



The FBI Oral History Project

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INTERVIEW OF

Former Support Employee of the FBI

ROY BRITTON

Years of FBI Service 1943 - 1980

**Email correspondence
from February 2003 to November 2006**

With Stanley A. Pimentel

RECOLLECTIONS OF ROY BRITTON
as told to Stanley A. Pimentel
from February 2003 to November 2006

The following are the recollections of Roy Britton, who was a support employee with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) from 1943 until 1980, primarily in Latin America. He emailed his recollections to Stanley A. Pimentel over a period of time from his home in France. The following are emails he sent to Mr. Pimentel beginning on February 1, 2003. The recollections have been edited by Mr. Pimentel for readability.

2/1/03

I have thought of getting Jean Gray if, thru his contacts, he could find out who was longest-serving in the SIS*/Legat program. Naturally, I'm thinking it would be yours truly, with Ann Arnold running a not too distant second.

** Special Intelligence Service of the FBI*

Just a brief clue, I went out in early '44 & it was then SIS. In fact, while working in the Civil (repeat Civil) Attaché's office in Mexico (third foreign post for me), I was not accredited to Embassy - as was the case with both agents & staff in Undercover (UC) status (staff for administrative reasons). Proof of SIS status - I was assigned SIS No. 7100 which was used on correspondence prepared by me instead of my initials, same for UC agents. The Bureau phone number, as I recall, was Executive 7100 - memory aid for me.

2/2/03

The nearest ex-agent that I know could be Mike Zinck in Paris. He served as resident agent (RA) in Laredo from San Antonio Office and later as RA Monterrey, Mexico; became Legat Paris (was married to French woman) and I think served out his career there. His wife died a couple of years or so ago. I heard from Mary Lou Todd, who worked for him in Middle East, that he was thinking of returning to the States - '99 -2001. Retired SA Directory carries his address as Paris. That's a four hour train ride by TGV (very great speed - sounds banal translated but TGV has prestige).

Stan, I'm wondering what kind of input I could have on what you are doing. One thing that might be valuable is that I could recall names of some old-timers who had served in other Legats before coming to Mexico or wherever I knew them - pinpointing them for possible contact. I think the early days would be more interesting - except for some individual cases - I'm thinking more of getting SIS operations off the ground.

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2/2/03, continued

I assume you have the groundwork in setting up SIS - the decree by President Roosevelt giving FBI responsibility for counterespionage in the Western Hemisphere, and, given Director Hoover's wont once the responsibility was placed, he wanted everything in place yesterday. FBI sent high Bureau officials or a high official to London to study their SIS system and/or guidance in organizing an effective organization. I don't know if Assistant Director Foxworthy (Percy Foxworth) was involved in such but word was that he was traveling by air (in Africa?) on business about the time SIS was being set up and was killed in a plane crash.

At the beginning, it's my understanding that an agent would be sent into a particular area just to nose around - said to have used the Appleton Spanish/English dictionary as a code book - also learn to speak Spanish, I would imagine (don't ask for details). You probably have all this. Later offices were established in various embassies throughout Latin American and liaison offices were established in embassies in European capitals and agents placed with businesses in an undercover capacity.

2/3/2K3 Teyran, France (Mr. Britton's home)

Just a squib, Stan, Speakes is JOHN N. (40-62—El Paso). He was in both Mexico and Puerto Rico before your time. Desmond (John) "inspected" him out of Mexico to PR as SAC. He seemed to have some qualms about going from Legat to Domestic Field. Come to think of it, I don't know whether he had ANY Domestic Field experience as I got the idea some UC guys went out from training school. A special seminar I would imagine unless there was emphasis on SIS candidates after finishing at Quantico. When some came back or entered Domestic Field after being on SIS, people in the Field were surprised that some didn't know case classifications.

