

PF47151/V2

ASHLEY. MRS. GISELA

PF47151/V2

SEE ALSO LIST INSIDE COVER

Serial No	Star Designation	Date	Serial No	Star Designation	Date	Serial No	Star Designation	Date
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KV2 / 4659

S. 960 Edn2

PF47151/V2

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ORIGINAL DOCUMENT RETAINED
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3(4) OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS
ACT 1958 *February 2024*

71

10.11.39 Letter from Mrs. A. in Holland, dated 7.11.39 71a

72

11.11.39 summarising information in report 70a 72a

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11.11.39 B.2 note re arrangements for Mrs. A.'s return 73a

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29.11.39 Letter from Lili WORTMANN to Mrs. A. 82a

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6.12.39 Letter from Mrs. A. to Lili WORTMANN 83a

84

6.12.39 B.2 minute to A.D.S. (B) 84a

85.

8.12.39. Receipt for £5 from Major LENNOX 85a

86.

9.12.39. Copy of letter to be sent to Capt. BESTHORN 86a

THIS IS A COPY OF THE ORIGINAL DOCUMENT IN THE RECORDS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

now extracted into NOF file

87

12.1.40 From S.I.S. re Lisette WORTMANN 87a

88.

17.1.40 [redacted] in answer to 87a 88a

92

Oct.1944 to UNRRA sending particulars of Mrs. ASHLEY 92a

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16.10.44. From UNRRA re 92a 93a
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? Note by Mrs. ASHLEY re work at MIRS and payment for it 96a

97

16.1.45 Note by A.D.A. on interview with UNRRA for Mrs. ASHLEY 97a

98

7.2.45 From M.I.R.S. to Mrs. Ashley thanking her for her help 98a

99

26.4.45 To Mr. Ingrams PID re employment of Mrs. A. by UNRRA 99a

100.

23.5.45 P.W.E. vetting form for Mrs. ASHLEY 100.

101.

21.6.45 Letter of Reference from this office for Mrs. ASHLEY 101.

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ACT 1958

JANUARY 2014

P.A./D.B.

Mrs. Ashley rang a few days ago to say that she was anxious to acquire an Unemployment Insurance Card, but feared that if she made an approach to the Ministry of Labour "out of the blue", awkward questions might be asked about past employment.

I undertook to square the Ministry of Labour in advance.

This I have now done, and if Mrs. Ashley would care to call personally upon a Miss Mitchell at the Ministry of Labour Office at Great Marlborough Street, she will be fixed up without embarrassing questions being asked.

Would you very kindly tell Mrs. A?

(I don't know her)

A.D.A.
21.1.46

present tel no.)

W.D.L.

Informed Mrs. Ashley as above.

PA/DB
22.1.46

A. Higgins

103.

2.12.47. Note re removal of Mrs. Ashley from Somerset House "Green Starred" List. 103a.

104.

4.12.47. Reply to 103a. 104a.

105.

6.1.48. Note from B.4.e to D.B. re National Registration Card issued to Mrs. Ashley. 105a.

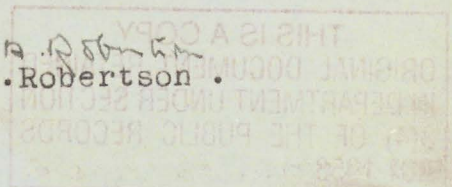
106.

D.B.

I have spoken to Mrs. Ashley on the telephone - her number is WELBECK 1410 - and she is returning the national registration identity card referred to.

B.2.
8.1.48.

T.A. Robertson
T.A. Robertson



107.

12.1.48. Note from D.B. to B.4.e in reply to 105a. 107

108.

13.1.48. Copy of letter from B.4.e. to Somerset House returning Mrs. ASHLEY's Identity Card. 108a.

109.

18.10.48. From N.I.D. information about Gisela ASHLEY found in some German Files of correspondence in 1940-45 between the German Naval Attache at the Hague and the German Admiralty. 109a.

110

20.10.48. Note from D.D.G. to B.2. re Gisela ASHLEY 110a.

111

27.10.48. To N.I.D. thanking them for sending the information re Gisela ASHLEY at 109a. 111a.

112.

27.10.48. Minute to D.D.G. re Gisela ASHLEY Mentioning BESTHORN. 112a.

113.

30.10.48. To Brigadier Borrowdaile, Int. Div. asking them to contact BESTHORN re Gisela ASHLEY. 113a.

114.

11.11.48. From Int. Div. - interim reply to 113a. 114a.

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ACT 1958

115.

29.11.48. Note on conversation with U.35 concerning report at 109a. 115a.

116.

30.11.48. From Int. Div. further to 114a.

116a.

117.

21.12.48. From Int. Div. re interrogation of BESTHORN re Mrs.ASHLEY.

117a.

118.

2.3.53. [redacted] re Mrs.Ashley joining Anglo-German Asscn.

118a.

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5(1) OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS
ACT 1957

Hold DB

EXTRACT.

118a

Extract for File No. : P.F. 47,151. Name : ASHLEY, Gisela.
 Original in File No. : * O.F. 511/2 Serial : 18a. Vol. : _____ Receipt Date : 2.3.53.
 Original from : _____ Under Ref. : 415/95. Dated : 28.2.53.
 Extracted on : 14.3.53. by : HNB Section : R6.

If the original is in the file of an individual include the name of the file owner

My Dear Malcolm,

The Anglo-German Association.

You may like to know that, on our instruction, Gisela ASHLEY has joined the above Association.

I have informed portentially interested sections in my Head Office, but I thought that perhaps you would also like to know in case your people have any particular interest in any members of the Association, in which case Mrs. ASHLEY could be asked to do anything you like.

For your information the Association from time to time holds conferences and meetings at which members are able to ask any questions that they like. You may like to bear in mind in case you ever want any particular question to be asked.

This letter requires no answer,

Yours ever,

Signed, _____

Lieut-Colonel M.E.D. Cumming, O.B.E.
M.I.5.

9/13

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 ACT 1958 *JANUARY 2024*



TOP SECRET & PERSONAL
Copy No. 1

From : Major-General J.C. Haydon, CB, DSO, OBE. H.Q. Intelligence Division,
Telephone : Herford 2132 70 Headquarters,
Your Reference..... CONTROL COMMISSION FOR GERMANY
Our Reference..... HQ INT DIV/PF 53094 (BRITISH ELEMENT),

B.A.O.R. 15.

21st December, 1948

Dear Miss Chenhalls

You will remember that on 30th October 1948 you wrote to Brigadier Borradaile (PF 47151/B.l.d./JC) concerning some information which you wanted about Korvetten-kapitan Kurt Carl Alfred von Besthorn.

I have now received a report on the subject of your inquiry which reads as follows:-

"Von Besthorn was seen in his home at Timmdorf, near Malente, on 14 Dec 48, and in answer to the question - had he recruited Fraulein Gisela Ashley as a member of the German Intelligence Service - stated the following:-

His own secretary, Fraulein Wortmann, and Ashley, had been great friends together in London. Some time during 1939 Ashley visited The Hague, and as she was in financial difficulties her friend Wortmann suggested to von Besthorn that he should assist her by employing her as a second secretary. This, von Besthorn stated he could not do as there were no vacancies on his staff, but he suggested that she should apply through Berlin. This she refused to do, and also refused Wortmann's suggestion that she should work for a Dutch firm. Shortly afterwards she returned to England.

He stated that he did not recruit Gisela Ashley for the German Intelligence Service.

The only other information von Besthorn could give was, that he believes Ashley wrote some articles for a magazine during her stay in Holland. He had no idea as to the whereabouts of his former secretary Wortmann."

*2 am signed
JCHaydon*

Miss J. Chenhalls,
Box No.500
Parliament Street, B.O.,
LONDON S.W.1.

[Handwritten signature]



116a

TOP SECRET
Copy No. 1.

From Brigadier H.A. BORRADALE, DSO
Telephone HERFORD 2280
Your Reference P.F.A.7151/R.1.d/JC
Our Reference H.Q. INT. DIV. FR. 53094

H.Q. Intelligence Division,
70 H.Q. CONTROL COMMISSION FOR GERMANY
(BRITISH ELEMENT),
B.A.O.R. 15.

23rd November, 1948.
Received 30.11.48.

Dear Miss Chenhalls,

Further to my letter of 8th November 1948.

We have now got hold of Von BESTHORN's present address and I am asking our local Intelligence staff to contact him and ask him the question you wanted put to him. I hope to be able to let you know the result very shortly.

Yours sincerely,

H.A. Borradale

Miss J. Chenhalls,
Box. No. 500
Parliament Street, B.O.
LONDON S.W.1.

115a

Note.

Reference 109a and 112a, I spoke to U.35 whose memory of the events of February 1940 enables him to say, without any hesitation, that the German information in all respects tallies with the story as he knew it. There is nothing in this information, he thinks, which need worry us.

D.B.
29.11.48.

D. G. White.



TOP SECRET

Copy No 1

114a
128/5

From Brigadier H.A. BORRADAILE, DSO
Telephone Herford 2280
Your Reference P.F. 47151/B.L. d/JC
Our Reference HQ 2nd: HQ/PPS3094

H.Q. Intelligence Division
CONTROL COMMISSION FOR GERMANY
70 H.Q. (BRITISH ELEMENT),
B.A.O.R. 15.

8th November, 1948.

Dear Miss Chenhalls,

Reference your letter dated 30th October, 1948.

We have no trace of von BESTHORN's present whereabouts in this H.Q. I am therefore trying the Royal Navy and will let you know the result in due course.

Yours sincerely,

H.A. Borradaile

Miss Chenhalls
Box No. 500
Parliament Street B.O.,
LONDON S.W.1.

held by DB

11 NOV 1948
B.I.D.
REF. PF 47151

P.F. 47151/B.1.d./JC

113a

Brigadier H.A. Borrowdaile,
H. Intelligence Division,
70 H. CCG/BE.,
BAOR.

I should be glad to know whether Korvetten-kapitan Kurt Carl Alfred von BESTHORN, born 1902, a native of Hamburg, can be located in your area. He served for some years in the Dutch East Indies, returned to Germany in 1935, was posted to the Hague in July 1939 as assistant Naval Attache, where he is ^{known} ~~proved~~ to have dispatched agents to the U.K. Further details about him are in the "German Purple Primer".

If he can be contacted, can you ask him if Fraulein Gisela ASHLEY, a great friend of his secretary's, Fraulein WORTMANN, was recruited by him as a member of the German Intelligence Service.

From German Naval Documents, the following information has come to light:- 1. From Berlin to the Hague.

Berlin: 13.12.39.

SUBJECT

Gisela ASHLEY

Reference

Telephone conversation between Korv. Kapt. BESTHORN and Kapt. Lt. GAHLEMANN in Berlin.

"There is no previous record of the above-mentioned woman. Her former husband has aroused suspicion because of frequent visits to Westerland and Cuxhaven and Hamburg, and he appears to have worked for British Intelligence. Assuming that Gisela ASHLEY is actually divorced from her husband and is no longer in contact with him, the 'ABWEHR' Department agrees to employing her on special tasks.

Please report when G.A. is again expected in Holland, and an official will then contact her and provide her with tasks. For reasons of deception frequent meetings between the Assistant Naval Attache and G.A. should be avoided. But it must first be investigated whether G.A. is a suitable contact for Agent JONNY. —SNDW

Please do not for the present commit yourself to anything in this (JONNY) affair.

2. From the Hague to Berlin.

20.2.40.

SUBJECT: Gisela ASHLEY

Frau Ashley has returned to England. She will be directed from Belgium.

Your attention is called to the discussion between Admiral CANARIS and Dorv. Kapt. BESTHORN on 17.2.40 in Berlin".

Gisela ASHLEY is well known to us and we shall be grateful for your help in ascertaining her loyalty.

JC/LE.
30.10.48

J. Chenhalls.

A3/B1d
20.10.48

112a

Captain Liddell. D.D.G.

There is abundant proof on these files that Gisela ASHLEY, on the instructions of this office, made two separate journeys to the Hague, and successfully used her friendship with the Secretary of the German Naval Attache to report on and obtain information from BESTHORN. During her second visit in September - October 1939, after she had been "abandoned" by U35, it is known that BESTHORN wanted her to work for him, but this was said to be an office secretarial appointment only.

On one occasion she furnished him with her personal particulars for him to send to Berlin. She reported to Mr. White when she was in England in August, before the outbreak of war, that she did not think BESTHORN thought of her as a recruit for the German SS, but that if she were to accept his suggestion and take up her residence in Holland, this might easily follow in due course (the relevant passage is flagged).

You may feel ^{Miss} ~~that~~ sufficiently explains the passage in the German documents, but in view of the message dated 20.2.40 - "Frau ASHLEY has returned to England. She will be directed from Belgium." - would not consider that either U35 or Gisela herself should be asked outright for an explanation?

J. Chenhalls.

J. Chenhalls.

~~Copy to Mr. White
and Mr. Liddell
of the file~~

800
Personally
I feel that
this is sufficient
explanation
but if BESTHORN
is available there
would be no harm
in this being asked to
explain
I have probably suggested
in some way that -
Thanking!

B.1.d.
27.10.48.

27/10/48

20/Bid
30.10.48

111a

Mr. Micholl.
N.I.D.

Thank you for sending me on the 15th October information obtained from the German files, your reference ADNI 13,818.

We shall always be interested to receive any information of this character for it enables us to either complete our records or amend them in the light of fresh information.

J. Chenhalls.

M.I.5.

27.10.48.

25/Bid
30.10.48

1/0a

B2

Would you look into
this. My recollection is
that G.A. was
deliberately tracking her
coat in Holland through
WEST HORN'S Secretary.
Wm Chenhall may know.

10/1/68

C. W. L.

10/1/68
30.10.42

CONFIDENTIAL



106/15
109a

Intelligence Division,
Naval Staff,
Admiralty, S. W. 1
15th October 1948

ADNI 18,818

M.I. 5

The attached is forwarded for information and return.

