

1 June 2024

WARNING AND NECESSARY CLARIFICATION

REGARDING FALSE HISTORICAL INFORMATION

ABOUT THE SUSSEX AND PROUST PLANS

On the website of the newspaper *Marianne*, in the “TRIBUNE” section, an article appeared on 18 May at 11:00, written by Sébastien Olard with assistance from Marie-Jo Bonnet, entitled:

“6 June 1944: The Proust–Sussex plan, when a secret French commando landed on Omaha Beach”

This completely fanciful account (to remain polite) is riddled with blatant errors. It takes no account whatsoever of the reality of the archives held by the Historical Service of Defence (SHD), which the authors of this account could—and should—have consulted at the very least!

This false information is damaging to history in general and, more particularly, to the memory of the 120 young French men and women engaged in these secret missions under the Proust and Sussex plans.

On several occasions I have sent messages to the various websites or newspapers that had already relayed (certainly in good faith) these untruths; unfortunately, I have never received any reply...

For the umpteenth time: THERE WERE NEVER any “SUSSEX” or “PROUST” TEAMS that landed or parachuted on 6 June 1944—neither at SAINT-LAURENT-SUR-MER nor at OMAHA BEACH nor on any other beach, for that matter!

To claim this is entirely false!

All official archives (SHD, NARA in Washington, etc.) prove the opposite.

Still in this account, there is mention of Captain Roger Guattary (SHD file GR28P 4 172/106).

Although he was indeed responsible for an intelligence mission “derived” from the Sussex and Proust plans, this intelligence mission in Normandy was called “ASCAIN”. (NARA file M1623 Roll 4 Volume 4 – Proust)

Roger Guattary did indeed land at St Laurent-sur-Mer, but only on 12 June 1944!

His service record attests to this. Still in this account, there is mention of:

“the twelve D-Day officers” under Guattary’s command.

Not one—let me be clear, not one—of these officers was on a mission before the following dates:

- François Bonafos, alias François Contet, landed on 19 June (SHD file GR 28P4 170-44)
- Jean Masson, alias Jean Moutier, landed (Ascaïn mission) on 19 June (SHD file GR28P4 174-152)
- Norbert Meyer, alias Norbert Martin, landed on 19 June
- Fernand Nocetti, alias Henri Bauge, landed on 20 June (SHD file GR 28P4 171-80)
- Yves Pollet, alias Georges Pocquet, landed on 19 June (SHD file GR28P4 170-60)
- Henri Stubert, alias Aicard, landed on 19 June (SHD file 16P 558103)
- Albert Poupart, alias Viallat, landed on 20 June (SHD file GR28P4 171-85)
- Arthur Laurent, landed on 25 June
- Raymond Le Guen, alias Le Gloan, joined the network in July 1944
- Louis Chevallier, alias Louis Tournier, landed on 30 August 1944

While Captain Guattary was for a time the administrative liquidator of the Sussex network (in 1945), he was never responsible for either the Sussex or the Proust plans.

Sussex consisted of 120 agents, including 2 women, all officers (and not non-commissioned officers as stated in the article).

Finally, credit should be given where it is due:

Although the American Colonel Neave of the OSS was indeed responsible for the American part of the Proust plan, here again the authors are mistaken by confusing the names of the American officers.

The professor emeritus of French at Columbia University, author of the translations of Marcel Proust, was Colonel Justin O’Brien and not Colonel Neave...

Dominique Soulier

Curator of the SUSSEX collection at MM PARK France.