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On the smoky slopes of Bunker Hill, a young Black soldier from Framingham steadied his musket and aimed true. Peter Salem, born enslaved in 1750 and emanicipated in order to join the fight for independence as a Mintueman, fired the shot that brought down British Major John Pitcairn—a moment that lifted Patriot morale and became a lasting symbol of resistance. He went on to serve in battles from Lexington and Concord to Saratoga. His defining act is immortalized in John Trumbull's painting of Bunker Hill at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and his name endures alongside other Black patriots like Salem Poor, Seymour Burr, Titus Coburn, and Crispus Attucks.

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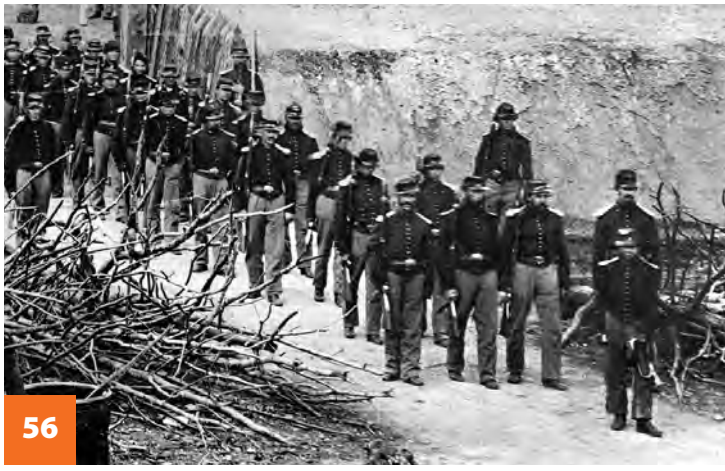
FEATURES

Cover: Marine Privates Harold R. Bates and Richard N. Martin rest atop a hill overlooking the Naktong River, South Korea. in August 1950. See story page 28. Photo: Naval History and Heritage Command


66


56

COLUMNS

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EDITORIAL

The state of Chinese armies in the 19th century.

The Chinese Army of the mid-19th century was in serious decline, its decay a reflection of the Qing Dynasty that produced it. The Qing originally sprang from the Juchen peoples, hard-riding tribesmen who occupied the territory north of Korea. In the 17th century Nurhachi of the Ansin Gioro clan united the Juchen tribes under his leadership. He created military units called "Banners," each distinguished by a colored flag.

Eventually there were eight banners; the list included bordered yellow, plain yellow, plain white, bordered white, plain red, bordered red, bordered blue, and plain blue. Eventually the Jurchen tribes became known as the "Manchu," and their territory "Manchuria." Nurhachi laid the foundation of Manchu greatness, but it was his sons Abahai and Dorzon who really created the Qing dynasty. The Manchu army became multiethnic, welcoming Mongols and Chinese into its ranks. In time, eight banners of Chinese and eight banners of Mongols were formed, joining the original Manchu formations for a total of 24 banners.

Eventually, these bannermen had both military and civic functions. Although there were 24 banner units, in fact, officially they were always just the "Eight Banners." After the Manchus took over China in 1644 and placed their Qing dynasty on the Dragon Throne, the pre-existing Chinese Army was reorganized with the title "the Green Banner." The green banner became a kind of national police force.

One estimate places the 19th-century strength of the bannermen at 200,000, the green banner at 500,000. These figures are inflated, because corrupt officials created fictional troops to pocket army funds. China had once led the world in military technology, inventing gunpowder and the crossbow in the Middle Ages. But although the Chinese Army may have had 800,000 men, sheer numbers alone could not disguise the internal rot, a deep malaise caused by the chronic failure to modernize.

The Qing emperors, like Chinese society at large, had become intensely sinocentric, so focused on the greatness of China they failed to recognize the technological developments in Europe and America. By 1860 the army was hopelessly out of date, its men armed with 17th-century or even medieval weapons. Some Chinese soldiers carried matchlocks or jingals, the latter a curious weapon that seemed half musket, half hand-held artillery.

The jingal had a 1.5-inch caliber and fired balls from four ounces to a pound. They were so cumbersome that to be fired they had to be propped on a wall, or even another man's shoulder. Other Chinese troops were equipped with swords, crossbows, bows and arrows, spears, and a curious kind of polearm that looked like a trident. By contrast, the red-coated British infantryman had as his standard weapon the 1853 percussion Enfield Rifled Musket, sighted to 1,200 yards.

Beginning in 1839, the Chinese fought the Europeans in the First China War, also called the "Opium War," and the Second China War. By 1860 the Qing had 20 years to see the handwriting on the wall, yet failed to moderize its military.

In 1860 bannermen were a magnificent anachronism, their dress and weaponry scarcely changed for over two hundred years. A British eyewitness recalled, "The Tartars [probably bannermen] were dressed in the ordinary Chinese black hat of silk … and had two squirrels' tails projecting from the hat behind. They had on light colored jackets over a long under-garment of darker material, and blue trousers tucked into long tartar boots. They rode in short stirrups, and were mounted on stout hardy working ponies."

The bannermen were superb horsemen, performing dazzling feats of equestrianship with grace and ease. Matchlock-wielding horsemen could fire and reload their pieces, and bowmen discharge a hail of arrows, all while riding at full gallop.

The typical Chinese foot soldier wore a sleeveless surcoat over a loose smock. The surcoat had a circle on the front and back that gave his unit and a character that meant "courage" or "bravery." In this period Chinese men adopted the Manchu custom of shaving the forehead but having a long braided queue or pigtail behind. Chinese or Manchu officers were distinguished by bamboo hats topped by a decorative fringe of red hair on top.

—Eric Niderost

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CARL A. GNAM, JR.
Editorial Director, Founder

KEVIN SEABROOKE
Managing Editor

SAMANTHA DETULLEO
Art Director

CONTRIBUTORS:
Kelly Bell, Mark Carlson, Michael D. Greaney, Joseph Luster, Edward F. Murphy, Eric Niderost, Kevin Seabrooke, Joshua Shepherd, John E. Spindler, Flint Whitlock

ADVERTISING OFFICE:
MARK HINTZ
Publisher
mhintz@sovmedia.com
(703) 507-4976

LINDA GALLIHER
Ad Coordinator
lgalliher@sovmedia.com
570-322-7848, ext. 160

MARK HINTZ
Chief Executive Officer

KATHRYN KAISER
Subscription Customer Services
kathryn.kaiser@darwin.cx

ROBIN LEE
Accountant

COMAG MARKETING GROUP
Worldwide Distribution

SOVEREIGN MEDIA COMPANY, INC.
Post Office Box 10003
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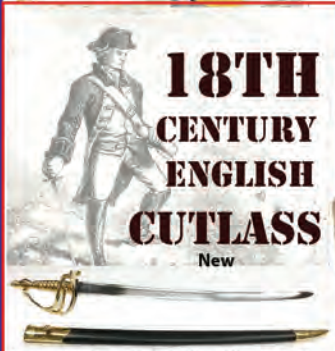

From the French & Indian War thru the American Revolutionary War, this sword served with British and Americans and is sometimes called the 'Bunker Hill' sword due to its use at that iconic battle. Comes with leather & brass bound scabbard, and the running Fox emblem of the original maker, Samuel Harvey. Has a 23.5" blade. $69.95 #SWRD41

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Frederick Townsend Ward trained the 'Ever Victorious Army' to fight rebel factions in 19th century China.

By Kelly Bell

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ABOVE: A portrait of General Frederick Townsend Ward, published in the January 20, 1866, issue of *Harper's Weekly, A Journal of Civilization*. TOP: Detail of a painted scroll depicting the Battle of Tongcheng during the Taiping Rebellion (1850-1864), a civil war in China against the ruling Manchu-led Qing Dynasty, led by Hong Xiuquan—who believed he was the brother of Jesus Christ. An estimated 20 million died during the conflict.

After more than 10 years of the costliest civil war in history, China was writhing in the spring of 1860, the sprawling nation gutted by the fratricidal holocaust history would call the Taiping Rebellion. The 200-year-old Manchu Dynasty was struggling to hold itself together in the face of a vast host of rebels calling themselves the Taipings. The insurrectionists worshipped a deity they called Shang-Ti (Supreme Lord) and his eldest son Jesus. Their leader assumed the title T'ien Wang (Divine King) and based his authority on revelations he received from ethereal beings who appeared to him during his frequent epileptic seizures. He believed himself the second begotten son of Shang-Ti, and convinced his followers that he was indeed the younger brother of Jesus Christ.

T'ien Wang's best military commander was a 37-year-old general known as Chung Wang (Faithful King.) He was entrusted with a crucial spring offensive to conquer the wealthy province of Kiangsu and its coveted port of Shanghai. His force of 105,000 fanatical men and women marched unopposed into the provincial capital of Soochow on June 2. If Shanghai fell the Peking government, already near-bankrupt from the war, would likely collapse. Desperately needing a hero, The emperor, in desperate need of a hero, would turn to a supremely unlikely candidate.

His name was Frederick Townsend Ward, a 28-year-old adventurer from Salem, Massachusetts, who had recently arrived in Shanghai's American enclave. He was just 5'7", but strong as a plow mule, and with a dusky mane that fell to his muscular shoulders. He had already served alongside federal forces in

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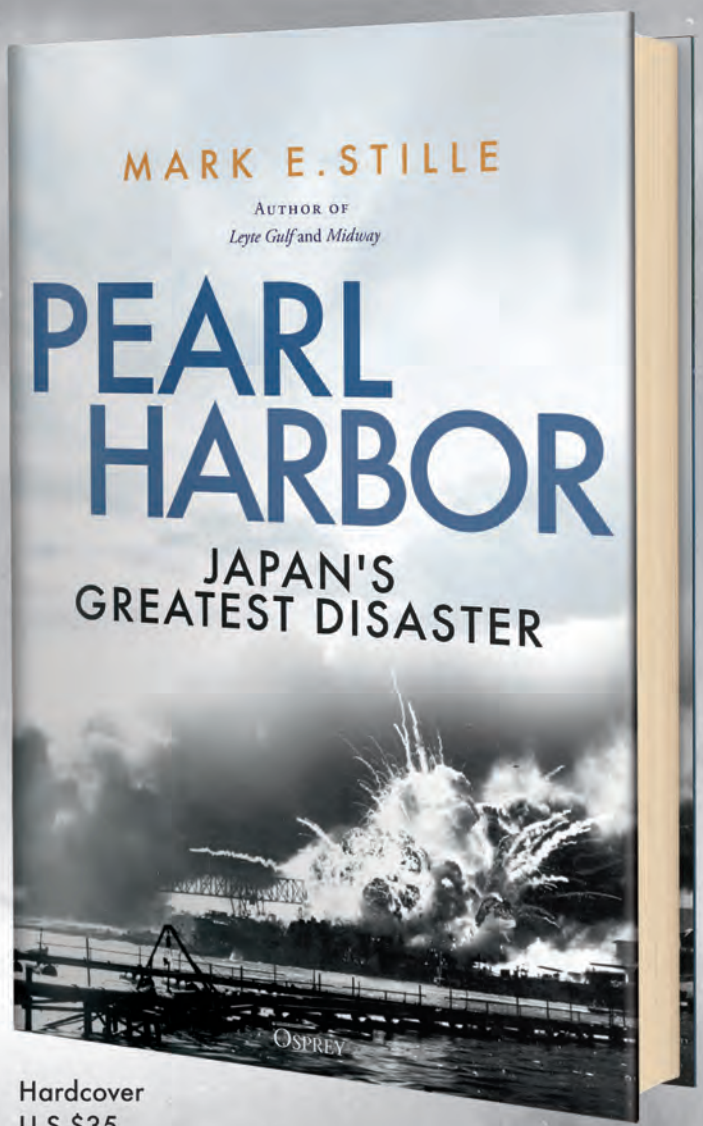
A detailed re-examination of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the Day of Infamy that saw the USA enter World War II.



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In this scroll painting, imperial troops of the Qing dynasty finally recapture the city of Nanjing (Nanking) in 1864. The city had been held by T'ien Wang ("Heavenly King") and the followers of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom since 1853. In 1860, American Frederick Townsend Ward trained and led an imperial army against the Taiping rebels, but was killed in battle in September 1862.