2. Could you please confirm that information of this sort is still required.

Kenneth Mitchell

for D. N. I.

ENCL 2 pages

wi. 18 OCT 1948

TO BTD

REF ? PF 47151

SLO/FES

In reply please quote :—

REFERENCE

CONFIDENTIAL

SHEET (1) ADMIC (54)
To (2) A.D.N.I. (F)

ADMIRALTY

From..... N.I.D/I.5

Dated..... 13th October 1948

109a

While examining some German Files of correspondence in 1940-45 between the German Naval Attache at the Hague and the German Admiralty, I recently came across some information on agents, and a translation of the relevant papers is attached.

2. There may be further cases of this kind in the files, and I would be grateful if you could tell me whether this type of information is still required.

M.G. Saunders

N.I.D/I.5.

*By Bid
30.10.48*

109a

(1) From Berlin to The Hague.

SECRET

German Reference:

Berlin,
13.12.39.

From: A. Ausl. 1/Abw. IM West N.
Br. Nr. 84/12.39

To: The German Naval Attache,
The Hague.

Subject: *Gisela Ashley*

*ckd
RM
18/10*

Reference: Telephone conversation between Korv. Kapt. Besthorn and
Kapt. Lt. Gahlemann in Berlin.

There is no previous record of the above-mentioned woman. Her former husband has aroused suspicion because of frequent visits to Westerland and Cuxhaven and Hamburg, and he appears to have worked for British Intelligence. Assuming that Gisela Ashley is actually divorced from her husband and is no longer in contact with him, the 'Abwehr' Department agrees to employing her on special tasks.

Please report when G.A. is again expected in Holland, and an official will then contact her and provide her with tasks. For reasons of deception frequent meetings between the Assistant Naval Attache and G.A. should be avoided. But it must first be investigated whether G.A. is a suitable contact for Agent JONNY.

Please do not for the present commit yourself to anything in this (JONNY) affair.

(signature illegible).

(2) From The Hague to Berlin.

SECRET

German Reference: Mar. No.235/39g.

20.2.40.

To: O.K.W.
Abt. Ausl. Abw. IM,
Berlin W.35.

Subject: Gisela Ashley

Reference: B. Nr. 84/12.39 (etc.) of 13.12.39.

Frau Ashley has returned to England. She will be directed from Belgium.

Your attention is called to the discussion between Admiral Canaris and Korv. Kapt. Besthorn on 17.2.40 in Berlin.

D.B.

Copy for P.F.47151

SECRET & PERSONAL

loga

13th January 1948

SF.51-32-23(4)/GP/B.4.e.

Dear Hansen,

With reference to your letter HQ/GS/1 of
18th December 1947, I return herewith Identity Card No.
AYUR/88/1.

This card was issued to Mrs. Gisela ASHLEY
© Louise BARTON, and should now be cancelled.

Yours sincerely,

Guy Poston.

H.E. Hansen, Esq.,
General Register Office,
Somerset House,
London W.C.2.

Enclosure

B.4.e. Mr. Poston.

108a

Reference your note of 6th January, Mrs. Ashley has returned the Identity Card which was issued in the name of Louise Barton, her alias. This card should now be cancelled.

D.B.
12.1.48.

SECRET

Register No.

P.F.47151 , Y Box 254

Minute Sheet No.

165a

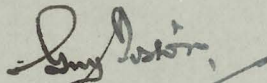
D.B.

With reference to your minute of 4th December 1947, we have informed the Registrar-General's Office that the name of Mrs. Gisela ASHLEY @ BARTON can be removed from the Green Star List.

The Registrar General's Office would now be grateful for information regarding identity card No. AYUR/88/1, Serial No. FN.9076795, which was issued in the name of Gisela ASHLEY @ Louise BARTON, and which has apparently never been returned.

I should be grateful for any information as to the whereabouts of this card.

B.4.e.
6.1.48.


Guy Poston..

Wd 1410

B.4.E. Mr. Poston.

10/4/47

Reference the note concerning the list of "Green Starred" names held by Somerset House, Mrs. Gisela ASHLEY @ BARTON can be removed from the list.

D.B.
4.12.47.

D. B. The White

PF. 47151 YBox 254
For ASHLEY, Gisela
@ BARTON,

103a

The attached case has been referred by
Somerset House for possible removal from the
"Green Starred" List in their current register.

Please reply to Mr. Poston B.4.S.

Received 2.12.47.

JB/m.P.
4/12.

15th August 1945.

I have long been meaning to write and thank you personally for the many and excellent services that you have carried out for us and for the Government during the last six or seven years. I should like you to know how much these have been appreciated not only by me, but by all those with whom you have been in touch. My one regret is that we have not been able to do more for you, and that all the various schemes for your subsequent employment, should, owing to circumstances which were quite beyond your control, have never worked out as we wanted them to. The whole thing must have been as frustrating and exasperating to you as it was to us. One thing however, I should like you to know, is the degree to which all here enjoyed working with you, and the very great appreciation we have of your services.

I hope things will work out well for you in your new job, and that you will keep in touch with us, in case we can be of any help to you at any time.

With best regards,

Mrs. G. Ashley,

Room 055

101a

21st June 1945.

To Whom it may concern.

Mrs. Giseka Ashley has worked for this department of the War Office since September 1939. She has been in every way a reliable, intelligent and co-operative member of my staff. Her qualifications, which include a good knowledge of foreign languages, are of a high order. She has had experience both in office work in general and in dealing with a variety of different types of people, in all of which she has been extremely successful.

I can recommend Mrs. Ashley strongly for any position of trust where tact, intelligence, ^{loyalty} and a high level of competence is required.

CB.

✓ PL
R34 26/6/45

CONFIDENTIAL

M.I.5. (Mr. G. Hogg)

100a

Have you any trace, please, of :—

Surname ASHLEY (nee BERGHOLT)

(State name at birth if different or if known by any other names)

Full Christian names GiselaDate and place of birth 13.7.06. Germany X Nationality British by marriage
1928Nationality at birth (if different from above) German

Full Christian and Surname and nationality at birth of

Father BERGHOLT, Karl - German Mother LUETOKE - German
dec'dHusband ASHLEY, Neville D. - British Wife -
Chartered Accountant (Divorced)Present address X Flat 270, White House, Albany Street, London, N.W.1. X

Permanent address "

National Registration No AYUR/88/1

Passport No., place and date of issue -

Religion ProtestantReasons for enquiry Possible employment with German & Austrian DivisionBrief particulars of previous employment Since September 1939 employed by War Office

Note.—If applicant or parents naturalized state number, date and name in which certificate was granted

Remarks by M.I.5

NOTHING RECORDED AGAINST.**23 MAY 1945***J. Stone*

Remarks by V

Application Authorised by : *J. Stone*
Lt. Col.
Deputy Security OfficerDate : 17th May, 1945.

Result Advised :

Date

Employed by : Initial :
Not Employed

Date

M.I.5 Notified | Date :
V Notified

Completed : Date : Initial

PF.47151/DB

26th April 1945.

Dear Leonard,

I spoke to you on the telephone recently about Mrs. Gisda ASHLEY. She is 39, bi-lingual in English and German, has German and English shorthand and typing, knows French and Dutch and a little Russian. She is an extremely capable woman and a good organiser. Although she is quite ready to do shorthand and typing, she is well worth something much better. I can personally guarantee her integrity and capability.

In September 1944 she saw a Mrs. Fordham of UNRRA and filled in all the necessary forms. In January 1945 she saw a Mr. Kearn who was looking for people who had done market research, for which she was of course unsuitable. She is of course of German origin but quite frankly that need not worry anybody, and she would be ready to work in Germany or anywhere else in Europe. If you can find her useful employment I should be most grateful if you would let me know. Her address is 270 The White House, Albany Street, N.W.1.

Yours sincerely,

G. M. LIDDELL

L. Ingrams, Esq.,
P.I.D.

Centre Block, Bush House,
Aldwych W.C. 2.

MRS,

40, Hyde Park Gate,

London, S. W. 7.

February 7: 1945.

Dear Mrs. Ashley,

It has just occurred to me that I have not yet written to thank you for your great kindness in doing all that typing on the Gray Book for me. I meant to do it a long time ago, but the weeks have passed, and I have been very busy and not done it. I must ask you to forgive me, and to believe that my gratitude is no less on account of my bad manners.

We are still hoping for some indication from C. (1) as to when publication is to take place, but are not yet having much luck

in that quarter!

I hope your efforts in their Asso-
-ciation after the loan office was not
too trying. Again, very many thanks
for everything you have done.

Yours sincerely,

Geoffrey H. Watkinson

97A

Note

Miss Newington (late of this office, now employed in the Establishment Division of U.N.R.R.A., Tel. MUSEum 6898, Ext.15) telephoned to me today to say that U.N.R.R.A. would be holding a further Appointments Board at 10.40 a.m. on Monday, 22nd January at 170A Gt. Portland St. (Room 136), of which the President would be Mr. Kearn. Mr. Kearn was particularly anxious to see Mrs. ASHLEY and wanted to know whether she would like to attend. I accordingly spoke Mrs. ASHLEY who said she would be very glad to go for a further interview.

Subsequently I spoke Mr. Kearn (whom I happen to know) and told him that Mrs. ASHLEY had been engaged on particularly confidential work whilst in our employ and asked him not to embarrass her in asking too many details when she came for interview.

Later I told Mrs. ASHLEY that I had spoken privately to Mr. Kearn. I understood from Mr. Kearn that the Appointments Board in question was primarily to select candidates for posts at the headquarters office of U.N.R.R.A. but he told me in confidence that once a good candidate got a leg in the camp there was nothing whatever to prevent her being transferred to a post overseas as and when their European offices got going.

A.D.A.
16.1.45.

W.D.L.

PA/DB. (Miss Huggins)

You may like to p.a. in your file
in Mrs A. *W.D.L.* 17/1

96A
By the way, I have settled the M.I.R.S. payment
affair & told them I am being lent by the
W.O. I pointed out that no payment arises
as I am being paid already.

95A
2nd December, 1944

Dear Mrs. B.,

Many thanks for your letter of 29.11.44. I have heard about the offer you have had from the War Office to do some work for them. From them I have learnt that the job will be a straightforward typing one which requires a knowledge of German and, if you can spare the time, it would be of great assistance if you could undertake this.

I should simply hate to receive the money which you get for this work as I certainly should not know what to do with it, so I do beg you to keep it and, if you feel you can make no use of it, please give it to some charity or other. If, on the other hand, you can persuade Mr. Orr to prevent the War Office from giving you any remuneration, perhaps that would be the best way out of it.

Yours ever,

T. A. Robertson

29/11/44

94A

Dear Colonel Robertson,

I understand from Mr. Orr, who rang me up at the suggestion of Miss Huggins, that one of the W.O. departments is anxious to find somebody for a short period to do some typing for them, I believe in connection with captured documents. I don't know any further details, but as Mr. Orr has spoken to you at my request I expect you know what it is all about.

As I have run out of work again for the moment, I am only too pleased to do anything useful for anybody.

Mr. Orr tells me that I will be paid for this work at the usual rates. I am not going to argue this point with him. As I am paid by the office, I would not dream of keeping any such money, particularly as I am not a typist but am only doing it so as not to be idle. I shall therefore send you whatever I get for BIA funds, and with luck I might even be able to use this experience for a story for Gelatine with the necessary adjustments, of course.

Yours sincerely,

Kinla Ashley

93D

30th October, 1944.

My dear Dick,

* This is probably a matter to which you have already given considerable thought but on the off-chance that it might have escaped you or Miall I thought I would just mention it.

I understand from Billy Robertson that it is now proposed that UNRRA should concern itself with the repatriation of displaced persons in Germany, and I wonder a little what sort of security "screening" there is likely to be. The arrangement would obviously present a very good opportunity for Nazis to get abroad under a false identity, in fact there have already been reports about their taking on the identity of a foreign worker who has either been bumped off or killed by a bomb. Gisela is angling for a job with UNRRA in the absence of any development on the G.C.M.S. front, and might possibly prove a useful link there.

G. M. LIDDELL

Colonel D.G. White, O.B.E.,
G-2 (INTELLIGENCE) DIVISION,
SHAER MAIN.

93C

30th October, 1944.

Dear Gisela,

I should have answered your letter of the 16th October sometime ago. I do not know precisely what measures are being taken to deal with the question you raise as it does not come strictly within my sphere. I think, however, your apprehensions are fully justified and I have drawn Dick's attention to the dangers. It may be that some plans have been made and that the military are proposing to provide the necessary "screening". I will let you know when I hear from Dick whether there is by any chance any opening for you. I rather doubt whether the security side of this matter will be left to the tender mercies of UNRRA. That does not, of course, mean that ~~SMOEF~~ will establish the closest liaison with UNRRA.

My brother-in-law has gone over but will I understand be coming back here before very long ~~and~~ On this occasion he will not get very much further than Paris. I will take an opportunity of seeing him as soon as he returns.

Personal & Confidential

93A

~~ADB - W. C. Robertson~~

N.E.D.C.

Have read the new K. P. S. A.

TAR.

TAR

I gathered that when Mrs
Ashby was interviewed, UNRAA
said they had never had the
original details, & recommendations, we
sent to the Appointments Dept of the
Min of Labour. I therefore sent
UNRAA copies, & you may care
to see them reply etc.
At return sometimes

W. C. Robertson 19/10

UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND REHABILITATION ADMINISTRATION,
EUROPEAN REGIONAL OFFICE,

Telephone :
LANGHAM 3090

11, PORTLAND PLACE,

LONDON, W.1.

Reference IS/EF/MMS

Your Ref.....

16th October, 1944.

Dear Colonel Cumming,

Thank you for your letter of
12th October enclosing further particulars
of Mrs. Ashley.

