



The Baghdad Set

Iraq through the Eyes of British Intelligence, 1941–45

Adrian O'Sullivan

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Also by Adrian O'Sullivan:

Nazi Secret Warfare in Occupied Persia (Iran): The Failure of the German Intelligence Services, 1939–45 (Palgrave, 2014)

Espionage and Counterintelligence in Occupied Persia (Iran): The Success of the Allied Secret Services, 1941–45 (Palgrave, 2015)

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Freya Madeline Stark, portrait by Herbert Olivier, oil on canvas, 1923. Source: The Picture Art Collection/Alamy Stock Photo

If the past were ever past there would be little use in recalling it; but it lives with us in never-ending variation, as if it were a magic carpet on which we travel through the middle air. The contours of our destination were long ago woven in its fading colours and half-obliterated mazes, and the time to alter or improve them passes quickly while the landscapes of our world race by below.

Our future is uncontrollable if we are unable to read our past.

—Freya Stark, *Dust in the Lion's Paw* (1961)

For my daughter, Claire

PREFACE

This book begins with an image of Freya Stark, who is at the centre of my story, when she was 30—a beautiful portrait by a family friend who had known her since infancy, painted about four years before she made her first entry into the secret world of Middle Eastern affairs. It is followed by a lovely verbal image that Dame Freya created herself much later in life—an extended metaphor of history as a fading, intricately patterned magic carpet on which we travel through time.¹ Clearly, she had learnt by then that history paradoxically embodies both our past and our future. If reading history offers us all a fleeting opportunity to master our past, then sourcing it and recalling it, as Dame Freya did and as I do, mean potentially empowering others to reach a common future destination by exposing them to hitherto concealed sources. Unfortunately though, like journalists, historians tend to write about whatever subjects promise the greatest abundance of sources, which is manifestly not how intelligence history should be investigated. Consequently, to the exclusion of any other historical genre except military history perhaps, most books on Iraq are about the history of politics and political theatre: either the tumultuous domestic kind—filled with conspiracies, coups, assassinations, and show trials—or the more poised, diplomatic kind, associated with the conduct and pageantry of Arab affairs on the international stage. The rich political topsoil of a nation like Iraq, located in the geopolitically volcanic zone of the ‘true’ Middle East—with its conflicted indigenous mix of Shia, Sunni, Kurd, Assyrian, Yezidi, and Jew—has been diligently tilled and sifted mostly by Arab, Israeli, British, and American scholars cultivating and

nurturing such fertile fields as oil, Arab nationalism, Zionism, Palestine, British ‘imperialism’ or ‘colonialism,’ Soviet and US ‘influence’ and ‘expansionism,’ and just occasionally Nazi hegemony.²

What has emerged is a lopsided version of mid-twentieth-century Iraqi history driven by source-rich *causes célèbres* (such as the politics of oil, pan-Arabism, and Kurdish nationalism), some of which have been enthusiastically embraced and prosecuted by political, diplomatic, and even military historians in something less than a distanced, objective way. In recent decades, however, a younger generation of historians—younger than mine that is—influenced no doubt by Edward Said and wielding the sharp scalpels of anticolonial and postmodern theory and criticism has begun to re-examine the history of the Middle East, sometimes mentioning the regional intelligence services, with admirable *post-facto* political correctness but with insufficient feeling for the life-and-death context of a brutal anti-Nazi war. The most eloquent exponent of this critical approach has in my opinion been Priya Satia, whose wonderfully written *Spies in Arabia* speaks indignantly of such things as British ‘covert empire’ and ‘discreet control.’³ But when such scholars examine wartime intelligence activity in a cultural, rather than operational, context, especially in areas of British overseas interest and influence, they inevitably tend to perceive clandestinity and covert space as oppositional concepts. Not so the intelligence specialist, for whom they are operational norms or preconditions. Operational secrecy is not furtive: it is simply professional, and it can save lives, especially in wartime. So, whenever I have tried to drill deeper into the history of Iraq from the end of the First World War to the end of the Second, I have discovered that the existing published literature on the region is of little use—to the operational intelligence historian, that is. It is all about political turmoil, military ‘bangs,’ and the evils of colonialism. It usually overlooks the fact that Iraq was never a British colony, and it seldom refers to the relatively source-poor subsoil of secret intelligence and counterintelligence operations that ensured the security and stability of Iraq between 1920 and 1947, when the British finally withdrew their armed forces and intelligence operatives from the country.⁴

In other words, constructing an objective history of clandestine operations in Iraq is a challenging task. Yet, wherever it is lacking, chronological continuity must be ensured. It is up to intelligence historians like me to guarantee that no lacunae linger in the narrative of Second World War secret operations in any theatre, however remote. The problem with the

marginalization of Iraq's intelligence narrative is that the defence and security of the region were of enormous strategic significance, yet no major military battles were ever fought there. Aside from the brief Anglo-Iraqi War of 1941, most of the military and quasi-military activity that took place in Iraq consisted of covert operations (espionage, intelligence, sabotage; counterespionage, counterintelligence, countersabotage; and propaganda). As a consequence, large tranches of the archival records that postwar historians would normally have used as the primary sources for an Iraq literature remained highly classified and inaccessible for many decades after 1945 (and some are still closed today). By the mid-1990s, 50 years after the war, a slow trickle of Iraq (and Persia) files actually began to appear at The National Archives (Kew) in the wake of the Waldegrave Initiative.⁵ By then, however, historians had apparently moved on to more fashionable postmodern subjects and showed little interest in the release of Iraq documents. Thus the history of an entire Second World War theatre of secret operations has been sidelined and neglected. This residual lacuna needs to be filled.

