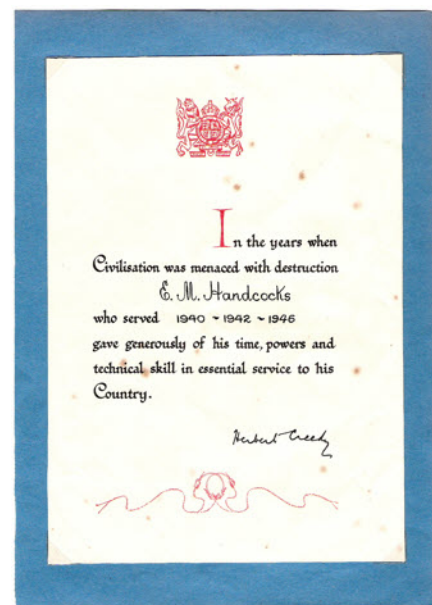
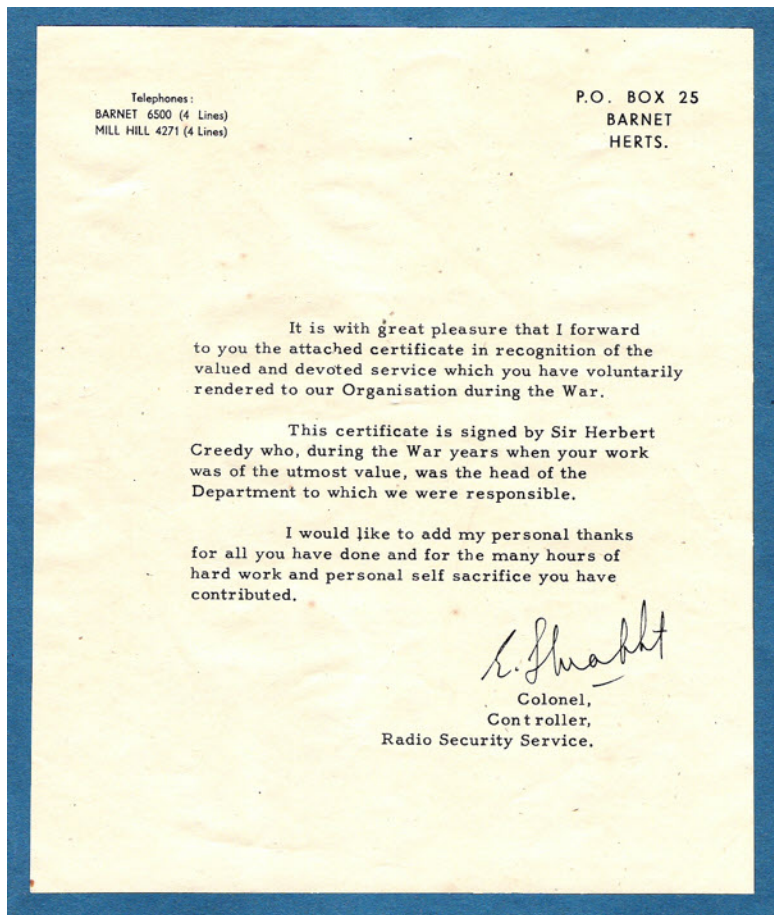


A History of Hanslope Park during World War 2 by Ted Handcocks G5HN

This is a short account of my activities during the period of World War two. It should "be made clear from the outset, that I was not engaged in the armed forces, but was in a civilian capacity and was paid directly from the war office. I only wore uniform when actually on duty in the radio station where I carried out my duties - the wearing of uniform when on duty, we were told, was for security reasons.

War was declared against Germany on September 3rd 1939* This did not come as a real surprise at the time as the clouds of war had been looming for some time. At the time I was working at the "Regal" Cinema, Caversham where I was employed as chief projectionist. It was a new cinema, and in fact had only opened on the 3rd of October of the previous year (1938). As soon as war had been declared, all cinemas and any houses of entertainment were ordered to close on the grounds of safety. Fortunately, however, this state of affairs only lasted for just over one week, when we were allowed to open again.

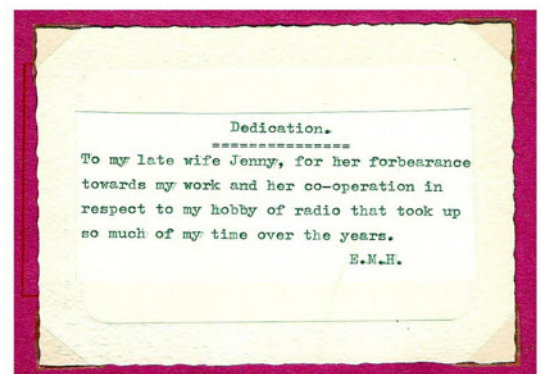
Things "became very difficult at work due to staff shortages and as we had recently been granted a Sunday licence, this meant working a seven day week for me - there were no days off then !



Maurice.

