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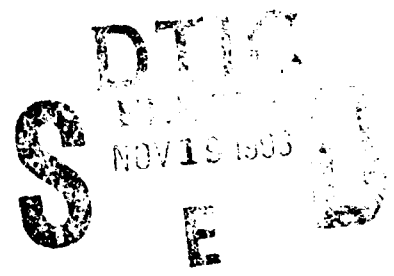
JEDBURGH OPERATIONS  
SUPPORT TO THE FRENCH RESISTANCE IN EASTERN BRITTANY  
FROM JUNE-SEPTEMBER 1944

A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U.S. Army  
Command and General Staff College in partial  
fulfillment of the requirements for the  
degree

MASTER OF MILIARY ART AND SCIENCE

by

RALPH D. NICHOLS, MAJOR, USA  
B.A., University of Texas at Arlington, 1976



Fort Leavenworth, Kansas  
1993

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# REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

Form Approved  
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Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302, and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0704-0188), Washington, DC 20503.

1. AGENCY USE ONLY (Leave blank)	2. REPORT DATE 4 June 1993	3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED Master's Thesis, 1 Aug 92--4 June 93
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4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE  Jedburgh Operations: Support to the French Resistance in Eastern Brittany from June -- September 1944	5. FUNDING NUMBERS
--	--------------------

6. AUTHOR(S)  MAJ Ralph D. Nichols, USA	
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7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)  U.S. Army Command and General Staff College ATTN: ATZL-SWD-GD Ft. Leavenworth, KS 66027-6900	8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER
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9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)	10. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER
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11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

12a. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT  Approved for Public Release; distribution is unlimited.	12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE
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13. ABSTRACT (Maximum 200 words)

Specially trained teams, known as Jedburghs, were inserted into France in conjunction with Operation "Overlord," to help liberate it from German occupation. The Jedburghs were three--man teams, comprised of two commissioned officers, (at least on French and one non-commissioned officer in charge of the radio (wireless telegraphy). All Jedburghs were volunteers. They received highly specialized training in guerrilla warfare. Jedburghs served in harm's way, deep behind enemy lines. They were subordinate to the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF), and its commander, General Dwight D. Eisenhower. Their covert mission in Operation "Overlord" helped pave the way for the liberation of France, and ultimately resulted in a campaign to free Europe from Nazi rule.

14. SUBJECT TERMS  Joint and Combined Operations, Special Operations Guerrilla Warfare	15. NUMBER OF PAGES  97
	16. PRICE CODE

17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT  UNCLASSIFIED	18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE  UNCLASSIFIED	19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT  UNCLASSIFIED	20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT
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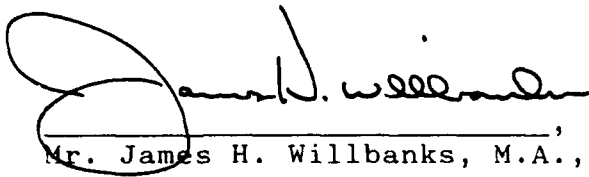
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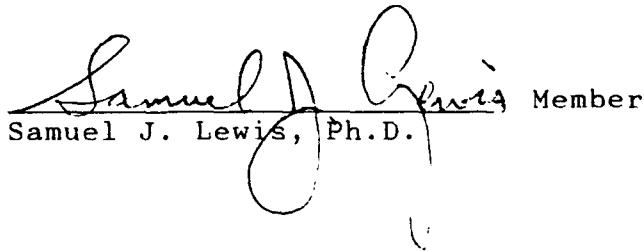
Name of candidate: Major Ralph D. Nichols

Title of thesis: JEDBURGH OPERATIONS: Support to the  
French Resistance in Eastern Brittany from June-September  
1944.

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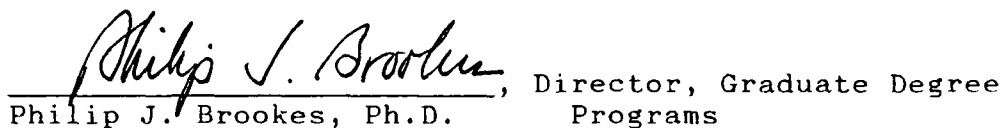


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The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of  
the student author and do not necessarily represent the  
views of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College or  
any other governmental agency. (References to this study  
should include the foregoing statement.)

## ABSTRACT

JEDBURGH OPERATIONS: SUPPORT TO THE FRENCH RESISTANCE IN  
EASTERN BRITTANY FROM JUNE-SEPTEMBER 1944 by Major Ralph  
D. Nichols, USA, 90 pages.

Specially trained teams, known as Jedburghs, were inserted into France in conjunction with Operation "Overlord," to help liberate it from German occupation. The Jedburghs were three-man allied teams, comprised of two commissioned officers, (at least one French) and a non-commissioned officer in charge of the radio (wireless telegraphy). All Jedburghs were volunteers. They received highly specialized training in guerrilla warfare. Jedburghs served in harm's way, deep behind enemy lines. They were subordinate to the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF), and its commander, General Dwight D. Eisenhower. Their covert mission in Operation "Overlord" helped pave the way for the liberation of France, and ultimately resulted in a campaign to free Europe from Nazi rule.

This study explores the origins, purpose, training and missions of the Jedburghs. I will examine the actual operations of seven Jedburgh teams in Eastern Brittany. Their actions and effectiveness will be compared with operations of other Jedburgh teams.

## PREFACE

This study examines the role of seven Jedburgh teams in Eastern Brittany. The Jedburghs helped develop the art of unconventional warfare, pioneering methods that would later be used by today's Special Forces. The British Special Operations Executive (SOE) and its U.S. counterpart, the Office of Strategic Services (OSS); the Special Air Service (SAS), operational groups (OG's) and other inter-allied missions are mentioned in this study only when they affected the operations of the Jedburgh teams under consideration.

The study of the seven Jedburgh teams are arranged chronologically, by date of insertion. The recently declassified operational records of the Jedburghs form the nucleus of the documentation for this study. Unfortunately, a great wealth of knowledge remains untapped in this arena. Many SOE records are still classified and not available for use.

The names of intelligence circuits will be capitalized to help the reader discern them. The names of individuals mentioned in the text are assumed to be real (as best as that can be determined). I have provided the nom de guerre of each French Jedburgh in the appropriate footnote.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Dr. Samuel J. Lewis and LTC (USA, Retired) James H. Willbanks, my thesis committee, for their support and encouragement. I acknowledge the staff of the Combined Arms Research Library at Fort Leavenworth for their invaluable assistance in this endeavor. I respectfully salute, with deep gratitude, every member of each Jedburgh team. The Jedburghs were the progenitors of today's modern Special Forces. All "Jeds" were volunteers, selfless and fiercely dedicated. They helped liberate Europe from Nazi tyranny in 1944 through their covert role in Operation "Overlord."

To my family, especially my wife Marilyn, words cannot adequately express my love for you. Thank you for the patience and unwavering support you have given me.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### ORIGINS

#### Introduction

This study will recount and evaluate the operations of seven Jedburgh teams operating in Eastern Brittany during the summer of 1944. This has become possible with recent declassification of records. Who were these Jedburghs? They were three-man special operations teams from the United Kingdom, United States, France and several other allied nations. They worked directly with resistance groups as part of a covert war employed by the Western allies. All Jedburghs were volunteers. The teams deployed in Eastern Brittany were specially trained to conduct guerrilla warfare with the French resistance, in support of the Allied invasion of France.<sup>1</sup>

The Special Operations Executive (SOE), was responsible for clandestine warfare operations for Great Britain's War Office. Its American counterpart in London, Special Operations (SO) branch of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), jointly developed Jedburgh objectives. These included: advising and assisting local partisan forces in order to synchronize resistance efforts with

theater headquarters, and to arrange for the resupply of arms, munitions, and equipment to sustain partisan war efforts.<sup>2</sup> Jedburgh teams would establish contact with French resistance groups, providing them with the necessary leadership, communications, supplies and linking them with the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF).<sup>3</sup> During covert operations, Jedburghs would maintain communications with Special Forces Headquarters (SFHQ), an allied organization under the command of the SHAEF. This communications link helped coordinate the Supreme Allied Commander's (General Eisenhower) intent and desires to French resistance leaders.<sup>4</sup>

#### Jedburgh Concept

In the spring of 1942, when the Allies began preparing for an invasion of Europe, Great Britain's SOE planning section developed the concept of specially trained teams--later to be named "Jedburghs." The Chief of Staff, Supreme Allied Commander (COSSAC), devised phased taskings for Jedburghs to execute during their covert support to French partisans. In phase one, SOE would organize resistance forces and direct attacks on enemy rail and signal communications. In phase two it would provide guides for British ground forces, and organize raiding parties, which would penetrate German lines.<sup>5</sup>

By June 1942 joint coordination began between the British SOE and its American partner, Special Operations (SO) branch of the OSS. They formed a unified headquarters in London, which helped facilitate communications between the allies in support for Operation "Overlord"--the Allied invasion of Europe. The SO and SOE agreed to form a combined organization to support and direct resistance groups in German occupied countries. The OSS, commanded by General William J. "Wild Bill" Donovan, had identified the need for the Special Operations (SO) Branch in the summer of 1941.<sup>6</sup>

On 6 July 1942, Major General C. McV. Gubbins, Military Deputy to the SOE, initially described the concept of the covert operations in support of Operation "Overlord," stating:

A project is under consideration for dropping behind enemy lines, in cooperation with an Allied invasion of the Continent, small parties of officers and men to raise and arm the civilian population to carry out guerilla activities against the enemy's lines of communication. These men are to be recruited and trained by SOE. It is requested that "Jumpers" or some other appropriate code name be allotted to this personnel.

On the following day, the code name "Jedburghs" was ascribed to the project.<sup>8</sup>

SOE went on to develop a role for the Jedburghs to support a planned Allied invasion of Europe in the summer of 1943. On 22 July 1942 SOE decided that 70 Jedburgh teams

would be required for the covert operation. An equal amount of teams (35 each) would be required from the British and the Americans. SOE departments held meetings during the summer of 1942 to evaluate the Jedburgh program, facilities and equipment required for training and deployment. In August 1942, the British Chiefs of Staff narrowed the focus of the Jedburgh role in covert operations. They decided that Jedburgh teams would not provide guides and labor parties for conventional forces, in effect eliminating phase two of the original concept. In December 1942, it was decided that Jedburghs would wear military uniforms. Additionally, one of the two officers in each team was to be of the nationality of the country to which the team would deploy. Jedburgh teams were to be dropped in secure areas, where they would be met by SOE agents. Jedburgh teams would not be used to help tactical plans of conventional ground forces. This was due to the fact that Jedburgh teams would be inserted too late to help these forces. In many cases, 72 hours or more would elapse between the time a commander approved a task and when a team could infiltrate and begin operations. SOE agreed to test the concepts during Exercise "Spartan"--a general headquarters exercise to take place from 3-11 March 1943.<sup>9</sup>

SOE staff personnel fielded eleven Jedburgh teams during Exercise "Spartan." The exercise simulated an Allied

breakout from the initial invasion bridgehead area. During the exercise, Jedburgh teams helped the British Second Army advance. The 8th Battalion of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers trained as local resistance groups. SOE personnel inserted individual agents behind "enemy" lines. They also deployed SOE staff officers at army and corps headquarters. Captain Franklin O. Canfield represented the SO branch during Exercise "Spartan."<sup>10</sup> SOE and SO personnel successfully accomplished their missions. Primary missions included: blowing up five targets, preventing three demolitions, cutting two enemy lines of communications and attacking an enemy headquarters. Secondary missions that followed consisted of guerrilla attacks against small enemy detachments, and targeting enemy staff officers. Agents in the field communicated with SOE staff officers at army and corps headquarters by way of an SOE radio station in Scotland. After the exercise, SOE decided that Jedburgh teams should be parachuted in at night, at a distance of at least 40 miles behind enemy lines in order to prevent detection. Jedburghs would conduct guerrilla warfare against enemy lines of communications.<sup>11</sup>

The Jedburghs served as a SOE and SO "strategic reserve." In this role, they could be directed by the allied commander to handle military situations behind enemy lines. SHAEF and its major subordinate commands would now

be able to synchronize their conventional forces in the initial stages of Operation "Overlord" with the presence of Jedburgh teams working with partisan groups in France.<sup>12</sup>

With the lessons learned compiled from Exercise "Spartan," SOE and SO concurrently developed position papers supporting the Jedburgh concept. These papers were submitted through their respective chains of command to seek approval, support and personnel for the project. Lieutenant General Frederick E. Morgan, COSSAC, approved the SOE proposals on 19 July 1943. His report to the British Chiefs of Staff Committee concluded:

I have discussed with SOE their proposals for establishing shortly before D-day:

a. Small SOE staffs and Signal Sections at Headquarters of Armies, and SOE representatives at Headquarters of Army Groups and of the Supreme Commander, for controlling resistance groups.

b. Reserve teams of personnel (JEDBURGHS) to be kept in this country for use after D-day, to provide, if necessary, suitable leadership and equipment for those resistance groups found to be in need of them.

