

Wilderness Period : Introduction to CCL

Earlier involvements with CCL:-

1961 in Cambridge - Town & Gown – described in *Behind the Scenes at Cambridge*:-

CCL-initiated approaches – see pp5,8

1965 at Marconi Instruments – described in *Internal Hints, External Progress*:-

CCL-initiated approaches – see pp3,4,6 & 15,16

English Electric initiated approaches - Stafford p6 & Kidsgrove p16

1966B : Much work for CCL blighted by independence issue & disinformation

Monday 21 March 1966

Around this time there was an announcement in The Times that Robert Maxwell, M.P. for Buckingham and Chairman of Pergamon, together with some associates had invested in Cambridge Consultants. The investment was of up to £60,000 with the requirement that further investment must be approved by Mr. Maxwell. This is probably what triggered me to phone Tim Eiloart to explore the possibility of offering my services as an Independent Consultant to CCL.



In our phone conversation Tim Eiloart said he had recently sent to me at M.I. a questionnaire about a particular interest of mine, modular construction. Recipients, he said, had been invited to get in touch with CCL. My copy was not readdressed so I never saw it but had I done so I would almost certainly have been in contact. Tim Eiloart later said he had sent out only three questionnaires. He went on to suggest I could help on the marketing and applications side of a new range of modular instruments.

Friday 25th March 1966

I visited CCL at their Histon Road premises and it turned out that CCL were interested in engaging my services. Apparently the modular instruments were designed in CCL but were to be handled by a new subsidiary of CCL, AIM Electronics. AIM was an acronym of Advanced Instrumentation Modules. It was thought I could help on the production engineering side as well as marketing.

We had a good discussion about a variety of matters, in the course of which I was asked about my leaving M.I. I said I had done so because in my personal view there had been excessive manipulation. It was left that CCL would get in touch with me

The AIM Electronics proposal could not have been more compatible with one of my major interests while at M.I. I had not only circulated a paper in that company about the modular form of construction but a Professional Group I chaired in the IEE had arranged a meeting on the topic in the forthcoming session. Also the work being suggested was to make good the deficiencies I had identified in CCL when I had been asked to give my views on the company to English Electric. Not only that, AIM Electronics was in essence to be the Instrument Division of CCL.

My visit led to an invitation to meet members of the Board of CCL for lunch at the Strand Palace Hotel.

Tuesday 05 April 1966

I had lunch with members of the CCL Board at Strand Palace Hotel. Tim Eiloart and his father, A.B. Eiloart, were present along with M.J. de Richardson (Panmure Gordon) and B. Murgatroyd, an accountant connected with C & A Modes. Mr. Richardson (who became Sir Michael Richardson of N.M.

Rothschild) was introduced to me as Robert Maxwell's adviser. The meeting was very amicable and the directors seemed very interested in what I had to say. We discussed the problems of running a business, the extent of my committee work, etc. I was clearly being vetted for something but I had no idea what.

Thursday 07 April 1966

Tim Eiloart telephoned and asked if he could come over and see me straight away at my home in Harpenden. When he arrived, he said he had been discussing the possibility of employing me with the CCL Board and would like to offer me a post at £4,000 p.a. (which was considerably more than I had been getting at M.I.) for a three months trial period. I was to take my time over deciding. He left Board minutes and accounts for me to peruse and said he awaited my decision.

Tuesday 12 April 1966

On the next working day (it being Easter weekend) I went to CCL at Cambridge and told Tim Eiloart that I would not accept CCL's offer. The accounts had shown a £10000 loss on £50000 turnover and I did not think CCL could afford me on that basis. In any case I wished to remain independent. I had a number of promising job applications and negotiations in hand and I did not see operating in the context of a tiny company as my forte. Instead we came to an arrangement by which I provided services to them as an independent consultant to CCL at less expense. I proposed a fee of £20 per day but reducing to £15 for the 3rd and 4th days if more than two days were worked in any one week. I was asked to wait while my proposals were put to a management meeting. Tim Eiloart came out and told me they had been accepted but there was a time limit to the arrangement of 1 month. I then took part in the meeting.

Superimposed on all this was an uneasy feeling about CCL's Managing Director which made me hold back. When he had said some three weeks beforehand that I might work on the marketing and applications side of a range of modular instruments I had an unsettling feeling that he may have been briefed directly by M.I. It revived the vague thoughts I had at the time that the contacts initiated by CCL and English Electric had not been straightforward.

I got stuck in straight away with consideration of granting a licence to Advance, another instrument company, to manufacture and market some of the AIM Electronics equipment.