Mexico, fighting sundry revolutionaries. He had also been a Texas Ranger, making a name for himself by, via single strokes, decapitating Comanches with the Russian sabre he had brought back from his service with the French in the Crimean War. Most recently, he had worked as first officer of the armed steamer *Confucius* as it plied the Yangtze River in search of pirates. It was in this capacity that he first clashed with the Taipings.

Ward saw them for what they were increasingly becoming—unscrupulous freebooters using a religious war as cover for their pillaging and mayhem. Hired by the Chinese Pirate Suppression Bureau to set up outposts to warn of approaching buccaneers, Ward soon caught the eye of local Imperial political boss Wu Hsu. When Wu offered him the job of raising, equipping, training and leading an army to fight the Taipings the young American was quick to nod.

Ward's prior military experience had taught him much about weaponry and tactics then in vogue in western armies. He had come to appreciate the value of modern siege techniques and the new use of units of riflemen as independent, free-moving skirmishers rather than in their traditional role of conspicuous, over-controlled columns of slow-moving infantry. For the Manchu Dynasty, Ward's arrival came just in time.

Although Chinese ruling families were traditionally contemptuous of pale-fleshed foreigners, they were no longer in a position to indulge their arrogance. In fact, it was government officials from Peking who had approached Wu on the subject of who would be a suitable commander to lead a force of "western barbarians" against the Taipings. There was no doubt in the old man's mind that Budda had sent the fiery little fighting cock from New England for the specific purpose of saving China from her own rabble.

Wu expertly handled the finances, keeping the swelling mercenary army paid well—and punctually—ensuring the troops were loyal and dependable. Ward concentrated on obtaining up-to-date weapons for his men. With invaluable assistance from his French second-in-command Henri Andrea Burgevine, Ward used Wu's vast expense account to purchase sizable stocks of Colt revolvers, .52-caliber Sharps repeating carbines and older (but still effective) British Tower muskets. Recruiting mainly from waterfront dives, Ward swiftly but thoroughly drilled his first hired command and he felt his troops were ready by July 1860.

The mercenaries assaulted the rebel stronghold city of Sung-Chiang on July 16. Since his command was seriously outnumbered, Ward was careful to attack at night. Using their brand-new artillery the attackers blasted an opening in the city's encircling wall. Pouring into the bastion's teeming interior, they bled the Taipings fearsomely. In the poor light the rebels could not see how small the attacking force was, but could certainly tell it was well armed and trained. The raid was over by 6 a.m., with Ward losing just 62 men while killing literally thousands of the Chung Wang's seasoned campaigners. Sung-Chiang would serve as Ward's base of operations for the next two years.

He set aside just two weeks to recuperate from a bullet through his left shoulder, and then invested the Taiping garrison at Ch'ing-p'u. Forewarned by spies, the fort's commander—an Englishman appropriately named Savage—sent a seriously decimated army of loyalists reeling back to Sung-Chiang. With five more wounds, a half-dead Ward had to be carried in a sedan chair.

On August 12, the rebels surrounded Shanghai, where Ward was convalescing. However when Chung Wang threatened to exterminate all the city's inhabitants, Ward crawled from his sickbed, armed himself with an Enfield repeating rifle and joined the defenders on the wall. The Taipings were ignorant of the strength of the defenses facing them. They did not know the numerous British on the ramparts were armed with the newly developed Enfields, or that both the British and their Indian auxiliaries' cannons were loaded with canister. These oversized shotguns were the ultimate in grisly effectiveness

against massed attackers. For a week the besiegers were gruesomely repulsed on every storming attempt. On August 24, a sobered Chung Wang and his decimated army left Shanghai and headed for the rebellion's western theater of operations.

Following this action Ward, gravely ill from his improperly treated wounds, dropped from sight and did not reappear in China until early 1861. He is believed to have sailed to Paris for medical attention. While he was gone Wu stopped paying the soldiers of fortune, and by mid-September they had all drifted away.

Ward realized the war was far from finished and, although it had nearly killed him, it still offered promise for an opportunistic young man looking to make his fortune as a professional soldier. So after the New Year, he slipped back into Shanghai and commenced recruiting.

With rumors abounding of a renewed Taiping offensive he had little difficulty convincing Wu to resume his monetary backing. The two main-

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Le Tour du Monde

ABOVE: American Frederick Townsend Ward began training and leading Imperial forces that became known as the "Ever Victorious Army" against the Taiping rebels in 1860. At the Battle of Tzeki (or Cixi) in September 1862 Ward, who usually led from the front, was shot in the stomach and died the next day. LEFT: Nineteenth century engraving of imperial guards of T'ien Wang's Heavenly Kingdom of the Great Peace (1851-1864), the Taiping revolt against the Qing dynasty. FAR LEFT: From the *History of the Insurrection in China* (J.-M. Callery and Melchior Yvan) published in France in 1853, an image claimed to be a likeness of Hong Xiuquan or T'ien Wang ("Heavenly King"), leader of the Taiping Rebellion.

tained airtight secrecy as the reborn outfit began drilling in Sung-Chiang. Working with his younger brother Harry and their father Frederick Gamaliel Ward (both were New England shipping agents,) Ward bought large stores of newly manufactured arms as well as the 81-ton river steamer *Cricket*. It was a formidable array and, thanks to Wu's expertly imposed concealment, none of this was known to the rebels.

By this time Imperial generals Tseng Kuo-fan and Li Hung-chang had recruited, armed and trained two massive armies of their own, and on September 5, 1861, these forces captured the rebel stronghold city of Anking. Such military setbacks, combined with the T'ien Wang's deteriorating mental condition, were to beset the revolutionary cause with battlefield reverses and internal decay.

Except for its officers and drillmasters, Ward's new command was almost exclusively Chinese. He had devised a genre of fighting well-suited to his situation. In almost every engagement his loyalists would be sorely outnumbered, so Ward had his troops carry out meticulously prepared nocturnal attacks on slumbering armies complacent in their numerical superiority.

A week after the capture of Anking, a 20,000-man Taiping force bivouacked for the night in the town of Kuang-fu-lin. They were en route to Shanghai, but were set upon in the middle of the night by a lethal unit they did not know existed. Darkness was again the attackers' ally as the rebels could not see it was just 500 resolute warriors tearing into them. Led by sabre-swinging European and American officers, these splendid warriors, clad in western-style uniforms that added to the Taipings' confusion, utterly routed the dumbfounded, demoralized insurgents. Ward was still gaining momentum.

He continued to collect acclaim, recruits and wounds as he and his soldiers hurled the rebels from the cities of Ying-ch'i-pin and T'ien-ma-shan on the first and fifth of February. At this point the loyalists returned to Sung-Chiang so they and their half-dead commander could rest. On the 14th, 20,000 revolutionaries assailed the post, only to be caught in murderous crossfires from concealed cannon emplacements. The Taipings had never encountered Asian gunners so well-trained in the use of modern artillery, and when the shelling stopped, masses of infantry attacked the dazed survivors. More than 3,000 of the revolution's finest were killed or captured, and when dispirited survivors made it back to their main force they spread defeatism. The rebels were terrified of what they were calling the "Ever Victorious Army."

At daybreak on the 21st, approximately 1,000

Continued on page 17

VALOR

All photos/National Archives

Private George B. Turner, 46, was the oldest enlisted recipient of the Medal of Honor during World War II.

By Edward F. Murphy

TOP: American Sherman tanks of the 14th Armored Division approaching Strasbourg, France, in December 1944, several weeks after landing in Southern France. Further north in early January, Pfc. George Turner, a spotter for the 499th Armored Field Artillery, part of 14th Armored, would remain in Philippsbourg after his unit withdrew and take up arms to help hold off a German attack. INSET: Private First Class Turner with his Congressional Medal of Honor.

The terse announcement stunned the tightly packed group of young Marines aboard a troop ship in New York Harbor, November 12, 1918. They looked back and forth at one another, asking the same questions, "What did the gunny say? We are not going to France. The war is over? Did we hear that right?" Then a stern "At ease!" from the gunnery sergeant brought them back to attention. "I repeat," he said brusquely, "the war in France is over. We will not be sailing for France. Gather up your gear. Everyone will be disembarking shortly. You will be returned to camp for further assignment. That is all. Dismissed."

Private George B. Turner looked around at the stunned faces of his buddies. All that training. All that effort. All for nothing. It did not seem possible. They had specifically enlisted in the Marine Corps to join the fight "Over There," in France. They desperately wanted to fight the brutal Huns. They had been training arduously for weeks so they would be prepared for battle. Nineteen-year-old Turner felt cheated. All he wanted to do was fight for his country. He quit Wentworth Military Academy in Lexington, Missouri, four months earlier to enlist in the Marines for the sole purpose of joining the fighting in France. Now he would not be sailing across the Atlantic Ocean. He would not be battling the Hun. Turner could barely conceal his disappointment. What would he do now?

George Benton Turner, born June 27, 1899, in Longview, Texas, grew up in the greater Dallas-Ft. Worth area where his father, Gaines B. Turner, an attorney and two-time state repre-

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American infantry and tanks of the 14th Armored Division fight their way through a town in Germany in early 1945. Separated from his unit, Turner fought with members of the 275th Infantry Division in Philippsbourg, France, on January 3. He then volunteered to make multiple trips driving wounded soldiers to a rear aid station for the next two days, while under German artillery fire. His actions over the three days would earn him the Congressional Medal of Honor.

sentative, owned a prominent real estate development firm. In 1928 George moved to Los Angeles, California, where he worked as a legal secretary and, later, in the wholesale grocery business.

Although little is known about Turner's life in pre-World War II Los Angeles, he never lost his patriotic yearning to fight for his country. Denied that opportunity in 1918, Turner viewed the gathering war clouds in the late 1930s as an opportunity to satisfy his long-held wish. He tried several times to reenlist in the Marine Corps, but at 41, his age worked against him. Undeterred, Turner went north to join the fighting as a member of the Canadian Army, but found rejection there as well.

Finally, after the December 7, 1941, Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Turner's goal of fighting for his country was finally realized. He was drafted on October 23, 1942, at the ripe old age of 43.

Private Turner joined the fledgling 14th Armored Division's 499th Armored Field Artillery Battalion at Fort Chafee, Arkansas. His platoon leader, Lt. Curtiss R. Thomas, recalled when Turner arrived.

"Turner was clearly the oldest man in the outfit," Thomas said, "but he immediately asked, 'What section will see the most combat action?' I told him the forward observers. 'That's where I want to be,' Turner announced." Thomas granted his wish.

Because of his age, education, and work experience, Turner frequently received lectures from his superiors on why he should go to officer candidate school and take a commission. But Turner always declined. He knew an officer's commission would remove him from the front lines and he remained determined to fight for his country.

After two years of intense training, the 14th Armored Division headed overseas, arriving in Marseilles, France, in October 1944. Two weeks later, the fledgling tankers entered the front lines in the Vosges Mountains in eastern France as part of the Seventh Army. As the division fought its way north and east, Turner found plenty of opportunities to experience combat.

"He always wanted to know where the action was," remembered his battery commander Lt. Col. Clarence F. Graebner. "He even volunteered to accompany infantry patrols." In November 1944, just days after entering the combat zone, Turner spent two hours in a church steeple directing his battery's fire, all while under enemy artillery fire. That display of courage earned him a Bronze Star.

At year's end, Turner, and the rest of the 14th Armored Division, manned defensive positions east of Bitche, France, just south of the east-west running French and German border. Turner's Battery C took up positions in the heavily forested hills around the picturesque village of Philippsbourg, France, an important road junction town that also sat astride the area's main railroad line. It was a relatively quiet area, a welcome respite from the weeks of intense combat they had just experienced. Unfortunately, that respite did not last long.

After the failure of Adolf Hitler's desperate offensive launched in December 1944 through the Ardennes Forest, the Battle of the Bulge, the Führer ordered another attack farther south. He hoped to not only lure American troops out of Belgium, but also to capture the Alsatian city of Strasbourg, a move that would allow the German troops there to link up with the German forces holding out to the south in Colmar, just west of the Rhine River. The Germans launched Operation Nordwind (North Wind), the Wehrmacht's last offensive operation in World War II, just before midnight, December 31, 1944.