I have agreed in principle to these proposals, and request that the Chiefs of Staff instruct the War Office to prepare the detailed establishments and arrange at the appropriate time, for the transfer of SOE of any personnel necessary.<sup>13</sup>

General Morgan's request was approved by the British Chiefs of Staff Committee on 21 July 1943.<sup>14</sup>

Meanwhile, Lieutenant General Jacob L. Devers, the European Theater Commander, United States Army (ETOUSA),

approved the SO proposal submitted from the OSS on 24 August 1943. He also authorized the recruitment of Jedburgh personnel. SOE and SO both agreed to provide personnel to fill 35 American Jedburgh teams, with 15 more teams to be held in reserve. It was also agreed that the Free French would supply a third man for each Jedburgh team.<sup>15</sup>

The British SOE and American SO branch of the OSS had now jointly agreed on an organization whose mission would be to conduct guerilla warfare directed against enemy lines of communication. The Jedburgh teams would assist local partisan groups to help prosecute this covert mission. So far, all of this was just a good idea on paper, another concept. Personnel would have to be recruited and trained. Just how this was to be accomplished would prove to be a monumental, ground-breaking task. More questions than answers arose during this time period that presented challenges that had to be overcome in a short period of time. Who would train the Jedburghs? How would they be recruited? Where would they deploy, and when? What equipment would they use? Who would they be working with? The answers and innovative solutions to these questions were soon to be addressed.



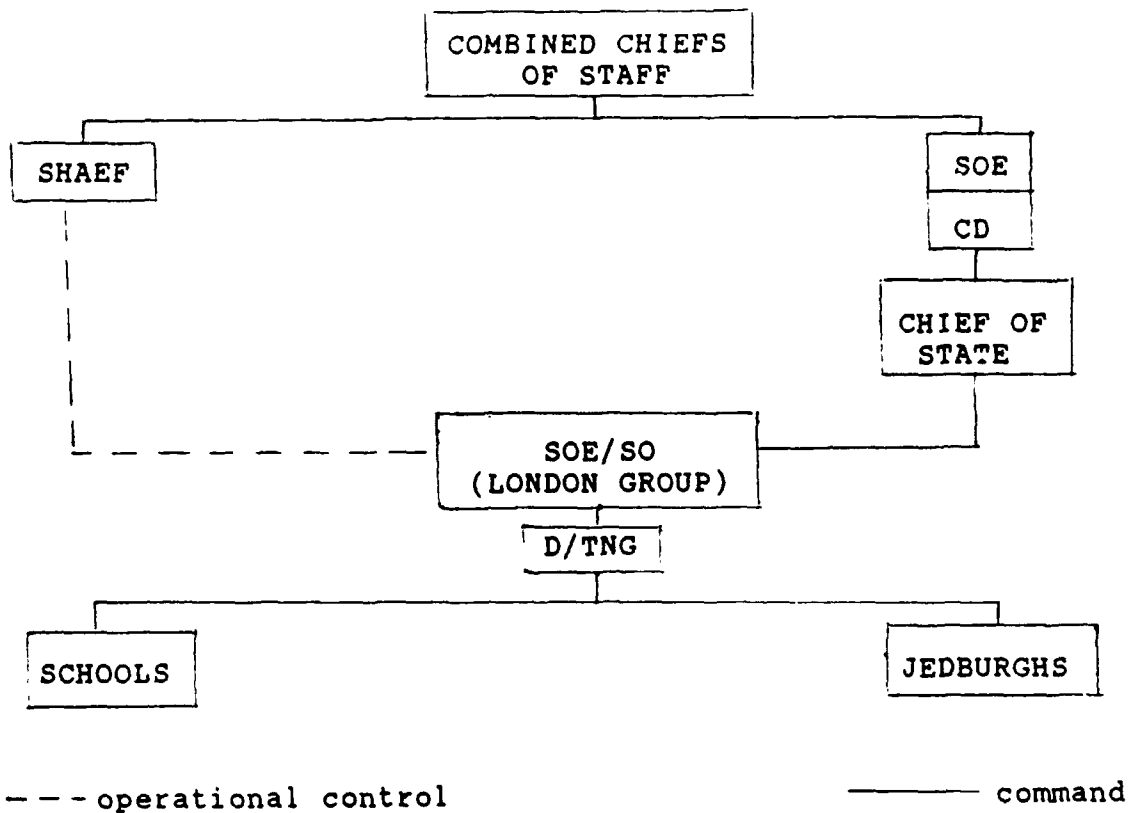


FIGURE ONE

Outline SOE chain of command, January 1944

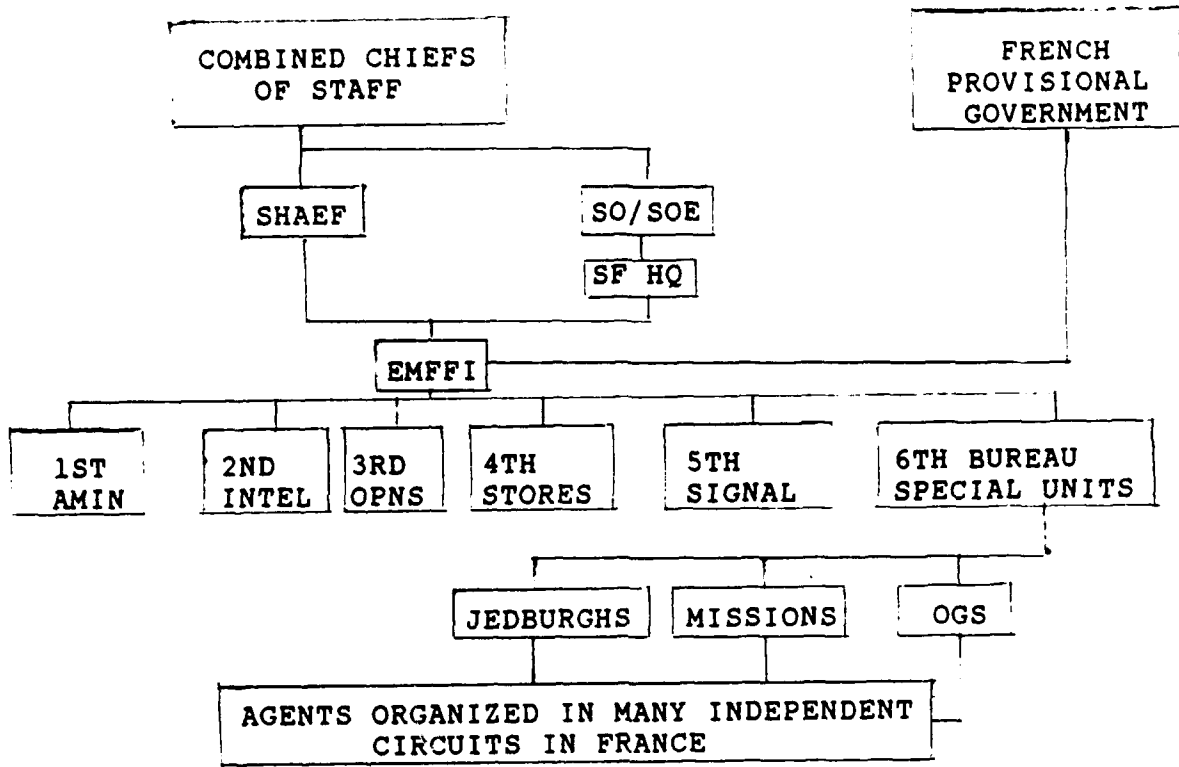


FIGURE TWO

Outline Chain of Command, July 1944

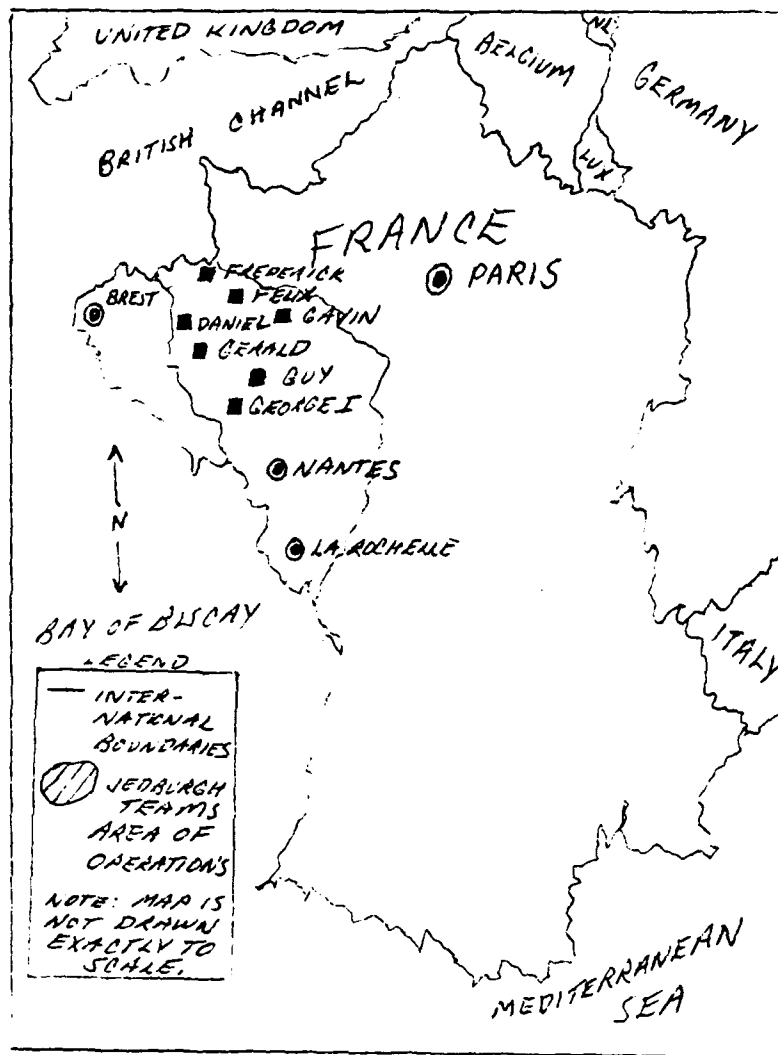


FIGURE THREE  
Jedburch Teams in Eastern Brittany

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> In March 1944, General Charles de Gaulle formed the Forces Francaises de l'Interieure, the underground army of his French government in exile. "Local clandestine activities," he said, "had to take on at the right moment the character of a national effort; had to become consistent enough to play a part in allied strategy, and lastly, had to lead the army of the shadows to fuse with the rest into a single French army." M. R. D. Foot, SOE in France: An Account of the Work of the British Special Operations Executive in France 1940-1944. (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1966), p. 360, hereafter cited as SOE in France.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. 33-34.

<sup>3</sup> John Medelsohn, ed., Covert Warfare Intelligence, Counterintelligence, and Military Deception During World War II Era, 18 vols. (New York: Garland Publishing, 1989) 3: ii.

<sup>4</sup> Anthony Cave Brown, The Last Hero - Wild Bill Donovan, (New York: Times Books, 1982), p. 525.

<sup>5</sup> S. J. Lewis, Jedburgh Team Operations in Support of the 12th Army Group, August 1944, (CSI, USACGSC, Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027, 1991), p. 4.

<sup>6</sup> In 1940, William "Wild Bill" Donovan served as the unofficial observer for the Secretary of the Navy in Great Britain. Donovan also had a mission from President Roosevelt to observe resistance movements, while serving as coordinator of intelligence. On 13 June 1942, Donovan was appointed director of the OSS, forerunner of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). On 1 October 1945, the OSS was terminated by executive order. Its functions were distributed between the War Department and the Department of State. John Keegan, editor, Who's Who in World War II, (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Publishers, 1978), p. 69.

<sup>7</sup> Mendelsohn, Covert Warfare, Vol. 3, p. i.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. Jedburgh is a village located in Cheviot Hills, southeast of Edinburgh, Scotland.

<sup>9</sup> Lewis, p. 5.

<sup>10</sup> Mendelsohn, Covert Warfare, Vol. 3, p. i.

<sup>11</sup> Lewis, pp. 5-6.

<sup>12</sup> OSS/London: Special Operations Branch and Secret Intelligence Branch War Diaries (microfilm; Frederick, MD: University Publications of America, 1985), Reel III, Vol. IV, JEDBURGHS, Preamble to 1 January 1944, pp. iv-xi, hereafter cited as OSS/London SO microfilm.

