

Fighting With Popskis Private Army

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Popski's Private Army, and the Special Air Service and Special Boat Service. Although a "first look" at the events, and thus naturally written almost entirely from the British side, both works are ...

This WWII memoir gives the inside story of Britain's legendary demolition squadron and their daring escapades in Italy and Northern Africa. During the Second World War, a Russian-born emigre named Vladimir Peniakoff emerged as a decorated officer of the British Special Forces in Cairo. Code-named Popski, he started the No. 1 Demolition Squadron—known as Popski's Private Army—charged with thwarting Field-Marshal Rommel's fuel supply in Northern Africa. This is the story of Popski's famous fighting unit as told by his second-in-command, Captain Bob (Park) Yunnie. As Britain's Eighth Army advanced toward Tripoli, PPA set out in jeeps across the desert to mount raids behind the Mareth Line in Southern Tunisia. In his lively and intimate account, Yunnie describes the ensuing action at Gafsa and Kasserine, and vividly depicts the sorties which took the men straight across the German Line of Command. As Tunisia fell to the Allies on May, 7th, 1943, PPA began raid operations for the Italian Campaign. Dropped into Central Italy by RAF gliders, they set about blowing up strategic targets while waiting for the Allied landings. Yunnie takes command of his own patrol, and through a series of daring missions, colorful characters flit in and out of the front-line action.

In October 1942, Vladimir Peniakoff (nicknamed Popski) formed his own elite fighting force in the North African desert. Over the next year "Popski's Private Army" carried out a series of daring raids behind the German lines that were truly spectacular—freeing prisoners, destroying installations, spreading alarm. This, one of the classic memoirs of the Second World War, is their story. "A story of adventure...which has no rival in the literature of any war." DAILY EXPRESS "This is certainly among the best of war books...splendid writing." THE OBSERVER "One of the small handful of really first-class war books. A superb story of adventure told masterfully, brilliantly." EVENING STANDARD "His courage, resourcefulness and qualities of leadership deservedly gained him a high reputation. He has now shown that he also possesses unusual literary talent." THE DAILY TELEGRAPH

'Shan' Hackett is remembered by his own and succeeding generations for a variety of achievements and attributes. A superb fighting soldier, he served with the Trans-Jordan Force, had fought through North Africa and was involved in the formation of the Long Range Desert Group, the SAS and Popski's Private Army. He went on to raise 4th Parachute Brigade which

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he commanded with flair at Arnhem where he was wounded and captured. He escaped and got back to British lines. He rose to high rank filling key command and staff appointments in the British Army and NATO. Always an intellectual, yet highly practical man, he retired to become Principal of King's College London where he was revered by staff and students. He wrote many acclaimed works including *The Third World War* and its sequel *The Third World War - The Untold Story*. He was constantly in demand in Britain for his television programs and radio commentary up to his death in 1997

Popskis Private Army was a special service unit led by Major Vladimir Peniakoff (Popski). Signalman Leslie (Chalky) White was taken on strength in December 1943. The aim of the unit was to collect intelligence, inflict damage on the enemy, and, therefore spread unease. PPA was one of the smallest, colourful, and most daring units ever set up to operate behind enemy lines, first in Africa, then Italy.

Tim Moreman examines the creation and deployment of British 8th Army, probably the most famous military formation raised by the British during World War II. Formed in September 1941 from the Western Desert Force, it went on to wage a lengthy, hard-fought campaign against German and Italian troops across the deserts of North Africa. It was composed of British and Commonwealth troops - as well as smaller numbers of French and Polish troops. Additionally, a variety of specialized elite forces came under its umbrella including the Special Air Service, Popski's Private Army and the Long Range Desert Group. This book will provide a fascinating insight into these unconventional troops who became the inspiration for today's Special Forces. It was also the first Allied army to rely on close air support; a revolutionary, war-winning tactic that would shape combined forces strategy throughout the rest of the war. The Desert War was unlike any other fought by the British Army. The hot, dusty, and unforgiving climate and environment in which its troops lived, moved, and fought was almost as troublesome as the enemy. During its two-year period of service in North Africa, 8th Army underwent major changes in organization, equipment, and training to adapt it to the terrain. Discover the difficulties of desert warfare and how these were overcome by the 8th Army to defeat Rommel and become masters of the desert.

