Special Forces

This guide offers brief descriptions of material held in the Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives relating to the role of Special Forces in World War Two. 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

CARY-ELWES, O A J (1913-1994)
Served with the French Special Air Service (SAS), 1944

DOBRSKI, Lt Col Count J A, alias Lt Col J A Dolby (1913-1994)
Served with the Special Operations Executive (SOE), 1940-1945
Training manuals and memoranda relating to SOE operations in Italy, Greece, the Aegean and the Balkans, 1941-1945; memoranda and directives on SOE infiltration in Italy, recruitment of Italian agents and propaganda production, 1941-1944; diary of Capt R G Turrall during sabotage mission to Crete, 1941-1942; papers relating to Operation BASILIC, for the infiltration of Scarpanto, Greece, and Operation ERRATIC, for the infiltration of Rhodes, Greece, 1943; reports on SOE activities in Crete, 1943-1945, including the kidnapping of German Army Maj Gen H G F Kreipe; correspondence of Force 153 Headquarters, Cairo, Egypt, 1944-1946, including reports on individual staff; diary of Maj John Mulgan, British Liaison Officer, Greece, 1944; correspondence concerning the ending of SOE organisation in Greece, 1944-1945

DODSON, Sir Derek (1920-2003)
Served with British Military Mission to Greece, 1942-1944, and with SOE mission to Northern Italy, 1945
Message books, notes, reports and maps relating to Greece, 1942-1944, and to Northern Italy, 1945

EVANS, Maj P H (1913-1994)
Trained with Special Operations Executive (SOE) in Palestine and Egypt, 1943; served with SOE Force 133, Greece, 1943-1944
Diaries, 1943-1944, detailing SOE training, service as instructor; Allied Military Mission Commando School, Pendalop Les, British relations with Greek partisans, and SOE harassment and demolition activity in Greece; reports, 1944, on reconnaissance missions in the Viti area, West Macedonia, Greece, and on Operation NADIA'S ARK, Allied and Greek resistance missions during the German withdrawal from Greece; correspondence between Evans and other Allied officers, West Macedonia, Greece, 1944; captured German papers relating to operations in the Viti area, 1944

GAVIN, Maj Gen J M L (1911-2000)
Lt Col in charge of No 101 Special Training School, Singapore, 1942
Report on the work of No 101 Special Training School, 1941-1942, training all types of personnel, military, civilian, European and Asian, for irregular warfare

HAMS0N, Professor C J J (1905-1987)
Special Operations Executive agent sent to Crete to plan clandestine operations and prepare for resistance in event of German invasion, 1940-1941
Memoir of his life and career, notably the Battle of Crete, 1941, written as a POW in Germany, 1941-1945

LAYCOCK, Maj Gen Sir Robert (1907-1968)
Commanded Special Service Brigade, ‘Layforce’, 1941, and Middle East Commando, 1941-1944; commanded Special Service Brigade, UK, 1942-1943, for the organisation and training of Commandos; Chief of Combined Operations, 1943-1947
Completed application forms for volunteer Commando officers [1940]; papers on Commando training, 1940-1941; notes and memoranda on Commando operations, 1941-1942; papers on Operation BLAZING and Operation AIMWELL, for raids on Alderney, 1942; notes on the planning of Operation CORKSCREEN for the capture of Pantelleria, Linosa and Lampedusa Islands, Mediterranean, 1943, and the planning of Operation HUSKY, for the invasion of Sicily, July 1943; correspondence and reports on Operation TORCH, for the Allied invasion of North West Africa, 1942; personal accounts by individual commandos, 1941-1945, including account of ‘Mission 204’, Burma, 1941-1942, by Sgt Pryde, G Troop, 7 Commando

LINGEN, Capt A H (1915-1974)
Served with British Military Mission to Greece, 1943-1945, and with No 1 Special Force, Venezuela, Italy, 1945
Reports, correspondence, signals and photographs relating to Greece, 1943-1945, and to Italy, 1945

MCDON, Gen Sir Roderick (1905-1980)
Commanding Officer Special Air Service (SAS) Bde, 1944-1945
Papers, 1944-1948, relating to the formation and operation of the SAS in France, World War Two; maps and diagrams relating to SAS operations, France, 1944; lectures on the SAS, 1944-1962
MILLS-ROBERTS, Brig Derek (1908-1980)
Served with No 4 Commando, 1942; Commanding Officer, No 6 Commando, North Africa, 1943; Commanded 1 Special Service Bde, North West Europe, 1944-1945
Account of No 4 Commando’s role in Dieppe Raid, France, 1942; movement orders for No 6 Commando, North Africa, 1943; accounts by Mills-Roberts and others of 1 Special Service Bde operations, North West Europe, 1944-1945; account (1944) of No 6 Commando training; German propaganda photographs of the Dieppe Raid, 1942; photographs of Commando service, North West Europe, 1944-1945