The sudden attack stunned the defending Amer-

ican forces. Although some more experienced units fought off the Germans, many American divisions were new to combat. One of those rookie units was the 70th Infantry Division, advanced units of which had just arrived in Marseilles on December 15, 1944. The division's lead elements from the 275th Infantry Regiment had only set up their defensive positions around Philippsbourg to support Battery C on December 28, 1944.

By late morning of January 3, 1945, attacking German units closed on Philippsbourg. With enemy artillery raining down on their positions, the 499th's armored artillery vehicles received orders to withdraw. But Pfc. Turner ignored the order. He decided to stay put. He was not about to miss another opportunity to fight the Germans at close range. Somehow, in the confusing rearward movement, no one noticed Turner remained in Philippsbourg.

As German armor and infantry entered the town from the north around 1400, Turner spotted members of the 275th's Company C preparing to pull back. The intrepid forward observer dodged enemy fire to join them. He asked for volunteers to help him fight off the advancing Germans. No one stepped forward. Undaunted, Turner picked up an abandoned rifle and began firing at the Germans. A few minutes later, Company C Browning Automatic Rifleman PFC Donald Docken heard two German Mark IV tanks rumbling down Philippsbourg's main street. Close behind them tramped some 75 infantrymen. Docken witnessed Turner pull a bazooka from an abandoned half-track and, completely alone, calmly advance to the middle of the narrow cobblestone street. Oblivious to the hot lead zinging past him and ricocheting off nearby buildings and the cobblestones, Turner calmly loaded a rocket into the weapon, aimed, fired, and scored a direct hit on the lead tank. Though that effectively blocked the second tank's advance, Turner was not satisfied. He reloaded the bazooka, fired again, and knocked a track off the second Mark IV, immobilizing it, too. Docken later said that Turner's "strategically placed shells stopped the German armor….and drove the infantry back."

From his nearby command post Second Lieutenant Joseph K. Donahue, a Company C platoon leader, saw Turner next pull a .50-caliber machine gun and several belts of ammunition from the half-track. Donahue watched in awe as Turner fearlessly, "… returned to the scene of his first engagement, went into position in the middle of the street, completely void of cover or concealment, and poured deadly accurate fire into the supporting infantrymen…" The remaining German infantrymen scurried for cover.

Later that afternoon, Company C's reorganized riflemen launched a local counterattack. Still

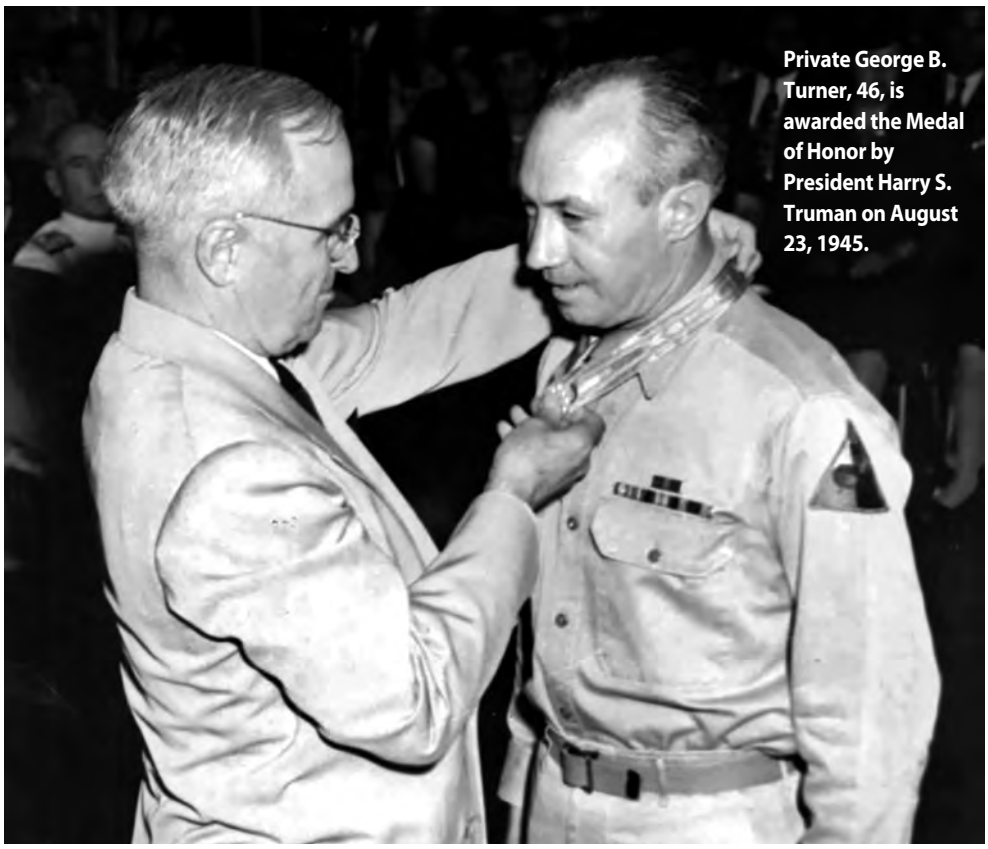
determined to fight the Germans, Turner eagerly joined them. When two supporting Sherman tanks took hits from a German antitank gun, Turner used his machine gun to cover the crews' escape. One of the fleeing men shouted to Turner that a wounded driver was still in one of the tanks.

Second Lieutenant Travis Coxe, Company C, remembered how Turner, while under a continuous stream of fire thrown at him by the enemy, raced to the burning tank, mounted the front of it, and reached for the trapped man." Though the tank's power traverse mechanism was engaged, causing the turret to revolve, Turner remained resolved to save the injured man. As Coxe watched, "Private Turner managed to grasp the driver and, as he started to pull him out, the tank's ammunition exploded, killing the driver and throwing Turner backward in a heap." Amazingly, the uninjured Turner staggered to his feet and moved to cover.

As the intense fighting raged on that afternoon, Turner, despite Lieutenant Donahue's suggestion, refused to leave his new buddies. When a German patrol approached the destroyed Mark IV tanks around 2000 hours that night, Turner spotted them. According to Donahue, Turner alerted the soldiers around him and directed their rifle fire at the enemy. At least 11 German soldiers dropped, while the others scrambled into a nearby building. The next morning Lieutenant Donahue and Pfc. Docken saw Turner, accompanied by just two other soldiers, assault the building. After a brief, but intense, flurry of gunfire, the trio emerged with four captured enemy soldiers. Docken said that Turner assumed the role of platoon leader for the rest of the day, carrying out several missions throughout the town.

"Turner's maturity and uncommon bravery led us novice soldiers to assume he was a combat-hardened officer," Docken said. Inspired by Turner's intrepid leadership, the men of his ad hoc rifle platoon silenced an enemy machine gun nest and several times patrolled into enemy territory seeking information on the enemy's positions.

Early the next morning, January 4, Philippsbourg was hit with an intense German artillery barrage. With the shells threatening the 275th's wounded in an aid station set up in the town's church, 2nd Lt. Clark M. Richardson, a battalion surgeon, asked a nearby group of soldiers for a volunteer to drive a truckload of wounded soldiers to a rear aid station. "Immediately a man climbed into the truck," Richardson later said, "and backed it up to the church and helped load four litter cases and eight walking wounded…. Completely ignoring the terrific enemy bombardment, this man once more climbed into the cab and fearlessly drove through the wall of enemy fire, successfully delivering the casualties … to the rear aid station."



Private George B. Turner, 46, is awarded the Medal of Honor by President Harry S. Truman on August 23, 1945.

When Richardson later asked who the volunteer driver was, "I learned that the man who so readily volunteered to risk his life in an effort to save his fellow soldiers was not even a member of the 275th Infantry, but George Turner from the 499th Armored Field Artillery." Turner made repeated trips that day and the next to move more casualties to safety. No one kept a record of how many trips he made, but a lot of 70th Infantry Division soldiers lived because of his selflessness.

By late morning of January 5, the German plan to capture Philippsbourg had been thwarted largely through the gallant conduct of Turner. The enemy forces pulled back into the mountainous terrain north of Philippsbourg. Having thoroughly satisfied his years-long quest to fight for his country, Turner decided it was time to get back to his own outfit.

Colonel Graebner remembered his return. "George was tired, dirty, and very hungry," Graebner said. "What I especially remember was that his canteen had a bullet hole through it. Apparently, this was the closest the Germans came to hitting him, as there was not a scratch on him!"

Too busy to do much more than welcome Turner back, Graebner put him to work in the fire direction center. Thinking that Turner had been missing due to the frantic withdrawal, Graebner did not question his absence and Turner did not volunteer any information. A few weeks later, though, several officers from the 275th Infantry Regiment visited Graebner. They asked him pointed questions about a soldier who matched Turner's description. Hesitant to respond, Graebner demanded to know why they were asking about the forward observer. The officers explained the mystery soldier's heroic actions in Philippsbourg. They wanted to ensure he received some recognition for his gallantry in action.

Turner received that recognition eight months later, on August 23, 1945, when President Harry S. Truman placed the blue ribbon of the Medal of Honor around his neck in a White House ceremony. At age 46, Turner was the oldest enlisted man to receive the Medal of Honor in World War II.

After his discharge, Turner returned to Los Angeles where he and his wife, Lucille, settled in Encino. Because he was an unassuming and reserved man who rarely spoke publicly of his combat experiences, little is known of Turner's postwar life. He is believed to have worked as an executive for the local Pepsi-Cola bottling company. Turner died of a heart attack on June 29, 1963, a few days after his 64th birthday. He was interred at Arlington National Cemetery. He and his wife Lucille had no children. Her date of death is unknown.

Though he was one of the most outstanding heroes of World War II, Turner's story has unfortunately faded into the pages of history, remembered by few, and forgotten by most. ■

Continued from page 11

of Ward's men, accompanied by a like number of British and French regulars, destroyed the garrison guarding Che-lin, and then rushed back to Shanghai and intercepted the Chung-Wang's latest attempt to snatch this prize. Between May 30 and June 6, the Imperialists not only scattered the Taipings, but re-captured their jumping-off point of Kuang-fu-lin, which Ward had been forced to abandon when he rushed all his available forces to meet the latest threat to Shanghai.

On May 18, General Li's regulars crushed a powerful rebel army just southwest of the port city. Ward and the Imperial generals now paused to take stock of their situation, consolidate their gains and devise future strategy. Ward's army kept getting larger, and on July 16, 1,000 of his bolstered, rested and refitted troops secured federal supply lines by routing an enemy column on the Pootung Peninsula. That evening the Ever Victorious Army linked up with one of Li's divisions, and in a night assault supported by typically telling shellfire quickly took the rebel-controlled town of Chin-shan-wei.

By this time the Imperialists had their eyes on the Taiping capital of Nanking, and the next step in this direction was made when the Ward/Li force grabbed the river port of Liu-ho. The T'ien Wang had no thoughts of merely holding onto his seat of power, however, he remained intent on seizing Shanghai, and made this threateningly clear to his Chung Wang. Still, the flustered, fearful rebel general was unable to subdue the stout federal defenders and their swelling contingent of western reinforcements. By Labor Day, Ward and Li had again cleared the Taipings from the Shanghai sector.

The new Imperial strategy was to secure control of the Yangtze River and shut off shipments of rice downstream, employing famine as a weapon. The first move was to seize the town of Tz'-u-ch'-i (also Cixi or Tzeki), which commanded the riverine approaches to the agricultural region.

On the morning of September 21, 1862, Ward was leading his men over the city's walls when he took a musket ball in his midsection. This 16th wound would prove fatal. Although the Ever Victorious Army swiftly swept the enemy from the objective, its chief did not live to savor this latest triumph. He died early the next morning. After hearing of his death his brokenhearted young Chinese widow quickly sickened and passed away herself.

It took Ward's paid militia and its federal allies two more years to finally crush the Taiping Rebellion, but their resolution to win for their beloved leader made final victory inevitable. By war's end somewhere between 10 and 20 million were dead from this bloodiest-ever civil war. Ward had ended it. If only he could have come sooner. ■

The 1917 hunt for Germany's 'Sea Devil,' Count Felix von Luckner, and his deadly windjammer, the SMS *Sea Eagle*.