13. Mendelsohn, Covert Warfare, Vol. 3, p. xiv.

14. OSS/London SO Branch micro, Reel III, Vol. IV, JEDBURGHS, Preamble to 1 January 1944, pp. xiii-xiv.

15. Ibid., pp. xv-xvi.

CHAPTER TWO  
JEDBURGH DOCTRINE

Jedburgh Recruitment

In the fall of 1943 no Jedburgh force existed. Planning for the Allied invasion of Europe was in full swing, with the execution order to follow in short order. The Jedburghs were to have a key role in Operation "Overlord." The task at hand for the SOE and the OSS was to select volunteers to become Jedburghs. SOE and OSS recruited officers and non-commissioned officers (NCOs) in the autumn of 1943. NCOs would be assigned as radio operators. The officers would serve as Jedburghs or as staff officers of Special Forces (SF) detachments.<sup>1</sup> In Washington, D.C., OSS Headquarters authorized 100 officer slots for the Jedburgh proposals. The distribution of officers would be: 50 for Jedburgh teams, 34 for SF detachments, and 16 for SOE/SO Headquarters (which would later become SFHQ). The G2 Division, War Department, helped coordinate the recruitment.<sup>2</sup> OSS qualifications for Jedburgh officers were as follows:

Officers recruited as leaders and seconds in command should be picked for qualities of leadership and daring, ability to speak and

understand French, and all-around physical condition. They should be experienced in handling men, preferably in an active theater of operations, and be prepared to be parachuted in uniform behind enemy lines and operate on their own for some time. They must have had at least basic military training and preferably have aptitude for small arms weapons.

Qualifications for Jedburgh radio operators were less stringent. They were as follows:

Qualifications for radio operator are not so high as for leaders and seconds-in-command and a fair working knowledge of French is sufficient. In addition to normal requirements for good radio operators, they must be of exceptionally good physique to stand up to training and be prepared to be parachuted into enemy lines to operate their sets in open under war conditions. They should attain a speed of 15 words per minute before being shipped to the U.K.

SO selected 56 NCOs for Jedburgh radio operators in the United States from Army Signal Corps schools at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey and Camp Crowder, Missouri.<sup>5</sup>

Screening procedures for Jedburghs were rigorous. Of 55 officers selected for further training in Great Britain, only 35 actually became Jedburghs. OSS had to expand the search for qualified recruits to U.S. Army units stationed in Great Britain. Some of these officers were recruited immediately. Several of the volunteers did not report to Milton Hall for training however, until late February, 1944, after basic training for Jedburghs had already begun.<sup>6</sup>

The OSS also attracted ten French officers to the Jedburgh cause from the French Military Mission in Washington.<sup>7</sup> SOE recruited 70 French Jedburghs from the Middle East in January-February 1944. These recruits were all combat veterans. This would help compensate for the fact that the 70 French Jedburghs from the Middle East would miss nearly two months of preliminary training and specialized instruction.<sup>8</sup>

Much less is known about the SOE selection process, due to ongoing security classifications. SOE selected British Jedburghs from its own rank and file, recruiting soldiers who had volunteered for hazardous duty with assault and/or airborne forces, or had experience with those units.<sup>9</sup>

With Jedburgh recruitment ongoing, SO and SOE worked out a plan to govern the operational details of the Jedburghs during the last few months of 1943. The result was the Basic Jedburgh Directive of 20 December 1943, which outlined the operational role, training equipment, coordination, liaison and cover stories for Jedburgh teams.<sup>10</sup> The Basic Jedburgh Directive stated:

JEDBURGHS are specially trained three-man teams. They will be dropped by parachute at prearranged spots in France, Belgium and Holland on and after D-Day. Each JEDBURGH team consists of two officers and a radio operator with his W/T set. One officer is a native of the country to which the team is going, and the other British or American. The members of the team are soldiers and will normally arrive in the field in uniform. There they will make contact with the resistance



groups, bringing them instructions from the Supreme Allied Commander, W/T communications, supplies, and, if necessary, leadership.<sup>11</sup>

With recruitment completed, SOE and the OSS next had to properly prepare selected volunteers for their upcoming covert role in the Allied invasion of Europe as members of Jedburgh teams. This would be achieved through a rather vigorous, intense training program for the Jedburghs.

### Jedburgh Training

SOE provided the training sites in Great Britain and the majority of instructors for the Jedburghs. American recruits arrived in Great Britain in late December 1943. Officers spent two weeks undergoing psychological testing near Peterfield. From there the American officers rotated through the three Special Training Schools (STS) during the month of January at Walsingham, Gumley Hall and Fairford. The American radio operators attended the SOE communications school at Henley-on-Thames. The American NCOs also endured the grueling psychological tests administered to the officers. They also practised basic marksmanship, self-defense and rigorous physical training. At the conclusion of January, all Americans underwent parachute training, conducted at the Ringway parachute school. At this three-day course, they learned how to parachute through the "joe hole" (small opening) of an RAF bomber.<sup>12</sup>

With preliminary training behind them, and with a new set of "jump wings," Jedburgh volunteers reported to Milton Hall on 5 February 1944 to begin their specialized and technical training. Milton Hall is located outside Peterborough, Northamptonshire. It remains the ancestral home of the Fitzwilliam family. Jedburghs conducted training at this estate; with weapons training in the sunken garden, and Morse code training in the dairy.<sup>13</sup> British and Dutch volunteers also conducted training at this site. French recruits did not arrive from the Middle East until late March, 1944.<sup>14</sup> The target date for completion of training was 1 April 1944, with 1 May set as the projected date for D-Day by SOE and the OSS. It was imperative that all American and British officers have a working knowledge of the French language and customs.<sup>15</sup>

Operational training for the Jedburghs began on 21 February and continued until D-Day. During this phase of training, Milton Hall emphasized guerrilla warfare tactics and skills: enemy weapon use, map reading, agent circuit operations, intelligence, sabotage, escape and evasion, counterespionage, ambushes, use of couriers and continued emphasis on hand-to-hand combat. Additionally, Jedburghs perfected their French speaking skills, Morse code, and conducted long road marches. Jedburghs also received extensive briefings on the history and organization of the

resistance movement in France.<sup>16</sup> During this phase, demanding field exercises emphasized team training. This contrasted with the individual training of the preliminary phase conducted in January.<sup>17</sup>

SOE/SO, or SFHQ as it was now known, labeled Milton Hall as ME/65, and the Jedburghs as "Allied Commandoes." This was done to provide a cover story for the Jeds as they conducted training in Great Britain, and in case of capture.<sup>18</sup> SOE developed four plans involving resistance coordination for northwest Europe. Plan "Vert" focused attention on sabotage against railroads. Plan "Torture" would concentrate sabotage against bridges and highways. Plan "Blue" entailed the destruction of electrical supply systems used by the German Army. Plan "Violet" involved the disruption of the German telecommunication system. These four major plans served as the foundation for the series of exercises that Jedburghs undertook during the spring of 1944.<sup>19</sup>

The field exercises were the most important element of operational planning. During these exercises, actual field conditions and challenges arose that simulated likely encounters with resistance groups and the enemy in France. The purpose of the exercises was to evaluate tactical procedures for Jedburgh teams and validate staff operations for the Special Forces Detachments. The exercises varied in

duration from 36 hours to ten days.<sup>20</sup> The major exercises were "SPILL OUT," "LEVEE," and "SALLY" (originally called "VERMILLION"). "SPILL OUT" took place in the last week of March. It consisted of: establishment and maintenance of communication networks, road block attacks, drops to reception committees, and escape and evasion games with mock Gestapo agents.<sup>21</sup>

Two command post exercises in March evaluated Special Forces (SF) Detachments' operational procedures for coordinating with Jedburgh teams. During exercise "LEVEE," US SO personnel served as SF Detachments assigned to field armies. SOE controlled this exercise. In "SALLY," US SO controlled the exercise. This exercise revealed problems with Jedburgh briefing procedures. This problem was later rectified by adopting the Air Corps briefing system. Exercise "SALLY" displayed the inexperience of staff personnel of the SO/SOE France Country Sections and the Low Countries section.<sup>22</sup>

By April the Jedburghs had completed the essential part of their training. Meanwhile, SHAEF moved the planned Allied invasion to 1 June 1944.<sup>23</sup> Individual and collective training refinements continued during April. During 24-25 April, exercise "SPUR" simulated a partisan ambush upon a German headquarters. Notable improvements were made by the

SOE/SO Headquarters staff in improving its Country Sections' working procedures during exercise "SPUR."<sup>24</sup>

By the end of April the Jedburghs had formed their own teams and trained on all tasks. Many Jedburgh teams participated in exercise "LASH" from 31 May to 8 June. The area of operations extended over Leicestershire's Charnwood Forest. The exercise required Jedburgh teams to contact resistance groups and direct attacks on rail communications and other targets. The radio (W/T) sent instructions to Jedburgh teams. Milton Hall labeled the exercise a success, despite the detection of daylight movement to target areas by large groups of resistance forces. SFHQ (SOE/SO) concluded that the guerrillas should have broken down into smaller groups to avoid detection. Other problems that surfaced, in the category of "minor criticisms," was that guerrilla groups had received vague orders, which led to some confusion. Additionally, Jedburgh groups had problems with escape and evasion techniques.<sup>25</sup>

Preparations for the reception of teams in France began in earnest, while Jedburgh training was being conducted. Captain M. Millet went to France to organize what was later to become the Mitchell Plan, which involved the identification of safe houses and the organization of reception committees. The latter tasks would be

accomplished by French military delegates, known as the Bureau des recherches et d'actions a Londre (BRAL).<sup>26</sup>

#### Jedburgh Team Equipment

SFHQ (SOE/SO) established a committee to select and procure Jedburgh equipment. Milton Hall obtained and stored supplies for team "kits."<sup>27</sup> SOE signals section designed a short wave radio set suitable for field use, designating it the "A Mark III set." It weighed approximately nine pounds, coupled with accessories and suitcase. It had a range of 500 miles, with a five watt output. A modified radio for longer ranges (B-2) weighed 32 pounds. All messages were encoded using a 9" x 4.5" piece of silk and ten microfilmed pages of key lists. The silk handkerchief contained 500 printed four letter codes for reporting and/or requesting operations. The key lists measured 4.5" x 4." They contained a thousand groups that required encoding via a magnifying glass. The key lists were captured by the Germans, but never decoded. The microfilmed pages were made of special paper, which was edible, or could be dissolved instantly in hot liquids.<sup>28</sup>

By May most of the Jedburgh teams had their "kits." Each team member had a uniform with web gear and pack, American jump boots, .45 caliber pistol, an American M1 carbine rifle, a British fighting knife, an oil compass, and RAF type survival equipment. Jedburghs carried false

documents, which included: an identity card, ration card, certificate of domicile, work permit, and driving license. These documents gave Jedburghs the flexibility to stay in uniform, which afforded POW protection rights under the Geneva Convention, or to wear civilian clothes.<sup>29</sup>

#### Jedburgh Dispatch and Deployment Procedures

To assist the allied invasion of northwest Europe, the French Forces of the Interior (FFI), developed a six phase concept of operation. Phase one centered on disrupting the movement of enemy reserve forces to Normandy, and dislocation of communications. The second phase concentrated on the liberation of Brittany. Phase three efforts involved assisting the allied advance to the Seine River, by providing tactical intelligence. This phase would be followed by assisting allied forces in southern France. Phase five featured the liberation of Paris. Finally, phase six would harass the withdrawal of German forces from the western and southern areas of France.<sup>30</sup>

Jedburgh teams would deploy to France to support these operations. The "Operational Procedure of Special Force Headquarters, 12 May 1944," specified dispatch procedures. SO/SF staffs, located in the field, normally initiated requests for Jedburgh teams. The appropriate country section handled the requests. Following the selection of a Jedburgh team by Milton Hall, a warning order

would be issued to the team and to the country section. The country section then made preparations and all other required arrangements, to include coordinating mission details, and conducting mission briefings. The country section was also responsible for requesting aircraft through the RAF and the U.S. Army Eighth Air Force, labeled the "Carpetbaggers," based at Harrington Aerodrome, Kettering. The "Carpetbaggers" arranged for parachutes, packages, ordering of containers for mission equipment, and coordinating transport of team members to the airfield.<sup>31</sup>

Once alerted for movement, the Jedburgh team would be transported from Milton Hall to London for its mission briefing. The respective country section involved conducted formal briefings, which were similar to Air Corps briefings, and lasted for several hours. Final preparations were conducted at these meetings. Jedburghs learned their final destinations after they received a current Michelin road map of the area, and the name of their dropping zone (DZ). Jedburgh teams reported back to SFHQ immediately, and requested follow-on drop zones in the prescribed manner; the number of the Michelin map, section number, and coordinates. The reception committee on the ground would mark the DZ with an assigned code letter designator, using small fires or blinking flashlights, or the signal of a beacon light to indicate a clear DZ. Once on the ground, Jedburghs



immediately contacted SFHQ. After codewords and bona fides were exchanged with resistance groups, Jedburghs began the process of coordinating operations with resistance leaders and SFHQ. Locations of safe towns and houses, indicated by a bearing and distance in kilometers from the DZ, provided refuge for team members in the operational area.<sup>32</sup>

### Jedburgh Operations

SFHQ dispatched seven Jedburgh teams from Great Britain into Eastern Brittany in the summer of 1944, as part of an overall effort, which involved the insertion of other Jedburghs throughout Northwest Europe. In the period of July-August 1944, the French Resistance received thousands of air dropped supplies, through the coordinating efforts of Jedburgh teams.<sup>33</sup>

