

The Torch

February 2016

Volume 27, Number 1

Operation Glimmer

by Tom Dent

The great illusionist Kreskin's most spectacular feat was to make the Statue of Liberty vanish.

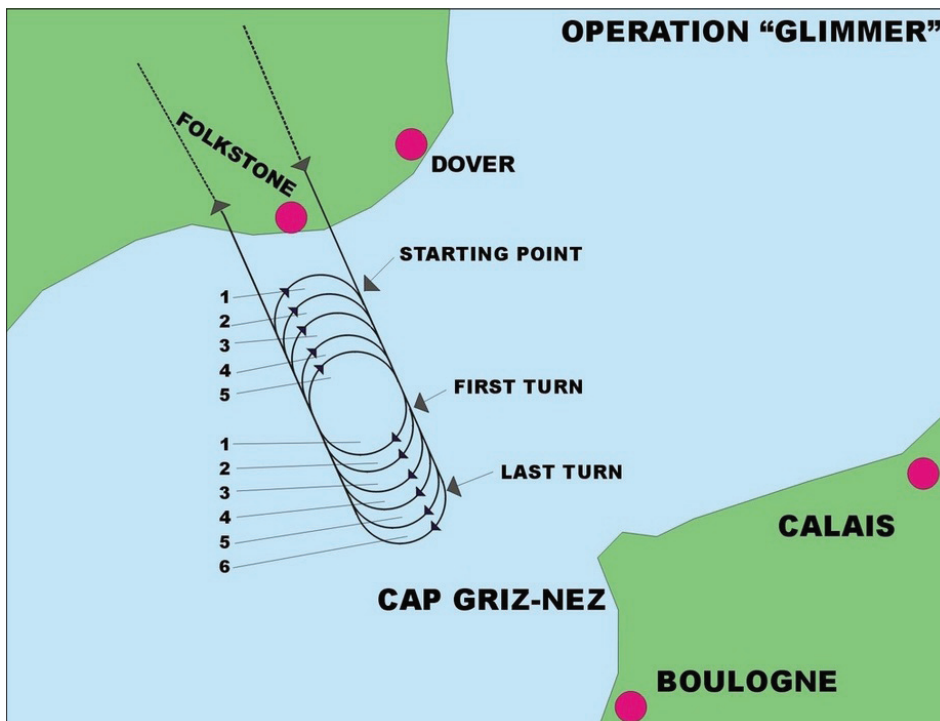
An even more spectacular illusion was created when on the early morning of June 6 1944, Operation 'Glimmer', carried out by RAF 218 Squadron, flying six Stirling four engine bombers equipped with GH precise radar navigation aids and loaded with thousands of bundles of paper strips, conjured up a massive naval invasion fleet advancing from Folkestone harbor on England's South coast towards Cap Gris Nez.

The illusion was so complete that shore batteries on Cap Gris

Nez opened fire on the "invasion fleet". Two German panzer divisions were held in the Pas de Calais area and were not despatched to join the defences 400 miles west in Normandy, until at least June 20.

How was this done?

The mastermind of this grand illusion was Sebastian "Bas" Pease, a 21 year old civilian working for Bomber Command's Operational Research Section. He conceived the idea of creating the illusion of a vast naval armada on the screens of German radar. To succeed, it would need pinpoint navigational accuracy and precision piloting.



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To understand how the operation worked, imagine two aircraft one about 4 miles behind the other, flying across the English Channel from Folkestone to Cap Gris Nez. Immediately on crossing the coast at Folkestone the first crew begins off loading "Window".

Window consists of bundles of paper strips, aluminum foil on one side, about ½ cm wide and cut to the exact length of the enemy's radar transmissions. As they fall to the ground twisting and turning they reflect back the enemy radar with the results that the screens become filled with snow and individual targets are impossible to detect.