From this time on, to justify my claims for the agreed fees, I kept notes in my Boots scribbling diary of the work I carried out for CCL and the time spent on each. In the diary entries which follow reference will be limited to the projects which are of particular significance in the overall picture of the actions and outcomes of my period as independent consultant to CCL.

Monday 18 April 1966

During the day I visited Advance Electronics at Hainault, with Tim Eiloart and Adrian Horne, Commercial Director of CCL. Good progress with discussions on behalf of CCL.

Tuesday 19 April 1966

1130-1630 CCL, Cambridge. When I arrived at CCL a Management meeting was already under way and from the Minutes I received a few days later I saw that an item that had been discussed prior to my arrival was extremely thought-provoking. The Minute set out possibilities regarding a man whose backers recommend that he should move to Cambridge, though it was recognized this would be difficult in a month and he would probably not want to move anyway. Further expenditure to enable him to work at home or employing him at CCL were other possibilities. It was agreed that "Harold Beck to assist with mediation if possible". The Minute ended with a reference to a confidence-boosting problem and that it should be stressed that logic design was not all that important. It was not recorded in the Minute but I was told the man even lived in Harpenden!

There were so many parallels to my situation that I had little doubt the Minute was an allegorical or allusive message to me, and that the agreement about my being involved and the reference to Harpenden was to ensure the message got through to me. I let the matter drop.

So one week after I started as consultant to CCL it seemed the same covert method of communication I had encountered at M.I. was being used at CCL. What was the origin of this ploy? Did Tim Eiloart learn the technique from the Department of Experimental Psychology? Was someone in the English Electric empire pulling his strings? Was this just an incredible coincidence? These are the thoughts which occurred to me. Whatever the explanation, I felt bound to resist pressure from CCL even though my job applications elsewhere were being blocked and much disinformation was being spread about me.

Thursday 21 April 1966

Shortly after my visit to Sussex and while my application was in process, a colleague of Professor West wrote to CCL asking about the possibility of investing in the company. He followed this up with a visit to CCL and Tim Eiloart was invited to make a return visit to Sussex (see 1st July).

Tuesday 26 April 1966

Following our meeting on the 18th, Gordon Pope wrote offering good money for a licence for various AIM Electronic modules.

Friday 13 May 1966

CCL Management Meeting. Was it just coincidence that items came up about Racal and Kelvin?

This was also the first time 'Grant the Russian' came up. It may have been on this or the second occasion (14th June) that the CCL management asked me to advise them about employing a Russian named Grant, who had applied to them for a job. I cannot now remember the details of the actual person (who I never met) but I clearly recall that even at that time I was wary about the request and was most circumspect about the way in which I responded. I advised Tim Eiloart in writing that before any other steps were taken, the Home Office should be contacted and asked if Mr. Grant had a permit to work in this country.

* * *

Four years later, when I mentioned 'Grant the Russian' to a senior MOD/Cabinet Office man in Whitehall, he scorned the idea that a Russian would be named Grant and clearly he had not heard of him.

Over 20 years later I read in Peter Wright's *Spycatcher* that after a serial from Golitsin in Spring 1962, a Russian refugee named Sokolov Grant had been detected living near a USAF base at Strettleham, Suffolk. He was thoroughly investigated and found to be in the clear. Sokolov Grant and his English wife had moved from the area shortly afterwards probably, Peter Wright said, because the MI5 enquiries had leaked in the village and they wanted to make a fresh start.

Peter Wright goes on to say that the Sokolov Grant story had always had a symbolic importance to him:

" . . . an ordinary man suddenly falling under suspicion, and just as abruptly cleared again, his life utterly changed because of something a man he has never met says in a darkened room on the other side of the world. The quiet rural world of Suffolk colliding with the secret world of betrayal, where there is no such thing as coincidence, and where suspicion can be fuelled at the sight of an empty desk".

Perhaps the job application to CCL by 'Grant the Russian' in 1966 indicated a wish to return to the area.

This as good a point as any to mention that Peter Wright and his father had worked in Marconi Company, the parent company of M.I., and that a number of people I knew or with whom I was in communication, e.g. Dr. Eric Eastwood & Sir Frederick Brundett, are mentioned in *Spycatcher*. Marconi Company had a special relationship with MI5 (e.g. devising and producing surveillance equipment) and MI6 (e.g. Marconi-trained marine radio operators used for intelligence-gathering).

* * *

Around this time Tim Eiloart asked if I would like to pay a visit behind the Iron Curtain - I made it clear I was not interested.

