

# THE "SCARLET PIMPERNEL OF HOLLAND" WILTS Nurse risks all in vain attempt to save traitor

**THE TRAITOR  
OF ARNHEM**  
by  
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● In September, 1944, an entire British airborne regiment was wiped out at Arnhem, betrayed by a leader of the Dutch Resistance Movement, CHRISTIAN LINDEMANS popularly known as King Kong.

He was arrested on the orders of Colonel Pinto and sent to England for interrogation, where he confessed all.

Flown back to Holland he was put into a prison near The Hague to await trial. Then, mysteriously, the entire official dossier on Lindemans' atrocities disappeared from the closely-guarded Dutch Counter-Intelligence Headquarters.

## NOW READ ON

SO far as I was concerned, the mystery of the disappearance of the Christian Lindeman's dossier from the files of Headquarters Counter-Intelligence was insoluble.

The file had vanished—I never set eyes on it again.

Meanwhile the spy, Lindemans was lying in a cell of the great, red-walled prison at Scheveningen across the stretch of bare sand dunes between The Hague and the sea.

For two years, due to one delay after another, Lindemans awaited trial.

I wanted this trial to take place, so that Lindemans—whom so many Dutch youths and girls had worshipped as "The Scarlet

Widely Dutch youths and girls had worshipped as "The Scarlet Pimpernel of Holland"—might be publicly accused of betraying to the Nazis the top-secret plans of "Operation Market Garden"—the air invasion of Arnhem.

Many people in high places had already been wrongly blamed for the disaster of Arnhem when 10,000 British paratroopers were dropped fatally upon the waiting guns of a Nazi Panzer division.

Field-Marshal Montgomery had been blamed. It was said that his surprise attack was "too daring."

The American 101st Airborne Division had been blamed for not relieving the British through Eindhoven.

The Army Air Reconnaissance had been blamed for not observing the Panzer Division during observation patrols over Arnhem the afternoon before the invasion—despite the fact that the Panzer Division did not arrive until darkness had fallen.

Even the weather was blamed.

EVEN THE WEATHER WAS BLAMED.

★  
BUT nobody had been blamed for the fact that Christian Lindemans, braggart Resistance Leader of the Dutch Interior Forces, had gone forward with the Canadians BEHIND the German lines with full knowledge of the Arnhem plan after I had reported him as a suspected Nazi agent!

It was a delicate situation. Yet too many of our own secret agents—men and women with whom I had shared drinks and joined in songs around the piano—had died in Gestapo torture-bellars, betrayed by Lindemans, for me to be able to sit calmly now and see the whole matter of his public trial dwindle into oblivion.

But in the middle of my search for the Lindemans File I was posted to duty in Germany.

He continued to wait in Scheveningen Prison, and the mud stayed unstirred for a little while longer.

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Then, one morning in May of 1946, articles began to reappear in the British and Continental newspapers, demanding to know what had happened to the "Dutch officer who had betrayed Arnheim," and "the officer who had been imprisoned in the Tower of London."

Dutch Government officials, anxious as anybody to clear up the situation, answered this newspaper agitation in the only way they could—by promptly fixing the date for his trial.

"Christian Lindemans will answer charges of treason before a Special Tribunal to assemble at the end of June, 1946."



**B**UT behind the blank, windowless red wall of Scheveningen Prison, an unexpected development was apparently taking place.

The spy Christian Lindemans was having his last love affair!

Women were not a novelty in Lindemans' experience. At the

height of his reputation, when he was a six-foot giant of a man, weighing 16 stone of hard-trained muscle, he had deserved his nickname of "King Kong" among the Resistance fighters. He had as many girls as there were days in the year.

The first time I had seen Lindemans he was surrounded like a film star by girls. Two years of prison had not improved his sensual handsomeness. I had watched him grow thin and morose. His bones protruded. Nevertheless, there must apparently have burned some remaining vital ember of virile appeal in his gaunt, wrecked body.

For it was one of the reticent, coldly efficient Netherlands nurses attached to the prison hospital, who fell in love with him, at the last!

I should explain that women nurses were not usually found in prison hospitals of Holland, or anywhere else.

But Scheveningen Prison—perhaps the largest in the Netherlands—had been used for years by the Nazis during their occupation, to hold political prisoners. It was equipped with torture-rooms.

Some of these patriots were still there, in a specially equipped prison hospital, too ill to be moved.



**T**HERE was only one formidable wing in Scheveningen that still held

Scheveningen that still held the suspected traitors, Nazi collaborationists, looters, spies. Among these was Lindemans.

Yet since his capture he had lost weight rapidly. Prison doctors, realising he had once had a bullet through his lung, suspected tuberculosis. He was removed for a time from his stark cell with its stone walls and bare floor to the locked wing of the prison hospital, for tests and treatment.

