Research Guide
North Africa
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This guide offers brief descriptions of material held in the Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives relating to operations in North Africa during World War Two, 1940-1943. Further biographical information about each of the individuals named and complete summary descriptions of the papers held here may be consulted on the Centre’s website (see contact details on the back page), where information about the location of the Centre, opening hours and how to gain access may also be found. New collections are being added all the time, so please visit the website regularly.

Individual collections

ALLFREY, Lt Gen Sir Charles (1895-1964)
General Officer Commanding 5 Corps, North Africa and Italy 1942-1944; General Officer Commanding British Troops in Egypt 1944-1948
Typescript diary, operational reports and papers relating to the Tunisian campaign, 1942-3, including Operations BLADEFORCE and BIZERTE (December 1942)

ANDERTON, Col Geoffrey (1902-1981)
Assistant Director of Medical Services, 1 Division, Tunisia and Italy, 1939-1945
Typescript report, printed map of Tunisia and papers relating to the First Division’s activities in Tunisia, 1943

BISHOP, Maj Gen Sir Alexander (1897-1984)
Chief Staff Officer, East and North and West Africa 1939-1943
Typescript memoirs covering his life and career, including service in Africa, 1939-1943

BOULT, Lt Col Herbet (1910-1979)
Served with 9 Armoured Brigade Group, 1942
Reports on 9 Armoured Brigade Group during the second Battle of El Alamein, Egypt, 1942

BOYS-SMITH, Capt Humphrey, RN (1904-1989)
Commander of HMS SPEY, 1942-1943
Memos, including account of Allied landings in North Africa, November 1942

BROOKE, F M A F, 1st Viscount Alamein of Brookeborough (1883-1963)
Chief of the Imperial General Staff, 1941-1946
Personal diaries, 1939-1946; semi-official files and correspondence as IIGS, 1941-1946, including correspondence with Gen Sir Archibald Wavell, Commander-in-Chief, Middle East, 1939-1941; FM Sir Harold Alexander, General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Middle East, 1942-1943; Gen Sir Bernard Montgomery, Commander, 8 Arm, 1942-1943, and Gen Sir Kenneth Anderson, Commander, 1 Army, North Africa, 1942-1943

CADELL, Air Cdre Colin (1905-1996)
Chief Signals Officer, Middle East, Cairo, 1943
Memoir relating to his RAF career, 1925 to 1945

CAUNTER, Brig J A L (1889-1981)
Commander, Armoured Brigade, Egypt, 1939-1941, and 4 Armoured Brigade, 7 Armoured Division, Western Desert campaign, 1940-1941
Photographs and papers relating to the First Libyan Campaign, 1940-1941, particularly the Battle of Beda Fomm, Libya, February 1941

CREAGH, Maj Gen Sir Michael (1892-1970)
General Officer Commanding 7 Armoured Division, Western Desert, 1939-1941
Reports, correspondence and maps relating to operations in the Western Desert, 1940-1941, especially the Battles of Sidi Saleh and Beda Fomm, and Operation BATTLEAXE, the attempt to relieve Tobruk, Libya, 1941

CRIBB, Col R D (1908-1986)
Lieutenant, 121 Medium Regiment, Royal Artillery, Western Desert, 1941-1943
Personal and typescript Unit diaries relating to service in the Western Desert and Tunisia, 1941 and 1943

DANIELL, Brig R B T (1895-1985)
Assistant Director of Medical Services, 1 Division, Tunisia and Italy, 1939-1945
Typescript report, printed map of Tunisia and papers relating to the First Division’s activities in Tunisia, 1943

DICKENS, Adm Sir Gerald (1879-1962)
Flag Officer, Tunisia, 1943-1945
Manuscript war diary, and official and personal correspondence

DIVERS, Brig S T (1896-1979)
Commanding Officer, 50 Div, Royal Army Service Corps, 1943-1942, and Deputy Director Supply and Transport, 10 Corps, North Africa, 1942-1943

EDGELL, Lt Col P M (1906-1997)
Commanded 345 Company, Royal Army Service Corps, 1942-1945
Account, “The five years of 345 Coy RASC (Royal Army Service Corps), from Baquba to Trieste, 1940-1945”, recounting of Edgell’s experiences in North Africa, including the siege of Tobruk, Libya, written in 1990

GALE, Lt Gen Sir Humphrey (1890-1971)
Chief Administrative Officer, European Theatre of Operations, Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force, 1942-1945
Diaries, 1942-1945; office files relating to his service as Chief Administrative Officer, 1944-1945; five printed volumes of ‘History of the Allied Forces Headquarters, Parts I II’

