

R.B. Tinsley, a biographical note

While researching the activities of the Abwehr, I came across the name of Tinsley, who in 1939 had recruited a German secret agent of Dutch nationality in Rotterdam.¹ To find out whether the former was the same person as Richard Bolton Tinsley, known for his activities for British Intelligence during the First World War, I did some research. Had he been revived as the Second World War loomed? Nigel West claims that T, Tinsley's prewar codename, became 'Z-Rotterdam', i.e. head of Dansey's intelligence organisation in the Netherlands in the second half of the thirties.² Unfortunately, no further references could be found, but I believe Tinsley merits a proper study about his work for what was to become MI6. This note would provide some factual pointers for such a study.

Expulsion

R.B. Tinsley was born on 14 November 1875 in Bootle near Liverpool. In July 1910³ we find him as a director of the Uranium Steamship Company Limited in the Dutch harbour town of Rotterdam, living at Heemraadssingel 203^a.⁴ On 23 February 1911 he caused a stir because he had almost succeeded in landing from one of the company's ships dozens of Russian remigrants.⁵ The Rotterdam Chief superintendent of police had expressly forbidden their disembarkation because the Germans refused them a transit visa. The police had even brought in two tugboats to enforce this injunction. On one of these boats F. van 't Sant⁶ had been posted, then head of the river police⁷, who some years later was to play a more direct part in Tinsley's life. It was possibly their first meeting, because in his report Van 't Sant had spelt his name as 'Tinsly'.⁸

The repercussions for Tinsley were severe, because he was considered to be a danger to the public order. As early as 28 February a Royal decree was signed for his expulsion from the Netherlands.⁹ On 1 March he was told to leave the country within fourteen days.¹⁰ Tinsley tried to counter his eviction by calling in the help of Queen Wilhelmina, requesting to postpone the expulsion in a letter dated 7 March.¹¹ The Foreign Office was brought in too. On 8 March the British envoy Sir Alan Johnstone¹² wrote: 'Referring to private conversations which have taken place between Your Excellency [the Dutch Minister for Foreign Affairs] and myself respecting the expulsion from the Netherlands of Mr. Tinsley [...] I have the honour to request that Your Excellency will be good enough to urge the competent authorities to suspend until the 28th instant the decree of expulsion pronounced against Mr. Tinsley.'¹³ That same day the Minister had a conversation with his colleague of the Ministry of Justice and the latter agreed to suspend Tinsley's expulsion for a fortnight at most, although he wished to have a Foreign Office request in writing first.¹⁴ There seems to have been a

¹ Etienne Verhoeven and myself are currently researching the activities of the Abwehr, the German military intelligence and security service, in and from the Low Countries before and during the Second World War.

² Nigel West, *MI 6: British Secret Intelligence Service operations 1909-45* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson 1983) pp.68-69.

³ Nationaal Archief ('s-Gravenhage) (hereafter NA), Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken, Inventaris van de A-Dossiers, 1871-1918 (2.05.03), 424 (dossier A 185). Letter 19110304 Chief superintendent of Rotterdam police to Minister of Justice. Dates are noted in accordance with ISO recommendation R 2014-1971.

⁴ *Francois van 't Sant en Richard Bolton Tinsley: spionnen aan de Heemraadssingel*. <http://heemraadssingel.vinden.nl> (20030810). On 19220201 he moved to London. Index card of Gemeentearchief Rotterdam (hereafter GAR).

⁵ A.J. van Weel, Tinsley in Holland, in: *Pro Memoria, Bijdragen tot de rechtsgeschiedenis der Nederlanden*, jaargang 3 (2001) aflevering 2, pp.316-317. I am indebted to Sierk Plantinga for calling my attention to this article.

⁶ François van 't Sant, 18830211 Den Helder – 19660603 Rotterdam.

⁷ F.A.C. Kluiters, *De Nederlandse inlichtingen- en veiligheidsdiensten* ('s-Gravenhage: Sdu 1993) p.389.

