

Field Report of Mrs. F. Catherine Rigsbee
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Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Mrs. Begg, SI-Portugal

DATE: 26 September 1945

FROM : F. Catherine Rigsbee

SUBJECT: Report for Period 22 March 1944 - 12 August 1945

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1. Although I was recruited by the MO Branch for its Cairo office, when I arrived there on 22 March 1944, I was assigned as secretary to Colonel John E. Toulmin, the Strategic Services Officer, OSS-ME, and continued in that capacity until approximately 15 October 1944.

2. In the early summer he had been appointed Deputy Commanding Officer, 2677th Regt. OSS (Prov.), and later reorganization caused a change in designation of title to Balkan Area Commander, giving him complete jurisdiction over Bari, Cairo, Istanbul and their sub-stations. On 5 August 1944, I was transferred to Bari, Italy, and as his secretary there performed the following duties:

Received incoming and distributed outgoing correspondence; in his absence (which was frequent), reviewed and forwarded, on own initiative, correspondence requiring immediate action by B.A.C., or brought to the attention of proper persons certain other matters which could be handled by them; secured data, whenever possible, on which he could base correspondence; set up and maintained suspense and regular files; ascertained that proper action was taken; contacted officials via telephone; assisted in the Office of the Commanding Officer of Company B.

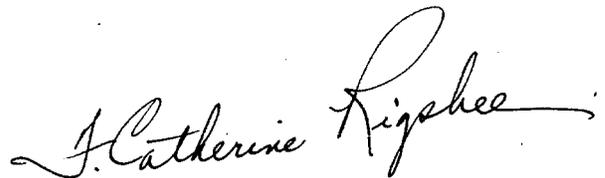
3. At a later date Colonel Toulmin recommended still further reorganization, which would eliminate the office of Balkan Area Commander. His recommendation was followed, he returned to Washington about 15 October 1944, and I remained in Bari as secretary and Administrative Assistant to the Commanding Officer of Company B, with duties similar to those described above. Between 15 October 1944 and 22 March 1945, there were three Commanding Officers of Company B: Lt. Comdr. Edward J. Green, Lt. Col. Walter M. Ross, and Major Joseph M. Richardson.

4. Because the war front had moved further north and our activities were concentrated on Central Europe, with less emphasis being placed on the Balkans, another shift took place: All Desks except those concerned with Central European affairs were moved to headquarters at Caserta; and Company C (operational base for Central Europe) was activated at Fortullino, Italy (eight miles south of Leghorn), with Major Richardson as the Commanding Officer. I was transferred to Fortullino on 22 March 1945, where I remained until 14 May 1945, the date of inactivation of the Company following cessation of hostilities.

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5. About the time of my arrival at Caserta after liquidation of Company C, an inquiry was received regarding availability of an executive secretary for the Lisbon, Portugal, office. I was appointed to this position about 25 May 1945, and expected to get instructions to go immediately since all signals between Washington and Caserta indicated an "extremely urgent need" in Lisbon. On 23 July 1945 Caserta was notified that the appointment had been cancelled due to budget difficulties and that I was to return to Washington for leave and reassignment. During the time I waited for clearance, that is, 25 May through 23 July 1945, I gave a helping hand where most needed at the moment, assisting the Cable Control Officer, the Commanding Officer of the OG's, the Chief of X-2 Branch, the Chief of Operational Supply, etc.

6. I left Caserta 2 August 1945 and arrived in Washington, D. C. on 12 August 1945, coming via boat from Naples to Newport News and by train from the latter point to Washington.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "F. Catherine Riggsbee". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

F. Catherine Riggsbee