

= List of Ops (B) staff =

Ops (B) was a deception planning department within the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF) during the Second World War . Established in the United Kingdom in April 1943 , the section was in charge of operational deception planning for the Western Front . Their major contribution was to Operations Cockade and Bodyguard , the latter being the cover plan for their Allied invasion of Normandy in 1944 .

Originally under Colonel J. V. B. Jervis @-@ Read , the department suffered from a lack of authority and resources . In December 1943 , Jervis @-@ Read was replaced by Colonel Noel Wild , a member of the middle eastern ' A ' Force deception department , and expanded dramatically . Wild split the department into Operations and Intelligence sections . Lieutenant Colonel Roger Fleetwood @-@ Hesketh retained charge of the latter , and Wild placed Jervis @-@ Read in command of the former . Fleetwood @-@ Hesketh immediately expanded his staff , bringing in his brother , an MI5 liaison officer and a secretary . The operations section was not expanded until May , with three American officers and Major S. B. D. (Sam) Hood (another ' A ' Force alumnus) joining the department .

In July 1944 , Wild won a power struggle over who was in charge of deception planning in France ; consequently Ops (B) had a much more involved role . He sent Jervis @-@ Read to France at the head of a " Forward " section , accompanied by the American officers Lieutenant Colonel Frederic W. Barnes and Major Alfred (Al) J. F. Moody . By the end of October 1944 , all of the American members of the department had returned home , leaving an entirely British staff .

= = John Jervis @-@ Read = =

Brigadier John Vaughan Bruce Jervis @-@ Read OBE was the original head of Ops (B) . He had joined the Royal Engineers from university as a second lieutenant in 1933 . By March 1942 , when he was appointed head of the deception section , he held the rank of colonel . His main task was the planning of Operation Cockade . It was not a success , in part due to the complexity of the operation , but also because of the limited resources at his disposal . Lieutenant General Frederick E. Morgan , at that time the most senior officer at SHAEF , the Supreme Commander having yet to be appointed , viewed Colonel Dudley Clarke 's A Force as a " private army " which he would not have duplicated under his command .

In December 1943 Jervis @-@ Read was replaced by Colonel Noel Wild , who reorganised Ops (B) . Jervis @-@ Read was made head of the Operations section as his deputy . Following the Allied invasion of France , he became Deputy Assistant Chief of Staff at SHAEF . In 1945 he was appointed an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) , the citation recognised his work with Ops (B) and in France . He retired from the army in 1963 , having attained the rank of brigadier .

= = Noel Wild = =

Colonel Noel Wild was Dudley Clarke 's deputy in Cairo from April 1942 . Toward the end of 1943 , when Ops (B) was scheduled for expansion to assist with Bodyguard , a deception cover plan for the D @-@ Day landings , Clarke secretly suggested Wild as the department 's head . In December of that year Wild was sent to London , he believed on leave , where he was assessed for suitability and then appointed to the role .

Under Wild , Ops (B) was expanded and divided into two sections ? Operations and Intelligence . It received greater power , including control of the information flowing to double agents . Wild used this to help with planning for Operation Fortitude , the major segment of the Bodyguard plan . This situation did not last long ; another ' A ' Force alumnus , Lieutenant Colonel David Strangeways , was brought over to head up R Force , the operational deception unit of the 21st Army Group . Strangeways and Wild clashed on a personal and professional level . Eventually , Strangeways rewrote large portions of the Fortitude South plan , and pushed Ops (B) into a more supporting role .

In July 1944 , Wild wrestled control of operational deception planning from Strangeways and others , and sent a portion of the department (Jervis @-@ Read plus the American officers Barnes and Moody) to France as the Forward section . He remained in the UK with the rest of the staff as the ' Read ' section .

= = Roger Fleetwood @-@ Hesketh = =

Lieutenant Colonel Roger Fleetwood Hesketh TD , DL , OBE , was the son of Major Charles Hesketh Fleetwood @-@ Hesketh . Like his father , he was educated at Eton and Oxford before becoming a barrister , and later a soldier . Hesketh , then a major , joined Ops (B) alongside Jervis @-@ Read as the department 's only intelligence officer . Colonel John Bevan , in setting up the unit , felt that it would only require operational capabilities , and that intelligence would remain with his own London Controlling Section ; but with the arrival of Wild , Hesketh was handed control of an expanded intelligence section , which included his brother , Cuthbert , a civilian secretary and an MI5 liaison officer .

Following the end of the war , Hesketh was sent to Germany , alongside his brother , to search through the files of German intelligence , and question officers . He was then asked to write a history of deception in Western Europe , including the work up to and including Operation Fortitude .

= = Other members = =

Prior to Wild 's arrival , Ops (B) had a very small staff ? consisting of Jervis @-@ Read , Hesketh and two American officers . From January 1944 , Wild expanded the staff to include liaisons with MI5 , additional American officers and experienced deception staff from ' A ' Force in Cairo .

= = = Operations = = =

= = = Intelligence = = =

= = = = London Gazette = = = =

The London Gazette : (Supplement) no . 33908 @.@ p . 742 . 3 February 1933 .

The London Gazette : (Supplement) no . 42989 @.@ p . 4015 . 10 May 1963 .

= = = = War record = = = =

" Recommendation for Award : Order of The British Empire " . The National Archives . 19 April 1945 .