I did interview Mrs. Ashley recently
and thought her very competent, as well as
charming.

Unfortunately, we have just at present
no vacancy in which her languages and other
qualifications could be used to the same
extent as they are at present being used.

I think in the fairly near future,
however, we may wish to call on her services
for work in an administrative capacity when
we set up offices on the continent.

/Perhaps

Lt.-Col. M. E. D. Cumming.
Room 055,
War Office.

Whitehall. S.W.1.

Perhaps you will be good enough to let
her know the position.

Yours sincerely,

E. Fordham

Mrs. E. Fordham
for Director of Personnel.

16th October, 1944.

93B

Dear Captain Liddell,

I have been for my interview with UNRRA and was told that I would be very useful to them, but not until Germany is occupied. While I was waiting there, I must say I was a little shaken by the weird creatures that seemed to come out from underneath stones !

The things that were said during the interview regarding the work UNRRA hopes to do and all that I have read about UNRRA have, however, given me an idea. Very likely, other and better people than I have thought of this, but it seemed to me just worth while sending it to you and asking you whether Dick might be interested. Obviously, I have thought of it as a job for myself, as I know Germany and German officials and also ought to know a little about security by now. What do you think of it ?

Thank you very much for your offer, but I don't think there is anything much that can be done about the Red Cross at present. I saw my two contacts there and told them about the Brigadier Ling interview. In spite of this, for some reason, these two seem determined that the Red Cross ought to employ me. They said they would take the matter up with Miss Johnson on her return, who is apparently the real person in charge of international relief, but who is in Moscow at the moment. I am not stopping them, although I am not very hopeful.

There was one other thing, however. I was told in deepest secrecy with the promise not to tell anyone (I don't include you in this), that Lord Revelstoke would go to Germany as soon as Armistice is declared. I presume he is going about our prisoners-of-war. Mightn't he need an interpreter ? My sole object is to get into Germany as soon as possible to have a look-see, and I am convinced that as a member of the Red Cross, one would get quite a different idea of what is happening than the Army.

Meanwhile, I am delighted with Major Masterman's scheme. From what he told me of how he is going to run it, it should be fascinating and something quite new to me.

Yours sincerely,

Minda Ashley

PERSONAL & CONFIDENTIAL

Room 055,

For P.A. with Mrs. Ashley's
Personal papers.

A.D.A.

92A

October, 1944.

Dear Mrs. Fordham,

I believe you recently interviewed Mrs. ASHLEY, who is at present in our employ, but unfortunately the particulars we originally supplied to the Appointments Department never reached you.

I am therefore enclosing two copies herewith.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs. E. Fordham,
Personnel Department,
U.N.R.R.A.
11. Portland Place,
W.1.

(Lt.-Col. M.E.D. Gunning)

ENCLOSURES

CONFIDENTIAL

92A
9th April, 1944.

Dear Sincock,

Further to my letter of the 9th March, I am now forwarding UNRRA Application Forms completed by 24 of our Women Staff. I should perhaps say that these are all in respect of candidates who seem to us to be prima facie of possible interest to you, and I am not troubling you with a number of applications from less suitable applicants which we have weeded out.

..... I now enclose; perhaps I

You will see that in each case our Lady Superintendent of Staff has added her personal assessment of character and ability, as we thought that this might be of assistance to you.

In conclusion I might perhaps usefully confirm - what I think I mentioned during our original telephone conversation - that all these applicants are at present engaged on responsible and highly confidential work, for which they were originally selected with special care.

Should you wish to pursue any of these applications I should be grateful if you would let me know before any approach is made to the person concerned, as they are at present all in key employment, and the question of release would have to be a matter for discussion and negotiation in the light of prevailing conditions.

Yours sincerely,

(sd) M.E.D. Cumming.

(Lt.-Col. M.E.D. Cumming)

E. Sincock, Esq.,
Ministry of Labour (Appts. Dept.),
Sardinia Street,
Kingsway, W.C.2.

920
Application received through:-
Officer in Charge,
Room 055,
War Office.

COMPILATION OF REGISTER FOR RELIEF WORK ABROAD.

Form of Application

Note 1. This form should be rendered in duplicate.

Note 2. The completion of this form entails no obligation in regard to eventual employment on relief and rehabilitation work abroad, nor in regard to release from official employment for such work at the cessation of hostilities.

1. a. Name in full: ASHLEY Gisela
(Surname first in block capitals)
b. Address: Flat 270, White House, Albany Street, London N.W.1.
2. Place and date of birth: 13/7/06 (Germany)
3. Male or Female: Female
Married or Single: Single, previously married.
4. National Registration Number: AYUR/88/1
5. Nationality: British, previously German
(if naturalised British subject, previous nationality should be stated)
6. Details of present work: Civil Assistant, Room 055, War Office.
7. Details regarding pre-war occupation, business concerns as well as to including name, address and business American Commercial Attache, Berlin, of last employer (if any): Secretary & translator to British business concerns. Professional playwright.
8. State grade and specialised duties in which you are interested, in Grade I order of preference; e.g. Grade III, Relief Supplies, Health, etc.:
9. Particulars of (a) technical and other and private firms, both in specialist qualifications, including England and abroad. Office organ- academic qualifications; (b) practical isation and thorough knowledge experience additional to that given of Continental as well as British under 6. above, with particular refer- business methods and procedure. ence to experience in handling bodies of people, e.g. refugees, mass feeding, etc.

10. Particulars of work and time spent in foreign countries or in international organisations, giving dates. Worked for ¹⁰~~12~~ years in Germany 1922-32.
11. Foreign languages: German perfect, both speaking and reading. (specifying degree of fluency French: speaking fair, reading good. and whether read easily or not) Dutch: fair knowledge. Smattering of Swedish, Spanish and Russian.
12. Whether free from physical defect or disease which would interfere with the proper discharge of duties on relief and rehabilitation work: Yes.
13. Whether unwilling to serve in any of the following zones:
 (a) Europe and the Mediterranean Basin
 (b) Middle East
 (c) Far East
 No, but obviously more qualified for Europe.
14. Whether service in any particular country or region is preferred, and if so, which: Germany
15. Whether already enrolled on the register of any voluntary Society for relief work abroad. If so, which: Yes. Friends Relief Service & Council of British Societies for Relief Abroad.

Date: February 8th, 1944

Signature: *Mirala Ashley*

For Official Use Only.

Mrs. Ashley is in many ways very highly qualified for one of these posts. She is a suitable person to deal with officials and has a very extensive knowledge of Continental ways and Continental peoples. She is very tactful, efficient, hard working and discrete. She is a capable organiser and has a good knowledge of the world and world affairs. She has always been willing to accept responsibility.

T.A. Rankin

Forwarded, and recommended.

M. J. Fitch

Lady Superintendent,
Room 055, War Office.

27 3.44

89a
90a.
91a

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ACT 1958.



KROEGER Fritz.

21.12.1912.

88A

PF.47151/B.2.

17th January, 1940

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

I have referred this matter to the source you mentioned. She informs me that Lili WORTMANN has no sister and no relative that she knows of with the name of Lisette. Lili's own age is about 40. She is known to be still working with Captain BESTHORN at the Hague.

It is possible that we may be able to get more information as to the identity of Lisette WORTMANN, Dutch national, by a very careful means in due course.

Yours sincerely,

Staw

[Redacted]

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ACT 1958 *JANUARY 224*

Secret.

In reply, state NUMBER and DATE.

87a

B2

[REDACTED] 12.1.40.

My dear White,

We have been told that a Dutch national named Lisette WORTMAN, born Haarlem 9.12.02. is working for the German S.S. in Belgium. Once a fortnight she goes to Holland.

It is a shot in the dark, but I would be grateful if you would ask your delicate agent whether Lili has a sister and, if so, what her name is.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. White,
M.I.5.

[REDACTED]
rf

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83a- 86 a now
pled in NOT.

File Ref. No.

Name

Alias

Nationality

Born on

at

Occupation

Address

Registration Particulars

Description

Handwriting ?

Membership ?

Activities

Photograph

82A

LETTER TO MRS. A. FROM LILI WORTMANN, DATED 29.11.39.

29.11.39

Gisa darling,

Thanks ever so much for your letter. I don't ~~very~~ like very much the idea of your being so far away but I see that it can't be helped.

I forward herewith some letters which arrived after your departure. A letter which arrived from Juliane..... puzzled me until I discovered that it came from your sister. She is alright I think; I intend to write to your mother and "tell her all about it", otherwise she will not understand why she does not hear from you.

Things here are much the same as before. I miss you very very much indeed but I have less time than ever to think about it. We have our ups and downs, some-times we are very nice, some-times just a little less. The weather is simply rotten, stormy and rainy the rooms are stone cold and I bless my flannel nighties as well as your hot water bottle which proves to be in order and very useful. I have not seen Miss B. or any other person except my charming austrian Oberst, the father of Miss Verspijk, you remember, who, together with his very nice wife, try to make an elephant of me. On the other hand, I can't say that I have taken to drink, exactly, but I am not too far off that point as it really is the one and only thing to do which is not directly forbidden.....

Now, of yourse, come the requests. But only two very ting requests. The first: my niece, Mrs. H. White, 37, Manor Court, Leigham Avenue, Stratham Hill. Will you, please, drop her a line, that she may write to me and under which conditions? And that I would like to know where and how her grandmother (aunt Jemina) is?

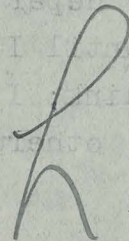
The second: The daughter of an acquaintance of B. Miss Hagemann, Address: c.o. Mr. Frank Scott, Aberdeen, 77, Fountain-hall Road, a girl of eighteen, wants, of course, to go home. I shall try to find out if there is a possibility, to go from Scotland to Holland, or if the girl has to go south, to find a ship. The only thing is, can she leave England at all, because she is German, or has she to stay until the whole affair is over? Do you know anything about it?

./.

I am very sorry to bother you with these matters..but the girl and her parents are rather deperate and we would rather like to help - if we could !

Luckily, that your flat was not let..what would you have done ! Is U. still going strong or have you found something else in the meantime ? Please, do write again. You know how little time I have to do so but that should not stop you !

Love
from



81x

LETTER FROM MRS. A. TO HER UNCLE,

November 16th, 1939

Dear Uncle Theo,

I expect that in the meantime you got the letter I sent over to you through an acquaintance as well as the Fl. 75.- which I asked the man to post to you. I wanted to let you know as quickly as possible that I was all right and I hadn't the time yesterday to write you a longer letter. As I don't really know the man - I just heard about him going over through my boss - I couldn't very well ask him to call on you.

I am afraid last Saturday was just one terrible rush for me. I told you I expected another telephone call Friday night and it turned out that I was expected to go to Brussels and meet my boss there, and not to London as I thought first. He planned to stay a few days in Brussels and then come back to The Hague with me. Well, I had to get a Belgian visa in Rotterdam first, as they don't give visas at The Hague and then catch the train. My boss flew over from London and I met him all right and we worked and worked from the moment of my arrival, I hardly had time to eat. On Sunday things did not look too good and on Monday morning he decided that he was going back to London until the tensions lessened. As he offered to pay my fare back and also keep me employed while in London I thought it wisest to go back with him, particularly as he has every intention of going back to Brussels first and then possibly The Hague if things become quieter and I can go with him.

I am sorry about all the worry and excitement, but I really didn't quite know what was going to happen. It's all right being back in London but I am determined to come back to Holland. I was so very happy there and I did enjoy our coffees together and the evenings when I came round to see you. I also hated leaving my friend and I do hope that I shall be able to come back soon.

I have been really awfully lucky so far and I am sure everything will work out all right. Thank goodness, my flat was not let and I had somewhere to go to when I arrived. As much as I enjoy travelling in peace time, it isn't really fun in war time.

Do write me again soon in case we are not coming back as quickly as I hope and let me hear how you are and give my regards to Odi when you write.

Yours

INCOMING DOCUMENT.

Enclosures.

received from H.O.
on 15 NOV 1939 at 2 a.m.
Senders Reference (or File No.) Bk 152 p.m.
Schedule No. 336

81A

Delivered to B2 Passed for action to
on 15 NOV 1939 at 5 a.m. on at a.m.
p.m. p.m.

R for former papers or traces

Herewith or
Out to

Executive Instructions

P.A. Section Date
Filed in 47151 as Enclosure No. 81a by [Signature]
Carded Names Subjects Places 15/1

I. O. File re arrival at Shoreham of Mrs. Ashley

as @ 10a

File returned, 'Seen, thank you' on 16.11.39.

Secret.

In reply state NUMBER and DATE.

19.11.39.

81K

B11
B3

Lennox -

My dear Sinclair,

I write to draw your and Robertson's attention to the second and third sub-paragraphs of paragraph 3 of White's letter PF.47151/B.2 dated 11.11.39.

I doubt whether JAPS has any connexion with SNOW but there seems to be just a chance that he has.

Yours sincerely,



19/11

Major Sinclair,
M.I.5.

PA

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INCOMING DOCUMENT.

Enclosures.

received from **S.C.O. Sherchan**

80A

on **15 NOV 1939** at **9.30** a.m.
p.m.

Senders Reference (or File No.)

Schedule No. **102**

Delivered to **B.2**

Passed for action to

on **15 NOV 1939** at **11.30** a.m.
p.m.

on _____ at _____ a.m.
p.m.

R for former papers or traces

Herewith or
Out to

Executive Instructions.

P.A. _____ Section _____ Date _____

Filed in **47151**

as Enclosure No. **80A**

by **Sh...**

Carded _____ Names _____

Subjects _____

Places _____

15/11

11/11/39.

SECRET.