GRAVES, Robert (1895-1985)
Poet and author
Account, ‘Historical note on the defence plan that foiled Rommel’s invasion of Egypt in 1942 - by the officer who designed it’, by Maj Gen E E Dorman Smith, written in 1943

HELY, Brig Alfred (1902-1990)
Commander, 60 Field Regiment, Western Desert, 1941-1942
Account of his career, including action around Sidi Rezegh, Libya, November 1941

HIGNETT, Lt Col John (1900-1994)
Served with Royal Hussars, North Africa, 1940-1943
Official photographs of the North African campaign, World War Two

HORSEMAN, Maj Gen Sir Hugh (1898-1987)
Chief of Staff, Middle East, 1941-1942
Account, ‘Chief of Staff to Operation SHARK’, recounting of Horseman’s experiences in the Western Desert, 1941-1942, written in 1987

IMPEY, Maj Gen Sir John (1891-1974)
Commander, 1 Armoured Division, Western Desert, 1941-1942
Account, ‘The Battle of El Alamein’, recounting of Impey’s experiences in the Western Desert, 1941-1942, written in 1947

JACKSON, Maj Gen Sir Ronald (1893-1964)
Chief of Staff, Middle East, 1941-1942
Account, ‘The Battle of El Alamein’, recounting of Jackson’s experiences in the Western Desert, 1941-1942, written in 1968

JENKINS, B (1907-1990)
Individual collections

KNOX, Lt Col Sir Robert (1890-1971)
Director of Medical Services, 1 Division, Egypt, 1939-1945
Typescript report, medical report, map of Tunisia and papers relating to the First Division’s activities in Tunisia, 1943

LAMBERT, Col C P (1910-1982)
Assistant Director of Medical Services, 1 Division, Egypt, 1940-1941
Typescript report, medical report relating to the First Division’s activities during the Western Desert campaign, 1940-1941

LIDDELL HART CENTRE FOR MILITARY ARCHIVES
www.kcl.ac.uk/lhcm
LIDDELL HART, Capt Sir Basil (1895-1970)
Military theorist, writer and publicist
Extensive correspondence with, and notes on conversations with, many senior British military commanders who served in or wrote upon the Western Desert and North Africa campaigns, including FM Sir Claude Auchinleck, Maj Gen E E Dorman-Smith (later Maj Gen E E Dorman-O’Gowan), Maj Gen Sir Percy Hobart and FM Viscount Montgomery of Alamein; correspondence relating to The Rommel Papers (Collins, London, 1965), including correspondence with the family of FM Erwin Rommel, and with German Army commanders Gen Franz Halder, Lt Gen Alfred Gause, and Gen Siegfried Westphal; correspondence relating to The Tanks: the history of the Royal Tank Regiment (Cassell, London, 1959), including comment on armoured operations in North Africa; themed press cuttings, maps and battle plans relating to North Africa

LINDSELL, Lt Gen Sir Wilfred (1884-1973)
In charge of Administration, Middle East Forces, 1942-1943
‘Notes on the maintenance of the Eighth Army and the supporting Royal Air Force by land, sea and air from El Alamein to Tunisia’, compiled by ‘Q’ staff, Middle East Forces General Headquarters, Cairo, 1943

MOCKLER-FERRYMAN, Brig E E (1896-1978)
Head of Intelligence Section, Allied Force HQ, North Africa, 1942-1943
Lecture on the planning and execution of the Allied invasion of North Africa, 1942, written c 1970

NELSON, Maj Gen Sir John (1912-1993)
Major, 3 BN, Grenadier Guards, North Africa, 1942-1943

NELSON, Sqn Ldr Thomas (1915-1999)
Served with 37 Sqn, Western Desert, 1942
Article, ‘A Desert Landing’, published in 1948, recounting his crash landing in the Western Desert, 19 September 1942, subsequent capture by German forces, and imprisonment as a POW in Stalag Luft III, Sagan, Germany, where he assisted in the mass escape of 76 Allied airmen, March 1944

OLDFIELD, Maj P G (1910-2002)
Head of Army Aerial Photographic Interpretation Unit, General Headquarters, Middle East, 1941; transferred, 1942, to ‘L’ Detachment, Special Air Brigade, North Africa, led by Maj David Stirling; POW, Italy, 1943-1944
Diary, June-November, 1941; account of Oldfield’s World War Two career compiled by his family, c 2002

