

# The Scoop

WE stayed in that nine pounds a week flat in Elgin Avenue, Paddington, for four years, or perhaps it was five, from November 1963. The photos we took started in black-and-white, but latterly blossomed into colour. In a little spiral-bound notebook I started a pictorial cartoon history of the family, adding a fresh episode with each new arrival.

I started to acquire the modest accoutrements of comfort and style. A framed print of a Canaletto painting of Dresden cost nineteen pounds in a South Kensington shop; it stayed on our walls for forty years. In Munich I splurged on a cine camera, and since I had resolved to buy only the best, or if possible slightly better than the best, it was sixteen-millimetre, not eight, and a Paillard-Bolex at that. A keen photographer, I bought a 300-millimetre telephoto lens; it took wonderful portraits, though only with a fixed tripod at that magnification. It fitted the cine camera too. One long scene of our infant Josephine, poor Josephine, discovering raspberries on a bush in the Spanish sunlight needs no film projector now; it will always be in my memory.

Soon we had a car. I had lost my previous car, a 1936 Morris

affectionately christened “Belinda” by its previous owner, “Killer” Kerrod at Imperial College; Kensington council workmen had decided she was too old to be roadworthy one night, and simply towed her away. For a hundred pounds Michael Banks sold me his old-style, sit-up-and-beg grey Ford Anglia; this loyal four-wheeler vehicle was my first real car, and it carried our family everywhere. One day, as we drove off down to mother’s cottage in Ongar, I nonchalantly flicked a switch: a new radio came on! In the flat I installed a Telefunken stereo radiogram, which was not much smaller than the Anglia. A colour television replaced the black-and-white; again I surreptitiously pushed a button as the children were watching: colour! Bit by bit we built our home, and those can be the happiest years for any family. The garden filled with discarded toys and tricycles and then a swing. The children scampered around in pinafores and gumboots, chattering in a *mélange* of English, French, and Spanish.

We seldom went out. If there was a pub near us in Paddington, we never knew it. We had no vices, and did not do drugs of any sort; even at university they were unknown; and we had a morality that may seem even puritan. Once in 1964 I took Pilar to see Rod Steiger in *The Pawnbroker* at the ABC cinema in Fulham Road.<sup>1</sup> At the point when Steiger began to unbutton the blouse of the young Black girl, we both rose and quietly walked out, by unspoken mutual consent. It was below the level of what we considered to be entertainment; it did not sink in at the time, but the film featured an embittered survivor of the Nazi death camps living in New York – the word Holocaust had not yet been stamped upon this area of Twentieth Century history.

Toward the end of our Paddington lease I had earned enough to buy a three-litre Rover second hand. I haggled H. R. Owen Ltd. down to two thousand pounds. For a while the Anglia and Rover stood radiator to radiator in the street like two rival pet dogs, eyeing each other suspiciously. When the old Anglia’s light bulb blew, I replaced it as a sentimental folly, although the car was hardly ever used now; I kept the grim secret of his coming end from this trusty old horse and even gave him a final wash and polish on the day that

the council came to haul him off to the knackers yard. Try explaining that to a woman; but that's the way it often is, between a man and his car.

In the Rover we made our first road trips to Spain, discovering by the time we got there, alas, that British Leyland cars were less than they were cracked up to be; on one trip two valves burned out, on the next it was the overdrive that went. The Rover 3.5 that I bought after that lasted barely sixty thousand miles before the gearbox failed.

I HAD finished researching and writing the PQ.17 convoy story for *Neue Illustrierte*. The pictures we found, particularly those by German war reporter Benno Wundshammer who had ridden shotgun in the dive-bomber missions, and the U-boat captains' home movies, were stunning. Half way through the series, a wholly unexpected misfortune struck as the magazine changed owners and decided to pitch for a women's readership instead. Our testosterone-heavy convoy-battle series was shipwrecked, and fizzled out after two or three more episodes. The magazine gave me permission to do as I wished with the flotsam and jetsam that had gathered around the sunken project, and I agreed with Kimber that I should rewrite the whole story as a book.

First however I wrote the story of the German V-weapons campaign – their missile attack on southern England from 1944 to 1945. The centrepiece would be the RAF'S gallant and costly moonlight attack on the Nazi missile establishment at Peenemünde on the Baltic coast in August 1943.