As soon as the leading aircraft is 4 miles from the coast the crew stop dropping Window. They then turn 180 degrees back toward the coast and begin dropping Window as soon as the turn is complete. When they reach a position four miles from the turn they cease Windowing, turn again on the same track and begin the procedure again. The second aircraft does the same thing but each time extending the flight a short distance forward. The result would be a column of Window snow 4 miles long and moving slowly towards Cap Gris Nez.

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en Français*



President's Message

Following a busy fall, the Friends are continuing with a full calendar of events and volunteer activities throughout the winter. We were pleased to kick off the 2016 Friends Forum series with a very special Guest Speaker-Friend, Gen(Ret'd) Paul Manson speaking on "*The Changing Face of War*" at the RCAF Mess on 14 January 2016. The Events Committee has a full program developed for the months to come. Watch the Torch, the FCWM Website and Victor Vaivads' E-Bulletins for details on the National Capital Region activities.

With our latest installment of \$25,000 paid to the Canadian War Museum (CWM) in January 2016, the Friends have contributed \$55,000 plus the \$10,000 contributed as part of Vice-Admiral Ralph Lucien Hennessy, DSC, CD and Diana Hennessy's legacy to the Medals Stories Project. These funds are making a difference as they offset the \$181,000 that the CWM has already invested in web development, salaries, translation, editing and conservation.

The estimated cost of conserving and displaying one of the 1,100 medals sets held by the Museum is \$250.00. Under the leadership of our newly appointed FCWM Medals Project Liaison, Robert (Bob) Argent, we expect to launch a Medals Stories Fundraiser in the near future. Bob is already working to gather information on the Project and its progress, to assist with identifying additional elements of the Project with which the Friends can assist and to develop with the Friends Marketing and Communication Committee our key Project messages and appropriate channels for message distribution.

Thanks to the efforts of CWM staff and Friends volunteer researchers, the first 200 Medals Stories are complete. The Museum staff is hopeful that the first searchable, albeit sparsely populated, Medals Stories website will be available by summer 2016.

We are reviewing our accomplishments in 2015-16 in preparation for the production of the 2015 FCWM Annual Report. At the same time, we are reviewing our Strategic Plan and will be identifying the parts of that Plan on which we will focus in 2016-17.

One new activity about which we are very excited is our recently approved Agreement to assist as a major sponsor with the 83rd Annual Meeting of the Society for Military History, hosted by the Canadian Museum of History and the CWM. From 14 to 17 April 2016, approximately 600 international delegates—scholars, military members and citizens interested in military history will come to Ottawa for this annual conference. The Friends will be front and centre as coffee break hosts and with our displays and information tables. The Symposium theme is *Crossing Borders, Crossing Boundaries*. Friends are eligible to receive a discount of \$60 off the regular conference registration rate. Before registering for the Seminar, members should call the FCWM Office Manager to get the special promotional code.

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Bas Pease used two formations of three aircraft, and spaced them in line abreast 1 mile apart. Allowing for the fact that these aircraft would be flying at 200 miles per hour Pease had to calculate the turning points so that the giant block of snow which would appear on the enemy radar screens appeared to be moving across the channel at the speed of a large invasion fleet.

To add to the illusion a fleet of naval launches kept station under the moving 'Window' and generated continuous radio chatter.

In an article written by Ron Colledge, one of the navigators involved in operation Glimmer, he tells how matters were organized inside each aircraft. Each of the Stirings carried three navigators instead of the usual one. The first would carry out normal dead reckoning navigation to get to the operating area and hopefully, home again. A second navigator using the earlier model Gee helped the pilot maintain an accurate track during the exercise. A third navigator used the GeeH equipment to set the turning point coordinates. Once the start point coordinate was reached, extra air crew inside the aircraft began pushing out bundles of Window. While this was going on, the navigator set the second coordinates on the GeeH machine. Once this point was reached Windowing stopped, simultaneously the pilot brought the aircraft onto a reciprocal course. As this was happening the navigator set up another set of coordinates and when this point was reached, with the aircraft now heading away from France, the order was given to resume dropping Window and the aircraft continued back towards the starting point. A final coordinate was set, fractionally nearer Cap Gris Nez and the procedure was repeated for the next 3 hours or so with Window being dropped on all the parallel tracks but never on the turn.