I have raked up a few names for you. I'm concentrating on old-timers as the operation became more or less routine after some years: Kenneth Crosby (deceased) went to Caracas from Mexico mid-45; Jack West - Legat, Havana in '44 - young maiden's dream - tall, dark, athletic build, handsome by any criteria and black wavy hair. Rumor had it that he was on UC (speculation perhaps) in Brazil and UC personnel were not supposed to marry or have family visit during UC stint. Rumor was that he married, presumably a Brazilian lady, was divorced before being named Legat; Mike Zinck, mentioned yesterday but is one of what I dub you Johnnie-come-latelys (no offense). I mention Bob Oglesby - (your category) - but after PR and Mexico, while he was in Caracas/Bogota, he was saddled with investigating the Jonestown massacre in Guayana. Something of interest might come out of his remarks and/or observations.

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2/3/2K3, continued,

I have in mind a few incidents that came my way during my stint. Incidentally, John Speakes had his 91st birthday in November 2002; had some previous experience in Peru (may have known and worked with George Munro before landing in Mexico). Joe Sparks (51-78- Beaverton, OR) keeps in touch with him at least to extent of calling or sending b'day greetings, 11/7/11. Last couple of years I have sent b'day greetings to him at Joe's urging. I'm wondering if he appreciates being reminded of his age as he hasn't responded to my cards, but I think Jackie, his wife, has responded to Joe's efforts.

Feb. 11 2K3 Teyran, France

Before trying to duplicate what was aborted yesterday, I'll give you a couple of names that may not have occurred to y'all:

Steve Evans (52-79-Scottsdale, AZ) although a J-come-Lately, might have something of interest for you in that, while he was RA Monterrey, Mexico, his plane was hijacked to Cuba, when he was coming to Legat to dictate. Robert Nischwitz (interviewed 2003) was Legat at the time which would put it early 70's. No point in my going into what I heard as you will get from him. He's in Phoenix in retirement.

Another that comes to mind is Matt Perez. He did a stint in Mexico in Legat in early 60's - not staying very long. She was of Scot origin but U.S. Matt (not his actual first name) later was assigned to Mazatlan Consulate and while there Consul Patterson was murdered. Matt lived and breathed the Patterson Case BUT I hear tell that Nick Nischwitz likes to expound on how he solved the case although, as Matt pointed out to him over the phone, he never set foot in the area. I could just give you the names and let you take it from there.

My comments are to give you a gist of what you might find. I didn't find Perez in THE directory - but he got into quite a controversy to point of suing Govt. for equal treatment, advancement, etc. for Hispanics. After Mexico he served in PR and married a PR gal - and I believe survived all that to become ASAC EP. He seemed like a regular guy to me, but that was 35 years or so ago.

I have mentioned Horton R. Telford before - he is pushing 90 if not already there. He was in Havana when I arrived and was my boss in Paris when I was there 46-48. Later 'defected' to CIA and spent years as an attorney in S. Africa for them. I wondered as to whether anything was available to you about his, Ray Leddy's and another Agent's serving as State Department couriers in Europe after things got a bit sticky. I don't know if that was between Cuba and Paris or prior thereto - could have been before they went into SIS. He was a Mormon and did his tour in Paris studying there before joining Bureau.

2/11/2K3, continued

I'm chopping this here. Thought I'd give you above names to work on if not already under scrutiny. The one I aborted was apart from this as it gave comments about staff training before being sent out and probably a lot of trivia of no interest to your project. I will get it to you but didn't want to repeat it today.

Feb. 13 2K3 Teyran, France

A quick one to set out another possible lead - Arnold Dolde. Think he lives in Oregon; had a bit of a health problem a year or so ago. I understand that he was a radio operator back when I met him on the Dominican Caper. He was great help in communications operation. Don't know when he made Agent. A very low key kind of a guy. Little episode involving his getting targeted (as rumor got back to Legat) for assassination. When Clark Anderson (deceased) called for his immediate recall, word sifted back from SOG to effect "What's Anderson getting panicky about?" I think he stood fast and I sold a VW bug to him upon my departure in July '66.