It must have been during this treatment that he met the nurse. They found some way of contacting each other and becoming intimate, without the knowledge of the prison authorities. It may have been that he had known her before he was arrested. I do not know, for I was not there in Scheveningen when the amazing "romance" took place behind penitentiary walls.

It was a "romance" that might have made a great difference to the story of "King Kong" might even have given it a very different ending to the one Fate was eventually to write.

For, according to what was later told, it masked a daring last throw of the dice by the spy, a last bid to evade the retribution that he saw closing in on him.

Organised by the nurse, an 11th-hour escape plan was thought out and tried. The girl must have been a cool worker, for as far as could be discovered none of the hospital guards ever suspected what she was really up to.

Lindemans, it will be realised, was being kept in a prison hospital room, with sound locks on its door and heavy bars at its small window. The escape plan was not a very complicated one. The chief thing it involved was the actual getting out of that locked and barred room. And the simplest

way to freedom lay through the window.

Which meant, of course, that the bars would have to be removed. Very well. That was the task the nurse set herself.

She had an accomplice. He was another prisoner, whose identity was masked under the nickname of "The Singing Rat." He was apparently serving a sentence for a not-too-serious offence, and through the efforts of the nurse was given the job of a cleaning orderly for sick prisoners like Lindemans.



**S**OMEHOW or other and the "how" was never afterwards satisfactorily explained — the nurse managed to get a steel-cutting file smuggled

plained — the nurse managed to get a steel-cutting file smuggled in. And with this she started to tackle the stout bars of King Kong's prison.

It must have been slow work. Only a little could be done each day, or night. But there was "The Singing Rat" to help, to take his turn up at the window while the nurse kept watch and remained close at hand with ready explanation should it become necessary.

At last the bars were sawn through. Not right through, for they had to appear intact to any casual inspecting eye.

There was now a second part of the plan that had to be fixed. The room in which "King Kong" lay was a good distance from the ground. Some way had to be found of lowering him once he had scrambled through the little window.

This was where "The Singing Rat" came in again. On the night chosen for the escape a rubber hose-pipe was, in apparent carelessness, left hanging out of a

storeroom window quite close to the window of Lindemans' room.

And it was down this hosepipe that Lindemans, in the darkness, slithered and scrambled to the ground when the moment came.

But his luck was dead out. He made too much noise. He could not help making too much noise and patrolling guards heard and investigated. Within a matter of minutes Lindemans was back behind bars again.

Fate was now ready to write the final lines in the dramatic story of Christian Lindemans. The date of his trial had been fixed. But two days before that day dawned he was found lying dead upon the mattress of his prison bed.



**H**IS body was nearly cold.

The nurse was found lying unconscious across him. She was rushed to the operating theatre, strong antidotes to poison were applied. She recovered. The official report stated, enough to confess that she had administered 80 headache tablets to Lindemans and taken a similar number herself.

It was to have been a suicide pact.

The death of Lindemans was mentioned briefly in various newspapers.

I was not able to discover the name of the nurse, nor have my investigations since brought it to light.

Nor do I know what became of the traitor Cornelis Verloop, the man nicknamed "Satan Face" whose confession to me had been my first proof that Lindemans was a paid spy of the Nazis and

my first proof that Lindemans was a paid spy of the Nazis and had betrayed Arnhem to them.

**But Lindemans was undeniably dead. And the special tribunal that was to have tried him dissolved before it ever assembled. The case of Christian Lindemans and the 7000 dead men of Arnhem had to be officially closed.**

To keep himself in funds for his amorous escapades, to get back one of his girls from Gestapo torture, Lindemans had recklessly betrayed his comrades of the Resistance Forces throughout Europe. He had been responsible for the death by agony of hundreds of them. These facts I know.

He had betrayed the plan of Arnhem so that an entire British airborne division was wiped out.

He had prolonged the most costly war in human history by eight months. He had caused his native Holland to be plunged into the tragic winter of 1944-1945 in which a quarter of a million people perished and 1000 Dutch farms were washed away when

the Germans opened the dykes, as they would not have been able to do had the plan of Arnhem been successful.

All this disaster—for a woman, and a little money!

Such spies as the much over-rated Mata Hari (who, as a German agent, was of no consequence whatsoever, but who did interesting work in her boudoir with certain of the crowned heads of Europe), such master spies as Von Rintelen and that formidable woman, Anna Maria Besserlein (Mademoiselle the Doctor), are famous in history.

Yet not all of these well-known names together in the whole of their dangerous, scheming lives succeeded in wrecking as much actual destruction as did the man they called King Kong—boastful, lecherous Christian Lindemans, son of a Rotterdam garage owner — who even in his final hour upon earth, apparently found a woman to get him out of his troubles.

[THE END.]