In the ensuing chapters, I will discuss and evaluate operations of each of the teams inserted into the Eastern Brittany region of France. Included will be the Jedburgh link up with resistance groups and their guerrilla actions leading up to the definitive message to the French resistance by General Koenig. The message, entitled "Le chapeau de Napoleon, est-il toujours a Perros-Guired?", transmitted over the BBC, directed the French resistance in Brittany to begin large scale operations on 4 August 1944.<sup>34</sup>

On 3 August General Koenig elicited a patriotic call to arms for all citizens of France, when he espoused:

French people of Brittany, the hour of your liberation has come! The provisional government of the French Republic calls for the national uprising! French people of Brittany, workers, peasants, official employees! The time has come for you to take part, with or without weapons, in the last battle. French people of Brittany! The whole of France salutes you! The whole of France will follow you in the national insurrection.<sup>35</sup>

This speech, sent over the BBC, was followed by the French national anthem, signalling the French to form battalions. From this point onward, the French resistance (Maquisards) sought out individual and/or small groups of Germans to neutralize or destroy.<sup>36</sup>

#### German Rear Area Operations

Jedburgh teams did not normally encounter large-scale German combat units. Most engagements were with rear-area security elements. These consisted of administration and supply units of the Military Governor of France, which was directly responsible to the German Army High Command. German security forces were aware of how the French resistance was organized, its radio links to Great Britain, and its mission to prepare and assist Operation "Overlord"--the Allied invasion of France. The majority of the French population sympathized and supported the resistance. French police and security forces, in some cases, assisted the resistance. Few Frenchmen willingly provided information to the Germans. The Third Reich categorized all resistance activity as terrorism. The German reprisal for terrorism

was met with Gestapo counterterrorism against the French populace: shootings, illegal arrests, and torture.<sup>37</sup>

By August 1944, the German occupation forces did not have a comprehensive picture of what was occurring in the French countryside. If an area appeared quiet and orderly, German occupation forces were generally satisfied. The threat of FFI ambushes on small parties led the Germans to send only large armed units outside their garrisons. Thus, large areas of France were left unobserved by occupation forces.<sup>38</sup>

### Endnotes

1. Lewis, Jedburgh Team Operations, p. 7.
2. OSS/London SO Branch micro, Reel III, Vol. IV, JEDBURGHS, Preamble to 1 January 1944, pp. xviii-xxi.
3. Ibid., p. xviii.
4. Ibid., p. xix.
5. Ibid., p. xxi.
6. Lewis, p. 8.
7. OSS/London SO Branch micro, Reel III, Vol. IV, JEDBURGHS, Preamble to 1 January 1944, p. xx, and January to July 1944, p. 4.
8. OSS/London SO Branch micro, Reel I, Vol. II, PLANNING, Preamble to 1 January 1944, p. xxx; and OSS/London SO Branch micro, Reel III, Vol. IV, JEDBURGHS, January to July 1944, p. 8.
9. Foot, SOE in France, p. 18, 35, pp. 40-42.
10. OSS/London SO Branch micro, Reel I, Vol. II, PLANNING, Preamble to 1 January 1944, p. xxxi.
11. Ibid., p. xxxi.
12. Lewis, pp. 10-11.
13. Stanley Cannicott, Journey of a Jed, (Cheddar, Somerset: Cheddar Valley Press, 1986), p. 22.
14. OSS/London SO Branch micro, Reel III, Vol. IV, JEDBURGHS, January to July 1944, pp. 8-9.
15. OSS/London SO Branch micro, Reel III, Vol. IV, JEDBURGHS, Preamble to 1 January 1944, pp. xxii-xxiii.
16. Lewis, p. 11.
17. OSS/London SO Branch micro, Reel III, Vol. IV, JEDBURGHS, January to July 1944, p. 10.
18. Mendolsohn, Covert Warfare, Vol. 3, p. xxv.

19. Brown, The Last Hero - Wild Bill Donovan, p. 567.
20. OSS/London SO Branch micro, Reel III, Vol. IV, JEDBURGHS, January to July 1944, p. 12.
21. Ibid., p. 12.
22. OSS/London SO Branch micro, Reel I, Vol. II, PLANNING, January-September 1944, pp. 5-6, and p. 30.
23. OSS/London SO Branch micro, Reel III, Vol. IV, JEDBURGHS, January to July, 1944, p. 14.
24. Ibid., p. 12; OSS/London SO Branch micro, Reel I, Volume II, PLANNING, January-September 1944, p. 5; and OSS/London SO Branch micro, Reel V, Vol. V, ARMY STAFFS, April, May, June 1944, p. 11.
25. Lewis, p. 11.
26. Mendolsohn, Covert Warfare, Vol. 3, p. 31.
27. OSS/London SO Branch micro, Reel III, Vol. IV, JEDBURGHS, Preamble to 1 January 1944, p. xiv.
28. M.R.D. Foot, SOE: An Outline History of the Special Operations Executive 1940-1946. (New York: University Publications of America, 1986), pp. 110-112, and pp. 124-125.
29. Robert G. Gutjahr, "The Role of Jedburgh Teams in Operation Market Garden," MMAS thesis, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 1990, pp.46-47.
30. Combined Administrative Liquidating Agency, "History of Organization of Command of Operations by FFI," (SOE/SO & SFHQ, 1945), p. 11.
31. Mendelsohn, Covert Warfare, Vol. 3, pp. 30-31.
32. Ibid, pp. 32-35.
33. Ibid.
34. Anthony Cave Brown, The Bodyguard of Lies, (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1975), p. 694.
35. Ibid., p. 780.

36. Ibid., p. 781.
37. Lewis, pp. 18-19.
38. Ibid., pp. 19-20.

CHAPTER THREE  
TEAM FREDERICK

On the ninth of June, SFHQ dispatched Team Frederick into Eastern Brittany to Cotes du Nord, along with an SAS team. It was the third Jedburgh team to be dispatched into France from the United Kingdom. In charge of the group was Major Adrian W. Wise, a British officer. Rounding out the team were Captain P. Aguirec from France, and an American non-commissioned officer, 1SG Robert F. Kehoe, who served as the radio operator. Operation "Overlord" was unfolding. Team Frederick would spend the next three months successfully operating behind enemy lines before returning to Great Britain.<sup>1</sup>

The primary mission assigned to Team Frederick was to assist the British SAS in establishing their base of operations. The base, called "Samwest," would be used as a sanctuary and a re-supply point for other SAS parties. The base would also serve as a storage facility for arms and stores that would be required by the French resistance in the area.<sup>2</sup>

The SAS mode of operations were dissimilar to the Jedburghs. Their operations consisted of attacking enemy rear area targets, often without coordinating their efforts

with the local resistance. This often resulted in German reprisals against the French populace, such as mass shootings of civilians, torture and the like. SAS tactics often conflicted with methods employed by the Jedburghs, which placed emphasis on providing training, leadership and building close ties with the Maquis. The fact that the SAS and the Jedburghs had separate chains of command exacerbated their difficulties in working with each other.

Intelligence indicated no knowledge of established resistance groups in Cote du Nord area. This would later prove not to be the case. During the next three months, Team Frederick would encounter a well organized resistance movement. The Gendarmerie (French police) throughout Brittany were also known to be sympathetic to the Allied cause. Their strength in the Brittany area was estimated by SFHQ to be 3,000 men.<sup>3</sup>

The area of operations in Cotes du Nord is characterized by a series of denuded folds of ancient sedimentary rocks, that have extensive intrusions of granite masses. It is in the northwestern area of France, in the northern part of the old province of Brittany. Cotes du Nord is bounded north by the English channel, west by the departement of Finistere, south by Morbihan and east by Ille et Vilaine. It covers nearly 2,800 square miles. Many winding, steep-sided valleys traverse across the grain of



the country. The coast is rocky and indented. More level land lies inland. Saint-Brieuc is the capital of Cotes du Nord. The population was estimated to be 500,000.<sup>4</sup>

On the 16th of June, the team reported that it had cut the Paris Brest underground cable, and that all railway lines in the area were out. The Jeds were executing a mission that they had been trained for at Milton Hall. Contacts with local resistance groups began in earnest. For the next week, 1SG Kehoe requested additional supplies from SFHQ, such as weapons, ammunition, money and clothing to support resistance fighters. On the 23rd of June, Team Frederick reported encountering heavy enemy activity in their area of operations. The Jeds carried out an attack on German rear area communications facilities. This action resulted in severing enemy lines momentarily. Team Frederick also reported a high state of morale among their group.<sup>5</sup>

For the remainder of June, Team Frederick concentrated on contacting all resistance leaders and groups in their assigned area. They continued to build up needed supplies to sustain special operations behind enemy lines.

The first week of July brought inclement weather to the Cotes du Nord. This repeatedly delayed aircraft drops of supplies. Team Frederick, however, did not remain idle. Indeed, on the 7th of July, in concert with the local

resistance, they destroyed 20 German lorries near Rostrenen. The Jeds also blew up a high tension line between Brest and Gouyec. The team continued to provide intelligence back to SFHQ on the disposition and strength of German forces in their area. Enemy strength estimates provided to SFHQ on 8 July indicated 2300 Germans in the village of Plounevez Moedec. Team Frederick also reported a general's headquarters and command post with an estimated combined strength of 6380 enemy infantry and artillerymen.<sup>6</sup>

By the 20th of July contact with the enemy became more frequent and intense. Team Frederick found itself encircled by a superior sized German force, but managed to break out. They lost everything except their small arms and cipher. SFHQ resupplied the team with a radio by airdrop. The AVECCHRE FFI (local resistance groups) served well in the escape. Many were later decorated for their bravery.<sup>7</sup>

Close work and training with the Maquis in Eastern Brittany was coming to fruition. The FFI, in teamwork with the Jedburghs and the British SAS, were beginning to exact a heavy toll on German forces in their area. During the Plesidy battle, Team Frederick reported an estimated 500 German casualties (killed or wounded) to SFHQ. The Maquis suffered light casualties in comparison. Their esprit de corps continued to be outstanding in the face of adversity.<sup>8</sup>

The start of August brought a shift in the mode of operations for Team Frederick. The Allied advance was rapidly coming in their direction. Instead of conducting small scale attacks on German communication lines and railway networks, the Jedburgh task was now to save them from enemy destruction. SFHQ instructed Team Frederick to safeguard the road networks leading towards the cities of Morlaix, Saint Briec and Lamballe, preventing enemy demolition of road bridges and culverts. This was necessary to safeguard the Allied advance.<sup>9</sup>

Unfortunately, Team Frederick was not able to stop the Germans from committing atrocities in Paimpol and Pluebian. The Maquis and the Jeds were strong enough to contain the enemy, but not to attack him at this time. Details of the alleged atrocities are not provided in the dispatches of Team Frederick's reports back to SFHQ during this period. For the remainder of their time in Cotes du Nord, Team Frederick continued to request help for the FFI area of Paimpol. The team returned to Great Britain on the 20th of August.<sup>10</sup>

#### Team Frederick Conclusions

The team successfully completed their assigned mission of establishing a base in Cotes du Nord, which provided liaison and arms and materials for the local resistance. However, initial intelligence estimates

indicated little known resistance movement in Brittany. This information proved to be erroneous. If the resistance movement had been contacted two weeks before D-Day, a better estimate of resistance strength could have been determined. In actuality, the FFI was nearly 2,000 strong in the area, but short on arms and ammunition. Due to the intelligence shortfall, Team Frederick was forced to continually request airdrop resupply to fulfill Maquis needs. This hampered operations to an extent, especially when bad weather did not permit aerial resupply.<sup>11</sup>

Team Frederick experienced poor security during their jump into their assigned area. The reception committee consisted of a gaggle of onlookers (men and women), who were smoking, despite the fact that Germans were in a town just seven kilometers away.<sup>12</sup>

Team Frederick had good fortune with their radio (W/T) equipment, operated with skill by 1SG Kehoe. When they lost their radio sets during one skirmish with the Germans, they were quickly resupplied with two additional radio sets that also operated perfectly.

The team successfully arranged a number of parachutings of men and equipment throughout their stay in Brittany. They also coordinated a reception committee for Team Felix (which will be analyzed in a later chapter).

The leadership and teamwork of Team Frederick and the Maquis in Cotes du Nord should not be underestimated. Both fought with bravery and courage in the face of tremendous adversity, while fighting outnumbered.

The team was successful in executing missions that they were trained to perform. They cut rail lines, disrupted enemy cable and telephone communications, organized a number of small unit attacks on convoys, contacted resistance leaders and resupplied their members with what they needed to sustain the fight against the Germans.

As a result of protecting road networks and preventing the Germans from blowing bridges, American Task Force A, led by Brig. Gen. Herbert L. Earnest, had a clear run through to Morlaix, as it rapidly advanced. General Patton considered this an important mission when he requested Major General Robert W. Grow of the 6th Armored Division to keep an eye out for the bridges along the railroad network in Brittany, particularly the one at Morlaix.<sup>13</sup> Once advance units of the US Army began to overrun Team Frederick/Maquis positions, the normal Jed role ceased at his point, and the team soon returned to home station.