⁸ NA, Ministerie van Justitie 1876-1914 (hereafter MvJ) (2.09.05), 6562. Report 19110226.

⁹ NA MvJ, 6561. Koninklijk besluit 19110228, no 2.

¹⁰ NA MvJ, 6562. Report 19110301.

¹¹ NA MvJ, 6562. Letter 19110307.

¹² Johnstone had presented his letters of credence to Queen Wilhelmina on 19101215. *Staatsalmanak voor het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden* 1912 ('s-Gravenhage; Utrecht: Nijhoff; Broese 1911) p.49.

¹³ NA MvJ, 6562. Draft letter 19110308.

¹⁴ NA MvJ, 6562. Letter 19110309 Minister of Justice to Minister for Foreign Affairs, no 41.

slight conflict of responsibilities, because on 13 March the Minister for Foreign Affairs, without informing his colleague, assured the Foreign Office in the person of Lord Acton that an extension of Mr. Tinsley's residence permit had been granted.¹⁵

On 24 March Tinsley was questioned about his plans by the Rotterdam police.¹⁶ Well, he planned to leave by train for Antwerp in Belgium on 27 March, and indeed, on that day a policeman observed Tinsley and his wife¹⁷ doing just that.

From the documents it does not become clear whether any other forces may have been at work, which might have pointed to another, more significant side of Tinsley, viz. his secret service activities.¹⁸ However, surprisingly fast his expulsion was to be rescinded. At the end of April the Minister of Justice wrote to his colleague, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, that he did not deem it necessary anymore to deny Tinsley's reentry into the Netherlands.¹⁹ Less than a month later Queen Wilhelmina signed a Royal decree in which the former decree was revoked.²⁰ Just a few days before, Tinsley had assured Her Majesty in writing that he would abstain from any illegal activities.²¹ He would not keep his promise.

Secret service

We do not know when Tinsley, a retired naval lieutenant (later captain)²², was called upon to provide intelligence to the Secret Service Bureau, founded by Mansfield Cumming in 1909.²³ Given Alan Judd's comments on Tinsley, based on the diaries of Cumming, it may be that Tinsley became involved in or shortly after 1913.²⁴ On 27 September 1914 Cumming noted 'with satisfaction that he had secured the rank of commander, Royal Naval Reserve, for a businessman, Richard Tinsley, whom he had sent to Rotterdam to open up a station.' According to Judd, in 1910 Cumming 'favoured Brussels over Copenhagen [as 'Branch Centre' in a European capital] because of its centrality in the event of war, its ease of access and "its Club, its English society, and its modern and cheap mode of living". [The overall head of Intelligence at General Headquarters, brigadier-general George] MacDonogh, on the other hand, now favoured Copenhagen or Amsterdam as being "less infected with spies".'²⁵ Judd notes that 'no overseas Secret Service station would in fact be established until the autumn of 1913.'²⁶ It seems logical to assume that Tinsley's station was opened after this main station in Brussels. This, however, does not exclude the possibility that Tinsley was recruited at an earlier date.

The Dutch government accepted his appointment as consul of Nicaragua in Rotterdam at the end of 1917.²⁷ We do not know what the Foreign Office thought about his consular activities, because it knew about his reputation for 'lying and unscrupulous intriguing'.²⁸ Tinsley had already lied about the true circumstances regarding the Russian remigrants in 1911. The FO had relayed his version of the incident to the Dutch government, which then had been able to challenge his story with vigour. Judd describes Tinsley as an 'energetic, self-advertising and none too scrupulous former businessman

¹⁵ NA MvJ, 6562. Draft letter 19110313.

¹⁶ NA MvJ, 6562. Undated report of S. Dijkstra.

¹⁷ Catherine Bell, 18750731 Liverpool.

¹⁸ Van Weel claims such circumstances, but the documents in the archives of the Ministry of Justice do not support this. A search for internal reports about the conversations with Johnstone in the archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was not successful.

¹⁹ NA MvJ, 6563. Letter 19110429.

