

THE Y SERVICE WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY STATION BRANSTON MERE.

During the Second World War the Y Service wireless telegraphy station at Branston Mere was one of a chain of British wireless intercept stations, part of one of the R.A.F.'s most secret intelligence units.

They were responsible for intercepting, day and night continuously, German radio traffic, taking down the coded signals and identifying their sources, providing the cryptanalysts at Station X Bletchley Park with high grade German Air Force wireless intelligence.

The wireless station at Branston Mere, along with a series of others up and down the country, monitored German air to air, air to ground messages and even reported on Luftwaffe sightings and it's own relayed intelligence assessments eg. signals intercepted from a daily German meteorological sortie, gave the likely German target for the day. Troop movements, orders of battle, positions of formations and warnings of impending attack, all this vital wireless intelligence could be deduced from the intercepted German signals. The signals were enciphered by the Germans using their Enigma machines, which the German High Command thought made them invulnerable.

These enciphered, intercepted signals were sent, via Cheadle and Chicksands, to Station X Bletchley Park, where clever translators and code breakers worked. This was the source of the Ultra special intelligence network. One of the best kept secrets of World War II.

The Y Service received virtually no publicity but was of vital importance throughout the war.

The work at the secret Y Service station Branston Mere was technically difficult for the operators. The Germans obscured the origins of transmitted messages by changing the frequencies used and the call sign daily. these had to be relocated at midnight when ~~the~~

change occurred. This involved searching the whole frequency band, and was helped by recognising the individuality of the German transmitters. Also atmospheric conditions, weak signal strength and garble were other technical difficulties to be overcome by the effort and ingenuity of the highly skilled Y Service operators.

The unassuming wireless station and Y Service personnel at Branston Mere, worked with the utmost secrecy and security, playing their part in the intelligence operation which helped this country to survive and win the Second World War 1939-45.

Reference "Ultra goes to war The Secret Story" by Ronald Lewin.