Even though the aircraft were flying at 200 miles per hour the accuracy of GeeH made it possible for the block of Window to creep across the Channel at around five knots, the approximate speed of a large fleet of invasion vessels.

The German forces in the Pas de Calais region were completely fooled. Coastal batteries on Cap Gris Nez opened fire on the advancing "invasion fleet" and as a precaution German Panzer divisions were held back for 14 days from the Normandy front.

Rendel Sebastian 'Baz' Pease became a famous plasma physicist and was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1977. He never spoke about his work on Operation Glimmer until 50 years later when he described it in a meeting with George Dyson, one of his colleagues in the days of the Operational Research Section of Bomber Command in 1944. "Baz" Pease died in 2004.

Tom Dent is a Volunteer Interpreter with the FCWM

2016 Annual Meeting

83rd Annual Meeting of the Society for Military History

"Crossing Borders, Crossing Boundaries"

April 14-17, 2016

Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

Hosted by Canadian War Museum
and the Canadian Museum of History

Prepare now for the Society for Military History's 83rd Annual Meeting in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada from April 14 to 17, 2016. **Reserve your room** at the **Ottawa Marriott Hotel**.

The registration link for the conference is now live at

<https://ww2.eventrebels.com/er/Registration/StepRegInfo.jsp?ActivityID=13867&StepNumber=1>

Special conference rate:

CA\$169 plus taxes and fees (**convert into U.S. dollars**)

- A complimentary continental breakfast for each guest will be served in the Summit, a private revolving rooftop restaurant on the 29th floor with panoramic views of downtown Ottawa.
- Internet (WiFi and Ethernet) and local phone calls are complimentary in all guest rooms.
- All public areas of the hotel offer complimentary WiFi.

A second hotel has been added for the conference. Rooms can be booked at the **Delta City Centre Ottawa** for a room rate CAD \$179 plus taxes per night. This price does not include breakfast.

If you have any questions, **please contact the organizing committee** at the Canadian War Museum in Ottawa.

Andrew Burtch - Tel: 1-819-776-8615

Francine Lapointe - Tel: 1-819-776-8396

SMH 2016 Coordinating Team

Transitions New Friends

From 1 October – 31 December 2015 the Friends of the Canadian War Museum have welcomed the following new Friends:

- The Royal Canadian Legion
Branch 341 (SK)
- Mrs. Shiela Anderson

- Lisa Bédard
- Mr. Matthew De Haan
- Julia Finn
- David Monaghan
- M. Jean-Guy Perron
- Sarah J. Toomey
- Omar Wakil

In Memoriam

Since distribution of the last Torch in November 2015, the Friends have been notified of, and mourn, the passing of the following colleagues:

John Armand Scott (Jas) Haley
Pauline Flynn
Robert (Bob) Margeson

FCWM Committees

The Friends are involved in a variety of activities in fulfilment of their mandate to support the Canadian War Museum. To ensure the optimisation and effective coordination of those efforts a committee organisation has been established. Volunteer committee members spend long hours in trying to find new and innovative ways to increase membership; to develop interesting events for Friends and Museum visitors; to fulfil research requests; and, to keep the membership informed of ongoing activities of interest.

This article is the first of two describing the roles and current activities of those Committees. In this edition, the Executive, Membership and Events Committees are described. The remaining Committees will be covered in the next issue of the Torch.

Executive Committee

The executive committee (EXECOM) is created by the Friends of the Canadian War Museum (FCWM) board of directors (BOD) in accordance with its by-laws and serves as its management committee charged with executing the day-to-day operations and affairs of the FCWM.