*Edward Maurice Benedict Roland
Handcocks*

1911-1997



Originals under ownership of
Angela Maureen Bennett
nee Handcocks

While at the cinema, both myself and 2YB were asked by 2MSE if we thought we could make up a transmitter for use by the Berks Constabulary. As I had quite a nice workshop fixed up at the cinema, this challenge was accepted by both of us - we all contributed components, but most of them came from 2HM's shack - 2YB and myself were to go up to his shack and help ourselves to any components that were required for the project. I must mention the final valve was a Taylor T200. We chose a normal line-up for the time i.e Crystal Oscillator, Buffer/Drive for the final. We were to operate on the Crystal frequency of 2650 Kc/s All the crystals were ordered from the Quartz Crystal Co, of New Malden - the director of the company was himself an radio amateur holding the call of 2HH, and was a regular member to our radio club which we had set up in Reading in about 1934. Other transmitters had to be built at a later date if this project proved successful, but the transmitter that we were involved in was for the main control station that was located at the Berks Constabulary which was at the Abbey Gateway in Reading.

After the construction of the transmitter was finished, 2YB and myself had it transported up the location, and got the thing working to our satisfaction. The next difficulty we found was getting up a suitable Antenna as the area was rather restricted, however, we were able to sling a reasonable wire up and get it to load up quite well. The anchorage was between two chimney stacks at reasonable height, When in later months when I was at Hanslope, I was able to listen to test transmissions and sent reports back to 2NM. Several receivers had been installed in various police stations in the Berkshire area, but the operators were very green and had to be taught - thankfully this did not fall to my lot as I had left the scene



I can remember a story that 2NM had told me. He had apparently (I think at Newbury) fitted up the station there with a receiver, which was a Hallicrafter Marine set and this receiver was supplied from the mains via a "Line Cord". These line cords could be quite long, and in this case a very efficient constable wishing to tidy the place up, cut the line cord to what he thought was a more sensible length, and, of course, when he plugged the set into the mains socket and switched on the set just blew up. 2NM was not very pleased about this as you can guess. I understand that at

a later date of operation, they were getting complaints from the Nottingham police - that was the main control station - (the one that 2YB and myself built) of interference to them because of the strength of the signal from Reading. In one way this was rather a compliment to us that the signal was so successful. Hi. I have often wondered what happened to all this gear after the war.

It would be well to try to achieve a little more recognition for the now diminishing group of radio amateurs who made a unique and seemingly invaluable contribution to British and Allied Intelligence during the Second World War. There must have been something in the order of 1500 or more British Amateurs - morse operators - that served during the second world war as "Voluntary Interceptors" (V.I's). It began in 1939 when Arthur Watts (G-6UN), president of The Radio Society of Great Britain, was approached by Lord Sandhurst, an officer in the Security Service (MI-5) to find out if radio amateurs could help in setting up a listening watch on behalf of the Radio Security Service (R.S.S). Arthur Watts responded enthusiastically -he felt this was a golden opportunity for amateurs to show they could make a useful contribution during wartime, and indeed the idea of a amateur listening watch was very appealing.



Gradually, under the oath secrecy, he talked to many amateurs of the time, then, in spreading ripples, the bulk of amateurs with useful CW experience were roped in.

By the early 1940 this new and shadowy organisation of V.I's ensured that there were Secret Listeners spread all over the country. The practical problems facing civilian spare time interceptors were far from negligible (www.secretlisteners.org)

Amateur transmitting equipment had been impounded at the outbreak of war, and any sounds of morse attracted attention - a number of V.I's were reported by suspicious neighbours as possible enemy spies. This happened to me on one occasion, and I will relate on this later. If there had been a successful invasion, the V.I position as under cover listeners for the Security Service would have been - to say the least - well interesting. To provide cover, they were later enrolled into the Royal Observer Corps - I never did get my uniform for this outfit.

The V.I's, if truth is to be told, found no beacons and few enemy spies in Britain, but the VI's did stumble on to something infinitely more important than a few lone German spies would ever have been. They found a spreading network of German secret communications, links between stations in Berlin, Hamburg, Vienna and Wiesbaden and outlying German Intelligence Posts in occupied and neutral countries and in ships. Some were radio links with agents in the field, but many more were the busy circuits to the "Asts" and "KO's" the main Abwehr and RSHA (and later Amtsgroupe Abwehr) The Reich Security Administration, a German joint government and Nazi party espionage, Counter-espionage and police organisation (the OKW) offices in the towns and cities.

During the evening of August 31st 1939, the BBC announced in the nine o'clock news bulletin that all full and artificial aerial amateur transmitting licences had been withdrawn. The following morning Post Office Officials impounded all my transmitting equipment. My receivers were left with me. In some cases I believe they also impounded receivers. To regularise matters R.S.G.B members were advised to press for the immediate return of non-transmitting equipment. At eleven o'clock on the morning of Sunday September 3rd 1939 Britain was at war with Germany. Not until February 1946 were our licences returned, and even then the bands of operation were restricted. The 28 Mc/s band was the first band issued to us, then followed the 1.7 Mc/s band - as time went on other bands of frequencies were released to us. For most of the intervening years of the war, the Defence Regulations made it illegal to have possession of valves of more than 10 watts dissipation, piezo-electric quartz crystals or any form of transmitting equipment, yet amateur radio far from disappearing, gathered innumerable new adherents, waiting eagerly for the official resumption of activity on some amateur bands in January 1946 (Or if the truth is to be told) sometimes jumping the gun from the end of the war in Europe in May 1945.

The amateur bands did not suddenly go quiet in 1939. American Hams remained active, though subject to increasing restrictions, until Pearl Harbour in December 1941. After an initial suspension, a few hundred German amateurs resumed activity, under the supervision of an SS General, whether as harmless propaganda training or covert activities is still a matter of speculation. The D3 and D4 stations, including band-edge beacons, could be heard on 3.5, 7, 14 and 28 Mc/s working among themselves, attempting Dx or contacts with similarly active Hungarian amateurs (or at least people using HA call signs, some of whom were British pirates. Sometimes the German stations changed their calls to snatch contacts with the American stations.