Have I mentioned Armand (Art) Cammarota? (deceased) I think he did a stint in Cuba, later became Legat, Rome. Gossip had it that he got a bit arrogant while there (too big for his britches?) and was replaced. It was also in Dom Rep that I met him. He later became assistant to Jim Miller (54-77 San Antonio) in Managua. When that office closed out, he covered Central America as R/T (roadtrip) from Mexico.

2/17/03 Teyran, France

I found another couple of names and Jim (Miller) flagged another (apparently met him on Central American R/T). Mine are George Hauer - Havana '44. Like Joe Campisi (interviewed), was a short termer. Peter Nero (40-75, Walnut Creek, CA) was assigned Legat, Mexico, in late 52 (?) and was designated RA Guaymas (first RA there, I believe). He might have an interesting thought or two because of that. He was considered to be a person who could be said to march to a different drummer.

That brings me to Ramsey Moore (42-46 San Salvador, El Salvador) who was also a short-termmer (I think he went into business in San Salvador early on but may have switched to cousins later on?) Another one has surfaced - Manny Sanchez. If memory serves he was in Civil Attaché Office, Mexico while I was there.

Stan, has the distaff side been mentioned in your endeavor? Granted they didn't go out until early or mid-1944. But they might have some interesting little happenings to contribute but, of course, lack of addresses would complicate matters.

I'll get to that education part a bit later. As Dick Clark (RIP) would likely say, "My plate has been a bit full last couple of weeks."

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2/26/03

More names: Tom Bishop (41-75, San Diego) - he had just left Mexico prior to my arrival. Bill Baker (35-62, Sun City, AZ) He served in Argentina (UC, I think - well I haven't seen them since 1957 - wife expressed a low opinion of Mr. H for having Bill leave her stranded out of Ft. Worth RA) before being assigned to Legat, Mexico to assist Ed (professor) Sweet to run police schools. Wife could join him in Mexico DF.

Harry Whidbee (47-75 San Diego) - that was before my time - may not have served on SIS but has a PI outfit in San Diego. I did a PI job or two for him through Legat asset after I quit. Worth a shot, no?

Emerson Downing - was UC (XXXXXXXXX for us and for Cousins starting about 1946 for a career - "I suspect"). He had been in DF for a time when I got there in 1945; married a Mexican woman of Robles family who appeared to have some standing in Mexican political circles. Live in McAllen.

Harold Brown comes to mind - Mexico - 1945 - Likely UC.

I have names of staff who served in the DR who went on to become agents but whose names I don't find in The Book:

John Straley - Richard (Dick) Guttler - Hughie Ratliff (served in Mexico while on hold in favor of minorities); Don Bishop (62-98, Spring, TX ?) - Mexico to San Antonio where became SA; Tom Nicodemus (60-92, Las Vegas) - Mexico - on hold in favor of minorities - became SA and served in Portland.

Don't know whether those serving in DR with one-shot deal of interest. Paul Braña (54-78, New York) is case in point, hotshot criminal man in UC operations - big Miami diamond theft case it would seem. "Don't know what the bleep I'm doing here. I'm a criminal man." Did the office a service as he cozied up to US Army Sgt. in charge of vittles, getting roasts, etc., as at that time we were in two apartments - connecting wall removed and Arnold Arrantia (Orrantia) was a pretty good cook. We ate on the premises for awhile - then moved into Embassy proper, forfeiting our 'kitchen' privileges, going to Embassy cafeteria. An aside - I credit Braña with getting Arnold Dolde's allegedly being put on the Caamaña hit-list. (Note: Caamana was the rebel forces leader in the DR conflict.) We had a fleet of white Plymouth cars - some still stenciled "U.S. Government" shipped over from Puerto Rico - contrary to Clark Anderson's specific request for nondescript and varied makes and models - or less conspicuous ones. Paul Braña in his swashbuckling way would pull up at the military, flash his badge-- vocalizing FBI-- and then get provisions for Legat. Word got around after a bit that those all white Plymouths belonged to the FBI. (Those vittles sure were good, though, Paul, and as it happened, no harm came to Dolde.).