By Mark Carlson

***SMS Seeadler*, by German marine artist Christopher Rave. Under Felix von Luckner, the sailing commerce raider "Sea Eagle" would capture 15 ships in about seven months during World War I.**

National Library of New Zealand

For more than three centuries, from 1520 in the reign of King Henry the Eighth up until the advent of steam-powered ironclads in the American Civil War, ships under sail ruled the world's oceans. Even during the years of the Great War, a majestic windjammer under clouds of canvas, the last vestiges of the romantic age of sail, was not an uncommon sight. One such ship, however, was not at all what it appeared to be. Rather than a harmless sail-powered merchant ship crossing the seas, it was in fact a deadly predator, a shark among the minnows. Her name was SMS *Seeadler*, the very last vessel of a 300-year legacy of fighting sail.

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ABOVE: At left, the Imperial German Navy's sailing commerce raider SMS *Seeadler* (Sea Eagle) moves to capture the French bark *Cambronne* off the coast of Brazil on March 20, 1917. OPPOSITE, BOTTOM: Launched in 1888 from the shipyards at Port Glasgow, Scotland, the *Pass of Balmaha* was transporting a cargo of cotton to Russia when it was intercepted and captured by *U-36* on July 24, 1915. Transferred to the Imperial German Navy, the ship was outfitted as a commerce raider, equipped with an auxiliary engine, two hidden 105 mm guns and two hidden heavy machine guns, as well as rifles for boarding parties. The renamed SMS *Seeadler* (Sea Eagle) would capture 15 ships in the Atlantic and Pacific over the next 225 days before foundering on a reef in a storm in French Polynesia.

By the fall of 1916 the Great War had been raging for more than two years and Imperial Germany was blockaded by the Royal Navy. Even as the Kaiser's armies were driving hard to take Paris, the nation, heavily dependent on foreign wheat and fertilizer, was forced to live off its hump. With the mighty High Seas Fleet bottled up in Kiel and Wilhelmshaven, the only ray of hope came from the U-boat and the commerce raider. Submarines, yet to truly make their mark, were too few in number, with limited range and speed. But a few commerce raiders, armed liners and merchant ships, had slipped past the Royal Navy early in the war to prowl among vulnerable Allied shipping lanes.

In 1916 Count Felix von Luckner, a tall, powerful Prussian aristocrat and member of the German high command proposed to Kaiser Wilhelm II that a large sailing ship, properly armed and disguised, could slip past the British blockade and raid the shipping lanes. As unthinkable, even ludicrous as the scheme sounded, such a ship would have a few very compelling advantages. Most raiders were seriously limited by their need for coal. Germany had few colonies around the world, and consequently almost no coaling stations. German raiders had to either capture British colliers or have German ones meet them in isolated areas of the ocean. Therefore any vessel that could remain at sea for long periods without fueling had an advantage. Windjammers were the ultimate sailing ships. Far larger than the sleek clippers that preceded them, the huge square-rigged barks had three, four and even five masts to carry acres of canvas. Often built of iron and steel, they could sail under the most difficult weather conditions—the pinnacle of the age of sail.

Luckner was sure a large sailing ship wouldn't be suspicous. "Your Majesty, if our Admiralty says it's impossible and ridiculous, then I'm sure it can be done," he told the Kaiser, "The British Admiralty will think it impossible also."

Born in Dresden in 1881, to a Prussian cavalry officer, Luckner went to sea in 1894 under the name Phelax Luedige. He became an experienced sailor, fluent in English and Norwegian. He developed a love for the four-masted bark *Pinmore*, built in 1882. Still under the name Phelax Luedige, he returned to Germany and studied navigation, then joined the merchant marine as a petty officer aboard the small liner *Petropolis*. A year later he joined the German Naval Reserve as a lieutenant and was promoted to Captain on February 3, 1912, while Germany and Great Britain were building dreadnoughts of ever-increasing power and speed. His skill and bravery—he twice saved sailors from drowning—came to the attention of Kaiser Wilhelm II.

He commanded light cruisers at the battles of Heligoland Bight in 1915 and Jutland the following year. When he heard of the German Navy was to convert an old square-rigger into armed commerce raider, he threw himself into the project. He spoke perfect Norwegian, so the vessel would be disguised as a harmless, neutral Norwegian bark.

With that was born the SMS *Seeadler*, or "Sea Eagle." She had been launched in Scotland in 1888 as the *Pass of Balmaha*. She was known to be fast and easy to handle. How the German Navy acquired her was a sea story in itself. While sailing to Arkhangel in Russia with a cargo of American cotton she was stopped in the North Sea by a Royal Navy cruiser. Even though America was still neutral in 1916, the ship was seized and a British crew put aboard to sail her to Scapa Flow. But fate intervened in the form of a German U-boat. The tables were turned and the Germans took the *Pass of Balmaha* to the North Sea port of Bremerhaven.

At 4,500 tons and a length of just over 250 feet, the ship was large enough for German purposes. She was extensively converted, beginning with a

950-horsepower auxiliary diesel engine and propeller shaft fitted just ahead of the rudder. This would provide propulsion even when the winds were slack. Her instruments and gear were well-used, weather-beaten and Norwegian-made. Two 4.2-inch guns were concealed behind false stacks of lumber at the port and starboard bows. The gunners were trained to load, aim and fire at specific targets on enemy ships.

But that was only the beginning of her makeover. The bark would be disguised as a harmless square-rigger with a crew of slovenly, ill-disciplined sailors.

As Luckner put it, the *Pass of Balmaha* became "a mystery ship of trick panels and trick doors. In addition to quarters for her sixty-four officers and crew, she could carry up to four hundred prisoners, that is, the crews from ships Luckner captured. The "cells" were cunningly hidden behind false panels in the hold that appeared to be stacks of crates and cargo. They were carefully constructed to be invisible to a British navy boarding party.

Luckner was adamant that the accommodations have plenty of bunks, toilets and even games and reading material. "I wanted them to feel as though they were my guests." This was more than his streak of gentlemanly chivalry. His "guests" would be more likely to behave and not sound the alarm when *Seeadler* was approaching another victim.

The crew were all German Navy volunteers, chosen for their sailing experience. Several spoke fluent Norwegian. One man, a slender, smooth-cheeked youth named Schmidt, was chosen to play the role of the captain's Norwegian wife, complete with wig, dress and makeup. Every man had worked out his "identity" as a Norwegian sailor or officer, right down to fake family letters, keepsakes and photos, clothing and personal idiosyncrasies. They chewed tobacco and learned the words to ribald Norwegian drinking songs. Luckner himself learned to chew tobacco, saying that it helped when asked an embarrassing question, to chew the plug, think for a long moment, then spit elegantly.

In early November 1916 the ship was ready, fully loaded and manned. Now all she needed to pass through the blockade was a false identity. The bark *Maleta*, which was similar to *Seeadler*, was loading in Copenhagen. Luckner traveled to the port and, using his former identity of Phelax Luedige signed on as a longshoreman. He crept aboard and stole the ship's logbook. The *Seeadler* would have a bona fide identity. But the German high command delayed her sailing until after the real *Maleta* sailed, throwing off the timetable. Luckner changed the name on the log and all ship's papers to the *Hero*, a bark of dubious registry. But there was a catch. The erasures and alterations to the papers were too obvious. Luckner had a daring idea. He called the ship's carpenter and told him to use an axe to smash all the portholes, railings, furniture, bunks and make sure to cover everything in seawater. When the job was done, it appeared the *Hero* had been through a violent gale. And of course, her papers, sodden and stained, were hard to read clearly. This innovation and nerve was the Luckner touch.

As *Seeadler* left Bremerhaven two days before Christmas, the first trial was to get past a huge minefield. A real storm came to Luckner's aid by forcing the bark to sail heeled far over on her beam-ends, which allowed her to ride safely over the submerged mines. Then a British cruiser, HMS *Avenger*, steamed close and ordered the bark to heave to for boarding and inspection. The Royal Navy officer saw a loaded lumber ship that had recently been battered by Baltic storms and a crew of smelly, undisciplined Norwegians who showed little respect for his rank or duty. The captain, a tall brute of a man named Knudsen, with a plug of tobacco wedged in his cheek showed him the ship's papers, which were water-stained and nearly unreadable. Knudsen, in his thick Norwegian accent complimented the officer on his warm camel's hair duffel coat. He then introduced his wife Josephine, who was lying on the damp cabin settee with a painful toothache. The Royal Navy officer saw no further reason to detain the obviously innocent Norwegian bark and returned to his ship. As HMS *Avenger* steamed away, the signal flags read "Bon Voyage."

Luckner and *Seeadler* had passed their first test. As they cleared the British Isles and headed out to sea they shed the disguise. The cargo of lumber was cast overboard to reveal the two guns. But some traces of the camouflage remained to lure unsuspecting prey into the *Sea Eagle*'s claws. Thus prepared, Luckner set out in search of prey into the broad North Atlantic, where he would soon earn the name

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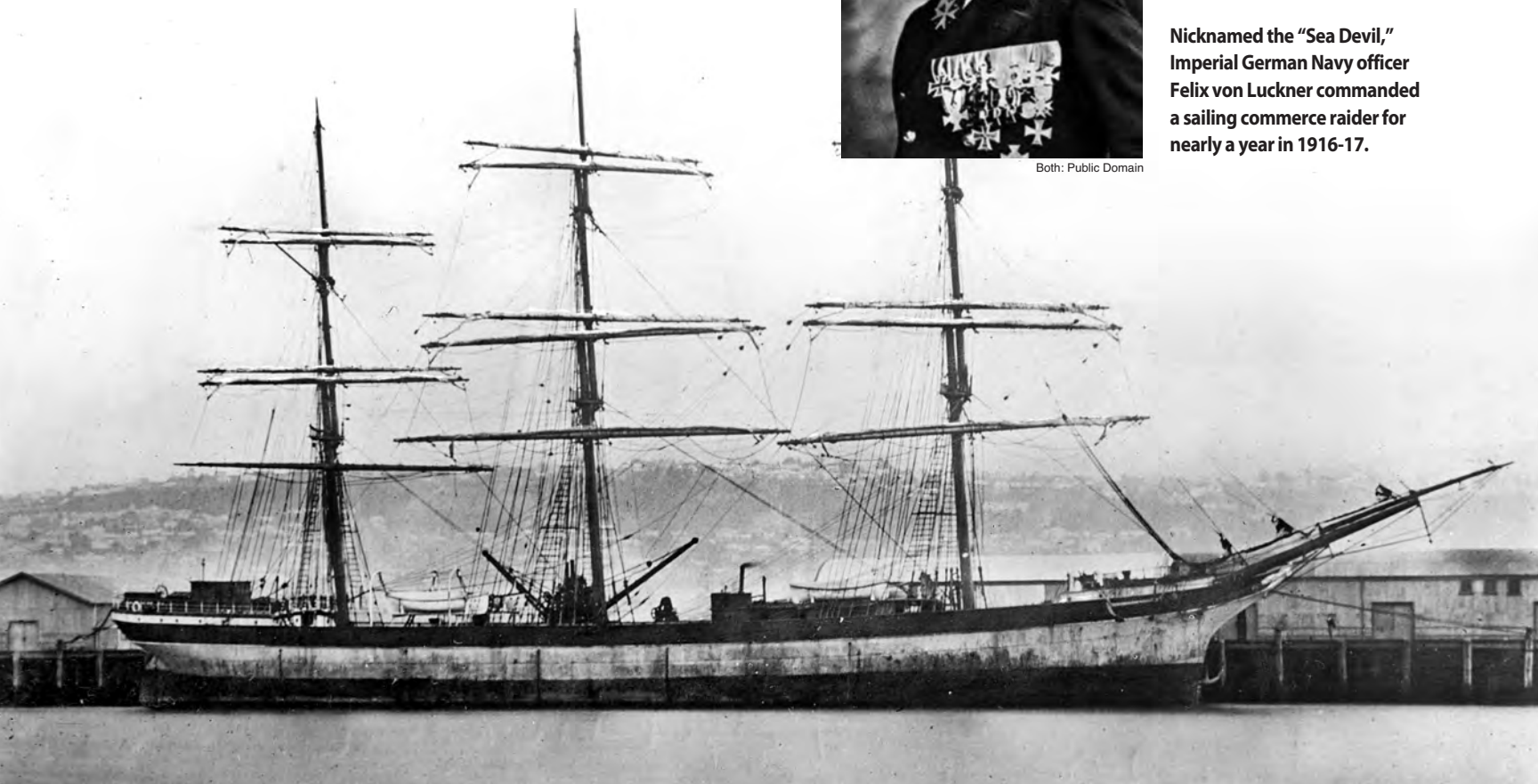
Nicknamed the "Sea Devil," Imperial German Navy officer Felix von Luckner commanded a sailing commerce raider for nearly a year in 1916-17.