The German government attempted to "nazify" the German amateur radio movement in the years immediately before the war, but came to regret this. Goering, as chief of the German Air Force is on record as having said in March 1943 "We smashed up the amateur radio amateur clubs and wiped them out, and we made no effort to help those thousands of small inventors and now we need them."

Actually individual German pre-war amateurs in the early days of the war were drafted into the German Military Intelligence (Abwehr) and to provide communications for the Abwehr and the German Security Police (RSHA). Together, with other operators, they were later formed into Signals Regiment 506. As war progressed the organisation had many outposts in occupied and neutral countries, and was responsible for the German clandestine links with agents in the UK, Eire, North Africa, Middle East and North and South America. Their main base station was in Hamburg, Wiesbaden, Berlin and Vienna. Their transmissions were listened to with great interest by the many British amateurs working as we shall see later, on behalf of the Radio Security Service.

Britain, surprisingly, in view of our tradition of losing every battle but the last, had foreseen that amateur radio represented a useful reserve of radio skills. Some amateurs were serving members of H.M. Forces although there was no Service Association of the type that exists today. The Royal Navy had established a Volunteer Wireless Reserve in the early 1930s. In 1933 radio amateurs, including Douglas Walters, G5CV the radio correspondent of the Daily Herald and George Jessup, G6JP, had conducted pioneering 56 Mc/s experiments in two chartered aircraft. These two-way contacts between aircraft in flight and between aircraft and the ground - and the resulting publicity that surrounded them - were prime reasons why the RAF entered World War II with vhf radios in fighter aircraft - an essential requirement for effective use of the first early warning radio chains.

The CWR and the RNV(W)R were mobilised as war threatened. The first draft of the Civilian Wireless Reservists reached France on September 5th 1939 to form part of the RAF Wireless Intelligence Screen and paved the way for the close relationship between radio amateurs and the Y signal Intelligence (Sigint) services that monitored the radio traffic of the enemy and so contributed directly to the outstanding success of the Bletchley Park code-breaking groups. That first draft included two amateurs who in later years were to play an important role in the post-war amateur radio. Roy Stevens G2BW and W.H(Bert) Allen G2UJ. The CWR also brought into RAF Signals Intelligence an enthusiastic radio amateur - Rowley Scott-Farnie G5FI. Of the first 1000 R.S.G.B members listed as on active service 60 per cent were in the SAF mostly on technical duties, 14 % were Royal Navy, 12 % Royal Corps of Signals. Many radio amateurs were involved in signals intelligence based on interception of enemy messages code-breaking and / or traffic analysis, or conversely in signals deception.

however, between the despatch of this letter I had spoken with them and told my intentions, so you will see the addition to the letter of a deadline date. So it was agreed that I should travel up to Barnet with my manager as was. I took up full time work with RSS on the 31st January 1942" and reported on that day at "Arkley View", High Barnet, London together with my old manager from the cinema.

"Arkley View" was a very large Victorian style house, and was in fact Box 25. My old manager was now Ernie Trumper, and we remained together throughout the whole period of our service - almost five years. We spent exactly one week at "Arkley View" before being sent up to the radio station at Hanslope Park in Buckinghamshire.

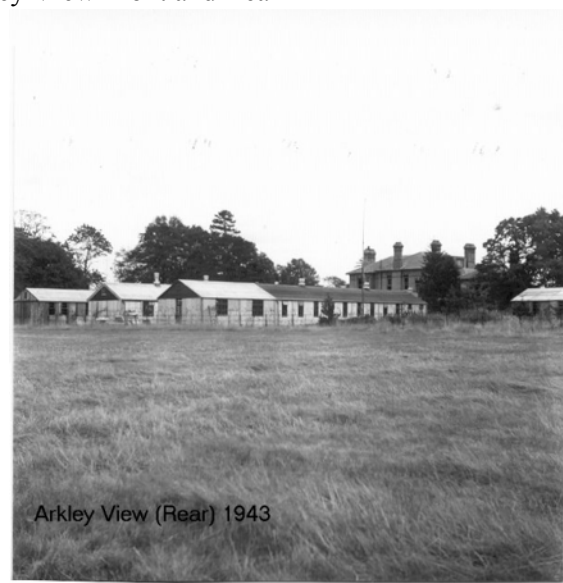
Whilst at Barnet, they had billeted us in another large house (Ravenscroft) that they had taken over for this purpose. There were about twelve of us in this particular group, and all licensed radio amateurs, so there was always plenty to talk about - in fact it almost turned into a convention.

We did keep a few watches on the sets at "Arkley View" but the antennas were not very good, but I think the purpose of the exercise was to see how we got on using two receivers at one time, which was quite new to us really, but we soon got used to this. We also had to take a Morse test to be graded because we were paid on our ability to copy. Unfortunately they had a regular Signal Sergeant to send, and I think he could have sent better with his left foot. A shock I had was when I turned my copy in, it was in long hand, and I was not the only one that got caught on this point. We were quickly told that copy had to be blocked (print style). This really did upset me because I had never copied code by blocking it, so this put me back a grade at this test, however? I was able to take a rest again at the station later and this time I got top grade (twenty five words a minute) This is based on five letter groups. I usually do go to pieces a little during tests of this nature, but I will refer to this later.

