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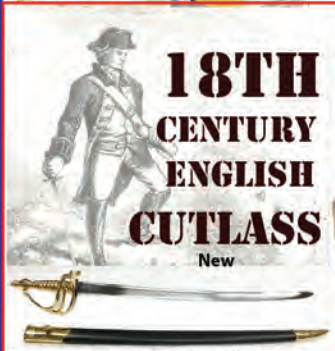

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FEATURES

Cover: A German soldier from the 14th Regiment, 2nd company, photographed in 1914. See story page 68. Photo: Alamy / Chronicle.

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COLUMNS

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EDITORIAL

Maneuvering for the Open Flank

All day on July 4, 1863, the Union and Confederate armies stared at each other across the battlefield of Gettysburg. Three days of massive attacks had bled the Confederates until they lacked the manpower to attack again. The Union's failure to go on the offensive is harder to explain.

In a letter to his wife, Major General George Meade justified his inaction. "For a day the enemy waited, hoping we could attack so they could play their old game of shooting at us from behind walls."

More than just explicating his lack of aggressiveness, this statement was his philosophy, one that Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee would also follow for the remainder of 1863. Both generals had seen the futility of frontal attacks at Fredericksburg and Gettysburg. Both had seen the success of the attack on the enemy's flank at Second Manassas and Chancellorsville. Both generals wanted victory without the carnage of a heads-on attack.

In October, Lee went on the offensive using the strategy that had worked so well for him previously. His initial aim was to assault the right flank of the Union army near Culpeper Court House. That plan failed because Meade rapidly withdrew his army north across the Rappahannock River.

Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

General George Meade orders troops forward during the Battle of Gettysburg.

Rather than abandon the offensive, Lee decided to try again. The second flanking maneuver would find his army striking the Union right and rear near Bristoe Station. Again, Meade frustrated Lee's plans by withdrawing.

Both times Lee could have assaulted the Union Army. He must have known that the rapid withdrawal had left it somewhat disorganized, and yet he did not press the advantage. He did not want to make a frontal attack, even when the enemy had little time to prepare.

Meade's strategy was similar to Lee's. In September, when he learned that part of Lee's army had headed for northwest Georgia, he spent two weeks trying to find a way to maneuver around either of Lee's flanks.

In November, he took the offensive twice. On November 7, he crossed the Rappahannock River at Kelley's Ford. By the time his troops crossed, Lee had pivoted his army about to face him. When the Union army did not attack, Lee withdrew across the Rapidan River.

At the end of November, Meade tried again. He crossed the Rapidan in hopes of marching around Lee's right flank. The III Corps lost half a day crossing the river, then blundered into the Confederates at Payne's Farm. During the night, Lee consolidated his position behind Mine Run. Meade made another effort to circle Lee's right. Ultimately, he failed and withdrew rather than risk a frontal assault.

This military minuet would end with General Ulysses S. Grant's arrival in Virginia in the spring of '64. Grant crossed the Rapidan in May, ready to fight—come what may. His strategy of using the superior numbers of his army to crush the Southerners led to repeated frontal attacks. Forced to counterattack to save his position, Lee found his army being destroyed in a war of attrition.

—Robert Suhr

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Second Lieutenant Erving Peterson was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross in northern Luzon, January 1945

By Michael A. Flexsenhar III

Second Lieutenant Erving L. Peterson led a seven-man reconnaissance patrol along the coastal road out ahead of the 158th Infantry's main column. It was early in the afternoon of January 12, 1945, a warm, clear day with a fresh breeze blowing from the north. The waters of Lingayen Gulf were calm as the surf gently lapped the nearby shore.

The patrol travelled light: weapons, maps, water, and demolition charges. How long their mission would take, they didn't know. How many enemy were in the area, they weren't sure. They were told to follow the road, keep moving north, until they met their objective—a Japanese ammunition dump which they were also to destroy, if possible.

The patrol passed *barrios*, small clusters of bamboo shacks, which were indistinguishable on their maps. To the right of the road fields, interrupted by an occasional copse, stretched across the landscape until they reached a series of razorback ridges that rolled up into the hills and on to hazy mountain tops from where the Japanese fired artillery and mortars onto the 158 Infantry.

The patrol soon spotted a more substantial settlement at about 1500 and Peterson halted the patrol. The village seemed to be deserted. Train tracks ran up to a large brick building with Romanesque arches, clearly a rail station. Beside the station the patrol could make out the ordnance lined and piled in a substantial ammunition dump. They counted 13 Japanese soldiers guarding the ammo dump.

Photo courtesy of Myron Broschat, VFW, Fergus Fall, MN

Second Lieutenant Erving Peterson soon after he was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross on the island of Luzon in the Philippines. TOP: Soldiers with a .30 caliber water cooled machine gun near Damortis on Luzon. On January 9, 1945, more than 175,000 troops landed on Luzon's east coast as part of Operation MIKE aimed at liberating the island from Japanese occupation.

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ABOVE: Soldiers from the 158th Regimental Combat Team, 3rd Battalion, man a hilltop observation post for 81 mm mortars on the Batangas Peninsula on Luzon in the Philippines in March 1945. The "Bushmasters" were tasked with clearing out Japanese forces and securing the area around Balayan Bay and Batangas Bay. TOP: On January 14, 1945, soldiers from D Company, 1st Battalion, of the 158th Regimental Combat Team, fire on a Japanese sniper near the village of Damortis along the Lingayen Gulf of Luzon, Philippines.

Outnumbered, two to one, Peterson had a decision to make.

Japanese artillery and mortar fire northeast of Lingayen Gulf on the Philippine Island of Luzon had slowed the progress of the U.S. 6th Army for days. Gen. Douglas MacArthur, Commander-in-Chief (CINC) of the Southwest Pacific Command, was growing impatient with 6th Army commander Gen. Walter Krueger. MacArthurwanted speed. The 6th Army's amphibious landings at Lingayen Gulf on January 9 had been unopposed. The U.S. 6th Army, made up of I Corps, commanded by Maj. Gen. Innis Swift, and XIV Corps, commanded by Lt. Gen. Oscar Griswold, had landed four total divisions, established beach heads, and quickly fanned out. Manilla, the capital of the Philippines, was only 120 miles away on the flat coastal plain and MacArthur wanted it liberated as quickly as possible. The outcome of the campaign, not to mention the lives of Filipinos, depended on it. After his humiliating nocturnal exodus from Corregidor in April 1942, after years of struggle and thousands of miles of fighting, redemption was now nearly in MacArthur's grasp. What was the holdup?

The plan for the invasion of Luzon, code named MIKE I, was for Swift's I Corp to hold the left flank and allow Griswold's XIV Corps to sprint to Manilla. But by January 11, only the far left of 6th Army's front, I Corps, had encountered significant Japanese resistance. Harassing artillery from positions along the Damortis-Rosario road was the problem. The I Corps was "having a tough time with shelling," Griswold wrote in his diary. Cautious and plodding, Krueger feared a Japanese counterattack was brewing to his northeast. Swift's I Corps, Krueger reasoned, was holding a tenuous left flank that protected the entire Lingayen beachhead. Krueger wouldn't risk overextending his forces. The enemy in the northeast had to be addressed first and MacArthur begrudgingly relented.

To plug gaps in I Corps' expanding front and ensure his far left flank was covered, Krueger decided to commit his reserves. On the morning of January 11, 1945, he sent ashore the 158th Regimental Combat Team (RCT).

The 158th RCT was commanded by the former Acting Secretary of War and America-first isolationist, Brig. Gen. Hanford MacNider. The 158th RCT comprised three battalions of the 158th Infantry, totaling a few thousand men, plus the 147th Field Artillery Battalion, medical corps and auxiliaries. All together the RCT made up an independent "baby division" of about 4,500 men. Peterson's infantry unit, the 158th, was a motley crew of men from 39 different states, including Native Americans and Mexican Americans. They were known as "Bushmasters" after a deadly pit viper of Panama's jungles where the original outfit had trained in 1942. Machete-wielding, Judo practicing, close-quarters aficionados, the Bushmasters were Uncle Sam's jungle warriors.

The 158th RCT's strategic objective was to clear the Damortis-Rosario road leading East from Damortis to the junction of highways 3 and 11. Meeting this objective would provide I Corps with easy access to the Japanese summer capital of Baguio, where Japanese Gen. Tomoyuki Yamashita, commander of Japanese forces in the

One of two large Japanese guns overlooking the Damortis-Rosario road north of Cataguintingan on Luzon, in an area known as "Two Gun Valley." This Type 7 30 cm howitzer, with a bore diameter of 12 inches, could fire a 1,300-pound shell more than 9 miles. On February 1, Lt. Erving Peterson's G Company silenced the mammoth piece with the help of 81 mm mortars. The next day, 1st Battalion followed tanks in to take the second Type 7 gun.

Philippines, had established his headquarters. Meeting the objective would also overcome the threat of Japanese counterattack and finally allow XIV Corps to turn south and speed towards Manilla. But first the 158 Infantry had to move North and hold the extreme left flank of the U.S. 6th Army.

Peterson formed up with 2nd Battalion, 158th Infantry on White Beach I at 0945 on January 11. At 1100, 2nd Battalion pushed north to protect the coast road leading north from Lingayen Gulf to Damortis. The Filipinos, who had endured unspeakable horrors at the hands of the Japanese, came out like supplicants paying homage to saints. Filipino men in broad-brimmed buri hats and Filipina women in free-flowing white dresses lined the roads and cheered as their saviors marched by. By 1300, the 158th had made it to Rabon and relieved 1st Battalion, 172 Infantry, of the 43rd Division. The 158th then continued north thousands of yards farther than their A-day schedule.

Soon, however, they were met with heavy artillery fire, light machine gun, and small arms fire from the front and from the ridges to the East. "All afternoon Jap artillery and mortar fire was landing on the crest of the hills across the road about 700 yards away," wrote Maj. William Garlic of the Third Surgical Hospital attached to the 158. The 158th Infantry took up positions astride the road: 2nd Battalion was in the van, 3rd Battalion outposted on the right flank, and 1st Battalion assembled just south. Heavy artillery continued falling. By 1400 the 147 Field Artillery was in position between the 3rd and 1st Battalion and was registering their fire by 1700. But progress had stopped. The 158 was pinned. They began digging in for what would be a long night.

At the RCT command post north of Rabon, the curtain of Japanese shellfire drew closer and closer, encircling the post and hitting men in neighboring foxholes, wrote American Legion correspondent Boyd Stutler. At dusk on January 11, casualties started arriving at the Third Surgical unit with shell fragment wounds. "There was enough to keep us busy most of the night," Garlic wrote. It was "one of the most harrowing nights I have ever spent on the battle lines," Stutler said.

While American casualties were still light, resistance was stiffening. And few experiences felt more helpless for the infantryman than artillery raining down from the heavens, each shell screaming and each soldier hoping it wasn't meant for him. The guns of the attached 147th Artillery Battalion responded in kind, but had little direct effect except to make noise. On January 12, MacNider summed up the situation in a letter to his wife: "Didn't get much sleep."

Intelligence reports started to filter in. A big Japanese ammunition dump was in the 158's sector, a dump that supplied the menacing enemy artillery. It was a tempting target. But if the dump was where intelligence said it ought to be—somewhere near the Damortis-Rosario road—it would be a difficult target to hit with American artillery or aerial bombing. An infantry unit would need to foot patrol into Damortis in order to confirm, and if possible, destroy the dump. Peterson, a quiet and unassuming 23-year-old from Fergus Falls, Minnesota, volunteered to lead the patrol.

By 1010, advanced elements of the 158th Infantry pressed forward once more with Peterson in the lead. MacNider himself started out with Peterson's patrol—"a grand bunch of kids," he called them. MacNider and Peterson chatted. It

Near Damortis, Philippines, on January 14 ,1945, members of the 158th Regimental Combat Team, nicknamed "Bushmasters," wait for litter bearers to carry a wounded comrade.

turns out, they'd met before.

Peterson was a newcomer to the Bushmasters but an old-timer in the Southwest Pacific. The day after the Japanese had bombed Pearl Harbor in December 1941, Peterson enlisted in the U.S. Army. He then spent most of the war fighting the Japanese in the steamy jungles of New Guinea as a platoon sergeant with the 32d Division, which at that time was under the direction of MacNider. Peterson had earned a reputation as aggressive, resourceful, and absolutely fearless in the face of danger. So impressed by his performance in combat were his superiors that they removed him from the ranks and sent him to Officer Candidate School in Australia. There he married an Australian girl who later gave birth to a son. In September 1944, he was commissioned as a second lieutenant and sent to the reconstituted 158th RCT as a platoon commander in 2nd Battalion, Company G, 158th Infantry.

"The general will not remember me," Peterson said upon reporting to MacNider's 158 RCT for assignment, "but I remember him well. The last time I saw the general was at the crossing of the Wanigela River just before Buna when he stopped and talked to me. I was an enlisted man then, and I am glad to be back under your command."

Now on the morning of January 12, MacNider was reunited with Peterson, this time following his patrol. MacNider relayed to his wife the happy reunion. "The Lieutenant [Peterson] in charge of its scouts," MacNider wrote, "had been a buck private in our outfit during the Buna campaign so we had a good time talking that over. Like old soldiers of another war." Soon Peterson would get a chance to prove his mettle once more, this time as a front line officer in the gritty 158.

By early afternoon, Peterson's patrol had left their commander in the rear and come upon the rail station and ammunition dump. Weighing the odds of seven Americans against 13 Japanese, Peterson talked with his men and quickly formed a plan—they would attack.

Peterson and his men crept towards the station, getting into position. At a prearranged signal, they launched a surprise assault. Firing from the hip, Peterson led the way. The shots echoed violently off the station's brick walls in the sharp and intimate firefight. The Bushmaster's speed and aggression overwhelmed the Japanese, who were all killed. The patrol, having suffered no casualties, searched the area. They captured 4 light artillery pieces, a .50 caliber machine gun, and 5 50 mm mortars.

Next the engineers went to work. They placed the demolition charges around the ordnance and set the timed fuses. They were about a mile down the road when the charges detonated. The explosion was so violent that it split the sky wide open. The ground shuddered under their feet. Dirt and debris started dropping down around their heads. Peterson's advanced patrol had destroyed 150 tons of enemy ammunition.

Damortis was secured by late afternoon.

But blowing up a single ammunition dump didn't stop the Japanese shelling. Now the real fighting would begin. The 158th RCT would turn East towards its main objective: clearing the Damortis-Rosario road. The campaign would be costly. To get to Baguio, the Bushmasters would have to traverse miles of lush valleys and narrow mountain passes along a route where the Japanese had years to prepare defenses. Entrenched in the hills above

the road—in meticulously crafted tunnels and pillboxes—they unleashed defilading artillery, mortar, and machine gun fire down onto the 158. "Moving directly up that highway through the valley was an invitation to be killed," wrote Capt. Harold Braun, Company B, 1st Battalion, 158th Infantry. With his Bushmaster buddies, Peterson's G Company would have to clear the defenses above the road–one bloody hill at a time.

Three days after taking Damortis, on January 15, MacNider was ranging along the front monitoring the progress of his "baby division." When he returned to the 158 RCT Headquarters, he received news that MacArthur was on the road up to meet him. It was the CINC's first visit to the front. MacArthur pulled up in his jeep, climbed out covered in dust, taking it all in. MacNider showed the CINC and his retinue around and MacArthur was pleased. MacNider's outfit was in some of the hottest fighting in the Philippines and was taking it to the enemy. The CINC had also heard about the kid from Minnesota. The initiative, the decisiveness, the speed—it was the kind of stuff that MacArthur was looking for. The CINC asked for the Peterson kid. MacNider sent word to pull him off a nearby hill.

At the Regimental Headquarters, MacNider, Swift, and Maj. Gen. Leonard F. Wing, commander of the 43rd Division were awaiting Peterson, along with MacArthur himself. All that brass must have made quite an impression on the small-town kid. The CINC approached Peterson and awarded him the Distinguished Service Cross. The Fergus Falls boy with the fetching smile was awarded the second highest honor in the U.S. military, behind only the Congressional Medal of Honor. Then MacArthur hopped back into his jeep and zipped off in a cloud of dust and Peterson returned to his unit to fight on.

Two weeks later, the 158th Infantry was engaged in heavy fighting along the Damortis-Rosario road north of Cataguintingan, in an area that became known as "Two Gun Valley." On February 1, a patrol encountered a well-organized enemy position containing mortars and machine guns. Peterson's G Company was dispatched to eliminate the pocket. Moving up the thick grassy slopes, by dint of will and persistent lead, they established contact, then set up a perimeter for the night.

Around midnight, the men were battered by the muzzle blast of a huge artillery piece located immediately in front of them. With ears ringing from the concussive blasts, the men could hear the jabbering of the Japanese gun crew as they loaded and fired the enormous 30 cm howitzer: the barrel and breech were 16 feet, with a bore diameter of 12 inches, and it was capable of hurling a 1,300-pound shell more than 9 miles. The gun rolled on heavy tracked wheels and railroad ties. After it was fired, the crew ran the gun back underneath a sawali shack with matted bamboo walls and covered the opening with camouflage netting, grasses, and bushes.

The Japanese got off 10 rounds before the 81 mm mortars attached to G Company succeeded in silencing the mammoth field piece. The battle was short, vicious, and one-sided. G Company killed 164 Japanese. Tanks were called for and at 0830 on February 2, 1st Battalion followed the tanks in. They crushed the last enemy defenses and took a second 30 cm howitzer. The two largest Japanese guns on Luzon were now the property of the Bushmasters. For capturing the gun, G Company was awarded the Philippine Presidential Unit Citation; the entire 158th Infantry would later receive the award for their part in liberating the Philippines.

That same day in early February 1945, amid nearly continuous combat with the Japanese, Peterson was severely wounded. The details are unknown, but he was evacuated to a field hospital where he languished for a few days. Peterson, who would never meet his son, died from his wounds on February 5. His body was returned to the U.S. in 1947 and he was buried in the Fort Snelling National Cemetery. ■

Civil War submarines like the H.L. Hunley opened a new chapter in naval warfare.

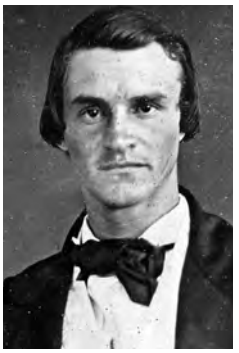
By Eric Niderost

Landsman Robert Fleming was on watch aboard the U.S.S. *Housatonic*, a Union steam sloop patrolling the waters just off Charleston, South Carolina, in the winter of 1864. "Landsman" was the lowest Navy rank at the time, signaling a novice seaman still learning the trade, and *Housatonic* was part of the Atlantic Blockading Squadron, whose express mission was to cut the Confederacy's vital overseas trade with Europe.

It was a chilly February night and being on watch was normally a tedious, even boring duty, but Confederate torpedo boats nicknamed "Davids" were in the area—which made the African-American Fleming as sharp-eyed as he could be. In fact Capt. Charles Pickering had ordered *Housatonic*'s fires banked, so the ship could make steam at a moment's notice. The wind-dimpled waters were dark, but a pale full moon allowed maximum visibility.

It was about 8:45 p.m. when Fleming noticed something floating about 400 feet from the *Housatonic*'s starboard side. What was it? It might be a dolphin; those playful marine mammals were often seen in the vicinity of patrolling ships. Fleming immediately reported it to Lt. Lewis Cornhwait, but after having a look, Cornhwait said it was a floating log, Fleming respectfully disagreed, pointing out that the object "was not floating with the tide as a log would, but against the tide." Another officer, John Crosby, was convinced it was a porpoise or dolphin.

The debate ended when the object began to approach *Housatonic* at a faster rate, the speed



Both: Naval History and Heritage Command

ABOVE: From left, James McClintock, one of the *Hunley* designers and Horace L. Hunley, who died aboard his submarine during a test in Charleston Harbor. TOP: The Confederate submarine H.L. Hunley, lower right, attacks the USS Housatonic, becoming the first submarine to sink an enemy ship.

churning up the water enough to make small waves and a trailing wake. Crosby beat the gong, the signal for all officers and men to report to the battle stations. The ship came alive as bluejackets scrambled to their posts. A few even had the presence of mind to grab a rifle and begin shooting at

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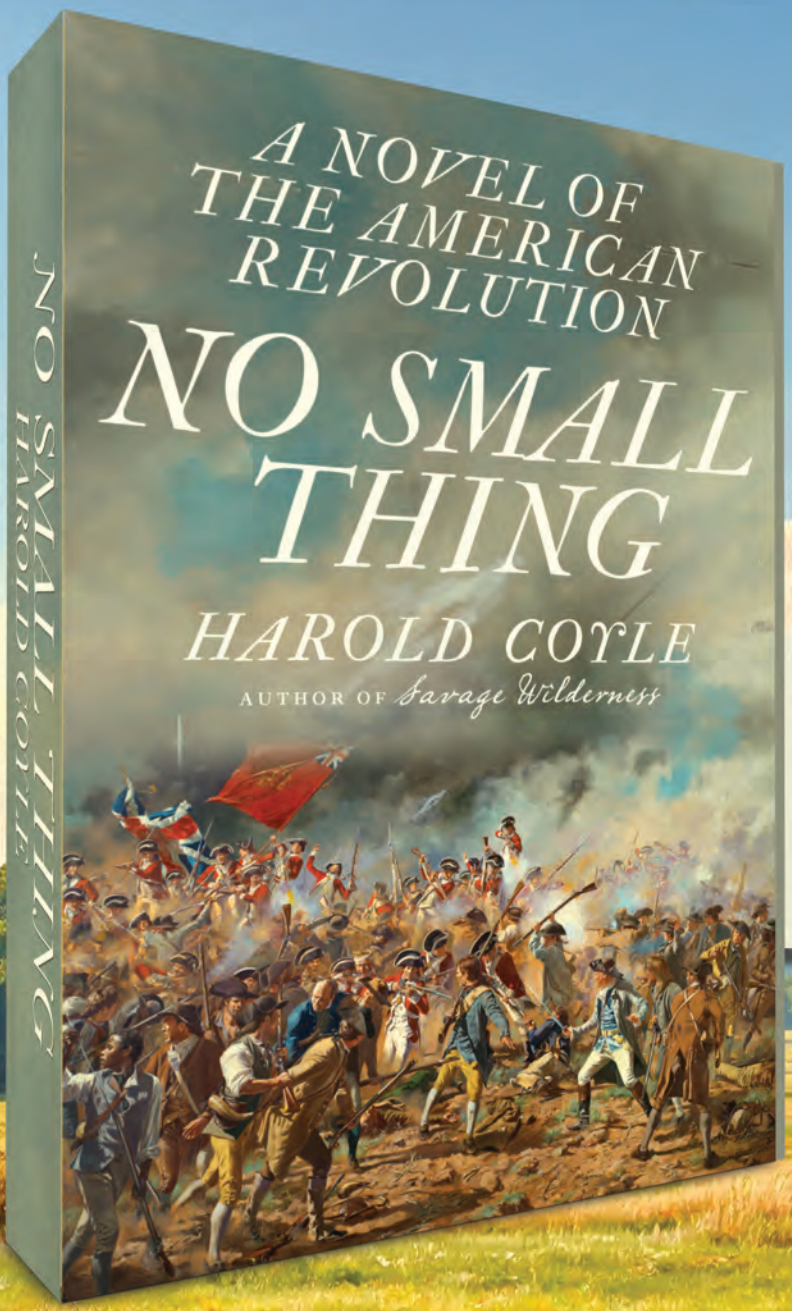

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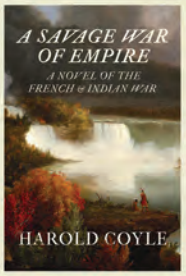

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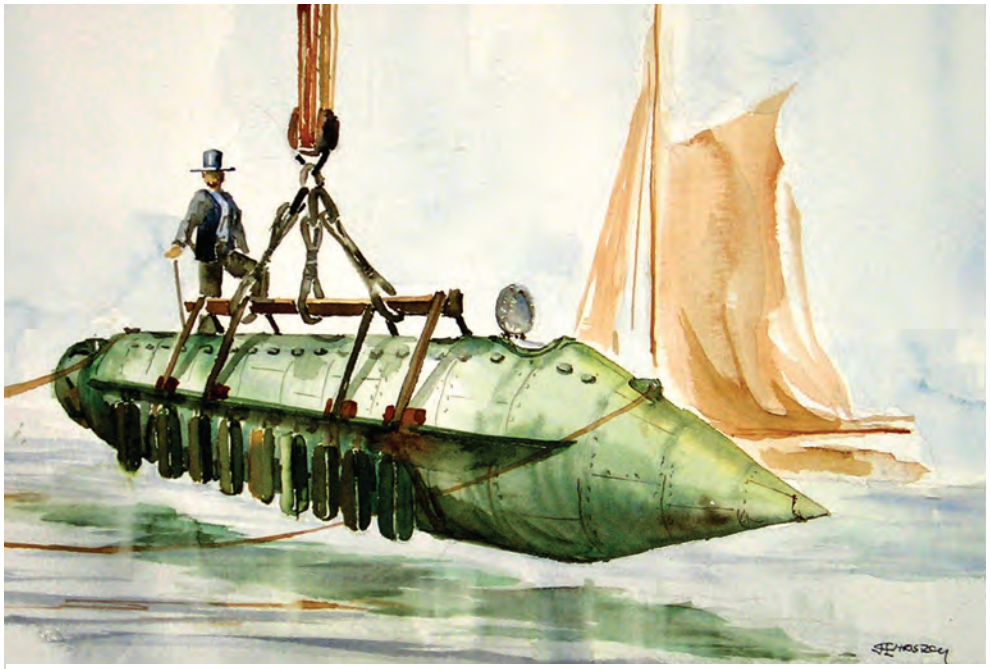


Built to counter Confederate blockade runners like the CSS *Virginia* (formerly USS *Merrimack*), the U.S. Navy's first submarine, USS *Alligator*, is lowered into the water.

the rapidly approaching object.

But it was too late to escape. *Housatonic* shuddered as something below the waterline hit it with great force, and moments later there was a terrific explosion. Black coils of smoke arose from the stricken vessel, and the ship began to list sharply to port. The crew didn't know it at the time, but they had been successfully attacked by a Confederate submarine, the *H.L. Hunley*.

The idea of a submarine had been around for centuries. It is said that a Dutchman named Cornelis Drebbel built one in the 1620s. It wasn't too sophisticated, and looked more like a rowboat that had a leather cover, but supposedly it worked. A one-man wooden contraption was created by David Bushnell during the American Revolution. Technically a semi-submersible—it didn't go completely under water—it worked after a fashion but was unable to sink the British warships that were anchored in New York harbor.

It is said that necessity is the mother of invention, and this was literally true in the case of the Confederacy. Largely agricultural, the South needed foreign trade to obtain the sinews of war it could not itself produce. The Confederacy began the war in 1861 with virtually no navy to speak of, and no seafaring traditions of a type that existed in places like New England. On the other hand, they were free of any hidebound conservatism that might hinder innovation.

At first individual blockade runners managed to slip past Union warships, bringing in supplies of guns and other desperately needed goods. But as time wore on, and the blockade grew more effective, the Confederacy found itself in dire straits. There had to be a way to break the blockade's economic stranglehold.

It is a measure of Southern desperation that they were even considering submarines. Anything that suggested stealth offended Victorian concepts of honorable behavior and fair play. Submarines were classed in the same category as underwater mines, then called "torpedoes." Such devices were labeled "infernal machines" by the press, unworthy of any civilized nation.

That's why the development of both northern and southerner submarines were usually shrouded in secrecy. Even after the war, some letters and other documents were purposely destroyed to protect the identities of the individuals involved in these clandestine projects. There was always a possibility, however remote, that Southerners that developed or manned submarines might be prosecuted after the war.

There seems to be evidence for more than 20 operational submarines during the Civil War, a figure that includes attempts by both the North and South. Many were privately built and probably were failures, while quite a few never got past the drawing board. The secrecy which shrouded most of them has further muddied the historical waters.

During the summer of 1861 an underwater explosives engineer by the name of William Cheeney designed a two-man submarine, but very little is known about it. It is known that the craft had a large 46-inch propeller. It is not known if the Cheeney boat had a system of gears to allow such a small crew to operate it. A practice demonstration on the James River near Richmond was witnessed by Mrs. E. H. Baker, a Union spy.

Apparently there was a third crew member, a diver, who attached an explosive device on a barge while underwater. A hose from the submarine supplied the diver with the necessary air. The device exploded, and the barge quickly sank. The sub's hose was supported by a sea green flotation collar that sucked in fresh air for the crew as well, but was easy to spot from the surface.

When the Cheeney sub tried to attack the U.S.S. *Minnesota*, a sharp-eyed sailor spotted the boat and cut the hose that supplied the rebel crew with oxygen. We do not know the ultimate fate of the Cheeney submarine and a sister vessel that was reported being built also disappeared from history.

There's evidence of other submarine development attempts, including one boat at Savannah that was lost in 1862 during sea trials. Once again, secrecy and lack of proper documentation has hampered modern efforts to study and understand these underwater experiments. But it is clear that the Confederates were willing to try anything to break the blockade, even if they violated the norm of what was considered "proper" warfare.

The North was just as interested in submarines, but they took a different approach. Submarines could be used not to attack enemy warships, but to clear underwater obstacles that hampered efforts to capture rebel seaports. Charleston's defense system was a prime example of what the U.S.Navy was up against. Besides the forts and gun batteries that ringed the harbor, there were also underwater obstacles. Stout piles were driven into the shallow harbor waters, and in addition there was a boom made of heavy logs weighted and fastened with iron.

On May 17, 1861, a strange contraption showed up off the Philadelphia Navy Yard, and the mere sight of it caused considerable consternation. Was this an "infernal machine" invented by the southern "rebels" to destroy navy ships or the port facilities? The police arrived on the scene and quickly arrested a man who claimed ownership of the strange vessel. He was a French immigrant named Brutus de Villeroi. It was a "submarine boat" that was floating placidly in Philadelphia

The boat was impounded at Noble Street Pier, but it—and its owner/inventor—attracted the attention of Adm. Samuel Francis Du Pont, who ordered three naval officers to inspect the boat for any wartime potential. The ad hoc committee ruled that the small vessel, only about 30 feet long, was interesting, but unworkable in practice. The vessel, nicknamed "Alligator Junior" by modern researchers, had been around since 1859, apparently unused and ignored.

© Dan Dowdey/Friends of the Hunley

Naval History and Heritage Command

ABOVE: *Submarine Torpedo Boat H.L. Hunley, Dec. 6, 1863*, painted by Conrad Wise Chapman in 1864, shows the scale of the Confederate submersible with its inventor Horace Hunley standing next to it. TOP: In the Park and Lyons Machine Shop in Mobile, Alabama, builders begin work on a third Confederate submarine, factoring in lessons learned during tests of the *Pioneer* (scuttled to prevent her from falling into Federal hands) and *American Diver* (foundered and sank). The new vessel, named after its committed benefactor H.L. Hunley, would become the first combat submarine to sink a warship (USS *Housatonic*).

Nevertheless it had features that might be applied more successfully in a larger version. Plans went forward for de Villeroi to design a larger version for the U.S. Navy. The committee particularly liked the idea of an airlock that would permit divers to exit the sub and plant explosive devices on any Confederate water obstructions they might encounter.

The Frenchman might have been boastful, and perhaps narcissistic—he once called himself a "natural genius"—but the Alligator shows the inventor was brilliant and innovative. It had an air purifying system that filtered oxygen through lime to remove carbon dioxide. Air was supplied from the surface by two tubes attached to floats. The 47-foot long boat also had that forward airlock, which permitted a diver to leave and return while the sub was still underwater.

The *Alligator* had a crew of 18, with no less than 16 sailors manning oars. Later, the oars were replaced by a hand-cranked propeller, which was clumsy, but increased the sub's speed to four knots. The boat was formally accepted by the U.S. Navy in the Spring of 1862. It had two missions: to destroy a bridge across Swift Creek, a tributary of the Appomattox River, and clear away obstructions along the James River.

At the eleventh hour both assignments were cancelled. It seems the waterways were too shallow for the *Alligator* to submerge completely. It was feared that, if spotted, the boat would be captured by the Confederates, who would turn the tables and use her against Union ships. In the meantime, de Villeroi had worn out his welcome with the Navy brass. He was removed from the project after an acrimonious flurry of letters were exchanged.

During the winter of 1862-1863 there were further improvements to the *Alligator*, like adding a small conning tower with viewing ports. Acting Master Samuel Eakins, a professional diver, was put in overall command. Unfortunately the revised *Alligator* never got a chance to prove itself. Assigned to the blockading squadron off Charleston, it was lost at sea during a heavy storm.

There has been an ongoing attempt to try and locate *Alligator*, a seemingly "needle in a haystack" quest in the deep and vast reaches of the coastal Atlantic Ocean. Researchers have not given up, but more recently there seems to be evidence of the first sub, the prototype that caused such an

Naval History and Heritage Command

alarm in Philadelphia. In 2024, a drone equipped with a magnetometer detected an anomaly that would correspond to the sub. The anomaly is in a New Jersey creek, which is exactly where "junior" might have been scuttled. The privately funded search is ongoing.

James McClintock was an engineer and part owner of a machine shop in New Orleans, a business that made gauges for steam-operated equipment. He felt he had the expertise to build a submarine, but needed funds to make his dream come true. Horace Lawson Hunley, plantation owner, lawyer, and customs agent, was wealthy and more than happy to bankroll what must have seemed a dubious project at best.

Their first effort, aptly named *Pioneer*, was clumsy and slow, and was scuttled when the Federals captured New Orleans. Undeterred, McClintock and Hunley moved their operation to Mobile, Alabama. A second submarine called *American Diver* was created, but rough seas in Mobile Bay swamped and sank her. Other men might have been discouraged, but not Hunley and McLintock. They were learning by trial and error, and were confident that they could ultimately build a submarine that could break the Union blockade.

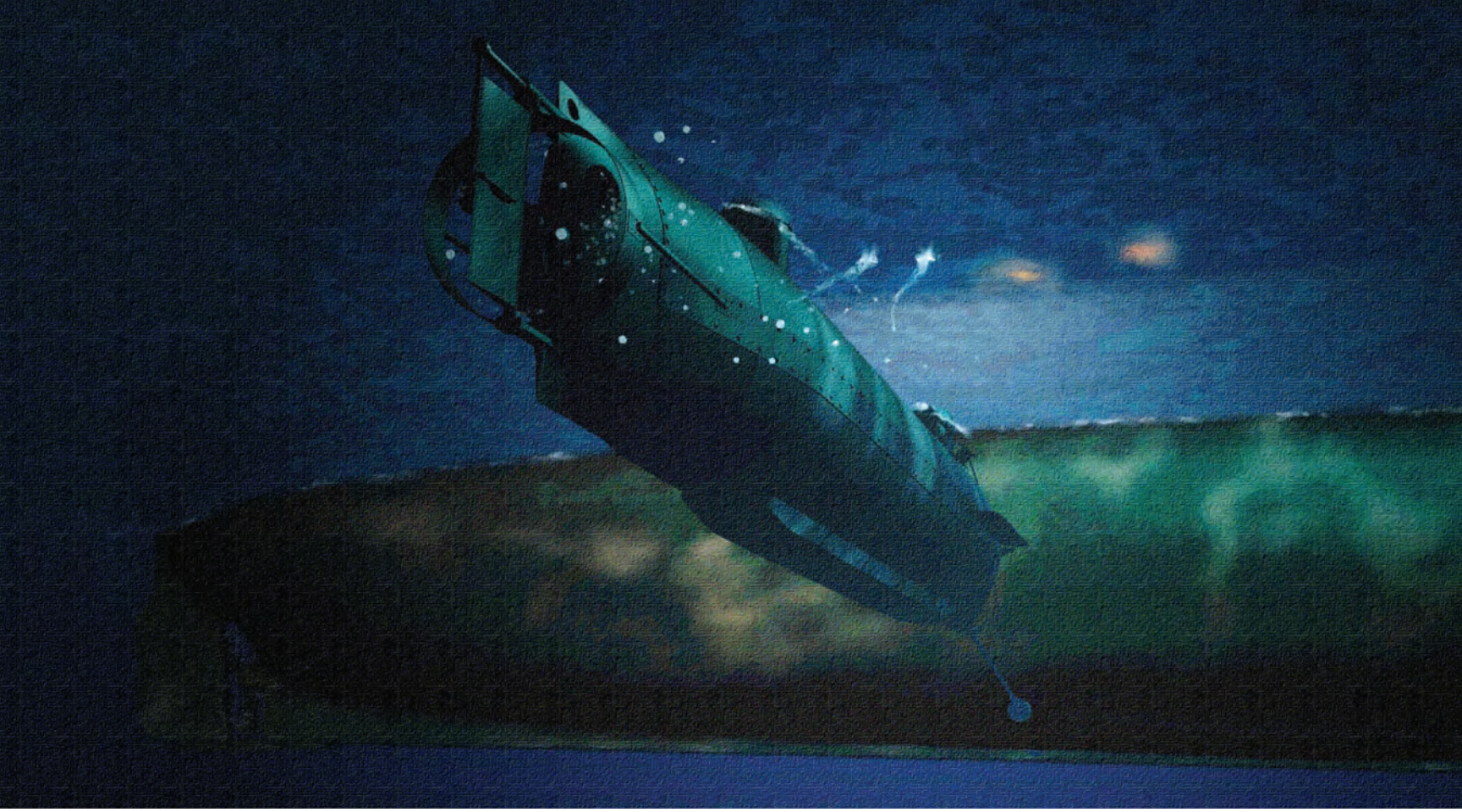
In the summer of 1863, a third submarine was finished, incorporating features based on knowledge gained from its predecessors It was dubbed *H.L.Hunley*, honoring the man who had given so much to make it a reality. The submarine was transferred from Mobile to Charleston by rail, then put through a series of test dives before it was deemed ready for action. Local Confederate commanders grew restless, impatient at these delays, but McClintock wanted to familiarize himself and his crew with the treacherous South Carolina waters.

Finally General Pierre P.T. Beauregard took control of the *Hunley* and handed it to the Confederate Navy. McClintock was first incredulous, then angry. He was the inventor and designer, and knew every inch of his diving machine. The men who had crewed the subs in Mobile also were experienced and ready to fulfill any mission they were assigned.

Lieutenant John Payne was given command of *Hunley*; inexperienced but confident he and his green crew would overcome all obstacles they might find in their way. On August 29, 1863, disaster struck as the crew was boarding the vessel. There are several versions of the mishap; at least one puts the blame squarely on Payne.

