

Меро 38/61

No. 3011 / MP / 3478

DIVISION

DIVNL. REF

SB

1951

UP 1967
 of Registration 1st 2/30
 Former papers

Edmond Mark David ROMILLY

The Registry should be notified if this file is passed direct to another Branch or if any file is attached to it or detached from it.

Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date
SM	13 ³ / ₅₈				
	26/3/59				
	24/1/60				
	10/8/61				

16/3/98
 RETAIN

For Authority to P.A.
~~17/3/53~~
 17/4/53
 17/3/66
 17/4/67
 17/3/68

Record Sheet of case of Docher Commissioner.

I think it probable that you may be approached personally in this case. Needless to say, all that we can do is, like the man in "The Hunting of the Snark", to offer this lady "jam and judicious advice". We shall continue to [redacted]

[redacted] but so far as the boy is concerned we can do nothing until there is some evidence that some criminal offence has been committed or is contemplated. There is no real prospect of any such evidence turning up. The recovery of the boy is a matter for the family solicitor if the parents cannot do it themselves.

What is really wanted is for these people, particularly the father, to be talked to by a solicitor or somebody else with weight and experience of the world. The late Lord Ribblesdale said in one of his books, "Anyone who has not been a socialist before he is 21 has no heart: anyone who remains a socialist after he is 25 has no head".

NR

10.2.34.

2

AC C Judge

[Large redacted block]

3

10/2/34
The alien file is at Bow St.
L.B. for report on the alien
file. Why is he held for
long. etc? NR 10.2.

⁴
Newspaper extracts att'd (49)



⁶
Copy of - 14 of 297/2/26.

⁷
Reports att'd (7a)

[Handwritten signature]

Please see 7a.

I do not think the Police should interfere.

⁸
19/2/34

[Handwritten signature]

9

Supt. Canning.

This lady had better be spoken to by the Chief Inspector or yourself if she rings up again. She must understand that this is not a matter for the police at all unless and until there is some evidence that some criminal offence has been committed or is contemplated, and that the best thing she can do is to get in touch either with her family solicitors or some other good firm of solicitors.

[Handwritten initials]

20.2.34.

¹⁰
Chief Insp Foster to see

¹¹
21/2/34

[Handwritten signature]
Supt. Canning
C. Foster
C.I.
¹²
21/2

Branch report attached 11^a

12

Press Extract attached 12^a

13

14.

Colonel Romilly rang me up this afternoon. He said that his son has lately been living on his own at No. 24, Gloucester Street, Pimlico (name of the landlady, Mrs. Bailey). Yesterday Colonel Romilly wrote him a letter suggesting that it was now time that he came home. The result of this has been that he finds that the boy left his lodgings this morning with a friend for an unknown destination. He is most anxious to find out his whereabouts.

Superintendent Canning

Are you able to make any enquiries to find out where the boy has gone?

FB

3.5.34.

15.

found Romilly going to Windsor, with another [redacted] named [redacted] on Friday, 4th May, to see his papers to students at Eton & district. Romilly recently received £40 from his father. He can usually be found at Megs Cafe, 1 Porten Street or Archer's Bookshop, 7 Porten Street W.C. Goke to St. Pancras.

SB
4/5/34.
M.P.-33-23524/50M D17

Alanning

15
H.S. report & extract from 'Sunday
News' (16th)

17
Letter from Col. Romilly (17th)

18

[Redacted]

19

[Redacted]

SB
25/1

M⁶

James
C. J. Sub

25.1.35

20

WH Extract attached 20th

21

Special Branch report attached 21st

22

Extract from 'Statement of Affairs' and 22nd

23

[Redacted]

24

[Redacted]

25

[Redacted]

26

[Redacted]

27

'Evening Standard' clipping. 27th

Corres. No. 301 / mp / 3478.

Minute Sheet No. 3

28

Copy Abstract and attachment



28A-6

CONFIDENTIAL

S.B. No. 5

METROPOLITAN POLICE (Special Branch)

SPECIAL REPORT

17th day of August, 1967.

SUBJECT. [Redacted]
[Redacted] Esmond
ROMILLY.

A short biographical note by 'Albany' in the "Sunday Telegraph" of 13th August, 1967 (see attached), announced the recent death in the United States of Giles ROMILLY, together with the fact that Esmond, his younger brother, was killed in the Second World War.