Additionally, the EXECOM is responsible for reviewing the FCWM governance processes and for ensuring that approved processes are followed. In fulfilling its responsibilities the EXECOM exercises all powers of

the BOD in the governance and direction of the FCWM in such manner as it shall deem best for the interests of the FCWM and subject to any specific directives imposed by the BOD, by-laws or any other statutory or common law. In every respect it must conduct its business in an efficient, effective, fully accountable and auditable manner. The EXECOM consists of the president, the vice-president, the secretary, the treasurer, the immediate past president and any additional directors, non-directors and advisors that the BOD may wish to add; as currently constituted, the director resources is appointed as a member. The EXECOM meets at the call of the president, but in any event not less than ten times per year.

Membership

The Membership Committee is charged with maintaining accurate records of members of the Friends, and a database of contacts who have expressed an interest in the activities of the Friends. This mandate includes the collection and maintenance of data, obtained online from our Website, and from surface mail. In addition to the individual records of friends and contacts, the data includes related financial contributions, in the form of membership renewals and donations. The Membership Committee works closely with the Treasurer, Webmaster and

System Administrator and reports directly to the Board of Directors.

The Committee's most significant accomplishment during 2015 was the migration of its information system from one written in Microsoft Access, to an open source information system called civiCRM. This transition involved hundreds of hours of work by a Contractor and several dedicated volunteers. Since the cut-over to civiCRM, Friends have been able to open or renew their membership accounts, and to make donations through the Friends' Website.

In 2016, the Committee will endeavour to utilize the new information system to improve the quality of communications with members. And we will be concentrating on broadening our knowledge of the civiCRM information system. There are plans for broadening the scope of the information system, and the Committee will be on constant lookout for opportunities to make it more accessible and useful to the Executive and other committees of the Friends.

The current Chair of the Communications Committee is LCol (Ret'd) Bob Farrell.

Events and Outreach

The Events and Outreach Committee was created to organize and supervise special and regular Friends events both within and outside the Canadian War Museum; to

maintain a diary of Canadian military anniversaries and to propose suitable relevant activities for the Friends; to propose, organize and coordinate Remembrance Day events with museum staff; to identify and develop Friends sponsored educational and outreach activities and the associated volunteer and other resource requirements; to recruit Friends from outside the National Capital Region (NCR) to assist in outreach activities and to act as links for undertaking Friends activities in other parts of Canada; and, to maintain contact with agencies

involved in activities similar to those of the Friends such as the Department of National Defence (DND), Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC), the Royal Canadian Legion, and other museum organizations.

In 2015, the Events and Outreach Committee organised six Friends Forums, including a visit to Eastern Ontario Cemetery Memorials; a play entitled "Jake's Gift" demonstrating the relationship between a Canadian D-Day veteran and a young French girl; and, a presentation by General Paul Manson (Ret'd) on the

Changing Face of War. The Committee also supported and attended ten Awesome Sundays at the Canadian War Museum and also staffed tables at two militaria shows and at the local celebration of Colonel By Day.

In 2016, in addition to current activities, Friends Forums, Awesome Sundays and tables at external events, the Committee will concentrate on creating and managing a Speakers Bureau.

The committee currently consists of seven volunteers and is chaired by Helen McKiernan.

The Man Who Prevented World War III

On Sept. 26, 1983, Soviet missile commander, LCol Stanislav Petrov, made a decision credited by many with averting a nuclear war.

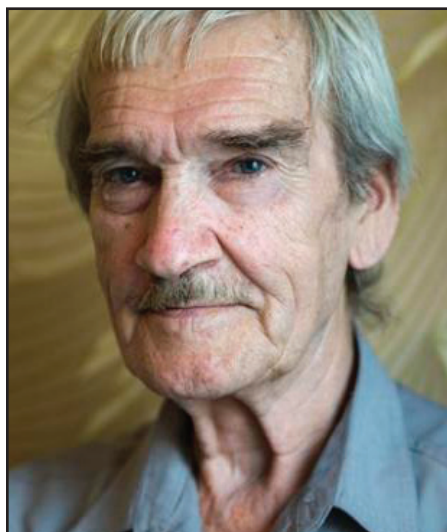
An alarm went off that night, signalling the launch of U.S. inter-continental ballistic missiles, and it was up to the 44-year-old lieutenant colonel to determine, and quickly, whether the attack on the Soviet Union was real.