According to survivor Charles Hasker, Payne got "fouled by the hawser (a rope) and in trying to clear himself got his foot on the lever that controlled the fins (dive planes). The boat made a dive while the manholes (entrances) were open and she began to fill." Five of the crewmen were unable to escape and drowned; only three men, including Payne, survived. As might be expected, the overall confidence in the project was badly shaken. It is a measure of Confederate desperation that Beauregard gave the green light to raise the sub, respectfully bury the dead, and recruit a second crew.

The second crew had experienced men from the *Hunley*'s Mobile Bay days, including Horace



ABOVE: On February 17, 1864, the crew of the USS *Housatonic* on blockade-duty in Charleston's outer harbor fired rifles at the CSS *H. L. Hunley* after the submarine was spotted by a sharp-eyed sailor aboard the Union warship. The *Hunley* was able to attach its torpedo and sink the Union ship, but it also sank and was lost, along with its eight crewmen—including Horace Hunley— until the wreck was discovered in 1995 and raised in 2000. OPPOSITE: The remains of the Confederate submarine *H.L. Hunley* in its preservation tank at the Warren Lasch Conservation Center of the Clemson University Restoration Institute.

Hunley himself. The second crew worked well as a team, and several test dives were successful, boosting confidence in the sub. But on October 15, 1863, tragedy struck again as the *Hunley* did another test dive under a friendly ship, the *Indian Chief*.

Something was obviously wrong as after a time air bubbles were seen rippling the surface. The *Hunley* never resurfaced and all hands, including Horace Hunley himself, perished by drowning. The excitement and novelty the submarine had once sparked was long forgotten and it was referred to by many as the "Iron Coffin."

Lieutenant George F. Dixon arrived at the scene, determined to succeed where others had perished. Beauregard gave reluctant permission to proceed only if *Hunley* remained on the surface before, during, and after an attack. Dixon managed to get volunteers for the third crew, even though they had been told about the boat's previous mishaps.

A 20-foot iron spar with a copper container on its tip holding 135 pounds of black powder was attached to *Hunley*'s bow. Dixon would be ready with a lanyard once the device—called a "torpedo" at the time—was firmly planted in the hull of the target ship. Then the crew would crank the propeller as fast as they could in reverse. When the *Hunley* was at a safe distance Dixon would pull the lanyard, and the device would explode.

Initially everything went as planned, and the resulting explosion sank the *Housatonic* in a few brief minutes. Five Union sailors were killed, but the rest of the ship's complement was rescued by other Union warships. *Hunley* had the distinction of being the first submarine to sink an enemy ship in wartime.

Unfortunately the Confederate sub never returned from its mission and the whereabouts of the lost vessel was unknown for more than a century. Located in 1995 and raised in 2000, the vessel is being studied at the Warren Lasch Conservation Center in North Charleston. Conservation efforts are ongoing, and the public is able to view *H.L. Hunley* on the weekends.

Hunley has revealed some of its secrets, but why the sub was lost may remain a mystery. But it continues to amaze, given the limitations of 19th century technology. Chief archaeologist Michael P. Scafuri, one of *Hunley*'s researchers, notes that he "was amazed how well constructed the sub was. The engineers who built it understood hydrodynamics, iron plate rivet construction, and the limitations of the vessel being hand powered." The sub's rivets were countersunk, that is, set in indentations, so they would not produce friction between the hull and the water and slow its speed. The bow was also narrow and rounded, the better to cut through the water.

But all subs, whether produced for the north or the south, had the same Achilles heel: the means of propulsion. In the 1860s steam power was the wonder of the age, but it was decidedly problematic for fully submerged vessels. Batteries capable of providing a submarine with adequate power would not be produced for decades. That meant human muscle was the only alternative, which is why clumsy crank propellers or even oars were used.

In spite of their limitations, Civil War submarines showcase the ingenuity, resourcefulness, and courage of the men, North and South, who fought in that tragic and fratricidal war. There is also a curious postscript to the submarine story—anecdotal and unproven—that DeVilleroi taught math to a young boy named Jules Verne, who grew up to write the classic adventure *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*. ■

UNIFORM 2nd Regiment, French Dragoons, 1870

Edouard Detaille

HELMET: French enlisted Cuirassier steel helmet, brass comb with "Medusa" face, black horsehair tail, leopard skin turban under brass chin-scales.

PORTMANTEAU: Dark blue with red grenade device on the ends, and red piping. Carried behind the saddle, with saddlebags on either side.

CARBINE: Cavalry pattern 1866 Chassepot breech loading rifle.

BELTS: Black leather waistbelt and cartridge pouch sling.

TROUSERS: Red "pantalon basane" with blue stripe.

COAT: Dark blue jacket, white collar with black tabs and the numeral 2, white cuff flap, brass buttons, and red epaulettes.

SWORD: Heavy cavalry sword (not visible) with a black sling.

BOOTS: Black leather gaiters (or false boots) that could be removed when on foot.

The 2nd Dragoon Regiment traces its lineage to the 16th century as a cavalry regiment, fighting in various wars and engagements across western Europe. In 1776 the regiment became a dragoon unit, expected to fight on foot as well as horseback.

Called up to help suppress the Nancy Mutiny in 1791, the unit went on to fight for the Revolutionary French government during the Wars of the First and Second Coalitions, 1792-1802.

In 1805 the 2nd Dragoon Regiment joined Joachim Murat's Reserve Cavalry Corps in the Grande Armée of Napoleon. The unit later served in the Peninsular Campaign, seeing action in major battles of the campaign.

Upon Napoleon's exile in 1814, the regiment briefly returned to service under King Louis XVIII as the Dragoons du Roi. After Napoleon's return and defeat at Waterloo, the regiment was briefly dissolved, then reformed.

During the Franco-Prussian War, 1870-1871, the 2nd Dragoons fought in several battles, during which most of the unit was briefly taken prisoner.

The unit went on to serve in World War I, and by World War II was redesignated the 2nd Motorized Dragoon Regiment. After France's surrender, many of the unit's soldiers joined the Free French Army in North Africa, where the unit was reformed as a tank destroyer unit.

After WWII the unit fought in the French Algerian War, 1957-1961, and in 2005 joined another unit to become the 2nd Dragoon Regiment - Nuclear, Biological and Chemical.

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VALOR

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One of only two Marines awarded a Medal of Honor for two separate actions, the 'fightinest Marine' was the Corps' most-decorated non-commissioned officer.

By Kevin Seabrooke

The geopolitical implications of the so-called "Boxer Rebellion" were unlikely to have crossed the mind of U.S. Marine Corps Private Daniel Joseph Daly as he and Capt. Newt H. Hall moved along the top of the ancient Tartar Wall surrounding China's capital city of Peking (modern Beijing).

Alert for snipers, the two men were scouting a position to build another barricade on a section of the massive wall fronting the American and German sections of the diplomatic quarter of the city—an area of less than a square mile that was squeezed between the Tartar Wall to the south and the wall of the Imperial City to the north.

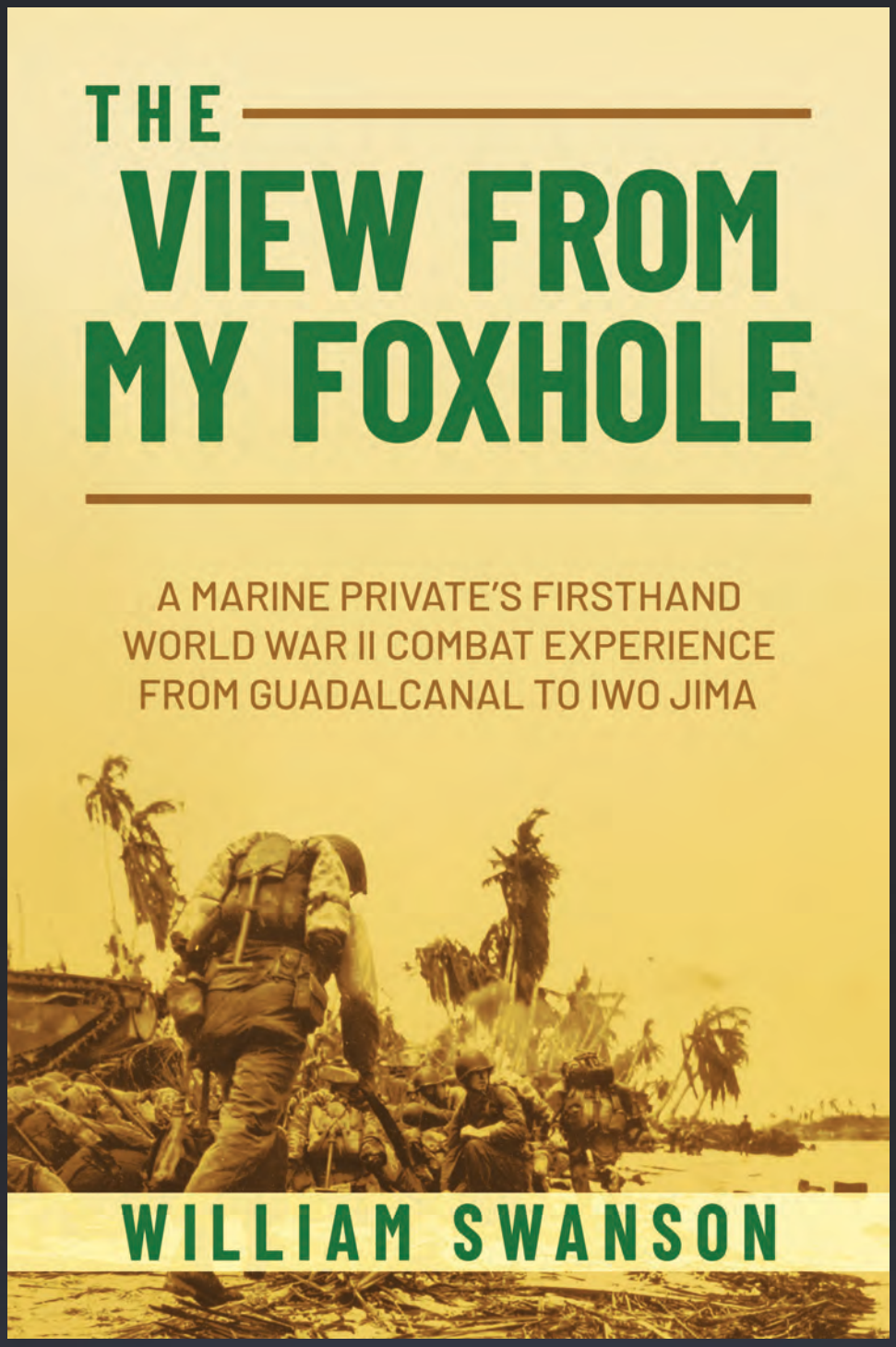
Incorporating towers and gates, the stone, earth and brick fortification built in the early 1400s was 40 feet tall and 40 feet across. It offered a commanding vantage point and a formidable firing platform that had to be defended from the growing uprising of violent groups closing in on the "Legation Quarter." A legation is overseen by a minister or envoy, as opposed to a more formal embassy headed by an ambassador. Ministers and their families from the United States and seven other countries—Austria-Hungary, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, and Russia lived in this small city within a city.

Daly and Captain Hall were up on the wall on July 15, 1900, after Hall had taken over for the wounded Capt. John T. Myers. Hall wrote in his report that the first secretary of the U.S. legation had gone up on the wall with him to point out where a new barricade should be built—at the "far end of the bastion

Naval History & Heritage Command

ABOVE: USMC First Sergeant Daniel J. Daly earned his first Medal of Honor for holding a position alone atop the Tartar Wall next to the diplomatic quarter. TOP: U.S. troops attack during the August 14, 1900, Allied Relief Expedition assault on the outer walls of Peking (Beijing) in China during the Boxer Rebellion.

See MILITARY HERITAGE's Review in This Issue.



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This photo was taken circa 1900 looking north-west from Fort Myer on the Tartar Wall bordering the United States diplomatic legation in Peking (modern Beijing) China. Foreign diplomats, missionaries, soldiers and Chinese Christians were surrounded under siege for 55 days during the Boxer Rebellion.

about 100 yards from our last barricade and yards from the enemy's barricade."

They had set out to "reconnoiter the bastion" at about 9 p.m. It had been arranged that if they weren't attacked, a work crew would follow 10 minutes later with improvised "sandbags" sewn of any available fabric and filled with rubble.

In the preceding days, Chinese forces had built barricades outside of the Tartar Wall, gradually moving closer and closer until they were able to build a tower overlooking the wall and the diplomatic neighborhood. It was in leading a night attack with American, British, and Russian Marines to capture the tower—catching the Chinese asleep and killing about two dozen—that Myers was injured by an iron-pointed Chinese spear below the right knee.

Hall and Daly waited and watched for some minutes, with no sign of an attack or the work crew. Finally, Hall became impatient and Daly volunteered to stay while the captain went back to see what the holdup was. A reluctant Hall noted in his report that "I did not wish to leave one man in the bastion as there were stray shots flying along the wall from the front and rear."

A number of complex cultural, economic and environmental factors had come together to place Daly alone on top of that nearly 500-year-old wall for a night that would become part of Marine Corps history.

The trouble in the provinces surrounding the capital had been brewing for decades. By the end of the 19th century Western European nations and Japan had carved up China into "spheres of influence" that led to nationalistic resentment and unrest. China's defeat in the two Opium Wars (1839–1842, 1856–1860) had been a humiliation. Forced to accept unequal treaties, China was compelled to allow foreign merchants in its ports, foreign envoys in its capital city and Christian missionaries across the countryside.

As anti-foreign and anti-Christian sentiment continued to grow—exacerbated by widespread flooding of the Yellow River in 1898, followed by severe drought—popular resentment led to the formation of secret societies such as I Ho Chuan ("Fists of Righteous Harmony") often called "Boxers" because their martial arts practices reminded Westerners of pugilism.

The Boxers first turned their rage against the Chinese Christian converts, derisively called "rice Christians," in the form of brutal ritualistic murders and church burnings. In December 1899, the beating and beheading of British missionary Reverend Sidney Brooks sent shockwaves through the West.

In response to the continuing unrest, the U.S. minister in Peking requested help. From the Cavite Navy Yard in the recently captured Philippines, the gunboat USS *Wheeling* was sent to patrol China's northern coast in March of 1900, along with ships from European navies based at Dagu (modern Port of Tianjin). The Navy's first modern cruiser, USS *Newark*, took over the patrol at the end of April.

As widespread violence against foreign missionaries and Chinese Christians had begun to spread in the spring of 1900, Peking's population grew by the hundreds as they fled to the city for protection. Several railroad stations near Peking were burned on May 28 and 29. Fearing they would soon be trapped, the legations telegraphed for help. Sailors and marines from foreign ships off China mobilized immediately.

From the USS *Newark* at Dagu, about 100 miles southeast of Peking, a force composed of two Marine detachments disembarked on May 29: 25 under Captain Myers and 23 Marines, 5 sailors, and U.S. Navy Assistant Surgeon Thomas M. Lippitt under Captain Hall.

Daly was one of the Marines in Myers' detachment. For a Brooklyn-born kid who had once

hawked newspapers on the streets of Manhattan, he could hardly be further away from home.

Daly had been 25 in 1899, when he was inspired to enlist in the Marines by the exploits of Teddy Roosevelt and the Rough Riders in the Spanish-American War. To his disappointment, the conflict had ended before he finished boot camp and he found himself in the South Pacific assigned to the Asiatic Fleet cruiser USS *Newark*.

The newly formed Legation Guard under the overall command of Myers, arrived at Peking on May 31 with a Colt machine gun with 8,000 rounds and 20,000 rounds of rifle ammunition. Another train brought 79 British marines, 75 French sailors, 72 Russian sailors, 51 German marines, 39 Italian sailors, 30 Austrian marines, and a 23-man Japanese special navy landing force.

The westerners tried to rescue and shelter as many persecuted Chinese Christians as they could, inflicting what Myers called "heavy punishment on the Boxers and their attendant train of pillagers" who were burning churches and communities.

Protected by walls to the north and south, the refugees in the Legation Quarter barricaded the eastern and western approaches as more and more Boxers closed in. After badly burned refugees showed up at the barricades on the morning of June 14, a rescue party brought back some 150 Chinese Christians. Throughout that night came the constant cries of "Sha! Sha!" (Kill! Kill!).

"It was realized at the time that these rescuing parties served to inflame the Boxer element more deeply against the foreigners," Myers said, "but it was more than flesh and blood could stand to see the terribly burned and lacerated bodies of those who escaped to our lines, and refuse to send aid to their comrades known to be still within the power of the fiendish Boxer hordes."

China's Empress Dowager Cixi sympathized with the anti-foreign feelings, offering tacit support for their actions. But in response to the Allies' seizure of the Dagu Forts on the coast, the Empress had the foreign ministers informed on June 18 that a state of war existed, giving the Westerners 24 hours to leave Peking with guaranteed protection to the coast.

Skeptical of the offer, the Allies requested a meeting with the Zongli Yamen (Office of General Management) established by the Qing state to deal with the foreign presence in China. On his way to the meeting on the morning of June 20, German minister Baron Clemens August von Ketteler was fatally shot by an Imperial Qing soldier.

In his description of the period between June 20 to July 17, U.S. Minister to China Edwin H. Conger, who would survive the siege of the Legations with his wife, Sarah, wrote that "there was scarcely an hour during which there was not firing upon some part of our lines and into some of the lega-

National Archives

tions, varying from a single shot to a general and continuous attack along the whole line."

The firing from the surrounding Boxers was so frequent that when the besieged Westerners began to run low, " five quarts of Chinese bullets were gathered in an hour in one compound and recast."

Myers noted in his report that Chinese soldiers began firing on the legation along with the Boxers, but the attack was not coordinated.

"Any hope that the Imperial Government would put down the trouble had long been dispelled, as our spies brought us word that the Boxers were entering the city through all the gates, guarded as they were by soldiery, and in all parts of the city mingling freely with the troops, with whom they appeared to be on the best of terms," Myers wrote.

"The besieged had not been idle during the days of uncertainty," Myers said, "and all barricades had been more or less re-enforced with brick, beams and stone torn from the demolished Chinese houses within the lines."

With the backing of Cixi, the Boxers and Imperial Chinese soldiers now began a full-scale siege of the Legation District. Boxers set fire to the Austrian, Belgian, Italian, and Dutch legations as well as the customs house, foreign banks, stores and neighboring houses.

There were nearly 500 diplomatic and missionary civilians in the British compound, which had been strengthened with makeshift fortifications. Some 3,000 Chinese Christians were also sheltered there. Defending them were about 400 soldiers and marines from the eight countries.

Some estimates place the ratio of Boxer and Qing imperial forces to legation defenders as high as 40-1. Snipers were the most immediate danger. The first four Marines killed in the Peking compound, from June 24 to July 1, had all been shot in the head.

It would be 55 days before relief forces could reach the small international legation guard, the besieged diplomats and their families.

Alone on that ancient wall as a stranger in a strange land, Daly found himself caught up in an maelstrom of cultural and political idealogies that had morphed into a very real beast of destruction—burning buildings, torture, shooting and shelling, sounding sirens and lighting fireworks through the night, building towers, tunneling—all to "exterminate the foreigners."

For Daly, though, the situation probably seemed clear enough—he was on that wall to stop anyone from getting over it. His actions that night exhibited a determination he would display time and again. Straight-backed, disciplined and tough—though only 5' 6" and 132 lbs., Daly had boxed semi-professionally as a young man.

During his 30 years in the Marine Corps, he was said to have been offered a commission numerous times. Reportedly, he turned them all down remarking, that he would rather be known as an outstanding sergeant than "just another officer." That statement seemed to fit the character of the future "Devil Dog"—who never married and was taciturn regarding any of his own experiences, disdaining any "fuss" made over him.

Some accounts claim Daly had an M1895 Colt-Browning machine gun up on the wall with him, but there remains no evidence. What he did have was a canteen and a Lee-Winchester Navy Straight-Pull Rifle with an M1895 bayonet and possibly 180 rounds of 6 mm ammunition in 5-round clips—all standard issue at the time.

Subjected to sniper fire and numerous attacks, Daly spent the night on the wall because all other Marines were "bogged down along other sections of the defensive works," and critically, "no reinforcements were available" to support the advanced position.

There were reports that the bodies of 200 dead or dying attackers were found on the ground below Daly the next morning, but there is no evidence to support that number.

One account reports that Daly heard the Boxers yelling "*Quon-fay*" during the night and was told that it meant "Very bad Devil."

For his stand on the Tartar Wall on the night of July 15, 1900, Daly was awarded his first Medal of Honor (though the citation incorrectly lists August 14, the day the siege was broken).

In March 1911, while garrisoned at the San Juan Naval Station in Puerto Rico, Daly saw a fire near the forecastle of the merchant schooner *Springfield* that was threatening to ignite its powder magazines. Along with nine other Marines and sailors, Daly was able to put out the fire, though he was severely burned and spent a few weeks in the hospital. For his quick action, he received commendations from both the Secretary of the Navy and the Commandant of the Marine Corps.

In April 1914, during the Battle of Vera Cruz, Daly was part of the landing force that captured the Mexican city.

On July 28, 1915, Gunnery Sergeant Daly was among the 330 Marines that landed at Port-au-Prince, Haiti, following the assassination of its president, Vilbrun Guillaume Sam, who was dragged out of the French legation and hacked to death after only some four months in office.

The so-called "Banana Wars" (1898-1934) were a series of U.S. military interventions in Central American and Caribbean countries to protect U.S. business interests, especially the banana trade, and maintain regional political stability. After interventions and police actions in Cuba, Panama, Honduras, Nicaragua, Mexico, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic, the conflicts ended with the withdrawal from Haiti in 1934.

On October 24, 1915, Daly was part of a 35-man mounted reconnaissance patrol from the 15th Company of Marines, operating out of Fort Liberté. While crossing a deep ravine at dusk, the detachment was caught in a crossfire by about 400 *Cacos* (guerrillas resisting forced labor) hidden in the bushes.

In the chaos of the assault, the patrol lost its machine gun when the mule carrying it was killed crossing the river. Pinned down under continuous fire throughout the night, the small Marine force was in a dire situation without it.

Daly made his way out of the defensive perimeter through enemy lines to find the submerged

National Archives

ABOVE: In Haiti in 1915, U.S. Marines exchange fire with "Cacos"—guerrillas resisting forced labor. Now a gunnery sergeant, Daniel J. Daly earned a second Medal of Honor for his actions on October 24, 1915, when his reconnaissance patrol from the 15th Company of Marines, operating out of Fort Liberté was ambushed by 400 Cacos. OPPOSITE: Photo of a Chinese "Boxer" taken circa 1900. Anti-foreign and anti-Christian resentment led to the formation of secret societies such as I Ho Chuan ("Fists of Righteous Harmony") often called "Boxers" because their martial arts practices reminded Westerners of pugilism.

machine gun, which he strapped to his back, along with the ammunition and crawled back to his unit undetected.

At daybreak, the Marines, now re-armed and with their morale bolstered by Daly's incredible feat, launched a daring counter-attack. Dividing into three squads, they advanced in different directions, surprising and scattering the Cacos in a decisive engagement. Daly led one of these squads, fighting with exceptional gallantry throughout the action. His retrieval of the machine gun, coupled with his leadership in the subsequent assault, earned him his second Medal of Honor.

Major General Smedley Butler, who served with Daly in Haiti and is the only other Marine to earn two Medals of Honor for separate acts of valor, famously called him "the fightinest Marine I ever knew." Former Commandant of the Marine Corps, Major General John A. Lejeune, acclaimed him as "the outstanding Marine of all time."

In November 1917, 44-year-old First Sergeant Daly deployed to France as part of the American Expeditionary Forces. In the brutal crucible of the Western Front, Daly would further cement his legendary status, particularly during the ferocious Battle of Belleau Wood in June 1918.

It was a pivotal engagement that showcased the tenacity and fighting spirit of the Marines, earning them the moniker "Devil Dogs" from their German adversaries. The fighting was savage, characterized by intense artillery bombardments, relentless machine gun fire, and desperate hand-to-hand combat in the dense woods.

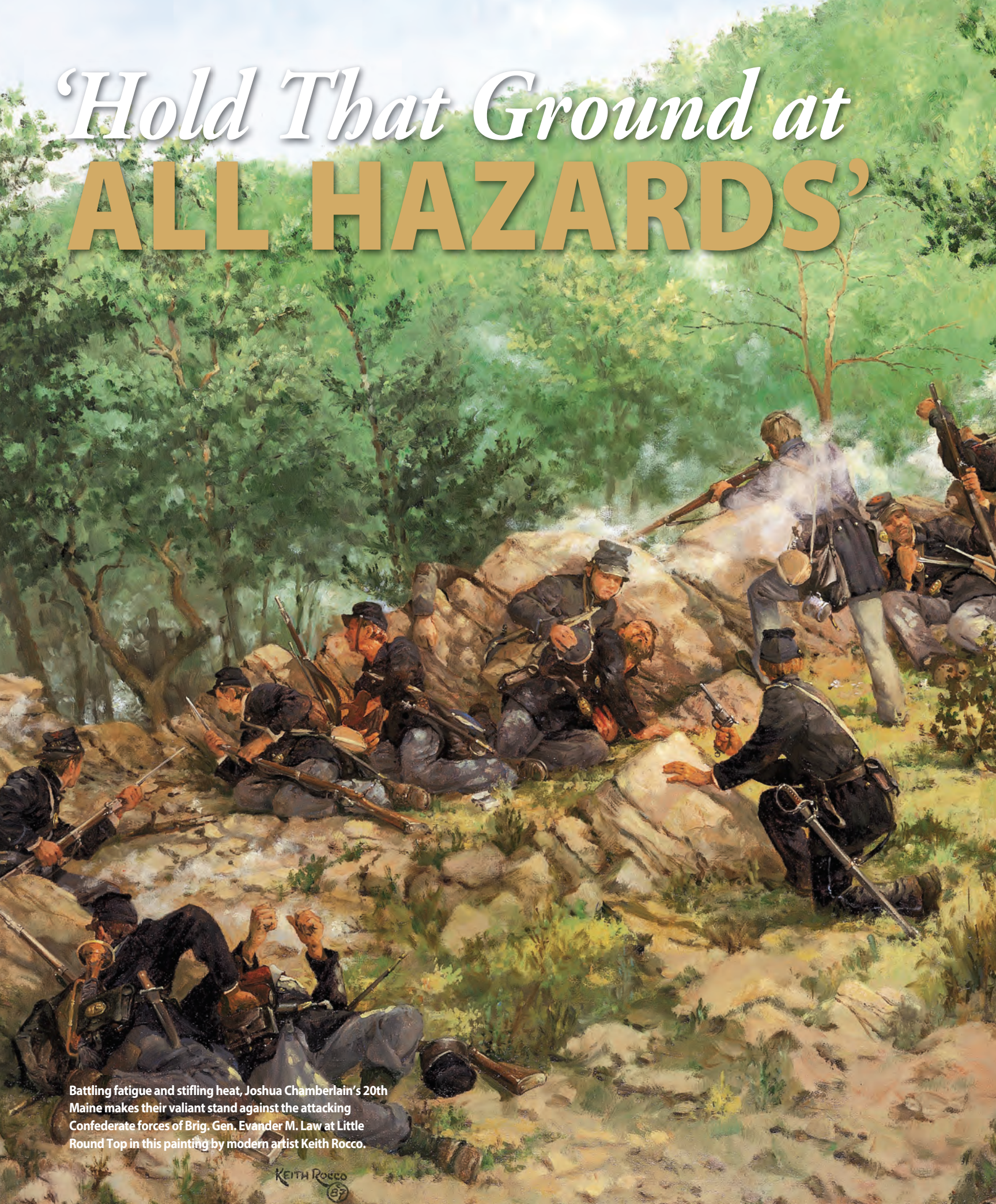
It was during this battle that the most famous, and perhaps apocryphal, quote attributed to Daly was uttered. As his company, the 73rd Machine Gun Company, 6th Regiment (Marines), found itself pinned down by devastating German machine gun fire near Lucy-le-Bocage, facing seemingly insurmountable odds, Daly reportedly sprang from cover and yelled, "Come on, you sons-o'-bitches, do you want to live forever?" This despite the fact that there is no evidence or witnesses that he ever uttered the line.

According to Alan Axelrod, author of *Miracle at Belleau Wood: The Birth of the Modern U.S. Marine Corps*, Daly had told a Marine Corps historian that what he had actually shouted was, "For Christ's sake, men—come on! Do you want to live forever?"

Daly received the following honors from the U.S. government during his three decades in the U.S.M.C: two Medals of Honor; Navy Cross; Distinguished Service Cross; three Letters of Commendation; Good Conduct Medal with two bronze stars; China Relief Expedition Medal; Philippine Campaign Medal; Expeditionary Medal with one bronze star; Mexican Service Medal; Haitian Campaign Medal; World War I Victory Medal with Aisne, St. Mihiel, Meuse-Argonne and Defensive-Sector clasps;

For his service in World War I, Daly received from the French government a Medaille Militaire, Croix de Guerre with Palm, and the Fourragere. ■

'Hold That Ground at ALL HAZARDS'



Battling fatigue and stifling heat, Joshua Chamberlain's 20th Maine makes their valiant stand against the attacking Confederate forces of Brig. Gen. Evander M. Law at Little Round Top in this painting by modern artist Keith Rocco.

BY AL HEMINGWAY

Brigadier General Gouverneur K. Warren peered down at the rugged terrain of southern Pennsylvania from his vantage point on Little Round Top, a small promontory about two miles south of Gettysburg. It was now early afternoon on July 2, 1863, and Federal troops under Maj. Gen. George G. Meade had been hotly engaged with Confederate forces outside of town since the previous morning.

Midway through the second day of the battle, the defensive perimeter of the Union army at Gettysburg looked like a giant fishhook. It ran from Culp's Hill in the north, around Cemetery Hill, then southward to Cemetery Ridge and finally, Little Round Top. At 548 feet high and nearly devoid of trees, its loose rocks and large boulders made natural ramparts to anchor the entire Union left.

A former brigade commander now serving as the army's chief engineer, Warren had gone to inspect the site after Meade reported hearing "a little peppering going on in the direction of the little hill off yonder." What he discovered on Little Round Top shocked him. "There were no troops on it, and it was used as a signal station," Warren said later.

The fate of the Army of the Potomac—and perhaps the entire Union—rested squarely on the shoulders of the 20th Maine and its unlikely, bookish leader.

"I saw that this was the key to the whole position, and that our troops in the woods in front of it could not see the ground in front of them, so that the enemy would come upon them before they would be aware of it."

Warren instructed the officer of a nearby rifle battery to lob a shell into the woods. As the round crashed through the trees, Warren witnessed movement from enemy soldiers and saw the glistening of their gun barrels and bayonets. Realizing that the Confederates were massing below for an attack on the undefended position, Warren dispatched a message to Meade urging him to send another division to Little Round Top.

Earlier that morning, infantrymen from Brigadier General John W. Geary's division of the XII Corps had manned the promontory. Then Meade decided to relieve Geary's men with those of Maj. Gen. Daniel E. Sickles' III Corps, while Geary went to rejoin his corps at Culp's Hill.

However, as often happens in the fog of war, Geary left his position too soon, and Sickles never even made it to

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The hastily dug trenches and breastworks combined with natural rock formations at Little Round Top to form a daunting obstacle for Col. Willam C. Oates' 15th and 47th Alabama regiments.

Little Round Top. Consequently, the entire Union left was dangerously exposed.

Robert E. Lee, an old engineer himself, saw the value of Little Round Top and ordered Maj. Gen. John B. Hood's division to get ready to attack. Brig. Gen. Evander M. Law had his Alabama brigades posted on the right, with Brig. Gen. J.B. Robertson's Texas and Arkansas brigades on the left.

Luck, however, was on the Union side. It took the bulk of the day for Lee's men to reach their positions and move toward Little Round Top. Lee spent much of this time sitting idly on a tree stump, occasionally looking through his field glass or conversing with Lt. Gen. A.P. Hill and Col. A.L. Long, one of his staff officers.

"What I remarked especially was, during the whole time the [artillery] firing continued he sent only one message, and only received one report," observed Col. Arthur Fremantle, a British Army officer attached to Lee's headquarters as an observer.

As the assault commenced about 4:30 p.m., Fremantle couldn't help but wonder at the oddity of the scene. "When the cannonade was at its height," he continued, "a Confederate band of music began to play polkas and waltzes, which sounded very curious accompanied by the hissing and bursting of the shells."

Meanwhile, Union Colonel Strong Vincent, leading the 3d Brigade, 1st Division, V Corps, received word of the impending peril on Little Round Top. He swiftly led his four regiments—the 20th Maine, 83rd Pennsylvania, 44th New York, and 16th Michigan—at the double-quick

to defend the hill. Once there, Vincent dispersed his troops onto the western and southern slopes of Little Round Top to halt the Confederate advance. Commanding the 20th Maine was Col. Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain, a former theology and language professor at Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine. As Chamberlain recalled later, "Passing to the southern slope of Little Round Top, Colonel Vincent indicated to me the ground my regiment was to occupy, informing me that this was the extreme left of our general line, and that a desperate attack was expected in order to turn that position, concluding by telling me I was to 'hold that ground at all hazards.' This was the last word I heard from him."

As the Maine volunteers peered across the saddle separating Little Round Top from Big Round Top, Private Theodore Gerrish recalled, "The ground sloped to our front and left, and was sparsely covered with a growth of oak trees which were too small to afford us any protection. Shells were crashing through the air above our heads, making so much noise that we could hardly hear the commands of our officers. The air was filled with fragments of exploding shells and splinters torn from mangled trees. But our men appeared to be as cool and deliberate in their movements as if they had been forming a line upon the parade ground in camp."

Facing the 20th Maine was the 15th Alabama Infantry, commanded by Col. William C. Oates, a lawyer from Abbeville, Alabama. Oates's regiment, part of Law's brigade of Hood's division, had marched nearly the entire day, covering a distance of about 25 miles before arriving at Gettysburg. With little rest, Oates's men were immediately ordered to the right flank, moving in a circuitous march to disguise their movement from

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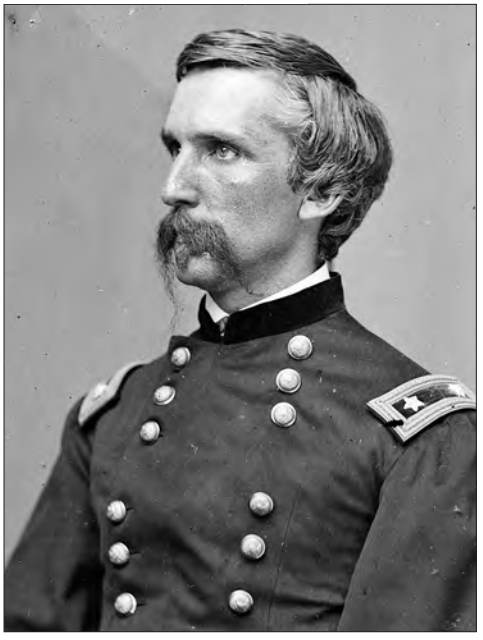

ABOVE: Colonel Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain. BELOW: Brigadier General Evander M. Law's troops included veteran fighters from the Texas and Arkansas Brigade. Painting by Don Troiani.

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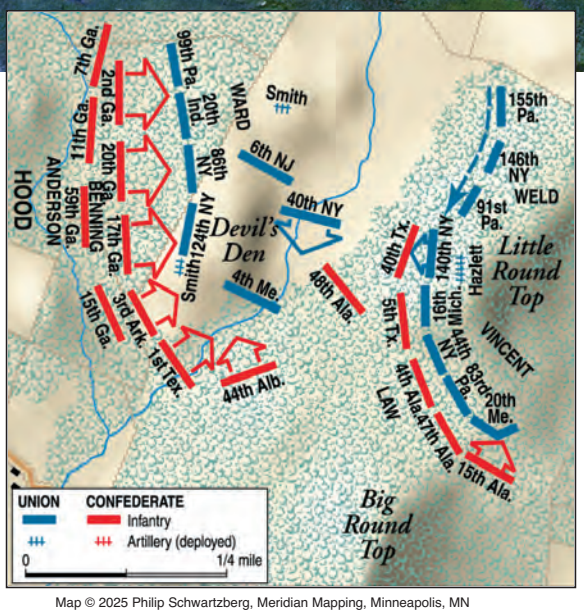
the enemy.

As they approached their objective, Oates remembered, "Finally, Hood marched across the rear of [Maj. Gen. Lafayette] McLaws and went into line on the crest of a little ridge, with [Brig. Gen. Henry L.] Benning's brigade in rear of his center constituting a second line, his battalion of sixteen artillery pieces, in position on his left. McLaws then formed his division of four brigades in two lines of battle on Hood's left, and with sixteen pieces of artillery in position on McLaws left."

As the brigade prepared for the assault, Oates's 15th Alabama was in the center. To his left were the 4th and 47th Alabama, to his right the 44th and 48th Alabama. At about 3 p.m., the Confederate artillery let loose a thunderous broadside on the Union lines. As the Federal cannon returned fire, the butternut infantry moved in quick-time through the valley and across a muddy, meandering stream.



Map © 2025 Philip Schwartzberg, Meridian Mapping, Minneapolis, MN

With Confederate forces about to overrun Devil's Den, Little Round Top became the linchpin of the Union line south of Gettysburg. If it fell, the battle would be as good as lost.

At the outset of the attack, Hood was severely wounded in the arm and evacuated from the battlefield. Law was now in charge of the division. His men pushed ahead toward Plum Run, a stream that ran north and south between the Emmitsburg Road and Little Round Top.

"The men sprang forward as if at a game or ball," recalled Private W.C. Ward of the 4th Alabama. "A long line of Federal skirmishers, protected by a stone wall, immediately opened fire. Men were falling, stricken to death."

As the Alabamians rushed the Union bulwarks, artillery fired from Devil's Den, a jumble of huge rocks less than a mile away on the left. The shelling and musket fire grew in intensity. "Immediately to the right, Taylor Darwin, orderly sergeant of Company I, suddenly stopped, quivered, and sank to the earth dead, a ball having passed through his brain," Ward said.

Confederate forces, including the 15th Alabama Infantry Regiment under Col. William C. Oates, mass at the base of Little Round Top shortly before making their assault against Maj. Gen. George Sykes's 5th Corps. As a special artist for *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, Edwin Forbes (1839-1895) captured the scene in his painting, *Attack on Little Round Top held by the 5th Corps commanded by General Sykes*—though he has incorrectly depicted Big Round Top as having two peaks.