²⁰ NA MvJ, 6563. Koninklijk besluit 19110522, no 84.

²¹ NA MvJ, 6563. Letter 19110519.

²² Christopher Andrew, *Secret service: the making of the British Intelligence Community* (London: Heinemann 1985) p.82

²³ Alan Judd, *The quest for C: Sir Mansfield Cumming and the founding of the British Secret Service* (London: HarperCollins 1999) p.83.

²⁴ Judd p.282.

²⁵ Judd p.203.

²⁶ Judd p.205.

²⁷ GAR, 1565A, G 136/1917. Letter 19171127. Tinsley stayed on as consul till 1928. This year, however, is not consistent with his leaving Rotterdam in 1922. *Staatsalmanak voor het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden 1929* (s-Gravenhage: Nijhoff 1928) p.71.

²⁸ Judd p.416.

whose later role, despite his faults, was important and beneficial. Conversations with him involved days of talks [beginning on 21 May 1915] – “Capt. Tinsley arrived at 11 and stayed until 6.30 with a short interval for lunch” – especially when his extravagant but generally successful claims for compensation for his alleged loss of earnings and business were the subject.²⁹

For his reputation for ‘unscrupulous intriguing’ it serves to cite Michael Occleshaw: ‘According to S.P[ayne] Best, who spent a year in the Secret Service in the Netherlands and was therefore in a position to know, a British diplomatic consortium there was engaged in what he termed an “absolutely scandalous business”. Necessary parties to this affair were Oppenheim and Maxse, already deeply involved in secret Intelligence, and Sir Francis Oppenheimer, Commercial Attaché at the Hague. This triumvirate, with the aid of Tinsley’s agents, ran what was virtually a system of blackmail known as “The Black Book”, listing firms which traded with Germany via the Netherlands. Their trade was profitable because a proportion of it was in contraband goods which would fetch a high price on the black market in Germany and they were thus extremely vulnerable to British pressure, both Naval and diplomatic. The firms listed were politely asked to help by having their representatives send back information for the British from Germany and even to pass selected British agents into Germany disguised as their representatives. Behind the polite request, as they knew only too well, hung the threat of ruin, but in return for active cooperation the passage of their goods was left unhindered. In most cases the pressure worked. In one case, at least, a salvage tug company, Smits, paid the triumvirate 100,000 guilders to be kept off the list and out of active compliance with British wishes.’³⁰ Apparently, salvaging both German and British ships was booming business for Dutch tug companies. According to Judd, a subsequent War Office investigation failed to find any evidence of blackmail.³¹ This outcome is not surprising since the military attaché at The Hague, lieutenant-colonel Laurence Oppenheim, and Foreign Office officials like E.G.B. Maxse³², the consul general in Rotterdam, were involved.³³

Payne Best’s successful intelligence work illustrates his own lack of scruples for he noted: ‘In those days the Germans were just as keen to get hold of morphia or cocaine as addicts are nowadays with heroin. I had a great deal of difficulty in getting permission to do this drug-pushing, in fact, I had to go to the Prime Minister, to Lloyd George, and get his authority to buy large quantities of morphia tablets and cocaine. With this I was able to suborn quite a number of people in the German Army.’³⁴ Occleshaw comments: ‘Best had the soul to do and dare, though, and since he specifically states that the drugs were bought in large quantities, that would indicate exploitation on a grand scale. Indeed, according to his own account he “even managed to get as far as the German General Headquarters where, as a result, I got most valuable documents”.’³⁵

After meeting Tinsley for the first time, Sir Walter Kirke noted in November 1915: ‘He strikes me as being a smart fellow, but not a man for whom any really high class agent would work, such as Ramble.’³⁶ With him it is a matter of business and I doubt his imparting patriotic enthusiasm to

²⁹ Judd p.316.

³⁰ Michael Occleshaw, *Armour against fate: British Military Intelligence in the First World War* (London: Columbus 1989) p.203.

³¹ Judd p. 416.