It is important for the reader to appreciate just how sparse and fragmentary the available primary and secondary sources are that have enabled me to describe and interpret the secret world of covert events, activities, and personalities in wartime Iraq. Sadly, the veterans of the secret services who might have provided valuable oral testimony are no longer among us. True, I have found some of their written memoirs scattered among such rich archives as the Imperial War Museum Documents Collection and the Middle East Centre Archive at St Antony's College, Oxford, but they have yielded little about secret and special operations. Few covert operatives who served in the Persia and Iraq theatre were ever permitted to publish accounts of their experience. Notable exceptions were Christopher Sykes, Nigel Clive, Bill Magan, and Patrick Maitland Wilson. Conversely, some otherwise prolific authors—like Freya Stark and Stewart Perowne for instance—remained forever tight-lipped about the true nature of their war work in the Middle East. Consequently, Dame Freya is generally portrayed as having been nothing more than an eccentric wartime propagandist and traveller. And Perowne, who was briefly and unsuccessfully her husband after the war, is usually considered merely a run-of-the-mill, though flamboyant, senior diplomat. In fact, my research tells me that these two intrepid nomads had been spying professionally for the British government at least since the inception of Section D of the Secret Intelligence Service (SIS) in 1938,⁶ and in Freya Stark's case probably for at least ten

years before that. Such clandestine activity partly explains how Stark, a lone female of diminutive stature in a predominantly male world, could have cultivated an extensive network of influential friends in high places before and during the war, while enjoying the total confidence of such brilliant military men as Archie Wavell and Jumbo Wilson.

As an intelligence historian, it has never been my intention to narrate and analyse the political, diplomatic, and military history of Germany's relationship with Iraq and the Arab world during the Second World War. That task was completed 50 years ago, definitively and comprehensively, by the profoundly knowledgeable Polish-Israeli scholar Lukasz Hirszowicz, largely on the basis of the extant archival records.⁷ And there is, of course, as I have implied, no shortage of more specialized but often hopelessly biased studies on the political history of the region.⁸ On the other hand, what has never before been attempted by any historian is a thorough, archives-based examination of the clandestine contribution made by the British secret services and their operatives to the thwarting of enemy attempts to influence and destabilize Iraq between 1939 and 1945. That, quite simply, is what I have tried to achieve with this book.

How then did the British deploy their covert resources and conduct their secret operations? To become familiar with the many formations and functions, one needs to swim through an ocean of acronym soup; I have therefore provided a complete list of abbreviations at the beginning of the book. For the final three years of the Second World War, military operations (including field security and security intelligence) in Persia and Iraq were part of an independent unified command structure based in Baghdad called Persia and Iraq Command (PAIC), spun off from the Cairo-based Middle East Command (MEC) in August–September 1942. Once established, PAIC and its constituent formations, known collectively as Persia and Iraq Force (PAIFORCE), inherited the pre-existing security-intelligence unit in Baghdad, the Combined Intelligence Centre Iraq and Persia (CICI), which had been operating since the early summer of 1941 more or less autonomously under the aegis of the Middle East Intelligence Centre (MEIC) in Cairo.

Supporting and liaising with (rather than directing) both CICI and MEIC was the Cairo-based regional 'branch-plant' of the Security Service (MI5), known locally as Security Intelligence Middle East (SIME), which acted as a clearing house and resource for all security-intelligence operations in the Middle East (including Persia and Turkey). Also specified in the original CICI charter was close cooperation in all matters of civil

security and counterintelligence with the Indian Intelligence Bureau (IB). Officers working under the 'combined' SIME umbrella held military rank and belonged to one of the three service branches (navy, army, or air force) of the British and Imperial forces, though most were serving in the British or Indian armies. Because of the traditional air-policing and intelligence roles of the Royal Air Force in the Middle East, most administrative and logistical duties were performed by serving RAF officers and other ranks (ORs).