DATE AND TIME.	SOURCE.	REPORT	COMMENTS.	ACTION TAKEN DATE AND TIME
<p>11/11/39. 3.40pm.</p>	<p>Observation.</p>	<p>The below described person arrived at this Control 11/11/39 by KLM plane from Amsterdam at 3.40pm.</p> <p>ASHLEY Gisela (Mrs) formally German subject, Individual No 24.</p> <p>At 10.45 am the following telephone message was received from Major Bardwell of your Office,</p> <p>" Reference Individual No 24 Mrs Gisela Ashley may be " arriving today Facilitate her and ask her to ring up " Mr White as soon as she reaches London.</p> <p>This message was conveyed to Mrs Ashley and she she left for London by Taxi.</p> <p>Respectfully submitted.</p> <p><i>[Signature]</i> S.C.O. 11/11/39.</p>		

79A

PF.47151/B.2.

15th November, 1939.



You may be interested to read this rather full report by Mrs. Ashley, regarding her stay in Holland. You will note that she has dealt with the personalities as fully as possible, and I hope that this may be of some use to your representative in Holland. A good deal of the separate items of information, however, have of course been forwarded in previous reports.

With regard to finance, Mrs. Ashley has handed me about 32 Dutch guilders and about 39.50 Belgian francs, which I reckon as about equal to £4 in English money. You may perhaps like to have these small amounts of foreign currency, and I am therefore sending them along.

With regard to Mrs. Ashley's future and further possible usefulness, I am discussing this matter with U.35 and we have a plan which may end in her being taken on by the German Intelligence Service for work in England. I will of course, keep you informed of any developments in this case.

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ACT 1958 JANUARY 2024

November 12th, 1939

REPORT FROM GISELA ASHLEY.

I entered Holland at the beginning of October, nominally as a secretary to a journalist, and, acting under instructions, returned to England on November 11th. My story was that having my people in Germany and a brother in the German army, I felt I could not remain in England during war time, especially as I had received somewhat unkind treatment from certain English friends and as I had lost my job on account of the war. I let it be known that my feelings were definitely pro-German, though not very pro-Nazi.

After the first few days in Holland I arranged to live at a boarding-house at The Hague with my friend Miss Lili Wortmann, who is secretary to Captain Besthorn, Assistant Naval Attaché at the German Legation. My immediate object was to gather useful information from my contacts with the staff of the German Legation and other Germans in Holland. I submitted my reports through certain channels as arranged. This report is not intended to be a repetition of these reports, but is mostly supplementary to them.

As far as I know, I was not suspect while at The Hague and all the Germans I met were most friendly and sympathetic. Later events may, however, have altered this.

After I had been in The Hague for about a fortnight, Captain Besthorn suggested that I might obtain employment on his staff. He wrote to Berlin for permission to employ me and the suggestion was made that it might help matters if I became German again. No definite reply had been received from Berlin when I left. Lili Wortmann's reactions to this proposal were mixed. She was most anxious that I should work with her, but, for personal reasons, she was not quite so anxious that I should work with Captain Besthorn. Meanwhile, pending a reply from Berlin, ^{Besthorn} also tried to get me employment with the Deutsche Nachrichtenbuero, Amsterdam and ~~ag~~ guaranteed my integrity to them. But they too required to get permission from Berlin.

On arrival in Holland, I was granted by the Dutch police a permit to stay for one month. With some difficulty I had this extended until December 5th.

Before leaving I made certain suggestions to Captain Besthorn and Lili Wortmann that, if I had to return to England, I might perhaps be of some use to the German Intelligence Service.

These suggestions were necessarily somewhat vague and tentative, but they may form the basis of future more concrete suggestions.

On leaving Holland, somewhat hurriedly, I gave out that my journalist employer had asked me to meet him in Brussels and I did not say that I was returning to England direct by air.

PEOPLE I MET:

Admiral Hintzmann, German Naval Attaché (office Koniginnengraacht 31). I met him casually. Age about 56. Retired 1919 and recalled to Navy. Said to have no attributes for the job, but got it because he is a friend of Admiral Raeder's. According to Besthorn, he is rather a nonentity, but B.'s views may be biased.

Captain Besthorn. Was Naval Attaché but was superseded by Admiral Hintzmann at the beginning of October. Is only an "Ehrenoffizier". Age 38. Speaks Dutch having been a planter for some years in the Dutch East Indies. Is apparently pro-Nazi, but being easily influenced his political views are apt to vary in accordance with his surroundings and circumstances. Is ambitious and inclined to be pompous and conceited and dreams of being a Colonial governour. Was extremely friendly with me and offered to help me.

Lili Wortmann. Besthorn's secretary and previously secretary to German Naval Attaché in London. She also does the coding and de-coding of telegrams from Berlin. (The code is a numerical one). A personal friend of mine of some years' standing. Age 40. Officer class. Violently anti-Nazi, but this does not prevent her from working to the best of her ability for Besthorn with whom she believes herself to be in love. Falling in love with her boss has always been a failing of hers. She is definitely not buyable because her own safety always ranks first with her.

... Kroeger. Assistant to Besthorn. Age 26. Previously worked with Messrs. Siemens in Holland. Anti-Nazi, careless and may have peculiar habits. I met him several times.

.....Frank. Age 43. Anti-Nazi. Flying officer in the last war. Used to be with Lufthansa in Holland and still lunches sometimes with his opposite number in the French flying company in Holland. Is in a vague sort of way attached to General Wenninger, Air Attaché,

(diplomatic immunity does not apply to Frank), and he is continually nosing round the offices. Presumably his job is to gather information as he has very good contacts. He expressed the opinion that Holland not being Poland, the Germans may have great difficulty in occupying it. He said that the Utrecht area is full of tank traps. I got to know him fairly well. He was very friendly and offered to try and get me a job.

Captain Winter. Agent for Hapag Rotterdam. Age about 50. Calls on Besthorn daily, presumably gives information about movement of ships and receives instructions. Anti-Nazi. I got to know him fairly well. Winter was of the opinion that Germany would shortly be recalling all her scattered merchant ships with orders to get home the best way they can.

.....Japs.

In Schulze-Bernett's office in upper floor of Johan de Witlaan 6. Age 26. I got to know him fairly well. Inclined to drink too much. By profession a photographer. Expert at Morse. In this office there is a wireless and either Japs or Borg (another employee whom I did not meet) take turns for most of the day and night listening in on this wireless. Japs referred to the instrument as his "Gerät" and on one occasion, when he acted as courier to Berlin he took the instrument with him for repair.

When I first met him about 3 weeks ago he told me, before Lili Wortmann could warn him that I was English and not on the Embassy Legation staff, that weather reports were very important to them, but unfortunately they could only pick up one station in Britain (somewhere in Scotland) which broadcasted these openly (he does not speak English and I gathered that he meant in simple code). He added that a Russian station was now rather jamming this Scottish station. He also told me that they (i.e. his office) had managed to get information through to Berlin which resulted in a man they had been looking for for 10 years being arrested at Bentheim half an hour before the train left. His office also gets special visas for certain people. His grouse is that Schulze-Bernett tells his own wife everything but is apt to leave his office staff in the dark. It was from Japs' remarks that I first got on to the idea that Schulze-Bernett was perhaps head of the German Espionage System in Holland. I was also told that Schulze-Bernett had given instructions that Johan de Witlaan 6, which is a semi-detached house, must never be left unoccupied - Japs always sleeps there, sometimes as the only one - and that they were not allowed to have private visitors.

Japs goes daily to the Koniginnengraacht to learn meteorology from a man called Mücke. Japs has no sense of humour about himself, is very ambitious and determined to go far. From his stories about himself he would make a good "Heiratschwindler" and he certainly seems to appeal to women.

I also met v.Wistinghausen, a Press Attaché, Bachmann, Bohle's brother-in-law, a Press Attaché, Graf Kalice from the Consulate and I was on very friendly terms with most of the secretaries.

PEOPLE I HEARD ABOUT:

Schulze-Bernett. Japs, of course, talked about him (see above), but on one occasion, when Capt. Winter mentioned his name in front of me he was warned by Lili Wortmann to be careful. I got the distinct impression that he was not to be talked about. His wife is supposed to wear the trousers.

Gesandter Aschmann. He is the Press Attaché, office former Czech Legation. No one seems to know much about him, but rumour has it that, as Aschmann is a "Gesandter" Graf Zech's days may be numbered and Aschmann may take over the Legation. This is merely rumour.

Tonaki Japanese Naval Attaché. A great friend of Besthorn's and sees a lot of him privately. On one occasion, when Tonaki was going to play Golf with Captain Schofield (British N.A.) Besthorn said he was looking forward to hearing all that Capt. Schofield would tell Tonaki. I mentioned this to "Mr. Middleton" who said he would pass it on to Capt. Schofield.

R. Liffers A German, Catholic, probably wealthy, with very good Dutch connections. Highly recommended by Berlin and Besthorn was ordered to give him every assistance. He calls frequently on Besthorn and apparently gives and asks for information. Lili Wortmann privately considers that he may be acting for Holland as well as Germany.

v. Schall I only heard this name mentioned once as a friend of Besthorn's. But from remarks I got the distinct impression that he is in some way linked up with Schulze-Bernett. v.Schall seems to have known Besthorn in the Dutch East Indies.

Rotterdam 51600. This telephone number may be nothing, but as I was refused the name of the man it was used in connection with and as I could not find it in the Rotterdam telephone directory, it might be of interest. The man and the call had something to do with shipping.

NOTE ON CAPTAIN BESTHORN'S ACTIVITIES.

Belgium as well as Holland is his territory. Naturally much of the work has to do with ships and information about ships. One case came to my particular notice. A few days ago, while Capt. Besthorn was away, a ship called the "Margaretha" was captured by the German Navy on information telegraphed by Lili Wortmann to Berlin that the ship was Finnish and was carrying wood for England. Information of this sort is evidently collected in Besthorn's office.

Captain Besthorn has callers at his office all day long and a continuous stream of telegrams comes in from Berlin throughout the 24 hours. (It might be mentioned here that the Legation has a Courier from Berlin every other day.) Capt. Besthorn considers that the Dutch Navy is ~~friendly~~ very friendly towards him.

SUBMARINES.

Lili Wortmann stated to me that Germany had about 100 submarines. Later, only a few days ago, she made the very definite though perhaps somewhat surprising statement that Germany had nearly 200 submarines and that the present building rate is about six a month. I cannot, of course, say what real value can be given to this statement, but as Besthorn's secretary it is more than likely that she has an idea of the actual figures.

STIMMUNG.

Most of the members of the German staff whom I met were definitely anti-Nazi and thoroughly depressed about the war. It is no exaggeration to say that after Hitler's escape from the bomb at Munich the office at the Koniginnengraacht was plunged into deep gloom! There were exceptions, of course, particularly among the lower orders and office menials. There is a very great dread of Germany invading Holland and therefore the horrid possibility of having to return to Germany! Paradoxically, there is also a fear of not being able to get back to Germany in such an event. The Nazi Government is not expected to give much help and is more likely to leave them to their fate. A common complaint is that Berlin sends no information ahead of events, a fact which did not make my work any easier, and also that Berlin never takes advice.

From letters received from Germany and from people coming from there I gathered that in the Rhineland the food situation is decidedly better than further inland. From people from Berlin we received any number of veiled complaints of not being able to obtain the quantities of fats, meat, sugar, chocolate etc. that they were supposed to get on paper, that there was almost no commodity that could be bought without cards but that, for instance, if you had money you could buy shoes costing RM. 45.- a pair and more without cards. If you sent a pair of shoes to be repaired - and you were only allowed to send one pair at a time - it took 4 weeks to get them back. People were allowed one winter coat, but if you had one, no matter how old, you could not buy another one. It was advisable not to make false statements about this as it was quite likely that your place would be searched when you put in an application for a coat. The real Nazis bear all this with fortitude, particularly as they know that England is so much worse off and even Holland has not got enough to eat, but among the other people there is a lot of secret grousing going on. The things people in Holland are asked by Germans to send them are butter, cheese, tea, coffee, cocoa, chocolate, milk, jam, sausage, any woollen garment, darning wool and soap. (Holland has prohibited the export of some of these things). When Besthorn went to Germany he took about ten half pounds of butter with him and also coffee in small packages to distribute amongst important people at the War Office and thus be sure of a friendly reception.

My brother, an officer in the German army, wrote home last week complaining of boredom and bad weather.

RECENT EVENTS.

During the past 10 days, the situation has been very tense and the general condition of the German officials can best be described as "a complete flat spin". Everyone felt that something was about to happen. At the beginning of the week Captain Besthorn decided to try and find out the situation for himself and go to Berlin.

On Wednesday, November 8th, Besthorn telephoned to Lili Wortmann from Berlin telling her that the situation was extremely serious and instructing her to draw his money from the bank and make preparations for a possible evacuation. On that day, Schulze-Bernett sent many of his files into Germany. Besthorn returned on Thursday, November 9th. He said he had talked to one of Hitler's personal adjutants and other high Nazi officials who had told him that the Führer's definite intention is to advance through a part of Holland to attack Belgium as the Belgian ports and air fields were considered essential in order to carry out a successful attack on England. Besthorn had gathered that the advance through Holland would only be through

the Maastricht district and that the Führer did not expect the Dutch to start active hostilities on the strength of this or, as an alternative, that he might negotiate with the Dutch for the free passage of his troops. Besthorn thought that the advance would be made some time during the week beginning November 12th.

On Friday, November 10th, it appears that fresh orders were received and during the afternoon Lili Wortmann telephoned to me asking me to pack her things at once. Late the same night I gathered that the new orders had been cancelled but the general opinion was that the advance would not be delayed for much longer than 48 hours, although it was considered that there was just a chance that nothing might happen after all.

Besthorn told Lili Wortmann that it was hoped in Berlin that, if the Germans violated the neutrality of Holland, the British could be trapped into violating the neutrality of Belgium on their way to intercept the German advance.

Since then events may have taken a new turn, but it is perhaps worth mentioning that all the indications from Germany were and are that the loyal Nazi people are looking forward to one of their Führer's famous coups in the very near future.