³² E.G.B. Maxse; Louise de Colignyplein 11 The Hague.

³³ It is a pity that Judd, despite the fact that he acknowledges Christopher Andrew’s wisdom, has not used Occleshaw’s book on British Intelligence during the Great War. Had he done so, Judd – a pseudonym of former senior MI6 officer Alan Petty – would have been able to corroborate, dismiss or elaborate on certain details in Occleshaw’s book. Judd Acknowledgements. Francis Wheen, Villain of the peace, *The Guardian*, 20000329.

³⁴ Occleshaw p.208.

³⁵ Cumming’s entry for 19200916 about one of Tinsley’s agents, whose name Judd could not decipher, possibly concerns an agent, originally recruited/suborned by Payne Best. This agent ‘successfully burgled some safes in the German War Office to the great advantage of the Military HQ. Complimentary telegrams were frequently received from the MA [military attaché] in regard to these. I [Cumming] have heard nothing of them nor of the man nor of his methods but Capt. W- tells me that on Good Friday last he showed me a letter from the War Office giving instructions in the use of morphine – which was intended for him.’ Judd p.451.

³⁶ By Ramble, mademoiselle Louise de Bettignies alias Alice Dubois (1880-1918) was meant. MacDonogh’s superior, field-marshal Sir John French, described her as a ‘regular modern Joan of Arc’. She led Ramble’s

agents. He therefore misses the best people, and I should never consider him capable of running our show in toto, without an officer in charge and always at his elbow.³⁷

In February 1915 the Dutch Commander-in-chief informed the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the espionage activities, organised by the German consul C.R. Kneist and the British consul general Ernest Maxse, both in Rotterdam.³⁸ The latter had set up a successful espionage system, maintained by the British consul Shadwell³⁹ in Delfzijl, a northern Dutch harbour town near the German port of Emden. For instance, on 7 August 1914 he sent the following telegram: 'Large German 3 funnel cruiser arrived Emden; damaged today; 8 torpedoboats left yesterday.' The Commander-in-chief remarked that the British consulate maintained a 'zeer nauwe relatie' – a very close relationship – with the Uranium Steamship Company.

Uranium Steamship Company Limited

In May 1915 the Rotterdam police already knew of Tinsley's activities. An accountant of his firm, J.F. Cowie⁴⁰, had been arrested for public drunkenness in the night of 4 to 5 May.⁴¹ He had papers and notes on his person which indicated an involvement in espionage, and interrogation seemed to confirm this suspicion. Cowie also acted as a courier for the British consulate in Rotterdam, delivering the diplomatic mailbag at the Hook of Holland-Harwich ferry. He also provided information about Germany to his friend Noble, an engineer at the Telegraph Office in London. Reports which were made by the company were paid for by the British consulate. Cowie's notebook was found to contain several names, including a certain D. de Peterson.⁴² It is interesting to see that Cowie had also noted the name and address of the German consul in Rotterdam, Kneist, who was constantly struggling with British Intelligence.

According to the telephone directory for 1915, D. de Peterson, a son of the Russian consul general in The Hague and secretary to the Russian consul in Rotterdam, was a certified Russian language translator. His full name probably was Dmitry de Peterson⁴³, which was already known to the Dutch police. From the German police in Hamburg a Dutchman had learned details about the clandestine handing over to British Intelligence of information about German ship movements copied from telegrams from the Dutch Coastguard to the Navy's Coastguard HQ in Amsterdam.⁴⁴ The Navy wanted to know all about ship movements near the Dutch coast. Subsequent investigations revealed that the Germans had indeed an effective counter espionage service in Amsterdam. The Hamburg police knew that an employee at the Telegraph Office in Amsterdam had been recruited by someone called Stern in September 1914. This employee was M.J. Peeters, who made copies of the Coastguard telegrams and sent them to a 'Mr. De Jong', c/o a kiosk at the Westermarkt in Amsterdam. In October 1914 an investigation brought to light that De Jong and Stern were identical with De Peterson. At the

system with vigour and panache till her arrest in November 1915. Occleshaw pp.244-245. Andrew pp.142-144. Personal archive E. Verhoeven. Unpublished biographical note concerning L. de Bettignies by P. De Cock. I am indebted to Etienne Verhoeven for calling my attention to this source, as well as to two other sources, mentioned in notes 62 and 69.