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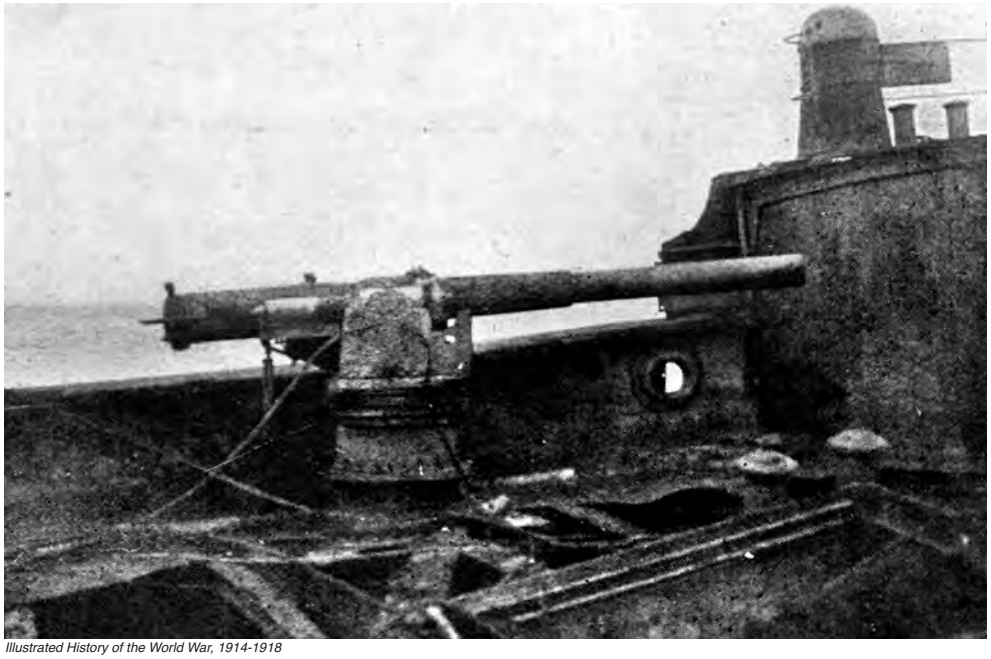
ABOVE: Felix von Luckner's sailing commerce raider SMS *Seeadler* sank this French merchant ship, the *Charles Gounod*, off the coast of South America on January 21, 1917. BELOW: One of the *Seeadler*'s two 105-mm guns, which were kept hidden behind hinged gunwales until needed. After the ship struck a reef and foundered in the Society Islands in the South Pacific in August, the crew disabled the guns.



Illustrated History of the World War, 1914-1918

"Sea Devil."

His orders limited him to attacking only other sailing ships. The idea of an old bark being able to capture a steamship was ridiculous, but to Luckner, the challenge was too good to pass up. He had his first chance on January 9, 1917, when the lookout saw smoke on the horizon. It was the 3,200-ton British steamer *Gladys Royale*, bound for Buenos Aires. After running up the Norwegian flag, Luckner used what would be his signature ploy, a request for a chronometer reading. This was common for sailing vessels, which needed accurate time for navigation. The Gladys Royale hove to under *Seeadler*'s port bow, then Luckner ordered the German Navy ensign raised and a shot fired across the steamer's bow. Three more shots forced the British captain to stop his engines and row over to the German ship. "You bloody well fooled me," he fumed at the grinning German captain.

The steamer's crew was brought on board the *Seeadler* and given quarters below while an explosive charge was placed in the steamer's hull. That night Luckner's first victim went to the bottom. The next day, flushed with victory, *Seeadler* found another victim, the 3,100-ton British steamer *Lundy Island*. But this captain didn't fall for the innocent chronometer reading request and tried to run for it. Luckner raised the German flag and fired two shots into the ship's funnel and hull. Beaten, the steamer surrendered and the crew was taken aboard. In two days Luckner had taken and sunk two British ships without a single life lost.

The British captains played checkers and the crews had the run of the *Seeadler*, albeit under guard. But there were no problems, due to Luckner's courtly treatment of his prisoners. Remarkably, the so-called prisoners were paid their regular wages while on board and participated in shipboard maintenance. Even more astonishingly, after Luckner stated that the first man to sight a ship would receive the equivalent of 50 marks and a bottle of champagne, almost every prisoner and even the two British captains lined the railings to spot the *Seeadler*'s next target. "Never," recalled Luckner, "had a ship such a lookout."

On January 21, the French bark *Charles Gounod* was seen and also fell for the chronometer reading ruse. This ship was easily taken, and along with the crew, several cases of good French wine were brought on board. Over the next three weeks, a windjammer from Canada and one from Italy fell to *Seeadler* without any resistance and the hold was soon packed with more than 100 prisoners. Still with no loss of life.

On February 3, 1917, the French square-rigger *Antonin*, a fast and well-handled ship, made a run for it. Luckner chose not to use his engine but engaged in a chase under full sail. At last he caught up and fired his machine guns at the French ship. They surrendered with the French captains swearing so loudly it could be heard over the span of water between the two ships.

In less than a month *Seeadler* had sunk six ships. And still the wily Sea Devil pressed on towards the South Atlantic. On February 19, Luckner was confronted with his past. The bark *Pinmore*, on which he had sailed as the young runaway Phelax Luedige was captured. With a sense of nostalgia, Luckner rowed alone over to the old windjammer and walked the decks of his youth. He even found where he had carved his name, into the stern rail. Then pragmatism intervened. He chose to put some of his crew on board the *Pinmore* and sail to Rio de Janeiro to load some needed supplies. With his usual flair for innovation, Luckner got away with this daring venture and rendezvoused with the *Seeadler* a few days later. But he then had to give the hardest order of his naval career. With a heavy heart he ordered the *Pinmore* sunk.

While in Rio, he met a Royal Navy officer from HMS *Glasgow*, a light cruiser, who told him that his ship and HMS *Amethyst* were preparing to head out to find and sink a German raider working off the Brazilian coast. With this uninten-

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Commander Felix von Luckner, seated left, and the men who were captured in Fiji in September 1917, where they had sailed in a longboat after the wreck of the SMS *Seeadler*.

tional warning Luckner bent on full sail to head south towards Cape Horn at the tip of South America. Along the way he sank three more windjammers.

The 3,600-ton steamer *Horngarth* was spotted on March 11. The ship not only had wireless, but a five-inch deck gun. Luckner had to put the wireless out of action before the British could raise the alarm. When the standard request for a chronometer reading went unanswered, he started a small fire on the main deckhouse and raised a distress flag, something no ship could ignore. At last *Horngarth* came close. Then Luckner had his "wife" Josephine, in reality "that rascal Schmidt," parade demurely along the deck to distract the British sailors. Then he raised the German ensign and fired a shot directly into the wireless room. When *Horngarth*'s crew attempted to return fire, Luchner had selected men with megaphones to yell out in English, "torpedoes are clear!" That made the British captain back down and surrender.

But Luckner's perfect record had been broken with the death of a British officer, who had died from wounds during the battle. He was buried with full military honors by the Germans and British. Now *Seeadler* had more than 275 prisoners. This prompted Luckner to make use of his next prize, the French bark *Cambronne*. Her captain was relieved to find that his ship would not be sunk but was to take the *Seeadler* prisoners to Rio. The bark's topmasts were cut down to slow her. Luckner sailed north, still within sight of the French ship. After dark he turned south and headed for the Horn. But unlike the other ruses, this did not work. The Royal Navy soon realized *Seeadler* was headed for the Pacific and sent *Glas-*

The hulk of the sailing commerce raider SMS *Seeadler* after it was wrecked on a reef in a storm on August 2, 1917, at the Mopelia atoll in the South Pacific's Society Islands, after stopping to replenish supplies. It was then burned by her crew.

State Library of Victoria

gow and *Amethyst* to find and sink her.

By this time the United States had declared war on Germany. From June 15 to July 5, 1917, Luckner captured and sank three small American schooners, the *A. B. Johnson*, the *R. C. Slade* and the *Manila*. These were slim pickings compared to what he had found in the Atlantic, but he had other concerns. The British were hunting for him and he was low on provisions. On the last day of July, the German raider anchored in the calm lagoon of Mopelia atoll in the Society Islands. The crew and prisoners went ashore to feast on turtle soup, lobster, eggs and fruit. But disaster struck on August 2, 1917 when a strong current caused *Seeadler*'s anchor to drag, and she was driven onto a submerged reef. Despite desperate efforts by the crew her keel was broken in five places. Luckner knew it was the end of the voyage. He ordered everything salvageable taken off and the ship burned. A village of sorts was constructed of ship's timbers and sail cloth on the beach.

But the audacious Luckner was not done. He selected five volunteers, outfitted a launch with sails, provisions and weapons, to try and capture the first island trading ship they came across. But after a 28-day journey to Fiji they had no luck. Then they were confronted by a British officer and armed soldiers. Knowing that to resist would only result in needless death, Luckner surrendered. His 224-day odyssey had ended. But in his wake were 14 ships sunk, including three steamers, and more than $25 million in damages to the Allies. It was the last hurrah of fighting sail. For the rest of his life Felix von Luckner was respected and revered for his daring, cunning and chivalry to his enemies. He may have been the Sea Devil, but he was truly the last of his kind. ■

UNIFORM German Heer Infantryman, Battle of the Bulge

By Johnny Shumate

HELMET: Standard *Stahlhelm* "steel helmet," simplified in 1942 to expedite production.

RIFLE: Karabiner 98k, bolt-action, using the 7.92 x 57mm Mauser cartridge. The K98k was furnished with a cleaning rod, tools and oil.

UNIFORM: Padded jacket, with hood, and trousers, in Heeres-Splittermuster 31 camouflage pattern. Black mittens.

GURTBANDTRAGEGERÜST: A-frame combat assault pack with M31 mess tin, Zeltbahn 31 shelter half/poncho. Below: Gas Mask Canister, M31 haversack (*brotbeutel*-"breadbag"), Feldflasche 1931 canteen.

BAYONET: S84/98 III bayonet, with a blade length of just under 10 inches. Carried with *Kleines Schanzzeug*-"small entrenching tool."

PATRONENTASCHEN: Ammunition pouches attached to waistbelt.

BOOTS: Schnürschuhe ankle boots.

The German unified armed forces were renamed *Wehrmacht* "defense force" from 1935 to 1945, comprising the *Heer* (army), *Kriegsmarine* (navy) and *Luftwaffe* (air force)—all distinctly separate from the paramilitary *Waffen Schutzstaffel* "armed-protection squad" of the Nazi Party.

Following World War I, the German army was limited to 100,000 men and officers. However, Germany's military leadership secretly began taking steps to rebuild its armed forces and by 1939, the Wehrmacht had reached nearly 1.5 million well-trained soldiers, organized into 98 divisions for the invasion of Poland.

The Wehrmacht General staff focused on offensive operations, developing the Blitzkrieg doctrine that initially proved successful. However, by 1943, with much of the Wehrmacht bogged down in Russia, the Blitzkrieg gave way to delaying actions and defense. The Wehrmacht became skilled at creating ad hoc battle groups to respond to emergencies, and to infiltrate enemy lines.

By December 1944, the Wehrmacht in France had retreated to the German border, and the Allies believed they were incapable of offensive operations. Despite even the doubts of the German high command, the initial Blitzkrieg assault through the Ardennes was successful. But with a stiffening Allied defense, the Wehrmacht soldiers of the Volksgrenadier Divisions were soon pushed back into Germany, with inevitable defeat only months away.