Despite the unified organization of PAIFORCE and CICI, and the proximity of the two countries, the control of security-intelligence operations in Iraq was not merged with that of Persia. Instead, the two defence security offices under CICI control (DSO Iraq and DSO Persia) operated as parallel formations. However, this is not to say that no circumstances ever arose requiring cooperation. For example, top-priority situations and events in Kurdistan and the Persian Gulf, together with the strategically vital pipeline between the Kirkuk oilfields (Iraq) and the Abadan oil refinery (Persia), sometimes impinged upon both DSOs, occasionally resulting in concerted efforts overseen by CICI. Such was the case in January 1943, when CICI saw fit to despatch Iraq-based Kurdish commandos to deal with reports of Japanese submarines landing supplies (and possibly even Axis personnel) on the Gulf coast. This area was technically within DSO Persia's territory; however, the Tehran office had no suitable reaction force at its disposal, so Force KALPAK was despatched by Baghdad to deal with the problem. In an earlier case, an Iraq-based ALO (area liaison officer) undertook dangerous covert activity among Kurdish tribes straddling the fluid Iraq-Persia border with a view to raising both the Persian and Iraqi Kurds in a postoccupational revolt to follow a possible German invasion of the frontier region.

In general, however, though subject to the same SIME and CICI controls, the two security offices in Baghdad and Tehran were never amalgamated. Instead, they performed separate routine roles, maintained separate registries, undertook separate operations, and issued separate reports, as befitted the disparate strategic, political, ethnic, and linguistic character of the two very different nations in which they found themselves. The absence too of Soviet and American forces from Iraq, as opposed to their large numbers in Persia, created a very different environment for spies and spycatchers. These are just some of the reasons why the intelligence history of Iraq has to be described, narrated, and analysed separately from that of Persia, no matter how harmonious relations were among the

various agencies of the Allied occupiers of both countries. And that is why I have written this third book, to complement my previous two monographs on Persia.

Unfortunately, the prevailing atmosphere of cooperation among the regional secret services inevitably posed a ticklish editing problem: how much of the shared genesis of SIME and CICI needed to be repeated here for the reader who had not yet consulted my earlier works? The solution I have adopted is to minimize reiteration of Iraq-relevant issues already examined in connection with Persia, but to provide appropriate references in the endnotes to relevant passages in *Nazi Secret Warfare in Occupied Persia [NSW]* and in *Espionage and Counterintelligence in Persia [ECOP]*. I sincerely hope that this method will provide newcomers to the regional history with adequate support without alienating those already thoroughly familiar with the Persia story.

Another editorial issue that had to be resolved was that of the reader's probable familiarity (or even overfamiliarity) with the many published treatments of political events, diplomatic moves, and military operations during the period of the Rashid Ali regime and the meddling of Dr. Fritz Grobba and the ex-Mufti of Jerusalem in Iraqi affairs up to the spring of 1941. Besides the fact that such matters hardly concern an intelligence historian focussed on Allied security measures, I could see no merit whatsoever in repainting such an overexposed canvas. I have therefore chosen to begin my narrative proper in 1941 with the siege of the British Embassy in Baghdad, the arrival of the British relief column (HABFORCE) from the Levant, and the beginning shortly afterwards of what some Arab historians have chosen to call the 'Second British Occupation.'⁹ Events prior to that are merely summarized in Chaps. 2 and 3, with particular emphasis on strategy, intelligence, and security. As usual, I have provided suggestions for further reading in the endnotes.¹⁰ Two other arbitrary editorial decisions, in keeping with my previous books on PAIFORCE, have resulted in the absence of service ranks, as they changed so frequently during peoples' wartime careers and many abandoned them after the war; and the use of 'Persia' rather than 'Iran,' according to the convention insisted on by Winston Churchill.¹¹

As its initial move after being established at the end of May 1941, CICI issued the first of what was to become a lengthy series of monthly intelligence summaries that were widely distributed throughout senior levels of the British and Indian forces and civilian authorities in the Middle East and beyond for the duration of the Second World War. These detailed

reports and appreciations, compiled in various editions with various titles which sought to separate security issues from tribal and political intelligence (T&P), as mandated by charter, form a significant historical corpus. It documents the intelligence history of Iraq from the signing of the armistice on 31 May 1941 (and of Persia from the Anglo-Soviet invasion on 25 August 1941) to the end of the war. Here I found the basis for my work: a unique, sadly neglected compendium of narratives, descriptions, and analyses written by intelligence operatives and political advisers stationed in Baghdad, Mosul, Basra, and a dozen regional outposts. Thus my book is not filtered through my eyes or those of other scholars. Instead, its backbone is formed by the forgotten CICI records and by the observations and commentaries of those who actually served in Iraq as intelligence officers or in various covert roles. It is quite simply an entirely factual book about Iraq as seen ‘through the eyes of British intelligence.’¹²