³⁷ Kirke, cited in Occleshaw p.159.

³⁸ NA, Ministerie van Defensie, Generale Staf (AHK), 1914-1940 (hereafter MinDef GS) (2.13.70), 336 (1945 GS). Letter 19150225 Commander-in-chief to Minister for Foreign Affairs.

³⁹ Shadwell had been expelled from Emden. At Delfzijl he was succeeded by consul Kearney, who also contributed to intelligence gathering. Dutch authorities felt awkward about Kearney's espionage activities. This was solved by his transfer to Dunkirk. NA MinDef GS, 336 (1399 GS). Letter 19150208 Commander Delfzijl to Commander-in-chief.

⁴⁰ John Farkuhar Cowie, 18600205 Camrie (Banffshire); Nieuwe Binnenweg 164 Rotterdam.

⁴¹ NA MinDef GS, 336 (4901 GS). Letter 19150511 Chief superintendent of Rotterdam police to Commander-in-chief.

⁴² NA MinDef GS, 336. Report 19150505 of S. Dijkstra. Other names were: R. Rae (Lieve Verschuierstraat 32^b), Th.H. Meulkens, vice consul H. Tom (Witte de Withstraat 14^b), and Mrs H. Kolff A. Qzn-Havelaar (Westerkade 20), all in Rotterdam. Some company staff members were listed in the telephone directory for 1915: Don Czopp, Meulkens and Rae.

⁴³ Dmitry de Peterson, 18861208 Jassy (Iasi), Romania – 19441226 The Hague; Mauritsweg 18 Rotterdam.

⁴⁴ NA MinDef GS, 336. Letter 19150225 Commander-in-chief to Minister for Foreign Affairs.

trial of Peeters, De Peterson, an employee of the Uranium Steamship Company, denied everything, but he now had the attention of the police.

Peeters' sentence is unknown, but it must have been a modest one, because during his short career in espionage his actions were not considered detrimental to the interests of the Netherlands. In June 1915 the Dutch Commander-in-chief even stated that arrest and interrogation could be considered a sufficient warning and deterrent, because in many cases a suspicion of espionage on behalf of the Allies or of Germany turned out to be very hard to prove in a court of law.⁴⁵

Some of De Peterson's earlier activities were described in a report of the Rotterdam police in June 1915.⁴⁶ At the end of August 1914 he had recruited Willem Both and J.M. van Gelderen, two Dutchmen living in Rotterdam, for sending coded telegrams about troop movements from Frankfurt. Van Gelderen and Both soon were arrested. Both was sentenced to five years in prison; Van Gelderen to one year. Others, arrested for similar activities, were sent to prison for eighteen months to eight years.⁴⁷ When Both's wife heard of the sentence, she managed to locate De Peterson at the Uranium Steamship Company of Tinsley. De Peterson gave her a lump sum of 60 guilders, followed by several payments of 25 guilders. Apparently De Peterson had been organising a network in Germany with Tinsley. The latter, with the address Boompjes 75 in Rotterdam, was still mentioned in the Sonderfahndungsliste of September 1939, the German record of persons to be arrested after the invasion.⁴⁸ De Peterson was listed too. After WWI he apparently had continued his career in Intelligence, while being attached to the publishing firm of W.N.J. van Ditmar in Rotterdam.⁴⁹ During WWI this firm had employed a deserted German sergeant – an engineer in civil life – who had been involved with the defensive works in Antwerp.⁵⁰ At Van Ditmar's firm he drew sketches of these works and sold them to British Intelligence, probably to military attaché Oppenheim.⁵¹ After the war, staff members of Van Ditmar suspected De Peterson of espionage because of his mysterious behaviour. The same behaviour was observed in another regular visitor to the firm, S. Payne Best, 'every inch a spy'.