Fighting was raging all around Little Round Top and Devil's Den. The defenders of Devil's Den managed to hold on, but the Federals behind the stone wall at the western base of Big Round Top were being pushed aside. Some retreated northward between Devil's Den and Little Round Top, others ascended Big Round Top. Law's right wing also divided, several regiments bearing left to the mouth of the valley between the Round Tops, while the 15th and 47th Alabama, with Oates in command, followed the Federals who had retreated up the hillside.

Oates's riflemen found the going extremely difficult. "My men had to climb up, catching to the bushes and crawling over the immense boulders," Oates wrote, "in the face of incessant fire of their enemy, who kept falling back, taking shelter and firing down upon us from behind the rocks and crags that covered the mountain side thicker than grave stones in a city cemetery.

"Seeing that they were fatigued by their arduous climb, Oates halted the regiment temporarily to rest. A few moments later, one of Law's aides galloped up to Oates and demanded to know why he had stopped the advance. The aide informed him that Hood had been wounded and that Law had assumed command. Law, he added, wanted the Alabamians to drive the Yankees from Little Round Top. Although he disagreed with the order—he wanted to stay where he was and entrench—Oates reluctantly acquiesced.

Meanwhile, the 4th Alabama moved on Vincent's position atop Little Round Top. The regiment advanced quickly until it encountered a withering volley of musket fire, the enemy bullets falling through the leaves like hail in a thunderstorm.

At first, the Union soldiers repelled the Confederate onslaught, until the Rebels seized Devil's Den, allowing for an unimpeded advance from the west.

Grasping the seriousness of the situation, Warren, still on Little Round Top, rode down the hill to muster any troops he could find. He stumbled across Col. Patrick H. O'Rorke's 140th New York Volunteers, part of Brig. Gen. Steven H. Weed's brigade.

The New Yorkers were headed toward the fighting in the Wheatfield when Warren, who knew O'Rorke from the Regular Army, intercepted him.

"Paddy! Paddy! Turn your regiment this way!" Warren shouted, pointing toward Little

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Round Top.

"General Weed is ahead, and he expects me to follow him," O'Rorke replied.

"Never mind that! Bring your regiment up here, and I will take responsibility," Warren barked.

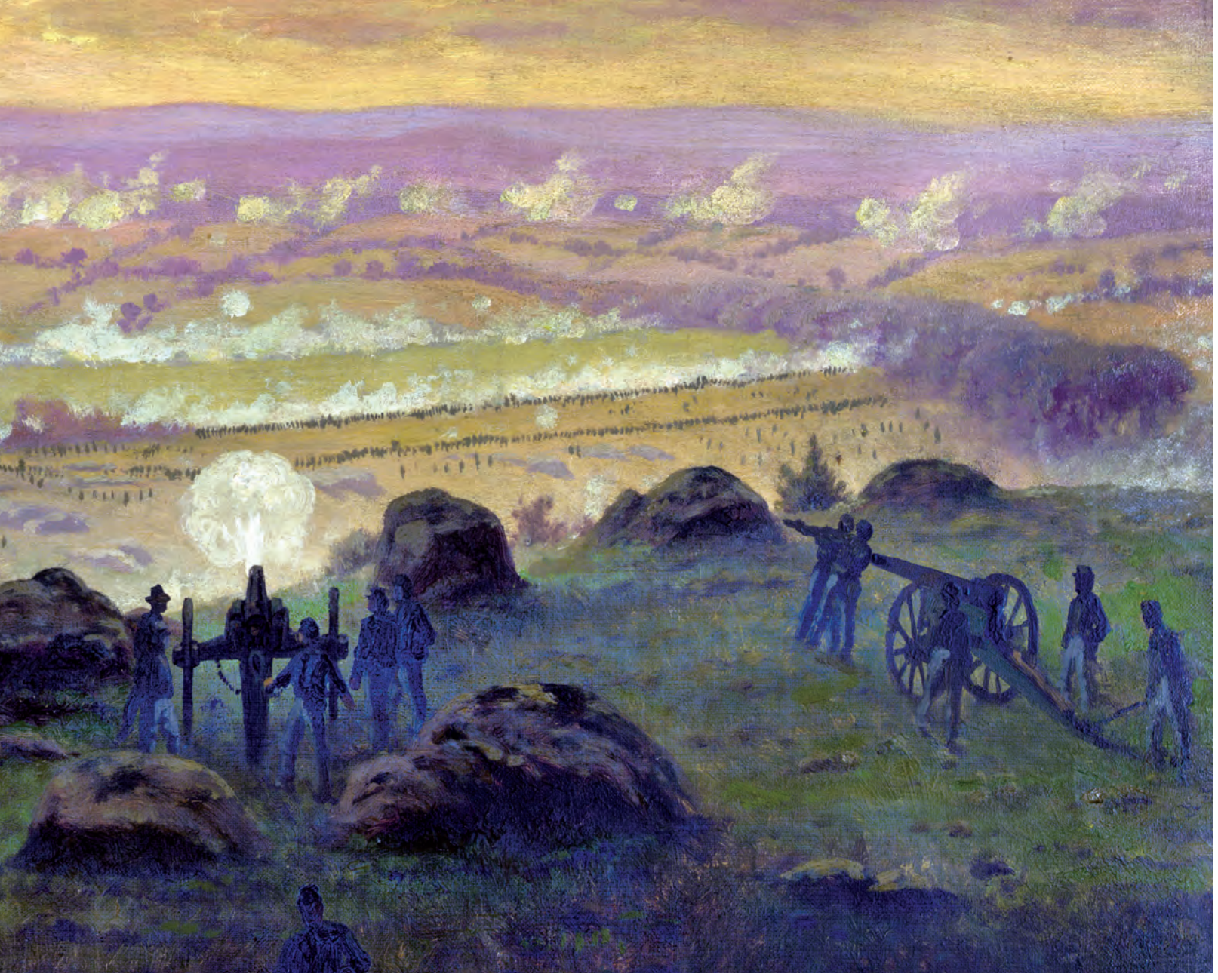
Without hesitation the Union riflemen, clad in brand-new Zouave uniforms of baggy blue trousers, red jackets, and fezzes, scrambled up the hill. "The bullets flew in among the men the moment the leading company mounted the ridge," said Capt. Porter Farley, a member of the 140th New York, "and, as not a musket was loaded, the natural impulse was to halt and load them. But O'Rorke permitted no such delay. Springing from his horse, he threw the reins to the sergeant-major. His sword flashed from its scabbard into the sunlight; and calling: 'This way boys!' he led the charge over the rocks, down the hillside, till he came abreast the men of Vincent's brigade, who were posted in the ravine to our left."

The sharp crack of rifle fire from Confederate sharpshooters at Devil's Den further harassed the Union defenders on Little Round Top. A bullet caught O'Rorke in the neck, killing him instantly. Another ball struck Weed as he was speaking to Lt. Charles E. Hazlett of the 5th U. S. Artillery. Hazlett knelt over the general to catch his dying words and immediately pitched forward himself, fatally shot through the head. Weed was carried to an aid station on the far side of the hill, where an aide, Lt. William H. Crennell, tried to comfort him. "General, I hope that you are not so very badly hurt," he said. "I'm as dead a man as Julius Caesar," Weed replied. On the other side of the crest, Vincent also fell mortally wounded, his blood splashing crimson on the rocks.

Although driven back, the Confederates came at the Union defenders once again. As before, the Union soldiers poured a destructive fire on the Alabamians. The attackers were stunned, but the line did not break. As one infantryman fell, another jumped up to take his place in the formation.

To his horror, Oates learned that the left flank of the 47th Alabama had become disconnected from the right flank of the 4th Alabama, exposing both regiments to enfilading fire from the enemy. Musket balls snapped through the air and found their mark. The soldiers of the 47th Alabama were being mowed down like grain before a scythe.

Lieutenant Colonel Michael Bulger, commanding the regiment, fell severely wounded, a Minié ball lodged in his lung. When his regiment retreated, Bulger was abandoned on the battlefield and left for dead. Propped against a tree and bleeding profusely, Bulger awaited the end. When a Union captain approached and asked for his sword, Bulger refused, saying, "I am a lieutenant colonel sir, and will surrender my sword only to an officer of equal rank."



This painting by Edwin Forbes (1839-1895), *View from the summit of Little Round Top at 7:30 p.m. July 3rd, 1863*, shows the guns of 1st Lt. Charles E. Hazlett's 5th U.S. Artillery, Battery D, wreaking havoc on the advancing Confederate divisions below. Forbes served as a special artist for *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* during the Civil War and became famous for detailed depictions of ordinary soldiers as well as dramatic battlefield sketches.

The Federal officer persisted, warning that he would have to kill him and take the saber. Bulger told him to go ahead—he would never give up his weapon to him while he was alive. Impressed by Bulger's courage, the young subordinate sent for his colonel and Bulger willingly gave his sword to the senior officer. Despite the severity of his wound, Bulger survived the war and returned to Alabama.

As the attack of Bulger's men faltered, Oates opted to maneuver his troops to the left flank, swing them around, and try to push the Union troops from the rocky enclaves. If he could accomplish this, he would take the pressure off the hard-pressed 47th Regiment and roll up the Union line.

The 650 Alabamians under his command struck with intense ferocity. This day, however, Oates's superb troops met a regiment of equal valor. Although numbering just 358 soldiers, Chamberlain's 20th Maine knew the surmounting importance of the engagement.

"It was a critical moment," Gerrish said. "If that line was permitted to turn the Federal flank, Little Round Top was untenable, and with this little mountain in the Confederates possession, the whole position would be untenable."

At about 6 p.m., the Rebels moved against Little Round Top. "They [were] rushing on, determined to turn and crush the left of our line," continued Gerrish. "Colonel Chamberlain, with rare sagacity, understood the movement they were making and bent back the left flank of our regiment until the line formed almost a right angle, with the colors at the point."

The air was quickly filled with the acrid smell of gunpowder, the ear-shattering sounds of close-range musket fire, and the screams of the wounded. It was nearly impossible to hear the orders being shouted by the officers. "My men advanced about half way to the enemy's position," Oates reported, "but the fire was so destructive that my line wavered like a man trying to walk against a strong wind, and then slowly, doggedly, gave back a little."

Many of the regiment's best officers were killed as they ascended Little Round Top that sweltering afternoon. Capt. James H. Ellison was straining to hear Oates's commands when he was hit in the

head by a bullet, collapsed, and lay motionless.

Lieutenant Colonel J.B. Feagin, Oates's second in command, also fell mortally wounded when enemy shrapnel tore off his leg. Capt. Henry C. Brainard, leading his men into the natural stone formations of Little Round Top, was wounded as well. As he lay dying, Brainard cried out: "Oh God! That I could see my mother!"

Also among the dead was Oates's brother, Lieutenant John A. Oates. The younger sibling had taken ill and had only rejoined the regiment after commandeering a horse. His older brother recommended that he stay in the rear and not participate in the battle, but John Oates vehemently disagreed. "Brother, I will not do it," he said. "If I were to remain here people would say that I did it through cowardice. I will never disgrace the uniform I wear." Mustering his strength, John Oates went to be with his troops. A short time later, pierced by eight bullets, he fell dead.

The 20th Maine was suffering staggering casualties of its own, as described vividly by Private Gerrish: "I wish that I could picture the awful details of that hour[,] how rapidly the cartridges were torn from the boxes and stuffed in the smoking muzzles of the guns; how the steel rammers clashed and clanged in the heated barrels; how the men's hands and faces grew grim and black with burning powder; how our little line, baptized with fire, reeled to and fro as it advanced or was pressed back; how our officers bravely encouraged the men to hold on, and recklessly exposed themselves to the enemy's fire—a terrible medley of cries, shouts, cheers, groans, prayers, curses, bursting shells, whizzing rifle bullets, and clanging steel."

At various places, small groups of Confederates managed to breach the Federal perimeter. Fighting was at close quarters—in the front as well as the rear. One Maine soldier tried to grab the colors of the 15th Alabama. Sergeant Pat O'Connor coolly stepped forward and jabbed his bayonet into the man's head. The combat surged backward and forward like a wave.

As quickly as the Southern infantry was repulsed, Oates urged his men to move forward again. Flushed with renewed spirit, the grayclad riflemen momentarily dislodged Chamberlain's men, but again were pushed back. During the melee, Chamberlain was hit in the leg by a bullet. The wound, however, proved to be superficial as the bullet ricocheted off his scabbard, leaving the ex-professor with only a nasty bruise on his thigh.

"We drove the Federals from their strong defensive position," wrote Oates. "Five times they rallied and charged us—twice coming so near that some of my men had to use the bayonet—but vain was their effort."

With victory seemingly his, Oates realized reluctantly that his men's tremendous drive could not be sustained. "The long blue lines of Federal infantry were coming down on my right and closing in on my rear," he reported, "while some dismounted cavalry were closing the only avenue of escape on my left, and had driven in my skirmishers." He was determined to sell his men dearly.

Although they had withstood the Rebel attacks, Chamberlain's regiment was still in dire straits. "Our ammunition [was] nearly all gone, and we [were] using the cartridges from the boxes of our wounded comrades," said Private Gerrish. "A critical moment [had] arrived, and we [could] remain as we [were] no longer; we must advance or retreat."

Chamberlain knew full well the precarious position his regiment was in—one more Confederate charge could drive them off Little Round Top. As a brief lull developed over the battlefield, he quickly called his officers around him. Of the 358 men he had mustered at the beginning of the battle, only 228 remained standing. Chamberlain, however, had already decided on his next course of action—he was going to charge right into the Rebel force.

"Not a moment was about to be lost," he later wrote. "Five minutes more of such a defensive and the last roll call would sound for us! Desperate as the chances were, there was nothing for

"HE WAS FULL OF PLUCK!"

While the celebrated hero of Little Round Top, Union Colonel Joshua Chamberlain, received numerous accolades in the years following the battle, his Confederate counterpart was given scant recognition.

Part of the reason, perhaps, was the difference in their social stations. Unlike the well-born Chamberlain, William Oates came from humble beginnings. Born on November 30, 1833, in Pike County, Alabama, Oates spent his boyhood on his parents' none-too-successful farm. He received little formal education and was primarily self-taught.

Like many of his neighbors, Oates led a wild frontier-like life. At the tender age of 17, he fled Alabama thinking he had beaten a man to death during a fight. Escaping to Texas, Oates continued his womanizing, brawling, and gambling, quickly earning a reputation as a tough customer. A few years later, Oates's younger brother John tracked him down and asked him to return to Alabama—the man he thought he had killed was, in fact, very much alive. Oates agreed to return and settled down to a more serene lifestyle.

He became fascinated with the law and graduated from law school and successfully passed the Georgia and Alabama bar exams. With his brother also becoming an attorney, the pair opened up a law office in Abbeville, Ala. Soon, the two brothers were pillars of the community.

When the Southern states began to secede from the Union, Oates urged patience. However, after Alabama seceded, he put his law practice on hold and offered his services to the newly formed Confederate Army.

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Obtaining the rank of captain, Oates formed his own unit, called the Henry Pioneers after the county where he resided. The company was reassigned to the 15th Alabama Regiment of Brig. Gen. Isaac Trimble's Brigade of the Army of Northern Virginia. The Alabamians subsequently saw action at the battles of Cross Keys, Gaines's Mill, Cedar Mountain, Second Manassas, Chantilly, Antietam, and Fredericksburg.

Promotion came easy for Oates, and within a short time he was a colonel, taking charge of the 15th Alabama in the spring of 1863. For some reason, the Confederate Congress failed to confirm the promotion, which technically meant that Oates never reached a rank higher than lieutenant colonel in the Confederate Army. Nevertheless, he claimed for himself the rank of colonel for the remainder of his life.

it but to take the offensive. I stepped to the colors. The men turned towards me. One word was enough—Bayonets!"

The left wing of the 20th Maine started forward, running and yelling as they charged the Confederate infantry. "Come on! Come on! Come on boys!" hollered Lt. Holman S. Melcher, waving his saber over his head. Caught up in the excitement, Melcher was a full 10 paces in front of his men.

The Union right flank also charged and swung forward in an extended right-wheel maneuver. Never suspecting that the Union defenders would attempt such an audacious maneuver, the Confederates were caught completely off guard. Some threw their hands in the air and begged for their lives.

"Many of the enemy's first line threw down their arms and surrendered," wrote Chamberlain. "An officer fired his pistol at my head with one hand, while he handed me his sword with the other. Meanwhile Captain [Walter G.] Morrill with his skirmishers (sent out from my left flank), with some dozen or fifteen of the U.S. Sharpshooters who had put themselves under his direction, fell upon the enemy as they were breaking, and by his demonstrations, as well as his well-directed fire, added much to the effect of the charge."

The Confederate command disintegrated. "With a withering and deadly fire pouring in upon us from every direction, it seemed that the entire command was doomed to destruction," Oates reported. "While one man was shot in the face, his right hand or left hand comrade was shot in the side or back. Some were struck simultaneously with two or three balls from different directions."

Oates finally had to order a retreat. When he did, he and his men "ran like a herd of cattle." Oates continued, "As we ran, a man named Keils who was to my right and rear had his throat cut and he ran past me breathing at his throat and the blood spattering. His windpipe was entirely severed."

Oates tried to reorganize his regiment atop Big Round Top, but any further effort to regroup was futile. Overcome with heat and exhaustion, Oates collapsed unconscious and had to be carried to the rear.

The fighting on Little Round Top was over. Out of nearly 700 soldiers, only 225 were left of the 15th and 47th Alabama regiments. The 20th Maine could only muster 200 of its original officers and men.

Chamberlain, wounded twice that fateful day, would suffer six wounds in all during his improbable military career. His extraordinary bravery and brilliant tactical moves on Little Round Top would earn him a Medal of Honor, although he would not receive the award until 30 years after the fact. For the time being, he shared full credit with his men. "In such an engagement there were many incidents of heroism and noble character which should have place even in an official report," Chamberlain wrote in his after-action report, "but, under present circumstances, I am unable to do justice to them. I will say of that regiment that the resolution, courage, and heroic fortitude which enabled us to withstand so formidable an attack have happily led to so conspicuous a result that they may safely trust to history to record their merits."

The Confederacy had lost a golden chance to take Little Round Top, roll up Meade's left, and perhaps win the Battle of Gettysburg on the afternoon of the second day. The fate of the Union had rested then on a small group of untested soldiers led by a colonel with no formal military education. Against all odds, Chamberlain and the 20th Maine had risen to the challenge and won the day. Their chief opponent summed it up best. "There never were harder fighters than the 20th Maine and their gallant colonel," William Oates said later. "[Chamberlain's] skill and persistence and the great bravery of his men saved Little Round Top, and the Army of the Potomac, from defeat. Great events sometimes turn on comparatively small affairs." ■

Despite the debate over his promotion, Oates was in charge of the regiment on that fateful day in July at Little Round Top. He was grief-stricken at the loss of life from his regiment. "My dead and wounded were then greater in number than those still on duty," he would later say. "Of 644 men and 42 officers, I had lost 343 men and 19 officers. The dead literally covered the ground. The blood stood in puddles on the rocks. The ground was soaked with the blood of as brave men as ever fell on the red field of battle."

A few months later Oates was again surrounded in controversy. At the Battle of Chickamauga in September 1863, he ordered a South Carolina unit into the fight, despite the fact that he had no formal authorization to give such an order. The 15th Alabama was also blamed for a friendly fire incident, a charge that Oates vehemently denied. "There was no better regiment in the Confederate Army than the Fifteenth Alabama," Oates maintained.

Despite these accusations, the regiment performed gallantly at Brown's Ferry, Lookout Valley, the Wilderness, Spotsylvania, and Cold Harbor. Although a brave and courageous leader, Oates lost command of the regiment. He was later placed in charge of the 48th Georgia. Near Petersburg, Va., on August 16, 1864, he was struck in the right arm by a Union bullet. The wound was so severe that it required amputation. The war was over for William Oates.

With the end of the Civil War, Oates turned his attention to politics and served the state of Alabama in various positions. Capitalizing on his war fame, he used the campaign slogan "the one-armed hero of Henry County," when running for office. His strategy worked and he was elected to Alabama's House of Representatives for two years. He was a delegate to the Democratic National Convention and the state constitutional convention. In 1880, he served in the U.S. House of Representatives from Alabama's 3rd District. In 1894, Oates decided to try his hand at governorship. The election was a mudslinging event, ripe with double-dealing, dirty politics, and corrupt bargains. He won, but only served one term as governor.

During the Spanish American War, President William McKinley tapped Oates to head three different brigades during the brief war with Spain. Although never seeing combat, he served proudly. Realizing the irony in it, Oates joked "I am now a Yankee General, formerly a Rebel Colonel, and right each time!"

Politics aside, Oates still maintained his law practice in Montgomery and dabbled in real estate. These two occupations made him rich. Together with his wife and son, the old colonel visited Europe in 1902. William C. Oates, Jr., would also become a lawyer and a partner in his father's law firm.

Despite his good fortune, the Civil War in general and Little Round Top in particular were indelibly etched in Oates's memory. He was haunted by the death of so many fine citizens of his beloved state, especially his brother John. For several years he tried in vain to have a memorial erected on Little Round Top for the fallen soldiers of the Alabama units that fought there. The Gettysburg National Military Park commissioners continually denied his request. He would later write a book, The War Between the Union and the Confederacy, giving prominent mention to his regiment's battles during the war.

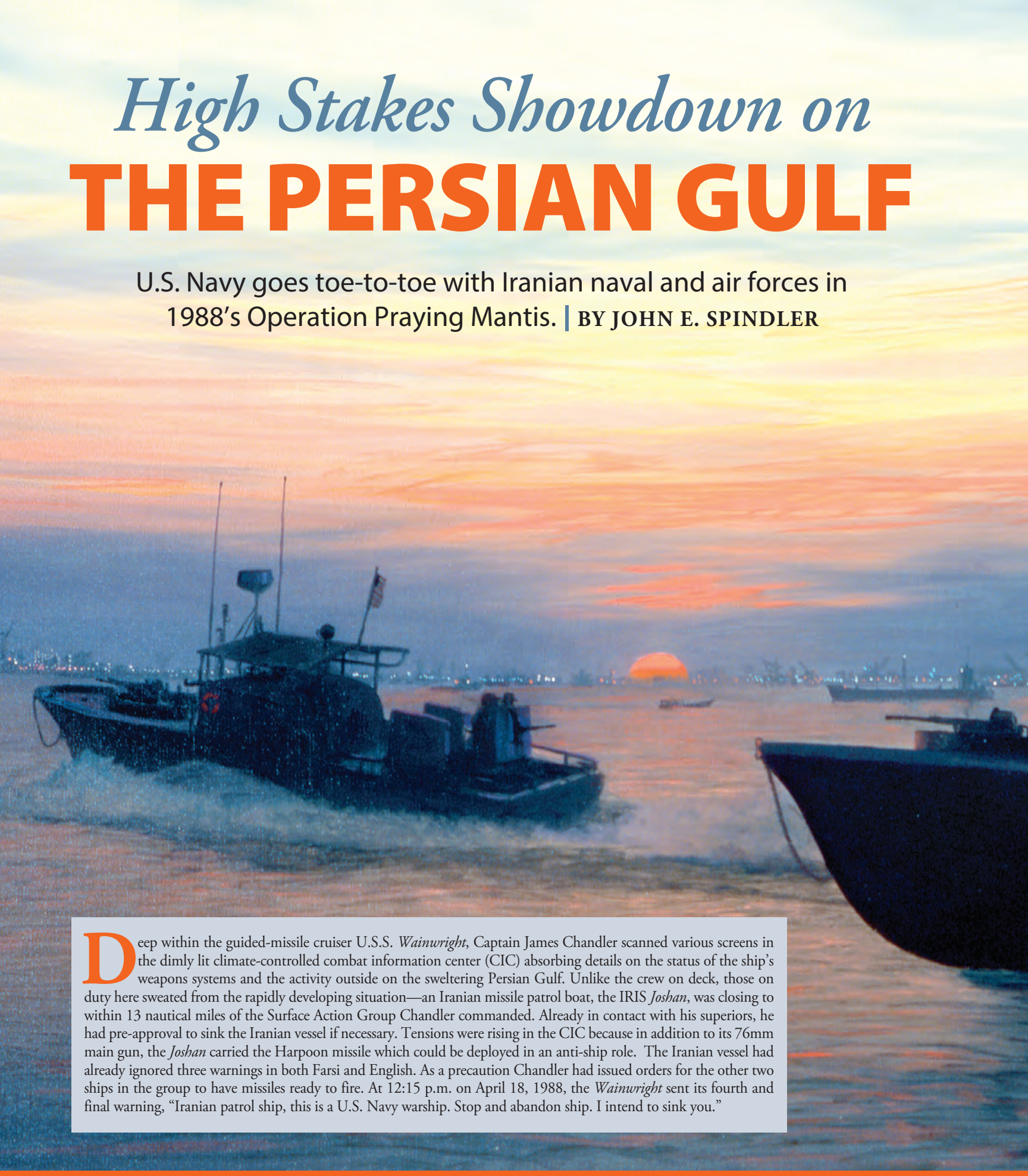
Oates remained active in veterans affairs until his death on September 9, 1910, at the age of 78. He was laid to rest in Montgomery with full military honors. Oates was praised in the newspapers for his battlefield exploits and his dedicated service to his state and country after the war.

One newspaper captured the very essence of Oates's life when it stated simply, "He was full of pluck!"

He certainly was. ■

High Stakes Showdown on THE PERSIAN GULF

U.S. Navy goes toe-to-toe with Iranian naval and air forces in 1988's Operation Praying Mantis. | BY JOHN E. SPINDLER



Deep within the guided-missile cruiser U.S.S. *Wainwright*, Captain James Chandler scanned various screens in the dimly lit climate-controlled combat information center (CIC) absorbing details on the status of the ship's weapons systems and the activity outside on the sweltering Persian Gulf. Unlike the crew on deck, those on duty here sweated from the rapidly developing situation—an Iranian missile patrol boat, the IRIS *Joshan*, was closing to within 13 nautical miles of the Surface Action Group Chandler commanded. Already in contact with his superiors, he had pre-approval to sink the Iranian vessel if necessary. Tensions were rising in the CIC because in addition to its 76mm main gun, the *Joshan* carried the Harpoon missile which could be deployed in an anti-ship role. The Iranian vessel had already ignored three warnings in both Farsi and English. As a precaution Chandler had issued orders for the other two ships in the group to have missiles ready to fire. At 12:15 p.m. on April 18, 1988, the *Wainwright* sent its fourth and final warning, "Iranian patrol ship, this is a U.S. Navy warship. Stop and abandon ship. I intend to sink you."

During the Iran-Iraq war (1980-88) both nations attacked commercial shipping in the Persian Gulf to disrupt supply to their enemy. Under Operation Earnest Will, the U.S. began sending naval patrols into the Gulf to offer protection for Kuwaiti shipping while trying to stay out of the conflict—until a U.S. Navy vessel hit an Iranian mine.

U.S. Navy Art Collection

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ABOVE: During Operation Praying Mantis the Iranian fast attack craft *Joshan* fired a Harpoon missile at the Guided Missile Cruiser USS *Wainwright*, shown here underway. Using chaff and electronic countermeasures, the Wainwright was able to divert the Harpoon and fire four Standard missiles of its own. Ships from Surface Action Group (SAG) Charlie closed in and finished off *Joshan*. *BELOW:* The Iranian minelayer *Iran Ajr* was seen laying mines during Operation Earnest Will—an American military initiative to protect Kuwaiti-owned tankers from attacks during the Iran-Iraq War. Navy SEALs seized the *Iran Ajr* in September 1987. The mine that damaged the USS *Samuel B. Roberts* in April 1988 was found to have come from that ship.

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In response, the *Joshan* locked its fire control radar upon the U.S. cruiser and fired a Harpoon missile. Already prepared for such a contingency, chaff dispensers went into action. Chandler and his crew awaited the outcome as the vessel executed evasive maneuvers. Already having received "Go," the nearby U.S.S. *Simpson* launched a RIM-66 Standard Missile, SM-1MR (standard missile, medium range). The *Wainwright*'s chaff threw off the Harpoon, which missed along the starboard side and disappeared into the sea.

Unfortunately for the *Joshan*, its chaff dispensers failed as the *Simpson*'s SM-1 hit its superstructure. Before the first missile hit, the *Simpson* had already fired a second that exploded almost atop the Iranian patrol ship, most likely ripping through its fire control radar as at 12:17 p.m. it went offline.

In the *Wainwright*'s CIC, Chandler ordered the launching of another SM-1MR, which also hit the *Joshan*. Although not in the process of sinking, the enemy ship was observed to be an inferno from bridge to stern when a third SM-1 from the *Simpson* struck it. The U.S.S. *Wainwright* and the IRIS *Joshan* became the first naval surface vessels in history to exchange missiles in hostility. Naval combat had taken a massive step forward into the age of electronics. Despite the historic milestone, the exchange between the U.S. and Iranian warships only constituted a part of the battle known as Operation Praying Mantis.

The largest U.S. Navy battle since World War II took place in the Persian Gulf during the intense and brutal Iran-Iraq War. This region has seen conflict for several millennia for a variety of reasons that included religion, trade, and empire building. The onset of the 20th century brought about yet another cause for nations to fight. In 1908, the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company discovered the first major oil deposits in southwest Iran and 15 years later, a similar discovery of oil deposits occurred in neighboring Iraq. The Persian Gulf suddenly became crucial to the West. By the 1980s, this hot and arid region contained about 80 percent of the world's proven oil reserves as well as one of its busiest waterways. With their deep draft, oil tankers were forced to stay in specific shipping lanes when navigating the Persian Gulf, passing through the narrow Strait of Hormuz—a natural chokepoint to be blocked in times of war.

After the Vietnam War, the United States developed a policy of strengthening and supporting regional powers but not taking direct responsibility for any region. In the Persian Gulf, the U.S. focused on the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Iran as their cornerstones for the region's security and accomplished this through the export of modern weapons to both nations. The American doctrine went askew when Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, the last Shah of Iran, was overthrown in January 1979. Led by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the country became the Islamic Republic of Iran. Saddam Hussein, the despotic leader of Iraq, kept a deep interest in the resulting confusion from the Islamic revolution in his neighbor. Hussein wanted to expand Iraq's narrow strip of territory along the Persian Gulf coast, the Al-Faw (sometimes spelled Al-Fao) Peninsula. Sensing the disorder in Iran would hamper its ability to respond militarily, Hussein seized the moment, sending in several divisions on September 22, 1980. Less than a month later, Iraq declared the water off Iran a "prohibited war zone" and any vessel inside this zone would be subject to destruction.

By early 1981, an unexpected fanatical defense by the Iranian revolutionary forces had stopped

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The Guided Missile Frigate USS *Samuel B. Roberts* (FFG-58) was damaged and nearly sunk by an Iranian mine on April 14, 1988. Other mines recovered by Navy divers in the area had serial numbers matching those found on the Iranian minelayer *Iran Ajr* a few months earlier. Four days later, the U.S. launched Operation Praying Mantis with three groups of U.S. warships targeting Iranian ships and oil platforms in retaliation.

Saddam Hussein's invasion. In the fall, Iran mounted its first counter-offensive. The drawn-out conflict, which would not end until August 20, 1988, saw the worst aspects of war which included Iran's "human-wave" tactics and Iraq's use of chemical warfare against Iran and its own people. Decisions by both governments led to attacks on vessels in the Persian Gulf by the Iraqi Air Force as well as elements of Iranian naval and air forces. Neither side wanted merchant ships to carry goods to their enemy's ports and had no hesitation using deadly force to support their blockades. The course of the war turned against Iraq in February 1986 after Iran's successful amphibious operation to occupy the Al-Faw Peninsula.

By this time, the United States had decided to safeguard delivery of oil by permanently deploying five warships to the Persian Gulf. An aircraft carrier stationed outside of the Strait of Hormuz provided crucial air support. From 1983 to 1986, Iranian and Iraqi attacks on merchant vessels and tankers increased each year. With the situation growing worse, Kuwait appealed to the U.S. in December, 1986, with the offer that the nation would allow its tankers to sail under the American flag, thus falling under American military protection. U.S. law forbids U.S. Navy warships to escort civilian ships under a foreign flag.

Tired of waiting for a response from the U.S., the Kuwaiti government contacted the Soviet Union with the same proposal in the spring of 1987. U.S. Secretary of Defense Casper Weinberger, in March, voiced his support of reflagging the vessels and providing an escort through the Persian Gulf. The Soviet Union was Iraq's main supplier of weapons and Weinberger wanted to prevent any further Soviet influence in a region so crucial to the Western powers. President Ronald Reagan agreed to the Kuwaiti request on March 10 and preparations for Operation Earnest Will, the American protection of Kuwaiti oil tankers, began.

This American campaign would eventually be the largest naval convoy operation since the end of World War II. Two months before the onset, America suffered its first casualties in the Persian Gulf. On May 17, 1987, an Iraqi Air Force Dassault Mirage F1 fighter jet attacked a U.S. Navy warship. The U.S.S. *Stark*, a guided-missile frigate, was struck by a pair of French-built AM-39 Exocet anti-ship missiles—which had gained notoriety for its success in the 1982 Falklands War. Some 37 American sailors were killed and 21 wounded in the attack, which the Iraqi government claimed was accidental, though this has never been confirmed.

Operation Earnest Will officially started on July 24, 1987, as Kuwaiti oil tankers were reflagged with American flags and most piloted by American captains. The United Nations Security Council Resolution 598, adopted unanimously three days prior, reinforced the protection of "neutral shipping and civil aircraft" in the region. Although the U.S. Navy provided the majority of the escorting warships, Britain's Royal Navy and the French Navy sent warships into the Gulf to enforce the resolution.

Opposing this enforcement of Resolution 598 and America's naval presence, Iran fielded a navy composed of warships bought from the West during the Shah's reign. Although its three destroyers (one ex-Royal Navy and two ex-U.S. Navy) were the Islamic Republic of Iran Navy's largest ships, a pair of frigates built for the previous regime in the United Kingdom were part of Iran's response to the American military actions on April 18. The IRIS *Sabalan* and *Sahand* were both launched in 1969. In addition to carrying Sea Killer anti-ship

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The British-built Iranian frigate *Sabalan*, commanded by Abdollah Manavi, known as "Captain Nasty" for his attacks on unarmed, often neutral, tankers and merchant ships during the Iran-Iraq War. Manavi boarded these ships under the pretext of a friendly inspection, at times even dining with the ship's master. Afterward, he would fire on the ship, sometimes aiming at the bridge and living quarters, before transmitting "Have a nice day" over the radio.

missiles, these frigates mounted a 4.5-inch Mark 8 naval gun for its primary weapon. The third major surface vessel seeing combat that day, the IRIS *Joshan* was a French-built fast attack craft from the 1970s. One of 12 such ships ordered under the Shah's regime, this Kaman-class ship carried the Harpoon missile as well as a 76 mm Oto-Melara naval gun, which also armed some of the U.S. Navy ships that participated in the April 1988 operation. The captain of the *Sabalan* earned the moniker "Captain Nasty" for his preference to attack merchant vessels by targeting their bridge and/or crew quarters. Frequently after an attack, "Captain Nasty" radioed the victimized ship saying "Have a nice day."

Separate from the Islamic Republic of Iran Navy, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps possessed its own naval force. More fanatical, this branch had been designated as a terrorist organization by some nation-states including the U.S. and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Among their ships were Boghammar fast patrol boats. Purchased during the early years of the Iran-Iraq War, the crews of these Swedish-built speedboats swarmed and ruthlessly attacked tankers and other merchant ships with RPG-7 rocket launchers, machine guns, and recoilless rifles.

The same preference for Western armaments extended to Iran's air force with aircraft purchased from the United States, such as the Grumman F-14A Tomcat interceptor, McDonnell Douglas F-4D Phantom II fighter-bomber/interceptor, and the Northrop F-5 Tiger II fighter. Along with these combat jets, the U.S. completed deals to arm the export aircraft with American-built missiles and bombs. By the time of Operation Praying Mantis, the Islamic Republic of Iran Air Force (IRIAF) had lost a number of aircraft to combat and accidents. Others sat grounded due to a lack of available spare parts, especially in the case of the F-14A Tomcat with Iran being the only operator of the aircraft other than the U.S. Navy.

On the initial escort mission of Operation Earnest Will on July 24, 1987, a reflagged Kuwaiti supertanker, now called the MV *Bridgeton* hit a contact mine about 18 miles west of Iran's Farsi Island. Though no definitive proof existed at the time that Iran laid the mine, suspicion overwhelmingly fell upon Tehran as a new consideration for the convoys to contend with had unwelcomingly appeared. During the preparation of Earnest Will, the capabilities of Iran's air force and both naval services had been taken into consideration. These concerns included Iran's land-based Silkworm missile batteries. These Chinese-built and supplied anti-ship cruise missiles had already been used against Kuwait from sites on the occupied Al-Faw Peninsula.

U.S. Army Boeing MH/AH-6 light helicopters fitted to operate at night and informally named "Sea Bats" flew from U.S. Navy ships. On the night of September 21, two months into the escort operation, one of these "Sea Bats" observed the *Iran Ajr* laying mines. After issuing a warning, the helicopter fired upon the landing craft-turn-minelayer killing some of the crew. A team of Navy SEALs arrived and took control of the Iranian craft, discovering more mines. It would be later confirmed that the mines confiscated on *Iran Ajr* were from the same production batch as those found near the *Bridgeton*. An intensive multinational effort commenced to clear out known minefields and actively deter Iran from laying more mines in the Persian Gulf. For the time being, the escort operation succeeded as whenever an Iranian warship sailed on a potential intercept course, American warships "illuminated them with our fire-control radar" thus sending the Iranian vessel back to safety.

A month later in the early morning of October 16, Iran launched another volley of Silkworms missiles from the Al-Faw towards Kuwait. The reflagged tanker MV *Sea Isle City* was hit, wounding 18 crew members including its American captain. Debate over responding to the incident among high-level Reagan officials occurred as the empty oil tanker, though under an American flag, was at the time in port and not being escorted. A decision to not eliminate an Iranian warship was adopted. Instead, U.S. forces would target a pair of oil platforms. The destruction of the Resalat and Reshadat platforms was justified as the Iranians, particularly the Navy of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, used them as bases to launch their Boghammar attacks. Under Operation Nimble Archer, four destroyers, a cruiser, and a frigate destroyed one platform and heavily

damaged the second on October 19. A commando team landed on the latter platform, retrieving documents and a teletype printer, before destroying it with demolition charges.

