

Traitor Of Arnhem:

**By Colonel
Oreste Pinto**

[In September, 1944, when the Germans were fighting a bitter holding war in Western Europe, Field-Marshal Montgomery conceived a daring and brilliant plan to bring a quick victory.

He planned to drop a whole British division, by parachute, at Arnhem, in Holland, well behind the German forces, and thus smash the German's rear.

But because of treachery in the Dutch Underground movement, a German armoured division was waiting, and the British paratroops fell into an ambush of fire and steel. Seven thousand of them were killed and the war went on.]

I FIRST met King Kong when he swaggered through my security camp at Antwerp, with a radiant girl on each arm.

His real name was Christian Lindemans, and in the Dutch Interior Forces (the resistance fighters) he was a popular hero.

He stood more than six feet tall, weighed nearly 19 solid stone. His right-arm biceps were like a footballer's thigh muscles.

He could pick up grown men in his giant fist and clash them senseless against a wall. That was why, admiringly, his comrades called him "King Kong."

He revelled in the nickname, dressed in a big camouflage-painted jacket, with pockets bulged by hand-grenades. In his leather belt stuck two honed, dark-steel killing knives. A long-barrelled Luger pistol with marksman's sights for 1,000 metres was strapped to his right hip. A Schmeisser-gun was slung

metres was strapped to his right hip. A Schmeisser-gun was slung across his huge vat of a chest.

I was Chief of the Netherlands Counter-Espionage Mission attached to SHAEF (Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force.)

With similar groups, we had a big job. We were responsible to General Eisenhower for the safety of all troops of the Normandy invasion, as they advanced through Flanders into the Netherlands. These were the British Second Army, the U.S. First and Third Armies, the Canadian First Army.

Behind them as they retreated the Germans were leaving booby traps, saboteurs, and spies, like jetsam after a retreating tide.

My job was to sort out the traitors from among homeless refugees, resistance fighters—all the bewildered turmoil of liberated Antwerp.

Into the big security camp ringed with barbed-wire, protected like a prison by machine gun nests, my security police had gathered all the wandering bomb-dazed and dishevelled mob for thorough examination.

The man Lindemans had no been brought in for such "screen

IN the whole story of World War II there is nothing to equal the infamy of the Traitor of Arnhem.

He was a "Hero" of the Dutch Resistance Movement, trusted and decorated, respected by men and loved by women. But because of his treachery, 7,000 British soldiers were killed or wounded at Arnhem and the war in Europe was extended for months.

Only one man suspected him. That was the Chief of the Dutch Counter-Espionage Service, Colonel Oreste Pinto who hunted the traitor — and got him.

Colonel Pinto has at last told the whole amazing inside story — a factual record wilder than the strangest fiction.

ing." He had come of his own accord, apparently to strut.

When I saw him, he and a group of admirers had halted by one of the camp's pass-gates, and Lindemans was growling with good-humoured contempt at one of my sentries.

I pointed to three gold stars on his sleeve.

"Are you a captain—and if so, in what army?"

Lindemans expelled his breath in a growl.

"Now see here, Colonel, I wear these three stars by authority of the Dutch Interior Forces—the underground!"

"If you do not hold the rank of captain in the Netherlands Army you must not wear this insignia," I said. And I ripped the cloth band with the three gold stars from his sleeve.

"It confuses my Security Police," I said. "They would hardly be to blame if they shot you as a spy."

"I shall complain of this," he threatened. But his voice was uneasy. With no further word he turned away and strode off. And I had seen something in his eyes at the mention of the word "spy."

BACK at SHAEF my assistant Vilhelm turned up the files on King Kong for me.

"Correct name Christian Lindemans," he said. "Born in Rotterdam, son of a garage proprietor. Ex-boxer, wrestler. Reputed to have killed several men in tavern brawls. Dozens of girls listed as intimate friends . . . The eldest of four brothers—all resistance men working on the escape line."

"Any killed?" I asked.

"None. The youngest brother was captured by the Abwehr (German Counter-Intelligence), also a girl cabaret dancer named Veronica, shown here as intimate with Lindemans—on the escape line. Both were later released."

"They were what?"

Vilhelm shrugged. "That's what it says here; they were later released."

SO I checked on King Kong, the resistance leader who was the hero of Holland.

