



# The Bulldog Bulletin



Patron: Her Majesty The Queen

President: Priya Guha British Consul General



CALDERDALE

The Newsletter of The Royal British Legion  
California Branch No 1

April 2014



CAMDEN



CRAYFORD



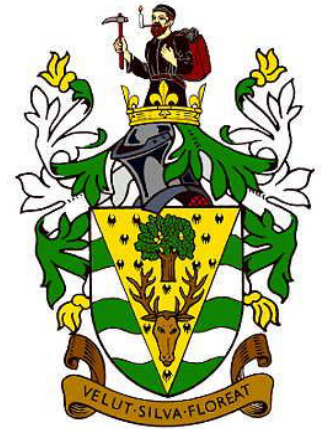
CROYDON



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## RBL Chairman's April report,



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The next meeting will be Tuesday May 13th and will be held at the San Rafael Yacht Club, 200 Yacht Club Drive, San Rafael CA. at 12:30 pm

Please do your best to attend

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**It is with great sadness we have to report the passing of one of our senior members Jack Lewis. Jack was one of the founding members of the Branch.**

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We would like to welcome our new members Terry Carlson Minneapolis, MN, Matthew Wayne Sylvania, OH. In addition, rejoining member Dr. Fred Graf. El Paso, TX.

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## *The Silence...*

About six miles from Maastricht, in the Netherlands, lie buried 8,301 American soldiers who died in "Operation Market Garden" in the battles to liberate Holland in the fall winter of 1944-. Every one of the men buried in the cemetery, as well as those in the Canadian and British military cemeteries, has been adopted by a Dutch family who mind the grave, decorate it, and keep alive the memory of the soldier they have adopted. It is even the custom to keep a portrait of "their" American soldier in a place of honor in their home. Annually, on "Liberation Day," memorial services are held for "the men who died to liberate Holland." The day concludes with a concert. The final piece is always "Il Silenzio," a memorial piece commissioned by the Dutch and first played in 1965 on the 20th anniversary of Holland's liberation. It has been the concluding piece of the memorial concert ever since.

This year the soloist was a 13-year-old Dutch girl, Melissa Venema, backed by André Rieu and his orchestra (the Royal Orchestra of the Netherlands). This beautiful concert piece is based upon the original version of taps and was composed by Italian composer Nino Rossi. Watch at full screen.

<http://www.flixxy.com/trumpet-solo-melissa-venema.htm>

## Patrick Robert "Pat" Reid, [MBE](#), [MC](#)

### **Early life and education**

Patrick Reid was born in Ranchi, India, the son of John Reid, CIE ICS, of Carlow, Ireland,<sup>[3]</sup> and Alice Mabel Daniell. He was educated at Clongowes Wood College, County Kildare, and Wimbledon College, London, and graduated from King's College London in 1932. He then trained as a civil engineer, working for Sir Alexander Gibb & Partners from 1934 to 1937, and becoming an Associate Member of the Institution of Civil Engineers in 1936.

### **Military service**

Reid joined the Territorial Army and was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant on 16 June 1933 on the General List. He joined the Royal Army Service Corps (Supplementary Reserve) with the same rank on 5 June 1935. He was promoted to Lieutenant exactly three years later on 5 June 1938.

Reid was mobilized for active duty on 24 August 1939, and served in the 2nd Infantry Division, receiving promotion to Temporary Captain on 1 December 1939. On 27 May 1940, while serving as a member of the British Expeditionary Force during the Battle of France,<sup>[2]</sup> he was captured by the Germans near Cassel.<sup>[4]</sup> He was sent to Laufen castle, Bavaria, designated Oflag VII-C, arriving there on 5 June 1940.<sup>[2]</sup>

Within days of his arrival, Reid was planning an escape, determined to return home by Christmas. After seven weeks digging Reid and a group of prisoners completed a tunnel, 24 feet (7.3 m) long, from the prison basement to a small shed adjoining a nearby house. At 06:30 on 5 September 1940 Reid and five others broke out and made for Yugoslavia, only 150 miles away. However, after five days the escapees were recaptured in Radstadt, Austria. Reid was sentenced to a month of solitary confinement, on a diet of bread and water.<sup>[5]</sup>