In early 1988, two-star Rear Admiral Anthony Less took over command of the Joint Task Force Middle East. From his flagship, the U.S.S. *Coronado*, no notable incidents took place under his watch until 4:45 p.m. on April 14, 1988. The guided missile frigate U.S.S. *Samuel B. Roberts*, a sister ship of the U.S.S. *Stark*, sailed into a minefield and struck one while trying to maneuver out of it. Using damage control lessons learned from the *Stark* incident, the crew saved the *Samuel B. Roberts* by using cables to prevent it from breaking in two. Astoundingly, no fatalities resulted from striking the SADAF-02 Sea Mine, the same type found on the *Iran Ajr*.

Immediately Admiral Less communicated his retaliation recommendations to his commander, U.S. Central Command's Marine Gen. George W. Crist, who in turn forwarded it to Adm. William J. Crowe, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Washington. Reagan met with his senior advisors including Secretary of State George Schultz, Secretary of Defense Frank Carlucci, and National Security Advisor Gen. Colin Powell. Less had advocated using aircraft from the U.S.S. *Enterprise* to strike land-based targets on Iranian soil as well as the sinking of a major Iranian Navy warship, preferably the *Sabalan*. These proposals received support from Crowe. Schultz took the position that targeting a warship could escalate the conflict and only ensnare America deeper in the region's turmoil.

After much debate, it was decided to eliminate two of Iran's important Gas-Oil Separation Platforms (GOSP), the Sassan and the Sirri. Separating natural gas and crude oil from the wellhead fluid, this pair of GOSPs accounted for nearly seven percent of the country's output. Reagan also gave permission to sink the IRIS *Sabalan* or an acceptable alternate, if possible. Over the next couple of days, details were finalized for Operation Praying Mantis to begin at 8 a.m. Gulf Time on April 18, 1988.

Three Surface Action Groups (SAG) were formed, each assigned a specific part of the mission. Assigned to eliminate the Sassan GOSP, SAG Bravo comprised the guided missile destroyer U.S.S. *Lynde McCormick*, destroyer U.S.S. *Merrill*, and the amphibious transport dock U.S.S. *Trenton*. Leading SAG Bravo from the *McCormick*, Capt. James B. Perkins had a U.S. Marine squad who would land on the platform. After securing it, they had orders to gather intelligence before setting demolition charges to destroy its production capability. Operation Nimble Archer had proven how difficult it was to destroy a platform by naval

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ABOVE: One of two oil platforms attacked by U.S. Navy destroyers during Operation Nimble Archer on October 19, 1987. Damaged in the Iran–Iraq War the previous year, the non-producing platforms were being used by the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps. The U.S. attack was in response to an Iranian Silkworm missile that hit the MV *Sea Isle City*, a reflagged Kuwaiti oil tanker, three days earlier. The tanker's American captain was blinded and 18 crew members were wounded. BELOW: A Navy guided-missile destroyer fires a RIM-66 Standard surface-to-air missile from a Mark-13 launcher during Operation Praying Mantis.

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National Archives

ABOVE: The main building of Iran's Sassan oil platform in the Persian Gulf is on fire after being hit by guided missiles from a Marine AH-1 Cobra helicopter on the morning of April 18 during Operation Praying Mantis. BELOW: On the morning of April 18, 1988, a U.S. Marine squad from Surface Action Group (SAG) Bravo searches Iran's Sassan oil platform for intelligence documents and military equipment. Afterwards, the Marines set demolition charges to destroy its production capability. The Navy wanted to prevent a major ecological disaster and had learned in 1987's Operation Nimble Archer how difficult it was to destroy the steel-lattice platforms by naval fire alone.

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fire alone and the Navy wanted to prevent the major ecological disaster of an uncontrollable oil leak. After eliminating the GOSP, they would target another.

Simultaneous with the attack on the Sassan platform, SAG Charlie would take out the Sirri GOSP. Under the command of Chandler aboard the U.S.S. *Wainwright*, this SAG also contained the guided missile frigate U.S.S *Simpson*, and the frigate U.S.S. *Bagley*. A SEAL commando team would board the Sirri, gather intelligence and set the charges to disable it. As with SAG Bravo, U.S. Army helicopters would be in a supporting role for reconnaissance and transport.

The third and final group, SAG Delta, was tasked to search-and-destroy any Iranian warships just inside the Strait of Hormuz. From the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the crews operating in the Persian Gulf, all knew the favored target was the *Sabalan*, though the sinking of its on-station replacement was acceptable. Assigned to SAG Delta were the guided missile frigate U.S.S. *Jack Williams*, guided missile destroyer U.S.S. *Joseph Strauss*, and the destroyer U.S.S. *O'Brien*. In command of this SAG, Capt. Donald Dyer led from the *Jack Williams*. A SEAL team would be on standby if the opportunity to board an Iranian ship presented itself.

Support for the operation came from Air Wing 11 stationed aboard the aircraft carrier U.S.S. *Enterprise*. The combat air patrol (CAP) to interdict any Iranian Air Force sorties was in the form of four Grumman F-14A Tomcats. The American warships received a surface combat air patrol (SUCAP) in the form of two Grumman EA-6B Prowler electronic warfare aircraft and two Grumman A-6E Intruders, whose mission payload included Harpoon missiles, Walleye TV-guided glide bombs, Rockeye cluster bombs, and Skipper II laser-guided missiles. Additional aerial support came from another Intruder and six Vought A-7E Corsair II attack jets, armed similarly to the Intruders. The U.S. Air Force provided Boeing E-3A Sentry for radar surveillance and one of its McDonnell-Douglas KC-10 Extender tankers for aerial refueling. All four branches of the U.S. military would participate in this operation.

At dawn on April 18, the ships moved into position with SAG Delta near the Strait of Hormuz and SAG Charlie steaming to the Sirri platform. Captain Perkins and SAG Bravo headed to the Sassan GOSP. The ships stopped about 4,000 yards from their target, aware the Iranians were alerted to their presence. Intelligence reported Soviet-built ZU-23 anti-aircraft guns had been installed on Sassan, and a helicopter conducted a reconnaissance sortie of the objective with visual confirmation, discovering the ZU-23s to be manned by fanatical members of Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. At 7:55 a.m. Perkins broadcasted warnings directed at Sassan GOSP in English, Farsi, and Arabic over both military and civilian frequencies, "Attention Sassan platform. This is a U.S. warship. This is your warning. You have five minutes to clear the platform before we commence firing."

A large number of platform personnel headed for a tug and workboats, while pleas were sent to SAG Bravo for more time. Seeing the Iranians actively trying to evacuate, the captain allowed them a few more minutes. At 8:04, the Iranians

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Marines inspect a Soviet ZU-23 anti-aircraft gun on the Sassan oil platform which Iranians had fired at the Marines before being silenced by a BGM-71 Tube-launched, Optically-guided, Wire-guided (TOW) missile fired from a Marine AH-1 Cobra helicopter. The attack was part of Operation Praying Mantis which was launched after the guided missile frigate USS *Samuel B. Roberts* hit an Iranian mine on April 14, 1988.

received the notification that time had expired. Both the *McCormick* and *Merrill* went to the "Weapons Free" status—OK to fire on the enemy. A Second-class Petty Officer stationed in each of the CICs used a joystick to train their 5-inch guns on the platform. Seconds later a 5-inch air-burst round exploded at the platform's vacant southern area as a hard warning. The extremists manning one of the ZU-23s fired at the destroyers in a useless gesture as well as directing 23mm rounds at an approaching Bell AH-1 Cobra gunship. The *Merrill* eliminated the enemy gun emplacement with an air-burst round.

The American ships ceased fire to allow the tug and workboats to vacate the area. Once the Iranians moved out of harm's way, the *Merrill* and *McCormick* resumed firing their 5-inch main armaments, with the former doing a majority of the shooting. Special care was employed to avoid bursting a round near a hydrogen sulfide tank on the northern side of the GOSP. The Marine commando team would have been unable to land on the platform because gas masks were ineffective against the lethal compound.

At 9:25 a.m., the Marines landed on the Sassan platform using MP-5s and flashbang grenades to suppress any lingering resistance. The Marines declared the objective secure 40 minutes after arrival. Demolition charges were detonated a little after 1 p.m. and 10 minutes later Cobra gunships leveled any remaining structures with TOW anti-tank missiles. The mission was completed without any oil leaks from the platform. An operation to eliminate another platform was started and then cancelled a couple of hours later when a surface contact was detected. This turned out to be a Soviet destroyer whose captain explained that he wanted to capture the moment for history.

SAG Charlie arrived at the Sirri platform before H-Hour. As at Sassan, the Americans issued a warning at 7:55 a.m. in Farsi and English giving those on the platform five minutes to evacuate. A response of more time was needed as tugs had been called for evacuation. Chandler elected to wait for the tug to load and clear the platform. When the tug and a few other boats were 2,000 yards from Sirri Platform, the Americans fired. From five miles out, the *Wainwright* and *Bagley* used their 5-inch main gun, while the *Simpson* shot 76mm rounds from a closer range. The first salvo saw a total of eight 5-inch rounds–the *Bagley* fired three before a round jammed in its lower gun carriage temporarily taking the ship out of action–and 29 shells from the *Simpson*. For defenses, Sirri also had the ZU-23mm anti-aircrafts guns and one of these was taken out by an airburst round in the initial barrage.

One, possibly more, of the surviving ZU-23s returned fire at the American warships plus a handful of Islamic Revolutionary Guards futilely used small arms. Many of the remaining Iranians on the Sirri GOSP decided to abandon the structure after the opening attack with some jumping into the water. The three U.S. ships paused the assault and helicopters bearing the SEAL commando team began their flight to the Sirri. While nearing the platform, at least one of the ZU-23s fired upon the chopper. SAG Charlie retaliated by firing a second salvo to eliminate the threat. An errant round from the *Wainwright* struck a compressed gas tank, setting off a fire that quickly spread. The blaze consumed an ammunition stockpile setting off secondary explosions. The SEAL-laden helicopters attempted another approach. Not taking any chances, mini-guns were used against any remaining enemies spotted on the platform. The inferno consuming the Sirri proved to be too hot and the boarding mission was cancelled. Instead, the American choppers dropped life rafts to the Iranians treading water. In targeting these platforms, some ranking U.S. officials hoped to lure out the Islamic Republic of Iran Navy.

As the American Marines were planting the

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ABOVE: An Iranian frigate, possibly the *Sahand* (see below), or the *Sabalan*, after being hit by an Mk-82 laser-guided bomb from a Navy A-6E Intruder. After the *Sahand* was destroyed earlier, the U.S. high command decided to spare the *Salaban*, which was later repaired. BELOW: The Islamic Republic of Iran Navy frigate *Sahand* burns in the Persian Gulf after being hit by three Harpoon anti-ship missiles, two 1,000-lb. laser-guided Skippers, two Walleye TV-guided bombs, as well as numerous Mk83 1,000-lb. bombs and cluster bombs. When the fire reached its magazine, the ship exploded and sank with the loss of 45 crewmembers. OPPOSITE: Part of the attack squadron VA-95 "Green Lizards" based on the carrier USS *Enterprise*, this A-6E Intruder drops CBU-59 cluster bombs over Iranian targets on April 18, 1988.

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demolition charges on the Sassan GOSP, Iran responded. In the Mubarek oil field near Sharjah, a trio of Revolutionary Guard Corps Boghammars attacked the *York Marine*, an oil storage tanker, hitting the engine room with an anti-tank rocket. After harassing the ship for nearly an hour, the speed boats raced back to port. Late that morning, the *Joshan* was dispatched to the vicinity of the Sirri platform. Less than an hour after it sailed, Chandler issued the first of the warnings to the Iranian missile patrol ship at noon.

Fifteen minutes later, the surface warships from the U.S. Navy fought their first battle against enemy capital ships since World War II. After firing the Harpoon missile, the *Joshan* at was hit by two Standard SM-1MRs from the *Simpson* and an SM-1MR from the *Wainwright*. A third and final SM-1MR from the *Simpson* struck the lifeless missile patrol boat. Reports exist that the *Bagley* missed with a Harpoon.

Less ordered Chandler to finish off the *Joshan*. The *Bagley*, *Simpson* and *Wainwright* riddled the Iranian ship with dozens of 5-inch and 76mm shells until a massive explosion obliterated its superstructure and it finally sank at 4:21 p.m. Not wanting Tehran to make false claims of Americans shooting Iranian survivors, rescue of the *Joshan*'s crewmen was left to fishing boats. A trio of IRIAF F-4 Phantoms approached SAG Charlie. Countering, the *Wainwright* launched a pair of RIM-67 Standard SM2-ER (Standard Missile, Extended Range) anti-aircraft missiles. One missed, but shrapnel from a near hit damaged one of the Phantoms and all of the Iranian aircraft returned to base.

As the *Wainwright* and *Joshan* were exchanging missiles, a sortie of seven Boghammars returned to the *York Marine*. A ship answering their calls for assistance was also attacked. Shortly after that the Panamanian-flagged barge rig *Scan Bay* was hit by rocket-propelled grenades and machine guns. A pair of A-6E Intruders from Squadron VA-95 and an F-14 Tomcat arrived to witness the latest attack, but at the time Navy pilots were not allowed to intervene for foreign-flagged victims. Contacting their superiors on the *Enterprise* led to a communication exchange that went straight up the ladder to Reagan. Three minutes after the initial call, the Intruder pilots were informed that the President decided to remove the threat. As the Boghammars were small and highly agile targets, it was with a bit of difficulty the Intruders engaged the speed boats with the Tomcat providing cover. Eventually a Rockeye cluster bomb destroyed one Boghammar, which caused the rest of the Revolutionary Guards Corps-piloted vessels to flee and beach themselves on Abu Musa.

Throughout the morning, the three ships of SAG Delta sat on location, awaiting news that the

Sabalan had entered the area. Sailors on the ships were drained from being on General Quarters the entire time in the 100-degree heat. For reasons still unexplained, the Tehran government decided to continue to respond to the Americans with its navy. The Iranians may have believed that the U.S. had finally allied themselves with Iraq. On the day of Operation Praying Mantis, Baghdad launched a major offensive to reclaim the Al-Faw Peninsula. Alerted via radar contact that a Saam-class frigate had departed from Bandar Abbas, SAG Delta had additional aid in the search operation from another A-6E, two F-14s and an EA-6B electronics jammer and communications plane. Due to a close call between Soviet and U.S. ships in the Black Sea in February, Less on the *Coronado* wanted visual confirmation.

At 2:40 p.m. the Intruder pilot, Commander Arthur "Bud" Langston, identified the ship as the *Sahand*. During the verification process, the Iranian frigate fired anti-aircraft cannons and launched a couple of surface-to-air missiles (SAM) which Langston defeated by employing countermeasures. The EA-6B Prowler jammed the *Sahand*'s air search radar and communications. From 12 miles out, Langston launched one of his Harpoon anti-ship missiles, striking the frigate amidship rendering it dead in the water. The commander reported the *Sahand* appeared to be slowly sinking, but was still able to fight.

In addition to SAG Delta racing to the area, the on-deck strike group of an Intruder and six Corsair IIs was launched from the *Enterprise* to engage the enemy vessel. As the reinforcements were en route, Langston undertook another attack run, this time his bombardier launched a pair of 1,000-pound Skipper missiles. Though one splashed into the sea, the other slammed into stricken *Sahand* under its bridge. Both SAG Delta and the strike group arrived in range about the same time. The second A-6E and the U.S.S. *Joseph Strauss* unknowingly fired Harpoons simultaneously, both hitting the target. Continuing its attack run, the second Intruder fired its two 1,000-lb. laser-guided Skippers with one striking the *Sahand*'s aft and blowing pieces of the stern into the air.

The A-7Es made their first attack pass, striking the *Sahand* with a Walleye TV-guided bomb and at least 8 unguided Mk83 1,000-lb. bombs, one of which eliminated the frigate's Seakiller missile mount. The Corsair II pilots reported flak was still being fired at them. Additional attack runs followed with the ship receiving hits from another Walleye, numerous Mk 83 and cluster bombs, and another laser-guided bomb. Then the burning ship's magazine exploded and the IRIS *Sahand* sank with the loss of 45 of its crew and 87 wounded.

As afternoon turned to early evening, the *Sabalan* sallied forth from its base at 5 p.m. Alerted by an AWACS aircraft, Lt.-Com. Jim Engler flew in the direction of the radar contact in his fully-loaded Intruder. Fifteen minutes later and eight nautical miles from the ship, a FLIR image confirmed the contact was the much-sought IRIS *Sabalan*. With Less' visual confirmation order still in place, Engler made a pass to identify the *Sabalan* and was greeted by a barrage of anti-aircraft fire and flashes signaling the presence of hand-held SAMs. SAG Delta called for the Intruder to stand down as the enemy frigate was theirs to eliminate. Ignoring the request as he had been fired upon, Engler rose to 17,900 feet in preparation for an attack run. Going into a 45-degree dive, the Intruder's bombardier released a 500-pound laser-guided bomb before leveling out at 12,000 feet. Eighteen inches above the waterline on the Iranian frigate's starboard side, it penetrated the ship's hull into the engineering area and exploded, rendering the *Sabalan* dead in the water with an oil slick spreading around it.

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Engler's A-6E still possessed Harpoon missiles and Rockeye cluster bombs. He radioed in his engagement. Less, who was in communication with General Crist in Tampa, relayed news that a bomb went down *Sabalan*'s stack and rendered it dead in the water. His choice of words has led to the popular belief that is how the frigate was critically damaged. The news quickly went up the chain of command. Though Less and Dyer favored destroying the ship, Admiral Crowe and Defense Secretary Carlucci felt enough death and damage had already been inflicted. The word was passed down to abort further attacks on the *Sabalan*, which was later towed back to Bandar Abbas for extensive repairs.

No further action took place that night as reports of Iran firing Silkworms at military and civilian ships proved to be false. Operation Praying Mantis officially ended the next day, April 19. The heavy U.S. response to the near-sinking of the U.S.S. *Samuel B. Roberts* inflicted significant damage to Iran, especially its navy. The *Joshan* and frigate *Sahand* were sunk with a combined loss of 56 men. Though claims of three exist, only one of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Navy's Boghammars was destroyed. The frigate IRIS *Sabalan* was heavily damaged, leading to a long repair time, and an Iranian Air Force F-4 Phantom also took damage. The ships of SAGs Bravo and Charlie destroyed the Sassan and Sirri GOSPs, impacting Tehran's oil production.

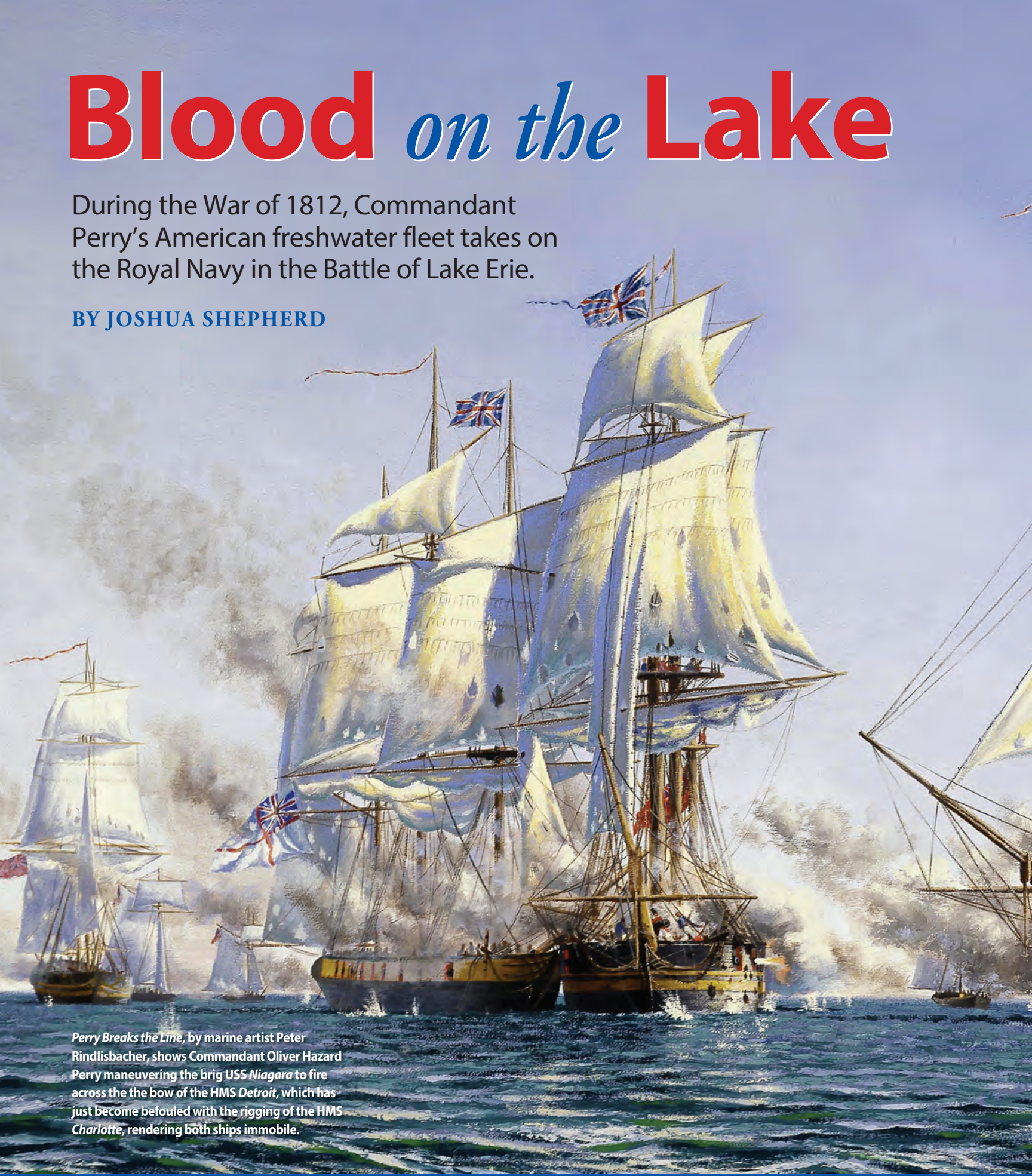
Unfortunately, the American victory was not casualty-free. A Marine AH-1T Cobra gunship from the U.S.S. *Trenton* went missing. Dive crews, assisted by sonar, later located the wreckage of the helicopter along with the bodies of its two-man crew on the bottom of the Persian Gulf.

Iran went to the International Court of Justice accusing the U.S. of committing crimes during Operation Nimble Archer and Praying Mantis. Among these, Tehran claimed American forces fired upon helpless survivors floating in the Gulf on April 18. The U.S. issued its own counter-claims. On November 6, 2003, the court dismissed the claims by both sides. ■

Blood *on the* Lake

During the War of 1812, Commandant Perry's American freshwater fleet takes on the Royal Navy in the Battle of Lake Erie.

BY JOSHUA SHEPHERD



Perry Breaks the Line, by marine artist Peter Rindlisbacher, shows Commandant Oliver Hazard Perry maneuvering the brig USS *Niagara* to fire across the the bow of the HMS *Detroit*, which has just become befouled with the rigging of the HMS *Charlotte*, rendering both ships immobile.

As the first streaks of dawn painted the horizon, all was quiet in the American squadron anchored at Put-in-Bay. A southwest wind was just beginning to furrow the waters of Lake Erie as the sun rose on the morning of September 10, 1813.

For weeks, the American ships had cruised the western reaches of the lake, returning without incident to safe harbor on South Bass Island, three miles from the southern shore. Squadron commander Master Commandant Oliver Hazard Perry had no reason to expect anything but the same on such a fine fall morning until there were determined shouts from the maintop of the brig *Lawrence*. The white canvas of enemy sails had been spotted on the blue waters of the lake.

Within moments, signal flags fluttered above decks, directing Perry's ships to get underway. Orders were shouted to scrambling crewmen: "All hands up anchor!" After months of waiting, Perry realized the day had arrived for the final showdown for control of Lake Erie, and with it, the fate of the war on the Northwest frontier.

War had come to the vast inland seas of the Great Lakes as the young United States was inexorably drawn into the vast swirling political currents of the Napoleonic Wars. While the European powers were locked in an epic struggle that rent the continent, the hard-pressed British Navy, desperate for more manpower, implemented a controversial policy of impressment on foreign vessels. Ostensibly designed to take British deserters back into custody, impressment inevitably fell on hapless American citizens aboard American flag vessels.

Affairs on the frontier only exacerbated increasing diplomatic tensions. Since the close of the Revolutionary War, Native American nations such as the Huron, Iroquois, Shawnee, and others of the Northwest (Ohio Valley region) had waged a series of bloody wars terrorizing much of the frontier and effectively slowing American expansion. British agents operating out of Canada publicly advocated for peace, but privately prepared the tribes for a military alliance in the event that war erupted. American fears of British intrigue among the Indians infuriated western states and their representatives in Congress.

Peace efforts proved ineffective as both nations steered a slow course to war. Past the point of no return by June of 1812, America issued a declaration of war. Wielding her considerable maritime power, Great Britain blockaded the eastern seaboard and the vast Canadian border loomed like a storm across the northern United States.

As the nation braced for war, America faced a naval disadvantage that bordered on the absurd. Great Britain had long been considered the world's foremost maritime power, and for good reason. At the outset of hostilities, the Royal Navy possessed an impressive fleet of 700 ships of war. By comparison, the United States possessed only 17 warships and 165 gunboats.

In fact, the unique geography of North America ensured that a naval confrontation would, ironically, unfold hundreds of miles from the coast. Along the border with Canada, the five Great Lakes were key to inland trade and immediately recognized as strategically vital to the American war effort. Although the United States could never hope to win control of the high seas with a major fleet action, it was hoped that the young republic could dominate the freshwater lakes in her own backyard.

Overall command of the war effort on the Great Lakes was assigned to Capt. Isaac Chauncey. His selection for such an important post, which would require creating a fleet from scratch, had much to commend it. A veteran officer of lengthy service, Chauncey was a dedicated Navy man, albeit woefully lacking in combat experience. He made up for that deficiency with extensive experience in shipbuilding, acquired through a successful stint running the New York Navy Yard. Chauncey's skill in ship building and management would prove a vital asset as the Americans hastily threw together a fleet, literally from the keel up.

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ABOVE: Britain's Indian allies massacred wounded American prisoners after the Battles of Frenchtown and Fort Meigs, leading to widespread outrage in the American press. RIGHT: Captain Isaac Chauncey, left, oversaw naval operations on the Great Lakes; Master Commandant Jesse Duncan Elliott, right, commanded the USS *Niagara* at the Battle of Lake Erie.

Of immediate concern to Chauncey was locating suitable harbors to get shipyards up and running. While he would oversee the war effort on Lake Ontario from a base at Sackets Harbor, Chauncey delegated oversight of construction operations on Lake Erie to Jesse Duncan Elliott, a promising lieutenant who had been in the service for nearly a decade.

Elliott chose Black Rock, a harbor on the Niagara River situated near the eastern end of Lake Erie to set up construction. Although Black Rock already had a small ship yard, access to the lake was somewhat restricted due to the Niagara's swift current. Moreover, the British installation of Fort Erie ominously frowned from across the river.

Marine Artist Peter Rindlisbacher

A number of the paintings accompanying this article are by artist Peter Rindlisbacher, who works mainly in oils and often portrays subjects from the "Age of Fighting Sail" and the maritime battles between the British and American navies on the Great Lakes during the War of 1812—though has painted many types of vessels, from Viking long ships to modern-day yachts. His work has been purchased by museums and historic sites throughout the United States and Canada. His paintings have appeared on the covers of more than 70 books and magazines. They've also been used in video and Public Television productions such for The History Channel and National Geographic.

Rindlisbacher researches each subject thoroughly and consults with historians whenever possible—utilizing maps, ship's logs, reports, technical books, models, and computer graphics models in an effort to capture period detail and accurately recreate historic scenes. He has been researching the events surrounding the Battle of Lake Erie for decades and painted many moments from that remarkable day.

"Most contemporary paintings of the Battle are riddled with errors," Rindlisbacher said. "But an abundance of eye-witness accounts from the time have survived to guide those modern artists willing to study them."

The son of a boat builder and a commercial artist, Rindlisbacher was born in Windsor, Ontario, Canada, where he developed his passion for everything nautical at an early age. He would go on to become a racing sailor, a club instructor, a model ship builder as well as historical naval re-enactor.

A full-time marine artist since the 1980s, Rindlisbacher lives in Texas and is a member of the Canadian Society of Marine Artists and American Society of Marine Artists.

www.RindlisbacherMarineArt.com

The ambitious Elliott, after eyeing British vessels in the Niagara River for weeks, decided to take action. In the early hours of October 9, 1812, Elliott and a hand-picked force rowed across the river, quietly boarding the H.M.S *Detroit* and the HMS *Caledonia*, a captured Canadian merchant ship. The *Detroit*, formerly the U.S. Army brig *Adams*, ran aground on an island in the river and was torched by the Americans, who made off with the *Caledonia* after running a gauntlet of enemy fire. The exploit earned Elliot a fair share of notoriety.

Unbeknownst to Chauncey and Elliott, the Madison Administration was making decisions outside of the chain of command that would alter the trajectory of the war on the lakes. Daniel Dobbins, an experienced Great Lakes merchant captain, visited Washington and lobbied for the Presque Isle shipyard at Erie, Pennsylvania, to become the new center of construction.

Intimately familiar with the lake, Dobbins convinced Madison that Black Rock was unsuitable for the Navy's forthcoming operations and was assigned supervision of the Presque Isle shipyard. Elliott seems to have been nettled at being sidelined by civilian authorities.

As Chauncey began to assemble his team for prosecuting the war on the lakes, he received an offer from Perry, an up-and-coming officer eager for a combat assignment. From his childhood, Perry seemed destined for the sea. Every male in his family had served in the Navy and Perry followed suit, signing on as a midshipman at 14.

By 20, Perry was a master commandant, the equivalent of a commander in the modern navy, and able to command a ship of 20 guns or fewer. But an unfortunate stroke of bad luck left a stain on an otherwise impeccable service record. In 1811, Perry's gunboat *Revenge* was sailing off the coast of his native Rhode Island in a fog when it struck a reef and sank. Though officially cleared of wrongdoing, the incident hung like a pall over Perry, who was unable to secure a coveted saltwater command when war erupted with Great Britain.

Desperate to prove himself in action, Perry offered his services to Chauncey, who took a chance on the young officer and offered him command of construction efforts on Lake Erie. Chauncey initially planned to assume command in person once a squadron was assembled.

In fact, the impending naval struggle over Lake Erie was quickly proving itself vital to the entire war effort on the northwestern frontier. In January of 1813, an advanced American column was attacked and captured nearly en-masse at the River Raisin just south of Detroit. Consequently, the American theater commander, Maj. Gen.William Henry Harrison, was forced to cancel his campaign northward and instead fortified his army at Fort Meigs in northwestern Ohio.

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LEFT: British Commander Robert Heriot Barclay was captain of the HMS *Detroit* during the Battle of Lake Erie. Barclay, who had lost an arm in a previous battle was severely wounded in his remaining arm and one leg. RIGHT: Often known by the honorific "commodore"—an informal title for one in command of multiple ships in an operation—Oliver Hazard Perry was the master commandant (commander in the modern navy) who led the American squadron that defeated the British in the Battle of Lake Erie on September 10, 1813. He was promoted to captain following his victory. TOP: Reconstructed Fort Erie, located in Ontario, Canada. The fort was originally constructed by the British during the French and Indian War.

With the British firmly in command of Erie and the Detroit River, it was obvious that control of the lake had become imperative to victory. Harrison was forced to remain at Fort Meigs until the Navy could come to grips with the enemy squadron that dominated the lake.

In February 1813, Elliott was transferred to Lake Ontario and replaced as commander of the Lake Erie squadron by Perry, who arrived at the frontier backwater town of Erie during the bleak March of 1813. Despite its isolated location, Presque Isle Bay proved an ideal base for the con-

ABOVE: *Perry in March, 1813* by Peter Rindlisbacher, shows Commandant Oliver Hazard Perry deep in thought as he reflects on winter progress of the ship-bulding efforts on the *Lawrence* and *Niagara* at Presque Isle Bay. BELOW: One at a time, the brigs *Lawrence* and *Niagara* were "cameled" across the sandbar at the mouth of Presque Isle Bay. After the cannons were removed, hollow wooden barges called "camels" were flooded and attached to the ship's hull. The water was pumped out of the camels, lifting its keel higher in the water. In a process called "kedging," the ship's anchor was rowed out in front of the vessel and dropped. The crew then used the windlass to wind in the anchor, pulling the ship forward. OPPOSITE: American Commandant Oliver H. Perry's Lake Erie squadron at anchor in Put-In-Bay off South Bass Island (now part of Ohio) at the western end of the lake. In his painting, *Night Before Battle*, marine artist Peter Rindlisbacher portrays the moon phase, compass position and elevation exactly as they were at 9:30 p.m. on September 9, 1813.

struction of a squadron. Five miles long and two miles wide, the bay offered commodious safe harbor for American vessels. Across the mouth of the bay, a sandbar only six feet below the surface afforded a measure of protection from enemy vessels. The new vessels had to be carefully maneuvered over the bar to exit the bay—using wooden pontoons called "camels" to lift the ship up, then using its anchor to pull it forward in a process called "kedging."

Perry pitched into his assignment with vigor, hoping to breathe new life into an idle shipyard. Winter doldrums had demoralized the work crews, who halted construction due to the forbidding cold on the Lake Erie shoreline. Perry immediately ordered work to resume, bringing much-needed direction, discipline, and purpose to the Presque Isle boat yard.

The British meanwhile, had not been idle. Command of operations on Lake Erie was assigned to Robert Heriot Barclay, a career captain and steady veteran who had suffered six wounds in action, including the loss of his left arm. Barclay had every intention of maintaining British dominance on the lake. To that end, he ordered regular cruises, and kept up a blockade outside of Presque Isle, effectively trapping the American squadron then under construction.

Keen to retain an upper hand in the high-stakes arms race, Barclay likewise undertook an ambitious building project of his own near Fort Malden on the Detroit River. Chief among his projects was the construction of a new HMS *Detroit* to replace the ship destroyed during Elliott's raid. At 110 feet long, with a complement of 20 guns, it would be formidable by lake standards, easily the most powerful vessel in the theater. Despite severe shortages of manpower and materials, construction proceeded slowly but steadily. Britain prided itself on mastery of the water, and the boat yard at Fort Malden threatened just that.

Perry, however, had every intention of matching the British gun for gun. Work continued apace over the spring and summer of 1813, and by July, Perry was in command of a respectable squadron of nine vessels, which included the two big brigs USS *Lawrence* and USS *Niagara*. He had also received reinforcements from Commodore Chauncey, which brought his force up to nearly 600 men. Among the reinforcements was Elliott, who had been transferred back from Lake Ontario and promoted to master commander. He would now serve as Perry's second-in-command. Although still undermanned, the squadron had a solid core of experienced sailors as well as a mixed bag of "blacks, soldiers, and boys," according to Perry.

On August 1, 1813, the Americans had a stroke

of good luck. For reasons still not understood, Barclay's blockading vessels inexplicably disappeared and Perry decided the time was right to make a run out of the bay. His smaller ships crossed the sandbar with ease, while it took three days to kedge the *Lawrence* and *Niagara* over the bar. But with his squadron finally united, Perry was free on the lake.

As his base of operations, Perry chose Put-in-Bay on South Bass Island, a small but suitable anchorage about three miles from Lake Erie's south shore, but within striking distance of the mouth of the Detroit River. It was a threat to British supply lines that Barclay could not ignore. Under mounting pressure from the army at Fort Malden, Barclay had little choice but to seek battle. After stripping the artillery from Fort Malden, Barclay was able to arm the newly-completed *Detroit*. On September 9, a determined Barclay sailed into the lake at the head of six vessels.

The Americans at anchor in Put-in-Bay had no idea that the British were on the loose until lookouts spotted those six sails to the west on the morning of the 10th. Perry realized that Barclay must have come looking for a fight and he was eager to oblige. Sailors leapt to action, amid a flurry of shouted orders, in a desperate attempt to get the ships underway.

But as the crews scrambled, an anxious Perry glanced nervously at the canvas stretched across his masts. Not only had the British unexpectedly caught him at anchor in the bay, but he was facing the nightmare of naval commanders during the age of sail—the wind was against him.

A steady wind of seven knots was sweeping across the lake from the southwest. As his ships formed up into a ragged line and exited the mouth of the bay, Perry faced an unenviable predicament. He had spent months building a squadron to secure the superiority of Lake Erie, but that superiority was quickly vanishing, both figuratively and literally, with the wind.

If Perry was forced into action without the wind in his favor, his short-range heavy carronades would be nearly useless. Barclay would be able to keep his own ships largely at a safe distance and batter the American ships with impunity. Perry's only hope to avoid that disaster was to tack into the wind, working his way back and forth in a desperate hope to clear the eastern side of Rattlesnake Island. If he could clear the island, Perry hoped to head off the enemy squadron in the waters west of Put-in-Bay.

For three gruelling hours, Perry and his increasingly frustrated men tacked back and forth, cursed the wind, and made little progress. As the little fleet neared Rattlesnake Island, it was obvious that the Americans had run out of room to maneuver and would be forced to run south of the island, and into the wind.

Perry was forced to make a quick decision, and held a brief conversation with his sailing master, William Taylor. A skilled sailor who could read the wind like a book, Taylor intuitively understood that the American ships could very quickly be trapped with no escape. Even if they made it east of the island, they might be caught in the tight confines of the Bass Islands and shot to pieces. If they did make it into the open lake, they might have more room to maneuver, but would still be fighting into the wind.

An inherently aggressive naval commander, Perry made the decision to pitch straight for the British and give battle regardless of the tactical considerations. Taylor cautioned that not securing the weather gauge could prove disastrous. Perry, whose blood was up, would have none of it. "I don't care," Perry ordered, "to windward or to leeward, they shall fight today."

At that, the die was cast. Perry's disjointed squadron made for the south side of Rattlesnake Island and headed for the open waters of Lake Erie, in the full realization that they would be at a decided disadvantage, struggling against both

wind and iron. Perry surely cursed his luck; about to face the greatest test of his life by fighting a battle not of his choosing.

And then in an unexpected turn of events, the wind that the Americans had been struggling against for three hours simply died. Sails fell limp, the ships sat quietly in the water, and every man in the American fleet, from the lowliest gunner to the squadron's commander, stared in disbelief. Perry could only contemplate his fate.

After five minutes of apprehensive inertia, the wind returned. Only now, it was from the southeast, and Perry's fortunes, in a matter of minutes, had changed dramatically. No doubt delighted at the unexpected shift, Perry once again ordered his ships to make for the enemy squadron. The Americans now held the weather gauge.

