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CRYPTOLOGIC ALMANAC

Ralph Bennett

We were saddened to see an obituary in yesterday's _London Times_ for Ralph Bennett (born 1911).

Mr. Bennett was a Cambridge historian already noted for his medieval and renaissance studies when he was recruited to serve as an intelligence analyst at Bletchley Park for decrypts of German ENIGMA-based messages in World War II.

He returned to Cambridge after the war, and acquired a reputation for teaching/mentoring excellence and for community involvement. He served as director of studies in history, and was president of Magdalene College, Cambridge, from 1979 to 1982.

As will be discussed in an ALMANAC article later this year, the first wave of books about exploitation of German communications in World War II came from veterans of the wartime effort. Although himself a veteran, Mr. Bennett waited until declassification of documents made a scholarly evaluation possible. His major works, _ULTRA in the West: The Normandy Campaign, 1944-45_, _ULTRA and Mediterranean Strategy, 1941-45_, and _Behind the Battle: Intelligence in the War with Germany_, were careful studies that combined solid research with his personal knowledge of the operations at Bletchley Park. They are essential reading for all those interested in the Second World War or, more specifically, signals intelligence.

[David A. Hatch, Center for Cryptologic History, 972-2893s, dahatch]

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