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For the men of the U.S. 9th Infantry Regiment, the evening of November 25, 1950, began routinely enough. Since entering North Korea the previous month, the regiment had pushed farther into the nation's rugged northern hill country. In many respects, the advance had gone smoothly as United Nations forces steadily battered the remnants of a defeated North Korean army. Rumors circulated that the troops would be home for Christmas.

On that frigid evening the 9th Infantry was positioned along a ridgeline overlooking the Ch'ongch'on River. At regimental headquarters, Col. Charles Sloane was keeping tabs on his three battalions, but after sunset, alarming news started to filter in. As the enemy began probing the position with attacks all along his regimental front, the South Korean troops on the right fell apart and fled pell-mell for the rear.

Led by the larger-than-life figure of General Douglas MacArthur, U.N. Forces push the North Korean People's Army all the way back to the border with Communist China.

BY JOSHUA SHEPHERD

Around midnight, Sloane listened in disbelief as disaster struck. A string of panicked communications came in from radio operators at the front pleading for help. In what seemed a surreal nightmare, they were being overrun by hordes of enemy troops.

"My God, they're everywhere," cried one radioman. "We're holding, but they're all over the place," shouted another. Amid a cacophony of small arms fire and wild shouting, desperate men on the ridgeline reported the worst: "We can no longer hold, there are so many of them…this may be the last message you get from us."

As his regiment crumbled, Sloane faced a grim reality that he had been suspecting for some time—Communist China had entered the war.

The decisions that brought American troops into North Korea had been borne of overconfidence, confusion, and heightened tensions at the advent of the Cold War. In the wake of World War II, the partition of Korea between a Communist North and Democratic South had virtually assured an eventual conflict. Degenerating relations between the two nations predictably led to a full scale shooting war in June 1950, when the North Korean People's Army, the NKPA, crossed the 38th Parallel that marked the border.

The Soviet Union had amply supplied the NKPA with state-of-the-art materiel, including the priceless armament of 150 T-34 tanks. North Korean forces smashed shocked and ill-prepared South Korean troops, first seizing the capital of Seoul, then driving south through the nation's heartland.

The American response to the growing disaster was hampered by a woeful lack of available manpower. An understrength task force of U.S. troops, rushed to the fighting from Japan, was badly chewed up by more experienced North Korean forces. The Communist juggernaut, however, was slowed by dogged resistance. By the end of July, a strong defensive position ringed the southern port city of Pusan.

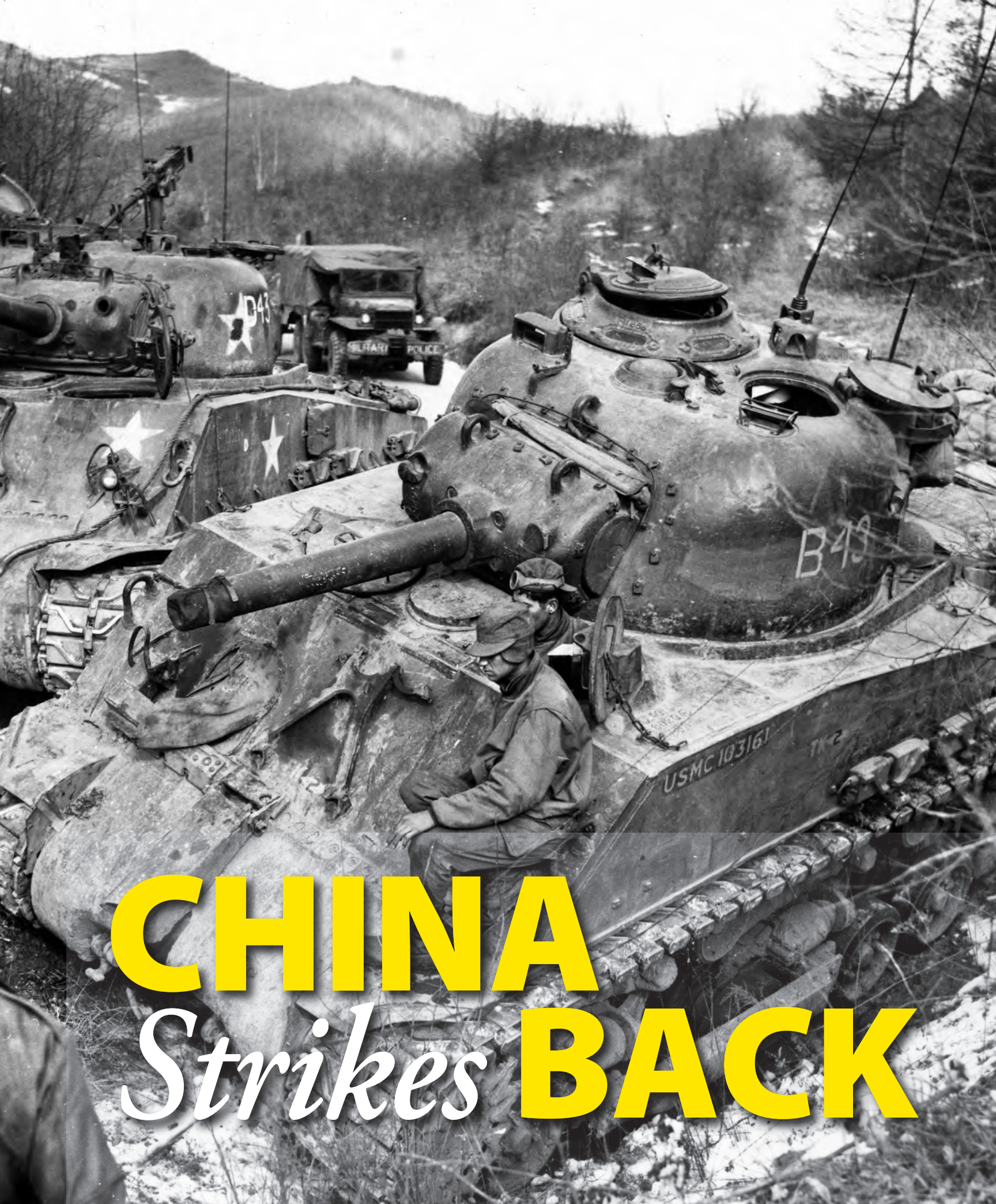
The United Nations had quickly condemned the invasion and authorized its member nations to forcibly liberate South Korea. Allied nations began to funnel troops into the Pusan Perimeter, slowly building up strength for an eventual counterattack. Not surprisingly, the bulk of the heavy fighting, and hence command of U.N. forces, fell to the United States.

Assuming overall command of the war effort was Gen. Douglas MacArthur, one of the most legendary commanders of World War II, who had been awarded a rare fifth general's star. Lionized by the press and respected by rank and file, he was also a cerebral career officer who lived and breathed grand strategy.

MacArthur would put those skills to use in turning the tide of the war in Korea. But rather than launch a conventional counterattack out of

This U.S.M.C. M4 Sherman has lost traction on a relatively flat part of the MSR (Main Supply Route) near Hagaru-ri near North Korea's Chosin Reservoir. With temperatures well below freezing, navigating the mountainous unpaved single-lane track through the 4,000-foot Toktong pass to Yudam-ni in support of the 5th and 7th Marines was a tall order for armor.

U.S. Marine Corps / National Archives



CHINA *Strikes* BACK

the Pusan Perimeter and risk seeing his troops tied up in a brutal slugging match to take back the Korean Peninsula, MacArthur developed a daring plan to divide his forces and launch an amphibious landing at the city of Inchon, far in the rear of North Korean forces. The plan met with resistance from fellow officers, the Navy, and Washington authorities, but MacArthur's force of personality ultimately won out.

The amphibious landing had been an audacious gamble, but it paid off. Beginning on September 15, elements of the American X Corps landed at Inchon, catching the North Koreans entirely by surprise. With their lines of communication gravely threatened, the North Korean army began to unravel. The American Eighth Army, bolstered by South Korean forces, then pushed its way out of the Pusan Perimeter, handily brushing North Korean forces out of the way and linking up with the X Corps on September 26. At the same time, elements of the 1st Marine Division entered Seoul, heralding the liberation of the South Korean capital.

The stunning success of the Inchon landings and subsequent rough handling of the North Koreans increasingly convinced MacArthur that a direct invasion of North Korea was not only advisable but imperative. After having so swiftly liberated South Korea, the general's blood was clearly up. With the NKPA reeling in confusion, MacArthur hoped to finish off the enemy.

To his credit, MacArthur possessed an abundance of the most necessary trait for a field commander: supreme self-confidence. But he was also notoriously independent, dismissive of restraint, and prone to operate without regard to authorities in Washington.

MacArthur's success at Inchon had only exacerbated his problematic tendencies. His penchant for acting independently could be an asset when quick, decisive action was necessary on the battlefield—the amphibious landings had clearly constituted one of the most brilliant strategic victories of the twentieth century. But if MacArthur's judgement as a theater commander was skewed by dangerous overconfidence, the results could be disastrous.

As he contemplated a drive north, MacArthur's mounting hubris led him to commit a fundamental military blunder—underestimating the enemy. Scoffing at the danger of North Korean resistance, MacArthur likewise dismissed the potential of Communist Chinese intervention. North Korea bordered both China and the Soviet Union, and fears of sparking a wider war with the Communist world loomed large

After Inchon, MacArthur was increasingly convinced that the Chinese would stay out of the war, simply ignoring any intelligence to the contrary. For the inherently aggressive commander bent on total victory, crossing the 38th Parallel and finishing off the North Koreans became a myopic preoccupation.

Authorities in Washington were increasingly seeing things MacArthur's way. Although initially hesitant to potentially provoke a full-scale war with either Communist China or the Soviet Union, the Truman Administration inexorably

ABOVE: In this undated photo, from left, are Kim Il Sung, Prime Minister of North Korea; Kuo Mo-Jo, head of the Communist Delegation to North Korea; and Gen. T. Shtykov, Russian Ambassador to Korea. BELOW: Though the United States provided the majority of materiel and personnel (nearly 1.8 million) to the United Nations forces in support of South Korea, 15 other nations contributed troops. These two soldiers manning a Bren Gun were part of the 81,000 British troops to serve in the Korean War, the second largest contingent in the U.N. effort. OPPOSITE: A U.S. Army 2nd Division machine-gun team poses near the Ch'ongch'on River in North Korea. In 1948 President Harry Truman signed Executive Order 9981 mandating desegregation of the U.S. military. Some organizations within the military were slow to adopt the order, but the Korean War effectively accelerated integration.

Both: National Archives

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drifted toward favoring a push into North Korea.

General Matthew Ridgway would later observe that there had developed "an almost superstitious regard for General MacArthur's infallibility. Even his superiors, it seemed, began to doubt if they should question any of MacArthur's decisions."

There were also simpler, more practical considerations for crossing the border. For Secretary of State Dean Acheson, the invisible line demarcating North and South Korea would prove a nearly impossible barrier for troops on a chaotic battlefield. In Acheson's words, the army couldn't just "march up to a surveyor's line and stop." In hindsight, it's apparent that the sheer momentum of events began to control decision making.

On September 27, the Truman Administration officially authorized MacArthur to cross the 38th Parallel. The order came with provisions not to unduly provoke either the Chinese or Soviets directly along Korea's northern border. For the independent minded general, who had already decided on the move, official authorization to do so was little more than a formality.

For the drive north, MacArthur wielded a somewhat disjointed command, although the arrangement was of his own design. His primary force consisted of the Eighth Army, commanded by Lt. Gen. Walton Walker, an unassuming, barrel-chested career man who had served in the European Theater during World War II. Though not a flashy officer, Walker was a steady army commander who could capably head up a mixed bag of troops, including his own Eighth Army, the Republic of Korea Army—or ROK—and contingents from other U.N. member states including Great Britain and Australia.

