) for Intelligence. Mure, *Master of Deception*, p. 81.

¹⁴⁶ Mure, *Practice to Deceive*, pp. 103-104. The conversation took place during a review of the pre-invasion deception plan targets in Greece after the 10 July 1943 Allied invasion of the island of Sicily. *Id.*, p. 103.

¹⁴⁷ Mure, *Practice to Deceive*, pp. 84-85.