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Brian Gordon Lett | 240 pages | 19 Dec 2012 | Pen & Sword Books Ltd | 9781781590003 | English | Barnsley, United Kingdom

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successfully in January , despite much opposition from the local regular Army and Navy commanders, and in the face of overwhelming odds. Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden told Fleming's lies on the international stage, denying any British complicity in the operation. The author, an experienced criminal QC, proves beyond doubt that this thrilling operation, and the men who carried it out, were the inspiration for Fleming's James Bond.

Postcode: Please enter a valid postcode. Lists with This Book. This book is not yet featured on Listopia. Add this book to your favorite list ». Community Reviews. Showing Average rating 3. Rating details. More filters. Sort order. I do not know a lot about Bond, James Bond. But I do know that he is a kind of a cool guy. And so I would expect that the book would be at least written in a cooler way and I definitely doesn't mean funny! For me, personally a disappointment. Or, in words of Bond - not shaken, but stirred The author, Brian Lett, has two motives in telling this story.

In almost every way, there are distinct parallels between James Bond's Cold War MI6 and SOE in including among other things the double [W] O system, the persons of "M" and "Q," the training of agents in primarily naval commando tactics, and the entire secret agent construct that made Operation Postmaster a success. He was intimately involved in the planning and coordination required for Postmaster. In later years, Ian Fleming would declare that he got all of his inspiration for his Bond stories from his real-life WWII intelligence experiences.

The critical difference is that Fleming was a mere staff officer and observer. But he was well-read into all of the personalities and planning with the SOE. He succeeded far beyond his expectations. Brian Lett succeeds admirably in making this case and it is the best historical explanation I have read for the real-life inspiration behind Bond.

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While the effort to compare the men of the SOE to James Bond is commendable, even super-secret agents will be broken down by simple bureaucracy. The story mainly follows a small group of soldiers, the first of the SOE, who were rescued from Dunkirk and follows them through Operation Postmaster. These were not English upper-class men playing games, or tough orphans grown up to hone their broad skills, becoming fine blades, but men of all walks of life. These men banded together with a single mindset to accomplish the task they were given. Sometimes the author goes on a stretch, trying to tie the mission and the men to the Bond books, but it is a fun exercise, especially if you read the books. Brian breaks down the makeup of the SOE and the code words and letters utilized during the time and how Ian Fleming incorporated those into his series.

Operation Postmaster is the tell of a small group of highly motivated soldiers from all walks of life and multiple nationalities banding together to accomplish a single goal. The story describes the trails and tribulations that the SOE went through just to be able to do their job. From the pushback of the Admiralty, to the international political scene. The detailed planning, the timely execution, and the personal fortitude of the men is quite evident. The fact that they received almost no help from their own military only added to the tale. The only way they could accomplish this mission was to get help from the Governor of Nigeria.

This is in no part due to the author, but due to the lack of support from the British military. In order to tell the story, the author has to incorporate the long delays, the trials, and tribulations that the men had to go through. When the story really picks up it is very good. Overall, I found it an interesting read but one I could do without.

The whole operation just seemed a waste of resources for little gain and the possible international ramifications. It is evident that he used his experiences working with the SOE for the background of his series, but I believe the author put too much emphasis on this one mission. My greatest disappointment is that Ian Fleming, although promoted heavily on the dust cover, features less than I expected. Lett has published six books, all dealing with the history of WWII. The story told takes place in and early A highly trained group of British agents were sent into Fernando Po to sink or capture two Axis vessels in the harbor. Their actions had to be deniable by the British as Fernando Po was part of neutral Spain. Ian Fleming, who later went on to write the James Bond series of novels, was serving in British Naval Intelligence at the time of this operation.

This book ties Fleming to the SOE operation and speculates on how the heroes of that action contributed to the character of James Bond. I enjoyed the 10 hours I spent reading this page history. I found this book interesting just on the SOE operation, but the additional connection to the future James Bond was also enjoyable. I read all of Flemings novels when I was a teenager. I like the chosen cover art. I give this novel a 4 out of 5. This is a well-researched adventure story. The Official Secrets Act kept the story out of the public eye long after the end of the war, and it was an enterprising modern author, Brian Lett, who researched and told the tale long after it happened. The description of SOE's operation Postmaster to steal Italian and German ships from Spanish Guinea during II World War is very accurate and well researched, but the book does not deliver its promise: the connection which Ian Fleming is obvious he was working for British intelligence during the war , but the idea that James Bond's novels were born out of this specific operation is somehow far fetched and not well established by the authors.

Nov 30, Rich Bussom rated it it was ok. Interesting story that would have made a great 10 page magazine article but not a book. The author constantly repeated material to the point of tedium. I'd suggest reading the Wikipedia article on "Operation Postmaster" instead. Nov 08, Rachel Ronning rated it really liked it. Very interesting. Definitely worth reading. Apr 25, Bill Ferguson rated it liked it.

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