In September 1915 Salomon Schanzer Jr⁵², a German newspaper correspondent, stationed in Rotterdam, wrote about meeting a German acquaintance in this city, a Kriminalpolizekommissar from Cologne.⁵³ In Germany one of the agents of the De Peterson-Tinsley network had been arrested and had admitted having sent his reports to postbus 656, belonging to the Uranium Steamship Company. The Kommissar had been sent to check up on this P.O. box, and he unsuccessfully tried to recruit Schanzer, in order to gain access to letters sent to this address.

It seems that Tinsley's centre of control was infiltrated. On the premises of his company there was also located a hotel for emigrants, locally known as the Uranium Hotel, which was run by Mr and Mrs Huber^{54, 55}. Gottfried Huber was an ex-purser, who became involved in Tinsley's espionage activities after WWI had broken out.⁵⁶ Therèse Huber provided Walter Schwäbsch alias Patent – who was working for German counterespionage – with names of Germans who were suspected of betraying

⁴⁵ NA MinDef GS, 337 (6379 GS). Draft letter 19150622 Commander-in-chief to Minister of Justice.

⁴⁶ NA MinDef GS, 337 (6272 GS). Report 19150611 by inspector C. van der Pol.

⁴⁷ Hartog Blaaser and Mozes van Arend: eight years. Meyer Blaaser: eighteen months.

⁴⁸ The address of the Uranium Steamship Company Ltd was Boompjes 76^a.

⁴⁹ Elka Schrijver, *Oorlogsbelevissen* (Amsterdam; Dieren: De Bataafsche Leeuw 1984) pp.20-21.

⁵⁰ NA MinDef GS, 337 (8589 GS). Copy letter 19150813 Public prosecutor Rotterdam to Procurator-general 's-Gravenhage.

⁵¹ On 19150813 a search of the premises seemed to confirm the suspicion of espionage. Van Ditmar was eventually acquitted. NA MinDef GS, 336 (8946 GS). Copy letter 19150824 Public prosecutor Rotterdam to Procurator-general Rotterdam; 353 (2034 GS). Letter 19160309 Public prosecutor Rotterdam to Commander-in-chief.

⁵² Salomon Schanzer, 18810322 Witanowitz, Austria.

⁵³ GAR, 1554C, GW 36/1915. Letter 19150927 S. Schanzer Jr to Queen Wilhelmina.

⁵⁴ Gottfried Theodor Huber; Therèse Françoise Huber-Kohls.

⁵⁵ Telephone directory 1915.

⁵⁶ NA MinDef GS, 353 (8659 GS). Copy letter 19160916 F.W.H. Nussholz to Abwehr Nord.

their Fatherland. One cannot, however, exclude the possibility that in reality this was a counterespionage operation of Tinsley.

According to Occleshaw, from 1916 onwards the Netherlands clearly went beyond the bounds of their neutrality.⁵⁷ In May 1916 the Dutch newspaper *De Telegraaf* publicized that Tinsley was a British Intelligence agent.⁵⁸ The Germans seized the opportunity to denounce him to the Dutch government and demand his immediate expulsion.⁵⁹ Moreover, they arrested some of Tinsley's agents.

Some months later a report was written regarding the functioning of Tinsley's intelligence organisation inside the offices of the Uranium Steamship Company.⁶⁰ On the third floor a photographic laboratory had been set up for Leon Verbruggen, the photographer. Photographs and drawings were transported in padlocked canvas sacks with weighted bottoms by way of the Harwich ferry.⁶¹ All this was organised by a certain A. de Meestere⁶².

