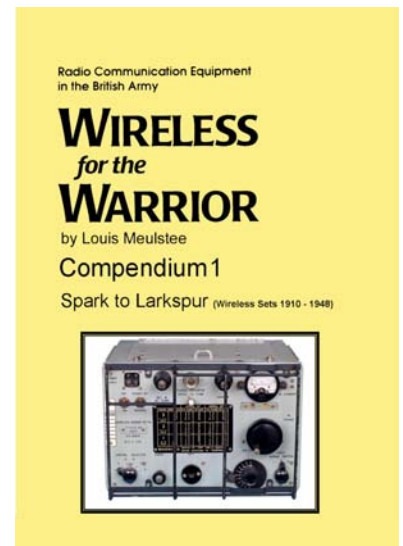


# Wireless for the Warrior

## Compendium 1 – Spark to Larkspur

by  
**Louis Meulstee PA0PCR**

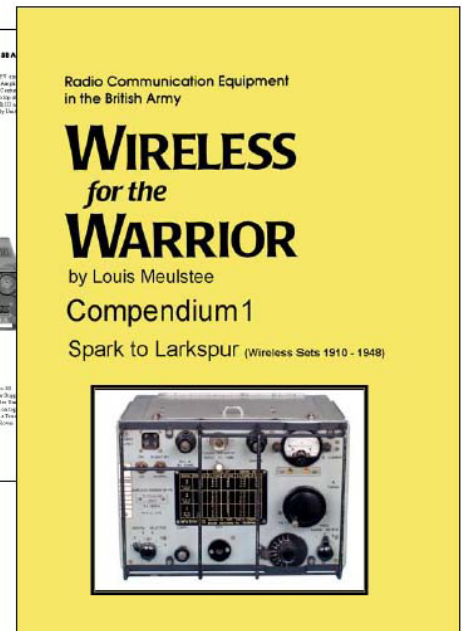
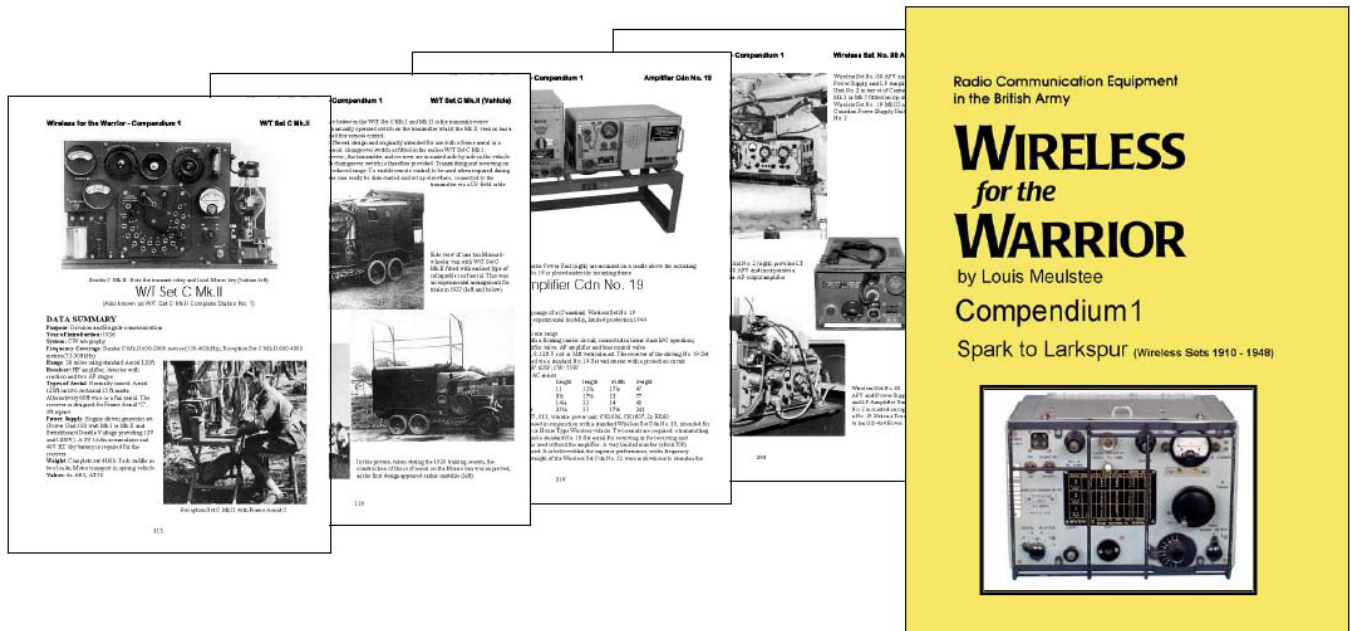
reviewed by  
*Alister J Mitchell GM3UDL*



We all wondered if Louis Meulstee was going to produce further volumes in the remarkable Wireless for the Warrior series, currently consisting of four large books, one soft cover and three hardback, which are the definitive source for technical information on British Army radio communications equipment from the 1930s to the early 1950s. Various rumours have circulated about the possible contents of such a new book but the truth can now be revealed, with the publication of Compendium 1.

Louis has a great deal more information than has been published so far and this Compendium is the beginning of his plan to make the rest public. The original volumes, as mentioned, are big (roughly A4 size), thick and copiously illustrated with photographs, drawings and diagrams, so are expensive to produce and buy – so much so that publishing future volumes in the same format has not proved practicable. Instead, this new volume, and those planned, are described as “reference and recognition handbooks” and are paperbacks around A5 in size. This one contains a respectable 400 pages.

The basic idea of the Compendium is to provide pictures and specifications for the sets covered, which for this volume is all the British Army wireless sets from 1910 to 1948. Obviously, the “WS series” is in there and the sets are presented in a similar format to that used in Volume 1 of Wireless for the Warrior. However, the latest available information is included and the majority of the photographs are new, with more than just one photograph per set, as was sometimes the case in Volume 1. Also, because of the wider chronological range covered, readers will find the early WS sets in company with other sets less well known to most enthusiasts, such as the MA and the F Sender.



The basic layout is chronological in three parts; World War 1, The Interwar Years and World War 2 but each part has a "Miscellaneous" section and for World War 2, this section contains a summary of all known wireless remote control units – something which has been needed for a long time. To attempt to describe the riches contained within this small volume is a difficult task – just like the first four volumes, every time it is opened, some new fact comes to light.

Although there exists in the National Archive a list of all the wireless equipment in use between 1903 and 1923, until now there has been no definitive list of their specifications and roles and certainly no photographs. In the well known source material such as Nalder's "History of the Royal Signals" and Priestley's "Work of the RE Signal Service" a few poor pictures appear but for the Compendium, Louis has found not only a large number of original contemporary photographs, but has been able to put together an outstanding collection of photographs of actual equipment held in museums. The Compendium is the definitive photographic record of this equipment.

Army wireless up to roughly 1916 was entirely spark telegraphy with the thermionic valve being relatively unknown until the middle of the War. Thereafter, CW began to appear in specialist areas and it was not until after the War that R/T was tried. All of this is beautifully illustrated by the chronological progression of sets and ancillary equipment described in the Compendium.

Compendium 1 is available at £23.50 from Wimborne Publishing online at <http://www.epemag3.com/> and we are told that Compendium 2 (Receivers, Special Sets and Larkspur) is in preparation.

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