At 10 a.m., the American ships passed Rattlesnake Island and steered a course for the enemy, visible eight miles to the northwest. Progress was slow in the light wind, allowing Perry the time to form up his line of battle for the coming fight. As the Americans approached, the British vessels hove to and coolly waited. Barclay had every intention of giving battle, winds be damned.

Barclay formed his battle line to spread the fire of his heaviest ships as equally as possible. The van of the British line was occupied by the *Chippawa*, a converted schooner. Next in line was the most formidable vessel on the lake, the *Detroit*, commanded by Barclay himself. The brig HMS *General Hunter* followed in its wake. Then came Barclay's second biggest ship, the HMS *Queen Charlotte*, followed by the gunboats HMS *Lady Prevost* and HMS *Little Belt* at the tail of the British line.

Observing the enemy's dispositions, Perry reorganized his own line for the coming fight. The schooners USS *Ariel* and USS *Scorpion* were out front, but off the weather bow of Perry's flagship *Lawrence*. Next was the brig *Caledonia*, followed by the *Niagara*, captained by Elliott. The rest of the American line consisted of the schooners USS *Somers*, USS *Porcupine*, and USS *Tigress*, followed by the sloop USS *Trippe*. Perry intended to be in the thick of it in a duel with the *Detroit*. On the *Niagara*, Elliott was expected to support Perry by challenging the *Queen Charlotte*.

Perry's flagship had been named for Captain James Lawrence, who had been killed in action against the British in June. Perry paid homage to the slain captain by securing a unique command flag from his topmast—a broad blue standard emblazoned with Lawrence's last words, "Don't Give up the Ship."

Because Perry's squadron was angling toward the British line of battle, his own flagship would be forced to bear the brunt of the fighting until the rest of his ships could come into action. Orders were issued by fife and drum for all hands to come to quarters and prepare for action. While sailors cleared gun decks and loaded their cannons, marines climbed aloft with small arms; surgeons readied their instruments.

For Perry's crews, it was an experience that frayed nerves as the squadron made painfully slow progress in the light wind. The men grew apprehensive at the prospect of the coming battle. "We stood in awful silence," recalled David Bunnell, "not a word was spoken, not a sound heard." Like any good commander, Perry tried to calm his men.

Coolly walking among them, he offered a steady presence and words of encouragement to each of the gun crews. To his veteran sailors, Perry assured them that "I need not say anything to you, you know how to beat those fellows."

Despite the show of confidence, Perry was under no illusions about what lay ahead. He entrusted his personal letters and official correspondence to the ship surgeon, instructing him to throw them overboard in the event he was killed. To another officer,

Perry commented presciently that "This is the most important day of my life."

As the American ships slowly angled toward the British, the smaller ships in the rear began to fall behind. Perry's larger vessels were able to catch more wind in their sails, and soon were far ahead of the rest of his tiny squadron. By 11:45 a.m., the Perry's lead ships were beginning to come into range of the British, who were about a mile away.

In a surreal moment that belied the killing that was about to take place, a British band aboard the *Detroit* began playing the tune "Rule Britannia." The patriotic air stirred the men of the British squadron, who spontaneously raised a shout that echoed across the lake. As their cheers subsided, Barclay ordered his guns to open on the Americans. A single 24-pounder fired, testing the range, missing the *Lawrence*. A second British gun barked, sending a 24-pound solid shot crashing into the American vessel.

The battle for the control of Lake Erie had finally begun. Perry signalled the *Scorpion* and *Ariel* to open up with their long guns. The *Lawrence*, largely armed with carronades, could only respond with a single 12-pounder. The American fire was ineffective. The *Lawrence* and the two gunboats were forced to run a brutal gauntlet of British cannon, but were unable to effectively respond.

British fire began to tell, shattering oak hulls to splinters and mangling crewmen aboard the American ships. For 30 agonizing minutes, Perry could do virtually nothing in response to the enemy fire. To the helpless American crewmen, it was a painful test of nerves. Though still out of range, Perry turned to the larboard and unleashed two broadsides at the enemy.

The shots fell far short of their targets, and Perry was forced to turn back to his original course and close the distance. Though battered by the approach to the British squadron and taking casualties, Perry's lead vessels succeeded in reaching carronade range with their masts and rigging intact. At 15 minutes past noon, Perry judged that he was finally in range and could bring his carronades to bear on the enemy.

"Take good aim my boys, don't waste your shot," advised Perry, before the *Lawrence* unleashed a thunderous broadside with her starboard carronades. In reply, the *Detroit* and her escorts sent a hail of iron into the *Lawrence*.

Perry and Barclay, who had been planning for this battle for months, were both eager to bring the fight to a resolution. The lead ships edged closer to each other until they were just 300 yards apart. At that range, the gun crews could hardly miss. As dozens of heavy guns from both sides were feverishly loaded and fired as fast as possible, the previously serene waters of Lake Erie became the scene of wholesale killing.

Wreathed in clouds of smoke, the two squadrons grappled like wounded beasts. In the cacophony of battle shouted orders could barely be heard and each gun crew, loading and firing, eventually fell into its own rhythm.

Determined to knock the American flagship out of the fight, Barclay instructed his ships to focus their fire on the *Lawrence*. Amid this intense artillery duel, Perry's men were felled by the dozen in a hurricane of enemy fire. Iron solid shot shattered gaping holes in the hull, sending clouds of jagged splinters across the decks. Enemy infantry

Smithsonian American Art Museum, gift of Mr. and Mrs. George B. Tatum

ABOVE: This unsigned work in oil and pencil attributed to Daniel Huntington (1816–1906) of the Hudson River School, *Perry Transferring His Flag to the* Niagara, shows crewmen rowing Commodore Oliver Perry under fire from his disabled flagship, the USS *Lawrence*, after it had been battered by the British warships HMS *Detroit* and HMS *Queen Charlotte* during the Battle of Lake Erie. OPPOSITE: *Lawrence Takes Fire*, by marine artist Peter Rindlisbacher, depicts Perry's flagship USS *Lawrence* bearing the brunt of the British attack early in the Battle of Lake Erie as Commandant Jesse Elliot kept the USS *Niagara* largely out of range of the English guns. Later, Perry would take command of the untouched Niagara and force a British surrender.

ABOVE: *Swift, Aggressive, Decisive* by Peter Rindlisbacher depicts the moment America won the Battle of Lake Erie—Commodore Perry on the USS *Niagara* letting loose double-shotted guns at half pistol-shot range on the HMS *Detroit* and HMS *Queen Charlotte* which had just fouled each other. OPPOSITE: The triumphant return to Put-in-Bay of Commodore Perry's squadron with his captured prizes the day after the Battle of Lake Erie is depicted in *Return of the Victors* by Peter Rindlisbacher. Perry's victory marked the first time in history that a British naval squadron had surrendered to an American force.

serving as marines targeted exposed gunners with small arms fire. The deck of the *Lawrence* was quickly rendered a charnel house.

Even veteran seamen were shocked by the intensity of the bloodletting. David Bunnell watched in horror as a shot tore off the head of a companion. The terrible sight of the ship's deck, Bunnell thought, was "one continued gore of blood and carnage." In fact, men were falling so fast that the deck was becoming cluttered with the bodies of the dead and wounded.

The officers were equally subject to the galling fire. As Perry directed the fight from his quarterdeck, Marine Lt. John Brooks was terribly mangled when a shot struck him, shattering his hip and upper leg. Sprawled on the deck in excruciating pain, the stricken lieutenant tragically pleaded with Perry and other officers to put him out of his misery. Carried below, he died within the hour.

Aboard the *Detroit*, the British crew likewise suffered heavy casualties, cluttering the decks with the macabre refuse of battle and reducing the number of men available to man the guns. The high command of the British squadron was hit hard. Barclay himself was wounded in the thigh when a shower of splinters struck his thigh. Taken below for treatment, he soon limped back to his quarterdeck to resume command. While he was below, his first officer, Lt. John Garland, was mortally wounded by American fire.

While the crew of the *Lawrence* battled for their lives, the brig *Niagara* curiously sat out of the fray. Although expected to engage Britain's *Queen Charlotte*, Elliott kept the *Niagara* in position astern of the now-USS *Caledonia*. Although Elliott kept rigidly in Perry's original battle line, his ship remained largely out of range of the British and was only scantily touched by enemy fire.

Junior officers aboard the *Lawrence* grew frustrated with the *Niagara*'s lack of engagement. A similar reaction took place aboard the *Queen Charlotte*. When the ship's commander, Lt. Thomas Stokoe, realized that the *Niagara* was unlikely to join the fight, he ordered more sail and moved to assist the *Detroit* in hammering Perry's flagship. The two largest British ships joined forces in taking on the beleaguered *Lawrence*, which was now badly outmatched.

Increasingly, the overwhelming concentration of enemy fire was reducing the *Lawrence* to a battered wreck. The storm of British fire had ripped the tops to shreds. After only 15 minutes of the intense fire, almost all of the rigging had been cut, leaving Perry with little control over the vessel.

Casualties aboard the *Lawrence* were staggeringly high. Dr. Usher Parsons, the only surgeon at work on the ship, was completely overwhelmed with the number of wounded men, and could do little more than try to save the men who had a reasonable chance of survival. Gun crews were sometimes reduced to just one or two men and Perry, desperate for manpower, requested that Parsons spare his assistants to man the guns. When that didn't suffice, Perry requested that the walking wounded return to their posts. Not one to scorn dirty work, Perry himself helped man

one of the last operable carronades.

Ultimately, the weight of metal proved decisive. The *Lawrence*'s starboard batteries were systematically knocked out of action until not a single carronade could be fired. The *Lawrence* had started the battle as the most powerful vessel in the American squadron, but the fierce fighting had turned the once proud brig into a blood-stained, crippled wreck incapable of fighting back.

Perry was confronted with an inevitable conclusion that he no doubt found repugnant. The *Lawrence* had been beaten, and badly; further fighting would result in useless loss of life. But despite the obvious defeat of his flagship, Perry was far from giving up the fight. A new opportunity was presenting itself. It was the *Niagara*, finally approaching the scene of the battle, albeit off Perry's protected windward beam. Perry quickly decided to transfer his flag to Elliott's largely untouched brig and resume the fight.

The *Lawrence* was entrusted to the command of Lt. John Yarnall. A volunteer helped lower the "Don't Give Up the Ship" banner, and Perry and a small retinue of sailors clambered aboard a cutter. As Perry was about to climb down from the *Lawrence*, Midshipman Dulaney Forrest shared a few unpleasant words about Elliott's late arrival to the fight. Perry simply replied, "If a victory is to be gained, I'll gain it.'"

As the men rowed frantically for the *Niagara*, the British opened fire. Fortunately for Perry, their shots flew wide, churning the water to a froth but leaving him and his men unscathed. The cutter succeeded in reaching the *Niagara* and Perry, still unscathed, climbed aboard.

What ensued was, no doubt, awkward for both Perry and Elliott. The details remain disputed, but Perry assumed direct command of the *Niagara* and Elliott volunteered to take the cutter and bring up the laggard gunboats in the rear of the American line. Both men seemed satisfied not to serve on the same quarterdeck.

Meanwhile, Yarnall was left with the unenviable duty of striking the *Lawrence*'s colors. The national flag was hauled down, signalling the surrender of the vessel. But the British were in no condition to send a boarding party to take formal possession and the *Lawrence* consequently drifted to the south, away from the action.

Perry, however, was out for revenge. Now in command of a fresh brig whose crew and armaments were relatively untouched, he put on more sail with a grim determination to renew the fight. Rather than maintain his original line of battle and trade broadsides with the enemy, Perry opted to cross the bow of the *Detroit* and cut the British line. After their brutal slugfest, it was apparent to Perry that the *Detroit* was in bad shape and vulnerable to a killer blow.

As the *Niagara* closed for action, it fired on the British flagship and quickly seized the upper hand. Barclay, already nursing a thigh wound, was struck in the shoulder by grapeshot. He was carried below with a badly mangled right shoulder, and command fell to Lt. George Inglis. At the worst possible time, the British squadron had lost the services of its commander.

Inglis recognized that his heavily damaged larboard batteries could never hope to hold off the fast-approaching *Niagara*. Left with little choice, Inglis decided to "wear" ship—the square-rigged equivalent of jibing (bringing the stern across the wind). Turning suddenly away from the American line would allow him to loop around to bring his untouched starboard batteries to bear. It was a move borne of outright desperation that resulted in unmitigated British disaster.

As the *Detroit* began to turn, *Queen Charlotte* commander Lt. Robert Irvine tried to follow Inglis' lead, but did so too late. Both ships had

Continued on page 98

In the final island battle of the Pacific, ships of the U.S. Navy withstood wave after harrowing wave of suicide attacks by Japanese kamikaze aircraft.

BY JOHN WUKOVITS

Gauntlet of Steel AT OKINAWA

Edward T. Higgins had witnessed few spectacles to match the one that unfolded all about him in the waters surrounding Okinawa, an island 400 miles southwest of the Japanese Home Island of Kyushu. Part of a relatively new and obscure unit called "frogmen," Higgins and his cohorts were to destroy any underwater obstacles that might impede the army and navy invasion forces when they crashed ashore two days later on April 1, 1945. They found an impressive and deadly array of underwater mines attached to a series of telephone poles that were connected with barbed wire.

As he advanced, sometimes under the waves and other times along the surface, Higgins had trouble focusing on his work, for a frightening cascade of sounds erupted from battleships, cruisers, and destroyers as they softened the invasion beaches in preparation for the landings.

"Over our heads the fire support drummed a thunderous tattoo," Higgins later recalled. "The little LCI [G's] lay close behind us, their 20 and 40 mm quads and .50 machine guns pumping in perfect rhythm as they fired scant feet above our heads at the beach. Behind them the destroyers worked back and forth across their grid patterns, slamming three and five inch shells in arithmetical patterns into the jungle above the shore line. Beyond the destroyers were the cruisers and battlewagons salvoing their six, eight, and 16-inch guns in great bursts of fire that made their land targets jump and shiver, erupting in clouds of dust and debris."

Higgins and the surface vessels provided foreshadowing of what would unfold at Okinawa. The three-month campaign to wrest the island from the Japanese saw some of the fiercest land action in the Pacific, including ferocious hand-to-hand combat to seize hills and traverse ridges. But another deadly drama played out on the sea, one so unnerving that Marines and Army infantry, normally envious of those serving aboard surface ships, almost felt sympathy for their Navy brethren. Prying Japanese soldiers out of trenches, bunkers and caves was hard enough, but at least soldiers on the ground didn't

Its decks still lined with fighters, a U.S. carrier attempts to ward off a Japanese kamikaze attack in this detailed scene by Navy Combat Artist Dwight Shepler.

U.S. Navy

National Archives

ABOVE: Imperial Japanese pilots of the Special Attack Force (*tokkotai*) in front of a Mitsubishi, Ki-51, "Sonia" at Chōshi airfield, east of Tokyo, Japan. Of the 18 men in this undated 1944 photograph, only Toshio Yoshitake (middle row, far right) survived the war after his plane was shot down by an American fighter. Though some 3,800 pilots died in Kamikaze attacks, it has been estimated that as many as 25-33 percent turned back because of bad weather, engine failure, or some other reason. Some made a forced landing before reaching their target or were shot down. OPPOSITE: Off the coast of Okinawa, a Japanese fighter is caught on film in a suicide dive that would narrowly miss the deck of the escort carrier U.S.S. *Sangamon*.

have to face Japan's newest weapon—the dreaded *kamikaze*.

The United States had gathered an immense force to take Okinawa. More than 1,200 ships, including 18 battleships, 200 destroyers, and over 40 aircraft carriers escorted and transported the assault troops. So great was the armada that forces had to assemble at most every major U.S. port in the Pacific, including locations in the Marianas, the Philippines, the Solomons, Hawaii, and the West Coast. Under the command of Vice Adm. Raymond A. Spruance, the hero of Midway, and Vice Adm. Richmond Kelly Turner, the naval units rivaled those employed in the massive European D-day operation staged at Normandy.

The campaign for Okinawa was the most recent in a long string of operations that shoved the Japanese out of the island bastions they had held since early 1942. Beginning in the Solomons, U.S. land and sea forces gradually leaped westward and northward in a simultaneous advance along two Pacific paths, gobbling up island groups in the process—the Gilberts, the Marshalls, the Marianas, New Guinea, the Philippines, and Iwo Jima. Next was Okinawa, practically on the doorstep of Japan. Once successful, the Americans intended to use its airfields to house bombers to attack Japan, and Okinawa would become a major staging area for the massive numbers of men, ships, and supplies required for a land invasion of the Japanese islands.

Imperial Japan had other ideas. The Home Islands had never before been invaded; Japanese honor stood on the line. Just as strong as the U.S. desire to take Okinawa was the Japanese intent to prevent its loss. Should the island fall, there was little to stop the Americans from continuing on to Kyushu or Honshu.

A desperate Imperial General Headquarters realized the enemy would come for Okinawa, but they lacked the necessary resources to stop them. Serious shortages existed in every area, including ships, oil, bombs, and bullets. Japanese factories, once humming with activity, now labored under devastating American bombing raids that seriously reduced their outflow. Placed in a precarious situation, the Japanese hoarded their precious remaining aircraft and turned to the one commodity they possessed in abundance—volunteers willing to die for their country and their Emperor by piloting aircraft into enemy ships. One aircraft, one ship. This was a simple equation that, if successful, might reverse fortune for the reeling Japanese.

Led by the commander of the First Naval Air Fleet, Vice Admiral Takajiro Onishi, called the "Father of the Kamikaze," kamikazes first appeared in the October 1944 Battle of Leyte Gulf. The name, Japanese for "Divine Wind," referred to a 13th-century typhoon that smashed a Chinese invasion fleet as it approached Japan.

The sight of a man willingly flying his aircraft into a ship and offering with it his own life terrorized American sailors, who could not compre-

hend the tactic. American soldiers and sailors sacrificed their lives for their fellow fighting men. Numerous accounts exist of one soldier falling on a hand grenade to save others, or of units attacking against overwhelming odds, but kamikazes differed. One was the act of an individual, whereas the kamikaze existed as part of a massive organized assault. It made sense to the Japanese, who were desperate to prevent the invasion of their homeland, but it only made the Americans wonder about the sanity of their opponents. "Few missiles or weapons have ever spread such flaming terror, such torturing burns, such searing death, as did the kamikaze in his self-destroying onslaughts," wrote historian Samuel Eliot Morison of the fear that gripped American sailors when kamikazes appeared.

The plan, named Ten Go (Heavenly Operation), earmarked a series of huge air raids, called kikusui (floating chrysanthemums), to assault enemy ships off Okinawa. Japan intended to collect 4,500 aircraft as well as a handful of smaller, piloted, rocket-propelled buzz bombs called Ohkas ("cherry blossoms"). that would be carried to the battle scene on a bomber's underbelly. Once launched, a suicide pilot steered his missile at the nearest target.

Except for the newest aircraft and most experienced pilots, which would be kept in the homeland to defend Japan's shores, every available aircraft—seaplanes, older fighters, training planes, and scout planes—was sent to Vice Admiral Matome Ugaki's Fifth Air Fleet for use off Okinawa. Despite being given little training in flying, men willing to gain honor by yielding their lives quickly filled the kamikaze corps.

Japanese soldiers fighting on Okinawa planned to slow the American advance on land with a series of rigorous defenses stretched out along Okinawa's numerous ridges and cave systems. As long as they stalled the American drive on land, American ships had to remain in the waters offshore to lend air support and bring in additional supplies, thereby offering tempting targets for kamikaze attacks.

National Archives

Lieutenant General Mitsuru Ushijima, commander of the Japanese defenders at Okinawa, exhorted his men to a spirited defense by heralding the feats of their brethren in the skies. "The brave, ruddy-faced warriors with white silken scarves tied about their heads, at peace in their favorite planes, would dash spiritedly out to the attack." Ushijima counted on the kamikazes to so seriously impede American naval support for the forces ashore that he would be able to defeat the American Marines and Army infantry.

Even though much of the combat at Okinawa occurred on land, a successful land defense for the Japanese relied largely on what unfolded at sea. American ships and sailors would pay a heavy price as a result.

On March 26, six days before the April 1 landing on Okinawa proper, elements of the 77th Infantry Division landed at Kerama Retto, a string of 10 rocky islands 18 miles west of Okinawa, to secure an advanced naval base. The Japanese defenders were quickly brushed aside, but the Americans unearthed a surprise when they discovered a base for 350 suicide boats, camouflaged and hidden in caves. The plywood craft, about 18 feet long and five feet wide, each carried two 250-pound depth charges. A Japanese volunteer would steer the craft at one of the numerous naval targets floating in the waters near Okinawa. Fortunately for the Americans, the 77th Infantry Division eliminated this threat, but the discovery made some wonder what other surprises Japan had prepared. They could never guess what was about to occur.

From the beginning, different factors hampered the United States in dealing with the kamikaze threat. Unlike earlier assaults, where American air power helped neutralize Japanese air opposition, Okinawa's location made it almost impossible to eliminate that danger. While resting outside the range of American air bases, it stood within easy striking range of Japanese bases in Japan and Formosa.

Normally, American carrier aircraft would be employed in such a circumstance, but crafty camouflage and widespread dispersal made it difficult to locate the airfields. Even if American aircraft knew the whereabouts, Japan built so many different airstrips that the fighters and bombers could not hope to eliminate them all. Placed in such a quandary, the U.S. Navy had no alternative but to remain off Okinawa to provide air support

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ABOVE: Imperial Japanese Lt. Yoshinori Yamaguchi's special attack D4Y3 Model 33 "Judy" dive bomber, burning after being hit by antiaircraft fire, seconds before it hit the *Essex*. INSET: This photograph from the USS *Ticonderoga* shows the explosion aboard the carrier USS *Essex* after Yamaguchi's kamikaze attack hit the flight deck just before 1 p.m. on November 25, 1944, off the coast of Luzon in the Philippines. OPPOSITE: Guns of the USS. *Washington* and surrounding Navy vessels unleash a hellish barrage of antiaircraft fire on Japanese fighters off Okinawa.

for the troops ashore, an alarming prospect to Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, commander-in-chief of the Pacific Fleet, and Admiral Spruance, who knew their ships, tied so closely to land operations, would be sitting ducks for enemy aerial assaults. They could do little but hope that Japanese airfields already on Okinawa would be speedily seized and readied for use, thus freeing the navy to depart.

To counter any threat from the air, Admiral Turner ringed Okinawa with picket ships. Prowling the waters at the 16 most likely routes leading to the island, the destroyers' main duty was to pick up incoming enemy aircraft on their radar, then dash a quick alert to the carriers and battleships steaming closer to shore. Some scoured the sea 75 miles away from Okinawa, while others watched the approaches from closer in. These destroyers, while standing guard at the most exposed locations, lacked enough antiaircraft guns to fend off large attacks. Should the enemy send great numbers of aircraft, the destroyers could be gravely imperiled.

Not only did the Japanese dispatch large groups of aircraft, but they did so repeatedly, hammering American vessels on a regular basis. Between April 1 and June 22, kamikazes struck on numerous occasions. While some operations consisted of 20 or fewer aircraft, the Japanese mounted 10 major offensives in which aircraft numbering anywhere from 50 to 300 pounced on American ships. In all, 1,900 kamikaze aircraft attacked off Okinawa. While some broke through the destroyer picket line and charged the larger ships, the American destroyers on the picket line bore the brunt of the attacks.

A hint of impending danger loomed on March 31, when a kamikaze struck Admiral Spruance's flagship, the cruiser Indianapolis, and forced the ship to nearby Kerama Retto for repairs. The main drama unfolded in earnest, however, on April 6-7, when 700 aircraft, half escort and half kamikaze airplanes, struck the American fleet in Kikusui No. 1. The volunteer kamikaze pilots had been instructed to search for enemy carriers and battleships, but in the frenzy of battle, the inexperienced pilots often pounced on whatever target first appeared—the picket destroyers.

The tale of destroyers Bush, Colhoun, and Cassin Young typified the day's action. The three vessels steamed along a 60-mile arc northeast of Okinawa at stations No. 1, No. 2, and No. 3, the most likely path for Japanese planes to approach out of Kyushu. At 2 pm on April 6, a group of about 40 aircraft approached at altitudes ranging from 500 to 20,000 feet. Some planes broke away from their formation to attack the Bush. The ship's antiaircraft gunners splashed two and drove off two other aircraft, but a fifth plane crashed into Bush's forward engine room, killing most of the men stationed there.

Dead in the water, the Bush issued a distress call that Colhoun answered. At 4:35, as she inched near the stricken destroyer, 12 kamikazes appeared. One plane struck the Colhoun's main deck and killed the crews of two 40 mm guns plus everyone in the after foreroom. Less than 30 minutes later, another kamikaze crashed into Colhoun's forward fireroom, ripping a huge hole below the destroyer's waterline.

The Japanese now swarmed on the two American ships, both dead in the water and easy marks for destruction. Two smashed into the Colhoun and a third struck the Bush with such force that the ship almost split in half, causing crew members to scramble for their lives. By 6 pm each ship had absorbed a fourth kamikaze hit that proved to be fatal. At 6:30, an ocean swell toppled the Bush, which quickly sank. Cassin Young, now in

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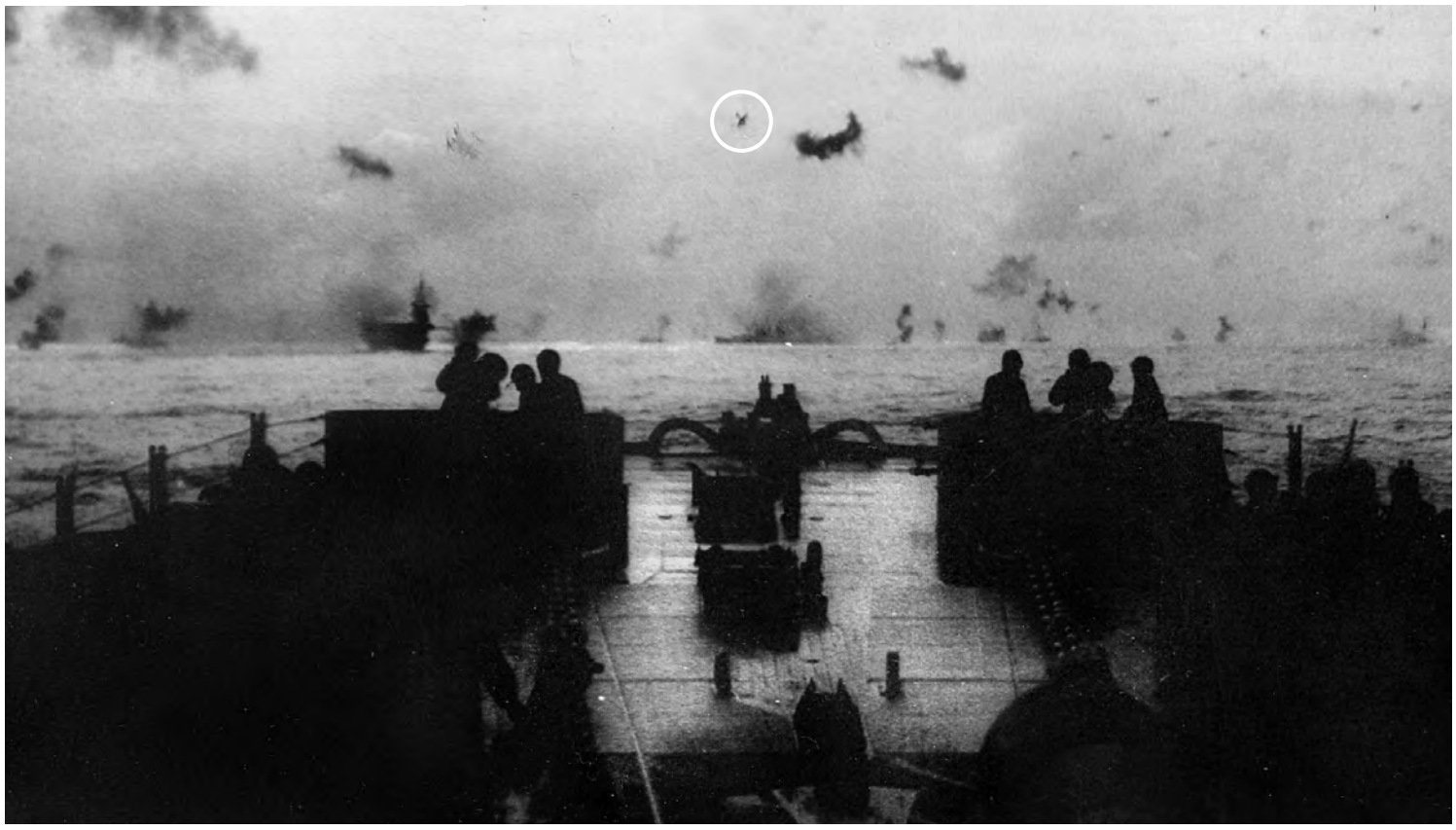


the area to lend support and retrieve survivors, hurriedly picked up sailors, but many drowned, either from exhaustion or from their wounds. After switching to the Cassin Young, the Colhoun's commander ordered the remaining destroyer to sink the battered Colhoun, damaged beyond repair. The two destroyers, the first such ships to sink off Okinawa due to kamikazes, lost 129 men killed and another 53 wounded. The frightening ordeal was simply a taste of what was to unfold.

The results from Kikusui No. 1 had an already uneasy Admiral Spruance fretting more about his ships off Okinawa. The campaign ashore had lasted only six days, and in one furious aerial attack the Japanese sank six ships, three destroyers, one LST, and two ammunition ships, damaged 10 others, and killed 367 men. Even though American antiaircraft guns and fighter pilots knocked down more than 350 intruders, 33 kamikazes sneaked through the defensive web to smash into vessels.

As if that were not enough, three days later the first Japanese suicide boat struck the destroyer Charles J. Badger. Although no one was injured, sailors had to keep alert to attacks from both sea and air.

Off Okinawa, even advance warning could do little to aid the ships. When a Japanese prisoner boasted of a second massive kamikaze raid to occur on April 11, the navy canceled support missions over land to focus on shielding their ships. No matter how protective the air umbrella might be, and no matter how many Japanese aircraft might be splashed, little could be done to ward off large numbers of suicide pilots determined to crash into a target.

Four hundred aircraft, again half escort and half kamikaze, struck on April 11-12 in Kikusui No. 2. This time, the Japanese damaged a handful of large ships, including the aircraft carriers Enterprise and Essex and the battleship Tennessee, killing more than 60. When the action settled, another ship had been lost and 18 damaged.

This second onslaught added one more peril that played with sailors' emotions and fueled their fears. On April 12, as the destroyer *Mannert L. Abele* stood at her station, the initial ohka (also called baka) bomb seen in the campaign struck. The ohka bomb was a piloted missile that whistled through the air at speeds approaching 600 miles per hour. Carried first to the scene on a bomber's underbelly, when released the ohka so quickly raced toward its target that defenders had almost no time to react.

This first ohka ripped into the *Mannert L. Abele* and ignited explosives stored in the destroyer's bowels, tearing the ship in two. Within five minutes both halves disappeared, leaving stunned survivors struggling in the water. A third of the 345 men died or suffered wounds. "The small size and tremendous speed of baka made it the worst threat to our ships that had yet appeared, almost equivalent to the guided missiles that the Germans were shooting at London," wrote Samuel Eliot Morison, on hand to observe the campaign.

Four days later, the third kikusui again inflicted horrible punishment on the picket destroyers, and one carrier, one hospital ship, and two transports also suffered damage. Swarms of kamikazes attacked the destroyer Pringle, on guard at Station No. 26, which was 75 miles northwest of Okinawa in company with USS Hobson.

One Zero crashed near the forward stack, aft of the bridge and chart house. Sonarman 1st Class Jack Gebhardt, who witnessed the plane pass barely 15 feet above him before it crashed, recalled the ordeal. "The Japanese came in waves and sent everything at us. All attacks were now kamikazes and every type of aircraft was used, some barely able to fly. What a waste of human life as we shot them down. The air raids were endless and our nerves became frayed and stomachs churned at the thought of being killed in a horrible blast or gasoline fire. This was absolute total unforgiving war and everyone was scared! The only way to stop a kamikaze plane was to kill the pilot before he crashed into you. There was no surrender, no mercy given or expected. You had to kill to live!"

They killed some, but this Zero made it through to demolish part of Gebhardt's ship. As he later wrote, Gebhardt scrambled to find safety. "When the two 500 lb. bombs on the plane exploded it

seemed like the world ended as the Chart House rumbled and years of dust crashed down from the overheads. I sensed the Pringle was severely damaged and tried to get off the Bridge through the Starboard door, but the door was jammed and access ladder was blown away. I managed to bend the door from the top and slide out onto the open bridge area. I looked toward the stem and the ship was a burning hulk with men stumbling dazed and bleeding from the flying debris, smoke and flames. I looked forward and saw men going over the side. Just then someone yelled "ABANDON SHIP" and I saw a 40-mm [antiaircraft] ammo [ammunition] magazine under the bridge on fire so I went to the Starboard side of the bridge and worked my way down to the main deck. The Bridge Splash Shield was blown away so I climbed down to the gun deck where I took off my shoes and hat and laid them neatly against the bulkhead as if I was coming back!"

Gebhardt leaped into the water and swam as hard as he could to place distance between himself and the sinking destroyer. "I don't know how far I swam, but it seemed like several hundred yards before stopping to look back and see the Pringle engulfed in flames, broken in half sinking amidships. The bow and stern were pointed sharply upward and I heard screams as she slipped under the water and disappeared. It all happened in less than five minutes after the Japanese plane hit and Pringle disappeared.

"When the ship sank I rolled onto my back and floated high in case a depth charge went off, but there was no explosion, only the cries of wounded men and the continuing battle. I watched helplessly as the Pringle sank and could do nothing to save her. The Japanese planes circled overhead like a swarm of angry hornets to make sure Pringle was dead.... I watched the Hobson put up an intense blanket of antiaircraft fire as the Japanese tried to strafe us in the water. They drove the Jap planes off and fired several 20-mm [antiaircraft] rounds into the water to chase off any sharks. When the attack finally ended the landing craft moved in and picked us up. I had been in the water about 7-8 hours after the Pringle sank and the water was rough most of the time. To keep up my spirits and stay alert, I prayed, sang and did anything to survive."

A landing craft eventually rescued Gebhardt, who enjoyed a large helping of whiskey from a bottle the crew handed him. "My hands shook as I drank and thought of my shipmates, sharks, fire and terror of the last few hours," he recalled. "The sight of Pringle going under was still vivid in my mind."

As gripping as Gebhardt's ordeal was, nothing matched the agony endured by the Laffey, stationed at the same spot where the Bush and Colhoun had earlier been sunk. While one group of kamikazes targeted the Pringle, another focused on the hapless Laffey, a destroyer that had participated in the Normandy landings in Europe on June 6, 1944. At one time, Laffey's radar plotted 50 enemy aircraft whistling toward the ship. Her guns splashed some, but others coursed through the curtain of fire. When one hit amidships and started a huge fire, other kamikazes swerved away from their targets to strike the wounded destroyer. In quick succession, two more smashed into the deckhouse, and bombs jammed the rudder and knocked out power to many of the antiaircraft guns. As the ship helplessly steamed in circles, another kamikaze struck the mast.

One sailor had both legs ripped off by a bomb explosion, but he continued to fire his 20mm gun until the final plane disappeared. "Please, please get me out of here," he begged, moments before he died.

For almost an hour and a half, one kamikaze attacked Laffey every four minutes. She shot down nine, but suffered an astounding eight kamikaze and four bomb hits. The ship continued to fight, carried along in part by the indomitable spirit of her skipper, Commander Frederick J. Becton, who defiantly shouted, "I'll never abandon ship as long as a gun will fire."

He carried out his promise. In the early afternoon other ships arrived to tow her to Okinawa's west coast, where she was patched up enough to head on to Guam under her own steam.

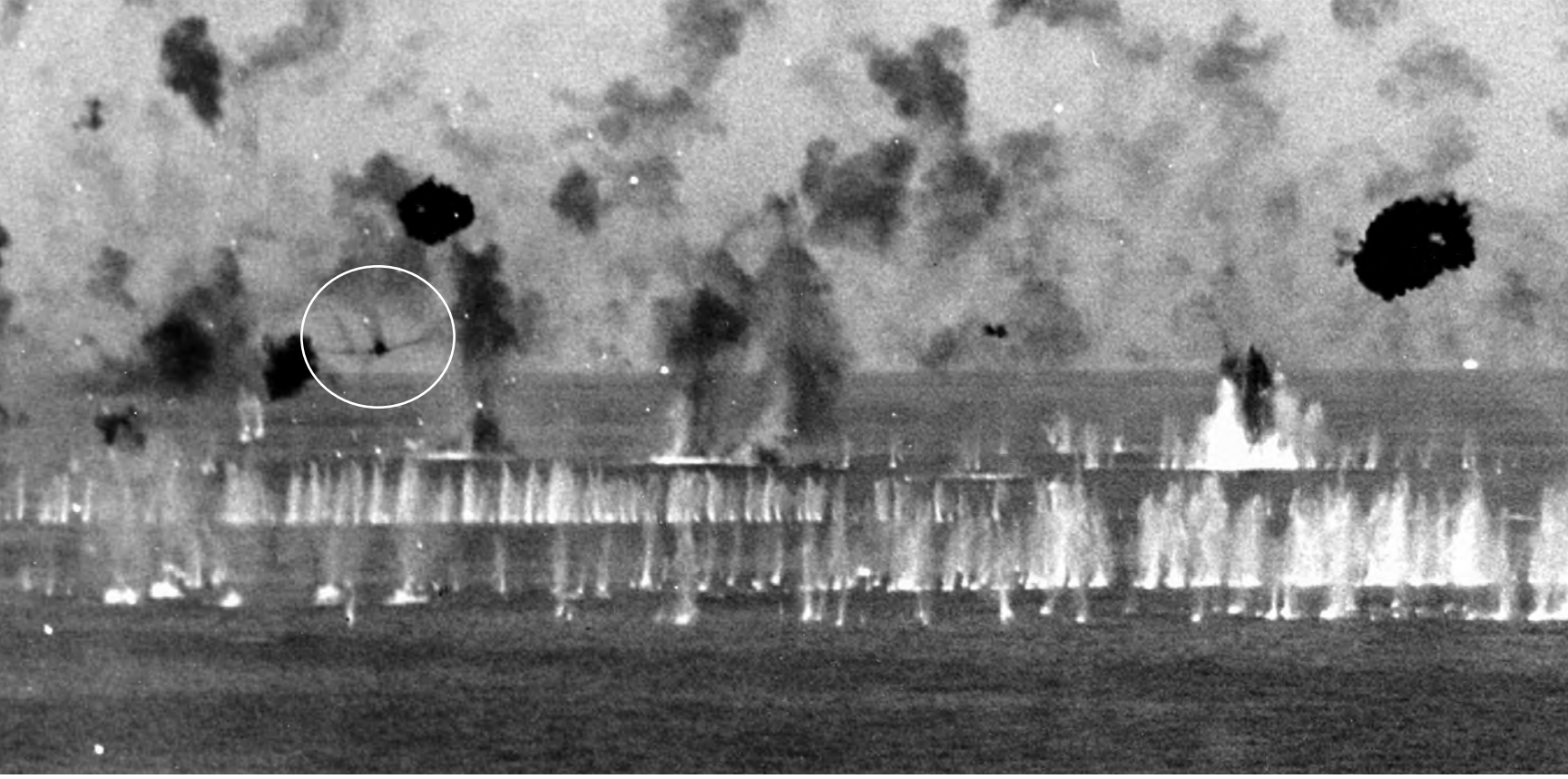
The Navy could ill afford to lose more ships, as the exhausting work off Okinawa required more than defense against kamikazes. As if that ordeal were not hard enough, sailors also had to lend fire support to the Marines and Army infantry ashore. Practically every day, ships hammered enemy land targets in attempts to soften the way for the men fighting and dying on Okinawa. A grateful Maj. Gen. P.A. Del Valle, commander of the 1st Marine Division, dispatched a message of thanks to the gunners aboard the battleship Colorado. "Your superb shooting has been a constant inspiration to our troops. Every Jap captured reveals the awe and fear with which all Japs regard your gunfire."