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2/26/03, continued

Would you be interested in who was on the DR caper? Will be furnished on request. I can furnish my own saga as to how I got there after installing my family on vacation in Acapulco and abandoning them the next morning enroute to the DR in late May and getting back for two weeks in September. Returned to DR until early December to be with wife two weeks for gall bladder operation then back to DR mid-December to remain until local elections held late June - wanted to see the operation through to that point. And our man won!!

Stan, fatigue is setting in and I've run past my lunch hour.

I don't think Wade Knapp (41-65, Omaha, NE) spent that much time on SIS. True he took over Central America Road trip, but at end of first stint - just prior to end of his first or second two-year tour. Was dismayed at road trip assignment but after doing it awhile loved it (so he told me - first hand this). He was in Hawaii before that where he met and married wife Eleanor who was employed in office there. She later succumbed to throat cancer - never smoked. Wade smoked a pipe though.

11:AM CET 2/27/03 Teyran, France

Didn't meet Tom Bishop, BUT I referred to early forties - and thinking UC operations - this is Tom E. who entered Bureau 1941 and could have been among those recruited for SIS. Speakes was "inspected" out of Mexico in 1960 by John Desmond who replaced him and was assigned SAC, San Juan in 1960. I don't know how long he stayed SAC SJ but was tapped to set up a police training or crowd control school in Panama Canal Zone for Latinos. Declined and Mr. H, in his own way, suggested that in that case, he might like to retire. He did and worked for years for General Mills in Corporate Security. Now retired in El Paso and just turned 91.

Jack Creeden died last year. I doubt that Emerson ever saw much if any stateside service. However on recheck don't see him listed in the book. Mexican son-in-law is an urologist who ripped out my prostate in 1980 just before relocating in McAllen.

Just ran across another name in looking for Downing - Warren DeBrueys is listed in book as having entered Bureau 1950 but served as staff (steno?) in Civil Attaché Office, Mexico, as single. Went into service late 1944 after marrying a local woman - father American, mother Mexican. I had room as pensioner in family home. He went to Tulane after service and became agent, often serving on specials and assisting on inspections. Was in second wave (replacing those allowed to go home for two weeks after being suddenly ripped away from their families late May, early June) of personnel sent to DR late '65. Is or was on New Orleans Crime Commission.

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28 Feb. 2K3 Teyran, France

Jack Creeden (EOD 1939 & mostly on SIS/legat assignments) came to Mexico after the cutout in favor of CIA (CIG, I think it was called then) - I believe FBI again took up foreign work after a few months, having turned their files over to CIA. Still had cross-referencing in Legat after I returned in 1952. Jack went from Mexico DF to Monterrey as RA in late 51 - in meantime romanced and married Betty Hodgins, Civil/Legat receptionist whose father was in mining in Chihuahua. Was "Our Man....." in Monterrey for next eleven years when he was "dull-needed" out of Legat by John Desmond (last part, my assumption) and finished out his career in San Antonio.

DeBrueys, staff, Civil Attaché, before going into service, married MARY Henderson, attended Tulane and EOD (as agent) in 1950. It was LUCILLE Henderson, her sister, who made a career out of dubbing movies. I resided at Henderson residence the full time I was in Mexico (UC) eleven months minus a day or two to comply with Mexican regulations. Lucille and I smooched around some but disassociated in favor of Tony (LNU) who was a fellow employee of American Airlines with both Henderson girls. Tony also did some acting in both movies and on stage - no children appeared on the scene; liked to compare himself with Clark Gable. You could see a slight resemblance after he mentioned it. I think he may have also done some dubbing with Lucille.