O’CONNOR, Gen Sir Richard (1889-1981)
Commander, 7 Div, Mesa Metrub Fortress, Egypt, 1939-1940; Commander, Western Desert Force, 1942; General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, British Troops in Egypt, 1943, captured and imprisoned in Castello Vescovado, Italy, 1941
Correspondence relating to planning the defence of the Western Desert Region, 1939-1940; correspondence, memoranda and notes relating to the First Libyan campaign, 1940-1941; detailed account of the First Libyan Campaign by O’Connor, written as a POW, Italy, 1941-1943; account, by Lt Gen Philip Neame, Military Governor of Cyrenaica, ‘Operations in Cyrenaica from 27th Feb 1941 when Lt Gen P Neame assumed command until his capture on 7th April 1941’; account of First Libyan Campaign by Lt Col J F B Combe, Commander, 11 Hussars, written c 1960
PRETICE, Maj Ronald (1913-1980)
Served in General Headquarters, Middle East Command, Cairo, 1942
Field book kept while at Middle East Command Headquarters, 1942, including notes on Long Range Desert Group operations, Western Desert, April 1942, including mention of Count László Almásy’s role as a German guide during Operation SALAAM, the German espionage mission from Libya through Allied lines

ROBERTS, Maj Gen G P B (1906-1997)
Commanded 3 Royal Tank Regt, 7 Armoured Div, 8 Army, Western Desert, 1941
Memoranda, typescript intelligence summaries and typescript and manuscript notes, relating to 22 Guards Bde and 7 Armoured Div, North Africa, June 1941

SAINTY, Christopher (1900-1977)
Chief Engineer and Director of Carrier Engineering Co Ltd, 1942-1944
Notes, calculations and sketches made by Sainty while designing sand eliminators and air filters for tanks, 1943-1944

SALMON, Lt Col H M (1892-1985)
Commander, RAF Regiment Units, North Africa, 1942
Operational logs, correspondence, memoranda, movement orders and deployment plans relating to RAF Regiment Units, North Africa, 1941-1942, particularly Operation TORCH, for the Allied invasion of North West Africa, 1942

SYM, Col John (1907-1980)
Served with 2 Seaforth Highlanders, North Africa 1942-1943
Memoir of service with 2 Seaforth Highlanders in North Africa, 1942-1943, including the second Battle of El Alamein, 23 October to 4 November 1942

THORNHILL, Lt Col E B (1890-1998)
Second in command, 2 Regiment, Royal Horse Artillery, 8 Army, Western Desert, 1942
Memoir, including service in North Africa, notably the Second Battle of El Alamein, October to November 1942

VEASEY, Capt R F, RN (1883-1964)
Divisional Sea Transport Officer, Port Said, Egypt, 1943
Letters from Capt Veasey to his wife, 1940-1943

Miscellaneous, microfilm and microfiche

MICROFICHE MFF 8
Armed Forces Oral Histories: US Army Senior Officer Oral Histories
Themed collection of 86 interviews of senior US Army personnel, made 1971-1986, including Gen Mark Clark, with comment on his service as Commander, US 2 Corps, on liaison duties with French forces in North Africa, 1942

MISC 48
German Surrender Terms, Tunisia, 1943
Letter (in German) from German Air Force Generalleutnant Carl Köchy, Airfield District Commandant, Tunis, surrendering to Maj Gen J L Hawkesworth, Commander, 46 Div, 13 May 1943

History of 30 Assault Unit, 1942-1946
Papers used by David Nutting and James Glanville in preparing their book, Attain by surprise: the story of 30 Assault Unit Royal Navy/Royal Marine Commando and of Intelligence by capture (David Colver, Chichester, West Sussex, 1997), giving the history of the 30 Assault Unit, an intelligence unit which undertook covert infiltrations into enemy territory including North Africa. Includes typescript memoirs and correspondence from former members of the unit

MISC 72
Publications relating to the British Army in North Africa and Italy during World War Two
Includes The Two Types, a cartoon book distributed to Allied forces in North Africa and The Story of 46 Division, 1939-1945

MICROFILM MF 460-462
Wartime Conferences of the Combined Chiefs of Staff
Minutes of meetings for the major conferences of the Combined Chiefs of Staff, 1941-1945, including reports relating to Operation TORCH, for the invasion of North West Africa, November 1942
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Front cover: Kittyhawks protecting a supply route, North Africa, from the papers of Lt Col J D Hignett (ref: Hignett)