The reason for this choice was family loyalty. My two brothers, John and Nicky, were both serving officers in the Royal Air Force. My revelations about the murderous attack on Dresden had caused much awkwardness at the air ministry. Both men were summoned before their superiors to explain. John, the older, almost certainly quoted at them *Genesis* 4:9, "Am I my brother's keeper?" He certainly did so often enough in later years. My twin brother's reaction was much the same, if less pious: Nicky eventually inserted a

hyphen between our surname and his third name, ensuring that as Newington-Irving he came nowhere near the troublesome author in any “little lists of society offenders” that the world’s Lord High Executioners might be keeping. I was still at an age of innocence, ten minutes younger than he, an age when one did not believe that any Englishman could ever keep lists on his fellow-countrymen. When I was eventually disabused of this happy belief, and I discovered what I am calling The Pottersman Factor, I was heartened to perceive that those responsible were not truly English at all.

Of the legitimacy of this particular air attack there could be no question. Aged now twenty-six (••) I informed the Air Ministry of my intention. The ministry, no doubt after consulting all the usual entrails, granted me access to official records and thus another best-seller was born.

As with the Dresden raid, I located the Master Bomber: this time he was from No. 8 Group, Don Bennett’s Pathfinder Force; while he made less of an impression upon me than Maurice Smith, Wing Commander John Searby had kept a detailed personal diary and several other mementos of the mission, in which he led virtually the whole of Harris’s bomber force to attack the peninsula with its large mysterious elliptical arenas (they turned out to be Werner von Braun’s rocket launch pads), factories, and ramps. Harris launched the raid in full moonlight, against the assembled might of the German night fighter force (Hajo Herrmann, my friend and, years later, lawyer, led his squadron of single-engined *day fighters* into one particularly successful counter attack), and Bomber Command suffered very heavy losses. The result was however a three-month delay inflicted on Hitler’s V-weapons; the flying bombs which had taunted us as infants in Essex began operating too late to affect the invasion battle.

I enjoyed a lot of what I regard as luck, and my reviewers kindly attributed to profound research. The rocket pioneer Professor von Braun communicated freely with me from Huntsville, Alabama; his private secretary, later Dorette Schlidt, sent me her own diaries; in British government files I came upon the seventy volumes of

stenographic transcripts of the German air ministry conferences and, since nobody else had bothered, read through them and even prepared handwritten indexes of most.

In Washington DC I was directed to visit the Torpedo Factory in the capital's suburb at Alexandria, Virginia, where Bob Hohmann (••) and his team were still wading through the captured German records and archiving them for microfilming. (The grey warehouse building on King & Union has long since been turned into a glitzy shopping mall.) Familiar as I was by now with some German writings about the wartime period, I felt I had stumbled into, not one but several, interconnecting Aladdin's caves of documents, and I could not understand why German historians were making no use of them; in the U.S. National Archives I located the relevant records of Hitler's arms minister Albert Speer – then still locked away in Spandau prison in Berlin. Back in England, a freighter, *United States*, eventually docked bringing the first crate of about two hundred microfilms of captured German records which I had ordered; I drove down to Tilbury to see these research materials through Customs. I had to buy a Kodak microfilm printer, it cost nearly five hundred pounds, a heart-thumping price – a year's rent – but Pilar never once objected to such expenditures.

Originally conceived as just the story of the Peenemünde raid, the canvas now widened to encompass the whole German rocket and flying bomb programme, and the Allies' Intelligence and countermeasures too.

If there is one man I want to meet and chat with in the hereafter, it is Lord Cherwell – formerly Professor Friedrich A. Lindemann, Churchill's principal scientific adviser "the Prof". A physicist and statistician, he had a broad knowledge of many affairs, and was empowered by a deadly logic too. He was the father of the British saturation bombing campaign, which Harris began in earnest in March 1942. From *The Prof*, Roy Harrod's most readable biography of the late Lord Cherwell,<sup>2</sup> I noticed that all his papers were deposited at Nuffield College in Oxford. The Librarian seemed unfamiliar with their content; he simply handed me the keys to the basement room

and its steel filing cupboards, with the memorable words: "We close at five."

I found myself alone in the room. It had a table and many steel two-door cupboards, which I began to open. The shelves were filled with boxes, and the labels showed they contained top secret Cabinet records, including Defence Committee minutes, correspondence with Churchill, Lord Cherwell's own dossiers on TUBE ALLOYS (Britain's wartime atomic project) and the infamous Morgenthau Plan.