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NOTES

1. Freya Stark, *Dust in the Lion’s Paw* (London: John Murray, 1962), 2.
2. The politicized, high-stakes nature of recent literature on the historical relationship between Nazism, the Holocaust, and the Middle East has been emphasized by Nils Riecken in his review of some recent books on the region, including Francis Nicosia, *Nazi Germany and the Arab World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015); and Barry Rubin and Wolfgang G. Schwanitz, *Nazis, Islamists, and the Making of the Modern Middle East* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014). See Nils Riecken, ‘National Socialism, Islam, and the Middle East: Questioning Intellectual Continuities, Conceptual Stakes, and Methodology’, *German Historical Institute London Bulletin* 38, no. 2 (November 2016): 63–76.
3. Priya Satia, *Spies in Arabia: The Great War and the Cultural Foundations of Britain’s Covert Empire in the Middle East* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008). For some more marvellous writing and an accurate view of Britain’s interwar strategy in the Middle East, see John Darwin, ‘An Undeclared Empire: The British in the Middle East, 1918–39’, *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 27, no. 2 (1999): 159–76; and with emphasis on intelligence and archival sources, Liora Lukitz, ‘Axioms Reconsidered: The Rethinking of British Strategic Policy in Iraq during the 1930s’, in Michael J. Cohen and Martin Kolinsky, eds., *Britain and the Middle East in the 1930s: Security Problems, 1935–39* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1992), 113–27. For a commonsensical assessment of Britain’s

- strategic position in a wartime context, see Warren Dockter, *Churchill and the Islamic World: Orientalism, Empire, and Diplomacy in the Middle East* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2015).
4. The elephant in the room is, of course, Saidean orientalism (see Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* [New York: Vintage, 1978]). Frankly, I can see no obvious connection between postcolonial culture studies and wartime Middle East intelligence studies. At the strategic level, the significant interface was between the Allied and Axis powers; the Arab and central Asian countries were merely arenas (war theatres). At the individual level, I have found no documented reports of imperial or imperious behaviour in Iraq by members of the British diplomatic and intelligence community, most of whom were enlightened, progressive Arabists or enthusiastic, supportive Kurdish experts (by no means ‘orientalists’ in Said’s sense). Anecdotal accounts of condescension on the part of individual British and Indian servicemen towards Iraqis are infrequent and atypical.
 5. See Adrian O’Sullivan, *Espionage and Counterintelligence in Occupied Persia (Iran): The Success of the Allied Secret Services* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015) [ECOP], 247–8.
 6. In April 1939, a young Scots Guards officer (Donald B.H. Lennox-Boyd [1906–39]), a friend of Perowne’s with whom Stark thought (mistakenly) that she had achieved some level of intimacy (and might even marry), died in Stuttgart under mysterious circumstances. Though Lennox-Boyd had died in custody, probably at the hands of the Gestapo, the official story released to the British press was that he had died of natural causes (heart failure). Foul play was denied, as was the fact that he had been arrested in a gay bar. Perowne subsequently wrote to Freya Stark that Lennox-Boyd had in fact been ‘on secret service work’, and that he (Perowne) was supposed to have been with him, but had refused the assignment and had begged Lennox-Boyd not to go to Germany. This is the clearest circumstantial evidence that I can find of Perowne’s working for SIS before the war. See Perowne to Stark, 27 April 1939, Container 20.7 (Stewart Perowne), Series II Correspondence, 1893–1985, Freya Stark Collection, Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas, Austin TX [HRC]; Jane Fletcher Geniesse, *Passionate Nomad: The Life of Freya Stark* (New York: Modern Library, 2001), 236, 239; *London Gazette*, 31 August 1928, 5771.
 7. Lukasz Hirszowicz, *The Third Reich and the Arab East* (London: Routledge and K. Paul, 1966); Hirszowicz, ‘The Course of German Foreign Policy in the Middle East between the World Wars’, in Jehuda L. Wallach, ed., *Germany and the Middle East, 1835–1939: International Symposium, April 1975* (Tel-Aviv: Tel-Aviv University, Faculty of Humanities, Aranne School of History, Institute of German History, 1975).

