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Mr. Herbert's File

C. V. PILKINGTON

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ON HIS MAJESTY'S SERVICE.

FASTEN Envelope by gumming this Label across Flap.
OPEN by cutting Label instead of tearing Envelope.

THIS FILE MUST NOT BE TAKEN FROM ROOM 17a. WITHOUT THE DIRECTOR'S INSTRUCTIONS.

(Lablest)
51-4558

51-4510

Ministry of Information,

Postal & Telegraph Censorship Dept.,

23/7 Brooke Street, Holborn,

London, E.C.1, England.

U.S. SECRET EQUALS BRITISH SECRET

POSTAL & TELEGRAPH CENSORSHIP DEPARTMENT.

SECRET CIPHER TELEGRAM

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+44 (0)1924 825700
info@britishonlinearchives.digital
www.britishonlinearchives.digital

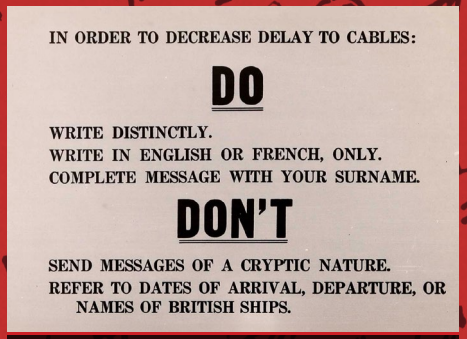
CENSORSHIP: POLICY AND PRACTICE DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR

BRITISH ONLINE ARCHIVES

Explore British postal and telegraph censorship...

...throughout a pivotal era of modern history.

This collection begins by surveying the first steps that were taken, in 1939, to implement censorship. Censorship units sprung up across the British empire, typically employing local people, especially women. They were tasked with monitoring all communications that could reveal sensitive information to the enemy. Censorship became a wide-ranging, international endeavour involving Britain, the Dominions, colonies, Allies, and neutral states such as the Republic of Ireland.


IN ORDER TO DECREASE DELAY TO CABLES:

DO

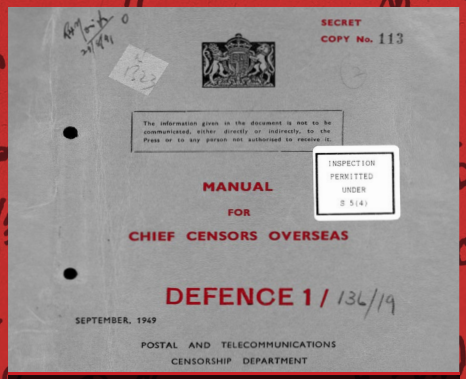
WRITE DISTINCTLY.
WRITE IN ENGLISH OR FRENCH, ONLY.
COMPLETE MESSAGE WITH YOUR SURNAME.

DON'T

SEND MESSAGES OF A CRYPTIC NATURE.
REFER TO DATES OF ARRIVAL, DEPARTURE, OR NAMES OF BRITISH SHIPS.

Censorship became one of the most important fronts in the so-called "secret war".

Policies and official guidance poured out from London with a view to keeping the censorship system efficient. Censors from various backgrounds became adept at breaking codes and recognising suspect material. They ensured that all correspondence was assessed, flagged (if necessary), and passed on. Towards the end of the war and following the Allied victory, censorship units took on a new responsibility: monitoring communications in occupied territories, including Austria, Germany, and Italy.

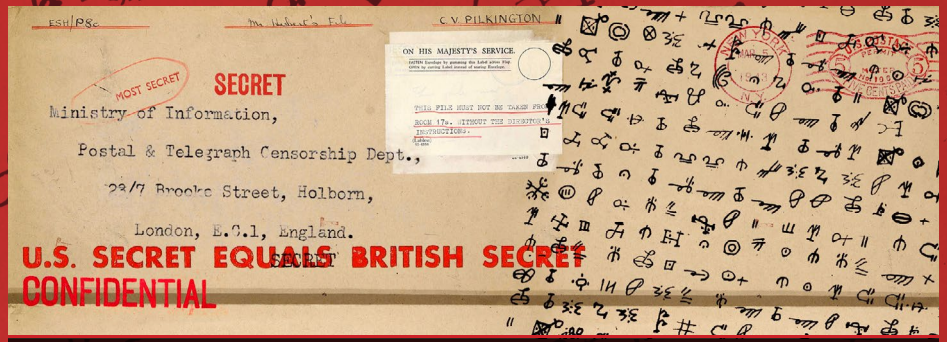


This collection contains over 17,000 images collated from Ministry of Defence files.

As this fascinating collection illustrates, censorship was not only a tool that helped win the war, it was also a vital part of securing the peace that followed.

Censorship: Policy and Practice During the Second World War is a rich resource for students and researchers with interests in military and political history, the history of the British empire, international relations, and security and intelligence.

"The work of the Censorship is of a highly confidential nature and must on no account be discussed outside the rooms in which it is actually carried on" — *Handbook of Instructions and Orders for the Postal Censorship Staff* (DEFE 1/36/11).



Innovative ways to evade censorship were always being developed. Japanese prisoners of war created codes, based on anagrams, to convey information about their conditions and treatment.

Censorship infrastructure had to be constructed, furnished, and, importantly, staffed across Britain's empire.

MAP SHOWING GERMAN POSTAL DISTRICTS.

The collection offers valuable insights into how censorship was operating in enemy and Allied territories. It includes official documents detailing how censorship practices varied in areas under Nazi rule.

BOA - Making Humanities Accessible.

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Sources include: The National Archives