You're right in that DeBrueys did do a stint with Legat, Mexico late sixties, possibly, and may have served as Legat, Brasilia, I think after that. I think I mentioned that he was a temporary replacement for one of first wave sent into Dom. Rep. on one day's notice. I was delayed by a day as I was on my way to Acapulco for a ten-day vacation with my family. Pfft. Left for Mexico City on first plane next morning (late May - 27th?). Out that night on Eastern Airlines via Atlanta, held up in Atlanta to fill up with GIs (Vietnam era, remember). Got to Dulles in time to be picked up by John Foarde in time for breakfast out somewhere in Virginia, prior to keeping an appointment at FBI Annex to pick up communication equipment with two SA's to ride shotgun to Santo Domingo. Oh, those were the days my dear...Wondered HOW they would end. Next saw my family in DF in September. Yeah, gittem there Yesterday!! Twenty people milling around with nothing to do till Legat and R. Trent and some staff got some semblance of an operation going

G'bye February! 1 March 03

Stan, this part was not very involved. We were about a half dozen or so rounded up to replace those able-bodies who had, around that time, been deferred due to employment. SS Boards (Selective Service) were scraping bottom of their barrels to meet their quotas and pressure apparently bore down on Mr. Hoover to recall draft material and replace them with women. I was classified 4-F due to messed up leg in farm accident in August 1938 and I'm sure had been taken due to classification.

1 March 03, continued

Staff Training:

We were given lectures on how to comport ourselves - one point being that if we happened across agent UC or other colleague talking to an unknown, give no notice as he might well be on official business. We were also given quick instructions on how to use the Speed Graphic camera (cumbersome - not recommended for any kind of subtle activity); taught how to open sealed envelopes, hopefully undetectably. I believe Asst. Director Clegg (irreverently referred to behind his back as "Old Liver-lips" because of his obvious facial features) was in charge of SIS and gave us some time in explaining what it was all about. That Secret Intelligence Service was very hush-hush. That Bureau had picked

while I was with Legat, Paris) on how to
set up to take over our responsibilities for counter-intelligence in Western Hemisphere.

I was sent to Havana but two months later was transferred to Port-of-Spain, Trinidad (British West Indies, at the time) to support the one Agent there. Girls Friday were sent to larger offices (for togetherness, presumably). A couple of other guys over draft age (28, I believe) went out to one-man operations - Haiti and Costa Rica (?)

It would probably be interesting to have insight into what training Girls Friday in that initial wave received. I wouldn't know where or when they might be contacted. Margaret A. (MAL) Lucy was in Mexico in '45 as were Mary Lyons, Lorene Huggins plus Martha (Martita) King. They all seemed to be well into things at SOG pertaining to SIS and may have been sent out from that section.

When I was first there in 1944 (FBIHQ), the place was like an ant hill. I was last there in 1978, it was (HOOVER Bldg., of course) like a morgue - practically no one in hallways, etc.

I had gotten to San Antonio a day early in order to do some shopping - bought a suit and it was being altered. Went to see SAC, explained the situation. He said their RA from Brownsville was returning there by car from visit to HQS. And in interest of economy I should go back with him. But I have a suit being altered that won't be ready till tomorrow. No sweat, we'll get it to you in Mexico. "Aye, aye, Sir." The RA helped me get a tourist card and a seat on PAN AM (DC-3) in Brownsville for that evening. The ride down was rather quiet as we were only three passengers - all American males. One guy talked of his returning to Panama where he was employed as a civilian truck mechanic for U.S. Army. The other fellow and I had little to say.

Got to Mexico, I being a tourist, went right on thru, transit passenger, no problem. That was Friday night and I duly reported to Civil Attaché's Office Monday morning. My 'patron' (W.J. {Chris} Christopherson - (Eleanor's later-to-be husband)) were both UC and I was assigned to him in the Espionage Section in the office, had a room off the back stair.

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1 March 03, continued

Later that morning I went out to the reception area ... and who do I see but my less-talkative fellow passenger on the PAN AM flight down from Brownsville Friday night! He commented to receptionist (who happened to later become Jack Creeden's wife), as to how discreet I'd been on the flight down. That he had asked me what time it was and I had referred him to the other passenger. Another UC!