8. See, for example, Ayad Al-Qazzaz, 'The Iraqi-British War of 1941: A Review Article', *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 7 (1976): 591–6; Walid Hamdi, 'Iraq in the Aftermath of the Rashid Ali Revolt, 1941', *Arab Researcher/Al-Babith al-Arabi* 7 (1986): 33–5; Hamdi, *Rashid Ali al-Gaylani and the Nationalist Movement in Iraq, 1939–1941: A Political and Military Study of the British Campaign in Iraq and the National Revolution of May 1941* (London: Darf, 1987); Mohammad A. Tarbush, *The Role of the Military in Politics: A Case Study of Iraq to 1941* (London: Kegan Paul International, 1982).
9. A loaded term implying that the Mandate had been illegal, and that Iraq did not return to independence after the armistice. See Matthew Elliot, *'Independent Iraq': The Monarchy and British Influence from 1941–1958* (London: Tauris Academic Studies, 1996), 14, 138; Majid Khadduri, *Independent Iraq: A Study in Iraqi Politics since 1932* (London: Oxford University Press, 1951), 235; Stefanie K. Wichhart, 'Selling Democracy during the Second British Occupation of Iraq, 1941–5', *Journal of Contemporary History* 48, no. 3 (July 2013): 510n3.
10. Anyone in need of the kind of general background that I have not provided should perhaps begin by reading the late Bill Cleveland's standard introductory textbook on the Middle East, now in its sixth edition: William L. Cleveland, *History of the Modern Middle East* (Boulder, CO: Routledge, 2018). For a contemporary analysis of 40 years of Iraqi history up to 1943, see Freya Stark, 'Appendix: Iraq' in *East Is West* (London: John Murray, 1945), 198–213. If in search of an authoritative military history of Iraq (and Persia) during the Second World War, look no further than Ashley Jackson's excellent comprehensive synopsis: *Persian Gulf Command: A History of the Second World War in Iran and Iraq* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2018). With respect to the actions of Germany within the same context, the most reliable general source is not surprisingly Gerhard L. Weinberg, 'German Colonial Plans and Policies 1938–1942', in Waldemar Besson, ed., *Geschichte und Gegenwartsbewusstsein: Historische Betrachtungen und Untersuchungen: Festschrift für Hans Rothfels zum 70. Geburtstag, dargebracht von Kollegen, Freunden und Schülern* (Frankfurt: Fischer, 1963), 462–91; and most comprehensively, Weinberg, *A World at Arms: A Global History of World War II* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 224–34.
11. See Adrian O'Sullivan, *Nazi Secret Warfare in Occupied Persia (Iran): The Failure of the German Intelligence Services, 1939–45* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014) [NSW], xiv; ECOP, xvi.
12. These reports are all to be found in the RAF records (AIR 29) at Kew. Though signed off by various senior CICI officers (Elphinston, Wood, Dawson-Shepherd, and Ryan et al.), these summaries were compiled, rather than written, by them. Cf. Satia, *Spies in Arabia*, 283–4.

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For originally inspiring me to investigate the Anglo-Iraqi War, I must first recognize my late brother-in-law, Major L.F.P. 'Pat' Russell (13th Duke of Connaught's Own Lancers, IA), who commanded a Sikh armoured-car squadron in Iraq and Syria in 1941 and always had wonderful stories of desert campaigning to tell, but sadly never recorded them in writing. Other family members have helped me with their patient encouragement and support, especially my sister Sheila Cockbaine and my daughter Claire O'Sullivan, and also my nieces Shelley and Tonie Russell, who have provided great help and logistical support during UK research trips.

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I wish to thank the Trustees of the Imperial War Museum for allowing me access to the collections held in the Documents Section, some of which are referred to in the notes. My sincere thanks also go to Lady Juliet Tadgell for her kind permission to quote from her late-husband Somerset de Chair's marvellous account of the 1941 desert campaign. At Palgrave Macmillan I must thank Emily Russell for her abiding confidence in my work and for fostering all three of my books on Persia and Iraq, as well as Oliver Dyer for his patience, flexibility, and attention to detail while preparing this most recent manuscript for production.

As this book finally goes to press, nearly three-quarters of a century after the events it depicts, my greatest debt is owed to a cohort of nameless contributors of historical narratives without whose writing there would be no book: British political advisers, area liaison officers, intelligence officers, and security officers scattered for four years across the wide, varied landscape of wartime Iraq—nearly half a million square kilometres in area, almost twice the size of the UK—covered by at most 25 observers. These men diligently filed periodic reports and appreciations with their Baghdad intelligence headquarters throughout the war. Once compiled and issued over the signatures of various intelligence chiefs, these documents became the impressive corpus of official records that has enabled me to reconstruct this history of clandestine activities in Iraq.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

2 i/c	second in command
AA	Auswärtiges Amt [<i>see also</i> GFO]
AB	Arabisches Büro [= ex-Mufti's Arab Bureau]
Abw	Abwehr
Abw I H	Abwehr I Heer [= German army intelligence]
Abw I L	Abwehr I Luft [= German air force intelligence]
Abw I M	Abwehr I Marine [= German naval intelligence]
Abw II OR	Abwehr II Orient [= Abw II Middle East desk]
Abw II SO	Abwehr II Südost [= Abw II Balkans desk]
ADSO	Assistant Defence Security Officer
'A' Force	Cairo-based unit responsible for Middle East strategic deception
AFHQ	Allied Force Headquarters
AIOC	Anglo-Iranian Oil Company
AISB	Anglo-Iraqi Security Board
ALO	Area Liaison Officer
Amt IV	RSHA IV or Gestapo
Amt VI	RSHA VI or SD-Ausland
Amt Mil	Mil Amt
AOC	Air Officer Commanding
APA	Assistant Political Adviser
APOC	Anglo-Persian Oil Company
ASI	all-source intelligence
ATS	Auxiliary Territorial Service
AUB	American University of Beirut
AWOL	absent without leave
B	counterespionage [<i>as in</i> MI5 B Branch]