Friday 27 May 1966

I visited a CCL/AIM stand at an Exhibition in London. Tim Eiloart introduced me to up & coming Peter Parker.

Friday 17 June 1966

I was all day at CCL. At an AIM Electronics Management meeting Tim Eiloart reported on a visit he had paid or was about to pay to Cranfield. Another coincidence?

Friday 24 June 1966

During the day at CCL in Cambridge Tim Eiloart and I discussed the pattern of work I was carrying out for CCL, which was very varied. I had been asked to sit in at management meetings, attend Board meetings and contribute to every aspect of the company's operations. I think I can fairly say that I brought much-needed experience to bear on such activities as licence negotiations, financial planning, the formulation of marketing as well as production engineering policies and budgetary control. I again made plain my independent status and Tim Eiloart seemed to accept this.

Tuesday 28 June 1966

In the morning I attended, by invitation, a meeting of the CCL Board. It was held at the H.Q. of Pergamon Press, 4 Fitzroy Square, London and Robert Maxwell chaired the meeting. He was exceedingly well-disposed and gracious towards me and indeed seemed anxious to make a good impression.

After the meeting, which lasted from 10am to noon, I departed for the IEE.

Friday 01 July 1966

I attended an AIM Electronics management meeting at which Tim Eiloart reported on his visit to Sussex University to see Prof. West. He said he had found Prof. West very despondent about the University and that he had told the Prof. what a good chap I was. An important point to note is that I had not told anyone at CCL about my application nor anyone at Sussex about CCL. The upshot of that particular piece of job-seeking was that I was not even invited to a selection interview.

Afterwards, Tim Eiloart told me he was taking a week's holiday - his first for many years and asked me to write to G.C. Pope of Advance while he was away saying that the basis on which CCL and Advance were to collaborate was now agreed, apart from two details, which I was to explain.

Saturday 02 July 1966

It was minuted that at an AIM Management meeting, at which I was not present, Tim Eiloart said he was going to get in touch with Prof. C.W. Oatley and invite him to lunch at CCL.

Monday 04 July 1966

I received a surprising letter from Tim Eiloart dated 28th June (see next page). In it he purported to confirm an offer of a directorship of AIM Electronics which had never been made and extended the offer to Chairmanship of the Company.

Wednesday 06 July 1966

I visited CCL, Cambridge, for the first time since Tim Eiloart had gone on holiday. While there I was astounded to learn from Minutes I found in my pigeonhole (see next page) that I was listed as present at the inaugural meeting of the AIM Electronics Board which was minuted as having been held in the same place and on the same date as the CCL Board meeting, i.e. at 4 Fitzroy Square, the H.Q. of Pergamon on 28th June. At that time I was at the IEE, Savoy Place.

28th June, 1966.

WB/P

Dear Harold,

I should like to confirm our offer of a seat on the board of AIM Electronics Ltd and hope that you will be able to accept the post of Chairman. I have asked John to let you have a note on the duties of a director and a chairman. I feel that it would be best for you to defer a decision about whether to accept a directorship until you know whether this will be compatible with your next job. In the meanwhile you can continue to act as chairman at our weekly meetings.

I was glad to discuss your work with us on Friday last. I can understand that while you find the work has a stimulating effect and the environment attractive you also feel that your abilities are being extended by a job that is not particularly vital.

I think we agree that AIM Electronics could barely provide you with a full week's work now or pay for it but I am certainly not convinced that CCL and AIM would be unable to afford you. Whether we can really use you is another matter. There is certainly a matching problem here, as I think you'll agree.

I feel that it is quite likely that we will be able to provide a really interesting challenge here when we get AIM launched and move to Bar Hill, particularly if Computer Technology comes with us. To run a company ten or a hundred times larger would of course be a very much more demanding task than to run CCL but if and when we start to grow rapidly again the picture may be quite different. The task of, let us say, doubling in size by acquisition or expansion every year would certainly keep us very busy and after 3 years we'd be overtaking companies that are now ten times bigger anyway.

Of course one is also treading much less well documented and familiar ground if trying to grow so fast. Whereas a fairly slow rate of growth requires a gradual change of control techniques, rapid expansion might presumably require a much more self-adequate control. Any new system would have to be worked out with reference to capacity to handle ten or twenty times more information and so forth.

I am most grateful to know more precisely what the situation is and it would be very helpful if you can continue to tell me about it.

Yours sincerely,

Tim

T.M.B. Eiloart

DIRECTORS: G.M. EDGE DIP.EL. A.B. EILOART. T.M.B. EILOART M.A. A.H.C. HORNE MBA
R.M. NEEDHAM Ph.D M.J. De R. RICHARDSON D.C. SOUTHWARD M.A.

