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**New edition of Biography of Alexander Wilson throws new light how and why the 'Alec Wilson' of the BBC series 'Mrs Wilson' was thrown out of MI6 during the Second World War.**

The book reveals he could have been unfairly discredited because of mistakes by the country's intelligence agencies.

Professor Tim Crook of Goldsmiths, University of London has painstakingly researched every aspect of the life of the multiple bigamist, spy writer and Intelligence officer over 13 years.

*The Secret Lives of a Secret Agent* was the foundation of the BBC dramatization along with a short memoir written by Wilson's third wife Alison.

Professor Crook has shared his royalties equally with the different parts of Alexander Wilson's families.

They have acknowledged that his 'years of patient research,' made them 'aware of each other's existence' and enabled them 'to become united as one strong and loving family.'

The first edition in 2010 revealed the extent of Wilson's successful spy writing career producing a series of novels that was the *James Bond* of the 1930s, and his connections with the Secret Service.

Three years later this led to the release to the National Archives of a file outlining how his career in MI6 came to an ignominious end.

In the second edition published for the first time this week (30<sup>th</sup> November 2018) he reveals:

- Alexander Wilson probably faked the burglary of expensive jewellery from his London home in 1942 so he could raise money to pay for expensive antibiotics that saved the life of his third wife Alison- played in the series by her granddaughter- the award-winning actress Ruth Wilson.
- MI5 and MI6 probably made a mistake when deciding he had faked intelligence reports that the Egyptian Ambassador in London was running a network of agents collecting intelligence.
- Professor Crook says that it is just as likely the Ambassador and his staff had pretended to run a network when they knew their phones were being listened to and that Wilson was translating and reporting what he heard accurately.
- Crook's research indicates the Egyptians were plotting their independence from Britain, and other files in the National Archives suggest the Ambassador, Hassan Nachat Pasha, was gathering intelligence from different sources in London.

- Crook highlights evidence British intelligence most likely unfairly hounded Wilson to make sure he never obtained any future official or responsible employment thereby plunging his young family into poverty and destitution. One of his sons ended up in a children's home for a period, and Alec and Alison Wilson were being pressured to put up another for adoption.
- The MI5 report condemning Wilson for making up the Egyptian Ambassador reports has been withheld for 'security sensitivity' despite repeated FOI challenges by Professor Crook.
- The secret MI5 report was produced by MI5 intelligence officer, Alex Kellar, who was working with the KGB traitor Anthony Blunt, then in charge of MI5 agents spying on embassies and diplomatic legations in WW2 London.

The new edition of the biography provides a true and comprehensive profile of each of the four wives of Alexander Wilson: Gladys, Dorothy, Alison and Elizabeth and their respective families.

It reveals how he formed and managed the bigamous relationships over many decades and explores the emotional cost and hurt these would cause the women and children in his life.

He wrote in one of his novels that 'I simply could not live without female companionship.'

The new book reveals he most probably embarked on his first bigamous relationship after boarding an ocean-going ship sailing out to British India from Liverpool in October 1925.

It was in The City of Nagpur, bound for Karachi, that he first met the touring actress, Dorothy Wick, who would become his second wife, and the mother of his third son.

They would live as man and wife in Lahore (now in present day Pakistan) from 1928 to 1933 and then in London until 1941 while his first wife Gladys and their three children remained in Southampton.

He would meet his third wife Alison at MI6 in 1940, marry her in 1941, and live in London with her and their two sons until his death in 1963.

In 1955 he met and married a fourth wife, Elizabeth, with whom he had a son in the same year. It's believed they lived parallel lives in London for two years when only two miles separated them from his other home with Alison and her two sons.

*The Secret Lives of a Secret Agent, Second Edition* also investigates why a much-loved man with the epitaph on his grave from *Othello* that 'he loved not wisely but too well', behaved the way he did.

The clues may lie in his 28 published and unpublished novels carefully analysed by Tim Crook.

Professor Crook says:

‘My involvement in this extraordinary story came about in 2005 because my friend and colleague at Goldsmiths, Richard Shannon, asked me to help his father, Mike, unravel mysteries about his father’s past.

The ensuing research odyssey has resulted in two books, many articles and a three-part BBC television dramatization.

Most importantly, it has brought the many families of Alexander Wilson together with a resolve to find out as much as they can about the full story of his work in intelligence.’

Professor Crook has asked his MP James Cartlidge to formally request the Home Secretary and Foreign Secretary to investigate if MI5 and MI6 are prepared to ‘exercise their discretion to release to the National Archives any information and files that can assist the Wilson family to understand the mysterious and traumatic events of more than 70 years ago.’

Professor Crook argues that the television series, and second edition of Wilson’s biography demonstrate an intense public and historical interest in releasing information about a significant popular novelist of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with a unique and controversial record in British intelligence.

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For more details on Alexander Wilson visit the Alexander Wilson Estate website at

<https://alexanderwilsonauthorandspy.com>

There is an extensive interview with Professor Crook describing the research project and discussing new issues in more detail at:

<https://alexanderwilsonauthorandspy.com/2018/11/15/interview-with-professor-tim-crook-biographer-of-alexander-wilson/>

Professor Crook pursued Freedom of Information applications against the Foreign and Commonwealth Office for the release of the MI5 investigation into Alexander Wilson’s phone-tapping of the Egyptian Embassy during the Second World War.

The Information Tribunal (First Tier) said in 2016 it did not have the power to order disclosure, or its transfer to the National Archives at Kew, but it did say:

‘The report was written during the Second World War. Ordinarily, as Professor Crook indicates, it might have been expected that the report would have been transferred to Kew. It is, however, plain that this has not occurred. Having regard to the age and subject matter of the information, we are puzzled by this fact.’

A further review by the Foreign Office was requested by Professor Crook via his MP, but in February this year, the FCO Minister Sir Alan Duncan said that it remains ‘security sensitive.’

*The Secret Lives of a Secret Agent: The Mysterious Life and Times of Alexander Wilson Second Edition* by Tim Crook is published by Kultura Press 30<sup>th</sup> November 2018.

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