B1A, B1a	MI5 counterespionage section administering double agents
B1B, B1b	MI5 counterespionage analysis section
BArch	Bundesarchiv [Berlin-Lichterfelde]
BArch-MArch	Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv [Freiburg im Breisgau]
BAOR	British Army of the Rhine
BDC	Berlin Document Centre
BESA	Begin-Sadat Centre for Strategic Studies
BGS	Brigadier General Staff
BL	British Library
BOAC	British Overseas Airways Corporation
BODC	British Oil Development Company
BP	British Petroleum
BSILO	British Security Intelligence Liaison Officer
BSM	British Security Mission; Bronze Star Medal [USA]
BTE	British Troops in Egypt
C, 'C'	Head of SIS (MI6)
CBE	Commander of the Order of the British Empire
CC	Creative Commons
CD	Head of SOE
CEV	Centre d'Examination des Voyageurs [Aleppo, Syria]
CI	counterintelligence [OSS]
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency [USA]
CIC	Counter Intelligence Corps [USA]
CICI	Combined Intelligence Centre Iraq and Persia [originally Combined Intelligence Centre Iraq]
CID	Criminal Investigation Department
CinC, C-in-C	Commander-in-Chief
CIO	Chief Intelligence Officer [RAF Habbaniya]
CIWL	Compagnie Internationale des Wagons-Lits
CMG	Commander of the Order of St Michael and St George
CO	Colonial Office; commanding officer
COS	Chief(s) of Staff
CREST	CIA Research Tool
CS	countersubversion [OSS]
CSDIC	Combined Services Detailed Interrogation Centre [Maadi, Egypt]
CSM	company sergeant-major [= WOII]
CX	counterintelligence; SIS intelligence reports
DAL	Deutsch-Arabische Lehrabteilung
DAPA	Deputy Assistant Political Adviser
DBE	Dame of the Order of the British Empire
DCOS	Deputy Chief of Staff

DDMI	Deputy Director of Military Intelligence
DDSP	Deputy Director of Special Planning (or Propaganda) [SOE]
<i>DGFP</i>	<i>Documents on German Foreign Policy</i>
DIB	Director of the Intelligence Bureau [India]
DMI	Director of Military Intelligence
DSO	Defence Security Office(r)
DSO(A)	Directorate of Special Operations (Arab World)
DSP	Director of Special Planning (or Propaganda) [SOE]
DVP	Deutsche Volkspartei
<i>ECOP</i>	<i>Espionage and Counterintelligence in Occupied Persia (Iran)</i>
FDR	Franklin Deleanor Roosevelt
FKI	Freikorps Iran
fnu	first name unknown
FO	Foreign Office
FSO	Field Security Officer [Intelligence Corps]
FSS	Field Security Section(s) [Intelligence Corps]
FSW	Field Security Wing [Intelligence Corps]
FTS	Flying Training School
G1, G-1	Divisional Intelligence Staff Officer (General Staff Officer I [GSOI])
G2, G-2	Divisional Intelligence Staff Officer (General Staff Officer II [GSOII]); also US Military Intelligence Service (MIS)
G3, G-3	Divisional Intelligence Staff Officer (General Staff Officer III [GSOIII])
GC&CS, GCCS	Government Code and Cypher School
Gestapo	Geheime Staatspolizei [RSHA IV]
GFO	German Foreign Office [see also AA]
GHQ	General Headquarters
GHQ ME	General Headquarters Middle East
GI	US serviceman [colloquialism]
GOC	General Officer Commanding
GOI	Government of India
G(R)	M(R) in the Middle East
GSI, GS(I)	General Staff Intelligence Branch
GSI(B)	General Staff Intelligence Branch security section [commonly I(b)]
GSI(C)	original designation and cover name for SIME
GSI(J)	original designation and cover name for SOE Cairo
GSI(Ji)	original designation and cover name for Directorate of Special Operations (Arab World); see also DSO(A)
GSI(K)	original designation and cover name for Directorate of Special Planning (or Propaganda); see also DSP

GSI(R)	G(R)
GSO	General Staff Officer
HBM	His (Her) Britannic Majesty('s)
HE	His (Her) Excellency('s); high explosive
HJ	Hitler-Jugend
HM	His (Her) Majesty('s)
HMG	His (Her) Majesty's Government
HMIS	His (Her) Majesty('s) Indian Ship
HMS	His (Her) Majesty('s) Ship
HMSO	His (Her) Majesty's Stationery Office
HQ	headquarters
HRC	Harry Ransom Centre, University of Texas at Austin
HUMINT	human intelligence
IA	Indian Army
IB	Intelligence Bureau [India]
I(b)	GSI(B)
i/c	in command of
ICC	Iraqi Civil Censorship
ICP	Iraqi Communist Party
IO	intelligence officer; interrogating officer
IOR	India Office Records
IPC	Iraq Petroleum Company
IPI	Indian Political Intelligence
IRMC	Iraqi Royal Medical College
ISLD	Inter-Services Liaison Department [= MI6 Middle and Far East]
ISK	Intelligence Service Knox [= Abwehr ENIGMA decrypts]
ISOS	Intelligence Service Oliver Strachey [= Abwehr manual-ciphers decrypts]
ISOSICLE	Sicherheitsdienst (SD) manual-cipher decrypts
ISR	Iraqi State Railways
IWG	International Working Group
IWM	Documents Collection, Imperial War Museum
JAFP	Jewish Agency for Palestine
JCS	Joint Chiefs of Staff
KBE	Knight of the Order of the British Empire
KGRNS	Kampfgemeinschaft Revolutionärer Nationalsozialisten
KO	Kriegsorganisation [= Abwehr wartime outstation]
KONO	Kriegsorganisation Nahost [= Abwehr outstation in Istanbul]
KTB	Kriegstagebuch [= OKW war diary]
Leit	Leitstelle [= Abwehr control centre]
LO	Liaison Officer
LOM	Legion of Merit