Despite the data coming in from the Soviet Union's early-warning satellites over the United States, Petrov decided to consider it a false alarm. Had he done otherwise, the Soviet leadership could have responded by ordering a retaliatory nuclear strike on the United States.

What made this even more dangerous was that the Soviet Union appears genuinely to have feared a surprise U.S. nuclear attack during what was an exceptionally tense period of the Cold War. That same month, the Soviets had shot down a KAL 007, a passenger plane flying to South Korea from the U.S., suspecting it of spying. In addition, the United States was preparing to participate in a particularly aggressive NATO exercise, ABLE ARCHER 83, which simulated preparations for a nuclear attack.

In his homeland, Petrov's role in history has won him little fame. He lives in Fryazino, a town on the outskirts of Moscow, in a simple, unkempt apartment.

In a recent interview with the Canadian Press, Petrov, now 77, looked back on that night at the secret Serpukhov-15 control centre and remembered the



Stanislav Petrov, 2015 (CP)

sound of the alarm that shattered the silence shortly past midnight, and the ensuing panic among his team. He remembered the need to make a quick, firm decision based on an assessment of how reliable he thought the information was.

His decision was complicated when, within minutes of the first alarm, the siren sounded again, warning of a second U.S. missile launch. Soon, the system was reporting that five missiles had been launched.

Petrov reported to his commander that the system was giving false information. He was not at all

certain, but his decision was informed by the fact that Soviet ground radar could not confirm a launch. The radar system picked up incoming missiles only well after any launch, but he knew it to be more reliable than the satellites.

The false alarm was later found to have been caused by a malfunction of the satellite, which mistook the reflection of the sun off high clouds for a missile launch.

Petrov was not rewarded for his actions, most likely because doing so would have brought to light the failure of the Soviet's early-warning satellites. Although his commanding officer did not support Petrov at the time, he was the one who revealed the incident after the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991.

Petrov's courageous decision possibly prevented the outbreak of World War III.

General Donations

The Friends are grateful to the following who made general donations during the Period 1 October – 31 December 2015

The Royal Canadian Legion
 Branch 638 (ON)
 MGen. John L. Adams
 Mrs. Ann Adams
 Mr. John Anderson
 Mr. Ernest Barnes
 Cdr. Pat Barnhouse
 Mr. C. Derek Bate
 Col. Francis Bayne
 Ms. Dineen Beath
 LGen. Charles H. Belzile
 Mr. Martin Boomsma
 Dany J. Born
 Ms. D. Elizabeth Brannen
 Capt. Thomas Brooks
 Mr. Bruce Brown
 Mr. Arthur G. Buskas
 Mr. James Cale
 Mr. David Camm
 Mr. Larry Capstick
 Ms. Jacqueline Carey
 LGen. (Ret'd) Harold A. Carswell
 LCol. (Ret'd) Art Carveth
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 Mr. Gilles Chretien
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 Mr. Bradford A. Flemming
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 MGen (Ret'd) and Mrs. Robert
 Gaudreau

Mr. Tim Gault
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 Mr. & Mrs. Allan Kerr
 Mrs. Margaret Kohler- Milledge
 Capt. (Ret'd) Michael Lambert
 Mr. Charles E. Lewis