Relations with the SAS proved strained. The lack of coordination with the SAS led to some failures. The SAS

provided resistance members with arms, without giving them proper training, in the opinion of Team Frederick.<sup>14</sup>

The Jeds were very successful in sabotage. They succeeded in blowing 60,000 gallons of petrol at St Brieuc. Sabotage was complimented with weekly attacks on enemy convoys, with the most important attack near Rostrenen, destroying 20 lorries.<sup>15</sup>

Lastly, one of the more interesting observations of the team noted that in the battle of the Paimpol peninsula, showed that resistance fighters could be used as infantry. During this battle, the French resistance held the towns of Lexandrieux, Treguler, and Plunex with the assistance of American tanks.<sup>16</sup>

### Endnotes

1. Mendolsohn, Covert Warfare, Vol. 8, p. 33. The members of Team Frederick had operational code names. The French usually had a nom de guerre. Listed are some personal information on Team Frederick members. True name: Major A. W. Wise, code name: KINROS, nationality: French. True name: Captain P. Aguirec, code name: VIRE, nationality: French, nom de guerre: Paul Bloch-Auroch. True name: 1SG Robert F. Kehoe, code name: PESETA, nationality: American.
2. Ibid., p. 34.
3. Ibid., p. 33.
4. Encyclopedia Britannica, Chicago: 1966, Vol. 6, p. 609.
5. Mendolsohn, Covert Warfare, pp. 36-37. The term "Boche" was a slang term used by the French to refer to Germans.
6. Ibid., pp. 137-138.
7. Ibid., p. 140. Team Frederick noted that the radio equipment worked exceptionally well throughout their operations in Western Brittany.
8. Ibid., p. 140.
9. Ibid., p. 141.
10. Ibid., p. 142.
11. Ibid., p. 143.
12. Ibid., p. 143.
13. Blumenson, Martin. US Army in World War II, European Theater of Operations, Breakout and Pursuit. Washington, D.C.: US Army Center of Military History, 1984, p. 349.
14. Ibid., p. 152.
15. Ibid., p. 153.
16. Ibid.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### TEAM GEORGE I

SFHQ dispatched Team George, along with Team Frederick, on the 9th of June from Great Britain into Brittany. Like Frederick, Team George was also sent with an SAS party. Three officers made up the team: Captain Paul Cyr (American), Captain Phillipe Reaguenau (French) and 2D Lieutenant Pierre Gay (French). Team George would not return to home station until 23 August of 1944.<sup>1</sup>

The mission for Team George was to drop with a party of SAS and assist them in establishing a base west of Redon. They were to organize local resistance elements and provide them with liaison, arms and materials. Although the team operated with the SAS, they were subordinate to SFHQ. Any cooperation between the two elements would be voluntary. Initial relations between the Jeds and the SAS were strained. Each organization was apprehensive of the other.<sup>2</sup>

The reception (parachute landing) of Team George at Dingson (located east of the port city of Vannes) was marked by poor security. The team reported that many people were laughing and talking loudly, although Germans were located just two kilometers away.<sup>3</sup>



Team George established its base at Farm de la Nouee, near Dingson. After two hours sleep, the SAS proceeded to conduct demolition operations. They cut railroad ties, telephone lines and all other lines of communication. The SAS and the Jeds coordinated air drop supplies during the next few days. The supplies in the containers would equip and arm the partisans in the area of Morbihan.<sup>4</sup>

Team George operated primarily in the Loire Inferieure department (now referred to as Loire Atlantique), in Brittany. The landscape of the region consisted of many small fields divided by low hedges. It was a heavy populated area with little cover, which proved to be unfavorable for defensive purposes.<sup>5</sup>

Jed relations with the SAS began to improve. Team George and the SAS jointly planned and conducted operations. This ad hoc arrangement would prove to be mutually beneficial during the summer of 1944.<sup>6</sup>

On the 17th of July SFHQ acknowledged receipt of a George transmission requesting arms for an estimated 4,000 men in the Loire Inferieure.<sup>7</sup> What accounted for the delay in not immediately reporting to SFHQ, as was the Jed established procedure? When they landed in early June, one of the radio sets broke during the landing, and the other was damaged. The team attempted to cannibalize the two sets

into one functional set, but it still did not work properly. This was compounded by the fact that within ten minutes of attempting to transmit a message, the Jed team was located by German radio location cars. On top of this situation, the Germans jammed the frequency that London was sending on. Although the team informed SFHQ that they could not receive messages on this frequency, the request was never acknowledged.<sup>8</sup>

Another task challenged Captain Cyr's abilities to control the local resistance forces. As soon as they began to arm the local resistance members, many of them immediately sought out and shot the nearest German. They returned with their truck and booty to the Jed headquarters. This mistake resulted in a large scale German attack on the Jed's base, which was now compromised.<sup>9</sup>

Having been discovered at the farmhouse by the enemy, Team George decided to concentrate on the area of Loire Inferieure, which presented lucrative sabotage targets. Before they could pull up stakes, however, the Germans launched a furious attack on their base at Dingson. During the confusion of the battle, the French resistance did not coordinate their fires. This unfortunately resulted in fratricide. The battle featured untrained resistance fighters equipped with only small arms, locked in a stationary position. The Germans held the high ground, and

thus they were able to call artillery fire on Jed and resistance positions. The Germans pinned them down with covering fires from mortars and machine guns. The Jeds counterattacked in the early evening of battle. Captain Cyr's company was outflanked by the Germans, as a result of his troops advancing too fast in relation to other units in the counterattack. The Jed team managed to escape, but the French resistance suffered heavy casualties. Team George I credited the training at Milton Hall for helping them to conduct a successful breakout against the enemy.<sup>10</sup>

After surviving the breakout from Dingson, the Jeds held a "council of war" with their SAS counterparts. The SAS commanding officer decided that his men would part ways with the Jeds and move to a different location. They agreed that Team George, now joined by SOE agents "Hauteur" and "Fonction" (who had been recently inserted into the area) would all transfer towards the Loire Inferieure. At this point, Team George, "Fonction" and "Hauter" worked essentially as one team.<sup>11</sup>

Unfortunately, bad luck continued to haunt the Jeds. On arrival in the village of Saffre, the team learned that a Gestapo agent had discovered the exact location of the resistance weapons cache. At 0600 on the 28th of June, the Jeds came under attack once again from a large German force. A tactical assessment of the situation showed that

they were completely surrounded. During the confusion that followed in this battle, the combined team of George, "Fonction" and "Hauteur" attempted to take charge of the situation. They organized the resistance elements into three separate groups and sent them out in different directions, in an attempt to break out. Once again, after hiding in thick bushes and surviving repeated grenade assaults on their positions, the Jeds managed to escape. They took only what they could carry on their backs: small arms, radio and some equipment. The Jeds then traveled northwest until they reached Ancenis on the river Loire.<sup>12</sup>

The Jedburghs were now established at La Roche Blance (a safe house). The team did not have civilian identification papers. The last battery of their radio set was now dead. The Jeds had to rely on couriers to relay messages to the French resistance. Finally, on 15 August, a resistance agent brought the team a battery. The team again attempted to radio London, despite the presence of nearby enemy soldiers. Germans would bathe in the river right in front of the Jed safe house. They were also being observed by a suspicious Frenchman. In order to disguise his accent, Captain Cyr stammered when conversing with the watchful stranger when approached. According to team reports, this proved to be a rather humorous exercise, since the Frenchman also spoke in a similar fashion! Captain Cyr's woes

continued. He liked to eat in a restaurant patronized by Germans. After arguing one day with a Luftwaffe lieutenant, the team decided it would be best for Captain Cyr to pretend that he had been wounded in the mouth. Afterwards, he always wore a bandage over his mouth. Eating proved rather difficult for him.<sup>13</sup>

Team George stayed on the move. They decided to move to the nearby village of La Meilleraye-La Varadas. During their stay at this location, they organized small scale operations against enemy lines of communications. Among their accomplishments: burning of a bridge at Ancenis, cutting a rail line from Nantes to Angers at numerous places and cutting two locks in the Nantes to Brest canal. The Jeds also destroyed a German petrol dump near Nantes.<sup>14</sup>

According to Team George, the Loire Inferieure resistance needed leadership, unity, confidence, and above all, arms and money. There never seemed to be enough of the latter two items. Problems with radio gear hampered the team throughout their three month stay in the region. The team was not able to request their requirements to London. In spite of this shortcoming, when Team George I departed the Loire Inferieure on 23 August, they left a force of some 2,500 men. These resistance fighters were fully armed. They succeeded in protecting the right flank of the Third Army

from St. Etienne to Redon. The resistance kept constant contact with elements of the German 265th Infantry Division in St. Nazaire.<sup>15</sup>

#### Team George I Conclusions

The Allies planned to intensify resistance activities in Northwest Europe (including Brittany) after trained guerrilla leaders, arms, ammunition and supplies had been inserted. SFHQ planned to fully develop resistance forces about the same time American troops entered the peninsula. U.S. troop exploitation was so rapid, however, that the French resistance forces had to begin operating before they could be fully developed.<sup>16</sup> The fact that Team George was not inserted until 9 June 1944, did not fully support the above mentioned plan. Perhaps if they had been inserted earlier, more arms and equipment could have been put into the hands of the FFI.

Poor security hampered Team George during their entire stay in Brittany. Untrained resistance members unwittingly revealed their location through a series of blunders (i.e., bringing war booty to headquarters, being double crossed by Gestapo infiltrators), which led to the Germans continually chasing them from one location to the next.

Poor radio communications throughout the summer of 1944 hampered Team George. Upon return to home station, the

team learned why they did not receive more arms and other equipment from SFHQ: long lapses of no communication between the team and headquarters. This gap, SFHQ surmised, could have been because the team may have come under Gestapo control. Of course, in retrospect, this was not the case.<sup>17</sup>

### Endnotes

1. Mendosohn, Covert Warfare, Vol. 4, p. 157. The members of Team George I had operational code names. The French usually had a nom de guerre. Listed are some personal information on Team George I members. True name: Captain Paul Cyr, code name: WIGTON, nationality: American. True name: Captain Phillipe Reaguenau, code name: SAVE, nationality: French, nom de guerre: P. Erard. True name: 2D Lieutenant Pierre Gay, code name: RUPEE, nationality: French, nom de guerre: C. Lejeune.

2. Ibid., p. 157.

3. Ibid., p. 159.

4. Ibid., p. 160.

5. Ibid., p. 191.

6. Ibid., p. 162.

7. Ibid., p. 155.

8. Ibid., pp. 163-164.

9. Ibid., p. 165.

10. Ibid., pp. 169-171. NOTE: The date of the battle was not recorded by the team in their report to SFHQ.

11. Ibid., p. 172.

12. Ibid., pp. 179-183.

13. Ibid., pp. 198-204.

14. Ibid., p. 206.

15. Ibid., pp. 189-90.

16. Blumenson, Breakout and Pursuit, p. 354.

17. Mendolsohn, Covert Warfare, Vol. 4, pp. 236-241.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### TEAM FELIX

Team Felix was the eighth team dispatched into France from the United Kingdom. The team dropped into the eastern area of Cotes du Nord on the night of 8/9 July 1944. It consisted of two British soldiers, a Captain J. J. Merchant and Sergeant P. Calvin, and a Frenchman, Captain Jean Souget. Team Felix would assist another Jed team already operating in Cotes du Nord--Team Frederick (discussed in Chapter Three), and Team George I in the Loire Inferieure (now called Loire Atlantique, noted in Chapter Four). Also in the area were two SAS bases--Dingson in the Morbihan area and Grog in Loire Inferieure department.<sup>1</sup>

The purpose of their mission was to organize and arm resistance groups. The team would also investigate the possibility of finding a suitable place on the coast to resupply the resistance from the sea for Cotes du Nord.