As one of the "Laufen Six", Reid was then sent to [Colditz Castle](#), designated [Oflag IV-C](#), a special "escape-proof" camp, arriving there on 10 November 1940. It was not long before Reid attempted an escape. He bribed a seemingly willing German guard to look the other way. On the night of 29 May 1941 twelve prisoners crawled through a sewer pipe from the canteen to an outer courtyard, planning to then descend a forty foot wall, and then over another wall 12 feet high topped with barbed wire. Unfortunately, although the guard had accepted the bribe, he also reported the escape plan to his superiors, and the Germans were waiting for them. After another spell in solitary, Reid accepted the position of Escape Officer, responsible for overseeing all British escape plans. Reid assisted in many escape attempts, some successful,<sup>[5]</sup> until April 1942, when he was replaced as Escape Officer by fellow member of the "Laufen Six" Captain Richard "Dick" Howe.



## Escaping Colditz

Reid finally took his own chance to escape on the night of 14/15 October 1942, along with Major Ronald Littledale, Lieutenant Commander William L. Stephens RNVR, and Flight Lieutenant Howard Wardle RAF. They cut through the bars on a window in the prisoner's kitchen, and climbed out onto the flat roof of the German kitchen. They then crossed the brightly lit outer yard, and avoided being seen by a guard. They entered a storage cellar under the *Kommandantur* (Commandant's HQ), crawled out through a narrow air shaft leading to the dry moat, and exited through the park. They split into pairs,<sup>[4]</sup> with Reid and Wardle disguised as Flemish workmen<sup>[7]</sup> travelling by train to Tuttlingen, near the Swiss border, via Zwickau and Munich. They crossed the border near Ramsen on the evening of 18 October. Stephens and Littledale also travelled to Tuttlingen by train, via Chemnitz, Nuremberg and Stuttgart, then followed Reid and Wardle across the border in the early hours of 20 October.<sup>[4]</sup>

Reid remained in Switzerland until after the end of the war, serving as an Assistant Military Attaché in Berne from 9 March 1943 until early 1946, and receiving promotion to Temporary Major on 1 November 1945.<sup>[2]</sup> He was unusually discreet about his duties there, but was in fact working for the [Secret Intelligence Service](#) (MI6) gathering intelligence from arriving escapees.

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### The Battle of Cambrai, 1917

On November 20, 1917, the British launched the first full-scale offensive that was designed exclusively to accommodate the British secret weapon, **the tank** (so-called because when the first shipment came from England they were described as water tanks to maintain secrecy).



A surprise artillery barrage started the offensive and 476 tanks, packed tightly for a mass attack moved against the German lines.

Supported by infantry the gains were dramatic, breaching the almost impregnable Hindenberg line to depths of 4-5 miles in some places. However, these gains seemed to surprise British High Command equally as much as the Germans, and the following cavalry failed to take advantage.

Nevertheless, Cambrai demonstrated how a well-thought out attack, combining tanks en masse with surprise, could be used to break the trench deadlock.



A Scottish woman went to the local newspaper office to publish the obituary for her recently deceased husband.

The obit editor informed her that there is a charge of 50 P per word.

She paused, reflected, and then said, "Well then, let it read, "Angus MacPherson died."

Amused at the woman's thrift, the editor told her that there is a seven word minimum for all obituaries.

She thought it over and in a few seconds said, "In that case, let it read.....

"Angus MacPherson died. Golf clubs for sale."

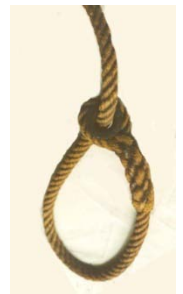
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## The Hangman Albert Pierrpoint

**Albert Pierrepoint** (30 March 1905 – 10 July 1992) was a long-serving [hangman](#) in England. He executed at least **400 people**, including [William Joyce](#) (one of the men dubbed "[Lord Haw-Haw](#)"), and [John Amery](#), whom he considered the bravest man he had ever hanged. He executed many people who had been convicted of war crimes.