British government archives were in those days still in the grip of a Fifty-Year Rule (a rule that I heartily endorsed, provided I could find ways round it). I was handling now foolscap pages headed in red "HIS BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S..." and underlined three times. I barely knew what I was doing: codenames that meant nothing to me, a hierarchy of which I was ignorant. I was a blind dog in a slaughterhouse – meat everywhere but where to begin to chew? Fearing at every moment the tread of a horrified senior archivist's feet on the stairs, I dictated over a quarter of a million words from those top-secret records onto the tape recorder over the next few days. I commuted between Oxford and London for days. I checked into a local boarding house. I bought my first photocopier, a large flatbed box with fifty golf-ball bulbs and a negative/positive wet process system. The copies it made are still good today, forty years later.

Somehow the government found what I had got my hands on. The Cherwell papers were closed, his TUBE ALLOYS files whisked away. Being English of course I at once agreed to the dictate of the Cabinet Office, the prime minister's secretariat, that I produce my finished manuscript to their censors for scrutiny. The Cabinet Office and Air Ministry in return allowed me limited access to their own official records on the usual, but irksome, condition that I did not directly cite from or identify them, and included a proper disclaimer in the opening pages.

It was now that I noticed a strange phenomenon, by comparing the captured German documents with the Allied records passing

through my hands. Often an Allied counter-measure had followed so swiftly upon a German operational signal or decision, that it seemed as though we were blessed with a second sight. Such evidence was sprinkled throughout the files of Lord Cherwell. Our orders sometimes mirrored the precise wordings of signals that I had found in the German admiralty and air ministry files. I claim no special insight into this – it would have become obvious to anybody with an open mind on the period and knowledge of the records in both languages.

At the Air Historical Branch (A.H.B.) of the Air Ministry in Tothill Street, I came under the supervision of Squadron Leader L. A. Jackets, its chief, and his civil service deputy, Mr (••fnu) Turner. Turner had the dark-tinged eyes and saturnine looks of a compulsive smoker. I sensed that my presence as an outsider was an inconvenience. There were no other researchers, at least while I was there. I was now being allowed to see British files up to a certain level, roughly squadron level, and certain higher-level files like the post-raid operational analysis of Bomber Commander's Operational Research Section (a valuable unit set up on the initiative of Professor P. M. S. Blackett, the same Blackett I had encountered at Imperial College). I also used the ADI (K) files of prisoner interrogations, though these were later withdrawn from use – I should not have been allowed them; and the captured German documents.

Once, I did the unthinkable – I borrowed a captured German document, one page, and walked out with it folded inside the evening paper: it was the original German War Office top-secret purchase order for the manufacture of twelve thousand V-2 rockets; I copied it at home and shivering with well-founded apprehensions about being, well, apprehended, I restored it to its ministry file the next day.

It was a victimless crime, but it was wrong and I died a thousand deaths while doing it, and never did it again.

As I was leaving the A.H.B. two evenings later, Turner stopped me. "Is that today's *Standard*?" he asked, displaying a toothy civil servant grin that said "gotcha" all over. He firmly plucked out the rolled-up newspaper from my hand; he shook it open, saying, "Any-

thing in it today?"

There wasn't of course, and there never would be again.

Lord Cherwell was dead, but most of the other participants were still living at that time. Duncan Sandys, who had married a Churchill daughter, had directed the counter-measures, with his rather opinionated friend and honcho, Colonel Kenneth Post. Now that I had a wad of Lord Cherwell's papers in my hand, it was possible to play an instinctive if inherently risky game of "show me yours" with each of these principals in turn.

A central figure on the Air Scientific Intelligence side was now a professor of physics at Aberdeen, R. V. Jones. He spent most of the war sparring with "the Prof." I put it to him that Cherwell's memoranda and letters seemed to indicate that British Intelligence knew rather more than they ought to of what was contained in the enemy's top-secret signals communications. He changed the subject rapidly. I did not yet realize it, but I had stumbled unwittingly upon the Enigma, one of the war's most extraordinary secrets.

It was a story that was nearly never told. In September 1945, the Combined Chiefs of Staff – *i.e.*, the British and American chiefs – had directed, as I discovered years later, that no historians, not even the government appointed official historians like M. R. D. Foot and Stephen Roskill, were ever to be told about the Enigma secret. If they independently found out, for example by comparing German and Allied records as I had done, they were not to be permitted to write about it; and if they did have to explain how Churchill, or Field Marshal Sir Bernard Montgomery, or the Americans, were so well informed about enemy intentions, they were to lie. The defeated enemy must never, ever, so the C.C.S. directed, realize just how we had cheated them of victory by reading their most secret signals. As the C.C.S. directive explicitly said, the Germans must not be able to claim that they had been defeated by ungentlemanly means, by another "stab in the back" as in 1918.<sup>3</sup>

So the Enigma became the war's most tightly guarded secret. The very words Enigma, the name of the German cipher machine, and its British product, Ultra, were kept secret. In British official ar-

chives is a file about the 1960s screening of Mr Churchill's wartime files for what were discreetly called only "codeword documents." These, it turned out, were any which explicitly referred to Enigma and the vast secret British establishment built up at Bletchley Park to defeat it.