According to Judd, on 27 November 1915 Cumming had 'listed Tinsley's staff in Rotterdam as comprising twenty-seven British, Dutch and Belgians. Again, the functions of most of these people are unclear, but for some he lists tasks and areas of responsibility, such as reports, cashier, Maastricht, translator, "contraband political".⁶³ It seems clear that Cumming listed the names, but Judd does not repeat them, thereby demonstrating his ignorance. We can only try to correct his omission. 'De Meestere' was a Belgian, but owing to the lack of detail he cannot be connected with Judd's quote. Probably considered by Judd to be one of the Belgians was Charles Denoyette⁶⁴, a Frenchman who worked for the sabotage section.⁶⁵ R.G.L. Vandereen⁶⁶ was another Belgian, just like Raoul Moreau and his brother Victor⁶⁷. They were part of a family of agents. Their father Jules⁶⁸, an engineer in charge of the workshops of the Antwerp North railway station, had met Tinsley and Oppenheim in July 1915, possibly through the Belgian lieutenant Joseph Michel ('Chassin').⁶⁹ Jules and all of his four children worked in the Oram network, which in 1918 numbered one thousand agents. Both Raoul and Victor were awarded an OBE, Officer of the British Empire.

The same lack of detail applies to a certain Pauen, a technical or mechanical engineering draughtsman. The translator was possibly Casfeliansky, whom Cowie described as someone who translated articles from the German press. One of the British was the Scotsman James Black⁷⁰, a purser; another was a certain captain Powers RN, who ran the naval section.⁷¹

⁵⁷ Occleshaw pp.183-184.

⁵⁸ Occleshaw p.167. Andrew p.153.

⁵⁹ In July 1915 the Germans had been pressing the Dutch authorities to expel a certain Putman, who had been identified as an agent. They were backing up their diplomatic pressure with a thinly veiled military threat, which included massing troops near the Dutch frontier. Occleshaw p.161.

⁶⁰ NA MinDef GS, 353 (5797 GS). Report 19160705 by J. de Graaf and W. Bruns.

⁶¹ Meulkens was charged with transporting sacks to the ferry from Flushing.

⁶² Probably: Henri Adrien Vital Demeestere, 18770127 Turnhout, Belgium; Nieuwe Binnenweg 294 Rotterdam. In 1925 he left for Belgium. According to French Intelligence, he had left the company on 19240421, on account of supplying inferior intelligence to Tinsley. After testing aspirant emigrants for Canada in Prague and Belgrade, he seemed to have been working for London direct. In this capacity it was said he would set up a new Belgian intelligence organisation at Antwerp. Studie- en documentatiecentrum Oorlog en hedendaagse Maatschappij (SOMA, Brussels), AA 1423, 7-1-100. SCR-report 19250509, no 2586.

⁶³ Judd p.336.

⁶⁴ Charles Denoyette, 18890315 Pontoise, France. Aliases were Antoine Dubois and Joseph Benoit.

⁶⁵ Details about some staff members in Archief Ministerie van Justitie, Centraal Archief Bijzondere Rechtspleging, K. Hoogeveen. List of names, undated.

⁶⁶ Raphael Gammarus Ludovicus Vandereen, 18881027 Berchem, Belgium; Prins Hendrikkade 40^b Rotterdam.

⁶⁷ Raoul Victor Jules (or Joseph) Moreau, 18970624 Berchem, Belgium, and his brother, the mining engineer Victor Jules Joseph, 18860812 Kain, Belgium, both lived at Avenue Concordia 37^b Rotterdam, as did Henry Landau.

⁶⁸ Jules Moreau, 18560119 – 1938.

⁶⁹ Unpublished extended essay by A. Hendrick, *Oram, un réseau de renseignements allié pendant la première guerre mondiale* (Université Catholique de Louvain 1982).

⁷⁰ James Black, 18710424 Glasgow; Veerhaven 11^a Rotterdam.

⁷¹ Occleshaw p.160.