LRDG	Long Range Desert Group
LSB	Lignes Syriennes de Baghdad
MBE	Member of the Order of the British Empire
MCC	Marylebone Cricket Club
ME	Middle East
MEC	Middle East Command
MECA	Middle East Centre Archive, St Antony's College, Oxford
MEDC	Middle East Defence Committee
MEF	Middle East Forces
MEIC	Middle East Intelligence Centre
MEW	Ministry of Economic Warfare
MI4	Military Intelligence Dept 4 [= cartography]
MI5	Military Intelligence Dept 5 [cover name for the Security Service]
MI6	Military Intelligence Dept 6 [cover name for the Secret Intelligence Service]
MI9	Military Intelligence Dept 9 [= escape and evasion]
Mil Amt	Militärisches Amt (RSHA Military Department); also abbreviated Amt Mil
Mil C	Militärisches Amt C [= post-merger RSHA equivalent of Abwehr I Ost]
Mil D	Militärisches Amt D [= post-merger RSHA equivalent of Abwehr II]
MI(R)	Military Intelligence (Research) [= M(R)]
MIS	Military Intelligence Service [USA] [= G2]
MOFA	Movements of Foreign Agents
MOI	Ministry of Information
M(R)	War Office sabotage section (uniformed personnel)
M/T	motor transport
NARA	National Archives and Records Administration [USA]
NCO	non-commissioned officer
NCS	National Cooperative Society
NEBS	Near East Broadcasting Service
NID	Naval Intelligence Division
NKVD	Narodnyi Kommissariat Vnutrennikh Del (People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs) [USSR]
NOIC	Naval Officer in Charge
NSRB	Nationalsozialistischer Rechtswahrerbund
NSW	<i>Nazi Secret Warfare in Occupied Persia (Iran)</i>
OBE	Officer of the Order of the British Empire
OC	Officer Commanding
OIC	Officer in Charge

OKH	Oberkommando des Heeres [= supreme command of the German army]
OKW	Oberkommando der Wehrmacht [= supreme command of the German armed forces]
OR	other ranks
OSINT	open-source intelligence
OSS	Office of Strategic Services [USA]
OSS-SI	OSS Secret Intelligence
OSS-SO	OSS Special Operations
OStJ	Officer of the Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem
PA	Political Adviser
PAIC	Persian and Iraq Command
PAIFORCE	Persia and Iraq Force
PAS	Political Advisory Staff
<i>PDAW</i>	<i>Political Diaries of the Arab World</i>
P/F	personal file; personnel file
PGC	Persian Gulf Command (December 1943 onwards) [USA]
PGSC	Persian Gulf Service Command (up to December 1943) [USA]
PIAW	Preventive Intelligence Arab World
PIB	Political Intelligence Bureau [India]
PICME	Political Intelligence Centre Middle East
PIO	Public Information Office
PIR	preliminary interrogation report
P/O	pilot officer
POW	prisoner(s) of war
PP	Penrose Papers
PR	Political Resident [Indian Political Service]
PSO	Port Security Officer
PWE	Political Warfare Executive [created in 1941 from the SOE propaganda department (SO1)]
RAF	Royal Air Force
RAFVR	Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve
RAM	Reichsaussenminister [= German Foreign Minister (Ribbentrop)]
RAMC	Royal Army Medical Corps
R&A	Research and Analysis [OSS]
RATL	Ar Ratl al-Tahriri al-Watani [= National Liberation Column]
RCMP	Royal Canadian Mounted Police
RG	Record Group [NARA]
RGASPI	Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv sotsial'no-politicheskoi istorii
RGS	Royal Geographical Society