MacArthur's secondary force, which he intentionally kept out of Walker's control, was the X Corps, consisting of the 1st Marine Division and the Army's 7th Infantry Division. Command of the outfit was assigned to Maj. Gen. Edward Almond, who had served as MacArthur's chief of staff. Almond's command of X Corps, as well as the favored status he enjoyed with MacArthur, caused no small resentment in the officer corps. Almond reported directly to MacArthur, and the uncomfortable arrangement occasioned a less-than-warm working relationship with Walker.

For the invasion of North Korea, MacArthur devised a complex offensive. While Walker's Eighth Army pushed north through western Korea, Almond's X Corps, which had executed the Inchon landing, would be embarked for yet another amphibious landing behind enemy lines, this time at the vital port city of Wonsan on Korea's eastern coast.

This plan, however, met with a dubious response. Walker preferred a simpler plan with X Corps driving directly north to Pyonggang with the Eighth Army in support. Once the North Korean capital fell, U.N. forces could then push east to link up with ROK forces on the coast. Walker's preferences had much to commend them. Such a move was logistically more feasible, and ROK forces on the east coast were making swift progress in the face of weakening North Korean resistance. Some officers pointed out that ROK troops would likely seize Wonsan before the X Corps could even launch an amphibious assault.

Not surprisingly, MacArthur stuck to his own course. The Eighth Army began preparing for a push north, and by October 8, elements of the 1st Cavalry Division had secured a general assembly area near Kaesong. Some of the troopers were within shooting distance from the 38th Parallel.

Farther east, South Korean forces eager to reunite their country had pressed ahead on September 30, when the ROK 3rd Division crossed the parallel. Despite advancing along heavily mined roads and facing increasing resistance from the North Korean 5th Division, the South Koreans made good progress, gaining about 15 miles a day. By October 9, the ROK 3rd and Capital Divisions, advancing in tandem, had raced ahead 110 miles from the border, and were positioned on the outskirts of Wonsan.

When the South Koreans assaulted the city early the next morning, they did so in the face of withering enemy artillery fire. Fierce street fighting developed over the course of the day, reducing portions of the city to rubble. After a day of heavy fighting, ROK troops pushed to the northern edge of Wonsan, securing the city.

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With U.N. forces poised to deliver a death blow to the NKPA, the United Nations General Assembly met in New York City and made a crucial decision that would have lasting repercussions. With North Korean forces rapidly disintegrating on the battlefield, complete victory seemed well within reach. Rather than simply stopping at the liberation of South Korea, delegates adopted an ambitious resolution on October 7, authorizing U.N. forces in Korea to unify the entire peninsula.

Farther west in central Korea, the ROK II Corps, consisting of the 7th and 8th Divisions, likewise crossed the 38th Parallel and drove hard for a strategically vital region which would eventually be known as the Iron Triangle. The locale consisted of a broad plain in an otherwise mountainous region, and served as a hub for road and rail lines across North Korea. By October 11, the II Corps had flushed out disorganized North Korean troops and seized the Triangle.

With South Korean forces pushing hard across the border, the Eighth Army followed suit. As Walker prepared to launch a major campaign with his forces, his initial target was the city of Kumchon. Stiff resistance was expected from the North Korean 19th and 27th Divisions, and the Americans faced the prospect of fighting their way through three lines of defensive field works. Both North Korean divisions were composed of green troops, who were nonetheless fanatically dedicated to defending their country.

On October 9, the 1st Cavalry Division, spearheading the attack, crossed the 38th Parallel and began probing enemy positions. On the left was the 7th Cavalry Regiment, on the right, the 5th. In the division's center, the 8th Cavalry advanced directly up the main road from Kaesong. Despite its access to good roads, the regiment made slow progress as it negotiated a thick network of enemy minefields. A heavily defended North Korean position stalled the regiment's advance. Despite repeated airstrikes, the North Koreans remained in place.

Off to the right, the 5th Cavalry faced tough opposition as it fought to secure the division's right flank. Running into a rugged ridge crowned with North Korean trenches, the regiment assaulted the position on October 12. In the confusion, Lt. Samuel Coursen jumped into a trench to help a stranded trooper, and found himself rushed by enemy soldiers. While the soldier dashed for safety, Coursen fought for his life, firing his rifle and then swinging it wildly as a club. When the position was finally secured, his body was found near those of seven North Koreans.

On the left, the 7th Cavalry would experience a lucky breakthrough. Although it was initially expected that the regiment would face the nearly impossible assignment of crossing the Yesong River, patrols discovered a usable footbridge—damaged but intact—still standing over the river. After a three-hour artillery barrage softened up enemy positions, infantry began crossing the bridge, and, under the cover of their own artillery, succeeded in crossing to the far bank with few casualties. But when the North Koreans discovered the Americans were crossing the bridge, they began funnelling reinforcements to the site.

The regiment's 1st Battalion crossed the bridge without artillery support, suffering 78 casualties. Despite the cost, more troopers began funneling over the bridge, and succeeded in fending off a North Korean counterattack overnight. By the morning, the entire regiment had crossed the river and swung north toward Hanpo-ri, effectively cutting off the line of retreat for North Korean troops still defending the Kumchon Pocket.

However, more fighting remained for the 5th and 8th Cavalry Regiments, which continued their attacks in the direction of Kumchon. North Korean forces put up stiff resistance, but fled north as their defenses collapsed on October 14. Their officers kept them in good order, and succeeded in getting the bulk of their troops out of the American trap. In five days of tough fighting, the 1st Cavalry Division succeeded in breaching the enemy's first three defensive lines and clearing the road toward Pyongyang.

Intending to keep the NKPA on the run, Walker kept the 1st Cavalry Division pressing north through the hill country south of Pyongyang, where it faced tough fighting on the main road into the capital. Off the division's right, the ROK 1st and 7th Divisions, moving on foot, were smashing North Korean resistance and threatening to reach the North Korean capital before the Americans. Hoping to speed up his advance, Walker pulled the 24th Infantry Division out of a supporting role and deployed it to the left of the 1st Cavalry.

By October 17, U.N. forces seized the city of

Sarwon, the last town of any size before reaching Pyongyang. North Korean resistance south of the capital was beginning to fall apart, and the following day, two U.N. columns converged on the town in a pincer move that caught the North Koreans off guard. From the south, the 1st Cavalry Division pushed into the city, while the hard-driving ROK 1st Infantry Division attacked from the east. Fierce fighting pushed Communist forces out of the city by October 20.

It was hoped, however, to cut off and destroy North Korean forces fleeing the city. The same day that Pyongyang was secured, the 187th Airborne Regimental Combat Team parachuted onto drop zones near Sukchon and Sunchon, 25 miles north of Pyongyang. The North Korean retreat from the city, however, was so rapid that most NKPA forces slipped by the paratroopers before they secured the area.

One North Korean unit, the 239th Regiment, remained south of Sukchon and was spoiling for a fight. American paratroopers moved south on October 21 but were unexpectedly attacked by the North Koreans. A relief column consisting of the British 27th Commonwealth Brigade moved up from Pyongyang and struck the North Koreans south of Yongyu. Despite stubborn fighting, the North Koreans were pushed off of the hills south of town, and attempted to break through the cordon established by the American paratroopers. Trapped between both U.N. forces and unable to effect a breakout, the North Korean regiment disintegrated as survivors fled north in small groups.

A swift pursuit of North Korean forces ensued. It was apparent that although the NKPA still possessed a good bit of fighting spirit as they defended their country, they posed little conventional strategic threat on their own. Kim Il Sung eventually moved his government to Kanggye in the rugged mountains of northern Korea. Ominously, the city was near the Chinese border at the Yalu River, and was ideally situated as a base from which to wage a defensive guerilla war.

MacArthur remained confident of success, and was still convinced that China would stay out of

ABOVE: United Nations forces under the command of U.S. General Douglas MacArthur made a successful amphibious landing at Inchon on September 15, 1950, and went on to drive the North Koreans back across the 38th parallel by the end of the month. Believing he could achieve a decisive victory and unify Korea, MacArthur pushed his forces north toward the Chinese border. By late November, more than 200,000 Communist Chinese soldiers had the U.N. forces in retreat. OPPOSITE: Maj. Gen. Edward Almond's X Corps, which had executed the Inchon landing, makes another amphibious landing on October 25 at the vital port city of Wonsan on Korea's eastern coast. But by the time X Corps had landed, troops from the Republic of Korea Army (ROK) had secured the city.

the war. With North Korean forces soundly defeated on the battlefield and in wild retreat across the peninsula, it appeared that little more remained than for U.N. forces to maintain persistent pressure on enemy troops and then mop up the remnants of the NKPA. MacArthur assured Washington authorities that victory was in sight, and began making optimistic assurances that the bulk of U.S. troops would be home for Christmas.

As U.N. ground forces raced north, it appeared that MacArthur was right. In fact, on October 24, MacArthur made a momentous decision. Although previous orders from the Pentagon had insisted that only South Korean troops would be permitted to operate in the northern provinces along the Chinese border, MacArthur unilaterally removed such restrictions and authorized his own troops to push all the way to the Yalu River.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff voiced concern over the move, but MacArthur defended the decision on grounds of military necessity, and insisted that the South Koreans couldn't secure the northern reaches of the country by themselves. Ultimately, nothing was done to halt the provocative use of U.N. troops along the Manchurian border.

In fact, circumstances were quickly shaping events even as exultant U.N. forces pushed north in the vacuum created by the collapse of the NKPA. As they did so, however, the logistical constraints of resupplying such a vast army increased dramatically. Much of the terrain in Northern Korea is characterized by heavy mountains and a more primitive network of roads and rail lines. Direct coordination of individual units became more difficult and the army's lines of communication were stretched dangerously thin. The weather likewise worsened with the coming of the notoriously harsh conditions of the Korean winter.

In fact, the ROK 6th Division, to the right of the Eighth Army, was gaining ground fast. On October 26, the Reconnaissance Platoon of the ROK 7th Regiment pushed through the town of Chosan, which sat directly on the Yalu River. North Korean troops were fleeing across the river, and Major Harry Fleming, an American advisor with the regiment, ordered a machine gun crew to open fire. It was the first unit operating in the Eighth Army sector to reach the Manchurian border. It would also be the last.

While elements of Walker's Eighth Army had swiftly pushed to the very gates of Manchuria, Almond's X Corps had been busy executing a cumbersome and, as feared, unnecessary amphibious landing at Wonsan. True to expectations, the city was fully under ROK control by the time the landings could be made, and on October 25, the 1st Marine Division began making uneventful landings at the port city. The area was so secure, in fact, that Almond ordered his 7th Infantry Division to make a landing farther north; it would be another week before the division was fully ashore at Iwon.

While it appeared that the war in Korea was coming to a speedy and victorious resolution, a nightmare scenario was quickly developing that would lead to the war spiraling out of control. As his nation was being overrun, North Korean dictator Kim Il Sung grew increasingly desperate. As his army was hemmed into an ever shrinking ribbon of land in the northern reaches of his country, he came under the stark realization that the nation over which he presided could very well evaporate. Given no substantive assurances from the Soviet Union, Kim had increasingly turned to the only nation with the ability to help, and begged for

Naval History and Heritage Command

ABOVE: U.S. Marines carrying M-1s and Browning Automatic Rifles engaged in street fighting during the liberation of Seoul, Korea, in September 1950. BELOW LEFT: From left, Eighth Army commander Lt. Gen. Walton Walker with Gen. William F. Dean, 24th Infantry Division Commander. BELOW RIGHT: From left, X Corps commander Maj. Gen. Edward Almond talks with a soldier from the 2nd Infantry Division. OPPOSITE: Men of the 19th Regiment, 24th Division, part of the Eighth Army, commanded by Lt. Gen. Walton Walker, move to the front lines during the advance from Pusan. The division was caught in the Battle of the Ch'ongch'on River that began with massive Chinese attacks on November 25, 1950.

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assistance from Communist China

Despite MacArthur's heady and seemingly invincible drive north, the U.N. decision to completely eliminate the North Korean state met with an inevitable response from Red China. Although Mao Tse-tung, Chairman of the Chinese Communist Party, had hoped to avoid conflict in Korea, the looming prospect of western troops being entrenched along China's border was simply unacceptable. After his nation had endured decades of western domination, Japanese occupation, and brutal civil war, Mao was convinced that the U.S. would inevitably invade the Chinese homeland if given a permanent toe hold in Korea.