REFERENCE TO PAPERS

This article closes the [Redacted] of the late Sir Winston Churchill, [Redacted] of Special Branch [Redacted] 301/MP/3478.

[Redacted]

301/MP/3478.

[Redacted]

Sergeant.

Submitted.

[Redacted]

Chief Inspector.

[Redacted]

CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT.

CONFIDENTIAL

"SUNDAY TELEGRAPH".

13th. August, 1967.

THE death of Giles Romilly in the United States will recall one of the most bizarre episodes in the history of Wellington, where he and his brother Esmond (later killed in the war) were at school 35

years ago. Fervent Communist sympathisers at the ages of 16 and 15, they produced an inflammatory newspaper called "Out of Bounds" which, because they were Sir Winston Churchill's nephews, attracted much enviable publicity.

Esmond, the younger, ran away from Wellington and lived in a Communist bookshop in London. Giles remained and was taken off by a kindly Headmaster on a day's outing to Hove to help him forget.

My favourite comment on the incident came from the aged Duke of Connaught, godson of the man after whom the school was named:

"His Royal Highness still adheres to his opinion that there must be some undermasters who have socialist leanings, which is always a danger among boys of the present age."

"EVENING STANDARD"

11. 3. 41.

2/A

Daughter for Mrs. Esmond Romilly

Evening Standard Reporter

A daughter has been born to Mr and Mrs. Esmond Romilly in Virginia, U.S.A.

Mrs. Romilly, who was Jessica Freeman-Mitford, daughter of Lord Redesdale, and younger sister of Unity Mitford, married Mr. Romilly, who is Mr. Churchill's nephew, in 1937.

Both she and her bridegroom were then eighteen.

Mr. Romilly, who was a volunteer in the Spanish Republican Army in the Spanish Civil War, is now training as a pilot in Canada under the Empire training scheme.

The new baby is their second child. A first daughter, born a year after their marriage, died a few months later of measles.



Mrs. Esmond Romilly.



S.B. Reg.

offpr.

Please P.A. with P.F. of
Esmond ROMILLY.

S.B.
12/3/41

301/112/3478 (P.F.)

W.H.

at Grant P.S.
for kept

24/18

Winston Churchill's Nephew Home From War



Daily Express Staff Reporter

EIGHTEEN - YEAR - OLD
ESMOND ROMILLY, nephew
of Mr. Winston Churchill, has re-
turned to his home in Pimlico-
road, S.W., after serving six
months as a machine-gunner with
the Spanish Government's Inter-
national Column in Madrid.

He is home on a fortnight's
leave, with "Babs" Ovenden, a
Folkestone man.

They were met at Folkestone by
officers of the special branch,
Scotland-yard.

Yesterday Romilly was in touch
with the Spanish Embassy, but
spent most of the day at home.

His mother said to me: "We are
delighted to have him back.
Sometimes we thought we should
never see him again."

Romilly, short, red-haired, and
thinned by living on army rations,
said: "I cannot say anything
until I have seen certain people."

P.A. - Romilly's
[Signature] 5/17

"NEWS-CHRONICLE", 23rd. November, 1936.

Churchill's Fighting Nephew

From Our Own Correspondent
MADRID, Sunday.

Mr. Esmond Romilly, 18-year-old nephew of Mr. Winston Churchill, is fighting with the British machine-gun section of the International column in the battle for University City, in the north-western suburbs of Madrid. He has been into action several times.

At Wellington College two years ago he edited "Out of Bounds," a magazine directed against many aspects of public school education. When the college banned the paper he sold it in Piccadilly Circus.

Pa. on Romilly's file
[Signature] $\frac{21}{11}$
 $\frac{26}{26}$

3478.

Wellington College

Put down, when
submitted, on
the Roundly file

ed $\frac{2}{5}$
 $\frac{1}{4}$

RECEIVED
MAY 19 1917

WELLINGTON COLLEGE

Out of Bounds. By GILES and ESMOND ROMILLY. *Hanish Hamilton.* 7s. 6d.