The reception of Team Felix was well organized and efficient. Unlike the earlier insertions of Teams George I and Frederick, these Jeds did not encounter poor security. The fact that their air drop went undetected by the enemy is noteworthy. A battalion of Germans was reported to be

resting for the evening just one kilometer from the drop zone.<sup>2</sup>

Team Felix reported no large SAS forces in their area of operations, just single officers and NCO's working alone. The only SAS member known in their region was a Lieutenant Fouquet. Repeated efforts to contact the Lieutenant proved fruitless. This caused considerable consternation for the Jed team, due to the fact that Lieutenant Fouquet often gave orders that conflicted with theirs.<sup>3</sup>

The Jedburghs and the SAS appeared to have the same operational goals of organizing and arming the French resistance. However, due to separate chains of command, and lack of joint planning and cooperation between the SAS and SFHQ, some problems in the field developed. Whereas the Jeds had been instructed to keep resistance activity to a minimum while arming was in progress, the SAS continued their sabotage activities in the area of Dinan and Legouray. This caused increased surveillance and repressive measures against the French resistance, which was still getting organized. It also cut down on the amount of time to properly train resistance fighters on weapons use and sabotage tactics. Compounding this situation was the fact that most SAS parties did not have a radio. Thus, they often continued to work with obsolete orders.<sup>4</sup>

During the first part of July Team Felix concentrated on meeting with local resistance leaders in an attempt to achieve unity of effort among the various French resistance factions. On the 13th of July they reported to SFHQ in London that they had prepared the bridge at Lancieux for demolition. The Jeds also coordinated numerous air drops of arms, ammunition and money to sustain the resistance effort. On the 23rd of July, the team requested an additional Jed team be dispatched between Team Frederick and their location. Encounters with the Germans were increasing in the area. They also requested more arms for resistance fighters. The remainder of July saw Team Felix continuing to contact FFI leaders and coordinating their small scale guerrilla efforts with SFHQ and other Jedburghs adjacent to their area of operations (i.e., Frederick and George I).<sup>5</sup>

The first of August brought changes in tactics for the Jeds. Due to the rapid Allied advance, SFHQ directed Team Felix to prevent the enemy from carrying out demolition of road bridges, culverts, and roads in their area.<sup>6</sup>

Attacks on German convoys continued however. From 2 through 18 August, Jedburgh directed attacks on German convoys resulted in the capture of enemy trucks, ammunition, supplies and the capture of over two hundred prisoners, as reported to SFHQ by Team Felix. Having accomplished their

mission in the area, the team returned from the field to the United Kingdom on the 23rd of August.<sup>1</sup>

#### Team Felix Conclusions

Overall, Team Felix felt that their mission had been a success. Their final report to SFHQ expressed the sole regret of not having been sent in earlier. This analysis seems to be similiar to the sentiment expressed by other Jedburgh teams that participated in Operation "Overlord."

One can only speculate how much more effective partisan support and effectiveness would have been if the SAS and the Jedburghs had achieved unity of effort through closer planning and cooperation. This was hampered by the fact that although both had a similar purpose--the organization and arming of the French resistance in Cotes du Nord, the fact of the matter is that they served two different masters (different chains of command). This led to conflicting guidance and orders being issued to resistance groups.

Another noteworthy comment provided to SFHQ by Team Felix was the fact that they were not issued suitable maps of the area of operations. Michelin road maps did not meet mission needs. Even these maps were not issued to the team until three weeks after their insertion.<sup>2</sup>

### Endnotes

1. Mendolsohn, Covert Warfare, Vol. 4, p. 363. The members of Team Felix had operational code names. The French usually had a nom de guerre. Listed are some personal information on Team Felix members. True name: Captain Jean Souquet, code name: CARNAVON, nationality: French, nom de guerre: J. Kennevel. True name: Captain J. Merchant, code name: SOMERSET, nationality: British. True name: Sergeant P. Calvin (killed in a plane crash taking off from Calcutta in January, 1945), code name: MIDDLESEX, nationality: British.

2. Ibid., pp. 369-70.

3. Ibid., pp. 370-71 and p. 379.

4. Ibid., p. 379.

5. Ibid., pp. 355-56.

6. Ibid., p. 367.

7. Ibid., p. 369.

8. Ibid., p. 379.

CHAPTER SIX  
TEAMS GAVIN AND GUY

Team Gavin

Team Gavin was the eleventh team inserted from the United Kingdom into France. SFHQ dispatched the team to the northern part of the Ille et Vilaine Department on the evening of 11/12 July 1944. The team members were led by a French officer, Major Jean Carbuccia. He was accompanied by 2nd Lieutenant Paul Valentini, also a French officer and Captain William B. Dreux, a 23-year-old lawyer from Louisiana.<sup>1</sup>

The mission of Team Gavin was to organize and arm resistance fighters in the northern sector of the Ille et Vilaine Department. Intelligence from SFHQ indicated that they would need to organize the department for the reception of stores and equipment for approximately 2,500 men.<sup>2</sup>

The area of operations covered approximately 2,700 square miles, facing the English channel coast at the root of the Breton peninsula in the Bay of St. Michel. Ille et Villaine is bounded in the west by Cotes du Nord, southwest by Morbihan, south by Loire Atlantique (referred to in 1944 as "Loire Inferiere"), east by Mayenne and northeast by Manche. Most of the Department is drained south by the

river Lilaine and its tributaries. The Vilaine has been canalized as far as Rennes. There it is connected by a canal via the Ille River. Much of the area near the coast is relatively flat, and is used for market gardening. Farther inland the ribs of hard rocks form higher ground.<sup>3</sup>

Team Gavin dropped near Courcite in Mayenne, which was approximately 75 miles from where the team was supposed to work. Unfortunately there is no mention of security at the drop zone, as in previous reports by other Jed teams.<sup>4</sup> Adjacent Jedburgh teams operating in Morbihan and Cotes du Nord (i.e., Frederick, George I, Felix) were to assist Team Gavin. SAS groups also operated in the same areas (operating bases at "Dingson" and "Samwest" as noted in previous chapters). They came under the command of "Commandant Bourgoin" (a nom de guerre). Jedburghs were instructed to assist the SAS as far as possible, but they would not come under their command.<sup>5</sup> The men under the SAS command of "Commandant Bourgoin" were uniformed soldiers, with an estimated strength of 300.<sup>6</sup>

Team Gavin reported to SFHQ on 13 July of their safe arrival, along with their containers and associated equipment. However, just two days later the team reported having problems with a radio set.<sup>7</sup>

On the 18th of July, SFHQ instructed Team Gavin to link up with Team Guy. On the 25th of July, Team Gavin reported an estimated strength of 4,000 armed Maquis in Mayenne. However, the resistance in the area lacked proper liaison and leadership according to Team Gavin. On the 31st of July the team informed SFHQ that it still had not contacted team Guy.<sup>8</sup>

Meanwhile on the 29th of July, General Omar Bradley's 12th Army Group assumed command of the FFI in Brittany, and placed it under control of the Third Army. General Pierre Koenig (Commander of SFHQ operations in France) designated Col. Albert M. Eon as the commander of the entire FFI in Brittany. American conventional forces planned to penetrate Brittany along two principal axes: Dinan-Brest and Avranches-Rennes-Redon. The FFI, (assisted by the Jedburghs and the SAS) would help that effort. SFHQ planned to parachute a small reconnaissance party into Brittany on the evening of 2 August to establish a command post for Colonel Eon. Poor weather conditions, however, forced cancellation of the drop. On 3 August the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) radioed a coded message to the FFI in Brittany. It signaled the start of general guerrilla activities short of open warfare. Because American troops had already sped beyond Dinan and Rennes by the 4th of August, General Koenig requested Colonel Eon to



set up a command post and secure the high ground north of Vannes in the Quiberon Bay area. Although Colonel Eon had no parachute experience, he nevertheless parachuted into Brittany on the night of 4 August.<sup>3</sup>

Team Gavin finally linked up with team Guy on 2 August. Team "Guy Gavin" (as described in their after action report) reported their location at Combourg. There they helped mop up the district. For the next two weeks they continued to assist conventional forces (i.e., the 83rd Infantry Division) in mop up actions in the regions between Cancale and St. Malo.<sup>10</sup>

#### Team Guy

Team Guy was the 13th team inserted into France from the United Kingdom. They dropped in the same area as Team Gavin on the night of 11/12 July. Their assigned area of operations would be the southern area of the Ille et Vilaine department. Team members included: Captain Andre Duron and 2nd Lieutenant Roger Groult, both French officers, and a British officer, Captain A. E. Trofimov.<sup>11</sup>

The mission of Team Guy was to organize, equip and lead resistance forces in the Rennes/Vitres area. The team had very little intelligence concerning the resistance in this area. The team's radio set was smashed when they jumped into France. As a result, SFHQ did not hear from the team until 3 August, when they linked up with Team Gavin for

operations. From this point forward, the Jedburgh teams of Gavin and Guy were to operate as a unified team in Ille et Vilaine.<sup>12</sup>

#### Combined Operations of Teams Gavin/Guy

Team Gavin dropped several hundred yards away from its drop zone, while Team Guy landed a half a mile away. Both teams were inserted near Courcite in Mayenne, which was about 75 miles away from the area that they were to work in. The Jedburghs decided that Team Gavin would work in Mayenne, while Team Guy would go to the southern sector of Ille et Villaine.<sup>13</sup>

On 24 July an alleged British SOE agent by the name of "Dennis" (a nom de guerre) informed the Jeds that there were two available drop zones in Ille et Villaine which had been used (apparently by the SAS). On 30 July "Dennis" arranged to have another radio set dropped on one of these drop zones for Team Guy.<sup>14</sup>

Team Gavin was faced with the prospect of covering 75 miles to get to their assigned area. The team covered the first 15 miles on foot at night. Captain Dreux (of team Gavin) was able to purchase an old car in order to cover the 60 remaining miles. Along the way his car was stopped by a German patrol. A German soldier approached the car, and proceeded to poke his submachine gun at Captain Dreux's chest. Captain Dreux asked the German questions in English.

The German soldier was perplexed at the response given by Captain Dreux. It is not clear whether the soldier did not understand English, or if he felt he was in a trap set by the resistance. Amidst the confusion of the situation, Team Gavin's car drove through the roadblock.<sup>15</sup>

On 2 August the combined Jedburgh teams of Gavin and Guy arrived in Combourg. Third Army troops had already been there. The allied advance was proceeding at a rapid pace.<sup>16</sup>

Captain Duron (of Team Guy) reported to Headquarters, 6th Armored Division at Loudeac on 3 August, per SFHQ directive. There he was informed that resistance groups (led by Jedburghs) were to round up all Germans in the area and act as a covering force to protect lines of communication for the rapidly advancing 6th Armored Division. During this operation, 1,400 German prisoners were taken in the areas of Tinteniac and Combourg.<sup>17</sup>

On 6 August the Jeds reached the outskirts of Dinan. Both bridges there had been blown by the Germans. Captains Dreux and Duron were among the first Allied officers to enter the city, just after the evacuation of the Germans.<sup>18</sup>

Not all Jedburgh operations in the Ille et Villaine department were successful. While on a reconnaissance patrol in the village of La Bastille, Captain Dreux reported that several tactical blunders were made. First and foremost, Captain Dreux lit a cigarette, which immediately

gave his position away to a well emplaced enemy machine gun position. Captain Dreux was not able to observe the enemy position clearly, because he had left his binoculars behind. Captain Dreux had assigned the machine guns to Algerian and Sengalese soldiers. He assumed, because of their combat experience, that these soldiers would fight well.

Unfortunately, the assumptions were unwarranted. The Algerian and Sengalese soldiers froze in combat, proving useless to the small patrol. As a result of these mistakes, two resistance fighters were wounded, one severely. Fortunately the patrol escaped without further incident.<sup>19</sup>

On 7 August the Jeds learned that the 83rd Infantry Division, with headquarters at St. Pierre, was anxious to include resistance fighters to support their effort. The Division Commander, Major General Robert C. Macon and Brigadier General Claude B. Farenbaugh (the Assistant Division Commander) arranged a meeting. At this meeting the Jedburghs were given the mission to protect the right flank on the division's push towards St. Malo.<sup>20</sup> At the meeting, Captain Dreux recalled that he accepted the mission despite the fact that the local Maquis were yet to be armed, the resistance strength in the area was unknown, and they were not yet organized.<sup>21</sup>

Captain Duron led a patrol of approximately 15 resistance fighters to Rotheneuf on 9 August, and

encountered no Germans. That same evening the Jeds established a base camp at Rotheneuf, establishing posts along the coast and scouting roads leading up to the German fortress of Rotheneuf. The Jedburghs provided valuable intelligence to the 82nd Battalion of the 329th Infantry Regiment concerning the various routes leading to the fort. On 10 August, Major Jean Carbuccia (of Team Gavin) participated in the attack on the fort, which fell to the Allies that afternoon.<sup>22</sup>

Due to the rapid advance of the 83rd Infantry Division, the covering force provided by the teams Gavin/Guy was no longer required. The only remaining position (in early August 1944) was the citadel of St. Malo, which was being attacked by advancing columns of the division. Since their covert mission was complete in Ille et Villaine (having their positions overrun by American forces), the Jedburghs contacted SFHQ in London. The mission was completed on 23 August.<sup>23</sup>

#### Team Gavin/Guy Conclusions

The teams of Gavin and Guy, like earlier Jedburgh teams sent in before them, operated in an area where another covert organization--the British SAS also operated. Could the effort to help the resistance have been more effective with a combined operation with the same chain of command? How much duplicity of effort resulted from this structure?

There are questions that remain unanswered and which are subject to continued speculation and warrant further study.

Perhaps the Jedburghs could have been inserted closer to their assigned area of operations if they had known about the two available drop zones (provided by the alleged British agent "Dennis").