AIM Electronics Limited

Minutes of the Board Meeting held at 4 Fitzroy Square, London, W. 1. on 28th June, 1966.

Those Present : H.V. Beck, G.M. Edge, T.M.B. Eiloart (Chairman pro tem), J.K. Forster (Secretary)

Copies to : Above, plus Minute Book.

Reference : JF/R34/P

Date Typed: 4th July, 1966.

1. Certificate of Incorporation : Certificate No.879924 dated 24th May, 1966 was produced to the meeting.
2. Directors : a letter was produced to the meeting, signed by M.J. Birkett and R.J. Lye appointing G.M. Edge and T.M.B. Eiloart to be first Directors of the Company.
3. Chairman : the official election of a chairman was deferred.
4. Company Secretary : a letter was produced to the meeting from M.J. Birkett resigning the post of Company Secretary. It was resolved that J.K. Forster be appointed in his place.

10. Miscellaneous Matters :

There being no further business the meeting was declared closed.

I handwrote the letter to Advance Electronics and left it to be typed on CCL notepaper.

Friday 08 July 1966

I made my other visit to CCL, Cambridge, while Tim Eiloart was on holiday.

My letter to G.C. Pope of Advance Electronics was now ready. Tim Eiloart had asked me before to contact various outside bodies in an executive capacity and I had previously circumvented this difficulty by drafting a letter for him or another director to sign. In this case, I had to word the letter carefully and made clear my relationship to CCL by signing the letter as "Consultant to CCL".

Wednesday 13 July 1966

This was my first visit to CCL since Tim Eiloart's return. When I showed him a copy of my letter to Pope he was clearly upset by the way I had written and signed myself.

When I raised the matter of the anomaly in the AIM Board Minutes Tim Eiloart said my name had been listed among those present due to a misunderstanding. I also had reason to doubt that the meeting had been held at Fitzroy Square and when I pressed him on this he admitted that the Board 'meeting' was actually held in the train on the way back from Liverpool Street to Cambridge.

Friday 15 July 1966

I heard that my old friend John Hammond of Cambridge Instruments had visited CCL. When, years later, I asked John how it had come about he said somebody had asked him to enquire about investing in AIM. He said the person's name may have been in the documents I had shown him. When I asked "Why not tell me?" he declined saying he had been asked in strictest confidence. He did not even offer to approach the person concerned to see if he minded disclosure to me. Besides, he said, it is not connected to my situation because he had been asked to look into two other firms at same time. It wasn't so long ago that I was as innocent as he was!

As I was leaving CCL for home at the end of the day, Pat, Tim Eiloart's secretary, pointedly said "good luck on Monday". My commitments on Monday 18th were to see A.J. Wilson, the marketing research manager at STC about an IEE meeting in November 1966 and an appointment with Miss Joan Woodward at Imperial College to examine a Cambridge M.Sc. student. I had not told CCL of either of these appointments.

Tuesday 19 July 1966

I was interested to learn that GWA Dummer, an engineer well known to me, had asked to become a consultant to CCL.

Friday 22 July 1966

I visited CCL at Cambridge. During the day I was extremely surprised and not a little annoyed to see a memorandum announcing that I had been appointed a Director of AIM Electronics Ltd, which had been issued on 20th June, a few days before the first meeting of the AIM Board. The announcement was pinned to the notice board which staff and visitors alike could see.

It would be very difficult to make a mistake about such a matter as the appointment of a Director and I wondered if Tim Eiloart's actions in making the false announcement as well as showing me as present at a Board meeting when I wasn't were along the lines of "This is what I want to happen so I will act as though it has happened". Similarly with the request for me to take executive action concerning Advance Electronics while he was on holiday. Perhaps he thought I would thereby be induced to go along with his wishes. I did just wonder if perhaps his approach was in accordance with a behavioural theory he had picked up in the Applied Psychology Department.

Alternatively, perhaps intense pressures had been put on him to recruit me to AIM Electronics, if not CCL, and he could have been using the announcement and the Board Minute to mislead people into thinking that he had succeeded. The memorandum could be seen by CCL staff and visitors. I wondered if John Hammond and Charles Oatley had their attention drawn to it when they visited. Because of my

regular contact with John Hammond through Freemasonry I could correct any false impression he might have obtained from his visit but with Charles Oatley and others it was not so easy.