I was always very much on my guard against the possibility of my being deliberately fed with information with the idea of passing it on. For many reasons I am utterly sure that this did not happen. X

In all cases I have submitted information and opinions precisely as they were given to me, usually without comment, but where possible I have quoted the source so that the degree of accuracy and probability can be judged.

X GA is conscious of possible deception - foreshadowing her XX role to come

DS.

Copy of letter to Lili Wortmann

14/11/39

78A

Lili darling,

Back in London again! U. not liking the look of things decided to go back on Monday and as he suggested I go with him and work for him in London for the time being I felt it would be foolish to refuse. Today things look better and there seems to be a chance of returning soon, probably Brussels first and than The Hague. Not quite as I planned it. Still there it is and beggars can't be choosers.

However, even if that doesn't work there may be other possibilities. Do you remember the charming old boy I told you about? I have already rung him up and am having lunch with him on Friday. He was very friendly and I think he'll help me to get a better job if he can. I have also written to Gilbert and asked if he has any bright suggestions and possible introductions.

I hope you miss your lady's maid. I hated leaving, it was so good to be with you. The flat is pretty lonely, thank goodness it wasn't let. I haven't had time to clean it properly yet. Things are much the same here. It's queer to be back and not uninteresting. Let's hope we'll meet again soon!

Give my love to Mevrouw de Weerdt, Jan and Benno, and tell her how sorry I am about this hurried departure. But what could I do? And anyhow I've paid her till the 20th.

Any letters from home, be an angel and read them, others just re-address, will you? And please do let me hear from you again soon. My love to everybody incl. your boss, provided he treats you nicely again.

Yours

Gisela

78*

LETTERS FROM MRS. A. DATED 9.11. and 10.11 (Red. 14.11.)

Stadhouderslaan 98
Den Haag

November 10th, 1935

My dear Dorothy,

It looks to me as if my letters take a long time to reach you again so as I'm going up to Amsterdam today for sightseeing I think I'll post this letter there to see if it gets you quicker. Please don't forget to mention the bank to which you propose sending my money in one of your next letters.

I had a telegram yesterday saying that Tagon will try to make me stallion's ne -

representative here. Grand! But
he'll have to apply for a working-
permit for me. I take it he realises
that. Meanwhile, I have heard
nothing from my old boss. I do
think it's essential that he should
write & tell me if he wants
to see me now. Don't you
agree? Please do me the
favour & ring him up &
ask him to write me so that
I know where I am.

Love
Gisela

recently
recommended
with good
I need

10.11.

Besthorn has come back with the information that the Germans intend to march through Holland, probably next week. They will, however, not come up to flooded areas which leaves only the Maastricht district and they do not expect Holland to go to war for that little infringement.

The information about the Finnish ship 'Margaretha' with wood for England was given Berlin from here. According to Lili they found out by chance, somebody talked. Herr Liffers sees Besthorn ~~xx~~ frequently. A German highly recommended by Berlin, Catholic with good Dutch connections.

I need more tissue paper please.

9.11.

Confirmation of my yesterday's telephone talk to Middleton:

Besthorn phoned from Berlin that situation very serious, to fetch his money here from back and his unfinished suits from tailor. Besthorn is back to-day, may hear more to-night.

Buddink has burnt his papers and Schulze-Bernett sent his files to Germany.

My brother's regiment stationed in neighbourhood of Eifel mountains.

November 9th, 1939

My dear Dorothy,

at present I can only say I hope to goodness that you haven't let my flat as the chances are that I might be returning any moment. It was bad enough to have to go through the tension of waiting for something to happen once. I can't say I am enjoying the second time any more or have got used to suspense. What a life! But after all there is still a

Can
17/11
A.D.S. (B) *16*
D.B.
B.15

to see.

77A

SECRET

D.G.W.
12/11

PF.47151/B.2.

13th November, 1939.

Further to my PF.47151/B.2 of 12th November, the following further items of information have been gathered from Mrs. Ashley.

1) Lili WORTMANN described how a Finnish ship, named 'Margaretha', was captured owing to information supplied to Berlin by her office. Information reached her office from someone apparently in shipping circles at The Hague that the 'Margaretha' was bound for England with a cargo of wood. Coming through the Kiel Canal the 'Margaretha's' master informed the authorities that the ship was Dutch, bound for Holland. Owing to The Hague information, this was not believed and the ship was not allowed to proceed.

2) Considerable interest was shown in the telephone number Rotterdam 51/600. From what she gathered Mrs. Ashley believes this number may be that of a Dutch firm with German sympathies.

Traces?
2
14/11

3) Mrs. Ashley's attention was attracted by a certain R. LIFFERS, a German Catholic, whom she believes to be employed by the German authorities because of his good connections with the Dutch. She believes he works on the Intelligence side.

4) General WENNINGER is still at The Hague. His two secretaries are Fräulein LUNZNER and Fräulein Von NEUVILLE. FRANK of the Lufthansa is also attached to his staff.

B2
will you
inform
Mr Schofield?
2
14/11

5) The name TONALLI, wrongly reported by me in para. C (1) of my PF.47151/B.2 of 22nd October, is really TONAKI, Japanese Naval Attaché at The Hague. It may be remembered that this man is on friendly terms with BESTHORN and also with our own Naval Attaché, Schofield. I understand from Mrs. Ashley that Schofield has already been warned.

6) According to Lili WORTMANN, the Germans are building submarines at the rate of 6 per month.

8) Mrs. Ashley has learnt that the man in charge of the broadcasting to England is Eduard Roderick DITZE. This man was announcer-in-chief during the Olympic Games of 1936. She also understands that BAILLIE-STEWART is not broadcasting from any German station.

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D G.W.

SECRET

76A

PF.47151/B.2.

12th November, 1939.

With reference to the report from Mrs. Ashley which I sent over to your office late last night, I spent a good deal of time carefully examining the lady on her information, and after further consideration I think it is worth while adding the following points which emerged from our discussion.

- 1) She is absolutely convinced from her talks, not only with BESTHORN and Lili WORTMANN, but with other members of their office during the last 48 hours before she left, that it really was the German aim to gain possession, not of the Dutch coast, but of the Belgian. She is equally firm that they all believed Hitler's plan to be as stated in my last night's report. A point which I did not mention then, but which she also made, was that even Graf ZECH, German Ambassador at The Hague, was advising the German Government that it would be possible to march through the Maastricht salient without bringing the Dutch into active hostilities against them. You will doubtless know much better than I whether there are any real chances of the Dutch coming to terms with Hitler in this sense. Our lady friend thinks it should be taken into account in this connection that there is a great deal of sore feeling in Holland over the operation of the British blockade, and that a great many Dutch people feel that England has forced them into a very awkward predicament.
- 2) As to what seems to me the fantastic calculation that with German troops in Maastricht area, we should at once, and without any notice to the Belgians, violate Belgian neutrality and thus bear the onus of doing so, I can only add that the calculation was not considered fantastic by the Germans with whom our lady friend talked.
- 3) Our source was very much impressed by the extent to which the German Legation at The Hague, and even the Service Attachés, had been left in the dark as to German intentions vis-à-vis the Low Countries. At 3 p.m. on November 10th, Lili WORTMANN rang her up, by pre-arranged agreement, to tell her to pack. She gave her to understand that the invasion was timed for that night. It was this information that I got over the telephone and passed on to Jebb on the night of the 10th. It was not until 11 p.m. on the night of the 10th that Lili WORTMANN again telephoned to her that the immediate action had apparently been cancelled. When, however, she had a chance of discussing it with Lili later still, Lili was still of the firm opinion that this was only a postponement and that the delay would not be more than 48 hours. She added that SCHULZE-BERNETT, who should know, had packed his bags and was ready to leave.

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76A

It is, I think, clear in all this that at no time while Mrs. Ashley was at The Hague did anybody receive absolutely specific instructions regarding Hitler's intentions. They worked largely on the information which BESTHORN brought back from his visit to Berlin, and Mrs. Ashley reports that she found all her friends extremely disconcerted by the apparent fact that they were going to be sacrificed to the interests of German strategy. They even discussed ways and means of escaping from Holland by the Rhine.

Whether a second cancellation of plans has occurred you will doubtless know already, but I thought you had better have the above information for the light which it throws on the weight which should be placed on the report which I sent to you last night.

I am sending you in another report some further items of information, which I have gathered from Mrs. Ashley in conversation. I have also asked her to write a very detailed account of her stay at The Hague, as in addition to what one might call factual information, she has some very interesting things to say about the general atmosphere prevailing among German official circles, and has also had letters from her relations inside Germany, which reveal something of the general 'Stimmung' there.

75A

Spoke to [redacted] and said I had two points. One was that Mrs. ASHLEY had come back and had given information which Dick had given last night to their people who had sent it to their friends in the F.O. ^{and} in the Service department. In regard to that it was possible that he could amplify things a little. He thought he had better see someone? [redacted]

The second point was what had led us to get Mrs. ASHLEY back quickly was that we had knowledge that her contact kept details of her name and address or telephone number in his pocket and we thought that these had fallen into the hands of the Germans. It had occurred to us that this aspect of things had raised the question as to their future plans. [redacted] replied that that was so but, on the other hand, while they did not know how much had gone west they also knew that he kept notes in Urdu and broken Russian, and this fact might put some limit on the extent of the danger. At the same time they could not not know how much had gone.

2
1/2

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B2.

74A

was ASHLEY

Individual 24

Arrived SHOREHAM
3.30 P.M.

Left BRIGHTON
4.18 P.M.

Message delivered

to her - she

wished to

Telephone from

SHOREHAM - but

in view of message

will do so on

arrival in LONDON

846.

4.45 P.M.

TE NB

11.XI.39

Date..... Signature.....

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Application is under No..... of the Defence Regulations relating to

If permission is not issuable by the Police, this Form should be presented by Applicant to the Authority competent to grant the permission desired.

Applicant checked with Document of Identity which contains the prescribed particulars for identification of the Bea...

247. Ex 1

~~ADS(B)~~

~~27B~~

~~B15~~

Handwritten initials

v. see

*Done
12/11*

B2

*Have you looking at jobs
November 11th, 1939 + 13ah
I think we have
traces. Duplex*

The source who yesterday reported that the invasion of Holland was to take place last night has today returned from Holland where she was in immediate contact with personnel of the German Marine Attaché's office at The Hague. She has now supplied the following further information relating to this matter.

Orders for the march into Holland were apparently cancelled late last night. This is regarded only as a postponement and the delay is not expected to be for more than 48 hours. It was considered among our source's intimate associates at the Marine Attaché's office that there is a two percent possibility that nothing at all will happen. What is 98% likely to happen may be judged by considering the following information:

Captain Besthorn, second in command at the Marine Attaché's office, returned to The Hague on Thursday, November 9th, from an official visit to Berlin. While there he saw and talked with one of Hitler's personal adjutants and others close to Hitler from whom he gathered that it was the Fuehrer's intention to adopt one of two courses with regard to Holland.

A) To March through Dutch territory remote from the floodable area (presumably the Maastricht district) en route for Belgium without threatening a total invasion of Holland. In this way he hopes that he will not precipitate active hostilities with Holland and also hopes that the British will be the first to violate Belgian neutrality on their way to intercept the German forces.

B) To negotiate with the Dutch a free passage for his troops.

Behind each of these plans lies the intention of bringing Belgium into the war with the object of gaining advanced air bases and ports on the Belgian coast.

Hitler's calculations that he can avoid hostilities with Holland while marching through part of her territory and that he can trap England into violating Belgian neutrality first may sound crude but they are reported exactly as our source has gathered them from Besthorn.

A.D. 8 (B).
D.V. B.
B.15.

good
FNB
32
2
M
B/P

Pass by hand.

73A

After hearing of the tragic happenings in Holland on Thursday afternoon, I thought it right to review the whole position of Mrs. Ashley in that country. I, therefore, asked B.'s permission to discuss the matter with U.35. U.35, who was very much affected by the news I had to tell him, said at once that Mrs. Ashley should not be allowed to stay a moment longer than possible in Holland. He said that when he supplied Uncle Stiopa with Mrs. Ashley's address and telephone number, Uncle Stiopa put these into his breast pocket, saying that they would never leave his person and that U.35 could count on them being perfectly safe in his care. We had, therefore, to consider the possibility that that address and telephone number were already in the possession of SCHULZE-BERNETT. After discussing the matter very fully with Mr. Curry and U.35 we agreed that the best course would be to get a call put through to Mrs. Ashley at The Hague to be taken by U.35 in the capacity of her ex-'boss'. He should say to her that he had spoken to me and that I wanted her to return home for a discussion of her future position as soon as possible. He was also to inquire whether she had enough money and to tell her that an aeroplane leaves Holland daily for this country. Unfortunately, when the call went through Mrs. Ashley was not in, and it was not until nearly 7.0 yesterday evening that she was successfully contacted. Her first words were: 'I have just heard. To-night's the night', to which U.35 said: 'Do you mean for the visit?' and Mrs. Ashley said: 'Yes. I have just heard it from my friend'. U.35 then told her of the necessity for her to leave at once. She said she had not enough money to buy an aeroplane ticket, and he advised her to go at once to her uncle and to borrow the money. Failing this, she was to go to the British Legation and

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say that she was unable to get it from her usual source and must, therefore, ask them to loan it to her. When she had the money she was to go at once to the offices of the K.L.M. and try to reserve a seat for to-morrow (Saturday). U.35 said he would ring again at 9.0 p.m. to see how these plans had gone.

On hearing of this conversation I got on at once to Colonel Harker and reported the impending invasion of Holland. He instructed me to get hold of Jebb and report that to him, while he would attempt to contact [redacted] the Service Departments. I therefore telephoned at approximately 7.15 p.m. to the Foreign Office and successfully got Jebb and gave him my information. I next arranged with Mr. Younger for the putting through of a second call to The Hague for 9 p.m. that night. With these plans laid I proposed to wait for developments of the second conversation, when a letter arrived for me from Holland. The letter contained the following information, dated 8.11.39:

"In German circles here the chances for invasion of Holland and Belgium are considered to be 98%. Everybody is praying for rain as the only hope. Kapitän WINTER, agent of the Hapag at Rotterdam, thinks that all German ships abroad will be told to make their way hom as best they can."