Ms. Terry MacDonald
 Mr. G. Jackson MacKenzie
 Mr. John Marchant
 Mr. Charles Mavor
 The Hon. Michael Meighen C.M.,
 Q.C.
 Mr. Douglas Meredith
 Ms. Marilyn J. Minnes
 Mrs. Connie M. Mooney
 Ms. Colleen Morrison
 Mr. William Newton
 Maj. (Ret'd) Neal Nickles
 Mr. Robert S. Oliver
 Mr. Eric N. Patterson
 Mr. Leslie Peate
 Mr. Peter Perry
 Maj. Zbigniew Pierscianowski
 Mrs. Miriam Rabinovitch
 Dr. Victor Rabinovitch
 Mr. Gordon Ritchie
 Col. Winston M. Rogers
 Mr. Douglas C. Rowland
 Mr. Michael Royce
 Mr. W. Donald Sawyer
 Mr. Nikol Schultz
 M. Rejean Serrurier
 Mr. Richard Shantz

A Child's Poem

Submitted by Mike Braham

The following is a poem composed by my 10-year old granddaughter Addison in satisfaction of a school project. Acknowledging that I am a doting grandfather, I think that it is a very perceptive view of the subject matter for one so young, presented in an artful, poetic transitional format. All that and a bit of creativity with the English language as well—“delightment” is now an approved word in our household.

Peace vs War

By Addison Braham

Peace
 delightment, wonderful,
 embracing, loving, laughing,
 lighting up the world, striking us down,
 attacking, killing, battling,
 despair, death,
 War

Dr. Donald McQ Shaver OC DSc
 Mr. Keith Sheldon
 Mr. William C.C. Silver
 BGen. (Ret'd) Dean Smith
 Prof. Robert A. Spencer
 Mr. David R. Stewart
 Mr. David L. Stinson

Mr. Michael Street
 Mr. George Tarasuk
 Mr. & Mrs. Don and Dorothy Titus
 Col. Tony Tremblay OMM, KStJ,
 CD, ADC
 Ms. M-J Tremblay
 Mr. Robert Tucker

Mr. Frank Verwey
 Mr. M.J. Keith Visser
 Mr. Omar Wakil
 Ms. Margaret Walton
 Mr. John Watts
 Mr. William B. Watson
 BGen. Michael Webber
 Col. (Ret'd) Z.M. Zawislak

In-Memoriam Donations

The following is the list of donors making in-memoriam donations during the period 1 October – 31 December 2015. The tributes are recorded in the language in which they are provided.

- Robert P. Beaudry, in memory of Captain B.F. Amos, RCA
- Mai-yu Chan, in memory of Jas Haley
- Chris Chance, in memory of F/O David Chance
- W. Bruce Clark, in memory of William Coombs, 5th Canadian Division, Italy and NW Europe 1943-1945 and in memory of Bruno Friesen, 7th Panzer Division, 1943- 1945 and Friend of CWM
- Robert G. Farrell, in memory of Pte James Wilfrid Betts, my Great Uncle - killed in action, Second Battle of Ypres, 25 Apr 1915
- Ian M. Galbraith, in memory of Col. Harvey Galbraith, (father) and in retirement Professor (Electrical Engineering) at Ottawa University and, Col. L.H. Nicholson (father-in-law) and subsequently Commissioner of the RCMP
- Gerald J. Gallagher, in memory of Dorothy Malott
- Jack Granatstein, in Memory of Barbara Wilson
- James Hanson, in memory of BGen Don Banks and LCol Wally Ratz
- Sigrid Hough, in memory of WO William (Bill) O. Hough, my husband, a veteran of the Second World War, who joined the Canadian Infantry Corps in February 1943.
- Arthur Palmer Kennedy, in memory of Col, the Hon. Thomas Laird Kennedy, 1878-1959
- Merv Letts, in memory of Flight Lieutenant Michael Belcher, 115 ATU, RCAF
- Richard K. Malott, in memory of LCol Nicholas Stevens and Mrs Alice Stevens, deceased RCAF friends and past FCWM members
- Valerie Mansfield, in memory of Howard Mansfield
- Robert C.Maveety, in memory of CSM R.J. Maveety, ED, First and Second World Wars
- Helen McKiernan, in memory of Mrs. Frances Bawden who died July 2015
- Douglas G. Meredith, in memory of Pte George Meredith, my father - 12th Company, Canadian Machine Gun Corps, 1916
- Lori Parent, in memory of Mr. Robert Parent
- John B. Partington, in memory of Captain Phillip Partington, RCA
- Joel A. Pinsky, in memory of Sydney Shulemson, DSO, DFC
- Patrick O. Read, in memory of Tpr Alfred Ward, BCD and RCAMC WW2 Italy
- André Tellier, in memory of Lt. André Tellier, Duke of York, Royal Canadian Hussars
- Ann Hyland and Edward Terry, in memory of Captain Edward Terry, RCAPC, died in POW Camp in Hong Kong, November 1942
- Diana Tremain, in memory of Edward Tremain