Saturday 23 July 1966

I expressed myself in writing to Tim Eiloart on this latest discovery, letting him off very lightly by pointing out that the notice was issued before we had the talk on 24th June in which I stressed that I was an independent consultant, not an employee of CCL or AIM. He should of course have removed the notice immediately after our talk.

Dear Tim,

I have just noticed a memo of yours listing newcomers to the Company, describing me as a Director of AIM Electronics, Ltd. This was issued on the 20th June, i.e. before our talk which cleared up misunderstandings on this point. I think it would be advisable to issue an amendment so that my function in the Company is clearly understood, i.e. that I am an independent consultant assisting AIM Electronics and CCL in management and in the formulation of Company policy.

Yours sincerely,

Harold

Wednesday 27 July 1966

Tim Eiloart responded to my representations about the Director announcement by issuing another memo with ambiguities loaded in his favour, saying that my Directorship had yet to be confirmed! I retained a copy of the memo despite a request to return it.

When I raised the matter face to face with Tim Eiloart he murmured jauntily that it was such a pity they had got their first ever notice listing newcomers wrong.

-HVB.

MEMORANDUM *Please return to Pit*

To: Bob Taylor, David Southward, Gordon Edge, Pete Chamberlain 27th July, 1966.

From: Tim R/P

Due to a misunderstanding, Harold Beck has been announced on our Notice Board as a Director of AIM Electronics Ltd.

For the present he is helping us on a part-time basis and his directorship has yet to be confirmed.

* * *

It was around this time that Tim Eiloart showed me an article in "Project", a magazine aimed at promoting in schoolchildren a favourable view of Engineering. The article described an interview with Lord Nelson of Stafford, i.e. George Nelson, who had taken over as Chairman and Managing Director of English Electric when his father - the first Lord Nelson of Stafford and founder of the Company - had died. Tim made derogatory remarks about the second Lord Nelson, saying among other things that the son had not succeeded on merit. Tim then asked me what I thought of him.

In my cagey response to Tim Eiloart's question I said that I did not know Lord Nelson at all, that so far as I knew he was doing a good job, that I knew one person (I didn't name him) who had expressed disappointment at Lord Nelson's succession but that another (again no name) had said that with two deputies the arrangement was satisfactory. And that, I said, was the sum total of my information.

It had been Ray Burnett who had expressed disappointment to me about Lord Nelson assuming the mantle of his father, adding that the old guard had carried the day. There was also the adverse remark about his speech-making ability, dropped into my ear at the December 1965 opening of the Engineering Laboratory wing

There was an extraordinary sequel to all this in Spring 1967

* * *

Friday 12th August 1966

Just before I went on holiday, I told Tim Eiloart, that my efforts to obtain another post were being undermined and various rumours had been spread about me (I had not then come across the term 'disinformation'). I said I had decided to approach members of the English Electric Group to see what could be done about the situation. Tim Eiloart replied that I was in a very weak position. He said I

should write to the Chairman of English Electric threatening to tell the shareholders about the way things were run in English Electric. This seemed to me to be the worst action I could take and indeed I did not follow it up.

Wednesday 31 August 1966

I cannot believe that what happened at CCL, Cambridge, in the days immediately after my meeting with Sir Gordon Radley was a series of coincidences.

When I entered Tim Eiloart's office he immediately picked up the telephone and called his father about a job of running a company going in London. The chap he had in mind wouldn't do because he had a family and didn't want to move from Cambridge. He couldn't think of anyone else at the moment but . . . Clearly this was a conversation meant to be overheard - I did not bite.

Two members of staff queried whether they would be seeing me in the future. I spoke briefly to Gordon Edge about manipulation. He thought it was part of the job of a director - but he liked straight dealing.

Friday 02 September 1966

Besides myself, only Tim Eiloart and John Forster were present at the CCL management meeting. I pointed out there wasn't a quorum - I was not a member of the Company but acting as an independent adviser or consultant. T. Eiloart said very forcefully that he regarded me as very much a part of the Company. I again stated my position and said I would like it to be recorded in the minutes. It wasn't.

I think it was on this occasion that a man named Saltmarsh appeared at CCL and Tim Eiloart introduced him with the words "You remember him from just before you joined Marconi Instruments, don't you?".

A decision to cancel an order for an oscilloscope which CCL had ordered from Hewlett Packard was deferred - strong pressure had been put upon me to write the cancellation letter but I had not responded.

Later in the morning, G. Edge offered me his job! I was much better at planning than he was, he said, and I could do his job much better. He wouldn't mind stepping down. He then revealed he had been offered four jobs out of the blue in the past three months. I told him it could be a coincidence - he was becoming better known - but it might be manipulation.