On the day we had to go up to Hanslope, the whole group of us went over to Euston Station and caught the train up to Castlethorpe. This is the nearest station to Hanslope. When we did eventually arrive at the station, there was a army lorry awaiting us. The outlook was grim to say the least. The weather had been pretty poor and there had been quite a heavy fall of snow. The whole area looked more like Siberia than anything, and we were told that we would be operating from the Park Lodge for the time being as the radio station was not quite finished. This was a disappointment to start with, however, there was nothing that we could do about this anyway. We found out what our shift duties were and then walked up to the Park where our billets were. It seemed miles up to the Park as we all so fed up. Whilst we were up at the Park, we found that our living quarters were there also, meaning that we would have to walk back and forth for all our shifts. To make matters worse we were working split shifts at that time - that is four hours on, four hours off. Another shock in store for us was when we were told that we would have to wear uniform of the R.C.S when we went on duty - for security reasons.



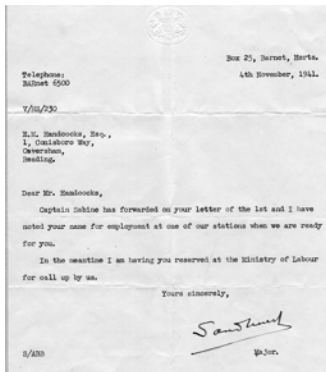
Arkley View Front and Rear



Arkley View (Rear) 1943

had a receiver installed in the place of my work (The Regal Cinema, Caversham.) and was able to keep some watches from there, which proved quite useful at times.

During the time I had worked at this cinema, I had influenced my manager into an interest in radio, and in fact had taught him the morse code, so we were able to enlist him as another V.I, and now with the receiving set up at the cinema, he was able to do quite a bit of watch keeping. After the war, he was able to take out a transmitting licence, and was given the call sign G3DAZ,



On the 4th of November 1941 I had a letter signed by Lord Sandhurst that read :- Capt Sabine has forwarded on your letter of the 1st, and I have noted your name for employment at one of our stations when we are ready for you, in the meantime I am having you reserved at the Ministry of Labour for call up by us. On the same day November 4th, I received from the local office of the Ministry of Labour and National Service, a letter requiring me to present myself before the the board interview on the 11th November 1941. I immediately wrote off to Lord Sandhurst stating the circumstances of which I found myself. On the 6th of November 1941 I had a further letter from the ministry that read :- Please note that as an application for the deferment of your calling up has been received at this local office, the notice summoning you for interview on the 11th Nov: a letter from Capt Sabine that said -

Should you at any time be worried by the Ministry with regard to your call up to the Armed Forces or transfer to employment under the Industrial Act, please inform us immediately, and we will take steps to see that you are diverted to our own Service.

After this I had no more interference from the Ministry. There is one incident that I would call to mind that happened during the period I was carrying out V.I work from home. I arrived home from work one mid-day to be informed by my wife that she had been visited by the Oxford CID, together with the local bobby and a representative of the Post Office. After refusing their entry because my radio room was locked (she of course had a key) and she knew that certain papers from RSS would be on my desk, they produced a search warrant so she had no alternative but to allow them in, however, due to the fact that she had refused them entry in the first place, they insisted on reading out the warrant on the doorstep, much to her embarrassment. They had apparently had a report that I had been using my transmitting equipment and supposed surely I must be an enemy spy. Needless to say they were unable to find anything but receiving equipment. I think what must have happened was that during my late night watch periods I used to keep, possibly a chink of light from my room had been showing through the black-out. It turned out rather funny really because the following day the local bobby (who I knew very well) came over and apologised for the trouble and to cap the lot, the Post Office fellow turned up and asked me to confirm that I had no transmitting gear. Had I had been at home when they had all their visit, I could have shown them my War Office pass that had been issued to me.

As the weeks went by, I was getting logs returned with comments, together with other instructions practically every day and the commitment was getting a little heavy, having to work so many hours at the cinema and then coming home late at night and then perhaps putting in two or three hours of watch keeping. I had been approached earlier about taking up the RSS job permanently, but had turned this down I was now thinking that I had made a mistake in this decision, so I changed my mind over this and wrote off to Box 25 and told them of my intentions. As my work at that time was reserved I could not leave immediately. In the meantime I had been asked by my boss - Mr Sado - to go up to St Johns Wood for an interview. It turned out that my manager, who was not in a reserved status, he was quite prepared to let go, and he wanted me to take over the responsibility of managing the cinema and also do the chief projectionists work, I then I reminded him that I had no administration experience, he said "Don't worry about that I will put a secretary at your disposal". This, of course was only a law evasion to keep me, as he had no one at that time to take my place.

When I refused to do this he became rather abusive and threatened to black list me, and actually said he would see to it that I would not get another job in this industry again. He also made the remark - "I suppose you are going into the aircraft industry or something to make plenty of money" I informed him that in any case he would not be able to reserve me for much longer. When he pressed me to know where I was going, I was of course unable to tell him, but I did say that if he wanted to know more he could write to Box 25, and they will inform him of my position. When I got back to the cinema I told my manager what they had in store for him. I was a bit fed up with this kind of treatment, so I said - "Well he may have me reserved at the present, but he cannot stop me handing in my notice to you, but I wish you to write me out a reference before I leave. I then rang up Capt. Sabine at Barnet, and told him my position.