Tinsley and Van 't Sant

General Sir James Marshall-Cornwall of the Intelligence Corps told Occleshaw that the War Office 'had a very good system organized by our military attaché, Colonel Oppenheim, at the Hague, who worked in conjunction with the Dutch Military Intelligence [GS III⁷²], but of course they had to keep that very secret.'⁷³ This coincides with the relationship Tinsley built up with François van 't Sant of the Rotterdam river police. In 1914 this inspector came to live at Heemraadssingel 302^b, thereby becoming a distant neighbour of Tinsley. When the war broke out, Van 't Sant was ordered by GS III to provide information on German and British intelligence activities in Rotterdam.⁷⁴ He began recruiting and running agents on behalf of Tinsley, thereby receiving information, which was also valued by GS III.⁷⁵ In a letter to the Minister of Justice the Commander-in-chief stressed the fact that there was no direct contact between his intelligence service and Tinsley.⁷⁶ The latter was communicating with the Rotterdam police in a 'most candid fashion', and his information eventually did reach GS III.

During the period 1914-1920 Van 't Sant received from Tinsley a total of £ 25,000 (equal to €113,000 nowadays), for the payment of his agents. Van 't Sant gave an account of these payments to GS III, which concluded there were no discrepancies. However, according to Van 't Sant, these payments had only been received for agents he had sent to the Dutch colonies in the period 1918-1920, because at that time the governments of both countries had the same interests in these spheres.⁷⁷

In 1919 Tinsley had become a Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (CBE).⁷⁸ Some ten years later, on 24 February 1930, Van 't Sant, at the time Chief superintendent of police at The Hague, was awarded a CBE too.⁷⁹ Tinsley's recommendation and testimony must have played an important part in awarding Van 't Sant this order. In 1948, for reasons unknown to me, Van 't Sant played down this award by calling it an OBE, Officer of the British Empire.⁸⁰ The CBE is an indication that the money paid to agents was indeed well spent, because Tinsley would not have been satisfied with bogus information from nonexistent agents.⁸¹ These £ 25,000, however, would come to haunt Van 't Sant during the Second World War, when he was accused of enriching himself with Secret Service money. The Dutch Prime Minister asked brigadier S.G. Menzies, chief of MI6, about the payments, and after an investigation 'C' denied the allegation. In this matter Menzies may have consulted Tinsley before the latter's death in 1942⁸². All in all it is reasonable to assume that Van 't Sant was not to blame, although for some C's denial was not enough, because they believed, as some nowadays still do, that denial and admission are all the same in secret service.⁸³

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The webmaster will be pleased to relay any comments to the author.

⁷² Oppenheim's contact with GS III was the Dutch liaison officer captain J.W. van Oorschot. He became head of GS III in 1919. J.C. Roelofsen in *Enquêtecommissie regeringsbeleid 1940-1945* (hereafter *PEC*) 2C ('s-Gravenhage: Staatsdrukkerij- en uitgeverijbedrijf 1949) p.223. Kluiters p.381.

⁷³ Marshall-Cornwall, cited in Occleshaw p.184.

⁷⁴ Kluiters p.389.

⁷⁵ L. de Jong, *Het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden in de Tweede Wereldoorlog* 9 II ('s-Gravenhage: Nijhoff 1979) pp.845, 862, 866.

⁷⁶ NA MinDef GS, 337 (6379 GS). Draft letter 19150622.

⁷⁷ Van 't Sant in *PEC* 2C pp.643-644.

⁷⁸ *Who's who* 1939 (London: Adam and Charles Black ny) p.3185.

⁷⁹ Email 20031212 Ministry of Foreign Affairs to author.

⁸⁰ Van 't Sant in *PEC* 2C p.644.

⁸¹ Dick Engelen does not mention this CBE in his biographical sketch of Van 't Sant. D. Engelen, 'Sant, François van 't (1883-1966)', in *Biografisch Woordenboek van Nederland* (<http://www.inghist.nl/Onderzoek/BWN/lemmata/bwnz/sant> [05-09-2003] (20030921)).

⁸² Van 't Sant in *PEC* 2C p.644.

⁸³ I am grateful to Antoinette Kluiters-Gilbert and P.J. van der Vet for their valuable comments on earlier drafts of this note.