One little episode that happened to me: I had just been transferred from Trinidad in open to Mexico UC. I likely was briefed again about being discreet if I met a colleague on the streets. I arrived UC in Mexico the day of FDR's demise, the next morning I was walking along the normally busy side of Alameda Park toward downtown when I recognized a man coming toward me as the former Selective Service supervisor in Dallas (at that particular point no one was in thirty or forty yards from us). We made eye contact but keep right on our ways. I had been out of Dallas only about a year and am sure that he had recognized me - later heard scuttlebutt to the effect that he was on his way to Buenos Aires - likely in a UC capacity.

I have another couple of things to mention. Without any possible doubt in Trinidad we had to have had the least prestigious, the most inelegant working space of any Bureau operation. We were 'officed' on the grounds of the British Security Forces who controlled neutral shipping plying primarily between Spain and South American ports - the "Cabo" passenger ships (*Cabo de Esperanza* and a sister ship), alerting Brits to any WWII bad asses coming or going between Europe and South America, and forwarding anything interesting that Brits discovered during their searches or interrogations (and wanted to share with us) - ours was strictly a liaison operation.

We occupied one room of a clapboard barracks that housed the British enlisted men doing the searching, etc. The structure stood about 18 inches off the ground on post-like supports. The upper part of three sides of our 'office' was hinged to permit raising outward for ventilation, with 'chicken wire' over these openings to prevent papers from escaping in case of a gust of wind. Invariably around two p.m., the seasonal rain could be heard approaching, almost like an advancing wall. More than once I got caught in one of these downpours on returning by bicycle from lunch at my 'pension. Didn't take long to get soaked. Then steam would rise from the ground for an hour or so. I jokingly complained once that every time I hit a typewriter key, I stood to get a spatter on my face from humid typing paper I was writing on.

One consolation here was the work was not so stressful, maybe a bit boring but....

If rain hadn't been too heavy, I could hear the plop-plop of tennis balls being hit in late afternoon. I didn't see the action and at that time I was not agile enough to even think of playing tennis

1 March 03, continued

We now change scenes - Tokyo. Our Girl Friday had a houseguest - a friend from her Legat, Mexico, days. Friday was not known to be an early riser - houseguest was more so, got up and out to a local Japanese market, happened upon some sandals that struck her fancy, bought same and couldn't wait to show her purchase to Friday. Latter liked what she saw and the two of them returned to the market so Friday could get some. Friday reports that they "wobbled" back home in their new sandals, noting during their return giggling by Japanese they passed. On arriving back to the place they were "house-sitting", the maid was horrified - seems one had bought black sandals - only worn by men and the other got red - only worn by children and "filles de joie." I didn't think to ask which color they COULD buy to conform. Little things like that can add spice to a foreign assignment!

Stan, one more name for you: I just recalled the name of young staff member I sort of buddied with in overlapping of assignment in Havana, and see James C. Kraus (41-76, Annandale, VA) as that person. The one who replaced me in Trinidad also made agent but I hear has long since gone to his reward - had a problem staring at the bottom of the bottle. Just as well that I don't recall his name. Kraus could be your neighbor.

March 3 of 2K3 Teyran, France

Top of the morning - pleased to get your quick responses. I had thought to take the day off. Well, I did have a couple of thoughts for you. Your neighbor, Jim Kraus - if he IS the one, was probably one of the first staff to go out - probably around 41 or 42. Thus, they, I hope, had more training than my group did. It's true we replacements, at least I did, had some training in domestic field, although I had been in less than a year when asked if I wanted to go on foreign assignment. In their annual personnel analyses, supervisors as a rule cited us all as "above average intelligence".

I was put on Sunday duty in Dallas after only two weeks or so. Another newcomer, I guess I was breaking him in, had to send a teletype to SOG. We screwed it royally - title was all aka's, et al's, etc. Bureau wanted clarification.