On the 21st January 1942 I had a letter from Box 25 stating that they had "been in touch with Mr. Dale (he was district engineer for the cinema) and had agreed to allow me to remain at the cinema, and call my manager however, between

I cannot remember how many weeks we went through this ordeal of tramping back and forth from the Park to the Lodge, but as time went on we got quite used to this and the distance did not seem so great. The receivers we used at the Lodge were mounted on trestle tables and again the antennas were poor. These were practically vertical and only one for the two receivers.

One of the unfortunate things was that due to the fact that we wore uniform of the R.C.S, it was considered by a certain Adjutant (a super boy scout) that we should do a certain amount of training and drill. This did not go down very well with any of the operators on any of the shifts - anyway this came to a head one day when - this Adjutant took our complete shift out on a route march all around Hanslope village. Don't know how many miles we covered, but we were all clapped out by the time we got back to the Lodge - we had no time even to have a wash before grabbing a bit of tea before going on duty. It was agreed by all on that shift that we would not take any services and make note of the reason to that effect on our logs, when these logs got up to discrimination at Barnet the following morning there was hell to play, but the main thing was that we had all these parades cancelled and the said Adjutant at fault was posted elsewhere. Looking back on this incident in later years? I suppose it could be deemed a mutinous or even treasonable act, however, we got away with it and I think at the time that was all we were concerned with.

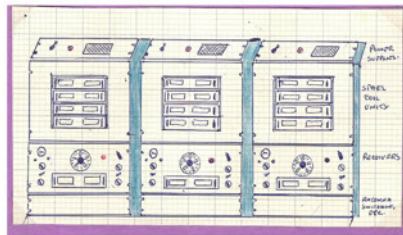
The Park was a lovely place and in beautiful surroundings and covered quite a large area - they say about five hundred square acres. The huts in which we were housed, were brick built, but later our group was transferred into



Tarrant huts. All these huts were situated under the very large oak tree's that were scattered all over the park. I very much doubt if any of the huts, or even the station for that matter, could have been seen from the air, which is just as well because, in spite of the large number of personnel - Operators, Technical Staff, Workshop staff, General duty and aerial Riggers - there was not one air raid shelter in the whole park.

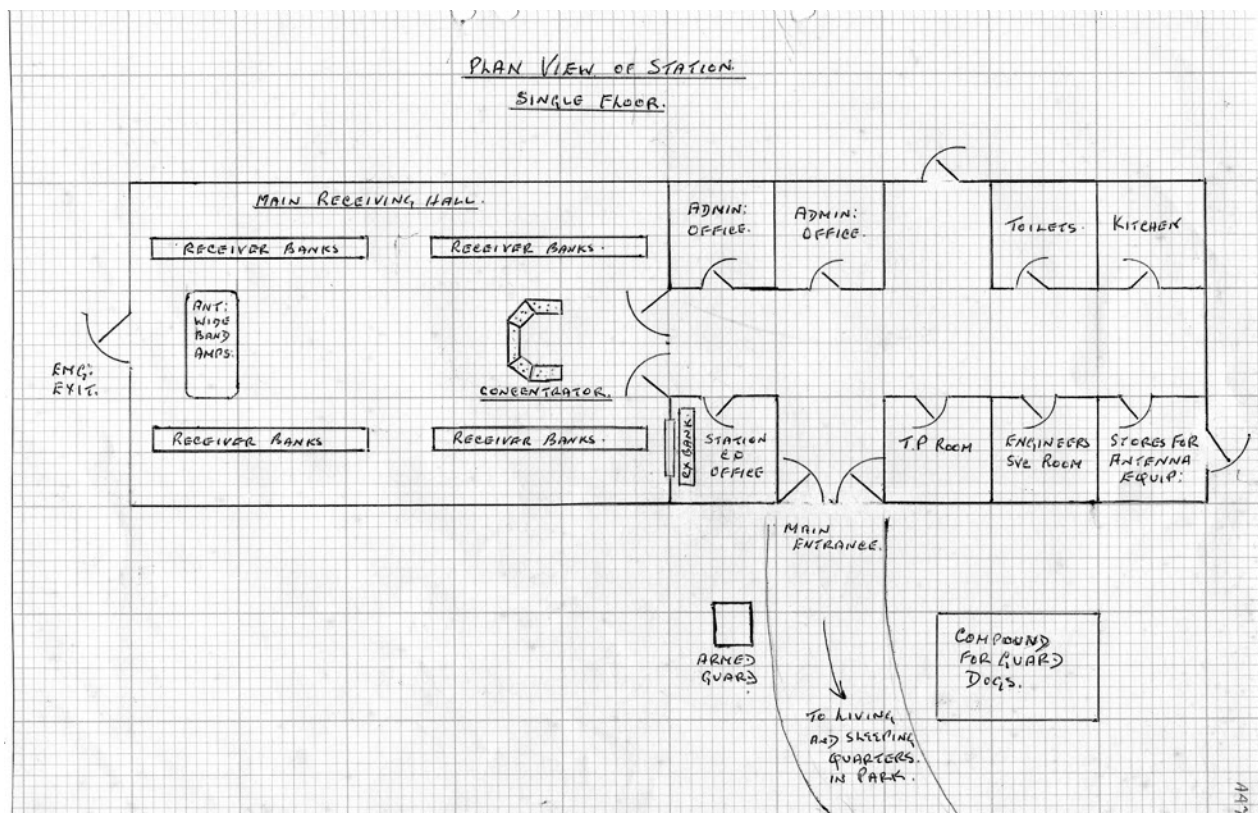
The time came eventually for us to take up our positions in the new station and this did not come too soon from our way of thinking. It was a dream of a place compared with the operating conditions we had been working under at the Lodge. Although we had on various occasions been over to the station to see how work was progressing, never was it so impressive as when we went on duty for the first time in these surroundings. (Google Earth View of Hanslope Park)