I knew none of this when I began, and if I did gain any innocent inkling of it I had no notion of just how secret it all was until one evening in 1964, sitting in my apartment in Paddington, I was told the whole thing. [*It was some time before November 1964, because I knew the Enigma secret when I paid my second trip to Dresden, and was acutely aware of its importance.*] A persistent little squaddy, an ex-RAF Sergeant named Harcourt, rang my doorbell. He was a man with a grudge, a typical former NCO as portrayed by Arthur English in countless British B-movies. I do not even recall if he had written a letter to me first; but I never turned such visitors away.

"I've got to tell you," he blurted out as soon as he came in. "But nobody won't listen. Why are they keeping it all secret?" – and he poured out in plain English the almost unbelievable story of the Computer. It came tumbling out, in breathless chunks that were – I now know – for the most part pure truth.

He had registered with the Ministry of Labour and National Service as a German-speaker, and on September 1, 1939 he had received a telegram ordering him to report at the General Post Office headquarters in Mount Pleasant, in West London; as though giving evidence in court, he pulled the actual yellowing telegram out of his pocket and smoothed it out on the coffee table in front of us, and I began to sit up and take notice. He found himself drafted to a secret location, RAF Church Green (he showed me a sports programme), and eventually to Bletchley Park in Buckinghamshire, or so I presume from his description, the Government's now famous Code & Cypher School (GC&CS): he flourished a faded canteen menu.

After Harcourt had been locked into this encampment for a while, an officer showed him the Computer – perhaps the fabulous Colossus itself. That he had never seen such a beast before was not

surprising, as it was as rare as a unicorn at that time. Out of one end, as Harcourt described it, came a rivulet of tickertape containing Hitler's secret messages, plucked out of the radio waves in code and decoded automatically by this brilliant secret British computer. On the wall was a map of the coming Normandy invasion area.

"Now you understand," drawled the RAF officer in the best Elstree Studios tradition, "why you will never be allowed to leave this camp again."

Besides his mementos, which I copied that same evening on the flatbed, Harcourt gave me a number of leads to follow, suspecting that I still disbelieved him. One of his mates, a certain Phelps, would back up his story; it turned out that Phelps lived in Randolph Avenue, a few hundred yards away – he politely shut the door on me when I said what I had come about.

A man called Josh Cooper, said Harcourt, had run the actual section he worked in – "He always had his hand down his trousers, scratching his bum."

An RAF sergeant notices things like that; to a writer, they spell verisimilitude. GPO engineers, Harcourt added, had built the miraculous machine.

Of course I wrote at once to the Post Office research department, asking for confirmation, and I received a very dry reply; I checked up on Cooper in the pages of *Who's Who* – his entry revealed that he had come under the Foreign Office for the war years, no department being specified. That usually meant only one thing. Joseph Cooper replied to my letter in language which was even dustier than the GPO's.

In that unlocked Oxford basement I had inevitably stumbled upon clues to Enigma and the Ultra secret, and within weeks I had unravelled it. In the inner machinery of the British Intelligence establishment, wheels began to whirl, as its files transferred to the PRO now show.

The next time Professor R. V. Jones, the scientific Intelligence chief, came to us for dinner, I put my problem to him more squarely, with some judicious questioning. He again sternly refused to talk about codebreaking. I picked away at him, as I had picked at that

crumbling lathe-and-plaster wall as an infant. He had claimed in an August 1944 report to have calculated V-2 rocket production from freight dockets captured by British agents; the serial numbers had started from a base of 17,000.

“Those freight dockets, they never existed, did they,” I challenged him.

By chance I already knew that, from the German *Abwehr* files – the *Abwehr* had directed that all secret rocket shipments were to proceed unaccompanied by any paperwork, and the discrepancy in Jones’s report had puzzled me. The little pile of plaster on the floor was growing.

“You were reading the coded radio signals passed between Blizna proving ground and Peenemünde.”

