

Declassified E.O. 12356 Section 3.3/NND No. 785020

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Feb. - M

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A/209/200 Material For Museums

Feb - Mar. 1946

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288/3/46



1st. March, 1946.

*With the compliments of
His Majesty's Ambassador at Rome.*

FILE
MUST
TILE
4034

Major General L. Browning,
M.M.I.A.
Allied Commission,
Rome.

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COPY

GENERAL HEADQUARTERS
CENTRAL MEDITERRANEAN FORCE
Office of the Chief of General
Staff.

21st. February, 1946.

My dear Hopkinson,

Thank you very much for your most helpful letter of the 18th February. I thought the matter would be a fairly delicate one, and did not really expect that we would get any very great results through the Italian Government. I agree absolutely that it is most undesirable that any official action should be taken with the Italian Government, and it was not in any way our intention to ask for that line of approach.

I leave here on 1st. March to go back to the Imperial Defence College. I will get my successor to act on the lines you suggest.

Yours sincerely,

(sgd) Dudley Ward.

H. Hopkinson Esq., C.M.G.,
The British Embassy,
Rome.

4033

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AAC

Open an A file on
Nap War Museum - Exhibits
and put this all on it.

WP

Let CC know you will
in future handle all this
CC A

OPEN FILE

INTERVIEW FOR 4032

11716

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ous / to extent in place
in. Main Service.

It. army is to be put
quickly & only source
& supply

A. cannot have
to priority

must be told / via
that It. army must
face share. This
United

My dear

Tom D.O. MAY of 28 Feb
re Italian - souvenirs - for
our museums -

I will go into the business
I see what I can collect,
without offence!

I will let you know
later what I've been able
to do.

I expect you are
having a pretty hectic time
baking cake from DUDLEY
WARD, with all that
there is on at the mo-
ment!

Rosemary

I will go into the business
I see what I can collect,
without offence!

I will let you know
later what I'm here able
to do.

I expect you are
having a pretty hectic time
baking over from DUDLEY
MARKS, with all that
there is on at the mo-
-ment!

Best wishes

Yours

Maj. Gen. MACLEOD.

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from:- Major-General M.W.M. MACLEOD

CONFIDENTIAL.

GENERAL HEADQUARTERS
CENTRAL MEDITERRANEAN FORCE
Office of the Chief of General Staff

DO. Italy

28 February 1946.

My Dear Browning.

I am in the process of taking over from General Ward and am therefore answering your DO/2 of 13 February 1946.

I have had the letter from Mr. Hopkinson to which you refer and he seems to think that we might get a certain amount out of the Italian Government without offence to them. For example he suggests such items as an Italian Infantryman's full marching kit, desert kit, parachutist's uniform, technical equipment such as anti-gas clothes, etc.

Would it be possible for you to approach the Italian Government on the subject and see what you could extract from them without in any way offending them. We would then arrange to collect the equipment concerned and, in due course, send it on to General Anderson.

Yours *Sincerely*

M.W.M. Macleod

4030

Major-General L. Browning, C.B., O.B.E., M.C.,
Land Forces Sub Commission A.C. (MMIA),
ROME.

Col A/R

What about it?

L.B. 4 min

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From:- Major-General A.D. WA

GENERAL HEADQUARTERS
CENTRAL MEDITERRANEAN FORCE
Office of the Chief of General Staff

DO. Italy

18 February 1946.

My dear Kay

Thank you for your DO of 13 February; I will pass the gist of it on to General Desmond Anderson who is running the historical monograph business at the War Office and deals with the museums.

As I expect you know, I am off on the first of March to go as a student on the first I.D.C. course. Melville Macleod is going to reign in my stead for the rest of the life of A.F.H.Q.

I hope that the Mission and the Italian Army will make great progress and that all your plans for the Army's reorganisation will mature fully. It does seem that things are on the right lines if only the Italians can keep it up.

All the best & good luck

Yours

82.00

4029

Major-General L. Browning, CB, OBE, MC,
Commander, Land Forces Sub Commission A.C. (M.M.I.A.)
ROME.

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Major General L. BROWNING, CB, OBE, MC,
Land Forces Sub Commission A.C.
(M. M. I. A.) ROME.

DO/2

13 February, 1946.

My dear

Thanks for your D.O./Italy of 25 January, in connection with material for our war museums. I will certainly do everything I can to get what you want. I have discussed this at length with Mr. Hopkinson of the British Embassy, and he is writing you a letter on the matter, with which I agree. I think we have to tread a little delicately in this matter, but nevertheless will be able to get a good deal of useful exhibits.

Yours

L.B.

Major General A.D. WARD, CB, DSO, MC,
Chief of Staff,
A.F.H.Q. C.M.F.

4u28

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COPY/dgc

Major General Browning,

M.M.I.A.

Before going off to the U.K. for 2 or 3 days Mr. Hopkinson left the attached fairdraft reply to General Ward's letter to him of 25th January (about war trophies) to be sent to you for your observations. (please).

May I have the papers back at your convenience.

(Sgd) Elizabeth Campbell

9.ii.46.

*No remarks. I agree.
It is a delicate subject
which needs to be handled
delicately.*

13 Feb 46.

L.B.

4027

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COPY/ago

Telephone : Rome 43.951

BRITISH EMBASSY,
R O M E.

February 1946

Many thanks for your letter of 25th January about the desire of the Royal United Services Institution to obtain certain trophies to commemorate the success of the British Army in the war against Italy. I have discussed it with the Ambassador, and it is, as of course I feel sure you will realise, a somewhat delicate matter at this late stage. Two years ago, or even directly after we entered Rome, it would have been easier. Since the Armistice was signed and Italy became a co-belligerent it has been Allied policy to build up the morale of the Italian fighting services and our BLU's and Liaison Officers with the Navy have certainly done a great deal not only to make something of the Italian forces for fighting purposes but to give them back their self-respect. It is obviously embarrassing for us now to go to the people we have been trying to build up and ask them to give us material of one sort or another which can only be intended to commemorate their humiliations!

2. On the other hand, I fully appreciate the desire of our museums and those of the Dominions to obtain material of this sort, and we will naturally do anything we can to help in the matter. I had a word with Browning and asked him as a first step to sound the Ministry of War informally on the subject. Their reaction was much as I had expected. They will hand over things if told to do so, but they will not like doing it.

3. My own feeling is that the matter would best be dealt with in the following way; as regards uniforms we should limit ourselves to asking for a small number of types with the explanation that we want them for historical purposes to be shown with our own and other similar items of equipment used in this war. The Italian infantryman's full marching kit for instance, desert kit, parachutist's uniform, and technical equipment such as anti-gas clothing, weapons etc. I am afraid I am not an expert but it should be possible to produce a rather limited list which we could put to the Italian Government.

4. As regards decorations we feel it would be best to concentrate on those of a purely Fascist character. These the Italian military authorities probably would not mind providing if they could be found. The best way would probably be to put the matter in the hands of a Rome black-marketeer and tell him to produce the best collection he can! As regards posters, proclamations etc., I feel that there is very little to be done now. Surely these can be found in the files of the various intelligence organizations which took part in the campaigns?

5. The Ambassador feels that in any case it would be difficult for him to take any official action without express instructions from the Foreign Office. He would be reluctant to do so in any case and hopes that it may be possible to make the necessary arrangements through private channels. There is also of course a large mass of Italian war material, including uniforms and other equipment, in the North which has not yet been handed back to the Italians. It might be worth while sending someone up to take their pick of this before it goes back.

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