The station building itself, viewed from the outside, seemed very insignificant, being just a ground floor building only, but when one went through the double doors into the receiving hall it was rather breath taking. The floor of the entire station was covered in green cork linoleum and polished so that one could almost see your face in it. The racks holding all the receivers were placed and run down each side of the receiver hall. The tops of all the desks (known as banks) in front of each set of receivers (some had two and some had three receivers) were covered in the same green linoleum as the floor.



All the racks to which the receivers and power supplies were fitted were finished in battleship grey, as were the bulkheads separating each bank. All the edges of the Bulkheads and the operating desks (banks) were edged with chrome metal strip. The receivers, power supplies and coil units, were all finished in black crackle - it was a picture to look at, and of course the convenience offered to the operator on each bank was something we were unable to enjoy at the Lodge. I will explain these in more detail. The main receiver hall was about one hundred feet long, and as explained the receiver racks were placed down each side. In the centre and at the far end were the racks containing the wide-band amplifiers for all the aerials. The panels on the front of the rack, apart from the wideband amplifiers themselves, were four large panels, which contained nothing but coaxial sockets. Two of the panels had the terminations from the aerials (via the amplifiers), and the other two had termination for the aerial feed to each receiver in the station. To bridge the aerial sockets to the receiver sockets, lengths of coax cable (about six feet long) were made up with plugs and one could go and select appropriate aerials for one's service, there were four sockets for each bank and switching to either receiver was done at the bank. In the centre of the entrance end to the receiver hall was situated the concentrator. This was of semi-

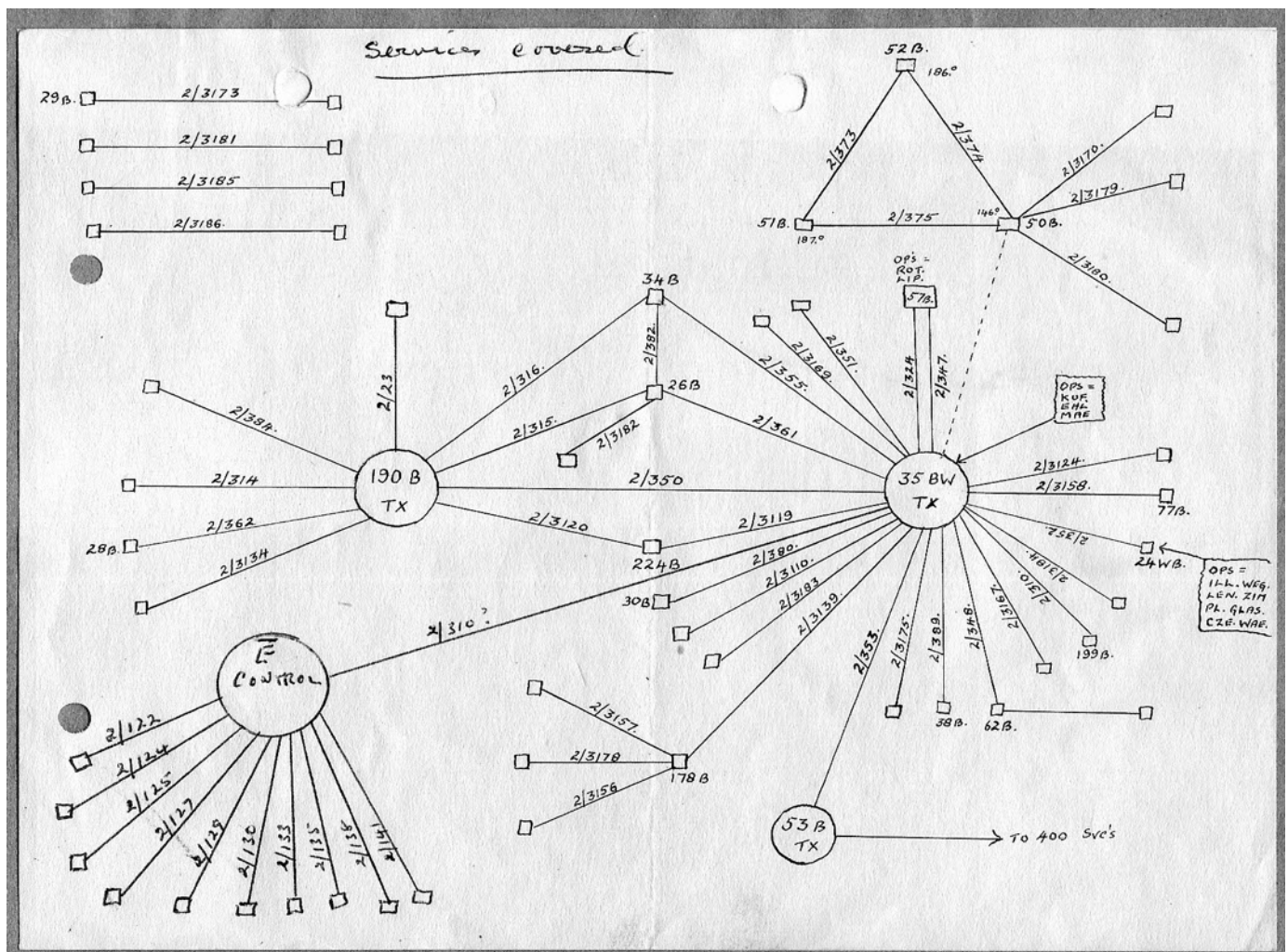
circular construction and the sloping panels were a mass of indicator lights and key switches. On the desktop was a single Morse key, as all signals of instructions sent over the lines to the DP stations etc, were in Morse, but the operator on the concentrator did have voice communication with any operator on the receivers in the station. This concentrator could take a signal from any receiver in the station and put it to line - out to the various DF stations, also he could put the signal from any receiver to another operator on any bank in the station.