Jones went visibly pink, and mopped his forehead. “I cannot comment,” he said in a strangled voice. “And whatever you have or have not learned, you did not get it from me.” That clinched it.

I now had enough to rewrite the opening of this V-weapons book. I called that chapter simply, “Enigma.” The whole typescript went off to Kimber’s.

Under my arrangements with the government, a copy had to go to the Cabinet Office for vetting. A very loud alarm bell evidently rang somewhere very soon after that. Within a very few days the authorities carried out simultaneous raids on my flat and William Kimber’s offices. Two or three gentlemen in belted raincoats called without warning at our flat in Paddington. They relieved my file cabinet of the offending first chapter, titled “Enigma,” and all the supporting working papers they could find, and all its carbon copies (I retained one, I forget how).

A few days later I was hauled before a board meeting in the Cabinet Office, presided over by Sir Burke Trend, the Cabinet Secretary, and attended by several unidentified men with somber countenances.

I guessed that one of the men sitting round that long polished table was a Mr Geoffrey Evans. I noted down his name, as he had signed in before me; his entry described him as security chief of

GCHQ at Cheltenham.\* Those initials meant nothing to me.

Evans commanded me never, ever, to reveal the Ultra secret. “We take *particular* exception to any use of that word, or the word Enigma,” he said.

I asked curiously why the secret had to be kept even now, twenty years after the war. The men looked at each other, then one replied that at the war’s end the British troops had gathered in the German Enigma code machines, and they had sold them extensively to Third World countries, assuring them that the resulting codes were unbreakable. The words perfidious and Albion trotted jointly into my mind. I suppressed a grin at the thought of all those worthy natives plotting secretly against the Empire. Evans now appealed to me as an English gentleman, with some effect; more compelling was the weight of a throwaway line he added to the effect that I had got the incredible story all wrong (I had not, it turned out) and I would therefore just be making myself a laughing stock.

The Ultra Secret remained unrevealed until 1974 when Wing Commander F. W. Winterbotham was allowed to publish a book of that name (I had introduced him to Kimber’s, who published his first book but inexplicably passed on *The Ultra Secret*, a huge best seller). They learned Harcourt’s identity, but they did not discover my file on him. After the secret was finally released in 1974, I turned it over to Ronald Lewin and to others who wrote on it.

The officials said they would “have a word with him” – I rather fear he may have been secretly put on trial and imprisoned for breaching the Official Secrets Act. I could not be prosecuted, as I had never signed the Act, so I was later told. R. V. Jones later wrote of the love of their country which persuaded thousands of Britons to keep the Ultra secret for so long:

I doubt whether the fact that it might have brought us into trouble with the Official Secrets Act weighed with us to anything approaching

\* Government Communications Headquarters, the British counterpart of the US National Security Agency. Newspapers were forbidden by D-notice to mention the existence of GCHQ.

the same extent. It was much more a matter of not 'breaking ranks' or 'letting the side down' . . . .

The one instance that I myself encountered arose when the author David Irving was writing his book on the German V-2 effort and our attempts to frustrate it, *The Mare's Nest*. By talking to a former NCO who had been at Bletchley, Irving discovered that the reason why we knew the works numbers of the spent V-2s that were being returned to Peenemünde from Poland was that we had broken the line of Enigma traffic in which these numbers were reported.

When GCHQ learned of the leak, two of its officers called on me and told me that it would be difficult for them to proceed against Irving if he insisted on publishing the text. They had come to me because they believed that he respected me, and they thought that there might be a chance that if I were to talk to him he might accept my persuasion not to publish. And so his book appeared without the vital disclosure. Years afterwards GCHQ told me that they could not have risked the publicity caused by a prosecution that would have blown the very secret of Ultra that they were still trying to keep, and that this was why they had sought my help.

Jones's narrative continues:

However, in about 1980 we met accidentally when he saw me trying to find a taxi in South Audley Street to take me to Heathrow. He was driving a Rolls Royce and promptly offered to take me the whole way. The drive was memorable for two things.

The first was Irving's driving technique, which reminded me of Lord Wavell's advice on handling an army: "The relation between a general and his troops is very like that between a rider and his horse. The horse must be controlled and disciplined: he should be 'cared for in the stable as though he were worth £500, and ridden in the field as though he were not worth half-a-crown.'"

Irving evidently regarded his Rolls in the same light; 'Everyone gives way to a Rolls,' he commented as we charged headlong from Mount Street transversely into the dense traffic in Park Lane.

On the way I asked him, 'What stopped you publishing the fact that we had broken Enigma when I asked you?' His terse reply was 'Patriotism!'