Laura Brandon Receives the Order of Canada

The Friends of the Canadian War Museum congratulate Dr. Laura Brandon who has been announced as a Member of the Order of Canada by the Governor General for her contributions to uncovering and preserving Canadian war art, and for bringing it to the attention of national and international audiences.

Dr. Brandon recently retired from her full-time position as Historian, War and Art at the Canadian War Museum, and now has a part time position at the Museum as a Research Associate. She is also an Adjunct Research Professor at Carleton University in the School for Studies in Art and Culture (SSAC), and is a long time Friend of the Canadian War Museum.

The Railway Man

Eric Lomax

First published by Jonathan Cape, 1995
This edition: Vintage, 2014
ISBN 9780099583844

Many of you are likely aware of the film “The Railway Man”, released in 2013. This is the book on which the film is based.

Eric Lomax was born in 1919 into a lower middle class Scottish family. In 1939 he enlisted, eventually took a commission in the Royal Signal Corps, was deployed to Malaysia, captured by the Japanese when Singapore surrendered in February 1942 and sent to a POW camp on the “death railway”. In August 1943, guards discovered a clandestine radio in the prisoners’ barracks, whereupon Lomax fell into the hands of the Kempeitei, the notorious Japanese military police. He was interrogated, brutally beaten and tortured, and finally sent to the notorious Outram Road Goal in Singapore. He was freed by British troops in August 1945.

Then began Lomax’ terrible ordeal with PTSD. When he got back to England, he found that the civilian world could not comprehend the ordeal which he had undergone. This led to increasing loneliness and isolation. Then, in the early 1980’s, he took the first steps to get help. He also met Patti, who helped him immensely and subsequently became his second wife.

In parallel with this narrative, the Japanese interpreter who had been present throughout the author’s interrogation and torture, Nagase Takashi, had been seeking to atone for the actions of the Japanese Army in Thailand. Eventually Nagase and Lomax made contact with each other, were reconciled and, against all odds and instincts, became friends.

This terse outline of Lomax’ story is necessary to understand the essence of the story, but by no means does justice to it. The author in fact wrote the story of his wartime experience immediately after his release from captivity before being repatriated to England. The remainder of the book was written in the early 1990’s after the author had met and been reconciled with Nagase. The book was first published in 1995.

This edition was published in 2014 to coincide with the release of the film of the same name starring Colin



Firth and Nicole Kidman. The film is an interesting stand-alone story, but after reading the book the film seems banal and stylized, an unworthy rendering of Lomax’ story.

(A detailed comparison of the film and the book can be found at <http://www.historyvshollywood.com>)

This is not a long book and, in fact, it reads very easily, but I found the story so intense that I had to put the book down from time to time. It is not sensational, as many such books attempt to be today when relating this kind of story; it does not need to be because Lomax’ understated and eloquent prose speaks for itself.

Eric Lomax died in 2012. Nagase Takashi, his Japanese protagonist, died in 2011. Patti Lomax at last report (2014) was still alive. This book is a worthy monument to their collective experiences. Most highly recommended.

Reviewed by John Anderson