MOCKLER-FERRYMAN, Brig E E (1886-1978)
Head of Intelligence Section, Allied Force HQ, North Africa, 1942-1943; served with Special Operations Executive, North West Europe, 1943-1945
Lectures, 1965-1975, on the planning and execution of Operation TORCH, for the Allied invasion of North West Africa, 1942, and on his SOE service, North West Europe, 1943-1945

MONTANARO, Brig G C S (1916-1979)
Commanded 101 Troop, Special Service Brigade (Commando Special Canoe Troop), 1940-1942; specially employed as Lt Cdr, R N, in command of MF Flotilla of submersible craft, 1942-1945
Orders and reports on the training and operations of 101 Troop, 1940-1942; diaries, including details of service with 101 Troop, 1941-1942, and as commander of MF Flotilla of submersible craft designed for anti-submarine work, 1942-1945; report on reconnaissance in Northern France, 1941; report on 101 Troop’s sinking of an oil tanker, Boulogne Harbour, 1942

MYERS, Brig E C W (1906-1997)
Commanded British Military Mission to Greek guerrillas in German occupied Greece, July 1942-September 1943
Diaries, correspondence, signals, appreciations, maps, photographs and reports, 1942-1945 relating to operations in Greece, including Operation WASHING, for the destruction of the Asopos Viaduct, 1943; reports on the military and political situation in Greece by Myers, 1943 and 1945

NIND, Maj P F (b 1918)
Served with Special Operations Executive (SOE) Force 133, North West Europe, 1943-1944
Scrapbook relating to his service with Force 133, Greece, 1943-1944, including report on resistance activities, 1943-1944, essay on the political situation in Greece, 1942-1944, messages sent to Force 133 Headquarters, Cairo, 1944; photographs, 1943-1944

PRENTICE, Maj R R (1913-1980) and WICKSTEAD, Capt H A (1913-1989)
Both served in Special Operations Executive (SOE), Force 133, Greece, 1943-1944
Diaries and notebooks relating to SOE operations in West Macedonia, Greece, 1943-1944; reports on demolition, intelligence and reconnaissance mission, West Macedonia, 1943-1944; maps and photographs of West Macedonia, 1943-1944; correspondence between Allied Military Mission commanders and sub-area commanders, 1943-1944; German 1 Mountain Div operational orders and German propaganda, 1943-1944; Greek propaganda and political leaflets, 1941-1946

OLDFIELD, Maj P C (1910-2002)
Served in ‘L’ Detachment, Special Air Brigade, North Africa, 1942-1943; led by Maj David Stirling, POW, Italy, 1943-1944; escaped to Switzerland, 1944
Account of Oldfield’s World War Two career compiled by his family, c 2002

O’REGAN, Capt P V W R (1920-1961)
Served with Special Operations Executive (SOE) in France and Italy, 1943-1945
Papers relating to O’Regan’s service in France and Northern Italy, 1943-1945; Papers relating to SOE operations, Italy, 1944-1945

SCOTT, Lt Col K F (b 1918)
Royal Engineer officer in charge of demolition during the Special Operations Executive (SOE) attack on the Asopos Viaduct, Greece, 1943
Account of the Asopos Viaduct demolition, 1943, written 1993

STREET, Maj Gen V W (1912-1970)
Served with No 1 Special Air Service Regt (SAS), Egypt, 1942-1943; captured by Italians, 1942; escaped from torpedoed Italian submarine, Mediterranean, 1943; General Staff Officer Grade 1 and Second in Command, British Military Mission, Yugoslavia, 1944
Letters home, 1941-1944, including account of escape from submarine, 1943

WILLERT, Gp Capt P O (1917-2001)
Second in Command to Col E C W Myers, Head of British Military Mission to Greek guerrillas in German occupied Greece, 1942-1943; succeeded Myers as Commander of British (later Allied) Military Mission to Greek guerrillas in German occupied Greece, 1943-1945

WOODHOUSE, Col C M, 5th Baron Terrington (1917-2001)
Second in Command to Col E C W Myers, Head of British Military Mission to Greek guerrillas in German occupied Greece, 1942-1943; succeeded Myers as Commander of British (later Allied) Military Mission to Greek guerrillas in German occupied Greece, 1943-1945

Microfilm collections

MICROFILM MF 204-211
OSS/London: Special Operations Branch and Secret Intelligence Branch War Diaries
Themed microfilm collection relating to US Office of Strategic Services (OSS) intelligence analyses and special operations in Western Europe, June 1942-June 1945

MICROFILM MF 494-509
OSS/State Department: Intelligence and Research Reports, part 1: Japan and its Occupied Territories during World War II
Themed microfilm collection relating to US Office of Strategic Services (OSS) and US State Department intelligence analyses concerning Japan, and the occupied territories of Formosa, the Philippines, the Netherlands East Indies, Borneo, Java, New Guinea, Sumatra, French Indo-China, Malaya, Singapore, Hong Kong, Thailand, Burma, Korea, and China, 1942-1947
Front cover: SOE personnel in the Alps, December 1944. From the papers of Capt P V W R O'Regan (ref: O'Regan 2)