Leonard Dawe (1889–1963) was the headmaster of Strand School and a crossword compiler for The Daily Telegraph, during World War II. Shortly before the ill-fated Dieppe Raid, Dawe’s crosswords strangely included the word “Dieppe” (clued as “French Port”). MI6 became increasingly concerned about Dawe’s loyalty when, in the months leading up to the D-Day invasion, his puzzles featured the military codewords “Gold”, “Sword” and “Juno”. After a brief investigation, British Intelligence put this down to coincidence, since those three words were relatively common in crossword puzzles. However, after later crosswords contained the codewords “Utah”, “Mulberry”, “Neptune”, “Omaha” and “Overlord”, Dawe was arrested by MI6 on suspicion of espionage. While he was eventually deemed not guilty, Dawe could offer no explanation as to how the words had made their way into his puzzles.

The five pieces here diagram the appearances of black squares in Leonard Dawe’s crosswords.

derek beaulieu is the author of eight collections of poetry, four collections of conceptual fiction and two volumes of essays. beaulieu co-edited bill bissett’s RUSH: what fucken theory (with Gregory Betts) and Writing Surfaces: Selected Fiction of John Riddell (with Lori Emerson). He is the publisher of the acclaimed no press and is the visual poetry editor at UbuWeb. beaulieu has exhibited his work across Canada, the United States and Europe and is an award-winning instructor. He was the 2014–2016 Poet Laureate of Calgary, Canada.

Five Poems
(for Leonard Dawe)

derek beaulieu