This facility was extremely useful - for example - say you were on bank three and you had heard the control signal come up that was for a service that you knew was being covered on bank twenty four, you could let the operator on the concentrator to put this signal through from your receiver to the operator on bank twenty four - the operator on that bank could then put your signal into his right earpiece while he made a search for it on his left receiver. This procedure sounds difficult, but could be carried out in a matter of seconds.

Each bank as I have already explained, had a minimum of two receivers some had three, especially the general search banks. Most of the banks were on various services, as by this time all the services had been allocated numbers and various groups, and operators were mostly always kept on their own services - this was very important because one got used to the various operators fists and particularly their moods, and often the operators names were slipped out. Let me say here, that all the receivers used in the entire organisation were National HRO's and all were calibrated to well within a dial degree of each other - this was a great asset particularly when giving out information over the line for DF purposes.

The panels under each receiver were various switches. Four of the switches were for connecting the various beam aerials to either receiver on the bank - two other switches were for the two Marconi aerials. The other panel had switches to attract attention of the fellow who handed out the service cards, another for calling the operator on the concentrator, another to switch in the microphone so that you could talk to him, and another switch to enable the signal from either receiver to be put into either earpiece or split phone working.



The procedure of operating was carried out now that services numbers and categories had been established, was that a service card was given to the appropriate operator of the particular service of which he was conversant with, about five or ten minutes before the service was due up. The service cards were laid out as shown giving service numbers, such as 2/310 etc, with call sign or more frequently cc/s (changing call sign) . The system of changing call sign was used in more than ninety percent of services in an effort to confuse the listener, but was really ineffective as in the course of a day or so, and particularly one month, it was recommenced again or perhaps would be advanced by a day or two, but this again was ineffective as an operator conversant with his services soon realised what was happening and at once knew what the call would be for the days of the month following.

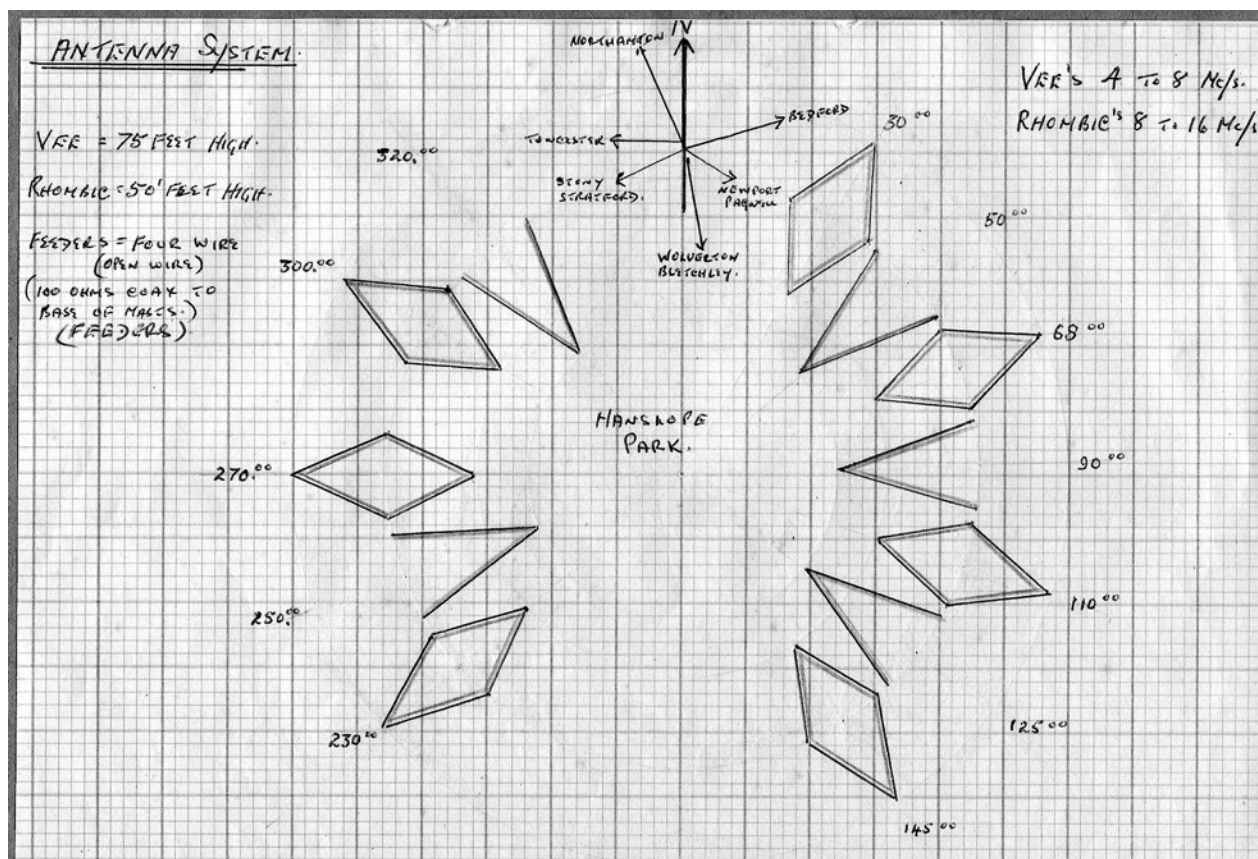
On the service card also, were the various frequencies that the control and answer transmitters were known to use, and if one side of the service was finding it difficult to copy, possibly due to QRM (interference), he would immediately stop the other operator and ask for QSU (a change of frequency). This request to QSU(say QSU2 or CSU3) according to the number of frequencies the other side had available. If the particular service had a priority, the service card would be marked - in red - "Jumbo Svc". This was a cue that any QTC (traffic) had to be sent immediately to the teleprinter room for immediate transfer to Bletchley Park for decoding. If it had been suspected that either side of the service was on the move, request for bearings would also "be put on the service card - the operator would then offer the appropriate signal - when it came up - to the operator on the concentrator who would then put it on the line to the various DF stations, together with the frequency and dial readings.