Radio problems continued to plague Jedburgh operations. Causing further annoyance, was the reported ineptitude of some radio operators at SFHQ, who were unaware of Team Guy's radio problems.<sup>24</sup>

The teams reported that they were sent out into the field without any intelligence contacts, civilian clothes and false papers. This hampered their operations.<sup>25</sup>

According to Captain A.E. Trofimov (Team Guy), the Jedburghs should have been inserted earlier into the area. This would have given the Jeds more time to establish better contact with the clandestine members of the resistance-- people who did normal jobs during the day but undertook resistance activities at night.<sup>26</sup>

Captain Trofimov recounted that the Jedburgh briefing given to Team Guy was inadequate. Too little information was known about resistance forces in Ille et Vilaine. No contact had been made with the resistance in the area since March 1944. Therefore, no information concerning resistance groups or conditions in Ille et

Vilaine were provided to the team by SFHQ at their briefing.<sup>27</sup>

The Jeds initial debriefing took place at Third Army Headquarters with SF officers. The Jedburghs had great difficulty in locating the SF detachment. Their final report was prepared at a SFHQ office in Baker Street, London.<sup>28</sup> This account by Captain Trofimov reveals the rigors of coordinating joint operations in a combat environment.

Finally, the teams felt that they were never really able to accomplish their assigned missions, although the teams of Gavin and Guy rendered valuable service to the 6th Armored Division and the 83rd Infantry Division. This was largely due to the fact that they were dropped approximately 75 miles away from their assigned areas.<sup>29</sup>

### Endnotes

1. Mendolsohn, Covert Warfare, Vol. 4., pp. 444, 459. The members of Teams Gavin and Guy had operational code names. The French usually had a nom de guerre. Listed are some personal information on team members. Team Gavin -- true name: Major Jean Carbuccia (later promoted to General in the French Army), code name: SHILLING, nationality: French, nom de guerre: D. Jean-Claude; true name: Captain William B. Dreux, code name: SIXPENCE, nationality: American; true name: 2D Lieutenant Paul Valentini, code name: HALFPENNY, nationality: French, nom de guerre: G. Masson. Team Guy -- true name: Captain Andre Duron, code name: DRONNE, nationality: French, nom de guerre: Andre Dthomas; true name: Captain A. E. Trofimov (of Middleton on Sea), code name: GIRONDE, nationality: British; true name: 2D Lieutenant Roger Groult, code name: DORDOGNE, nationality: French, nom de guerre: J. Deschamps.
2. Ibid., p. 445.
3. Encyclopedia Britannica, Vol. 11, p. 1077.
4. Mendolsohn, Covert Warfare, Vol. 4., pp. 445, 474.
5. Ibid., p. 446.
6. Strawson, John. A History of the SAS Regiment. London: Secker & Warburg, 1984, pp. 132-33.
7. Mendolsohn, Covert Warfare, Vol. 4, pp. 147-48.
8. Ibid., pp. 448-49.
9. Blumenson, Breakout and Pursuit, pp. 354-55.
10. Mendolsohn, Covert Warfare, Vol. 4, pp. 449-50.
11. Ibid., pp. 469-70.
12. Ibid., p.472.
13. Ibid., p. 674.
14. Ibid., p. 476.
15. William B. Dreux, No Bridges Blown, (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1971), pp. 164-65. Captain Dreux was a lawyer from New Orleans, Louisiana before World War II. He volunteered to be a Jedburgh at



Fort Benning, Georgia, where he was an infantry officer. William B. Dreux was born in 1911 in Paris, and lived there until 1919 when his parents immigrated to the United States. Although he was trained as a demolition expert, much to his chagrin, Captain Dreux never did get to blow up a bridge as a Jedburgh in World War II.

16. Mendolsohn, Covert Warfare, Vol. 4, p. 484, and Dreux, No Bridges Blown, pp. 208-9.

17. Mendolsohn, Covert Warfare, Vol. 4, p. 485.

18. Ibid., p. 485, and Dreux, No Bridges Blown, pp. 208-9.

19. Dreux, No Bridges Blown, pp. 241-43.

20. Mendolsohn, Covert Warfare, Vol. 4, p. 486.

21. Dreux, No Bridges Blown, pp. 222-23.

22. Mendolsohn, Covert Warfare, Vol. 4, p. 487. Major Jean-Claude, whose real name was Jean Carbuccia of Besancon, France, would later become a General in the French army after World War II.

23. Ibid., p. 485.

24. Ibid., p. 489.

25. Ibid., p. 489.

26. Trofimov, A.E., letter to the author, 24 March 1993. Mr. Trofimov was born 7 December 1921. After his mission in Brittany was complete in July 1944, then Captain Trofimov parachuted into the Karen Mountains of Burma with another Jedburgh team in early February 1945. In Burma he was promoted to Major. Major Trofimov distinguished himself while in Burma, and was awarded the French Croix de Guerre, and the British award of the Military Cross, following an attack against the Japanese garrison at Papun. Major Trofimov served in various command assignments until his release from military service in September 1946. He became a chartered architect after the war until his recent retirement.

27. Ibid.

28. Ibid.

29. Mendolshon, Covert Warfare, Vol. 4, p. 488.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### TEAM GERALD

On the night of 18/19 July 1944, Jedburgh Team Gerald parachuted into the Morbihan area of Brittany; the seventeenth team sent from the United Kingdom. The team consisted of: Captain Stephen J. Knerly, and 1st Sergeant Berent E. Friele, both U.S. soldiers; and a French officer, Lieutenant Claude L'Herbette. Team Gerald would spend the next three months operating in the Morbihan area before returning to London.<sup>1</sup>

There were two SAS bases in the Morbihan area-- "Dingson" and "Grog" (as noted in previous chapters), ostensibly led by Commandant "Bourgoin." Team George I (in Loire Inferieure, i.e., now called Loire Atlantique) and Team Frederick (in Cotes du Nord) were also operating in close proximity to Morbihan. SFHQ sent Team Gerald to Morbihan to replace team George I (which had displaced to Loire Inferieure). They would help organize resistance groups in the area, and assist Commandant "Bourgoin" (of the EMFFI).

SFHQ estimated some 4,000 armed maquis in Morbihan.<sup>2</sup>

On 20 July team Gerald reported their safe arrival to SFHQ. The Eureka set (radio navigational device used to

mark a drop zone) was lost when parachuting into Morbihan. This would hamper future aerial drops.<sup>3</sup>

Commandant "Bourgoin" failed to appear for a meeting with Team Gerald on 24 July. Several days later the team decided that they would operate independently of the SAS in Morbihan. Team Gerald was wary of working with the SAS. In their report to SFHQ, the team indicated that they disapproved of SAS tactics. Whereas the Jedburghs were sent primarily to advise and organize the resistance in the area, the SAS were perceived as actually taking over the Maquis in Morbihan.<sup>4</sup>

The work accomplished in Morbihan by the Jedburghs and the Maquis consisted of attacking enemy lines of communication: railroad ties and telephone lines. They also attacked small convoys. An excellent example of such operations occurred on 3 August. Captain Knerly and 1st Sergeant Friele succeeded in blowing up a tree in front of three approaching enemy vehicles. A short engagement ensued, with the result of 30 enemy killed and 15 wounded, and two vehicles demolished. The Jeds and the resistance fighters suffered no casualties.<sup>5</sup>

Team Gerald reported that their meetings with resistance groups were usually fast, efficient and trustworthy. However, one courier was captured by the Gestapo in Pontivy. The agent told the Germans what they

wanted to know, so the Gestapo knew of Team Gerald. They were even aware that the Jeds had lost a radio in the area (i.e., one receiver was smashed on the insertion, however, the Jeds had brought another receiver as a spare). Despite being informed of the Jedburghs in Morbihan, the Gestapo never, however, caught Team Gerald. They were able to avoid detection by constantly staying on the move, in the area of Mur de Bretagne, Loudeac, and Pontivy.<sup>6</sup>

In early August Allied forces were rapidly advancing into Brittany. Team Gerald met up with an advancing column of the 6th Armored Division, which provided a jeep for the Jeds. They led the column through St Conac to Finisterre, for Combat Command B (commanded by Colonel George W. Read, Jr.) of the 6th Armored Division, which advanced along the main road to Brest from Rennes. The team reported that they liberated eight French towns along the way. At Carhaix they encountered resistance from a garrison of 1,500 Germans, and went north towards Morlaix through the town of La Cloitre. Their jeep then ran over a mine. The Jeds escaped without injury, but all of the equipment in the vehicle was destroyed.<sup>7</sup>

Team Gerald proceeded to contact the SF representative at the 6th Armored Division. At the division, they contacted Major General Robert W. Grow, the Commanding General. He put them in touch with a Lieutenant

Colonel Drosty. The team then briefed him on the tactical situation in the Morbihan department. They also described the lack of unity between the Jeds and the SAS in the area.<sup>8</sup>

During the next several weeks in the first half of August, Team Gerald directed resistance efforts in the Morbihan area. They dispatched three Maquis battalions, which took control of the main road from Brest to Rennes, while the SAS guarded roads south of the main road. In Pontivy the team established an office in the bureau of civil affairs to facilitate cooperation with the 6th Armored Division.<sup>9</sup>

On 18 August Team Gerald left Pontivy for Rennes. There they contacted SFHQ, which relayed the status of General Bradley's advance. At Rennes they briefed the G-2 of the U.S. First Army of the resistance situation in Morbihan. After the briefing the team's mission was complete in Brittany, and they returned to London.<sup>10</sup>

#### Team Gerald Conclusions

The team commented in their after action report, that the terrain description in the SFHQ briefing in London prior to insertion, was incorrect. Although this did not adversely affect their operations, it could have proven otherwise.<sup>11</sup>

Relations between the Jedburghs and the SAS were strained, as was the case with previous teams in Brittany. The Jeds had a high regard for SAS fighting abilities, but with separate chains of command, and therefore separate agendas and priorities, the two organizations never quite meshed. This lack of unity in the same area of operations hampered aid to the resistance.

The team complained that they did not receive items that were requested for the resistance from aerial containers supplied by SFHQ. Not enough weapons and ammunition were sent to Team Gerald to supply resistance fighters.<sup>12</sup>

Radio problems continued to crop up in analysis of Jedburgh operations in Eastern Brittany. The team lost a Eureka set and a radio receiver was destroyed when they landed. Fortunately, the team had brought an extra receiver with them. Messages from SFHQ were often 24 to 40 hours late. As a result, most of the work had already been carried out by the time the message(s) was received. Team Gerald requested that messages be written in English to facilitate deciphering. Despite this request, SFHQ radio operators sent a number of messages in French, which made deciphering more difficult and time consuming.<sup>13</sup>

### Endnotes

1. Mendolsohn, Covert Warfare, Vol. 4, p. 558. The members of Team Gerald had operational code names. The French usually had a nom de guerre. Listed are some personal information on Team Gerald members. True name: Captain S. J. Knerly, code name: NORFOLK, nationality: American; true name: Lieutenant Claude L'Herbette, code name: SUFFOLK, nationality: French, nom de guerre: J. L. Beaumont; true name: ISG Berent E. Friele, code name: SELKIRK, nationality: American.

2. Ibid., pp. 558-9.

3. Ibid., p. 560. The Eureka set was a radio navigational device used by agents on the ground to mark a drop zone for aerial drop of personnel and equipment. The operator on the ground transmitted signal letters to aircraft, using the Eureka becon (by changing the frequency of the signal), which an aircraft radar air-ground instrument recorded.

4. Ibid., pp. 566-67.

5. Ibid., pp. 569-70.

6. Ibid., p. 571.

7. Ibid., pp. 572-73, and Blumenson, Breakout and Pursuit, p. 310. The 6th Armored Division was a new unit. Major General Grow was attached to the unit as its commander from the Third Army--commanded by Lieutenant General George S. Patton, Jr. The 6th Armored Division was subordinate to VII Corps, commanded by Major General Troy H. Middleton.

8. Ibid., p. 573.

9. Ibid., pp. 570-71.

10. Ibid., p. 575 and Blumenson, Breakout and Pursuit, p. 36. General Omar N. Bradley assumed command of the U.S. First Army in the fall of 1943. General Bradley supervised planning of U.S. ground units that were to participate in "Operation Overlord," and directed American elements in the invasion assault.