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER □ The incredible untold story of World War II's greatest secret fighting force, as told by the modern master of wartime intrigue—coming soon as a limited series on Epix! □ Reads like a mashup of *The Dirty Dozen* and *The Great Escape*, with a sprinkling of *Ocean's 11* thrown in for good measure. □ Michiko Kakutani, *The New York Times* ONE OF NPR'S BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR □ □ *Rogue Heroes* is a ripping good read. □ *Washington Post* (10 Best Books of the Year) Britain's Special Air Service—or SAS—was the brainchild of David Stirling, a young aristocrat whose aimlessness belied a remarkable strategic mind. Where most of his colleagues looked at a World War II battlefield map and saw a protracted struggle, Stirling saw an opportunity: given a small number of elite men, he could parachute behind Nazi lines and sabotage their airplanes and supplies. Defying his superiors' conventional wisdom, Stirling assembled a revolutionary fighting force that would upend not just the balance of the war, but the nature of combat itself. Bringing his keen eye for detail to a riveting wartime narrative, Ben Macintyre uses his unprecedented access to the SAS archives to shine a light on a legendary unit long shrouded in secrecy.

With the Axis Powers ejected from North Africa, the Western Allies look to take the fight across the Mediterranean and into Mussolini's Italy. This supplement for *Bolt Action* focuses on Operation Husky, the airborne and naval invasion of Sicily, the hard-fought battles in the villages and rugged mountain passes of that island, and the advance up the Italian Peninsula

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towards Rome. With a host of scenarios, new units, special rules, and Theatre Selectors this book contains everything players need to refight these important battles in defence of the Regno d'Italia or to strike at the underbelly of Axis-controlled Europe.

The array of new technologies that came on the scene in the early 20th century resulted in widely varied new forms of military special operations once civilization embarked on its greatest war. Suddenly, fighting men could be delivered by parachute, submarine, glider, jeeps, and fast amphibious craft deep into enemy territory to perform special tasks; yet others would continue to perform missions the same as their ancestors in previous wars—non foot using stealth, endurance and patience. This work contains discussions of the employment of various special purpose, special mission organizations during World War II. These units operated in Allied and Axis countries and in various theaters of war including Europe, North Africa, the Pacific, Asia, and the continental United States. Representing every major combatant, the operations include various kinds of raids, intelligence gathering missions, support to partisan/guerrilla groups, prisoner rescues, direct-action missions, and at least two where the object was simply to steal something. Some missions would have been officially denied if the operations had been caught in the act. The book is divided into two sections: Behind Enemy Lines and Behind Friendly Lines, to demonstrate that special-purpose organizations can be employed wherever needed, even in areas controlled by military units of their own or allied countries. Many of the units described run the gamut of special mission types, from commando to parachute units, reconnaissance to sabotage units, and partisan training units as well as those with combined missions. Many of the operations described in this book continue to serve as templates for modern Special Operations missions, while still others—the first attempts of their kind—continue to serve as examples of what not to try under the circumstances. Michael F. Dilley served for 20 years in the U.S. Army's Military Intelligence branch. After retiring from the Army, the author served for about ten years as an employee of the Department of Defense, then as a contractor for various U.S. Government agencies in several fields for 15 years. Author of several books and many articles, a number of these chapters are based on his previous writings for the legendary Behind the Lines magazine.

A history of the British Army unit's deployment to and defense of a group of islands between Greece and Turkey during World War II. Shortly after the invasion of Sicily, in order to distract German attention from the Italian campaign, Churchill ordered the occupation of the Dodecanese Islands in the Aegean. The Long Range Desert Group, retraining in Lebanon, were now part of Raiding Forces, Middle East, along with the Special Boat Service and No 30 Commando. In support of 3,000 regulars in 234 Brigade, the LRDG landed covertly on Leros establishing observation posts, reporting movement of enemy shipping and aircraft. In October the LRDG were ordered to assault the island of Levitha, losing forty highly skilled men killed or captured. The Germans invaded Leros with overwhelming force on 12 November 1943, five days later the battle was over. While many British troops were captured most of the LRDG and SBS escaped. Their individual stories make for enthralling reading. A measure of the intensity of the fighting is the fact that the LRDG lost more men in three months in the Aegean than in three years in the desert operating behind enemy lines. The author, an acknowledged expert on the LRDG uses official sources, both British and German, and individual accounts to piece together the full story of this dramatic, costly but little-known campaign. It is a valuable addition to the history of special forces in the Second World War. Praise for The Long Range Desert Group in the Aegean —O—Carroll provides an interesting and informative read about a little known action by a World War II era special operations unit and an important part of SOF history. —SOF News

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