Stan, other than what I set out - maybe more lectures than I indicated - was it. I have come up with another name out of the deep dark past - Mark deWolf. I see he made agent - EOD shown as 1942-72, Sun City, AZ, which would indicate entry as staff, as it was 1944 that I saw him in Cuba; was returned to States mid-44 to face draft. AS Sherlock, I would guess these guys may have been trained as staff and sent right to Legats. So, you have him and Jim Kraus as prospects for info re staff training.

March 3 of 2K3, continued

I went to Managua in February in 1973, after the devastating earthquake of 1972, to give the office a hand for a week or so. Josephine Navarro - as a grandmother - was in office. I believe she was one of first Fridays that went out and married Navarro in whatever country she was assigned, returning to domestic field to further career or resumed it after Navarro left the scene. Nice person. She could be a good source if extant and findable.

In that regard, Fridays have their FBI Association, as you know, with annual get-togethers and may have a list of members that you could maybe get your girl Friday to cull thru. I believe she was a few years my senior, so.....Ann Arnold might be of help in that area - don't know if she still attends such. Barbara (LNU) has attended a few reunions and might give you a lead on the shakers and the movers of PHOEBEE (Fridays). Irene Cannon in Denver was active in it but had a brain operation in Dec. 2001 and another early 2002 and wasn't doing that well after second one. No further news from her relatives who thought she would go into nursing home soon to recuperate.

March 6 2K3 Teyran, France

Beautiful at moment but raining this AM. I dragged another name out of the long ago two months in La Habana: Durkin - Robert, I would guess from The Book - EOD in 1942 - only served till 1945 - all others listed entered later. I'm wondering whether Horton Telford is still around and if he has been contacted. He was my boss in Paris late 40's. Looked me up in Mexico when he called on Win Scott there around early 70's.

September 6, 2006: Continuation of Roy Britton's recollections:

Regarding the staff sent UC to Mexico City needs explanation. Seems then Ambassador and Mr. Hoover had crossed swords somewhere in their careers and rumor had it that one or the other would like to have met the other in a dark alley. Result the Ambassador refused then Civil Attaché's request for personnel he felt he needed. And he brought staff in UC which meant that UC staffers (and UC agents, of course) were not accredited to embassy and were not to associate with embassy personnel.

This same Ambassador refused to let our section be known as Legal Attaché - hence Civil. UC personnel - five or six of us - all male - photographer, code clerk, two men in Chief Clerk's domain and I assigned to Espionage Section in back office in a building across the street from the Embassy. Espionage Section consisted of Walter Jack Christopherson and me as his office staff. Germans seemed to accept that the war in Europe was all but over and their espionage activity had all but ceased. "Chris" Christopherson - Walter Jack Christopherson - was just commencing a summary report of one of the more involved German espionage cases - it seems (61 years later) of thirty-some volumes. I wrapped it up with an assist from friends - running off stencils and assembling - in time to take my first trip to Acapulco for July Fourth week end 1945 to join Lucille Henderson and her father there.

September 6, 2006, continued

Might be interesting to record that in general embassy personnel, wherever, were a bit leery in having FBI on board. Could they be here to look over our shoulders? (This was war-time.)

October 8, 2006

I don't know if this has any place here but I thought of a little incident that happened the day before Kenneth Crosby's (deceased) departure for assignment in Caracas:

I was tapped to go to SA Crosby's residence Sunday afternoon to take some last-minute dictation. But it seemed that he needed something from the office. Would I go to the office and get it. Office car that I could use was parked on the street at the curb on Reforma Avenue and he described it to me - a '35 Ford. I set forth and there was only one car parked in the vicinity. Just as I walked behind it to check license plates, a couple casually got in it and drove away. I was left with my mouth hanging open, wondering what had happened. It was the office car and it happened to be that model that had ignition key to lock the steering gear but just a tab to push to activate ignition. I reported back to Crosby and he asked whether I had tried to get a taxi to take pursuit. Mid-afternoon on Sunday - very little traffic and the couple's action so casual, as if were getting into their own car. It was left to Crosby to handle the matter with the office and presumably the Bureau.