Pierrepoint was often dubbed the Official Executioner, despite there being no such job or title. The office of executioner had traditionally been performed by the local sheriff, who increasingly delegated the task to a person of suitable character, employed and paid only when required. Pierrepoint continued to work for years in a grocery near Bradford after qualifying as an Assistant Executioner in 1932 and a Chief Executioner in 1941, in the steps of his father and uncle.



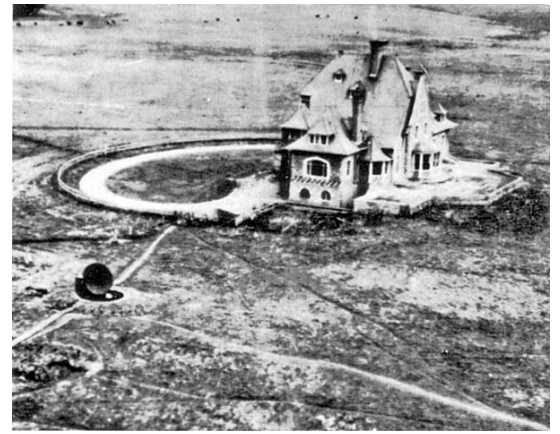
Following his retirement in 1956, the [Home Office](#) acknowledged Pierrepoint as the most efficient executioner in British history. He subsequently became a [publican](#) in Lancashire and wrote his memoirs, in which he sensationally concluded that capital punishment was not a deterrent.

There is no official tally of his hangings, which some have estimated at more than 600; the most commonly accepted figure is 435.

*Albert Pierrepoint* - [Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia](#)

# Operation Biting

**Operation Biting**, also known as the **Bruneval Raid**, was the codename given to a British [Combined Operations](#) raid on a German radar installation in [Bruneval](#), northern [France](#), that occurred between 27–28 February 1942 during [World War II](#).



A number of these installations had been identified from [Royal Air Force aerial reconnaissance](#) during 1941, but their exact purpose and the nature of the equipment that they possessed was not known. However, a number of British scientists believed that these stations had something to do with the heavy losses being experienced by RAF bombers conducting bombing raids against targets in Occupied Europe. A request was therefore made by these scientists that one of these installations be raided and the technology it possessed be studied and, if possible, extracted and brought back to Britain for further study.

Due to the extensive coastal defences erected by the Germans to protect the installation from a sea-borne raid, it was believed that a commando raid from the sea would only incur heavy losses on the part of the attackers, and give sufficient time for the garrison at the installation to destroy the [Würzburg radar](#) set. It was therefore decided that an airborne assault, followed by sea-borne evacuation would be the most practicable way to surprise the garrison of the installation and seize the technology intact, as well as minimise casualties inflicted on the raiding force.

On the night of 27 February, after a period of intense training and several delays due to poor weather, a small detachment of airborne troops under the command of [Major John Frost](#) parachuted into France a few miles from the installation. The force then proceeded to assault the villa in which the radar equipment was kept, killing several members of the German garrison and capturing the installation after a brief fire-fight. A technician that had come with the force proceeded to dismantle the Würzburg radar array and remove several key pieces to take back to Britain, the raiding force then withdrew to the evacuation beach. The detachment assigned to clear the beach had failed to do so, however, and another brief fire-fight was required to eliminate the Germans guarding it. The raiding force was then picked up by a small number of landing craft and transferred to several [Motor Gun Boats](#) which brought them back to Britain.

The raid was entirely successful. The airborne troops suffered only a few casualties, and the pieces of the radar they brought back, along with a German radar technician, allowed British scientists to understand enemy advances in radar and to create counter-measures to neutralise those advances.

Click the link [Operation Biting - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia](#)

## German submarine sinks Lusitania

The earlier German attacks on merchant ships off the south coast of Ireland prompted the British Admiralty to warn the *Lusitania* to avoid the area or take simple evasive action, such as zigzagging to confuse U-boats plotting the vessel's course. The captain of the *Lusitania* ignored these recommendations, and at 2:12 p.m. on May 7, in the waters of the Celtic Sea, the 32,000-ton ship was hit by an exploding torpedo on its starboard side. The torpedo blast was followed by a larger explosion, probably of the ship's boilers. The *Lusitania* sank within 20 minutes.