Punctually at 9 p.m. U.35 was connected with Mrs. Ashley. She reported that her uncle had lent her the money for her fare, but that there was not a free place on the aeroplane. U.35 then advised her to seek advice from Chichester at the British Legation, mentioning his name as explanation. She should ask Chichester if he could expedite for her a Belgian transit visa, which would enable her to travel to Belgium on the following day and get the Ostend boat on Sunday. This arrives at Folkestone

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or Dover roughly about 6 p.m. Mrs. Ashley sounded perfectly confident and not unduly worried, though she grasped at once the reasons for our instructing her to return. She was particularly told not to pay any visits, but to stay at home quietly and pack her things in readiness for her departure. I am satisfied that she understands the situation well enough not to be enticed either to the German Consulate at The Hague, or to the German Embassy or to the premises in Johann de Witlaan.

There is, I think, nothing further that can be done from this end. When [redacted] rang up a little later in the evening I told him that I had thought it right to recall Mrs. Ashley, to which he perfectly agreed. He himself had passed her information on to the Admiralty, and he told me that there was information of the same kind coming in from other sources. We must now wait patiently for Mrs. Ashley's return. Everything is now up to her and I feel quite sure that she is equal to the situation.

I have arranged with D.4 (Commander Cazalet) that the ports of Folkestone and Dover and the airport of Heston be notified of the possible arrival of Mrs. Ashley to-day or to-morrow and that on arrival she be instructed to telephone to me.

B.2. D.G.W.
11.11.39. <

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SECRET

A.D.S. (B) }
Dy. B. }
B. 15 }

to see.

12.11.39.

72A

PF.47151/B.2.

11th November, 1939.

The following are the points from Mrs. Ashley's report, dated 25th October, which reached me through your representative and the bag. You presumably know the contents, but in order to keep our records straight I am sending in the usual recapitulation.

- 1) From Monday, 23rd October to Thursday, 26th October, BESTHORN visited Brussels with Admiral HINZMANN in order to introduce the Admiral there.
- 2) Our source and Lili WORTMANN spent the afternoon of 24th October with the agent of the Hapag, Kapitän WINTER, in Rotterdam. Nothing particularly interesting was said, except that WINTER had to go to Schiedam to look at some small tankers which the Germans are proposing to buy. In the course of the conversation, WINTER also mentioned the name of SCHULZE-BERNHARD (presumably SCHULZE-BERNETT) and was warned by Lili WORTMANN to be careful of him.
- 3) On the evening of 23rd October, a man called JAPS, aged about 26, intelligent and ambitious, in private life a photographer, who has been at The Hague about two months, came to visit Lili WORTMANN. It turned out that JAPS was employed by SCHULZE-BERNETT and works at Johann de Witlaan 6. This, says our source, is a semi-detached house. In No.4 BUDDINK works and downstairs in No.6 the Consulate is now housed.

JAPS has a colleague named BORK (or BORG), formerly secretary to the Kaiser at Doorn, and their work consists of listening in to the wireless (mostly in the night hours of 1-4 a.m. and again between 6-7 in the early morning) with the idea of picking up weather reports. Both know Morse. According to JAPS there is only one English transmitter that gives out weather reports openly (our source suggests that by this he means not in secret code). This transmitter is somewhere in Scotland, and it is JAPS' duty to listen to it because it cannot be picked up in Germany. The weather reports are needed for aircraft. Lately, according to JAPS, the transmitter has been jammed by a Russian station and is, therefore, difficult to get.

About three weeks' ago JAPS went to Berlin as a courier, and among other things took his 'Gerät' with him. (This is presumably, according to our source, a radio set.) She also adds that it is curious that he had to get it repaired in Berlin and could not get it repaired in Holland.

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JAPS also mentioned that amongst his duties he was responsible for obtaining visas. In connection with this work, which must be of a police kind, he claimed to have been responsible for getting a man arrested whom the German authorities had been looking for for 10 years. This man was caught at Bentheim half an hour before his train left.

JAPS sleeps in Johann de Witlaan 6 and is often quite alone there, as his colleague BORK has a wife in Amsterdam who he visits, mostly at week-ends. According to SCHULZE-BERNETT's instructions, No.6 must never be left unoccupied.

4) Our source comments that SCHULZE-BERNETT, who is not popular with JAPS, tells his wife everything. In our source's opinion he is certainly connected with, if not actually the head of, German espionage at The Hague. The German Secret Service at The Hague has nothing to do with the Consulate, but it may be some indication of the whereabouts of its controlling head that JAPS has to go every day at 12 to report to someone in the Koniginnen-graacht. Our source does not think this is BESTHORN, but hopes to be able to tell us who it is in due course.

5) According to Lili WORTMANN, German cargo boats are running the blockade by avoiding the Channel and passing round the North of Britain and North of Denmark into the Baltic. She says that to date about 48 ships have reached Germany. Our source reminds us that about three weeks' ago she mentioned that BESTHORN was celebrating the arrival of some ships, and that at that time the whole story was obscure to her. She now says that on Saturday, 21st October, Nos. 4 and 5 of the group of ships he then mentioned reached harbour. She gathered that they came from Spain.

6) Our source has heard a rumour that Graf ZECH may be retiring soon as a new man, Gesandter ASSMANN (sic) arrived at The Hague about three weeks' ago. This man has his office in the former Czech Legation and seems to be running the press.

Stew

71A

LETTER FROM MRS. A. IN HOLLAND, DATED 7.11.39 (Recd. 10.11.39)

8.11.39.

In German circles here chances for an invasion of Holland and Belgium are considered to be 98%. Everybody is praying for rain as the only hope. WINTER, Hapag agent, thinks that all German ships abroad will shortly be told to make their way home as best as they can.

Food situation is supposed to be better in Rhineland than inside Germany. In Berlin you can only have one pair of shoes soled at a time and it takes 4 weeks to get them back. If you have money you can buy a pair of shoes from RM45 upwards without ration cards.

Stadhouderslaan 98
Den Haag

7/11/39

My dear Dorothy,

I am glad to say I have
got the permit to stay here
for another few weeks to
enable me to get the working
permit situation straightened
out. I am sending all the
forms that will have to be
filled in by my boss through
a friend who can at the
same time explain the
situation when he arrives.
I think that will be simpler
& quicker.

Otherwise not much news. I
wish my friends here would give
a little more help, but they
are at present so taken up
with their own affairs I can
hardly blame them. Still, as
far as they know I have only
got a fortnight & we should
know one way or the other
in that time anyhow.

I am sending you copy of
my letter to Tagon for keep.
Let me hear from you again
soon. I trust a hurried return
will be simpler than the visit,
if you know what I mean!

Love

Trische

Secret.

In reply state Number & Date. ^{10m}

[redacted] dated 8.11.39.

B2

M.I.5. (Mr. White)

The following is the gist of a letter received from our Representative in Holland, dated 25.10.39., regarding Mrs. ASHLEY, subject of correspondence ending with your P.F.47151/B2 of 28.9.39.:

Mrs. ASHLEY telephoned me in the pre-arranged way; she was unable to say very much over the 'phone, but was genuinely worried. I decided that the only solution was to arrange to meet her. This I have done today (without of course disclosing my identity - I remain under the name arranged for me).

2. Her first problem was financial. This I was able to settle at once. I had taken sufficient money with me in anticipation. She has now had all the £30 authorised in your above telegram.

3. She was anxious about two things:

(a) her channel of communication.

(b) her position here.

As regards (a) she told me she had written several letters, but did not know whether they had been received safely, or opened or lost or what had happened to them. Had I, she asked, sure and swift means of communication and, if so, could I not take over and forward her letters for her?

I said my means of communication worked well and, as far as I was concerned, I was quite willing to help, but would ask my people first.

In the meanwhile, I agreed to enclose the attached letter (which she gave me, unsealed), which explains her difficulties as regards point (b) above.

4. I do not in the least wish to butt in; on the other hand, I am anxious to be of assistance in any way I can. Would it not be better to make use of me as a safe two-way post and telegraph office for this lady, in much the same way as I did for U.35? (She need not know exactly what my sure channel is).

If you agree I will so inform her and will send anything I get from her to you marked:

G.l. Personal
from Mrs. A.

On receipt of the above, [redacted] spoke to [redacted]

[redacted] by 'phone and told him that Mrs. ASHLEY's letters had been received.

The letter referred to in the last sub-para. of para.3 above is attached hereto and [redacted] would be glad if you would get into touch direct with [redacted] by 'phone over this matter.

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70a
October 25th, 1939

REPORT

~~Yesterday~~ Besthorn went to Brussels on Monday with the Admiral Hintzman to introduce him there. They'll be back Thursday.

Yesterday Lili took the afternoon off and we went to Rotterdam where Kapitän Winter, the agent of the Hapag, showed us round. Nothing particularly interesting was said except that Winter has to go to Schiedam to look at some small tankers which the Germans are proposing to buy and that he mentioned the name of Schulze-Bernhard and was warned by Lili to be careful of him.

That same evening a man called Japs (about 26, intelligent, means to go far, in private life a photographer, has been here about 2 months) came to visit Lili and it turned out that Schulze-Bernhard is his boss. Japs works at Johan de Wittlaan 6. This, as you know, is a semi-detached house. In No.4 Buddink works and downstairs in No.6 is the Consulate now.

I gather that the chief work of Japs and his colleague Mr. Bork or Borg (formerly secretary to the Kaiser at Doorn) is to listen to the wireless, particularly weather reports. Both know Morse. Japs says there is only one English sender that gives out weather reports openly (I gather he means not in a secret code) somewhere from Scotland which he also has to listen to, as Germany cannot get it, and they need the weather report for aircraft. Unfortunately, lately it is being jammed by a Russian station and therefore difficult to get. Japs went to Berlin about 3 weeks ago as Courier and among other things took his "Gerät" with him, as far as I could make out because it did not work properly. I can only imagine that by "Gerät" he means his radio, but why it shouldn't have been repaired here I don't know. Japs also talked about having to obtain visas for people who were waiting for them and that once they managed to get a man arrested, by informing Berlin, whom they had been looking for for 10 years. They caught him at Bentheim half an hour before his train left.

It seems to me that Schulze-Bernhard, who is not popular with Japs and who tells his wife everything, is certainly connected with if not actually the head of the espionage here. That organisation has certainly nothing to do with the Consulate. Japs nowadays - he usedn't to - goes about 12 every day to report to somebody in the Koniginnengraacht. I don't think it is Besthorn but I have not found out yet who it is.

Japs always sleeps in No.6, quite often alone as Bork has a wife in Amsterdam whom he visits at times, chiefly weekends.

x nor are they
allowed to
have visitors

Anyhow, Schulze-Bernhard has given instructions that the house must never be left unoccupied. Japs, and Borg too I presume, drink a lot at night as they have to listen to the wireless at odd times between 1 - 4 and again between 6 - 7 in the morning and consequently have to be up most of the night with little else to do. That is all about this for the time being.

I gather from Lili that German cargo boats are running the blockade by not going through the channell but round the North of Britain and North of Denmark into the Baltic. So far about 48 have reached Germany. If you remember about three weeks ago Besthorn was going to celebrate some ships and I could not make head or tail of the story. Last Saturday Nos. 4 and 5 of this lot got into harbour. Some of them seem to be coming from Spain.

There is a rumour that Graf Zeck may be retired soon as a new man, Gesandter Assmann, arrived here 3nweeks ago. Nobody quite knows what he is doing except that he has his office in the former Czech Legation and seems to run the Press.

One of the girls made the remark the other day that the Germans might undermine the Maginot Line and blow it up. It may be complete nonsense but I thought I'd better hand it on.

H. Ashley

70a

October 25th, 1939

Dear Dick,

It seems to me that I have not made it quite clear or expressed myself badly in my "Dorothy" letters regarding my position as U.'s secretary. Everything was grand until about a week ago. Everybody thought it was extremely lucky that I had got here the way I had, a pity of course, that U. had to go back to London as I would be bored not having enough to do. On the other hand, he had paid for my boarding-house for a month, so there was really nothing to worry about and I would probably here from him soon. Then, since about a week ago I have been asked every day whether I have heard from U. I cannot say I have as it is easily possible to check up. I have tried to explain his silence away by his possibly having flue and by the censor holding up letters, but it is not really satisfactory. You see, in the ordinary course of events, a man engaging a secretary for abroad and then leaving her to it, would be considered either dirty or phony, and in these times it is apt to give rise to suspicions.

You gave me a grand start and it seems such a pity not to keep it up for 4 weeks, after which I can get the sack. Could I therefore please get a letter from either U. or Dorothy, who has telephoned with him, saying that various things have happened which make it necessary for him to stay longer in London than he anticipated but that he hopes to be back shortly. Then, on the 31st, I shall apply for an extension of my permit here. As soon as I have got that, I shall let you know and I then get a further letter from U. telling me that he finds he won't be able to return for some time and suggesting that I come back and that he will, of course, pay my fare. I shall write him officially (not really) that I have decided to stay on. I have told Lili that I have enough money on my own with me to live another month, that I have some more in the bank in London which Dorothy can send me, if I need it. On the other hand I hope that these half-hearted attempts to get me a job will become real attempts once it looks as if I am in a real fix.

Besthorn would very much like to employ me in his office and he has written Berlin to ask for their permission. Lili, however, is doubtful whether they will give it. I think she is torn between a desire to have a competent

assistant and the fear that I might prove too competent and get between her and Besthorn. For details to send to Berlin I gave Besthorn merely a typed sheet showing birth dates, father killed in the last war and details about my two brothers. Nothing further can be done there except to wait for the answer.