Later in the afternoon, T. Eiloart said that M.J. de Richardson, Robert Maxwell's right hand man, had been asking if I would be interested in a Joint Managing Directorship of Computer Technology. Iann Barron was first rate technically but was not a good administrator and got people's backs up when writing reports, etc. He never presented alternatives - it was always all or nothing and they were getting fed up with it. They needed someone to steer things along better lines, negotiate with companies such as Plessey, AEI, etc.

I told T. Eiloart that I was interested in the Ministry of Technology rather than Computer Technology and that the British Calibration Service post, though not ideal seemed the best bet all round. He said that the BCS post wasn't good enough for me. The computer field was much faster growing and Computer Technology, Ltd. would be one of the biggest in the country in the not too distant future (there were between 2 and 7 on the staff at the time). Tim Eiloart said Mr. Ernest Marples (a Conservative ex-Minister) might be investing in C.T. instead of Robert Maxwell (had someone realised I was not of Labour disposition?). Tim Eiloart also said the company would be established within 20 miles of Luton. I asked what salary was envisaged and he said "anything you need". I said I would think about it and took the file of C.T. Board minutes and other documents to look through.

It was in this context that Tim Eiloart remarked that he did not approve of "closed societies" trying to help me. There is little doubt this was a reference to Freemasonry and at the time I wondered if he was making an oblique irrelevant reference to my membership of a Cambridge Lodge.

Monday 05 to Friday 16 September 1966

Because, clearly, my follow-up of the Computer Technology proposition was not a CCL consultancy project for which I could charge a fee I did not note details of dates and times of communications and visits. However the following probably took place within two weeks of the proposition being put to me.

I phoned Michael Richardson (of Panmure Gordon) and he asked me to see Arnaud de Vitri who was on the Board of Computer Technology.

I met Mr. de Vitri at a Mr. A.E. Davidson's flat in Bryanston Square. Mr. de Vitri was also on the Board of European Enterprise Developments. He described its interest in building a Channel Tunnel and its close connection with a very successful growth Company in the small computer field, the American Digital Equipment Co. We discussed the C.T. post and he said he very much hoped I would take it.

I attended by invitation part of a Computer Technology Board meeting, which Robert Maxwell chaired - again he was very gracious to me. One of the Board members was Tom Margerison who had been at the SIMA annual jamboree which Ray Burnett had invited me to some 2 to 3 years before. I also visited C.T.'s offices at Cardiff Road, Luton and was somewhat underwhelmingly received.

After careful consideration I declined the offer on two grounds. The first was that I doubted the viability of the product. The design of the computer, though good, was not in my view outstanding enough to make up for its late arrival on the computer scene. There was only one prototype in existence and the Company had no experience of production. A supply of funds for such a product was very doubtful. The other was that the VTM (Vulnerability To Manipulation) index was too high. My experience of CCL made me very wary of being on the same Board as Tim Eiloart and the very small size of C.T. meant that it could be made to succeed or fail at will.

I kept on with my consulting work at CCL for I was constantly being asked to take on new projects. I put in 3/4 days per week which brought me in £55 to £70, and I think I gave very good value. In the meantime I continued to apply for posts elsewhere and my applications continued to be undermined. I felt strongly, however, that I must continue to resist the manipulations and that all would be right in the end

Monday 19 September 1966

A CCL Management meeting discussed Government business (not present). It was minuted that "Harold to lunch Don Woods", another of my close Ministry contacts who I used to lunch during my time at M.I.

Wednesday 21 September 1966

Around this time I was amazed to find, despite the number of times I had made my position clear, that CCL had recently issued a sheet showing the fees charged by CCL for various levels of staff. I was shown as a Principal along with Tim Eiloart, Gordon Edge etc. When I tackled Tim Eiloart about it he murmured it was for internal use only - which left unanswered the basic question of why I was on it anyway.

<u>CAMBRIDGE CONSULTANTS LTD.</u>	
<u>9. Principals</u>	<u>7. Senior Engineers</u>
BECK Harold	CLARK Bruce
EDGE Gordon	GOSLING Alex
EILOART Tim	PROSSER Jeremy
HORNE Adrian	
ROBERTS Frank	
SOUTHWARD David	

Thursday 06 October 1966

CAMBRIDGE CONSULTANTS LTD 89 HISTON ROAD CAMBRIDGE ENGLAND TELEPHONE (054 3) 62466

DATE _____ ORIGINATOR _____ FILE _____

Harold

Frank L left last Friday.

