



(U) The 'Other' End-to-End SIGINT Site in the UK

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Everyone has heard of Menwith Hill Station, but what about the GCHQ site where British and American SIGINT'ers are working side by side? (C)

(S//SI) RAF* Digby, a small base situated in the peaceful Lincolnshire countryside, does not attract the kind of press attention lavished on RAF Menwith Hill to the north -- and long may that continue. The American presence here is a quiet one but has a profound impact, as soldiers, sailors, and airmen work together with their British counterparts to produce critical intelligence on an amazing variety of targets, all tasked by GCHQ*.

(U) After five years at Menwith Hill and a considerable number of TDYs to GCHQ, I thought I had seen all the charms which the English countryside had to offer. But Lincolnshire has its own special landscape, similar to the unspoiled parts of my home state, Ohio. At the heart of it is the lovely town of Lincoln, where the skyline is still dominated by the magnificent cathedral, some parts of which date all the way back to the year 1092.

(U) Housing prices in Lincolnshire are quite cheap in comparison with the London area, so more and more people are choosing to live here and make the daily commute on the fast train from Margaret Thatcher's birthplace, the nearby town of Grantham. I relish the hustle and bustle of London and spend a lot of time there -- only to be relieved to get away from the crowds, get on the train, and zip back to the sweet tranquility of Lincolnshire!

(S//SI) The SIGINT mission here is incredibly diverse and tailored to intelligence needs from STRATCOM, NORTHCOM, EUCOM, and CENTCOM in addition to UK customers -- including direct support to UK forces in Iraq and Afghanistan. DIRNSA's vision of increasing collaboration with Second Party partners is a reality on the Digby ops floor every day, with collectors, linguists, and analysts working as a virtual team with their counterparts at [GRSOC](#), [MRSOC](#), and the new Alaska Mission Operations Center.

(C) Unlike most U.S. SIGINT sites, Digby is still small enough to retain a "family" feeling, and a fantastic social life can be had on base and off, with a vast number of gatherings, balls, and dinings-in held throughout the year. Right now I am the only NSA civilian, but as part of the ongoing Mission Alignment, three more NSA civilian positions for Digby SIGINT Operations Centre are going to be advertised soon. I am looking forward to a few more lucky individuals joining me as we work with our closest ally to better satisfy both UK and U.S. customer requirements -- while learning a lot and having a great time in the process. Happy hour at the pub, anyone?



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*(U) Notes:

RAF = Royal Air Force

GCHQ = Government Communications Headquarters

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