RIN	Royal Indian Navy
RINR	Royal Indian Naval Reserve
RM	Royal Marines; Reichsmark [currency]
RN	Royal Navy
RNOH	Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital
RNVR	Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve
RSHA	Reichssicherheitshauptamt [= Reich Security Administration]
RSHA IV	[= Amt IV or Gestapo]
RSHA VI	[= Amt VI or SS foreign intelligence service]
SAS	Special Air Service
SBS	Special Boat Service
SCOPG	Security Control Officer Persian Gulf
SD	Sicherheitsdienst (SS Security Service [incl RSHA III, IV, and VI])
SD-Ausland	[= RSHA VI (Auslandsnachrichtendienst)]
SGO	Surgeon General's Office [USA]
SHAEF	Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force
SI	Secret Intelligence Branch [OSS]
SIGINT	signals intelligence
SIME	Security Intelligence Middle East [= MI5 Cairo]
SIS	Secret Intelligence Service (MI6)
SK	Sonderkommando (special squad) [an SS euphemism for extermination squad]
SKL	Seekriegsleitung [= German admiralty maritime warfare command]
SMH	Society for Military History
SNOPG	Senior Naval Officer Persian Gulf
SO	Security Officer; Special Operations Branch [OSS]
SO1	[= SOE propaganda department which became PWE in 1941, though the merger was gradual, especially in the Middle East]
SO2	SOE operations (sabotage)
SO3	SOE research [soon merged with SO2]
SOAS	School of Oriental and African Studies [University of London]
SOE	Special Operations Executive
SS	Schutzstaffel [= originally Nazi Party security forces]
T&P	Tribal and Political (Intelligence)
TIR	Trans-Iranian Railway
TIS	Turkish intelligence service(s)
TNA	The National Archives [UK]
UCL	University College London [University of London]
UK	United Kingdom

UKCC	United Kingdom Commercial Corporation
UNISA	University of South Africa
USAAF	United States Army Air Force
USAFIME	United States Army Forces in the Middle East
USHMM	United States Holocaust Memorial Museum
USS	United States Ship
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics [= Soviet Union]
VAD	Voluntary Aid Detachment
WCNA	Whitman College and Northwest Archives
WE	war establishment
WOII	Warrant Officer Class II [CSM or equivalent]
W/T	wireless telegrapher/telegraphy [= radio operator/radio]
X-2	counterespionage [OSS]

CHRONOLOGY

- 29 Feb 1932 Fritz Grobba arrives in Baghdad as German chargé d'affaires.
- Mar 1939 Sir Basil Newton appointed British ambassador.
- 4 Apr 1939 King Ghazi dies in car crash; four-year-old Faisal II succeeds him; Emir Abdulillah becomes Regent; Monck-Mason assassinated in Mosul.
- 16 Oct 1939 The ex-Mufti of Jerusalem moves to Baghdad.
- 1 Apr 1941 Rashid Ali al-Gaylani assumes dictatorial powers.
- 2 Apr 1941 Sir Kinahan Cornwallis replaces Newton as ambassador.
- 18 Apr 1941 Operation SABINE: British and Indian troops land at Basra.
- 30 Apr 1941 Iraqi forces lay siege to RAF Habbaniya.
- 10 May 1941 Fritz Grobba returns to Baghdad accompanied by Abwehr officers.
- 18 May 1941 KINGCOL reaches Habbaniya.
- 29 May 1941 Rashid Ali and the ex-Mufti flee to Persia. Elphinston takes over security from RAF 'I' Branch.
- 31 May 1941 Armistice signed. War within war ends.
- 1–2 Jun 1941 Anti-Jewish pogrom (*Farhud*) claims many lives in Baghdad.
- 6 Jul 1941 New CICI charter issued.
- 15 Aug 1941 Chokra Wood assumes command of CICI.
- 25 Aug 1941 Operation COUNTENANCE: British and Soviet troops occupy Persia.
- 3 Aug 1942 Harris-Griffiths murders in Luristan.
- 18 Sep 1942 Persia and Iraq Command (PAIC) HQ opens in Baghdad.

- 11 Oct 1942 Adrian Bishop dies in freak accident at Shemiran hotel.
- 3 Nov 1942 Germans and Italians begin retreat from El-Alamein.
- 14 Jan 1943 Force KALPAK expedition despatched to Persian Gulf.
- 2 Feb 1943 Last German troops surrender at Stalingrad.
- 15 May 1943 Steve Penrose posted to Cairo as head of Near East Section OSS-SI.
- 17 Jun 1943 Operation MAMMUT (Abwehr II) dropped off-zone near Mosul.
- 28–29 Jun 1943 MAMMUT parachutists captured.
- Jul 1943 Art Dayton posted to Baghdad as OSS chief agent for Iraq.
- 15 Aug 1943 Franz Mayr (RSHA VI) captured in Tehran.
- 23 Aug 1943 Battle of Kursk ends in German defeat at Kharkov.
- 28 Nov–1 Dec 1943 Churchill, Roosevelt, and Stalin meet in Tehran.
- Jan 1944 Archie Crawford succeeds Penrose as head of Near East Section OSS-SI.
- Apr 1944 Alec Kellar first visits DSO Baghdad.
- 28 Nov 1944 Operation TEL AFAR (Arab Bureau) dropped 18 km W of Mosul.
- 26 Oct 1947 Last British forces leave Iraq.