Thank you very much for dealing within, and sorting out the problem in a way that saved a considerable number of months (2) salary at £200 per month or so.

Tim

I had been asked by CCL Management to 'deal' with an employee whose work, I was told, was unsatisfactory and who, it was said, was constantly blaming others for his misfortunes. I welcomed the opportunity of showing how such a case should be handled i.e. open discussion and amicable agreement with the man concerned. The man was listed as a Principal but whereas I worked closely with the other Principals I hardly knew this one.

I interviewed the man and he agreed to leave CCL. Later Tim Eiloart sent me a note of thanks saying that I had saved the company 2 months salary at £200 a month.

Interestingly English Electric and Marconi - but not M.I. - people were offering to work for CCL.

Friday 14 October 1966

At last I was interviewed at the Civil Service Commission for the Ministry of Technology post of Deputy Director of the British Calibration Service (BCS). I was told I would learn the result on 5th November but I told Tim Eiloart of CCL that I was expecting to hear on 10th November (q.v.).

Tuesday 18 October 1966

To Cambridge for a CCL Board meeting. I was spokesman for AIM Electronics plans.

This may have been when Tim Eiloart and the CCL Principals first took me to lunch at the "Coach & Horses". This was a public house on Trumpington Road (A10) on the other side of Cambridge from CCL. On two occasions Tim Eiloart said to me with unusual earnestness something like "This, in your case, is an appropriately named pub".

There was also the occasion when we had lunch in an Indian restaurant just around the corner from Magdalene Street. Tim insisted on going through every item on the menu explaining what each one was and saying "You will need to know these things".

Wednesday 19 October 1966

As Chairman of the Editorial Board of JSI I attended a meeting of the Publications Committee of the Institute of Physics. This was the first meeting after Dr. J.V. Dunworth, Director of the NPL, had taken over the chairmanship of the Committee from Professor Brian Flowers and he had invited members of the Committee to a lunch in the basement dining room at 38 Belgrave Square. I was surprised when John Dunworth, a short, imposing and deliberate man of considerate kindness, asked me to sit next to him while he presided over lunch. In the course of the meal he started talking - quietly, to me alone - about Robert Maxwell. He said what an excellent man he was, people who worked for him could expect to go places etc. . . . It was quite clear this was no chance topic of conversation.

John Dunworth obviously had some sort of association with the network which was trying to get me into the CCL/Maxwell orbit. Who prevailed upon the Director of NPL to do a "selling" job on Robert Maxwell? Was it Maxwell himself? Was it someone at M.I., Marconi or English Electric? Was it someone or some organisation completely outside the industrial orbit? I discovered years later that the 2nd Lord Nelson of Stafford had been on the General Board of NPL from 1959 to 1966, which may or may not be significant. I discovered too from Tom Bower's writings on Maxwell that the publisher's association with John Dunworth went way back.

Tuesday 25 October 1966

AIM Management meeting (not present). Jeremy Prosser reported an approach by Livingston Laboratories - my links with Livingston went back to Cavendish days and I had visited them earlier in the month. AIM asked me to contact them.

AIM was also becoming involved with the Physics Exhibition, an Institute of Physics event in which I had a professional interest - I was a member of the Exhibition Committee responsible for it, as was Ray Burnett of M.I.

Thursday 03 November 1966

CCL Management meeting - Cambridge Instrument Co item considered. I was working independently on a project with CCo.

AIM Management meeting - an item came up on the Design Centre.

Monday 21 November 1966

Around this time I circulated a note to the management group of CCL pointing out that negotiations with persons outside the Company affecting any member of the Company or person like myself associated in

an independent capacity should be disclosed. I hoped by my note to both assert my independence and learn what was going on behind the scenes. It produced no response.

Tuesday 22 November 1966

I attended a CCL Board meeting at Pergamon H.Q., London. One item I noted was Cash Flow assessment criteria.

Tuesday 29 November 1966

To CCL, Cambridge. I had a talk with T. Eiloart.

From September to December 1966 I had put in 3 to 4 days a week on CCL work, which left me enough time to make and follow up job applications as well as engage in professional institution activities

However, a process of insidious absorption had intensified. The best term I can devise at this time for this process is 'absorption by boundary removal'. Examples have already been given - e.g. my name in a list of Principals. It continued with a request that I should fill in the standard timesheet as was used by all CCL staff and that I agree to be paid monthly along with the rest, instead of my sending in from time to time a detailed account of work done and the time taken and then receiving a cheque accordingly. The request seemed reasonable and I readily went along with it. The next thing however was that I received a standard pay slip as though I was on the payroll of the company. Then CCL headed stationery was sent to me with a request that I use it. Then I received a CCL telephone credit card. A desk was allocated to me and my name was displayed adjacent to it. I received all papers as though I was a Director. One of the more amusing 'boundary removal' ploys was the purchasing unknown to me of a coffee mug with "Harold Beck" glazed thereon, which stood beside matching named mugs for the actual Directors and, so I understand, was brought out and displayed to or even used by visitors to CCL.

