

CLASSIC DRIVER

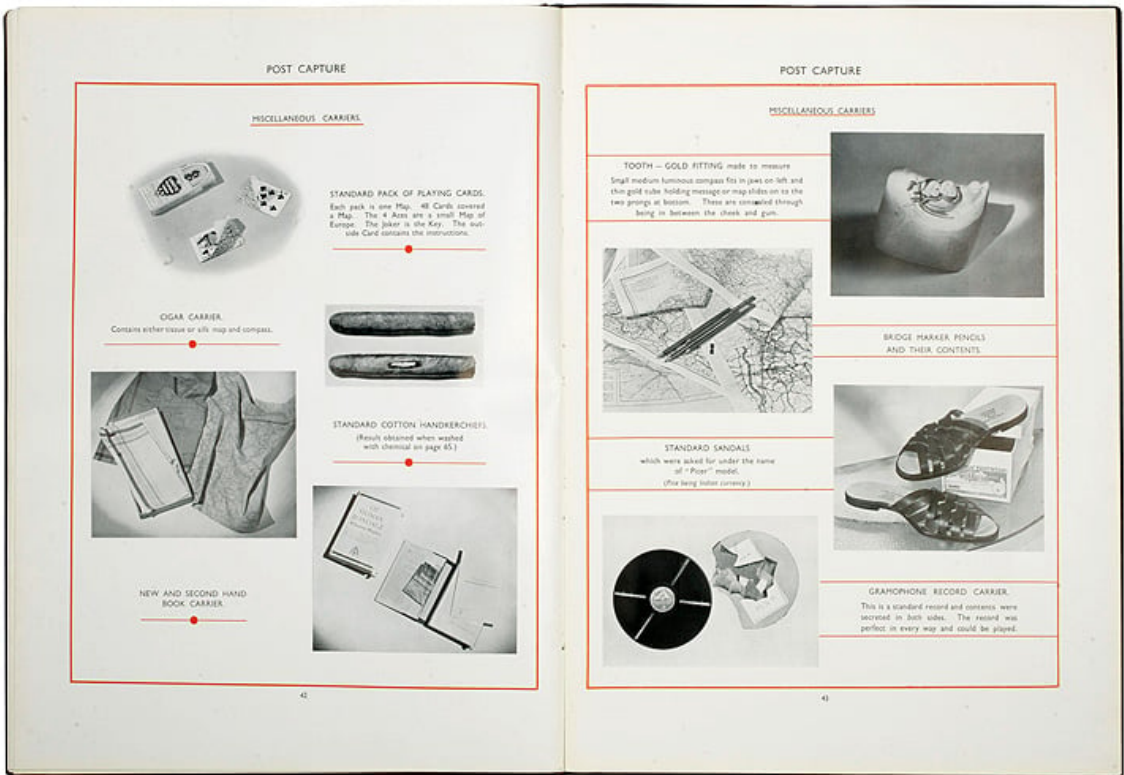
Psst...Top Secret: Instruction manual for MI9 agents uncovered