Most accounts of Public School life have been dished up in the form of fiction, no doubt to avoid libel. But the Romilly brothers, aged eighteen and sixteen, have written a straightforward description of experience not at Marlinton or Welborough, but at Wellington College. It is a very amusing book. I like the account with which it begins of a Scaford Prep. school with its drawing class, in which the works produced were divided into three sections. "A very good drawing would be admitted to the Royal Academy, a good one to the National Gallery, and a fairly good to the Tate." Almost Evelyn Waugh, I think? Later the fun becomes furious. Here are two boys, evidently above the average in ability and of the most respectable parentage, their father a retired Colonel in the Scots Guards. They go to Wellington, where they become Pacifists and Communists; and with the support of Comrades in London carry on active propaganda. (Wellington, it must be remembered, is a school which caters specially for the sons of soldiers, a large proportion of whom it prepares for Sandhurst and Woolwich.) They produce a magazine, *Out of Bounds*, which excites the *Daily Mail* to a long article headed "Red Menace in Public Schools," "Moscow Attempts to Corrupt Boys." Scotland Yard (can this be true?) gravely writes to the headmaster. The younger Romilly then runs away, if one may use so undignified a word about so determined a character. But he sometimes slips back to see his brother and colport his magazine, the sale of which is, of course, forbidden.

Of course, it would be very cross-making to have sons who were trying to convert the world to Communism instead of working for their House Colours; and Mrs. Romilly (who emerges as a most charming character) was perfectly right to point out that knowledge and experience should be acquired before entering upon missionary work. But the parents of these two bright boys had at least the consolation of knowing that they were bright. It is to their unfortunate schoolmasters that one's sympathy goes, for these could get nothing from the affair but annoyance and anxiety. And they behaved really remarkably well. Indeed, everyone concerned comes very well out of the story, except perhaps the father, who does not seem to have been very tactful. But perhaps the authors are unfair to him—most adolescent boys dislike their fathers. The whole story would make an enchanting film, and I recommend it to Monsieur René Clair. The Armistice Day celebrations, for instance, when Mr. Giles Romilly inserted pacifist leaflets in the hymn-books, would provide a stunning sequence.

But, of course, the book has also a serious side. Inevitably a Public School has a Tory atmosphere, because the vast majority of the boys come from Tory homes. The more conventional and inefficient such schools are, the more defenceless will be the class they educate. Good Communists, like the Romillys, therefore ought to welcome, instead of attacking, the faults of the Public School. But those of us who are not Communists must regret the appalling waste for which the Public School is responsible, waste of natural talent and of potential adult happiness. A specially clever boy will survive a Public School comparatively unharmed, unless his misery there has made him neurotic; a specially stupid boy also may suffer little harm. But the average boy, though not unhappy, acquires in the Public School atmosphere a contempt for intellectual and aesthetic pleasures which impoverishes him for life. The schoolmaster will justly answer that most boys come from utterly Philistine homes: and indeed the circle is vicious, for the Public School boy grows into the Public School parent. But most boys have natural curiosity, and this is not fed but stifled in the Public School. The fault is largely with the staff, not because they are barbarous, but because they are ineffective: they allow the tone to be set by a gang of seventeen-year-old toughs. In this book the imbecile monotony of the life is well described, the futile boredom of mechanical lessons and compulsory games, with sex providing the only regular excitement.

Two of the many issues raised by *Out of Bounds* require further comment. At Wellington, as at almost all Public Schools, the prefects still have the demoralising privilege of beating the smaller boys. Consequently the imagination of these adolescents is, as this book shows, continually occupied with the idea of corporal punishment. Any psychologist could explain the danger of this, and it is not for nothing that Englishmen of the governing class enjoy abroad a reputation for sadistic and masochistic practices.

Another preposterous tradition frowns upon friendships between boys in different houses. And as friendships between boys of different ages are for moral reasons forbidden, there are only four or five boys out of six hundred and fifty with whom friendship is not discouraged. I have met several masters at Wellington, intelligent, humane and open-minded men, but I have never had the honour of meeting the headmaster to whose kindness this book pays a tribute. Probably he is hampered, if he desires any reforms, by the obstinate conservatism which usually distinguishes the more vocal "Old Boys." But I wonder how an intelligent man can justify to his conscience the continuance of these two customs. Of course, Wellington is not in these respects exceptional, and possibly Eton is the only orthodox Public School which would stand up any better than Wellington to such a candid description.