Each raid he led suffered

heavy casualties. Always, with guns blazing, the leader escaped, swore vengeance upon the Judas who had once again betrayed the Resistance Men. Just as inevitably, his comrades writhed and died all around him.

The Nazis had released his brother, and his childhood sweetheart—released them sane and able to walk. That was not typical Nazi mercy.

Before their arrest he had owed money. After their release he spent freely.

I traced two of his women associates—and found I knew them as valuable agents of the Nazis.

But I was too late. One had escaped to Vienna. The other took poison just before I reached her, and died without speaking.

Then I gave orders that Christian Lindemans was to report to me. But he did not come. He had left on "a very special mission."

Insolently low . . . dangerously low . . . the British reconnaissance plane flew over Arnhem town. It flew slowly at less than 800 feet, searching carefully like a woman looking for a needle in a carpet.

A few German police fired their fat pistols wildly, uncertainly. The nearest German anti-aircraft battery was two miles away. The people of Arnhem watched, their faces upturned white, like daisies.

It was not a very unusual sight. An Allied recon plane, over the Dutch border, that autumn of 1944.

"No sign of abnormal enemy activity at Arnhem," reported the pilot later that afternoon. He produced his aerial photos for proof. "Only some Bosche who pot-shotted at us with revolvers!"

The date was September 16. Much depended upon there being no German concentration near Arnhem. Ten thousand men of the British 1st Airborne Division waited to be dropped at Arnhem

at dawn the next day. Twenty thousand American paratroops and 3,000 Poles were to be dropped at Grave and Nijmegen.

But as dusk fell, German panzers moved cautiously into the areas selected for the landings.

The trap was set . . .

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The trap was set . . .

Nine days later, 2,400 survivors of the British 1st Airborne Division had withdrawn across the river, leaving 7,000 disastrously behind in the carnage that had been Arnhem.

This—Monty's first and only big defeat of the entire war—delayed the Nazi collapse a further eight months. In the subsequent "black winter" of wrecked dykes and war-trampled harvests, nearly 200,000 Dutch folk died in flood and famine.

SIX weeks later, a detected spy was trying to bargain with me for his life.

He was Cornelis Verloop, a young Dutchman, and he offered me information.

"You fool," I told him, "such information as you have will be extracted from you before you are shot. It is simple routine."

He smiled. "Impossible, Colonel. You can make me tell what you think I should know—you cannot extract information that you do not suspect I possess."

Then he told me, and proved, that the German Counter-Intelligence system knew the names of our agents. But he would not say who had told them.

I thumbed back the safety catch of my pistol.

"Get up," I said curtly.

I was only planning to take him to Eindhoven prison.

But Cornelis Verloop, astute spy, shameless bargainer—and mortal coward, misunderstood my gesture with the gun. "Wait—" he gasped. Men say "Wait!" when they think they are about to die. "It was Chris—it was King Kong! He is in the pay of the Abwehr—has been a Nazi agent since March!"

"Did King Kong betray Arnhem to the Nazis?"

He nodded. "Ja—he told Colonel Kiesewetter on September 15 when he called at Abwehr headquarters, that British and American troops were to be dropped."

THERE were no handcuffs in Holland big enough to clamp around the mighty wrists of Christian Lindemans, when we had arrested him?

My security police lashed his arms with cord that contained a core of steel wire.

"Fasten his legs, too," I said as he was brought glowering on to the R.A.F. airfield tarmac at

to the R.A.F. airfield tarmac at Antwerp. His powerful leg could have smashed the plane's thin-walled cabin, and to perish so spectacularly in mid-air was the sort of farewell gesture that might appeal to Lindemans.

There was a country house outside London, belonging to the British Intelligence Service, where skilled psychologists and interrogators could "operate" upon the mind of a traitor and extract full, detailed confessions without

any need for using the clumsy torture implements of the Gestapo.

Here it was that I sent Lindemans. They kept him two weeks. When he was flown back to me, this time pinioned with a pair of Scotland Yard's special, adjustable ratchet handcuffs, the great, obdurate King Kong had made a full and detailed confession that covered 24 pages of typed foolscap!

There was not a bruise nor scar on his body, not a needle-mark on his arm.

TO-MORROW: The File That Disappeared.