I know that they have also talked to Mr. Frank of the Lufthansa who is supposed to know everything and asked him to find me a job. I shall follow that up a little later. Two consulates have been asked to give me a job but turned me down as I am British. In any case, I can do nothing about being British, there have been no other suggestions and if there were, I should consider it for some time and find out all the snags first. As far as I can make out, there is no Gestapo here.

Lili said the other day that they thought I might try to get a job here with the British Shipping Control as it might be interesting for them. I was a little dense on that subject and we got off it again. There doesn't seem much sense in that, does there?

Everything is very slow and, of course, there is the possibility that they may not be able to find me a job. In that case will you be able to get me one? It would be useless for me to try it on my own as Dutch firms cannot employ me, English ones would hesitate with my German origin and anyhow, I don't speak Dutch. It is an awful bore having nothing to do all day, except to wait for the evening. Except occasionally at lunch time there is little chance of seeing anybody before 7. I am sorry about my expenses, but unfortunately most of the young women here including Lili, have rather expensive taste in food and although we have paid for it at the boarding house we go out a fair amount. I have no choice but to attach myself to them, any hints I have dropped about not being able to afford it are ignored, and as Lili is generous only in theory there is nothing I can do about it but pay my share. Everybody drinks a fair amount, except me. I have explained that with some kidney trouble I had in England just before I came.

As I told you, the people here know little of nothing of what the German government's plans are. They are all definite that neither Belgium nor Holland will be invaded. The attached report does not need developing. I do hope I get hold of something worth while soon.

Will you give my love to Gilbert please? I take it you are showing him my letters? You should have had 6 so far, plus a report and a test letter.

Yours,

Mirela

ADS ✓

2yB

B 15

2/10 re

9/11
daw

8/11

SECRET

69A

PF.47151/B.2.

8th November, 1939.

Our lady friend in Holland has sent some further items of information as follows:

1) Dated 3.11.39.

The German Legation staff at The Hague have been left without any guidance as to German long range strategy. They, and in particular BESTHORN, are, therefore, worried about the rumours circulating there regarding the possible invasion of Holland. BESTHORN, who is due to visit Berlin on business, is doubtful of the advisability of leaving owing to the uncertainty. WENNINGER has also been on a visit to Berlin, returning on the 3rd November.

2) PUTLITZ is understood to have been dismissed from the Embassy staff on account of homosexuality. He is understood to have returned to his estates in Germany, but no one has been told anything about this matter.

3) Dated 4.11.39.

On returning from Berlin, WENNINGER reports that no orders have yet been given for the march into Holland, and the decision rests with Hitler alone. The situation, he states, is precarious, but not hopeless. He is denying rumours that Von Brauchitch has gone.

Our lady friend says that she is quite convinced that she is not herself under suspicion, and has never noticed any signs of attempts to keep a watch on her. She reports that the Germans are very nervous of using the telephone, as they consider that not only the Dutch, but the English also may be listening in.

The attached report and newspaper cutting have reached me through the diplomatic bag.

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daw

November 1st, 1939. *69a.*

REPORT

Although, according to Lili, Berlin denies any intentions to violate Dutch neutrality Besthorn has reported to Berlin that the Dutch are apprehensive about a German invasion. In this connection the enclosed article, which should have been entitled "Hints to Neutrals and Holland in particular" might interest you. The general feeling of the anti-Nazis at the Legation seems to be that unless something staggering happens with regard to Russia the time is again ripe for a coup of some sort to make the people at home forget their empty or only partly filled tummies. But nobody knows what it will be.

Besthorn, who is fed up, has written home asking to be given command of a sub-marine. He is at least 38 years old. He is going on Friday to Antwerp for the day and is planning to go to Berlin this weekend or beginning of next week. When there he is also going to take up my case there as he has heard nothing so far. Yesterday he also talked to a man from the DNB (Deutsches Nachrichten Bureau) Amsterdam (unfortunately Lili couldn't remember his name) and asked him to employ me, apparently putting up a very good sales argument. According to Lili these people are anxious to do Besth. a favour and the man promised him to write to me to come for an interview. On the other hand, they also need Berlin's permission if they want to employ me. I am going into the passport question.

As I told you Boehm, Flottenchef, has been or has retired, nobody knows why. He was very popular. The new man's name is Marschall.

They have a meteorologist (is that the right word for the man who makes the weather?) at the Koniginnengraacht who spends his time on the roof there and Japs, Schulze, Bernhard's employee, goes there every day, not to report as I thought, but to learn meteorology.

SECRET

DyB
BIS
to see
27/10
25/10

B2.
Are we telling NID
about this

607A

20/10

FF.47151/B.2.

25th October, 1939.



The following further items of information have been received from our lady friend in Holland:

A. Dated 18.10.39.

1) The German submarine fleet comprises about 20 big submarines and 100 small ones. (Our source says she cannot guarantee these figures) As compared with this the Dutch are said to have 20 small submarines.

2) The small submarines are, according to Lili WORTMANN, 250 tons and have a radius of 48 hours. One of their bases seems to be Heligoland. The large submarines are 750 tons, which work from an Atlantic depot, locality unknown.

B. Dated 20.10.39.

1) BESTHORN continues to be friendly with TONALLI, with whom he dined on 18th October.

2) BESTHORN has written to Berlin, asking for permission to employ our source on his staff. He maintains that, with the exception of Lili WORTMANN, his staff is exceedingly incompetent.

Stan

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Flat 12

6FA

3.11.39.

My dear Gisela,

I was delighted to get your ^{two} last/letters dated 26th and 29th October. It is always cheering to hear from you, and you will be glad to know that the mails are apparently much more regular now.

I am sorry to say that the flat is still on our hands, and I'm afraid I don't think that your landlord would be at all enthusiastic over a suggestion of reducing the rent. However if a favourable opportunity for mentioning the subject occurs, I'll do my best.

As regards the financial question - you know, of course that there are royalties due to you on your plays, and will you please let me know if you want any money from this source. Otherwise I shall presume that you are all right for funds for the present. You know that it may be difficult to send money through the post, and I have been wondering whether you could get some from my or your relatives instead. I can always bank the royalties for you.

Life over here is not very exciting just now - the weather is damp and depressing into the bargain and people are beginning to get that typical November look.

I'm glad to hear you have met your old uncle again and I hope you have met some other pleasant people and are enjoying life as much as possible.

Write again soon.

Love, Dorothy.

8.

29.10. Lily told me in confidence that to her knowledge only 'Admiral Scheer' and 'Deutschland' got through and are on high seas somewhere. Forgetting former vague statement she said that the German have nearly 200 small submarines and hope to have a further 100 in a year's time. Pappenheim was here on 27th. Besthorn returned depressed from Brussels as people there take pessimistic view of position. Belgians completely pro-French.

Conditions in Germany not too good. Lots of things, shoes, etc. unobtainable. Worsened through Polish refugees. Joke from Berlin: If Germany loses war, Russia's frontier will be the Rhine, if she wins, Russia's frontier will be the Elbe. Böhm - chief of fleet (Flottenchef) retired. Reasons not yet known.

68A

TWO LETTERS FROM MRS. A. IN HOLLAND, DATED 3.11. and 4.11

(Recd. 7.11.39.)

Stadhouderslaan 98
Den Haag

3/11/39

My dear Dorothy,

Thank you so much for your letter of the 25th. Things don't look too good to me about my boss as I have heard nothing from him. Still, it can't be helped. In the meantime you will have had my letter asking for money. Perhaps you'll tell me which bank you are sending it to here and I can then fetch it. It's rather important that you do that, as I shall be out of funds the end of the month, not having taken more than that with me.

I had a letter from Routh, my American boss, touching. He suggests that I may be able to do something for Stablond in this country and thus stay on their pay-roll. I doubt it but have written to Tagan, telling him about it, also what I think of the business here from what I have seen in shops and asking for his suggestions. I have told nobody about it and it'll be at least a week before I can get an answer. But it seems to me if nothing else materialises that it might be a way out. What do you think? Besides, it is nicer to be paid for doing something than sit about. Anyhow, if you don't think much of the idea George might go and see Tagan. From the business point itself I should say there is very little that can be done at present.

I apologise profusely for my handwriting, I know it's atrocious, particularly long letters look a complete mess, I agree. But it couldn't be helped as I can't always use a typewriter. Still, I'll do my best.

Would you do me a favour to give the enclosed letter to Gilbert L. I've lost his address but he's sure to be in town some time.

Let me heard from you again soon and thank you for looking after my things. You are nice and encouraging anyhow.

Love

3/11 Best don worried to death
a) about situation he was in
rumours here. He was going
was going Anbury to my
suggested to
instead. He was
he dare leave
Verninget
Berlin today
Publish
here. because of
homosexual
to have retired
Germany, but
what happened

Stadhouderslaan 98
Den Haag

4/11/39

My dear Dorothy,

Thank you for your letter
a pity that the flat has not
been set yet, but I shall con-
tinue to hope that something
will turn up. You'll be glad
to hear that, thanks to your
remark that due to my
atrocious handwriting you might
put moth-balls into jam jars,
you are considered to have a
sense of humour. Aren't
you pleased?

To have good news from
my mother, but my brother

complains of boredom and
bad weather. So do I for that
matter.

We are all a bit on edge here
at present. Hardly surprising
when you consider the uncertainty
of the future. What else can I
tell you? Nothing much seems to
happen to me. I was under the
impression that letters went daily
by air mail but considering the
time they take I seem to be
wrong. I do hope you can
read this letter. I am extremely
apologetic for my hand-writing,
but what can I do about it
when typing isn't possible?

Yours
Linda

67a.

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65A

PF.47151/B.2.

3rd November, 1939.



1. Our lady friend from Holland has more to say, dated 29.10.39, regarding the submarine fleet. She reports that Lili WORTMANN, forgetting her former vague statements regarding this matter, now states that Germany has nearly 200 small submarines, and hopes to have a further 100 in a year's time.
2. Lili WORTMANN also reports that as far as her knowledge of the matter goes, only the 'Admiral Scheer' and the 'Deutschland' got through and are somewhere on the high seas.
3. BÜHM, chief of fleet (Flottenchef), has been retired. The reasons are not yet known.
- 4) PAPPENHEIM visited The Hague from Brussels on 27.10.39.
5. BESTHORN returned from his visit to Brussels in a depressed frame of mind. He remarked that people there take a very pessimistic view of the situation, and that the Belgians are strongly pro-French.
6. With regard to conditions in Germany, the scarcity of commodities has been worsened through the influx of refugees from Poland. Shoes are amongst certain categories of commodities which are now virtually unobtainable. To sum up the feeling among certain discontented people in Berlin, the following story is told with regard to the Russo-German pact: "If Germany loses the war, Russia's frontier will be the Rhine. If she wins, Russia's frontier will be the Elbe."

Staw

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64A

LETTER FROM MRS. A. IN HOLLAND, DATED 29.10.39 (Red. 1.11.39)

63A

PF.47151/B.2.

1st November, 1939.



Our lady friend in Holland reports, in a letter dated 26th October, that there is a general belief in the Legation staffs at The Hague that air attacks on London are now likely. She says that if Memel is returned to Lithuania, there will be a particular reason why the German authorities must do something to turn the balance of the war in Germany's favour. This will be necessary from the point of view of German public opinion.

I understand that our lady friend reported something of this kind direct to [redacted] on 25th October.

Stan

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62A

LETTER FROM MRS. A. IN HOLLAND, DATED 26.10.39 (Recd. 30.10.39)

Hadhonderlaan 98

Den Haag

October 26th, 1939

My dear Dorothy,

Thank you so much for your letter of the 17th which I got today. It seems rather a long time for a letter to take but I gather you have had my letters anyhow. I read most of it to my friend as she had been even more anxious than I that I had heard nothing either from you or my boss. Her worry is that you say nothing of sending me money if I need it. I assured her, however, that you were bound to be able to remit it to some bank where I could fetch it. After all, I am in no hurry about it, still you might confirm my ideas in your next letter.

Thank you for sending my identity

card. A pity, the flat isn't
let, but it can't be helped.

The weather is absolutely
atrocious here. Rain and hail
most of the time.

My old uncle is coming to
lunch with me today. He is rather
a dear & gets terribly worried if
he doesn't hear from me for a
few days.

How are things with you?
Busy as ever? Do let me hear
from you again soon.

Love

Grider

Stadhouderslaan 98
Den Haag

29/10/39

My dear Dorothy,

Thank you so much for your letter of the 22nd & 23rd which I got two days ago. I was very relieved to see that the mail didn't take quite as long this time.

I wonder if it will be possible to beat my landlords down in the rest. After all, I lost my job in London & had to take what I could get which meant going abroad. I don't think there is much object though mentioning my feelings as they are not a benevolent institution

And it might make things difficult for me afterwards. What do you think?

The Dutch generally speaking & gathering from newspapers, seem partial to England although there are, of course, some others. They are to an extent upset about their ships being kept for so long which gives the other side good propaganda value. Still, neutrality is the key-word.

Thank you for sending me my mother's letter. I hear from her occasionally through my friend, but little of interest. Can you read my letters? I know I have got an atrocious handwriting.

Love
Grete

67A

PF.47151/B.2.

27th October, 1939.



Will you please refer to correspondence ending with my PF.47151/B.2, dated 25th October. There have been certain items which may be of possible interest to N.I.D. I have not passed these direct and should like to know if you wish me to do this in future, or whether you would rather distribute such items as you think worth while.

Idew

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59A

Flat 12

25.10.39.

My dear Gisela,

I got your letters of the 19th and 21st safely and this time without quite so much delay. The censors have been kinder. The only thing is that your writing ~~is~~ getting scandalously bad. I do not expect it is always possible to do so, but when it is, please use the typewriter. Otherwise you will find me putting moth-balls in the jam-jars and letting your flat as a hospital simply because I can't read your instructions.