Seems it was presumed that man who stole the car had access to where it was stored and managed to get the key and just happened to spot it parked on Reforma.. (Leaves a bit for speculation, but...)

BACKGROUND OF ROY BRITTON:

Resume of Roy Britton's service in Bureau:

EOD: April 12, 1943, reporting to the Dallas Division

Serving in a support role until early 1944 when headquarters inquired as whether I would be interested in a foreign assignment. I jumped at the opportunity as I had heard just enough rumors as to SIS operations to whet my appetite and felt that would be one way of my contributing a bit to the fight we were in. Actually I feel that I should say that I would have never made it into FBI except for fact that young men of military fitness were being called by the draft. I was classified 4-F for draft due to serious accident to left leg in 1938 and young males were getting harder to come by.

Background, continued,

I reported to Washington in February of 1944 and, after some training, lectures, as to comportment, etc, was assigned to Havana, Cuba. It was a disappointment to me as I would be just barely getting out of the States, whereas others drew Rio, Buenos Aires, Santiago. As it happened I was only in Havana two months to the day and then was sent on down to Trinidad, BWI (British West Indies - their colony at the time), still not South America. Legat, Trinidad was a one-man office liasioning with the Brits who controlled Spanish shipping plying between Spain and South America that might be carrying strategic materials back to Europe for transshipment to Germans, or could be carrying German agents to or from.

I'm convinced that no other Legat operation could compare with our office set-up. We had one room in a barracks otherwise housing enlisted Brits who handled the control - searching ship, interrogating - of Spanish ships.

I was in Trinidad about ten months and was brought back to Washington for leave and reassignment. An interesting note possibly - we on foreign assignment were not allowed to take leave other than in U.S. - wartime.

After two weeks leave, I was advised by registered letter to report to San Antonio for instructions on reassignment to Mexico but in a tourist capacity (the reasons for which I explained in my recollections). In effect, I and others in Civil Attaché Office in UC role were not accredited to the Embassy or could associate with embassy personnel. My stay in Mexico on tourist card was limited to 11 months.

Reported to SOG for reassignment and drew Paris - but at that time the Bureau's role on foreign soil was much debated - on again, off again - hold every one. It wasn't until I was on the boat and the boat had cleared New York harbor, that I felt that I was on my way to Paris.

Might point out that the Mexico office was actually closed out and our files were turned over to CIA. But is a bit fuzzy to me - I think the Bureau resumed operations there only a few months later. Liaison offices in Europe were not affected and I served a bit over two years with Legat, Paris, before opting for marriage and reassignment to domestic field, back to Dallas.

My French wife got her U.S. citizenship and in due course I got another chance at Mexico, but as the head of a family of five - that was 1952. Had the idea of getting back to Europe with Bureau after a couple of years back on the foreign circuit but stayed with the Bureau in Mexico until 1980 and retired in Mexico. Got my Mexican "Green Card" but never took on a job there.

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Background, continued,

Cut the cord with Tenochtitlan (Mexico) in 1989 and relocated in the South of France where I still hold forth. Have two daughters and five grandchildren nearby and three sons and two grandchildren in U.S.

21 Sept. 06 (Britton's assignments)

EOD	domestic	4/12/43	Dallas Division
	SIS	3/7/44	Havana
	"	5/7/44	Trinidad
	"	5/?/45	Mexico
	"	5/10/46	Paris
	domestic	Oct. 1948	Dallas
	SIS	6/12/52	Mexico

While assigned to Legat, Mexico, I was designated for special assignment to the Dominican Republic late May 1965, family remaining in Mexico, returning to Mexico assignment July of 1966. Went on temporary duty to Managua, Nicaragua, in February 1973 as result of earthquake of Christmas Eve of 1972, returning to Legat, Mexico, three weeks later. Continued service at Legat, Mexico until my retirement mid-April 1980. Remained in Mexico until July of 1989 at which time relocated to South of France in immediate vicinity of Montpellier.

Of possible interest to note that of service in Bureau of 37 years and one day approximately 32 of those years were spent on foreign assignment.

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