Nor did it help that on one occasion, apropos of nothing, Tim Eiloart said I would cause a terrible scandal for the Chairman if I did not toe the line; he remained silent when I asked him to elaborate. On another occasion, in high elation, he said he did not believe in rules governing conduct in business. On yet another, Tim said he had been asked to find out my price - every man had a price so what did I really want? This time it was me who did not respond.

Faced with all this I decided to take a strong line with T. Eiloart and have a talk with him in which I spoke to a brief I had written out beforehand:-

1. I will not join CCL under any circumstances.
2. It must not be made to appear that I have joined CCL.
3. I will be applying or negotiating for posts elsewhere.
4. No pressure must be put on me to join CCL.
5. I will be informed of any formal or informal arrangements made with other parties that will affect me.
6. I shall wish to see Robert Maxwell.
7. If the above are accepted I will make my experience available but not my name, i.e. internal, not external, for a scale of fees, until such time as I obtain another post.
8. I will not rule out external negotiations or action on behalf of CCL but this will involve separate negotiated fees for specified and agreed jobs.

I made all these points in our conversation. Tim Eiloart's response was that everything should remain as it was pending a full discussion early in the New Year.

Thursday 01 December 1966

AIM Management meeting I was present at a discussion of what AIM should do in connection with the IEE meeting on Modular Instrumentation which had been arranged long before I started to work as

consultant to CCL/AIM and which I was due to chair. My fear that CCL might make more of the connection than they should proved to be well-founded.

Tuesday 06 December 1966

Far from leaving everything until the New Year Tim Eiloart wrote to me as follows:-

6th December, 1966

Dear Harold,

I am writing to confirm the conversation we had last Tuesday about your work for us. Forgive me if I amplify some of the arguments.

I think I understand the various factors which prevent you committing yourself to CCL. but we feel that the present arrangement should be altered.

The ingredients you have provided (policies for AIM, budgetary controls and general approach) have been invaluable. However, I hope we have learned much of what you teach and we feel that it would be appropriate either to work with you openly, or to seek your advice in more concentrated doses, perhaps once a fortnight.

I think we both agree that at present your abilities are partly wasted. In particular your potential strength as a negotiator is hardly being used nor are your executive (as opposed to legislative) skills. Finally, you may be in the embarrassing position of having to separate the two halves of your life, so that your very valuable circle of contacts is closed to us even though we may sometimes be worthy of introduction.

One factor that may be forgotten, when comparing co-operation with CCL to independent consultancy is that the transfer of kudos is not entirely one way. Apparently Wedgwood Benn says that "every other piece of paper" on his desk relates to Computer Technology now. As the original launching pad for C.T. we should be able to earn considerable esteem without much difficulty. This is only one of the irons we have in the fire and although we are certainly not yet in the main-stream of British technology I'm determined to get there somehow and indeed I feel we can be uniquely placed when we finally arrive.

I look forward to discussing this further with you.

Yours,
Tim

Thursday 08 December 1966

To CCL, Cambridge. I was asked what I thought of someone going to Hungary on behalf of CCL in connection with some work for Plessey. At an AIM Management meeting, marketing plans were discussed and items came up on Tube Investments and the Cavendish Laboratory. The Advance Electronics project was said to be going swimmingly!

Thursday 22 December 1966

To CCL, Cambridge. The Project Cash flow I had carried out was considered very sensible.

Thursday 29 December 1966

To CCL, Cambridge. The atmosphere of sweetness and light continued.

Saturday 31 December 1966

On this last day of 1966, I received a letter dated 29th December from Tim Eiloart of CCL which, without previous warning, conveyed the news that my consulting assignments with CCL were to be cut right down. It was in fact something like a re-run of the deplorable events which had occurred at M.I. one year before - a series of encouragements preceding a sudden massive shock delivered in that case by Shull Arms. Clearly, Tim Eiloart was applying the same behavioural technique.

I was determined not to be coerced in this way. I drafted a reply on the lines that I wished to cast loose from CCL but did not exclude the possibility of well-defined work on an ad hoc basis.

Harold Beck
November 2017