I phoned up your boss and told him he must let you know his plans. I am afraid, as I said before, you must be patient, but I think you are doing wonders in that line already. Your instructions are really useful and keep me completely in the picture. Only remember that I have never been in charge of your personal affairs before and I feel the responsibility and although I have the benefit of George's advice, I like to hear as often as possible from you.

George sends his love with me as usual,

Dorothy.

58A

LETTERS FROM MRS. A. DATED 19.10. and 21.10

(Recd. 25.10.39)



Miss D. White

Flat 12

60, Great Russell Street

London W. C. 1

England

Get by G.O. / Radha-draslan 98
Din Day

Audhouderlaan 48
Den Haag

October 19th, 1959

Dear Dorothy,

I am beginning to be seriously
worried whether you are all right
or what has happened that
I don't hear from you. I
know you are probably very
busy but couldn't George type
a short note for you telling me
whether the flat has been let
& how things are generally?
Or didn't you get my other
letters? In that case there

Wouldn't it be much object writing
to you any further. Frankly,
I am grieved of not to say
hurt that I seem to have been
forgotten as quickly as that.
Goodness knows we need enough
patience in this life as it is.
I am glad to say it is again possible
to buy English papers here, only one
day late, that means reading papers
in 3-4 different languages daily
on the news. What an
education! I regret to say this
week seems a dead as I am bored.
But there is nothing like hope
for excitement. I hate to think
of the war & some of the things that
have happened. Yours sincerely

OPENED BY ENED BY

P.C. 66

P.C. 66

ZE GEREED ZUN!

12½ CENT 12½

Miss D. White

Flat 12,

60, Great Russell Street,

London W.C.1.

ENGELAND

CENS

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October 21st, 1939

My dear Dorothy,

I wonder if you could do me another favour? I have heard nothing from my old boss since he went back to London. It didn't really worry me as I explained it to myself with his artistic temperament, but as everybody else is continuously asking me about him I am gradually being worked up into a state about it. After all, he might have dropped me a note, even if he does not know when he is coming back, assuring me of his goodwill. And even, if later on he finds he can't get back, there is nothing to prevent him telling me then, provided he refunds me the money for the return fare and at least a week's keep. Don't you agree? Would you give him a ring? What's more, with all this reading of detective stories one is apt to look for bodies, culprits and motives with such strange behaviour. So be a dear and find out for me.

As far as my personal affairs are concerned, perhaps you could discuss them with one of the playwrights you know. I'd hate to be diddled by the agent and it's a ticklish business which after all might produce

*By am. expect about train every day.
trying to have so little to report always.
he is not coming back.*

*For preparation...
What's more, with all this reading of detective stories one is apt to look for bodies, culprits and motives with such strange behaviour.*

results in the long run. If you don't agree with me say so and we'll give it up as a bad job. I wish I could look after things on my own but having started the way I did it won't be possible for a little while yet so we'll have to be reasonable about it.

I must say Holland is nice but expensive and meeting new people doesn't make living any cheaper. Still I simply have to cut down expenses, particularly as I don't know what is going to happen. Perhaps I'll find some other and more satisfactory job soon, but you needn't mention that to my boss as yet.

Lots of love

Gertie

D.B. C...
BIS for Dutch connections.

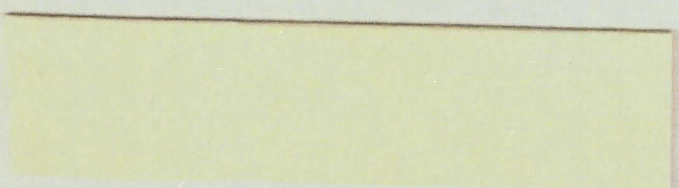
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D.G.W.
22/10

SECRET

PF.47151/B.2.

22nd October, 1939.



The following further points of information have reached me from our lady friend in Holland. You will note that the mail is somewhat irregular.

A. Dated 9.10.39.

- 1) ERWEGGER, the young reserve officer, mentioned in my PF.47151/B.2, dated 20th October, was seen on 8th October working on decoding from a figure code with BESTHORN. The work was apparently regarded as urgent and took BESTHORN and ERWEGGER most of the day.
- 2) Two German girls in Rome (presumably serving in the German Embassy there) have been recalled because they were known to be friendly with Italian officers.

B. Dated 12.10.39.

- 1) Lili WORTMANN has said that the work in the Marine Attaché's office consists mainly in watching the movements of ships, collecting data about blockade, mine-fields, etc. She has expressed the opinion that there will be no German offensive, no invasion of Holland and Belgium and no air attack on London. She keeps reiterating that the blockade is the most effective weapon against England. She also states that no Russian wood will be allowed to reach England, though materials sent to Russia under the Anglo-Russian Trade Agreement will probably be allowed through.
- 2) BESTHORN's assistant (Hilfsarbeiter) KROGER will shortly be dismissed for inefficiency.
- 3) It is believed that in the office of the Marine Attaché there is no wireless equipment.

Ba
Sanderson
ought to
tell this
has not
been
mentioned
in
the
report

C. Dated 14.10.39.

- 1) BESTHORN is very friendly with TONALLI (this man is a Naval Attaché at The Hague, presumably Italian, but the word is mutilated and cannot be read). TONALLI is also friendly with Schofield of the British Embassy, with whom he was to have played golf on Sunday, 15th October. BESTHORN was looking forward to hearing what Schofield had to say to TONALLI. TONALLI has expressed the opinion that England may win the war, but will probably lose the Empire.
- 2) BESTHORN states that every time the British Fleet comes within range it will be attacked from the air.

Bild
...

THIS IS A COPY
ORIGINAL DOCUMENT RETAINED
IN DEPARTMENT UNDER SECTION
3(4) OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS
ACT 1958 JANUARY 2024

Submarine warfare will also be increased. He states also that the Dutch are disturbed by the fact that their ships are held up in the Downs.

3) Like Lili WORTMANN, BESTHORN states that there will be no German offensive for some time to come. He relies on German ability to wear Britain down by inaction.

4) Lili WORTMANN has said that in the raid on Kiel the 'Deutschland' was not hit. The bombs actually hit only a breakwater.

5) Captain SPILLER, formerly Assistant Air Attaché in London, is going to Oslo as German Military Attaché there.

D. Dated 16.10.39.

1) Our source's brother, Jürgen BERGHOLTZ, who formerly served with the German Army in Poland, and whose regiment is M 8 mechanised, has been sending postcards home recently from Heidelberg, Wiesbaden, Mainz and Nierstein.

2) There are rumours that Aachen and Düsseldorf will be evacuated. The population of Trier has received no instructions.

3) After telephoning with Berlin on the morning of 15th October, BESTHORN went to Amsterdam with the agent of Hapag of Rotterdam.

4) Our source spent the evening with Fräulein LÜNZNER, General WENNINGER's secretary. She said that in her opinion none of the German officials at The Hague really knew what was likely to happen, and that they took their ideas mainly from the German press.

5) Our source has made contact with KRÜGER personally since last reporting his impending dismissal. She finds that he is unaware of this. She reports that he expresses anti-Nazi sentiments and actually stated that he hoped England would fight it out, though he is doubtful of this. He also said that a German officer friend of his had told him that French troops had held up notices, saying "Morgen werden wir durch Engländer abgelöst" and "Die Engländer sitzen da und da". In KRÜGER's opinion this proves that the French do not like the English.

6) ERWEGER, BESTHORN's assistant who used to work for Siemens, states that this German firm is now executing more foreign orders than ever, with the object of acquiring foreign currency.

7) SPILLER reports that the British Admiralty has admitted bad damage to 'Repulse'.

Summing up the above points, the opinions of the various officials at The Hague appear to reflect German propaganda and indicate the general German strategy at the moment as the avoidance of any general offensive and the reliance on the blockade. This will be prosecuted by aerial attacks upon the British Fleet, coupled with intensification of submarine warfare. It is clearly hoped

that by this means England will tire of the war, while it is still thought possible that France may be detached from her Ally.

In view of the information reported on 16.1039 (vide para. 5) you may think it worth while approaching the disgruntled KRÖGER.

Would it be worth while warning Schofield of TONALLI's friendship with BESTHORN?

56A

Flat 12.

22nd October, 1939.

My dear Gisela,

The post is so irregular that I am afraid I shall sometimes receive your letters in couples. This happened with your last two, dated 15.10 and 17.10. However now that I have them I will do as you ask me and put the moth-balls in the blankets, air the flat occasionally, etc. No, I am afraid I haven't succeeded in letting the flat yet. There are so many flats going begging at the present time, and I have heard of some cases in which agents have dropped as much as £100 a year in order to keep a tenant, so you see what I'm up against. Still, I'll do my best, as you know.

I'm sorry to hear you have got a cold. I have not yet got one myself, but I feel sure it is to come since we too have had days of continuous rain. And the heaviest rain unluckily coincided with one of my rare weekends out of London.

George is well and asks me to convey his love to you. He is, of course, interested in your doings - he is as busy as ever. I ring him up occasionally and tell him little bits of gossip about your doings, which you give me.

You may not believe it, but the war has not changed those friends who really are friends. We in England are not fighting a war against the German people, and there is an entire absence of the hatred and war-fever which was so terrible in the last war, at least so I am told. As you know I was not old enough to see it for myself.

I am wondering how the Dutch feel about all this. Our hope is that the neutral countries will

23/10.

understand that we are really fighting their battle for them. We understand that they are not in a position to join us, but benevolent neutrality is something and the thought that their sympathies are with us is a great moral asset.

I must rush off to work now, don't worry about your flat. I will do my best for you and perhaps we shall be successful in the long run.

Love,

Dorothy.

55A

LETTERS FROM MRS. A. DATED 15.10 and 17.10.39 (Recd. 21.10.39)

Stadhouderslaan 28
Den Haag

17/11/59

My dear Dorothy,

I am very anxious to know whether you managed to get the flat at least for a short while. If you have not, there is not much hope, would you be an angel & throw a few more moth balls amongst the blankets. It would be a pity to have them eaten up.

There is little else to tell you from here. There is on the war path against Charlie's wife which complicates & upsets every body all round. Generally speaking these private wars seem so much more important

that we completely overlook
the fact that there is a real
war on. It's beyond me &
can only be explained by supreme
egotism. She seems only able to
think of one thing & I am too much
of a lady to mention it. God
forbid that we grow old like that.
Tonight 6 of us "girls" are
meeting & going out to supper.

Sessions like that usually build
down to a lot of gossip & bright
remarks, but nothing else. Still,
I ought to be grateful that I am
so nicely accepted into the
circle. Towards the middle of
next week I shall have to go
to the police to have my permit
extended. It should be all right
but you never can tell. Sorry
about my hand writing. Can you
read everything? My love to
everybody. Yours Grace

Stadhouderslaan 98
Den Haag

15/10/39

My dear Dorothy,

The weather is jolting with intervals. At the present moment it's coming down in buckets.

I've managed to get a cold again but as most people here seem to have one it's not surprising. Yesterday afternoon, having nothing better to do as all my friends were working, I went out to Scheveningen.

It was marvellous, a nice strong wind, an angry looking sea, it cheered me up no end. In the evening we had a little celebration, just a stroke of luck catching everybody together & inclined to come out to a nice dinner. So far I haven't paid for it but as it was my suggestion I may have to. At least, it has brought me very much into the forenoon.

Again which was necessary,
I have written my boss last week,
thought of giving him a message
for you, but decided against
it as I might as well write
you personally. My Dutch is
setting on, I stagger through the
newspapers & converse with the
maid to her delight. Only the
dog in the house doesn't get
up in excitement when I say
to him "uit gaan" so perhaps
my pronunciation isn't all
that it should be. I wish I
had something exciting to tell
you, but I haven't. Tomorrow
night I have asked a nice little
girl I met in London to come
out with me for dinner. She looks
as if she lived on air but is a
sweet & intelligent girl. My
love to everybody. Yours
Grethe

16.10.

My brother's regiment M.8 mechanised has sent postcards home lately from Heidelberg, Wiesbaden, Mainz and Nierstein. Rumours of evacuating Aachen and Düsseldorf. People in Trier have had no instructions yet. After telephoning with Berlin Sunday morning, BESTHORN went to Amsterdam together with agent of Hapag, Rotterdam.

Spent evening with LÜNZNER, WENNINGER's secretary. She too says nobody here knows what is going to happen or has happened, except what papers say. Later met KROEGER, BESTHORN's assistant, anti-Nazi, incompetent, will be sacked shortly, but doesn't know it. He hopes England will fight it out, but is doubtful too. Says Russia sent Germany $17\frac{1}{2}$ tons gold? and will fight India. Heard from German officer who is supposed to have seen it that some French troops held up saying: "Morgen werden wir durch Engländer abgelöst" and "Die Engländer sitzen da und da", proving French don't like English. ERWEGER? Er? used to be with Siemens here, says that Siemens, Germany, execute more foreign orders than ever to get currency. SPILLER says British Admiralty admits bad damage to Repulse.

14.10.

Invited Lili and BESTHORN to dinner to-night as opportunity arose. BEST. very satisfactory. Be is still very friendly with TONALLI Naval Attaché. Latter called on B. this afternoon with wife and child. TONALLI is playing golf with SCHOFIELD Sunday. B. is looking forward to hearing anything SCH. said to T. T. is of opinion England might win war, but would lose Empire. B. says everytime British Fleet comes out German planes will be there and submarine warfare will increase. Also that Dutch are extremely upset about their ships being held in Downs. B. does not think there will be German offensive for some time as nothing happening will wear out Britain more. We are meeting again alone, but not in The Hague to discuss matters. Lili says 'Deutschland' was not hit, no ship was, only breakwater. SPILLER, formerly London, going to Oslo as Military Attaché. My opinion: German newspapers have poisonous campaign against England supplying gas to Poland, which looks like an advance excuse for using gas themselves.

Please acknowledge letters 1, 2 and 3.



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