At night, rather than rest, ships' crews had to be alert in case the Marines or Army units requested star shells to illuminate the areas immediately to their front. Again, infantry units welcomed the assistance provided by their naval compatriots. "Time and again," wrote Army historians, "naval night illumination caught Japanese troops forming or advancing for counterattacks and infiltration, and made it possible for the automatic weapons and mortars of the infantry to turn back such groups."

Sailors off Okinawa's coast were delighted they could assist the troops ashore, but the seemingly

Naval History and Heritage Command

ABOVE: This undated photograph shows Japanese kamikaze pilots being given final instructions shortly before a mission. OPPOSITE: As antiaircraft shells churn the water around it, a Japanese "Kate" torpedo bomber (circled) presses home its attack.



National Archives

endless duties wore them down. Providing fire support by day and star shells at night would tax anyone, but these sailors also had the heavier burden of not knowing when the next kamikaze attack would appear. They arrived off Okinawa hopeful of a relatively easy campaign, for they assumed the Japanese Navy had been mortally wounded in earlier Pacific battles, but instead they faced what became one of the war's most frightening weapons. Nerves frayed and anger mounted as the days unwound.

"We'd get warnings of about half an hour before they appeared," explained Fred Poppe of life aboard one of the ships, "and the waiting was scary too, the knowing what was coming when those pilots' one wish in the world was to kill you."

"During the day, the ships threw up so much ack-ack that daylight almost disappeared in a million black puffs," stated Dick Whitaker, who watched from shore. "During night attacks, the concentration of fire made a kind of twilight—incredible. A sea almost solid with tracers and gun flashes. So much fire would have seemed truly impossible if you didn't see it."

Each day, laboring under the incredible strain of possible kamikaze attacks, American sailors became wearier. Some approached the point of nervous exhaustion and wondered how a human could so readily terminate his life in such a manner. Captain Charles R. Brown, chief of staff of one of the task groups, wrote, "I doubt if there is anyone who can depict with complete clarity our mixed emotions as we watched a man about to die, a man determined to die in order that he might destroy us in the process." He added he felt "a strange mixture of respect and pity—respect for any person who offers the supreme sacrifice to the things he stands for, and pity for the utter frustration which was epitomized by the suicidal act."

Macabre humor even appeared. After the crew of a picket destroyer battled off one particularly trying kamikaze attack, the sailors mounted a huge arrow-shaped sign pointing to their rear. The sign carried the words, "Carriers this way."

Admirals Spruance and Turner became so concerned with the sluggish progress of the troops ashore, which required the ships to remain off Okinawa even longer, that they began to prod their cohorts. Spruance, upset with the Army's slower manner of combat compared to the Marines' faster, more direct approach, wrote another officer, "I doubt if the Army's slow, methodical method of fighting really saves any lives in the long run. It merely spreads the casualties over a longer period. The longer period greatly increases the naval casualties when Jap air attacks on ships is a continuing factor."

Spruance had a point, but he also overlooked the fact that the men ashore, including the Marines, faced some of the most intricate defense systems erected in the Pacific. Admiral Turner even implored the Army commander to implement an amphibious operation behind the Japanese flank to speed up the campaign, but he failed to convince his Army brethren.

The cost to the navy for the lengthy Okinawa campaign was visibly evident at Kerama Retto. Sonarman 1st Class Gebhardt called it "a graveyard of shot up 'tin cans' from the picket stations around Okinawa. Some had the stacks shot off, sinking by the stem [bow], beached to avoid sinking or burned black with bomb holes. They were kept afloat by constantly running bilge pumps. Some of the ships were so badly damaged we wondered how anyone survived."

Admiral Spruance sent a handful of messages to Admiral Nimitz imploring a speedy conclusion to the fighting so he could remove his beleaguered ships. The navy requested that the army divert Boeing B-29 Superfortress bombers from their raids against Japanese cities to air bases in Kyushu, but the Army balked. When Admiral Ernest J. King, the chief of Naval Operations, hinted in Washington, D.C., that if the Army Air Forces was not willing to help, he might have to halt supplying the Army air bases housing the B-29s in the Marianas, the Army Air Forces grudgingly lent assistance.

Even that did not suffice. Spruance wrote Nimitz, "The skill and effectiveness of the enemy suicide air attacks and the rate of loss and damage to ships are such that all available means should be employed to prevent further attacks." On April 23, Nimitz arrived in Okinawa to nudge his land commander into more aggressive action. When the army commander replied that the navy knew little about land fighting, Nimitz shot back, "Yes, but ground though it may be, I'm losing a ship and a half a day. So if this line isn't moving in five days, we'll get someone here to move it so we can all get out from under these stupid air attacks."

As the calendar stretched into May, the fighting

Naval History and Heritage Command

and dying continued, both on land and at sea. While Marines stormed Sugar Loaf Hill and other Japanese bastions and army forces assaulted entrenched enemy troops along Okinawa's numerous ridges, the navy continued to bleed. Nimitz asked Admiral Forrest Sherman if he thought the Japanese would switch targets and give the picket destroyers respite, but Sherman answered in the negative. "You could get a man down quicker by hitting him on the same tooth than by punching him all over."

Nimitz thought for a moment, then replied that American productivity back home would be the difference. "Anyway we can produce new destroyers faster than they can build planes."

In addition to the U.S. Navy, a force of British carriers and destroyers fought off Okinawa. Their carriers, however, did not worry about kamikazes as much as their ally because of the sturdiness of their steel decks. American ship planners preferred the lighter wooden decks over the steel decks, whose added weight affected the ship's stability and reduced the number of planes that could be carried. However, British carriers stood up to kamikazes much better than the American carriers. When hitting an American carrier, the kamikaze usually punctured through to decks below and caused severe damage. Against a British carrier, as Samuel Eliot Morison stated, "A kamikaze hitting a steel flight deck crumpled up like a scrambled egg and did comparatively little damage."

One American officer observing aboard a British carrier could hardly believe the differing results of kamikaze strikes. "When a kamikaze hits a U.S. carrier, it's six months' repair at Pearl. In a Limey carrier it's a case of 'Sweepers, man your brooms.'"

Kikusui No. 6 on May 11 illustrated the point when kamikazes battered the aircraft carrier Bunker Hill. Seaman 2nd Class William Rowe, a 22-year-old from the small Michigan town of Painesdale, joined the navy because he believed he would enjoy a better life than those fighting in foxholes. "As long as the ship was not shot out from under you, I figured it would be okay."

His duty off Okinawa forced him to take back those words. "We were living 24 hours a day on a floating target," he later recalled. "This thought was always present, but especially so at Okinawa where Japan used the kamikaze. We constantly thought of being an open target. You never knew when you would be under attack and if you would be alive tomorrow. It was like living on a large bull's-eye."

May 11 tossed worse events his way. The Bunker Hill, recently resupplied with two million gallons of fuel and oil, was steaming offshore when kamikazes punctured through the afterdeck. Raging fires quickly consumed 30 aircraft standing on the flight deck, leaving nothing but heaps of ashes behind shattered steel propellers. Below, a group of pilots in a ready room suffocated as they attempted to flee through a passageway.

Rowe watched one kamikaze zoom directly over him before it crashed into the deck. "It's terrifying to see a kamikaze coming down. They keep boring in on you on a sharp angle, and it's either him or you. I saw tracers from our guns going right into the plane and yet it would not blow up. I kept wondering how in the world it stayed up. I was far from calm, yelling to the gunners to 'Hit it! Hit it!'"

Immediately after the hits, Captain George Seitz, the ship's commander, swung her broadside to the wind so the smoke and flames would be carried away from the carrier. He then ordered a 70-degree turn, which propelled thousands of gallons of aviation fuel overboard and reduced the threat of worse fires.

Fires raged out of control in Rowe's area. When an officer ordered everyone to jump overboard, Rowe plunged to the ocean 80 feet below, then spent two hours in the water before being rescued. When he returned to the carrier the next day, he saw a battered and bruised ship, but one that somehow remained afloat. His next sight, though, stopped him in his tracks. Seventy-three bodies of fellow crewmen had been neatly lined up along the

PRESIDENT FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT DIED WHILE THE BATTLE FOR OKINAWA WAS AT ITS HEIGHT.

Friday, April 13, brought more sadness to a fleet already hammered by successive kamikaze attacks when the news that their commander in chief, President Franklin D. Roosevelt, had succumbed to a cerebral hemorrhage. The passing of their leader hit the Navy especially hard since Roosevelt, who loved to sail, had long held a special place in his heart for the Navy. The feeling was reciprocated, so the thought of losing their beloved commander was particularly bitter.

The loss assumed greater significance in light of the fact that, for many of the men in service, Roosevelt had been the only president they knew. After assuming office in 1933, he guided the nation through the depths of the Depression, stood as the chief opponent to Adolf Hitler, proclaimed the country as the "Arsenal of Democracy," and oversaw the massive military build-up used to wage war in the European and Pacific Theaters. Now, instead of the constant, ever-optimistic Roosevelt at the helm, an unknown commodity would be in charge.

"Few of us spoke, or even looked at each other," wrote one sailor of the sad moment they received the news. "We drifted apart, seeming instinctively to seek solitude. Many prayed, and many shed tears."

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ABOVE: A Japanese kamikaze swerves low over the whitecaps just moments before impact with the USS *Missouri* in the waters off Okinawa. OPPOSITE: The Yokosuka MXY-7 *Ohka* ("cherry blossom") was a kamikaze rocket aircraft used by the Imperial Japanese in 1945. With solid-fuel rockets, the Ohka could hit 620 mph in a dive but, with a range of about 20 miles, it had to be carried to its target underneath a Mitsubishi G4M2e Model 24J "Betty" bomber. The U.S. Navy countered these attacks by engaging the G4M/Ohaka combinations before they were within range. At the Battle of Okinawa, Ohkas sank or damaged some escorts and transport ships, but they never sank a major warship.

deck, and for the rest of the day Rowe and others gently placed them in canvas bags for burial at sea.

The carrier made it to Ulithi under her own steam, but Rowe's ship was out for the remainder of the war. A British carrier would have been quickly patched up and put back on the line.

By the end of May, when Admiral William F. Halsey's Fifth Fleet relieved Admiral Spruance, kamikaze attacks had slowed, both in numbers, and intensity. Kikusui No. 8, lasting from May 27-29, and containing more than 100 aircraft, was the final attack. From then on, kamikaze strikes became more haphazard. Attrition of the Japanese and American numerical superiority in ships, planes, and weaponry doomed the kamikaze campaign to failure from the start.

The Army and Marine land forces finally overwhelmed Ushijima's rigorous defenses the next month. By the time Okinawa was declared secured on June 22, the casualty count made the battle the bloodiest of the Pacific. On land, more than 130,000 Japanese soldiers died, another 75,000 Okinawan civilians perished, and 39,000 Americans were killed or wounded. At sea, 1,465 kamikazes sacrificed their lives and in the process sank 34 ships, destroyed 763 carrier aircraft, and killed or wounded 10,000 sailors, a higher cost than any previous Pacific naval campaign.

The fighting at Okinawa convinced American military planners that the next operation, the campaign to invade the Japanese Home Islands, would exact a frightening toll. The Joint Chiefs of Staff urged President Harry S Truman, who had succeeded Franklin Roosevelt, to adhere to the unconditional surrender policy adopted by President Roosevelt.

The strife off Okinawa's shores offered sailors moments of sheer terror interspersed with noble bravery. Winston Churchill, an orator and writer accustomed to memorializing great military moments in history, so recognized the U.S. Navy in a June 22 letter to President Truman. "The strength of willpower, devotion and technical resources applied by the United States to this task, joined with the death struggle of the enemy, places this battle among the most intense and famous of military history. We make our salute to all your troops and their commanders engaged." ■

The Seige of PRZEMYŚL

By Eric Niderost

Four Russian soldiers, a lieutenant colonel and another officer, with an NCO and bugler, strode briskly down Jaroslaw Road just north of the defensive perimeter of Fortress Przemyśl. Even though it was October 2, 1914—the Great War pitting England, France, and Russia against Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Turkey had started a few months earlier—there was no sense of danger, because the men approached the enemy lines under the protection of a flag of truce.

Located in the foothills of the Carpathian Mountains, Przemyśl was a road and rail transportation hub and a key crossing point over the broad San River.It was designed to block, or at least seriously impede, an invader's push west and south. The fortress blocked the Lupkow and Dukla Passes through the towering mountains, and the main rail line to Vienna linked Przemyśl to the Hapsburg capital.

If the fortress fell, those road and rail links would be in Russian hands, making it easier to logistically support an ongoing Czarist offensive. Once through the Carpathian Mountain passes, the Imperial Russian army would debouch into the Hungarian plain, potentially taking Budapest and even Vienna in the process. Austria-Hungary would be knocked out of the war.

These were all attractive scenarios to the Russians, but Przemyśl had to be taken first. It was a bone in the throat of the Russian "bear," an obstruction the Czarist forces nevertheless felt would be easy to swallow. There had been some preliminary fighting outside the fortress, and the Russians were not impressed with the quality of the troops facing them.

Russian Army troops, led by musicians, advance in the early days of the Great War. Fortress Przemyśl, now part of modern Poland, defended two routes over the Carpathian Mountains, and was governed by Germany's ally, Austro-Hungary. The fortress garrison was told to "hold at all costs."

Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

At the outset of the Great War, a mulitinational collection of middle-aged reserves tries to hold an outdated Polish fortress against the Russian Bear.

Alamy

Troops from the Austro-Hungarian Empire—mainly territorial brigades of Austrian Germans, Hungarians, Romanians, Serbs, Slovaks, Czechs, Italians, Poles, and Ruthenians (Ukrainians)—move through the town of Przemyśl to man the surrounding ring fortress in 1914. With the declaration of war, the peacetime complement of around 85,000 men grew to a garrison of some 130,000 troops by the time the siege began.

The commander of Fort XI, one of the points on the defensive perimeter, telegraphed Fortress Command in Przemyśl for instructions on what to do. The Russian colonel had a message for Przemyśl commander Lt. Gen. Hermann Kusmanek von Burgneustädten from Gen. Radko Dimitriev. Orders were given that the Russian envoy would be driven to Fortress Command and allowed to deliver his message, but he would have to be blindfolded for the journey. The others in his party would be sent back to Russian lines.

The messenger had to cool his heels for three hours before being led to fortress headquarters, a not-so-subtle way of showing the Russian they were not cowed by his presence or his message. Once at Fortress Command he was made to wait in an anteroom while Kusmanck read the note. The missive called for immediate surrender "to avoid needless bloodshed." General Kusmanck and his officers laughed scornfully when they read the message, making sure the merriment was loud enough for the Russian envoy to hear in the other room.

The reply was short, sweet, and to the point. "I find it beneath my dignity," Kusmanck declared, "to grant a substantive answer to your insulting suggestion." Reading between the lines, it was a message that even the most obtuse Russian would not fail to understand: "If you want Przemyśl, come and take it."

Fortress Przemyśl's transition from peacetime border fort to wartime bastion began almost as soon as hostilities were formally declared. General Rusmanek was energetic and experienced, aware of Przemyśl's strengths as well as its weaknesses. As summer turned to fall, some 27,000 military laborers, 2,200 specialist technical troops, and 300 officers worked tirelessly to prepare the fortress for the ordeal that was sure to come. Ammunition was stockpiled. Barracks, stables, and field kitchens were built to accommodate an expanded garrison. When the siege began, Przemyśl had something like 130,000 troops, up from a peacetime complement of around 85,000 men.

The Przemyśl garrison was a microcosm of the sprawling, polyglot Hapsburg empire itself. Its defenders included Austrian Germans, Hungarians, Romanians, Serbs, Slovaks, Czechs, Italians, Poles, and Ruthenians (Ukrainians). Austria was a "dual monarchy," with the aging but revered Franz Joseph as Emperor of Austria and King of Hungary. There was the Imperial and Royal Common Army, shared by both partner countries, but also two organizations—originally meant as reserve bodies—the Imperial Austrian Landwehr and the Royal Hungarian *Honved,* which translates to "defender of the homeland."

Przemyśl's garrison were mainly *Landsturm* (territorial) brigades from Austria, northern Hungary, and the city's "home" province of Galicia. By definition, Landsturm units were composed of reservists aged 37-42. Some of them seem to have been even older physically than their numerical age, and many were out of shape, described at one point as "well past their prime fatties."

Landsturm officers were rudely plucked from their civilian life and placed in command of largely peasant soldiers. Before the war they had been academics, businessmen, or minor civil servants with reserve commissions, men with families and per-

sonal concerns rooted in civilian life. They had no interest in military glory or public fame.

It's a source of wonder that the Austro-Hungarian army could function in peacetime—in war, their cohesion is something of a modern miracle. One of the garrison units at Przemyśl was the 3rd Battalion, Landsturm Infantry Regiment No. 18. With one or two exceptions, the officers spoke German or Czech, while the peasant rank and file's mother tongue was mainly Polish or Ukrainian. In theory the language of command and military communication was German, but many common soldiers never even learned the basics.

Second Lieutenant Bruno Prochaska admitted his soldiers were "good natured, willing and brave but slow, clumsy and untaught." Army rules stated that, while German was essential, if another

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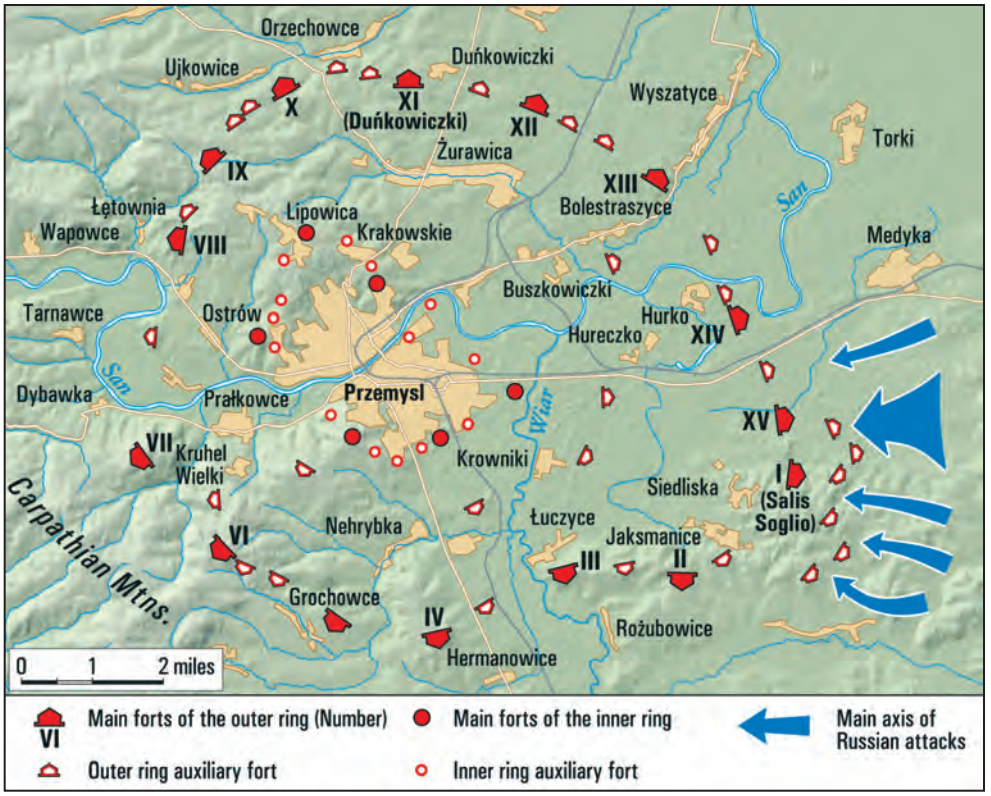

ABOVE: The Fortress City of Przemyśl, Poland, had a central stronghold ringed by 25 smaller forts and 12 artillery emplacements. Though the Russians were unable to take the city by force, it eventually starved out the 130,000-man garrison after it had eaten all of its horses. LEFT: From left are Russian General Radko Dimitriev and Przemyśl commander Lt. Gen. Hermann Kusmanek von Burgneustädten.

language dominated at least one fifth of a regiment, the officer had to learn that language. Still, it was tough, especially if you didn't have an "ear" for languages.

Prochaska recalled that "none" of his common soldiers knew German, and "only the noncommissioned officer has mastered a little Austrian military German." If there was a problem, and the NCO wasn't available, the officer might fall back on his "few nuggets of Polish" out of sheer desperation. Even that might fail, with the exasperated officer trying to understand the soldier's explanations in his "Złoczów farmer's (Polish) dialect."

Though the main forts had mostly been constructed in the 1880s, and few had been modernized or upgraded, Przemyśl still was an impressive fortress. After three decades of construction the fortress boasted of a chain of seventeen main forts with eighteen subsidiaries. If it was held by a determined garrison, it would be a very tough nut to crack. Added to this was a factor that was to prove decisive—the Russians would feel the pressure of time.

Czarist forces initially had the upper hand, but the situation was fluid and could rapidly change. The longer Przemyśl held out, the longer the Austro-Hungarian field army had time to recover, reorganize, and start their own offensive. A message delivered by airplane to Commander Kusmanek told him to hold at all costs. It was an order he intended to follow.

Fortress Przemyśl had a layered defense consisting of three rings radiating out from the city's core. First was an inner core that had a scattering of strong points and batteries. Outside of this was a second line of artillery batteries. Third was the impressive outer ring—a strong belt of forts 30 miles in circumference. Though the average distance from the outer ring to the city center was about four miles, it stretched to seven miles in the southeast.

In the weeks before the Russians arrived, military laborers strengthened the outer ring of Przemyśl by stringing thick belts of barbed wire in front of the forts, amounting to some 620,000 miles of prickly barrier. Mines were also laid, and additional artillery posts established. Trenches were also hastily dug between forts, to be manned by infantry, lest the Russians try to infiltrate those places as the Germans in Liege had done not long before.

On September 12, 1914, the Austrian field army withdrew from Przemyśl, eventually relocating 110 miles to the west. On September 16, his 54th birthday, Kusmanek received a message informing him he was on his own, and reminding him that his duty was to "hold at all costs." He pressed on, supervising preparations for the siege that was bound to come.

The Russians arrived in early October. General Alexi Brusilov's orders did not include the taking of Przemyśl; *Stavka*, the Russian high command, wanted it to be screened and bypassed, at least for the moment. Brusilov, more competent and thoughtful than most senior Czarist generals at the time, disagreed. He recognized that taking Przemyśl might give the Russian army access to vital rail lines and open up the Carpathian Mountain passes to Hungary and beyond.

Not taking the fort was also a violation of the most basic of military precepts—never leave a major enemy army to your rear. Those 130,000 men could do all sorts of mischief, and even act in concert with the Austro-Hungarian field army. Brusilov decided that Przemyśl had to be taken, by assault if necessary. At his disposal were the Russian Third and Eighth Armies as well as a weak force that currently surrounded Przemyśl. Brusilov strengthened that blockading army considerably by adding heavy artillery. The task of capturing the fortress was assigned to Gen. Dmitry Sheherbachev, a man whose reputation was tough and uncompromising.

There would be diversionary attacks elsewhere,

but the main Russian effort would be at Fort I "Salis-Soglio" along the southwestern corner of the perimeter near Siedliska. Fort I itself was an outmoded 1880s affair, but in front of it there was a semicircle of six smaller forward forts. Four of them had been built at the turn of the century, which meant they were fairly modern in design.

But there were compensations for the attackers: hills in front of the forts could be used by artillery spotters, a rail line was nearby for supply logistics, and gullies and ruined villages would provide good cover for advancing infantry. The Russians would storm Przemyśl simultaneously on three sides. In the north, a diversionary attack of 168 guns and 43 infantry battalions would go forward to distract the defenders from the real effort. In the south, 7 rifle battalions and 24 guns would support the main southwest effort and guard its flanks.

The Russians attacked in the early morning hours of October 5. Though there were no breakthroughs, progress was made and fortress outer positions taken in several spots. Inside the Przemyśl forts and support trenches the heavy fighting, loud artillery exchanges, and the overall climate of fear began to take a toll on some of the middle-aged reservists. A Polish officer, his coat ripped by shell fragments, eyes wild from shock, shivered and declared hell could not be worse. Many other defenders had a similar reaction.

The following day was one of artillery bombardment, designed to soften up the southwest corner of the fortress for the main assault with bayonets. In the eighteenth century, Field Marshal Alexander Suvorov had coined the expression, "the bullet is a fool, the bayonet is a fine fellow," and it had become an article of faith for Czarist forces.

Lieutenant Bruno Prochaska of the Landsturm Infantry Regiment No 18 and his men enjoyed the relative protection of being in Fort I during artillery barrages, but even there, the atmosphere was tense and frightening.They could hear the distant sounds of the Russian guns, and then "the (shell) thuds like a colossal battering ram furiously against the earth covering of the old fort…the building shudders and resounds down to its foundations…dust and gasses from the explosion (make) the air heavy and suffocating."

The Russian 19th Division and the 69th Reserve Division would lead the assault on the southwestern forts. Each attacking regiment was given scaling ladders, steel cables, portable bridges, and wire cutters. A regiment would also get 32 hand grenades, an amount that was ludicrously few, but standard early in the war. At least four of the smaller forward forts were up to date, featuring steel observation cupolas, steel gun turrets, a deep ditch and plenty of infantry support. These would be tough "nuts" to crack, but Russian morale was still high.

The Russian storming of southeastern Fort I-1

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ABOVE: Russians and Austrians in hand-to-hand combat in an Austrian trench at Przemyśl in this German news illustration from 1914. Near the end of the first siege of Fortress Przemyśl (September 16-October 11, 1914), Russians penetrated some of the outermost defenses around Fort I/1 leading to two bloody hours of fierce fighting. Some 250 men of the Crimean Regiment managed to get across a defensive ditch into the fort, but were held off until reserves came to the rescue. OPPOSITE: This period post card shows smoke rising from an ammunition magazine in the fortress city of Przemyśl during the 1914-1915 Russian siege. The five-month siege, the longest of the Great War, lasted from November to March, when the Austro-Hungarian defenders ran out of food. They blew up the outer forts and their ammunition before surrendering on March 22, 1915.

National Library of Poland

was the climax of what was later called the First Siege of Przemyśl, an epic that showcased the various aspects of the human condition: courage and cowardice, strength and weakness, efficiency and incompetence. After the siege, Lt. Janko Svrljinka was lionized by the Imperial and Royal press as the hero of the defense—his exploits heavily fictionalized. He was chosen perhaps because he was the only professional officer present.

Hungarian Landsturm Second Lieutenant Dr Istvan Bielek, a 39-year-old lawyer, was the real hero. He had taken over commander of I/1 two weeks earlier, bringing with him elements of his own 2nd Company, Hungarian Landsturm Infantry Regiment No. 11. The regiment was a mixed group that included Hungarians, Ruthenes (Ukrainians), Jews, and a few Slovaks.

At about 3 a.m. on October 7, something alarmed the sentries at Fort I/1. According to one story, a soldier in an advance listening post fired a warning shot before the advancing Russians crept into his position and cut his throat. Bielek rushed up to the wall and immediately ordered flares to be fired. The flickering lights revealed that the leading edge of the Russian assault wave was already at the bottom of the fort's glacis.

Realizing that surprise was lost, the Russians turned on large searchlights, simultaneously illuminating the fort and blinding its defenders. Then the Czarist artillery began pummeling Fort I/1. Though rendered half blind by the lights and half deaf from the exploding shells, the I/1 garrison admirably kept their heads and opened up with sustained rifle fire.

But the fort's artillery was strangely silent, even after Bielek sent request after request for support fire. Ironically, it was Svrljuga the "hero" who was in command of the guns, and he was having a nervous breakdown! Though never officially acknowledged, rumors circulated that Svrljuga had lost his nerve, constantly crossing himself as he repeatedly moaned "Oh, my God, Oh, my God."

Bielek didn't have time to figure out why the artillery wasn't firing as the Russians came closer and closer. He prepared for the worst by ordering heavy beams and sandbags be readied to block the fort's main entrance. For the next two long and bloody hours the fighting was fierce, with the garrison contesting every foot of ground as the Russians advanced.

Some 2,000 men of the Russian Crimean Infantry Regiment No 73 were in the forefront, so close to the fort that Ukrainians in the garrison could understand their talk between the bursts of gunfire. By about 5 a.m. the Russians managed to throw a bridge over the fort ditch and break through the right shoulder. Just then, with the bridge crowded with Czarist troops pouring across, Ensign Hans Seiler fired one of the turret guns. Probably disgusted by Svrljuga's apparent cowardice, Seiler took action without orders. His timing was perfect, as the turret guns sprayed the Russians with lethal doses of canister even as they crossed the bridge and climbed up the fort wall.

Seiler's blasts dislodged the assault bridge, killing even more Russians. Other Russians were still alive amidst the carnage, trying to climb the 10-foot walls of the ditch when the machine guns in the fort carponier (outwork) sprang to malevolent life, mowing down scores of green-clad men.

This action bought time, but 250 men of the Crimean Regiment had made it over and were scaling the fort proper. Bielek had only about 40 men left defending the wall. The Russians had climbed over the parapet and there was some hand to hand fighting. There was nothing left to do but for Bielek and the survivors to fall back into the interior of the fort.

There was an anxious moment when it was discovered that the heavy entrance door had already been shut and bolted. Pounding at the door and shouting finally got through to the soldiers on the other side, and the commander and his surviving men were let in. Bielek and his men were now essentially entombed within their own fort.

The Russians were on the roof, and had taken possession of most of the fort. Bielek could not call for help, because the bombardment had cut all the phone lines. The dim light and stuffy, fortress rooms were made even more terrifying by the screams of the wounded outside and strange noises echoing through the corridors—it was the enemy trying to shoot through ventilation shafts, or drop objects down fort chimneys.

The Czarist troops grew increasingly frustrated. The guncotton they had brought along to stuff

Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

down chimneys was wet and failed to explode. Russians interrogated garrison wounded, trying to find out where all the entrances were in the fort, but the injured prisoners told them nothing. Casting around for a solution, they focused on the fort's rear main entrance and rooftop iron door. The invaders might have succeeded, but were kept at bay by a few soldiers firing from nearby loopholes. One soldier, a roofer from Vienna named Franz Suchy, kept watch at the main door and later claimed to have shot 40 Russians.

About 7:30 a.m. help arrived in the form of the fortress reserves, Hungarian Hovid troops considered the best of the garrison. They made short work of the Russians who now found themselves trapped and unable to escape. They were cut down or made prisoner. Fort I/1 was saved, and with it Fortress Przemyśl. Two days later the Russians were forced to retreat and the siege was broken. The Hapsburg field army soon launched an offensive, pushing Czarist forces further back.

The whole Austro-Hungarian empire rejoiced at the news that the Russian bear was not invincible, and the once feared Czarist juggernaut could be stopped by a few determined men. Przemyśl also rejoiced, but the respite only lasted a month, and was followed by a long second siege that started in November, 1914. It was an ordeal that would test the physical and mental endurance of both civilians and soldiers.

Once again the Austo-Hungarian field army fell back, and Przemyśl was under siege. Having been stopped in October, the Russians were not eager to repeat the experience. There would be no further bravado, nor wasteful frontal assaults or attempts at storming the fortress perimeter. "General Famine" would be in charge of the operation to starve Przemyśl into submission.

Just before the second siege began on November 10, there had been some evacuations of noncombatants, but 30,000 civilians, including children, remained in the city. The garrison now numbered 130,000, along with 21,000 horses that might become a food source if regular supplies ran low.

Good morale was essential, so every effort was made to make life as routine and normal as possible. Theaters were open, and since laughter is a great psychological medicine the playbill usually included slapstick comedy. Przemyśl's movie house, The Olympia, was crowded with people seeking a couple of hour's relief from their stressful lives. Drama, comedy, or even fantasies like *A Thousand and One Nights* proved very popular.

The schools were reopened in January, 1915, a move that was welcomed by students and teachers alike. Children craved normality, and drew comfort from a sense of routine they knew before the war. Classes were conducted as usual, even if a teacher's voice might have to compete with the distant boom of artillery fire and chatter of machine guns.

At least in the early weeks, citizens strolled the lovely landscaped park not far from the old City castle, or had a drink at the Grand Café Stieber, located on the ground floor of the magnificent Hotel Royal. The café was not too far from Fortress Command, and so there was always a hope one might pick up some good news.

As a garrison town, Przemyśl was no stranger to romance even before the war. Soldiers often courted and sometimes married local women. But during the siege the dynamics changed, and often not in a woman's favor. Some genuine romances blossomed, but as the weeks went by and real starvation threatened, desperate females became girlfriends/mistresses of soldiers, particularly officers, who had food.

Some of these women achieved an almost legendary status, such as Ella and Hella, nicknamed the "flyer princesses" because they associated with the fortress pilots. Both were beautiful, vivacious, well dressed, and had pleasant voices. An evening with one of them was enough to make a man forget the miseries of war.

A kind of mystique surrounded them, partly because they were unattainable by ordinary soldiers. Rumors persisted they might be Russian spies. After Przemyśl fell, Hella was seen at a café being very friendly with a Russian officer. Was she a spy? An eastern "Mata Hari"? Or simply a woman

trying to survive by adapting to new circumstances?

It was also in January that the grim reality finally began to register with Przemyśl's beleaguered inhabitants. That's when the horses, the last ditch source of food, began to be slaughtered in great numbers. Flour was made in part from horse bones and dried horse flesh, and horse liver Pâté was spread over it. Horse intestines made good sausage casings, and of course the sausages themselves were stuffed with horse meat, chiefly offal. For cooking oil, horse fat served well enough.

Przemyśl wasn't entirely cut off from the outside world. They did have radio communication, an airfield, and air squadron Flik 11. The squadron had Albatros and Avitik two-seater biplanes, canvas-covered contraptions that were primitive, but serviceable by 1914-15 standards. Remarkably, Fortress Command set up a regular airmail service with these planes. Soldiers could contact their families via special post cards, made of thinner, lighter paper to save weight. Understandably the cards were censored; only greetings and comments about the sender's health were allowed.

Aircraft of another kind showed up on the morning of December 1, 1914. It was a Russian plane, and crowds of Przemyśl citizens thronged the streets to view the entertaining spectacle. The fortress guns opened up, and dirty white blossoms of smoke appeared near the plane as the shells burst. The crowds laughed and made jokes about how scared that Russian pilot must be, when suddenly small dark objects were thrown out of the aircraft.

Speculation about what was falling from the plane ended when the objects hit the ground and exploded with loud detonations. Voices shouted, "bombs! Bombs! The Russians are throwing bombs!" and the panicking crowd ran for cover. It was the first of many bombing raids on Przemyśl; throughout the siege the Russian air corps dropped no less than 275 bombs. This was one of the earliest bombing raids experienced by a civilian population.

Winter was particularly hard on everyone bottled up in Przemyśl. One observer recalled that the soldiers in forward positions were like a "procession of ghosts. The soldiers creep forward, pale, like shadows, buckled like old men." Ragged, apathetic and hollow eyed, the garrison troops reminded observers of Napoleon's Grand Army during the retreat from Moscow. Sickness also decimated the garrison ranks; by March 1, 1915, some 15,000 men, or 1 in 8 garrison soldiers, were hospitalized.

A half-hearted effort to break out was tried, but it ended in bloody failure. About 40,000 garrison troops were assigned the task to, at least in theory, break through Russian lines and reach the Austro-Hungarian field army some 56 miles away. Kusmanek was no fool—given the condition of the men, success was a near impossibility. Nevertheless, an attempted breakout might disrupt the Russian front infrastructure like the railroads, capture food stockpiles, and satisfy the army's diminishing sense of honor.

Lieutenant Jan Vit spoke for many when he

ABOVE: Muslim soldiers from Bosnia attacking the Russians during the Great War. The Austro-Hungarian Army was made up of soldiers from the various ethnic and geographical regions within the Hapsburg Dynasty. The 130,000-man garrison at Przemyśl was composed mainly of territorial reservists, aged 37-42, who were Austrian Germans, Hungarians, Romanians, Serbs, Slovaks, Czechs, Italians, Poles, and Ruthenians (Ukrainians). BELOW:The original Russian demand for the garrison's surrender was made at Fort XI in October 1914, and the fort was the first to be destroyed by the garrison shortly before the defenders finally surrendered on March 22, 1915. OPPOSITE: Austro-Hungarian troops assault Russians early in the Great War. The siege was briefly lifted when Austro-Hungarian forces moved toward Przemyśl in October. But after a Russian victory near the Vistula River the Austro-Hungarian and German forces retreated and the Russians began a second siege at Przemyśl in November, 1914. This would last until the defenders ran out of food and surrendered on March 22, 1915, after blowing up all the major forts.