Out of Bounds ends with a short account of Bedales, to which Mr. Giles Romilly went after his departure from Wellington. This he found much more tolerant and humane, but also more completely anti-intellectual and Philistine. Moreover the timidity with which the co-education there was conducted had the most unlucky results. Probably under the new headmaster things are now being changed. The political opinions of the Romilly brothers will evidently provide a most convenient excuse for disregarding their criticisms of the Public School system. This is a pity, for it seems to me on the whole a candid and surprisingly fair book.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

S.B. No. 1 (in).

METROPOLITAN POLICE.

Ma

Special Report }

E **SPECIAL BRANCH,**
Metropolitan Police,
Scotland House,

3478

SUBJECT Desmond
ROWNEY @ MARO

7th day of June 1935.

Reference to Papers.

I this day visited St. Charles L.C.C. Hospital, Ladbroke Grove, S.W. I interviewed Dr. Sears who is the Deputy Medical Superintendent of the above hospital.

He informed me that Rowney is still a patient in Ward HI, Bed 18, and that there does not appear to be any chance of his leaving the hospital within the next few days. He says that he has issued instructions for this Office to be informed by telephone the moment Rowney intends to leave the hospital.

D Saunders P.C.

Submitted.

PA

M. H. ...
Inspector.

[Signature]
Superintendent.

2478

204

BOY "RED'S" BOOK

His Secret Visits to College

ESMOND ROMILLY, who in February last year at the age of 15 ran away from Wellington College to produce "Out of Bounds," a publication of advanced views for circulation in the public schools, is joint author with his brother Giles, now an Oxford undergraduate, of an autobiography bearing the same title which is published to-day.

This book, *Out of Bounds* (Hamish Hamilton, 7s. 6d.) shows that the two young iconoclasts lack neither brains nor literary ability.

Esmond describes an interview with the Master of Wellington when the latter had received a letter from Scotland Yard stating that a "Red group" was concentrating the attentions on the college.

MOTHER'S HELP

Shortly after the publication in *The Daily Mail* of a circular issued by the two brothers had made these activities conspicuous, he determined to run away.

All my actions were clouded over by the persistent accusation that I was "letting down" my father. It is true that my mother had undertaken to distribute a large number of the "Out of Bounds" leaflets among friends and relations, but doubts were not slow in arising in her mind as to the propriety of this.

From Bedales, the co-educational school, he made by car the second of his secret visits to Wellington to sell copies of "Out of Bounds."

News of his visit reached the authorities; masters and the school porter collected in the main drive, but Esmond and his companion accelerated, and passed out of the gate. There has been another visit since, and he adds that there will, no doubt, be more in the future.

P.A.

Bill 6!
for Subst
3/6

10th. May '34

HUNTINGTON PARK,
KINGTON, HEREFORDSHIRE.
KINGTON 53 X.

Sept 17^a

Dear Sir Trevor

I'm sorry I had left
London when you rang me up.
Thank you for your letter and
the trouble you have taken.
My wife has seen Superintendent
Canning and been told how to
act, if necessary. We have now
got the boy's address and my
wife has seen him.

Yours sincerely
Bertram Romilly

From Assistant Secretary 'S.'

To Secretary

S-1.

S-3.

S-3 (Pensions).

S-4.

S-5 (L.P.O.).

Registry.

Supt. Typing.

41/S.PRO/385

Date.....

30-17613/500 W143

D/Comm to see
(ref 301/MP/3478 att'd.)

Ismond Rainilly (still
of 4. Barton St W.C.I.)
Crops up again.

A caution will meet

This case
Mr Pulling. DM W.G. CROP 1919

S.B. No. 1, (Plain).

METROPOLITAN POLICE.

Special Report }

SPECIAL BRANCH,

Metropolitan Police,

Scotland House,

SUBJECT.....

7th. day of May. 1934.

E. Romilly.

Reference to Papers.

Referring to Esmond Romilly:-

Submitted herewith is a newspaper cutting from the "Sunday Graphic" of May 6th, 1934, relating to his activities at Eton in connection with the sale of his magazine, "Out of bounds".

I am informed that Romilly has been paid £5. 5. 0. for the story.

Submitted.

W. Hay
Inspector.

W. Thompson
Inspector.

Superintendent.