11. Mendolsohn, Covert Warfare, Vol. 4, p. 578.

12. Ibid., p. 577.



13. Ibid., p. 576.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### TEAM DANIEL

Team Daniel was the eighteenth team dispatched to France from the United Kingdom. They parachuted into the Cotes du Nord department on the night of 4 August. A British officer, Captain Ken D. Bennett was in charge of the team. Sergeant Ron Brierley, also British, served as the radio operator. Lieutenant Albert de Schonen, a French officer, completed the team.<sup>1</sup>

The mission of Team Daniel was to provide a liaison between SFHQ and the commander of the Cotes du Nord department. They were to meet with Colonel Eon, who was in charge of the Maquis in the area (NOTE: Colonel Eon had recently been parachuted into the area, as noted in previous chapters).<sup>2</sup>

The team was to have been met by a reception committee organized by Team Frederick. However, they were not dropped at the right location. Team Daniel was met by a noisy crowd of some 100 youths, who had lit two fires in the hopes of receiving parachuted Allied supplies. Fortunately, there were no Germans located near the drop zone, to take advantage of the poor security displayed by the inexperienced young resistance fighters.<sup>3</sup>

The local Maquis drove the Jeds (by car) to Team Frederick's headquarters, which was 12 kilometers away. Upon arriving at Team Frederick's command post, they reported to Colonel Eon. Their mission, known as "Aloes," as it turned out, was not necessary. Coordination between the chief, FFI and other resistance groups in Brittany had already been accomplished. Team Daniel found themselves searching for meaningful work while on mission "Aloes."<sup>4</sup>

On 7 August, SFHQ informed Team Daniel that they were being recalled, to perform a mission near Chateaudun. On 10 August the team returned to London, having spent less than a week in France.<sup>5</sup>

#### Team Daniel Conclusions

As it turned out, Team Daniel was not needed, as its mission had already been accomplished by Colonel Eon, with the help of Team Frederick. SFHQ evidently, was unaware of the tactical situation on the ground, hampered by poor communications between Team Frederick and London. This situation was unfortunate, as Team Daniel could have been dispatched to a more important area. In their final report to SFHQ, Team Daniel noted the important contribution that French women made in the resistance movement. They often undertook dangerous tasks, such as conveying messages, performing reconnaissance and carrying money to distant

maquis members, often moving through numerous German checkpoints and patrols.<sup>6</sup>

### Endnotes

1. Mendolsohn, Covert Warfare, Vol. 4, p. 581. The members of Team Daniel had operational code names. The French usually had a nom de guerre. Listed are some personal information on Team Daniel members. True name: Captain Ken D. Bennett, code name: APOTRE, nationality: British; true name: Lieutenant Albert de Schonen, code name: ARGENTIER, nationality: French; true name: Sergeant R. Brierley, code name: FLORIN, nationality: British.

2. Ibid., p. 581.

3. Ibid., pp. 582-83.

4. Ibid., p. 584.

5. Ibid., p. 582.

6. Ibid., p. 586.

## CHAPTER NINE

### CONCLUSION

In January 1944 the Jedburghs were a neophyte organization. They were the forerunners of today's modern special forces. Yet the organization was disbanded soon after World War II. What lessons can be derived from studying the operations of seven Jedburgh teams in Eastern Brittany during the summer of 1944? This chapter will examine that question and explore several others. It will analyze the reasons for success or failure for each team. Jedburgh experiences in Eastern Brittany will be compared with other teams that served in Northwestern Europe (in conjunction with Operation "Overlord") during the same time period. Finally, it will conclude with examining methods that could have been employed to improve Jedburgh performance.

Why had the Jedburghs been formed to begin with? There was a need to form a joint organization, comprised of Americans, British and French to aid the French resistance and to help pave the way for the Allied invasion of Europe. British Major General Gubbins originated the idea for the Jedburgh operation. The Jedburghs were to parachute three man teams behind enemy lines to conduct

guerrilla operations against the enemy's lines of communications. Specific tasks for Jedburghs included: disrupting enemy communications, cutting rail lines, attacking enemy convoys, targeting rear area enemy command posts and staffs, and performing any other task deemed necessary according to the military situation.<sup>1</sup>

In order to accomplish their assigned tasks, each Jedburgh team's first priority was to establish liaison with the resistance. They then reported the strength of personnel, equipment and leadership potential to SFHQ. SFHQ then supplied the resistance with air drops, with drop zones identified by the Jed teams. In some cases, several teams were instructed to prevent German sabotage, due to the rapid advance of Allied forces in their area. Also, some teams were to work with the British SAS in their area, even though the SAS operated under a separate chain of command that was not under SFHQ.

Team Frederick successfully accomplished its assigned mission. It established a base of operations in Cotes Du Nord, which provided liaison, arms and materials for the local resistance. The team cut rail lines, severed enemy communications, and attacked convoys. It protected road networks and prevented enemy destruction of bridges, which helped pave the way for the rapid Allied advance to Morlaix. Shortcomings of the mission included: strained

relations with the SAS, and lack of accurate intelligence. The intelligence failure of SFHQ caused difficulties in requesting and receiving proper amounts of arms and equipment. Additionally, Team Frederick also helped establish liaison between SFHQ and the commander of the Cotes du Nord department. This proved significant, because Team Daniel later parachuted into the area to conduct the same mission. Why was this fact not known by SFHQ?

Team George I was hampered by poor security during its stay in Eastern Brittany. They were constantly on the run from the Germans. The team had trouble with resupply from SFHQ, due to poor radio communications. This is one of the few teams analyzed that had good relations with the British SAS. The team helped lead and arm a large contingent of resistance in the Loire Inferieure Department (today referred to as "Loire Atlantique") and helped protect the right flank of the U.S. Third Army from St. Etienne to Redon.<sup>2</sup>

Similar to other Jedburghs, Team Felix felt that they had been inserted too late. They were successful in their mission to organize and arm resistance groups in the Cotes du Nord department. One can only speculate how much more effective partisan support and effectiveness would have been, if the Jedburghs and the SAS had achieved unity of effort through closer planning and cooperation. The



separate chains of command led to conflicting guidance and orders being issued to resistance groups. Team Felix received Michelin road maps (as was the case with other teams), which possessed insufficient detail.<sup>3</sup>

The combined operations of Teams Gavin and Guy provide the reader with unique insights into guerrilla operations in the Mayenne and Ille et Villaine departments, and liaison with conventional army units. Both teams dropped approximately 75 miles from their intended drop zone, despite the fact that several drop zones were much closer. As a result, the teams admitted that they were not really able to accomplish their assigned missions. They did, however, help protect the right flank of the 6th Armored Division during its push towards St. Malo. Radio problems also plagued these operations. Causing further annoyance was the fact that some radio operators in London were unaware of Team Guy's radio problems.<sup>4</sup>

Team Gerald experienced difficulties while working with the SAS in Morbihan. The SAS were too inclined to fight the Germans, regardless of consequences. The Jedburghs on the other hand, preferred to spend more time training resistance fighters prior to conducting raids. The team complained that they did not receive enough weapons and ammunition to supply resistance fighters. The team's radio set was destroyed during the insertion. They also lost a

Eureka set. Despite these setbacks, the team accomplished its mission of providing liaison to the resistance and supplying them with leadership, tactical training and supplies.

The mission of Team Daniel can only be viewed as a failure. They spent less than a week on the ground in Brittany, searching for a mission, and waiting to get back to London. SFHQ was unaware of the fact that Team Frederick had already provided the liaison with resistance elements in the Cotes du Nord department. Team Daniel could have been dispatched to a more important area in retrospect.

As compared to the Jedburgh teams studied by Dr. S. J. Lewis, which operated in support of the 12th Army Group during the same time period, there are several recurrent themes. The mission of the aforementioned teams and that of the Brittany teams examined in this study were essentially the same--to provide assistance to the local resistance. Radio problems plagued Jedburgh teams in both studies. Radio sets would often break during parachute drops. Communications with SFHQ were difficult in the field. Often messages did not get through or were not processed by SFHQ properly.<sup>5</sup>

Other similarities between the two sets of Jedburgh teams examined, was the feeling of team members that they should have been inserted into their area of operations

sooner. A. E. Trofimov, a member of Team Guy, stated that SFHQ had, had no contact with the Maquis since March 1944. Yet, both studies show that the Jedburghs were not inserted into Northwestern Europe until the summer of 1944.<sup>5</sup> Perhaps the very lack of human intelligence was a primary factor for not inserting the Jedburgh teams earlier.

Another common facet of Jedburgh teams in Northern France and Eastern Brittany, is that several teams were used by regular forces in a conventional role, rather than the unconventional role that they had been trained for. Team Rupert-Phillip helped screen the left flank of the U.S. Third Army.<sup>7</sup> In Eastern Brittany, Team George I protected the right flank of the U.S. Third Army from St. Etienne to Redon.<sup>8</sup> Teams Gavin/Guy provided assistance to the 6th Armored Division in screening their right flank.<sup>9</sup>

Cooperation between the British SAS and the Jedburghs was strictly voluntary, i.e., ad hoc. Relations between the SAS and the Jedburghs were strained in several cases. This contrasts with the excellent cooperation between the neophyte organizations of the British SOE and the American OSS, which helped jointly develop, train, and deploy the Jedburghs into Northwestern Europe.

What could have been done in 1944 to improve the performance of the Jedburghs in Eastern Brittany? If the British SAS could have been incorporated into the joint

structure of the British SOE and American SO into SFHQ, perhaps operations could have been improved. Unity of command would have been achieved. All of the above organizations would have answered to one chain of command, speaking with one joint voice, thus reducing confusion and duplicity of effort. Training and liaison with the resistance would have been tremendously improved. Often, resistance leaders were confused as to who to talk to and had difficulty discerning exactly who was in charge.

Radios tended to break when parachuting into a drop zone. Perhaps a harder cover could have been tested and fielded in order to provide better protection. In the absence of this procedure (due to the limited technology of the period), the teams could have been fielded another spare set. That, however, would have required the radio operator to carry even more equipment, and additional weight.

Why did the teams have to be so small? If one member of a three man team became a casualty, there was little or no redundancy to ensure that the mission was carried out. If the radio operator was killed, one of the two officers would have had to perform this laborious function. Luckily, this was not a problem for the teams examined in this study. The addition of several more Jedburghs per team would have provided SFHQ more members to provide intelligence to SFHQ and train resistance fighters.

Three soldiers per team were woefully inadequate to train and equip upwards of a thousand Maquis in a given area.

Better military maps were needed to provide the Jedburghs with detailed topographical information on the terrain in their respective area of operations. Jedburghs were issued Michelin maps during their SFHQ briefings in London, prior to their insertion. These maps lacked sufficient detail to meet mission demands.

Many institutional failings were experienced by the seven Jedburgh teams that operated in Eastern Brittany in the summer of 1944. However, the Jedburgh operations represent an early success in joint operations. The cooperation in planning, training and execution between the British SOE, American SO and the French resistance was an outstanding achievement of its time.

Another shining success of the Jedburghs endures. That success was the level of inspired leadership and courage the Jedburghs displayed while helping the French resistance cut loose from four years of Nazi occupation. The Jedburgh spirit lives on today in the U.S. Army Special Forces, who are indebted to the pioneering techniques employed by the volunteers from Milton Hall.

### Endnotes

1. Mendolsohn, Covert Warfare, Vol. 3, p. i.
2. Mendolsohn, Covert Warfare, Vol. 4, pp. 189-90.
3. J. J. Merchant, letter to the author, 4 March 1993.
4. Mendolsohn, Covert Warfare, Vol. 4, pp. 488-89.
5. Lewis, Jedburgh Team Operations, p. 62.
6. Trofimov, A. E., letter to the author, 4 March 1993.
7. Lewis, p. 69.
8. Mendelsohn, Covert Warfare, Vol. 4, pp. 189-90.
9. Ibid., p. 486.

## GLOSSARY

Agent	Specially trained operative dropped behind enemy lines to obtain information, organize resistance forces, and commit acts of sabotage.
BBC	British Broadcasting Company, the national radio system of the United Kingdom, sent blind transmission broadcasts to FFI and Jedburghs in France.
<u>Boche</u>	French slang word for Germans.
Bren	An automatic British light machine gun, which fired .303 inch ammunition. A reliable, magazine fed, gas-operated selective fire weapon, with a cyclic rate of fire of 50 rounds per minute from a 30 round magazine. Weight: 10.04 kilograms.
Containers	A durable metal or plastic cylindrical case approximately six feet in length. Used for aerial resupply of resistance or Jedburgh teams.
COSSAC	Chief of Staff, Supreme Allied Command, Western Europe.
DZ	Drop zone.
EMFFI	Etat Majeur Forces Francaises de l'Interieure--headquarters of the French Forces of the Interior, an allied organization commanded by General Pierre-Marie Koenig.
Gestapo	German Secret Police.
G-1	U.S. Army Staff Personnel Division
G-2	U.S. Army Staff Intelligence Division

G-3	U.S. Army Staff Operations Division
G-4	U.S. Army Staff Logistics Division
G-5	U.S. Army Staff Civil Affairs Division
LZ	Landing zone
Maquis	The name given to French guerrilla bands. Also known as Maquisards. The word originally signified the high ground in southeastern France, where young men sought refuge from forced labor imposed by the enemy.
OG	American Operational Group composed of specially trained volunteers, consisting of four officers and 30 soldiers, who conducted guerrilla warfare.
OSS	Office of Strategic Services, and forerunner of the Central Intelligence Agency.
OVERLORD	Code name given to the 6 June 1944 Allied invasion of France.
SAS	Special Air Service. A British military unit similar to OSS/OG teams.
SFHQ	Special Forces Headquarters, a joint OSS/SOE headquarters in London.
SHAEF	Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Forces, headquartered in London.
SO	Special Operations Branch of OSS
SOE	Special Operations--Executive, British organization that controlled Western Allied support to the resistance in Northwestern Europe.
SOF	Special Operations Forces
Wehrmacht	The German Armed Forces of World War II.
W/T	Wireless telegraphy or radio.



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