Germany justified the attack by stating, correctly, that the *Lusitania* was an enemy ship, and that it was carrying munitions. It was primarily a passenger ship, however, and among the 1,201 drowned in the attack were many women and children, including 128 Americans. Colonel Edward House, close associate of U.S. President Woodrow Wilson, was in London for a diplomatic visit when he learned of the *Lusitania's* demise. America has come to the parting of the ways, he wrote in a telegram to Wilson, when she must determine whether she stands for civilized or uncivilized warfare. We can no longer remain neutral spectators.

Wilson subsequently sent a strongly worded note to the German government—the first of three similar communications—demanding that it cease submarine warfare against unarmed merchant ships. Wilson's actions On the afternoon of May 7, 1915, the British ocean liner *Lusitania* is torpedoed without warning by a German submarine off the south coast of Ireland.

Faced with the overpowering size and strength of the British Royal Navy at the outset of World War I, Germany realized its most effective weapon at sea was its deadly accurate U-boat submarine. Consequently, in February 1915, the German navy adopted a policy of unrestricted submarine warfare, declaring the area around the British Isles a war zone, in which all merchant ships, including those from neutral countries, would be subject to attack.

Though the United States was officially neutral at this point in the war, Britain was one of the nation's closest trading partners, and tensions arose immediately over Germany's new policy. In early May 1915, several New York newspapers published a warning by the German embassy in Washington that Americans traveling on British or Allied ships in war zones did so at their own risk. On the same page, an advertisement announced the imminent sailing of the British cruise liner *Lusitania* from New York back to Liverpool.

prompted his secretary of state, the pacifist William Jennings Bryan, to resign. His successor, Robert Lansing, took quite a different view of the situation: the sinking of the *Lusitania* had convinced him that the United States could not maintain its neutrality forever, and would eventually be forced to enter the war against Germany.

On the German side, fear of further antagonizing Wilson and his government led Kaiser Wilhelm and Chancellor Theobald von Bethmann Hollweg to issue an apology to the U.S. and enforce a curb on the policy of unrestricted submarine warfare. By early 1917, however, under pressure from military leaders who advocated an aggressive naval policy as an integral component of German strategy in World War I, the government reversed its policy, and on February 1, 1917, Germany resumed its policy of unrestricted U-boat warfare. Two days later, Wilson announced that the U.S. was breaking diplomatic relations with Germany; the same day, the American liner *Housatonic* was sunk by a German U-boat. The United States formally entered World War I on April 6, 1917.

# Nazi Saboteurs' Spectacular Failure Detailed In Newly Released Spy Files



Adolf Hitler decorates members of his Nazi youth organization "Hitler Jugend" in photo reportedly taken in front of the Chancellory Bunker in Berlin, April 25, 1945. That was just four days before Hitler committed suicide. (AP Photo)

LONDON -- The four men wading ashore on a Florida beach wearing nothing but bathing trunks and German army hats looked like an unlikely invading force.

Declassified British intelligence files describe how the men were part of Nazi sabotage teams sent to the U.S. in June 1942 to undermine the American war effort.

They were trained in bomb-making, supplied with explosives and instructed in how to make timers from "easily obtainable commodities such as dried peas, lumps of sugar and razor blades." Fortunately for the U.S., they were also spectacularly unsuccessful.

"It was not brilliantly planned," said Edward Hampshire, a historian at Britain's National Archives, which released the wartime intelligence documents Monday. "The Germans picked the leader for this very, very poorly. He immediately wanted to give himself up."

A detailed new account of the mission – code-named Pastorius after an early German settler in the U.S. – is provided in a report written in 1943 by MI5 intelligence officer Victor Rothschild. It is one of a trove of previously secret documents which shed light on the Nazis' desire to use sabotage, subterfuge and even poisoned sausages to fight the war.

Pastorius was a mixture of elaborate planning, bad luck and human error.

Eight Germans who had lived in the U.S. were dropped along the Eastern seaboard – four on Long Island, the rest south of Jacksonville, Florida. They were to go ashore, blend in, then begin a campaign of sabotage against factories, railways and canals, as well as launching "small acts of terrorism" including suitcase bombs aimed at Jewish-owned shops.

Click on link [\*Nazi Saboteurs' Spectacular Failure Detailed In Newly Relea\*](#)