I tell the story because Irving has at times provoked many of us; but when it is remembered what a ‘scoop’ he sacrificed, surely one of the biggest ever, he has a lasting right to our respect alongside Governor Dewey, who in 1944 and in similar circumstances sacrificed his chance of becoming President of the United States.<sup>1</sup>

THE minutes of the Defence Committee meeting of October 25, 1943 showed that Lord Cherwell did not think the Nazi rocket actually existed. “Lord Cherwell still felt that at the end of the war, when we knew the full story, we should find that the rocket was a mare’s nest.”<sup>4</sup> I called the book *The Mare’s Nest*.

Kimber thought we were taking a risk with such an opaque title, but once again Peter Chadwick, his artist, produced a dramatic cover design, featuring a brace of V-2s being launched, which left no doubt what the book was about.

Donald McLachlan at *The Sunday Telegraph* again bought serial rights as it was an unusual story – even when shorn of its opening Enigma chapter; the Bertelsmann group published a German edition under the title *Die Geheimwaffen des III. Reichs*, which concentrated more on the technical aspects of the story.

This time the news magazine *Der Spiegel* bought German serialization rights too. They had first noticed me in their issue of June 19, 1963 when they [•• was it in that issue?] published a special editorial or *Haus-Mitteilung*, about me, saying that they proposed to keep their eyes on this promising new historian. [•• QUOTE if we can find it: “...”].

Their picture research was wonderful. They even found a picture of S.S. *Gruppenführer* Hans Kammler, Heinrich Himmler’s secretive chief engineer and architect, who was the last commander of the V-weapons offensive against southern England.

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1 R. V. Jones, *Most Secret War. Reflections on Intelligence* (William Heinemann Ltd London, 1989) pages 68–69. Thomas Dewey had learned about the MAGIC decrypting of the Japanese diplomatic dispatches prior to Pearl Harbor, but voluntarily abstained from disgracing Roosevelt by divulging this secret during the 1944 presidential election campaign.

That was nearly the end of this story, but not quite. Many years later – I was by now writing a biography of Field Marshal Erwin Rommel – the Cabinet Office phoned me: they had a small *bonne bouche* for me. On that same polished table around which we had sat years before, I saw an inch-thick buff-covered file, which I recognized as being from the German Army's archives. It was Rommel's original, intact, personnel file, his 201 file, which British officers had snaffled from under the noses of our great American allies in their occupation zone of Germany. The file contained every document from his father's first tentative letter to the Württemberg artillery regiment, asking if they would find a place for his twelve-year old son, to the last letter that Rommel wrote to Adolf Hitler in 1944. Years later still, Professor Jones told me that this was the British government's way of saying thank-you to me for having kept the Ultra secret. I am happy to believe it.

"They were very nervous," he said, "because you were the only one who had never signed the Official Secrets Act. You had a global scoop, and they could not have touched you."

When Panther Books (Granada) published an updated edition in 1985 I finally included the missing Enigma chapter. It was no longer a global scoop, but it was satisfying all the same.

For days on end I sat in a corner of the Central Reference Library off Leicester Square, hunched in front of one of its two microfilm readers, spooling through reels of *The Times*. It had a magnificent index for those wartime years. History flashed past, flitting across the screen from left to right; the real world swam in the opposite direction when I stood up.

It was often difficult to concentrate on the search, and not to be snagged in the mesh of history. Everything was new. I feasted on unrelated, unneeded titbits of life and death: a woman hanged during the war for placing an object on a railroad track in the Isle of Wight. Three lines, just half a column-inch. I paused briefly. England had a Resistance too? She should have gone in and out of my short-term consciousness in five seconds, yet she slipped through the mesh into my long-term memory too and she remains lodged

there anonymously today; like the old woman whom I alone saw step with grim determination in front of a passenger train on a lonely railroad platform in Bavaria early one morning twenty years later. Who were these two women, what drove them to it, does anybody now care about them but I?

(Endnotes)

- 1 In *The Pawnbroker* (1964), Rod Steiger played Sol Nazerman, a Jewish pawnbroker who survived imprisonment in a concentration camp, while his wife and family did not.
- 2 Roy Forbes Harrod, *The Prof: A personal memoir of Lord Cherwell* (Macmillan, London 1959). F. A. Lindemann, later Lord Cherwell (1886-1957), was the son of an Alsatian financier.
- 3 [•• Provide actual source from CCS files].
- 4 Defence Committee (Operations), October 25, 1943