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Wikimedia Photo: Damian Pękalski

George Grantham Bain Collection

ABOVE: Russian soldiers, right, survey the destruction of one the outer defensive forts of the Ring Fortress of Przemyśl. The Russians only held the fortress until June 3, 1915, when it was retaken during a renewed Austro-Hungarian offensive. TOP: A 2002 aerial view of Fort VIII "Łętownia," the first single-rampart artillery fort built in 1881-1882 as part of the massive Przemyśl Fortress complex. Part of it was destroyed by the Austro-Hungarian defenders before they surrendered to the Russians in March 1915. During its Nazi occupation in World War II, Fort VIII became a place of execution for Poles and Jews.

wrote, "Everyone from the highest commander to the ordinary soldier knew very well that our starved and physically exhausted men and emaciated horses were incapable of undergoing a single day's march, not to speak of several days of battle."

The March 19 breakout "offensive" was a debacle of the greatest magnitude. Of the 40,000 poor wretches that bravely went forward. Some 10,000 were killed, wounded, or captured.The survivors wearily made their way back to the fortress.

When the food was gone, so was hope. An officer in the 23rd Honvid Infantry Division wrote, "I have been walking like a drunk…or to speak precisely, a man condemned to death. I find no delight in anything. There is nowhere to hide—the end is coming."

Before Przemyśl was surrendered, anything of value would need to be destroyed. There would be nothing left for the Russians to use for their own war effort. At 6 a.m., March 22, 1915, all the major forts were blown up, a spectacular pyrotechnic display that would forever linger in the minds of those who witnessed it. The first one to go was Fort XI, "Dunkowicski." First, a huge explosion that shot fingers of flame and coils of smoke into the sky, accompanied by a terrifying roar that could be heard throughout the city. Moments later another fort blew up, then another, and another, until what once was a defensive perimeter was transformed into a ring of flame and smoke that circled Przemyśl like a crown of apocalyptic destruction.

To some it seemed like Przemyśl was surrounded by a chain of erupting volcanoes, and from the air the spectacle was even more awe inspiring. Pilot Rudolf Stanger was one of the last of the garrison to escape before its surrender. After he took off, the sight he beheld from above inspired an almost poetic description. It was "horrible, and yet of incomparable beauty, eternally sad yet of such sublime greatness that the destruction of Pompeii and Herculaneum could not have offered a sight more awesome."

Fortress Przemyśl formally surrendered, and the garrison marched off into captivity. Mounted Cossacks now trotted through its streets, and a jubilant Russian officer declared "Przemyśl belongs to us now forever." A casual statement,

Illustrated London News

A mounted Russian officer surveys prisoners outside Poland's fortress-city of Przemyśl in this period newspaper illustration that has been annotated by a reader. Przemyśl's garrison of 130,000 men consisted mainly of regional *Landsturm* (territorial) brigades composed of middle-aged Austrian Germans, Hungarians, Romanians, Serbs, Slovaks, Czechs, Italians, Poles, and Ruthenians (Ukrainians). Some 110,000 of them were taken prisoner when the fortress fell.

but in retrospect an ominous one for the people of Przemyśl and Galicia. Most Russians, even Czar Nicholas himself, embraced the idea of a "great Russia"that insisted much of Slavic Eastern Europe had somehow historically been Russian territory in the distant past.

The Ukrainians were considered Russian, albeit "little Russians," and not permitted to have any sense of separate ethnic, cultural or even linguistic identity. Ukrainian newspapers were shut down, and the Russian language replaced Ukrainian in schools. It was part of the overall Russification program, and even the clocks were set to St. Petersburg time. History often repeats itself, and the Russian policies of 1915 are not too different from the ones that Vladimir Putin has been following in the 21st century.

The worst treatment was meted out to Galicia's Jewish population, and the jews of Przemyśl also suffered. Antisemitism was endemic in Russia, and periodic pogrom persecutions of Jewish communities occurred on a regular basis. Crude and derogatory names for the Jews were common; even the Czar was antisemitic, casually using ethnic slurs in his private correspondence.

As part of their ethnic cleansing/Russification program, no less than 17,000 Jews from Przemyśl and the surrounding district were rounded up and deported to locations deep in Russia. Russification also meant that anyone—Austrian, Polish, Slovakian, Hungarian—who was a community leader, or a potential community leader, was arrested and/or deported, lest opposition coalesce around them.

But the Russian occupation of Przemyśl was brief. On June 3, 1915, formidable German troops expelled the Russians, who would not return, at least until the end of World War II. The saga of Fortress Przemyśl was over, at least for the moment. The fortress city had endured the longest siege in World War I, five grueling months from November, 1914 to March 1915.

Thomas Carlisle once wrote "It is singular how long the rotten will hold together." Austria-Hungary was indeed rotten, a patchwork quilt of territories filled with diverse nationalities, religions, ethnic and cultural identities. Yet against all reason it largely held together in the years just before the war. And in retrospect, given the horrors of the Nazis and Communism that was soon to come, relatively successful.

The second half of Carlisle's quote is seldom included. He says that the rotten will hold together, provided "you do not handle it roughly." This underscores the miracle of the Austro-Hungarian empire. It was "handled roughly," very roughly, for four brutal years, always teetering on collapse, yet still maintained a cohesion that was nothing short of miraculous.

The siege of Przemyśl also illustrates that the human factor, which is sometimes overlooked, is of supreme importance in war. The troops that held Fortress Przemyśl were middle aged, out of shape, and were a motley collection of different languages and nationalities. They had little in common, though some had a genuine affection and reverence for the old Hapsburg Emperor Franz Joseph. Armed with obsolescent weapons, manning forts that were mostly out of date, poorly prepared and in some cases poorly led, these men rose to the occasion and performed much better than expected.

Though little known in western histories the siege profoundly altered the whole course of the war. If Przemyśl had fallen in 1914, the Russian "steamroller" would have pressed on into Hungary and may ultimately have captured Vienna. The Hapsburg empire might well have collapsed before its German ally could rescue it. Allied victory might have been achieved in 1915, saving millions of lives in the process. ■

The long history of whiskey in the U.S. Military. | BY IAN MCCALL

JOHN BARLEYCORN *Joins Up*

Whiskey has long been a faithful companion for many soldiers out on campaign. Be it issued by armies or snuck onto battlefields inside canteens; whiskey remains one of the most important beverages for American soldiers. Throughout our history as a nation few things are more genuinely American than bourbon and rye; even apple pie was created in England. Bourbon is 100-percent American and as such it makes sense that the fighting men and women of the United States military would develop such a pension for it, and that our military would have such a long history with the drink.

Whiskey has been thought to have various medicinal powers since the 15th century. Prescribed to heal everything from kidney troubles, intestinal issues, to depression and anxiety. Further adding to whiskey's reputation as a health tonic during this time, whiskey, and most other alcoholic beverages, were safer to drink in most areas than water. Alcohol was an important component of

Mount Vernon's Ladies Association

ABOVE: A costumed interpreter stirs the mash at George Washington's Gristmill, once the largest distillery in America with an annual output of 11,000 gallons. RIGHT: A Civil War era whiskey flask, complete with pewter drinking cup that fits over the bottom of the bottle.

Fagan Arms

European life, and many colonists would bring this appreciation with them when they crossed to the new world.

While not all who came over to America shared the appreciation, many colonists would spend cold winter nights and warm summer evenings whiling away over a mug in the local public house. But in these early colonial days, whiskey was not the beverage of choice, beer, cider, and brandy would have been far more common. However, the king of beverages in the colonies was rum. Given America's proximity to British Caribbean holdings it was no small wonder that rum was seen as the best choice for fortifying soldiers' nerves. During this time, it was common to outfit English soldiers and sailors with a ration of rum. English Sailors would also put limes into their rum

Unidentified Union soldiers pose for the camera with whiskey and playing cards.

Library of Congress

Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

ABOVE: U.S. military personnel in Puerto Rico "drink to the girl [they] left behind" during the Spanish-American War in 1898. BELOW: U.S. soldiers at Fort Riley, Kansas, pose on steps with bottles of whiskey in 1909. By this time, Congress had banned sales of any alcohol to enlisted men on military posts. Established in 1853 to protect settlers and traders traveling along the Sante Fe and Oregon Trails, Fort Riley has been the home of the 1st Infantry Division (The Big Red One) since 1917.

ration to stave off scurvy, and thus the nickname of limy was born. But after the Declaration of Independence and the start of the Revolutionary War, America found itself cut off from rum imports, and so a homegrown solution needed to be found.

Ever since Europeans had arrived in America, they had begun making their own form of whiskey. While old world whiskies were mostly made from wheat and barley, the American distillers had found that rye and corn could create an extremely cheap and tasty product. It was during the Revolution that whiskey first earned its place as the alcoholic beverage of choice of the American fighting man. Soon after the Continental Army was formed in 1775, Congress voted to supply it with beer. However, George Washington felt that something more stout was required. Eventually Washington convinced Congress to authorize each soldier to be issued a gill, which was 4 ounces of whiskey, every day. A further directive also instructed field commanders to reward valor and exceptional service with additional rations. To make sure there would be enough whiskey to go around Washington asked Congress to fund the creation of new whiskey distilleries. However, even this would not be enough for Washington who would open his own distillery at his Mount Vernon home, to make sure troops' mugs never went dry.

In 1782 the distribution of whiskey to soldiers would move to a standing army policy, and for the next 50 years each soldier was entitled to a daily gill. This amounted to nearly a bottle of whiskey per soldier per week, which in turn helped grow the American whiskey distilling industry exponentially. By 1829 the army was buying 72,000 gallons of whiskey each year or about 13.6 gallons for each recruit.

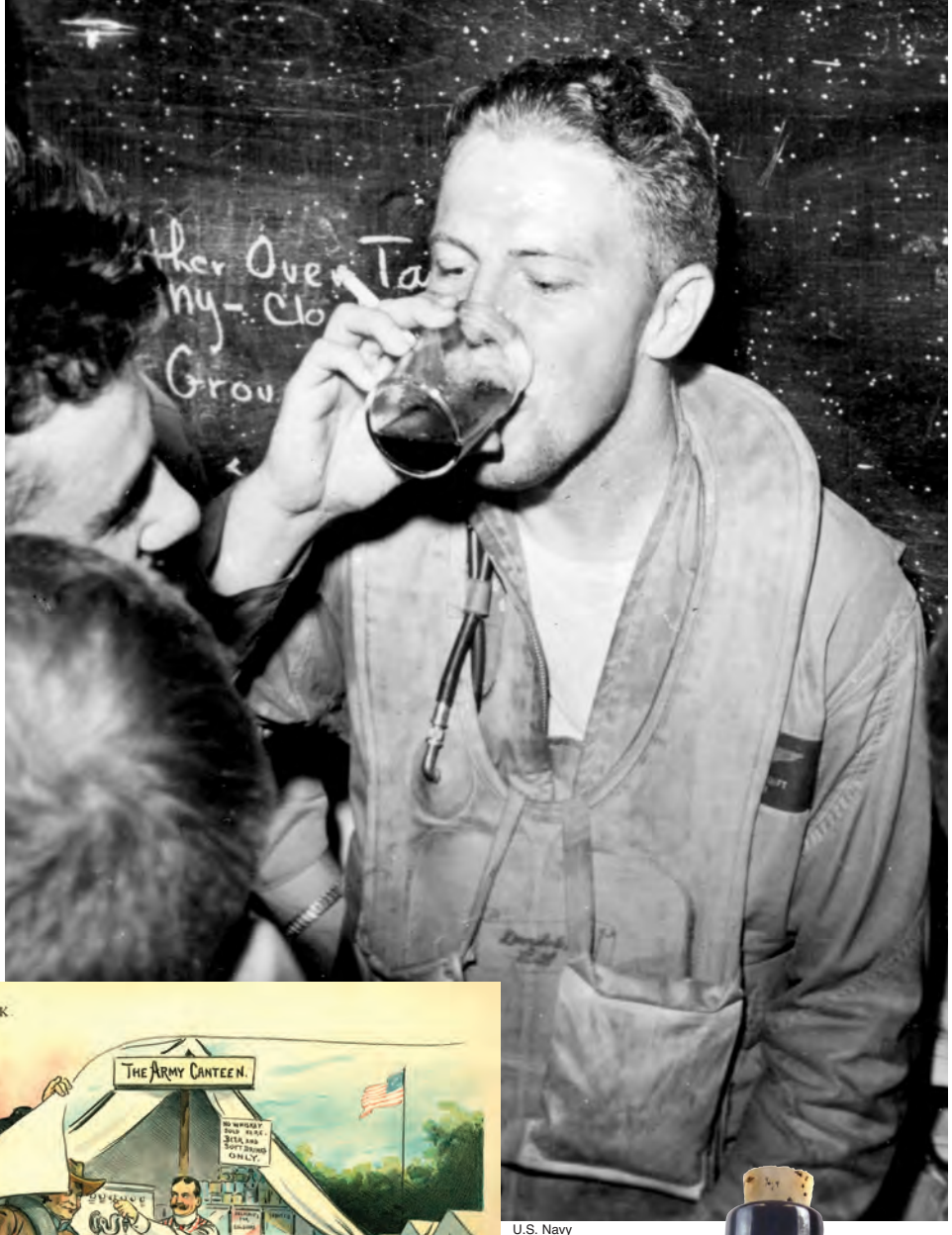
This large consumption of whiskey, however, led to a high degree of drunken fights and general insubordination by the troops. In 1832 the whiskey ration was abolished, and steps were taken to increase sobriety among the troops. It would be during the Civil War that whiskey would once again come back into service as a curative for everything from exhaustion, blisters, the mental trauma of the battlefield, to the healing of other minor maladies. While it was never official government policy to issue whiskey, many regimental officers took it upon themselves to furnish their men with a steady supply of the drink in order to help improve morale and sometimes fortify their nerves before battle. Although there is a common myth that soldiers would only be given a shot of whiskey before an amputation this was an extremely rare occurrence. In most cases soldiers would be rendered unconscious via ether or chloroform before an amputation began.

After the Civil War whiskey procurement once fell to individual soldiers. In 1895 the War Department officially issued orders to establish the first military post exchanges, stores in which military men could buy whatever they needed. Since those first stores

opened in 1895, pausing for a brief break during prohibition, whiskey has always been on the shelves.

During World War II most distilleries had to convert their infrastructure to create industrial alcohol and as such whiskey was in limited supply. However, that did not stop the fighting men from doing everything they could to acquire bourbon and rye. In fact, whiskey remained so popular that the government increased the proof gallon tax by 200 percent, and by the war's end this had generated more than $6 billion in revenue. Today whiskey remains one of the most popular beverages in post exchanges around the world.

In 1997 when Jack Daniels began selling its whiskey by the barrel the United States military became their biggest client. One barrel, weighing pounds, can fill 250 standard bottles. Every year the military purchases millions of dollars' worth of whiskey to make sure that officers clubs, PXs, and bases all around the world have adequate access to whiskey. It is a testament to America's military strength that even in far-flung corners of the globe, an American serviceman can still walk into a store on base and pick up a bottle of bourbon or rye just like he could at home. Despite the years gone by and the many changes made to the United states military one thing is clear, whiskey's association with the American military is here to stay. ■



U.S. Navy

Library of Congress

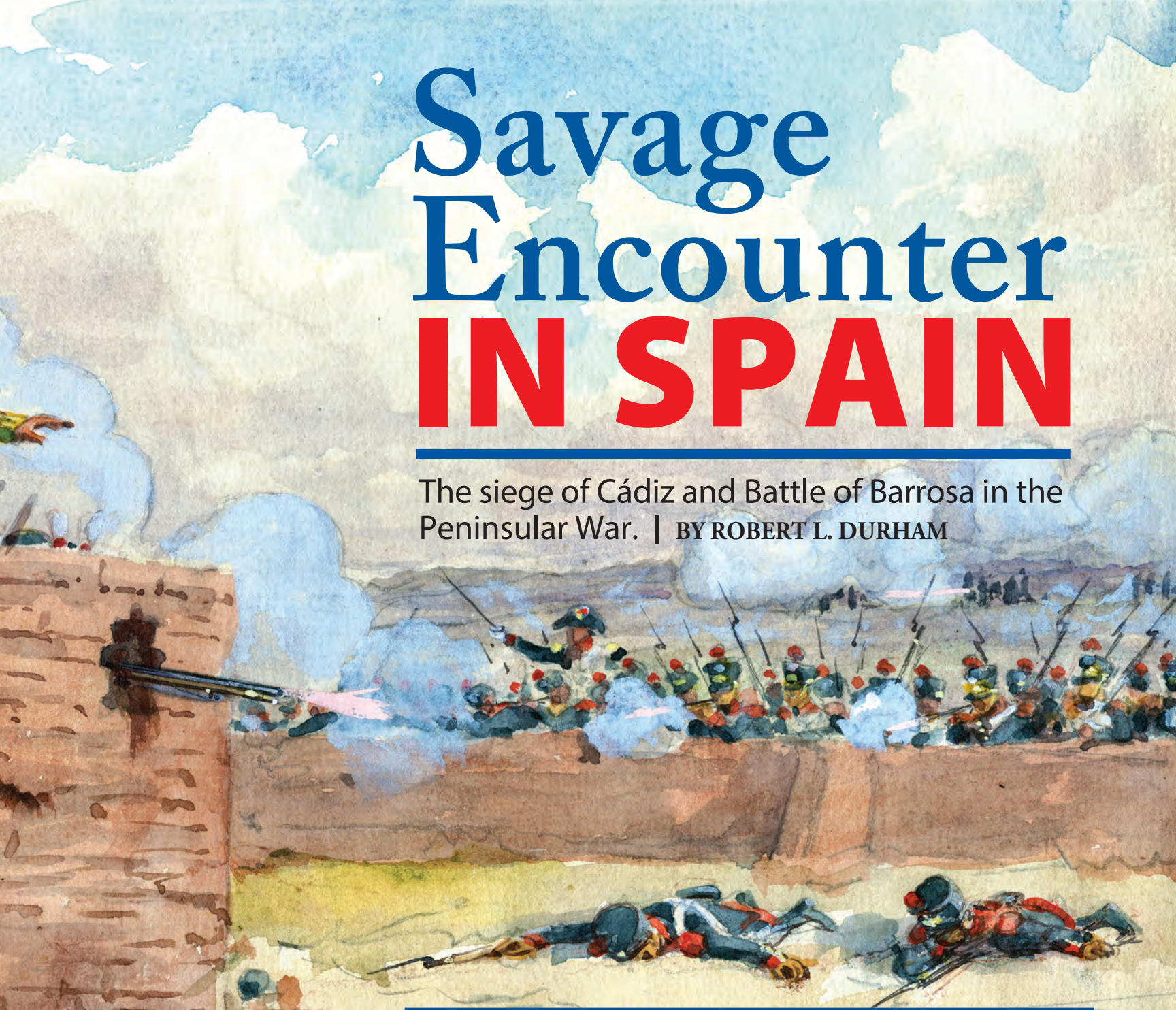
ABOVE: During a time when the Temperance Movement was popular in America, this *Puck* magazine cartoon from 1900 shows both sides of the Army canteen question. Is it better to have soldiers drinking beer on base (right) or intoxicated on liquor in the local saloons? In 1890 Congress imposed a ban on the sale of liquor to enlisted men at military posts. In 1901, the passing of the so-called Canteen Act also banned wine and beer. TOP: Lieutenant Ronald P. "Rip" Gift relaxes with other pilots in a ready room on board USS *Monterey* (CVL-26), after landing on her at night following strikes on the Japanese fleet, June 20, 1944. RIGHT: Jack Daniel's Old No. 7 Stoneware Whiskey Jug from the 1970s.

The 94th Regiment—Scots Brigade—at the Defense of Matagorda, March 21st 1810, **by British artist and illustrator Richard Simkin, shows the unit (referred to as the "Scotch Brigade" at the time) defending Fort Matagorda, one of several surrounding the Spanish port city of Cádiz, which was besieged by the French for two years during the Peninsular War.**

Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

Savage Encounter IN SPAIN

The siege of Cádiz and Battle of Barrosa in the Peninsular War. | BY ROBERT L. DURHAM



With a large army and little to oppose him, King Joseph Bonaparte sat in Madrid on the throne of Spain, in January of 1810. The British had retreated into Portugal, and the Spanish posed little threat. They had only 25,000 men to protect a front of 160 miles. The Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte, sure that Spain would come under his sway with diplomacy and a "few cannon shots," did not worry. But he had misjudged the spirit of the Spanish people who still supported and took pride in their own government—no matter how corrupt—and would never accept the elder Bonaparte as their king.

After winning the Battle of Wagram, July 5-6, 1809, Napoleon negotiated a peace treaty with Austria in October and could send reinforcements to Spain if needed. King Joseph and his chief of staff, Marshal Nicolas Jean de Dieu Soult, now concentrated on the conquest of Andalusia, the southernmost region of Spain. By January 11, they had an army of 60,000 men poised to begin the invasion. Soult boasted to Paris that, with such a host, the victory could be had in a day.

It took a little more than a day, but not much more. By the end of the month, only the Guadalquivir River separated him from Seville. "Andalu-

Map © 2025 Philip Schwartzberg, Meridian Mapping, Minneapolis, MN

Royal Collection Trust

ABOVE: This 1815 watercolor illustration by British artist Denis Dighton depicts a General officer of the Spanish cavalry, with guerrillas and lancers. In the Peninsular War, Gen. Manuel de la Peña was the Allied commander of the defense of Cádiz, and was later relieved of command for his actions during the defense of the city. His own troops thought of him as an "old woman," referring to him as *Doña Manuela* (Lady Manuela). TOP: Fought on the Iberian Peninsula by Portugal, Spain and Britain against the invading and occupying forces of Napoleon's First French Empire, the Peninsular War (1807-1816) saw the port city of Cádiz, temporarily Spain's seat of government, fall under siege for two years. The Battle of Barrosa was the result of an attempt to free the city.

sia will soon be pacified," King Joseph assured his brother. "I hope to enter Cádiz without a shot being fired." At Joseph's dinner table that evening, a discussion arose as to whether Seville or Cádiz should be taken first. Cádiz was the new seat of the Spanish Junta, as well as the country's largest seaport. Voices were raised in favor of securing Cádiz since a single corps would be enough to take Seville. "Give me Seville and I will answer for Cádiz," Soult said, overruling them all.

Joseph entered Seville on February 1, to the "cheers of the whole populace," according to his account. More shrewdly, his Master of the Household noted "Cries of 'Viva el Rey' arose on every side. No doubt, curiosity and fear had a greater share in that triumphant reception than any other sentiment but . . . it seemed at the time to justify the occupation of Seville." Soult planned for the First Corps to spend the night in the city and march on Cádiz the next day. By then, however, it would be too late.

Taking Cádiz on the 29th of January would have been easy, for then it was defended only by 2,400 new recruits. The Spanish Junta had ordered the Duke of Albuquerque, stationed north of Cádiz at Mérida with 8,000 men, to attack the French First Corps. Outnumbered three to one, he disobeyed orders and marched to relieve Cádiz, picking up another 2,000 men on the way. Some 3,000 more Spanish troops reinforced the city by sea from Ayamonte.

When the French First Corps arrived at the city gates, they found the fortifications fully manned. Marshal Claud Perrin Victor's call for the city to surrender received this reply: "Cádiz, faithful to its word, recognizes no king but Ferdinand VII." Soult's decision not to take Cádiz first, would prove disastrous for the French.

The 46-year-old Victor had been in the French army for 30 years, starting as a drummer-boy and serving as a private for 10 years. His performance at the sieges of Toulon, Marengo, Jena, and Friedland had led to steady promotions until Napoleon made him a Marshal of the Empire. In 1808, he became the 1st Duke of Belluno and Napoleon sent him to Spain. There he met the British for the first time, at Talavera, and learned to appreciate their fighting spirit.

Within Cádiz, the civilian inhabitants forced the unpopular Spanish Junta to resign, replacing them with a three-man *Cortes* (Regency), which requested aid from Britain. On orders from the Duke of Wellington, three Portuguese and two British battalions set sail for Cádiz, arriving mid-February and increasing the city's garrison to 17,000 men.

As a seaport, Cádiz would prove to be hard to subdue. Four British and twelve Spanish battleships, along with their supporting vessels, kept the

port open. Joseph requested Napoleon send the Toulon squadron to close the port, but Napoleon did not respond. He knew the British Mediterranean Fleet lay between Toulon and Cádiz.

On the landward side, Cádiz was protected by the wide tidal channel of Sancti Petri and its flanking marshes. After crossing the channel, an invading army would have to fight its way up the Isla de Leon, through forts and earthworks, before reaching the Cádiz side of the island. The next barrier was a four-mile sandy spit with a wide ditch across it. Lining the cut was the stone San Fernando battery stretching from shore to shore with the city's ramparts beyond it. Holding Cádiz benefited the Allies by keeping a significant portion of the French army—some 20,000 men—occupied manning the siege lines.

While Joseph was ensconced in a royal court in Madrid, Soult governed from Seville in far more splendor. "No monarch ever surrounded himself with more majesty: no court was ever so reverential," one French officer wrote. When Soult went to mass on Sundays, "picked troops lined the route between his palace and the cathedral."

Although it was difficult to lay siege to Cádiz, the French did seal it off from the rest of Spain. Soult marched north towards Badajoz with 20,000 men early in 1811, reducing to a minimum the number of troops on the siege lines. The Cádiz garrison made plans to take advantage of this by landing troops behind the French to attack them from the rear.

Lieutenant General Thomas Graham masterminded this strategy. A Scottish laird, Graham had no military ambitions until a Toulouse mob disrespected the body of his dead wife. He then raised and outfitted the 90th Foot Regiment at his own expense and became its first colonel. He rose to lieutenant-general through his own merit and his men were dedicated to him. Unfortunately, Graham would not command the expedition. Since the Spanish troops were double those of the British, that honor would go to Gen. Manuel de la Peña y Ruiz del Sotillo. There were 4,900 British troops (including 1,000 from Gibraltar), 332 Portuguese, and 9,600 Spanish. Graham knew the Spanish general to be "weak and timid." Indeed, De la Peña's own men thought him an "old woman," referring to him as *Doña Manuela* (Lady Manuela).

De la Peña's plans were for most of the Cádiz garrison, under Gen. José Pascual de Zayas, to build a bridge of boats across the Sancti Petri and assault the French front line. Sailing to Tarifa, some 50 miles southeast of Cádiz, the main Allied army would then march on the rear of the French siege lines. De la Peña would take the advance, followed by Graham in command of the rearguard. Graham embarked first, on February 19,

Musée national du Château de Fontainebleau

Joseph Bonaparte, formerly King of Naples, was placed on the throne of Spain in 1808 by his older brother, Napoleon Bonaparte, igniting the Peninsular War. In 1804, the elder Bonaparte had declared himself Napoleon I, Emperor of France.

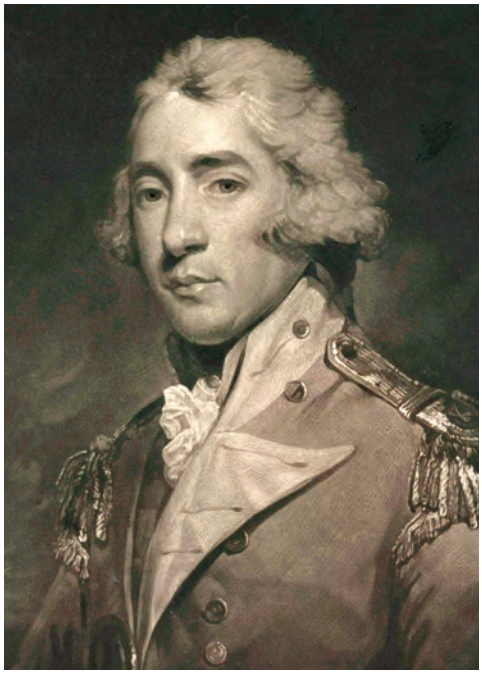
and everything fell apart almost immediately. Strong winds and currents forced them to land at Algeciras, 15 miles short of their goal, on February 23. They had no rations there and had to purchase them from the locals at outrageous prices.

Another setback was that the road to Tarifa was impassable for wheeled vehicles, forcing the Navy to detail sailors to row the guns and horses along the coast to Tarifa. Graham wrote to Vice-Adm. Richard Keats of the Navy that "the great exertions made by the navy in rowing such a distance against a wind" astonished him.

The Spanish also ran into foul weather and were forced to return to Cádiz, where De la Peña refused to permit the troops to disembark. They were "exposed without cover to this terrible weather," wrote Lt.-Col. James Stanhope. When he spoke to a Spanish officer about this, he was told the men were used to suffering.

Palace of Versailles

New York Public Library



LEFT: Claude-Victor Perri, was a teenager when he joined the French army as a drummer. As Marshal Victor, he led the French forces during the Battle of Barrosa. RIGHT: A wealthy Scottish aristocrat, General Thomas Graham, joined the British Army at 42 after his wife died, and served through the Napoleonic Wars.

When the weather finally calmed, De la Peña set sail and the entire force, nearly 15,000 men, assembled at Tarifa near the end of February and started toward Cádiz on the 28th. They met only light French resistance, but De la Peña insisted on marching at night, believing that he could surprise Victor. Losing their way in the dark, their nights were filled with marching and counter marching as the troops, stumbling against a strong wind, became utterly exhausted.

The morning of March 1, 1811, they reached a convent at Casa Viejas, held by two companies of French infantry that fled when they saw the Allied army. The King's German Legion (KGL) pursued the French, who formed in line and fired a volley, before throwing down their weapons. The volley killed two KGL Hussars and wounded several more. The pointless bloodshed enraged the Hussars, who charged into the defenseless Frenchmen with sabers drawn and killed them all.

By now Victor had word that a strong Allied force was making its way up the western road from Tarifa. After the aggressive action of the Cádiz garrison, Victor concluded those troops could only be heading for Cádiz and set about preparing a trap along their predicted route.

General Eugène-Casimir Villatte's division would block the western road, preventing access to the Santi Petri and the Isla de Léon. Under the commands of Generals François Amable Ruffin and Jean François Leval, two other divisions would hide in the thick pine forests near Chiclana waiting to attack the Allied flank when they engaged Villatte's division.

De la Peña's column continued towards Cádiz on March 4, moving at an irregular pace that might halt every five minutes or so. The lurching pace tired the Allies so much that they inevitably took the wrong road. When Graham realized they were marching straight into Victor's camp, he rode to the front to correct their course. They reached their destination on the morning of March 5, 1811, wet, weary, and hungry after 14 hours of marching.

The Allies found a French force barring the road to the Sancti Petri crossing. De la Peña abandoned his plan to attack the French rear and made for the Isla de Leon to get into the city, right back where they started from. Zayas had followed his orders and bridged the river on the night of March 2-3. De la Peña was supposed to engage the rear of Victor's main divisions, allowing Zayas to attack across the river, and destroy the French siege works. De la Peña's thoughts now were to fight his way into the city, so he attacked the French division under Gen. Eugene-Casimir Villatte. The French in front of him, only 3,000 strong, abandoned their position. The way now open to the city, De la Peña ordered Graham to cover him.

Graham posted one British and five Spanish battalions, with a small battalion of flank companies of the Rock of Gibraltar garrison, and cavalry from both armies, on Barrosa hill as rearguard. He placed Bvt. Lt.-Col. John Frederick Browne, the commander of the Gibraltar battalion, in charge of this rearguard. Graham would join the Spanish with his main body and, when that was complete, withdraw the rearguard.

Graham set off through the pine wood, the fastest route to join De la Peña. It seemed safe since there was no sign of Victor's main force. They were in the middle of the woods when Lieutenant von Gruben of the KGL Hussars, reported to Graham that a large body of French were approaching the Barrosa hill from the north—the key to the Allied position. Victor intended to capture it, then assault Graham's stretched-out line of march. Graham sent a Spanish officer to tell De la Peña of the French advance, then marched back toward the Barrosa hill in the mistaken belief that De la Peña would soon be on his way to support him.

Two French divisions under Marshal Victor converged on Browne's position on the Barrosa hill. Lt.-Gen. Sir Samuel Ford Whittingham, commander of the cavalry, asked Browne what he intended to do. "I intend to fight the French," he answered. Whittingham responded that, "you may do as you please, but we are decided on a retreat." He then led his five squadrons of cavalry and the five Spanish infantry battalions off the hill, fleeing down the coast road to join the baggage train.

French dragoons moved quickly up the hill, riding around the flanks of Browne's battalion. French artillery and infantry under Gen. François Amable Ruffin moved forward in full dress, the two brigades marching in a compact column of divisions. Seeing he had no chance of holding the hill, Browne sent a message to Graham, reporting he had to retire. He formed his battalion into a close column and ordered them to march toward the pine forest.

Unable to form a square against the French dra-

goons because of their artillery, Browne sent out skirmishers to keep the enemy horsemen at bay. Major Bussche and a squadron of KGL Hussars came to his aid to help hold the French back. Bussche retired by half-squadrons, one charging the French while the other withdrew. Every time the Hussars charged, the French dragoons retreated behind their infantry, who fired a volley into them. The Hussars experienced many casualties but succeeded in covering Browne's retreat. When Browne reached the bottom of the hill, the Hussars rode off to join the rest of the cavalry retreating on the coast road. The French now occupied the Barrosa hill.

Graham exploded with rage at Browne's message and when he caught up to him, demanded to know whether or not he had been given orders to defend the hill. Browne replied that the Spanish had run "long before the enemy came within cannon-shot." Graham allowed that it was a "bad business," and ordered Brown to "instantly turn round again and attack."

Riding up to his Gibraltar battalion of flank soldiers, Browne took off his hat and roared, "General Graham has done you the honour of being the first to attack these fellows. Now, follow me, you rascals!" They "moved forward with four hundred and sixty-eight men and twenty-one officers to attack the position," Lt. William Blakeney wrote. "[The hill] was now defended by two thousand five hundred infantry and eight pieces of artillery, together with some cavalry. To this force were added two battalions of chosen grenadiers."

Browne knew he could not engage in a fire fight with the much more numerous French infantry so he ordered his men to make a bayonet charge. "A tremendous roar of cannon and musketry was all at once opened. Ruffin's whole division pointing at us with muskets, and eight pieces of ordnance sending forth their grape, firing as one salvo," Blakeney wrote. "[After a second volley] the men were fast falling, and it required the utmost exertion to keep the survivors together, exposed as they were, to a murderous fire of round-shot, grape and musketry." Browne's men suffered more than 300 casualties before they were forced to scatter, but bought time for Graham to deploy his troops.

Seeing the Allied force on the verge of being overwhelmed, Graham turned his divisions to deal with threats to his flank and rear. Colonel Wheatley's brigade was sent to face Leval in the east and Brig.-Gen. William Thomas Dilkes was given orders to retake Barrosa hill.

Graham ordered his own two brigades to form as quickly as they could, knowing his exhausted men had "undergone a long and harassing night march and had been about twenty hours under arms with their packs on." Dilkes' brigade formed on the right, two battalions of Guards. They advanced in a jagged line, with two companies of Rifles under Lt.-Col. Amos Norcott guarding their open flanks. They came out of the pine wood in "little order indeed, but in a fierce mood," Dilkes wrote.

A wounded Blakeney watched their advance from above, writing that, "reckless of the murderous fire which swept their still unformed ranks, they bore steadily onward and having crossed a deep broad and rugged ravine, wherein many a gallant soldier fell to rise no more, they climbed the opposite bank." They met two Grenadier battalions, two battalions of the 24me Ligne, and the 96me Ligne charging down from the top of the

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ABOVE: In support of Brevet Lieutenant Colonel John Frederick Browne's Gibraltar battalion, who suffered more than 300 casualties in the first assault, Brig. Gen. William Thomas Dilkes' Brigade of Guards advances up Barossa hill to take on Gen. François Amable Ruffin's infantry and artillery. TOP: A soldier from the French 63rd Line Regiment takes a Spanish flag at the Battle of Barrosa near the Isla de Léon. Most of the Spanish troops in the battle were with Gen. Manuel de la Peña as he pushed against Gen. Eugène-Casimir Villatte's French troops as he tried to clear the way to Cádiz.

Map © 2025 Philip Schwartzberg, Meridian Mapping, Minneapolis, MN

Palace of Versailles

ABOVE: The Battle of Barrosa was part of an unsuccessful Anglo-Iberian maneuver to break the French siege of the Spanish port city of Cádiz during the Peninsular War. RIGHT: *Battle of Chiclana, 5 March 1811*, by Louis Francois Lejeune, depicts the allied forces of Britain, Spain and Portugal under the command of Gen. Thomas Graham engaged in fierce combat with French forces under Marshal Victor on Barrosa hill in an effort to break the French siege of the city of Cádiz, seen in the distance, during the Peninsular War.

hill. The British brigade numbered less than 1,400 men against more than 2,000 French, attacking in two columns.

The British Guards brigade, strung out in an uneven line, opposed the French battalion columns. As the French charged downhill with drums beating and bayonets fixed against the outnumbered British moving uphill, the outcome appeared obvious. The 1st Guards fired a volley, joined by fire from the Rifles and, incredibly, they stopped the French columns cold. Their fire mowed down the front ranks of both battalion columns of the 24me Ligne. The French survivors tried to return their fire, with no impact. The British 67th infantry battalion came up and added their fire to the conflict.

Victor, watching from the crest of the Barrosa hill, took personal command of his Grenadiers. He waved his white-plumed hat and ordered them to charge. They marched down the slope against the 67th Battalion and the 3rd Guards on the right of Dilkes' line. They continued downward, through the storm of musketry, until they came to within 10 yards of the British line. They should have continued their attack but stopped and began trading volleys. Both sides suffered overwhelming casualties at such close quarters.

Victor knew everything hinged on the result of this fight. "Conspicuous in the front, the marshal was recognized by both armies waving his plume in circling motion high above his head," Charles O'Neil wrote. "Again and again were they summoned to the attack, but the lines had hardly closed over their dying comrades, when another volley would again send confusion and death." Seeing the carnage, Graham moved to the front of his other battalions, 150 yards from the French and uttered just one command, "Charge!"

That command "shot from the centre of the British line to the extremities of its flanks, instantly followed by the well-known British cheer, sure precursor to the rush of British bayonets," O'Neil wrote. The Brit line pushed back the heavy French infantry even though they were greatly outnumbered. Victor brought the 2/9me Léger and the 1/96me Ligne battalions from his left wing to support his other battalions. The survivors of Browne's mixed battalion, now less than 300 men, regrouped and started to snipe at the French. "They darted from behind trees, briars, brakes, and out of hollows," Blakeney wrote.

Browne did little more than distract the French, but it gave time for the Guards to break Ruffin's line. "Ruffin's whole division . . . were instantly in whirling motion rolled down into the valley below," Blakeney wrote. "Their battle was won; and the gallant Graham triumphantly stood on the bristling crest of Barrosa's blood-drenched hill." The fight for the Barrosa hill may have ended, but the fight on its right slope had just begun.