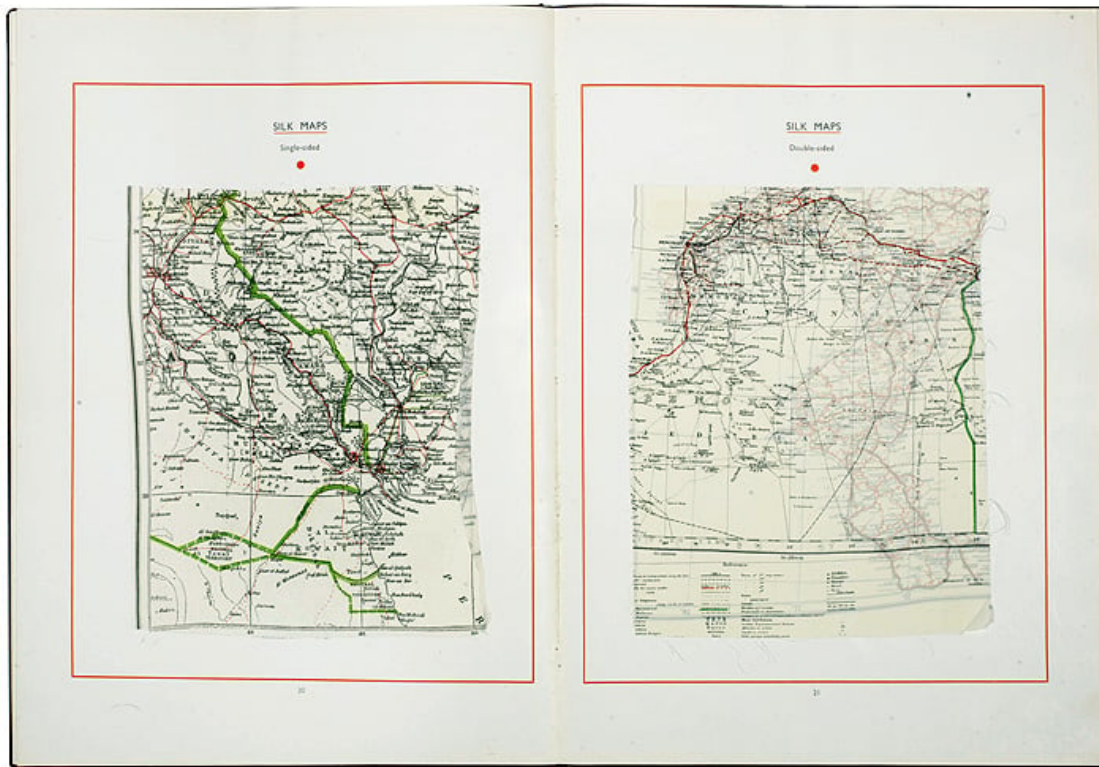
Lead

Invisible cars, lasers concealed in watches and exploding pens – superspy James Bond wouldn't have lived to die another day without his famous gadgets. Now a rare wartime book is up for auction, detailing the equipment that was used by real life MI9 agents to outsmart the Nazis...

Now pay attention, 007 enthusiasts – as gadget-master 'Q' from the Bond films might have expressed it. If you were under the impression that tiny compasses hidden in gold teeth and cigarette lighters carrying cameras only exist in the world of film and fiction, you're mistaken.

As the 1942 catalogue reveals, James Bond-style gadgets didn't only exist, but helped hundreds of Allied spies and prisoners of war to escape from enemy territory. The 75-page booklet describes what the devices were, how they were built and how they could be hidden in everyday items. These 'secret weapons' were then packed into food parcels and sent to prison camps, like the infamous Stalag Luft III.





Among the clever designs are maps of Germany printed on silk, so that they could easily be stuffed into pens or disguised as handkerchiefs. Other getaway gadgets listed in the manual are radio receivers concealed in cigar boxes and hacksaws hidden in dartboards. Meanwhile, fewer than 100 copies of the classified catalogue were printed and given to American Intelligence Officers, who were light years behind the British in espionage design. Now one of these rare books, titled 'Per Ardua Libertas', has found its way to the auction block.

Consequently, one successful bidder will soon be taking home a piece of history; a little book of secrets covering some truly ingenious inventions that, at the time they were created, pushed the boundaries of science (remember we're talking about the pre-iPhone era here). So when the manual goes under the hammer at Bonhams' Gentleman's Library Sale in London on 30 January, we expect it to sell well beyond its modest £800 estimate - that's how captivating we find its contents.

Photos: Bonhams

Gallery





Source URL: <https://www.classicdriver.com/en/article/psst%E2%80%A6top-secret-instruction-manual-mi9-agents-uncovered>
© Classic Driver. All rights reserved.