No predictions could ever be given as to how long a service would stay up. A service coming up with no traffic, could be up and signed in less than one minute, on the other hand one side may have many QTC's (traffic), and one could easily overlap into the next sked time. One was indeed thankful to hear, after several hours of taking traffic, to hear the welcome - R.Hr Nill QEX nxt SK - meaning, I have no more traffic see you next sked time - a sigh of relief.

An operator could spend quite a long time after taking traffic, clearing up his log as well as all the chatter between each side which also had to be logged - this was very important and sometimes one got to hear operators names slipped out.

Code names were given to the various groups such as- "Bertie" "Mary", "Harry", "Willie" and "Violet" etc* One soon got to remember these various services and also the banks on which they were covered on this made interception easier because one often, when looking for your own service, would bump into some ones service, and then could the bank concerned know his service was up, if he had not already logged it.

The station building itself was a ground floor affair, and contained as the receiver hall, offices which incidentally had two racks of receivers (that is four receivers), and they had exactly the same facilities as any of the operators in the main station. Next to the offices was the teleprinter room which had about half dozen teleprinters on the go - then was the engineers workshop who serviced all the receivers and general maintenance work -then there was a large workshop that saw to all the aerial work and erection and carried enormous quantities of aerial gear, such as the large nine inch Pyrex glass insulators, six inch ceramic feeder spreaders. The were great six feet diameter drums of hard drawn enamel 14 S.W.G wire for the aerials and of course all the various galvanised hardware.



There were other rooms of course such as toilets rooms for administration and a kitchen for making tea and sandwiches for the operators on duty in the station. We always had a main meal in the mess hall when we came off duty - whatever shift; The Aerial situation was very good indeed. Some of the aerials were as much as a quarter mile away from the station. The feeder system was a four wire open line of 600 Ohms, transformed down to 70 Ohms coax at the station end. There were many end fed Marconi type aerials and each bank had two of these available. The main beam aerials were Vee beams for 3 to 8 Mc/s and Rhombics for 8 to 16 Mc/s. The Vee beams were 75 ft high and the Rhombic 50 ft high.

The layout of the aerials were as follows:-

Vee Beams at 50, 90, 125, 250, and 320 degrees.

Rhombics at 30, 68, 110, 145, 230, 270, and 300 degrees.

The Park was situated about half a mile from the village of Hanslope itself and consisted really of only one street. Once we had moved into the station for duties and did not have to make the journey up to the Lodge for our shifts, we had a fair amount of time to ourselves when off duty, also we did not work split shifts any longer but eight hourly shifts straight - this was much better. The shifts at the station now was as follows ;-

Midnight until 08.00. 08.00 until 16.00. 16.00 until Midnight. Eight hour shifts with no breaks. We used to have tea and sandwiches on duty, and main meals when we came off duty - whatever shift. We always able to arrange shifts so that when we came off a night shift, the following day was our day off then come back on an evening shift, this gave us a maximum time off, and I was able to get home every week. In the summer months I was able to have my wife and young daughter down - I had managed to get digs in Wolverton lived out from the park during this time, and just went in for my duties what ever shift the may be - it was just like any job of work really. On days off then, we used to visit various places like Northampton, Bedford etc.

Back at the park later - the authorities turned over the use of a full Tarrant hut for us to use as a club, shack and workshop -needless to say it was not long before we had built up a transmitter and or course there were loads of receivers about, so before long we were on the air working any amateurs that were on the band -funny, but there were quite a number of amateur calls on the air and I guess not any of them were really licensed, but we did not let a little thing like that worry us too much.

Work at the station got pretty grim when the allies finally landed in France and started to push forward. It was not unusual to go on duty, plug in your phones and relieve the other operator and sit down and do the best part of the shift, copying traffic. It was certainly a welcome sight to see the next shift come on duty and take over, but then you might spend another half hour or so cleaning up your log for the day before turning it in