In turning his division around in the pine wood, the formations of some of Graham's battalions had become muddled. The two rear companies of the 67th, part of Maj-Gen. William Wheatley's brigade, marched off with Dilkes. This squared things when Graham ordered two companies of the Coldstream Guards, part of Dilkes' brigade, to escort Major Alexander Duncan's guns to the support of Wheatley.

When one of Duncan's guns got entangled with a tree the drivers, having no time to disengage the gun, whipped the horses and tore the tree out by the roots. They arrived in time to help Wheatley against a French division trying to cut the British off from De la Peña. Graham sent Lt.-Col. Andrew Barnard's flank battalions ahead of Wheatley's Brigade to delay the French until the rest of Wheatley's men could clear the pine trees and deploy. Barnard's 95th Rifles, and the 20th Portuguese Caçadores, emerged from the wood in time to meet Leval's division, scarcely 400 yards away, beating the pas de charge.

"When we reached the plain, and perceived the enemy, never did a finer sight present itself," remembered one of the Riflemen. "The grenadiers had long waving red plumes in their caps, at least a foot in length; while the light infantry had feathers of the same length and make, but green with yellow tops. The whole of the French army had on their best or holiday suits of clothing, with their arms as bright as silver, and glancing in the sun as they moved in column, gave them really a noble and martial appearance."

Supported by Duncan's ten cannons, Wheatley faced 9,000 Frenchmen under Gen. Jean François Leval, who sent his four battalions against the British in two columns of two battalions each. The 1st and 2nd battalions of the 54me Ligne and the composite Grenadier battalion formed the right column. Two battalions of the 8me Ligne and a battalion of the 45me Ligne formed the left. They moved forward in a column of double companies, which meant a frontage of 70 men, 9 ranks deep. Leval, who did not know the Brits were in his front, had his artillery following the columns.

The British Riflemen and Portuguese Caçadores were still disordered as they came out of the pine wood, but they were ready for battle and opened fire on the French right column before it could deploy. Major Thomas Bunbury, in command of a company with the Portuguese, left his recollections: "The advance of the French was a most imposing spectacle, and there was a much more ostentatious display of plumes and

Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

martial music than we could have shown under similar circumstances." The Portuguese were slightly behind the Rifles, who were the first to open fire on the French. The Rifles' fire was deadly and "it served to arrest their march and caused them to open a desultory fire from their whole line in return. This had considerably deranged their hitherto parade-like formation," Bunbury observed.

Leval, who met Wheatley's flank battalions with astonishment, was shocked by the emergence of the rest of his brigade from the wood. Then Duncan brought his 10 guns up to the edge of the wood and wasted no time firing rounds of canister into the French ranks at only 250 yards. Panicking, the French 54me Ligne started to form square, wrongly thinking they were being attacked by cavalry. Realizing their mistake, they tried to form column again, but Barnard's flank battalions surged around them, firing into the 54me at close range.

Greatly outnumbering the British skirmish line, the 54me formed back into column and marched forward against Barnard. The front two ranks of the 8me Ligne fired in volleys, and they forced back Barnard's men, who were now taking heavy casualties. The 95th Rifles withdrew but Colonel Busche held his Caçadores to the job. Bunbury told him his men were blocking the fire of Wheatley's main line, but Busche told him to mind his own business, he would not retreat in the face of the enemy.

He rode in front of the line as musket balls shrieked around him, calling out to his men, "What beautiful music." Busche's attitude confused the French. "The French seemed suspicious of an ambuscade," Bunbury wrote, "halting, vacillating, and then marching again." Busche presented an easy target though, and a French ball mortally wounded him. The senior captain of the Portuguese ordered his men to retreat, saying, "Boys, I always told you that these mad Englishmen would get us into some such scrape as this. Let us be off: what are we doing here?"

The French were now too close for the caçadores to retreat safely. Bunbury tried to get the Portuguese captain to hold, "I begged they would stay, as, if they attempted to move while the enemy was so near, they would be shot down like mosquitoes," Bunbury remembered. But the captain and his men turned and ran, taking Bunbury's company with them. Bunbury tried to stop them, he grabbed one man, but a French volley struck that man down. The French "made dreadful havoc among them." They were forced to retreat but they held the French columns long enough for Wheatley to deploy his men beside

***General Graham defeating the French at the Battle of Barrosa March 5, 1811*, a line engraving by J. Edwards after W. Hal Brooke, published by Almanack Stationers in 1812. Along with Maj. Alexander Duncan's artillery, and the King's German Legion hussars, Graham drove off the French under Marshal Claude Victor, but was unable to break the siege of Cádiz.**

Duncan's guns. At such close quarters, Duncan's artillerymen lost heavily. "The action very quickly became general," reported Duncan, "and I believe a warmer one never took place."

Leval's four leading battalions, followed by two in reserve, still advanced in column. The French cannon unlimbered 1,300 yards from Duncan's guns and engaged them in an artillery duel. Duncan's two batteries of 10 guns soon silenced the 6 French guns. "Never was artillery better served," Graham wrote.

The French columns now met Wheatley's main line. In the British center, the 87th infantry, an Irish battalion led by Lt. Col. Hugh Gough, met the French 8me Ligne. Only the first two French ranks of the 8me could fire, 140 men out of an 800-strong battalion. They faced the 600 Irish of the 87th in line. Both battalions held their fire until they were within 50 yards, with an inevitable result. When they traded volleys, the 87th tore them apart.

This fight of line against column exemplified the regular infantry battle of the Peninsular War. Leval commanded 3,800 men to Wheatley's 2,400, but the British line overlapped both French flanks. The French battalions never deployed into line, "They never got into line, nor did they ever intend to do so," wrote William Surtees of the 95th Rifles, "but advanced as a solid body, firing from their front."

"In all my fighting," Surtees continued, "I never was in an action where the chances of death were so numerous as this." The 2/8me Ligne, positioned in the center of the French disposition, came up against the 87th Irish Regiment. Sergeant Peter Facey of the 87th could not help but admire the French infantry, "Justice I must allow them to be the finest regiment I ever beheld in the French service."

Browne's light infantry formed on Wheatley's flanks. The 87th closed to 60 yards, when Major Gough ordered them to fire a volley. The French "waited until we came within about 25 paces of them, before they [1/8me] broke, and as they were in column when they did, they could not get away," reported Gough. "It was therefore a scene of most dreadful carnage." The French were helpless against the fury of the Irishmen. Gough admitted he could not bring himself to kill the routed enemy soldiers, "I must own my weakness, as I was in front of the regiment I was in the very middle of them, and I could not cut down one." The Irish soldiers made up for Gough's reticence, fighting with fists when their weapons were broken.

Ensign Edward Keough of the 87th pointed to the Imperial Eagle of the 1/8me and called out to his sergeant, "Do you see that, Masterson?" Keough and Patrick Masterson rushed toward the French eagle, shouting *Faugh a Ballagh*, "clear the way." Some of the French soldiers, realizing they were about to lose their eagle, tried to escape with it. "They were pursued by our men," Wright Knox remembered. "They made some resistance and every man of them was cut off." Keough seized the eagle from the French standard-bearer, but was bayoneted and killed by the color guard. Sergeant Masterman ran his seven-foot-long pike through the standard-bearer's body and seized the eagle, the first taken in the Peninsula.

To the left of the 87th some of the Coldstream Guards, led on foot by Graham, started to fire at the French. Graham knocked some of their muskets up and yelled, "Cease fire and charge." The whole British line charged with "the most unearthly howl."

At this time, the French 45me battalion approached their right and Graham pointed them out, ordering Gough to break off his pursuit of the 8me and face the 45me. "With the greatest difficulty," Gough stated, "by almost cutting them down, I got the right wing collected, with which we charged the 45th." Fortunately, the French "broke and fled, for had they done their duty, fatigued as my men were, they must have cut us to pieces."

The 54me Ligne moved to the right, to outflank the British left and Colonel Belson led his British

Continued on page 98

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ABOVE: ***The Death of General Nathaniel Lyon, at the Battle of Wilson's Creek, near Springfield, Mo.,*** **from** ***Frank Leslie's Illustrated History of the Civil War,*** **1895. Lyon was shot and killed on August 10, 1861, leading 5,500 Union men against 23,000 Confederates at Wilson's Creek. As head of the Department of the West, Gen. John Frémont was criticized for his ambiguous orders and failure to send reinforcements. INSET: A portrait of General John C. Fremont taken by Mathew Brady Studios, ca. 1862.**

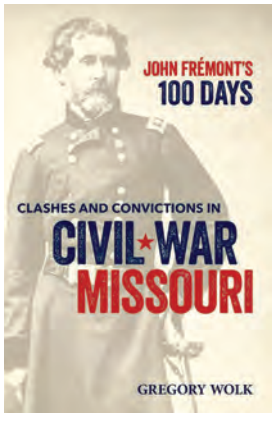
Though controversial as Commander of the Department of the West in 1861, Frémont gave Col. Ulysses Grant his first command.

By Kevin Seabrooke

President Abraham Lincoln appointed John C. Frémont as a major general on May 15, 1861, and gave him command of the U.S. Army's Department of the West, based in St. Louis, Missouri—a border state that officially remained part of the Union, but had strong pro-Confederate sentiments.

Though obviously political, Lincoln's choice did have some merit, though Wolk notes portentously that Frémont was being given "a rank and responsibility that few independent observers would have thought him fit to occupy."

Frémont, "Great Pathfinder," had become a nationally famous figure after embarked on a series of expeditions beginning in the early 1840s as a young officer in the U.S. Army's Corps of Topographical Engineers that mapped and documented the vast, largely unknown territories of the American West. These expeditions—often guided by legendary frontiersmen like Kit Carson—were crucial to the westward expansion of America. They surveyed and charted vital routes such as the Oregon Trail, documented the flora and fauna of the region, and explored geographical features like the Great Salt Lake and the Sierra Nevada.



Adding to his fame was the popularity of his reports, often co-authored by his wife, Jessie Benton Frémont, that often read more like tales of adventure and discovery at a time when the country was enthralled by the idea of Manifest Destiny.

As the Western Department was headquartered

in St. Louis, Missouri, Lincoln was also aware that Frémont's wife was the daughter of powerful Missouri Senator Thomas Hart Benton (in office from the state's founding in 1821 until 1851).

During the U.S.-Mexican War (1846-48) Frémont's fame and reputation grew even more after he led an expedition into California in which he eventually took command of the American settlers whose "Bear Flag Revolt" in Sonoma declared the short-lived California Republic. When war officially broke out between the U.S. and Mexico, Frémont's actions were seen as instrumental in securing California for the U.S.

After he was appointed the territory's military governor, Frémont got into a bitter conflict with General Stephen W. Kearny over who held ultimate authority and found himself court-martialed for insubordination. His military career was saved by a public outcry and presidential pardon, but he resigned his commission.

Somehow the affair only added to his reputation as maverick willing to stand up to authority and following the discovery of gold on his Mariposa estate that made him a millionaire, he became one of the new state's first two senators in 1850.

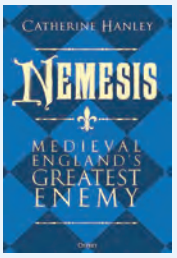
By the mid-1850s, Frémont's national popularity, combined with his anti-slavery views, made him a natural choice for the emerging Republican Party in the North. He was their first presidential candidate in 1856, with a slogan of "Free Soil, Free Men, Frémont," presenting himself as a man of the West, with no ties to the "slave power" of the South. Appointing him to a significant military command at the outset of the Civil War was likely a way to garner support for the Union cause among various factions within the party and the public.

In ***John Frémont's 100 Days: Clashes and Convictions in Civil War Missouri*** (Gregory Wolk, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, IL, 208 pp., 25 halftones, 11 line drawings, 3 maps, Sept. 29, 2025 $22 SC), Wolk notes that one positive thing that Frémont did during his 100 days in Missouri was to put Colonel Ulysses Grant in command of the District of Cairo (southern Illinois and southeastern Missouri). However, as Wolk points out, "Within the next 48 hours, however, Frémont would make a decision that was probably his worst."

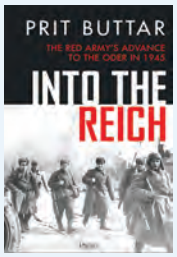
Frémont penned and released a proclamation on August 30 that, in addition to declaring martial law in much of Missouri, "ignited a firestorm," in Wolk's words, with the inclusion of the phrase, "and their Slaves, if any they have, are hereby declared Free men." It would lead to a public clash with Lincoln and political factions in Washington and Missouri and seal Frémont's fate, just a month after taking command.

Wolk's meticulously researched narrative is a fascinating read, filled with the tortuous machinations of politics, personalities, and the military in a maelstrom of moral conflict and the fortunes of war.

SHORT BURSTS

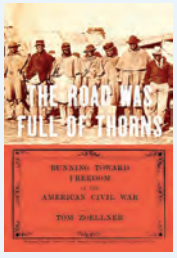


Nemesis: Medieval England's Greatest Enemy (Catherine Hanley, Osprey/Bloomsbury Publishing, New York, NY., 304pp., b/w illustrations, maps, tables, family trees, Sept. 9, $35 HC) Over 40 years France's King Philip II played a part in the downfall of four Plantagenet kings: Henry II, Richard the Lionheart, John and Henry III.

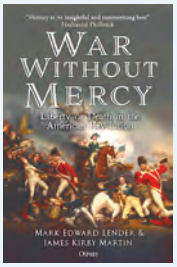


Into the Reich: The Red Army's advance to the Oder in 1945 (Prit Buttar, Osprey/Bloomsbury Publishing, New York, NY, 448pp., 8 pp. b/w illustrations, maps, Sept. 9, $35 HC) A fascinating account of Stalin's power play during the dying days of the Third Reich by a former British Army doctor and Eastern Front expert.

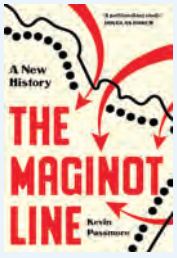
The Blood in Winter: England on the Brink of Civil War, 1642 (Jonathan Healey, Penguin Random House (Knopf), New York, NY, 432 pp., Sept. 16, $32 HC) Chronicles the events that led to England's great political awakening in the face of King Charles I trying to retake absolute power.



The Road Was Full of Thorns: Running Toward Freedom in the American Civil War (Tom Zoellner, The New Press, New York, NY, 320pp., Sept. 30, $34.99 HC) A National Book Critics Circle Award winner, Zoellner details how the confiscation of three enslaved men as contraband led to the Emancipation Proclamation.



War Without Mercy: Liberty or Death in the American Revolution (Mark Edward Lender and James Kirby Martin, Osprey/Bloomsbury Publishing, New York, NY, 288 pp., 8 pp. color illustrations, Oct. 7, $32 HC) Explores the idea that American fear of "political, cultural and even physical extinction" led to the violence of the Revolution.

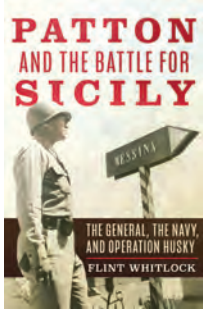


The Maginot Line: A New History (Kevin Passmore, Yale University Press, New Haven, CT, 512pp., 22 b/w illustrations, 19 maps, Oct. 14, $40 HC) A fresh look at the 1930s French engineering marvel, so formidable and innovative for its time, yet France fell to Germany within six weeks.

The Wounded Generation: Coming Home After World War II (David Nasaw, Penguin Press, New York, NY, 496 pp., Oct. 14, $35 HC) Using memoirs, oral histories, and government documents, Nasaw details the experience of World War II vets suffering from social isolation, nightmares, and rages decades before PTSD was understood.

Bring Me the Head of Joaquin Murrieta: The Bandit Chief Who Terrorized California and Launched the Legend of Zorro (John Boessenecker, Hanover Square Press (HarperCollins), New York, NY, 512 pp., Oct. 21, $32 HC) Violent bandit or folk hero? The truth about the California Goldrush figure obscured by legend. ■

Patton and the Battle for Sicily: The General, The Navy, and Operation Husky (Flint Whitlock, Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, MD, 320 pp., 5 Maps, 12 b/w photos, Nov. 18, 2025 $29.95 HC)



Launched on the night of July 9-10, 1943, the amphibious assault of Operation Husky was the largest the world had ever seen—more than 3,200 vessels and half a million Allied soldiers, sailors, and airmen attacked the island of Sicily, Adolf Hitler's

"Fortress Europe."

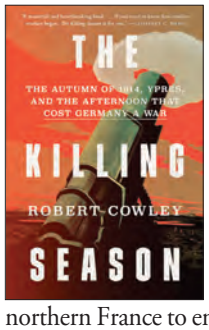
The Allied victory in North Africa had both strategic and psychological results, offering a significant boost in morale for the Allies, but British and American leaders had different ideas on how best to proceed. Though Husky was ultimately successful—Sicily was the first piece of Axis homeland to fall to the Allies—that schism between the Allies would lead to conflict and disorder throughout the 38-day operation.

In the middle of it all was George S. Patton, America's larger-than-life general and one of the most gritty, aggressive, and controversial commanders of World War II. Patton possessed an almost pathological need to best his rival, Eighth Army commander Gen. Bernard Montgomery, by beating him to the key port of Messina and proving that American GIs were just as good as, if not better, than the Brits.

In addition to chronicling the events of one of the most critical campaigns of World War II, author Flint Whitlock makes use of Patton's letters and diaries to reveal his unvarnished opinions of all those around him. In addition to his primal dislike for Montgomery, Patton held low opinions of most of the Allied command, including Eisenhower, Marshall, Clark, Bradley, Alexander.

Though Operation Husky has been criticized as "wasteful," Whitlock argues that the invasion began the ultimate take-down of Benito Mussolini's fascist regime and drained Axis resources from the Russian front, which benefitted Joseph Stalin. The land-sea logistics learned in Italy would also pay huge dividends on France's Normandy coast in June 1944.

The Killing Season: The Autumn of 1914, Ypres, and the Afternoon That Cost Germany a War (Robert Cowley, Penguin Random House, New York, NY, 752 pp., photos, maps, index Sept. 2, 2025 $40 HC)

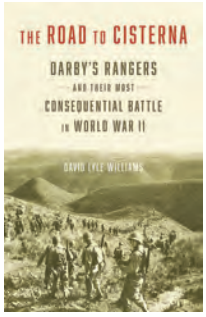


In August 1914, Germany implemented its Schlieffen Plan with 1.7 million soldiers sweeping through Belgium and northern France to envelop and crush the French and British armies. Overwhelmed at Mons, Belgium, the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) and the French Fifth Army began a 180-mile strategic withdrawal. Crossing the Marne River southeast of Paris, the Allies dug trenches and were finally able to stop the German juggernaut at the First Battle of the Marne (September 5-12), a conflict Cowley himself once called "the most important military event of the last century."

An authority on the Great War, Cowley's new book takes readers on a novelistic chronicle focused on the legendary "Race to the Sea"—a series of unsuccessful flanking maneuvers by both sides that ended at the coast of Belgium around October 19. The proliferation of the iconic trenches put an end to the fighting on open ground—the Killing Season—of the war's beginning.

Cowley argues that it was Germany's loss at the First Battle of Ypres (October 19-November 22), with the Channel ports of Dunkirk, Calais and Boulogne at stake, that foretold their ultimate defeat.

The Road to Cisterna: Darby's Rangers and Their Most Consequential Battle in World War II (David Lyle Williams, LSU Press, Baton Rouge, LA, 401 pp., 22 illustrations, 12 maps, Sept. 26, 2025, $44.95 HC)

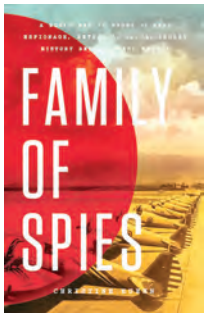


Operation Shingle, better known as the Battle of Anzio (January 22-May 25, 1944), was aimed at bypassing the German's daunting Gustav Line in an effort to capture Rome. The amphibious forces Under Major General John P. Lucas the amphibious landing some 30 miles south of Rome was unopposed. A cautious Lucas chose to consolidate the beachhead instead of advancing. It was a costly decision, for by the time an attack was launched on January 29, the 69,000 Allies were facing 71,500 German troops.

Three Ranger battalions, some 767 men, were tasked with a night infiltration of Cisterna to secure the Conca-Cisterna Road for an attack of German supply lines the following morning. Unknown to Allied command, Cisterna was being used as a Wehrmacht staging area for relief divisions. Darby's Rangers were ambushed, with 311 killed and 450 captured, and the units were disbanded.

A former U.S. Army officer, Williams spent more than 20 years collecting the combat experiences of 160 Rangers, compiling a comprehensive history of the unit. This book allows 46 of those who fought at Cisterna to tell their story in their own words.

Family of Spies: A World War II Story of Nazi Espionage, Betrayal, and the Secret History Behind Pearl Harbor (Christine Kuehn, Celadon Books, New York, NY, 272 pp., Nov. 25, 2025 $29.99 HC)



A letter from a screen-

BATTLEFIELD 6 PUTS IT ALL ON THE LINE IN A BID TO KNOCK CALL OF DUTY OFF THE TOP SPOT

By Joseph Luster

BATTLEFIELD 6

Genre: Shooter • **Platform:** PS5, Xbox Series, PC • **Publisher:** EA
Available: October 10, 2025

EA and the team at developer Battlefield Studios (Dice) are betting big on *Battlefield 6*, which aims to take the series back to its roots while offering the most expansive multiplayer options to date and the return of the single-player campaign for which many have been clamoring. Whatever you missed most during 2021's sortie, the multiplayer-only *Battlefield 2042*, you'll likely find it here in some form. Can it take down *Call of Duty* in 2025 and beyond, though? We'll find out this October!

Some folks have already found out, or at least have started forming opinions on the new entry, thanks to the series' biggest-ever open beta. Players

were able to dive into the multiplayer and give it a test spin from August 9-10 and 14-17—Early Access players got it a couple days earlier than that, too—and there are a bunch of things to take away and consider as we build up to the full game's launch on October 10.

As far as setups are concerned, *Battlefield 6* plops us smack dab in the not-so-distant future of 2027. A "high-profile assassination" has provided a major shake-up around the globe, with various European countries leaving NATO in its wake as the U.S. and its allies struggle to pick up the pieces. With a power vacuum established, the huge private military corporation known as PAX ARMATA aims to fill in the gap by any means necessary.

One of the key updates in *Battlefield 6* is mobility. The heart of movement and gunplay this time around is the Kinesthetic Combat System, which also offers up new tactical options that make it easier to assist your teammates. Drag and Revive can help pull them away from imminent danger, and weapons can be mounted on walls to cut down on recoil concerns. Supporting all this is the return of an improved class system, opening up avenues for experimentation with classes like Assault, Engineer, Recon and Support, each with certain tools that are unique to their class.

Destruction is also back in the mix, adding in a dash of enhanced freedom as you bust up the combat arena to open up new strategic possibilities. Anyone who digs experimentation in their online shooters will likely appreciate the opportunity to break the landscape apart to form new paths and get the drop on their enemies in unexpected ways.

Speaking of experimentation, a deluge of players got time in during the first weekend of the beta back in August. During its peak, more than half a million concurrent Steam players were logged, so naturally there was plenty of feedback to soak in after the dust had settled. One of the quibbles during week one had to do with TTD (Time to Death), which many players experienced as seemingly instantaneous at times. There's certainly skill involved when playing online, but even the devs at Dice themselves were attempting to gather video examples of the "suspected super bullet" phenomenon that had players losing rounds in a flash.

While multiplayer remains the bread and butter of the *Battlefield* series—something that doesn't seem to be changing any time soon—the return of the campaign is a big deal for a lot of people (myself included!). At the time of this writing it's unclear exactly how long it can be expected to last, but if *Battlefield* wants to continue to compete with the *Call of Duty* series it's going to have to cater to both single and multiplayer audiences. Let us have a few hours of big-budget bombast before throwing us into the online fray for the foreseeable future.

YIELD! FALL OF ROME

Genre: Strategy • **Platform:** PC • **Publisher:** Daedalic Entertainment
Available: Now

Turn-based 4X strategy game *Yield! Fall of Rome* has enjoyed a successful Early Access campaign, but as of August it's officially in 1.0. For the uninitiated, the term "4X strategy" refers to the concepts of Explore, Expand, Exploit and Exterminate, and includes both real-time and turn-based entries in the sub-genre. That mix of empire development and strategies both within and outside of the military realm is alive and well in *Yield!*, which has a lot to offer for fans of more complex tactical management sims.

While *Yield!* certainly falls into the category of 4X games that demand a lot of forward thinking, it also aims for a fast-paced experience that suits folks who don't have a ton of time to invest in intense strategy games. The core game has you choosing from eight playable factions, each of which boasts its own individual campaign. From there you'll need to expand and conquer, outwitting opponents and discovering new ways to dominate provinces and choose whether to maintain tradition or advance Roman culture in the process.

Those who jumped into the full release were met with a number of updates, including unique skills and traits for faction leaders, new modes, full story arcs for all factions, improved multiplayer support and more. There's a ton to explore now that *Yield! Fall of Rome* is officially in 1.0, and so far this strategy outing has been well worth our time. ■

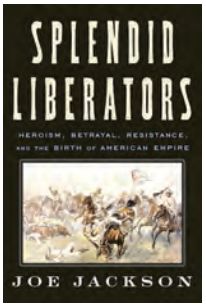
writer researching WWII in 1994 turned journalist Christine Kuehn's world upside down. The writer wanted to know what her father, 70-year-old Eberhard Kuehn, remembered about his own father's life as a spy.

Though he wept, her father wasn't very forthcoming, leading her to research the incredible story herself.

Berliners Otto and Friedel, along with their three children Ruth, Eberhard and Hans, had arrived in Hawaii aboard the Tatsuta Maru in the spring of 1935 on their way to Japan. According to a release by the publisher, Otto's daughter Ruth met Ruth, met Nazi leader Joseph Goebbels at a party, and had an affair. When Goebbels found out she was half Jewish, he sent the family to Hawaii to spy instead of having Ruth killed.

The Kuehns were arrested the day after Pearl Harbor. Otto was sentenced to death, then sent to Leavenworth, before he was released and returned to Germany. Friedel and the children spent time at Hawaii's internment camp at Sand Island. When the rest of the family went back to Germany, Eberhard remained in the U.S. in foster care—keeping his shocking secret for decades.

Splendid Liberators: Heroism, Betrayal, Resistance, and the Birth of American Empire (Joe Jackson, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York, NY, 816 pp. Oct. 14, 2025 $35 HC)

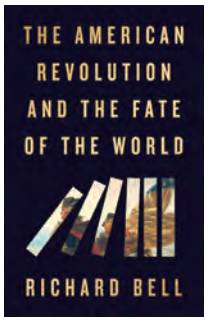


The explosion of the USS *Maine* on February 15, 1898, Cuba's Havana harbor, did not directly result in war with Spain—but with the help of the "yellow press" and public opinion it did escalate tensions between the two countries. "Remember the Maine, to Hell with Spain!" became a popular rallying cry, especially for those who saw an opportunity for America's global Manifest Destiny and its arrival as a major player in world affairs. The U.S. gained control of Cuba, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines, while solidifying its presence in the Caribbean and the Pacific.

At 816 pages, this epic work of narrative nonfiction removes the filter of American popular history—the *Maine*, Teddy Roosevelt and the Rough Riders, the birth of the modern Marine Corps—to also include the view through Cuban and Filipino eyes, and "to gauge the consequences and costs of America's first major imperial adventure."

Jackson, a former investigative reporter for the Norfolk *Virginian-Pilot*, has written eight nonfiction books, including *Black Elk: The Life of an American Visionary*, winner of the PEN/Jacqueline Bograd Weld Award and the Society of American Historians' Francis Parkman Prize.

The American Revolution and the Fate of the World (Richard Bell, Riverhead Books, New York, NY, 416 pp., Nov. 4, 2025 $35 HC)



Growing up in Britain, naturalized American citizen and University of Maryland history professor Richard Bell learned almost nothing in school about the American Revolution. In America, Bell notes that the mythification of "the plucky homegrown heroes faced down all the king's horses and all the king's men, all on their own" began immediately after the war.

The mythology surrounding America's battle for independence has only reinforced the belief that it was "an event somehow separate from world history." making it difficult for those raised on Longfellow's poem, "Paul Revere's Ride, to see it as the international transformation it was.

But Bell places the struggle of those 13 colonies at the center of a network that spanned the globe and was the origin of what would become our modern world. His comprehensive narrative puts "the Sons of Liberty, the minutemen, and the members of the Continental Congress on the same stage as Black American freedom seekers, German relief troops, Irish privateers, Chinese tea-pickers, Mohawk warriors, Sierra Leonean separatists, French sailors, Spanish blanket weavers, patriot POWs, Jamaican washerwomen, Indian rulers, loyalist war widows, and British peace activists."

The Atlanta Campaign: Volume 2: From the Etowah River to Kennesaw Mountain, May 21 to June 27, 1864 (David A. Powell, Savas Beatie, El Dorado Hill, CA, 608 pp., photos and maps, Oct. 2, 2025 $39.95 HC)

Recognizing that the Confederacy could not win a war of attrition, Gen. Ulysses S. Grant ordered five simultaneous offensives in the spring of 1864 in a strategy to exhaust Southern resources and manpower.

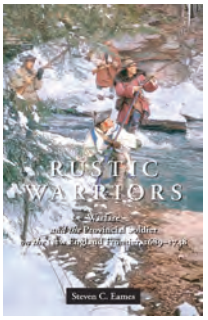
Featuring several major battles and significant casualties, the Overland Campaign of Virginia pitting Grant against Robert E. Lee has historically overshadowed the Battle of Atlanta. Somewhat understandable given the leaders involved and the fact that it marked the first time that the Army of the Potomac pursued Lee after an initial engagement, forcing him to remain on the defensive, unable to reinforce any other campaigns.

Award-winning author David A. Powell, who had access to hundreds of primary accounts, many previously unused and 21 original maps, aims to shine the light on a campaign he sees as equal in importance to the Overland.

As a rail hub and industrial center, the city of Atlanta was vital to Confederate supply lines and its loss would cripple the South's ability to sustain its war effort. In addition to boosting Union morale, Sherman's capture of Atlanta secured President Lincoln's reelection.

This is the first of five comprehensive installments on the Atlanta Campaign of 1864. The second volume will be From the Etowah River to Kennesaw Mountain, May 20–June 27, 1864.

Rustic Warriors: Warfare and the Provincial Soldier on the New England Frontier, 1689-1748 (Steven C. Eames, NYU Press, New York, NY, 320pp., maps, notes, index, Sept. 9, 2025, $35 SC)



In the pre-Revolutionary War era of the New England colonies, provincial soldiers fought a series of wars against New France and its Native American allies, with mixed results. Provincial troops often lacked supplies, arms and ammunition as well as traditional military training and discipline.

Though they were British subjects, England had little involvement in defense of the colonies, at first. To Britain, the colonial soldier was "ill-disciplined, unprofessional, and incompetent." General John Forbes, who led the 1758 Forbes Expedition which occupied the French outpost of Fort Duquesne and renamed it "Pittsburgh," referred to them as "a gathering from the scum of the worst people ... an extream bad collection of broken Innkeepers, Horse Jockeys, and Indian Traders."

Eames argues that settlers in early New England had, in fact, developed "a unique way of war that selectively blended elements of European military strategy, frontier fighting, and native American warfare."

In the first part of the book, Eames offers an operational study of offensive and defensive strategies undertaken by the colonies of Massachusetts and New Hampshire. Part II focuses on an extensive analysis of the actual experience of the provincial soldier in great detail in order to present a more balanced view of their place in history. ■

LAKE ERIE

Continued from page 57

suffered heavy battle casualties and were badly undermanned. In the confusion the *Queen Charlotte* rammed into the *Detroit*'s mizzen rigging and both ships became hopelessly entangled. British sailors frantically tried to cut the ships free.

The *Niagara*, however, was bearing down as Perry cut through the British line. To his larboard, the sterns of *Lady Prevost* and *Little Belt* offered inviting targets. To his starboard, the *Detroit* and *Queen Charlotte* were helplessly locked together.

Perry made the most of it, double-shotting his guns and having them coolly fired off one by one from point-blank range. The deadly storm of iron careening through the decks of the exposed British ships, tore apart masts, rigging, and men.

As the British ships were pounded to splinters, a new threat emerged in the form of the American gunboats, finally hurried into action by Elliott. The four ships—*Trippe*, *Somers*, *Porcupine*, and *Tigress*—were in a unique position to fire into the sterns of the *Detroit* and *Queen Charlotte*. Under normal circumstances no match for the big British ships, the little gunboats added a crushing preponderance of iron as solid shot from their 32 pounders wrecked the rear of the trapped British vessels.

British sailors finally succeeded in cutting the *Detroit* and *Queen Charlotte* free, but it was far too late. Amid choking clouds of smoke, the two ships drifted apart, hulls shattered by American fire and decks littered with bodies. Only one option remained as the *Detroit*, *Queen Charlotte*, *General Hunter*, and *Lady Prevost* struck their colors in turn. The HMS *Chippewa* and *Little Belt* made a brief run for Detroit, but were pursued and forced to surrender by the *Trippe* and *Scorpion*.

Using the back of an envelope, an ecstatic Perry scrawled a brief message to William Henry Harrison, informing the army commander of the momentous victory. "We have met the enemy, and they are ours," Perry famously wrote, "two Ships, two Brigs, one Schooner, and one Sloop."

In one of the most dramatic naval engagements in U.S. history, the fortunes of war had turned defeat to victory in a matter of minutes. Boarding the *Detroit*, a shocked Elliott lost his footing on the gore-slicked deck, covering his uniform in blood. The ship was a shambles, with bodies of the dead and wounded scattered across its decks.

Barclay offered his sword in surrender, but Elliott refused, reserving the honor for Perry. But when the British officers offered their swords to Perry, he also refused to accept them. They had fought with bravery and determination, he observed, they could keep their swords in honor.

The young squadron commander had indeed won a remarkable victory. In a harrowing four hours, Perry had borne the brunt of the fighting in his own flagship, without appreciable assistance from his second-in-command. Rather than panic in a moment of seeming defeat, he had taken over direct command of the *Niagara*, and snatched victory from the jaws of defeat.

For both sides, the human cost of the battle had been shockingly high. The Americans suffered 27 dead and 96 wounded. On the *Lawrence* alone, the casualty rate had exceeded 70 percent of the effectives engaged. The British had endured even worse with 41 men killed, 93 wounded.

Perry's victory altered the course of the war in the Northwest. With the Americans now the undisputed masters of Lake Erie, the British supply lines to Fort Malden and the Detroit region were dangerously exposed. Immediately recognizing that the British hold on western Ontario had been rendered untenable, General Proctor made the decision to abandon the region and retreat eastward up the Thames River.

Perry, meanwhile, ferried the bulk of Harrison's army across Lake Erie, making an amphibious landing south of Fort Malden on September 27. Making a pursuit up the Thames River, Harrison, with Perry serving as a volunteer aide, caught up with the British and their Indian allies on October 5. In a brief but sharp engagement, Proctor's forces were soundly defeated.

With Lake Erie dominated by American vessels, the upper Great Lakes were placed firmly in the American orbit. Perhaps most importantly, the Northwestern Indian tribes, who had resisted American expansion since the close of the Revolutionary War, were finally, and irrevocably, pacified. The expanse of the American midwest was. now open to a young republic hungry for growth.

Remembered as one of the most heroic naval figures in American history, Perry was promoted to captain and admired in the highest circles in his own day. Secretary of the Navy William Jones offered one of the best assessments of Perry's legacy—"brilliant, decisive, and important in its consequences."

The entire victory, however, had been equally due to the dedication and suffering of the common sailors who served in the Lake Erie squadron. Perry was an inspiring officer who was sincerely concerned for the honor of his country and the welfare of his men. They rewarded him with the fame of a legendary victory.

One of those men was an unfortunate sailor who had been taken below decks on the *Lawrence*. He had lost both of his legs from enemy fire and the ship's medical staff could do nothing for him. He lingered in agony, surviving just long enough for his comrades to inform him that the Americans had won the day. Before slipping off, he muttered, "I die in peace." ■

BATTLE OF BARROSA

Continued from page 91

28th Regiment to meet them. "We had formed under cover of the 95th [Rifles], and then advanced to meet their right wing, which was coming down in close column—a great advantage," said Charles Cadell, a 28th officer. "Fire at their legs and spoil their dancing," Belson shouted. The 28th fired several volleys at them as they tried to change into a line formation. The 54me did not stand a chance as the volleys had a "dreadful" effect. The 28th charged but, initially, were unable to break the superior numbers of the 54me. It took a third try, and they finally succeeded as "the enemy gave way and fled in every direction," Cadell wrote.

Wheatley's brigade, supported by Duncan's artillery, finally drove all the French before them. Leval had only one fresh reserve, his composite Grenadier battalion, and he ordered them to cover the retreat of his broken division. As some of Victor's dragoons came to aid the rearguard, they were assaulted by the KGL Hussars, who seemed to be ever present at the right time. They "immediately moved towards the enemy, at a short gallop," Dilkes reported. "They mixed, dispersed, and reformed, the enemy retiring and our hussars pursuing the stragglers." After dispersing the cavalry, they rode on into the French infantry and artillery, capturing two cannons. The French were routed, fleeing in a "disordered mass."

If the Spanish cavalry had come into action, the French defeat would have been a disaster. De la Peña, although being urged by his division commanders to go to Graham's aid, refused and sat timidly aside. He would be court-martialed for his inaction during the battle—refusing to aid his British Allies or pursue retreating French troops. He was acquitted, but relieved of command.

The Battle of Barrosa secured the Allied retreat over the Sancti Petri, but it could have accomplished a lot more, possibly raising the siege of Cádiz. The Allied retreat, after hours of vicious struggle, put them back where they had started.

Severely angered over the Spanish lack of support, Graham reported it to Wellington, who replied that "the conduct of the Spanish throughout this expedition is precisely as I have ever observed it to be. When the moment of action arrives, they are totally incapable of movement and they stand by to see their allies destroyed."

After his defeat, Victor almost abandoned the siege, but it continued. After Wellington's victory at Salamanca, July 22, 1812, it became necessary to free the troops in Andalusia to reinforce the French facing Wellington. King Joseph sent an order to Soult, to "evacuate Andalusia and march with your whole army to Toledo." The French finally lifted the siege of Cádiz on August 25, 1812. ■

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