Just one day after the U.N. authorized MacArthur to reunify the two Koreas, Mao ordered Chinese Communist forces, under the guise of "volunteers," to enter the war. Despite his quick response to the U.N. resolution, Mao vacillated for much of October. Cancelling, and then just as quickly authorizing military operations, China's Great Helmsman agonized over the potential cost to his nation if it entered the war.

His crisis of indecision only worsened when the Soviets, despite previous assurances to the contrary, made it clear that they would not provide direct air support to Chinese ground troops. Fully cognizant that his troops would be decimated by American air superiority, Mao hesitated making a final authorization of intervention.

Despite his unwillingness to become directly involved, Soviet Premier Joseph Stalin was adamant in pushing Mao to join the war. "If a war is inevitable," he wrote, "then let it be waged now." Ultimately, such logic held sway.

On October 19, 30 divisions from the Chinese People's Volunteer Army, the CPV, began crossing the Yalu River. Unfettered by heavy equipment, extensive supply trains, or supporting armor, the lightly armed but fast moving Chinese infantry fanned out across northern Korea. Due to a dire breakdown in intelligence, U.N. forces had little idea what was taking place.

By October 25, the Chinese were ready to act. The initial plan, or First Phase Offensive, was to probe U.N. forces, looking for weaknesses in enemy tactics and giving their green troops a chance to gain experience against a technologically superior enemy. The first troops to face pressure from the Chinese was the ROK 6th Infantry Division, positioned off the right flank of the Eighth Army. Unexpected Chinese attacks caught the South Koreans completely off guard, inflicting heavy casualties and forcing the Koreans to give ground.

Meanwhile to the east, the ROK I Corps was driving toward the Chosin Reservoir and its vital hydroelectric plants. That day, an interrogated enemy prisoner revealed that he was Chinese, and that upwards of 5,000 Chinese troops were in the vicinity. The fighting indicated as much. The Korean attack halted in the face of intense resistance, and it was increasingly evident that a large enemy force had suddenly appeared in their front.

Hearing the alarming reports of Chinese prisoners, General Almond decided to personally investigate. Almond interrogated 16 prisoners who revealed that they were, indeed, Chinese. The men indicated that they were not isolated volunteers, but a part of the Chinese 370th Regiment of the 124th Division, which was in position in the vicinity of the reservoir. The general passed the information up the chain of command, but intelligence indicating a Chinese presence in North Korea was initially discounted, and regarded as little more than evidence that isolated Chinese volunteers had joined the fighting.

On November 1, subsequent attacks struck hard at the U.S. 8th Cavalry Regiment and the ROK 15th Infantry Regiment near Unsan. Both units were badly mauled, with nearly 1,000 casualties overall. The Chinese offensive swept across the front. Over the evening of November 4, a massive attack struck the 24th Infantry Division, which dangerously straddled the Ch'ongch'on River. A fierce battle for survival erupted for Hill 622, crucial high ground that dominated the town of Kunuri and the Ch'ongch'on River. The hill was lost, and then recaptured, multiple times, before ROK troops succeeded in securing a tenuous hold on the heights.

On the far bank of the Ch'ongch'on, American troops fought desperately to hold on with the river to their back. Chinese troops infiltrated to the rear of the 1st Battalion, 19th Infantry, and overran their position. As the battalion streamed for the

National Archives

rear in confusion, the 3rd Battalion organized a counterattack, which failed to dislodge the Chinese. Reinforcements were funneled to the north bank of the river in an attempt to stem the tide, and the 21st Infantry narrowly succeeded in recapturing the lost ground.

On the evening of November 5, the Chinese struck again, hoping to overpower the isolated and weakened American position on the north bank of the river. A surprise night attack on the 19th Infantry caught the regiment unprepared, and many men were killed in their sleep as swiftly moving Chinese infantry poured through the position. The Chinese drove the Americans back for 1,000 yards, but were finally forced to pull back. Both sides had suffered heavily in the fighting. Most importantly, the Eighth Army's swift progress toward the Yalu River had been halted.

In northeastern Korea, U.N. forces continued to gain ground as they battled back disorganized North Korean troops. The ROK Capital Division pushed north near the east coast, fighting daily but making good progress toward the border. Almond's X Corps command split up for separate targets. His 7th Infantry Division advanced to the left of the ROK I Corps. Amid temperatures that often dipped below zero, the division pushed north for the Yalu, frequently fighting through North Korean delaying actions.

South and west of the 7th Division, the 1st Marine Division was ordered toward the Chosin Reservoir to relieve ROK troops that had been stalled in the area. The Marines moved into the sector on November 1 and faced stiff fighting from what were clearly organized Chinese units. From prisoners and casualties it was discovered that the Chinese were present in force, and elements of at least three Chinese infantry divisions were thought to be operating near the Chosin.

In addition to mounting evidence that the Chinese were present in force in North Korea, an alarmingly wide gap existed between the Eighth Army and the X Corps. A yawning chasm more than 20 miles wide completely separated the commands, and the intervening terrain constituted some of the most forbidding and inaccessible mountains in North Korea. MacArthur had considered the area almost impassable to the trucks and armor of his forces. The fact that the mountains were accessible to Chinese light infantry had never been given much consideration.

Although it was apparent that the Chinese had indeed intervened in the war, MacArthur was convinced that their initial clashes with the Eighth Army had taken the fight out of the Chinese and that they would remain on the defensive. Still optimistic of securing a total victory on the Korean peninsula, MacArthur developed a final plan to unleash a fresh offensive and crush any remaining North Korean and Chinese forces still in the field.

In the east, the X Corps brushed aside disjointed North Korean resistance and drove hard for the Manchurian border. On November 21, the 1st Battalion of the 17th Infantry Regiment entered the town of Hyesanjin, which sat on the frozen narrow ribbon of the Yalu River. Chinese troops were clearly visible on the far bank. Exultant to have reached his objective on the Manchurian border, Almond personally entered

Marine Corps Archives/Oliver P. Smith Collection

National Archives

ABOVE: U.S. Marines pushing north toward the Chinese border in November 1950 halt for the clearing of the Main Supply Route (MSR), an unpaved single-lane track winding its way from Hagaru-ri to Yudam-ni through the mountains near North Korea's Chosin Reservoir. Though as late as November 24, General MacArthur would receive intelligence reporting only 34,000 Communist Chinese Forces (CCF) fighting alongside the North Korean People's Army (NKPA), the true number was about 240,000. On the night of November 27, some 120,000 Chinese soldiers attacked the combined UN forces of 30,000 men at the Battle of Chosin Reservoir. LEFT: Enthusiastic Chinese volunteers working in a machine factory sign up for military service. About three million military and civilian personnel served in Korea as part of the Chinese People's Volunteer Army. OPPOSITE: Marine Corps tanks on the road south of Koto-ri in December 1950, as prisoners are escorted to the rear. General MacArthur badly misjudged the Chinese response to the U.N. advance to the Chinese border, refusing to believe initial reports of overwhelming Chinese attacks.

the town with the men of the regiment.

In the Eighth Army sector, the attack unfolded on November 24. The Eighth Army, which had stabilized its front, pushed north for the Chinese border: I Corps to the west, IX Corps in the center, and the ROK II Corps on the right. Promisingly, the offensive proceeded smoothly and faced relatively light resistance. Walker's troops succeeded in gaining ground all along the front, and suffered light casualties as it brushed aside North Korean and Chinese resistance.

On November 25, Walker's troops seized the town of Chongju. Though a tough fight had been expected, the city was found abandoned by enemy troops and the relieved soldiers of the 24th Infantry Division walked in unopposed. Farther to the right, the 25th Division was nearing its objective at the city of Unsan. As the top brass of the Eighth Army looked over their maps on the evening of November 25, it appeared that the offensive was going according to plan.

Updated intelligence reports indicated perhaps 12 lightly armed Chinese infantry divisions were in North Korea backing up the shattered remnants of the NKPA. The auspicious start of the offensive gave further hope that enemy forces would, indeed, be mopped up by Christmas.

Such hopes would prove a chimera as during the previous month, 300,000 Chinese troops had moved into North Korea undetected and MacArthur's hapless troops were about to face a veritable avalanche of highly motivated Communist infantry. Rather than face a mere 12 divisions that were on a defensive footing, U.N. forces would be pitted against 30 divisions eager to launch their own surprise offensive to reconquer the Korean peninsula. By the evening of November 25, 180,000 Chinese were preparing to attack the Eighth Army. Farther east, 120,000 Chinese were in position to assault the isolated X Corps.

Over the evening of November 25, the trap was finally sprung across North Korea, as the Chinese unleashed their Second Phase Offensive. Chinese attacks were costly but extremely effective, and succeeded in not only blunting the U.N. advance but shattering MacArthur's hold on North Korea. In little more than a month of bloody fighting, the Chinese succeeded in driving U.N. forces from much of North Korea. For the average soldier in the field, the Chinese counterattack tragically dashed any hope for a quick end to the war, and ushered in a wintry nightmare of horrific killing the likes of which American fighting men had never seen. ■

In this painting by Alonzo Chappel, Connecticut Patriot militia have lost all military order against the Loyalists fighting alongside warriors from the Iroquois Confederacy—as the Battle of Wyoming Valley turns into a massacre.

Blood Along the SUSQUEHANNA

Yankee Patriots marched out of Forty Fort to defend their beloved Wyoming Valley against Tory Rangers and their Iroquois Confederacy allies.

BY KELLY BELL

Dread gripped the Connecticut settlers of the Wyoming Valley, as the alarm guns boomed from Wilkes-Barre Fort. The sound of those cannons meant trouble and local militiamen grabbed their muskets and rifles and began to gather at Wilkes-Barre and other forts that dotted the valley.

On July 1, 1778, bloodied and tired survivors stumbled into Jenkins' Fort with word of an Indian attack further up the Susquehanna River the day before. This distressing news confirmed reports of scouts that had earlier ventured up the river and traded shots with lurking Tories and Indians. The threat of an attack, looming over the scenic valley for some weeks, now seemed frightfully imminent.

Continental Army officer Lieutenant Colonel Zebulon Butler quickly rode out of Wilkes-Barre for Forty Fort, headquarters of the 24th Connecticut Militia Regiment. There he was met by Col. Nathan Dennison who had sent for Butler, asking him to take temporary command of the valley's defense as the veteran officer had much more military experience than he did. The other militia officers present agreed and Butler promptly took charge.

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The Metropolitan Museum of Art

Small detachments of militia were quickly dispatched to provide protection to the forts in the valley where women and children were already flocking. Butler then wasted no time in marching out of Forty Fort with the remaining militia intending to confront the invaders. Moving up the west bank of the Susquehanna, the militia kept a sharp eye expecting anytime to be attacked. No resistance was met and Butler halted the militia at Sutton Creek. From there he dispatched a lone company to the scene of the Indian attack at a tannery and nearby cornfield.

Here two warriors were spotted and quickly killed. The mutilated bodies of the victims were then recovered and the company turned back to rejoin the rest of Butler's command. After a 20-mile march, the weary militia returned to having not found the sizable Tory and Indian force reported to be nearby.

Meanwhile, four miles above Forty Fort, two Tories slipped out of the humble Fort Wintermoot. Driving a small herd of cattle, they headed northwest for a mile and half to Lookout Mount overlooking the valley. Here they met with the large Tory and Indian force Butler had been unable to find. Commanding this force was another officer named Butler—Maj. John Butler. This Butler, a Loyalist, had arrived with a large command of his Rangers and Indian allies. He had come to bring war and destruction to the scenic Wyoming Valley turning the settlers' dread into sorrow.

The Wyoming Valley nestled in what is now northeastern Pennsylvania was no stranger to bloodshed and trouble. Located between two forest carpeted mountain ranges, the valley stretched for about 25 miles and was about three miles wide. Cutting through the valley was the wild Susquehanna River. In 1662, King Charles II of England granted the Colony of Connecticut a strip of land extending from sea to sea. An overlapping land charter was granted to William Penn in 1681, which in turn caused both Pennsylvania and Connecticut to believe they had the right to the land.

At the same time, the Wyoming Valley was claimed by the mighty Iroquois Confederacy in New York who had moved bands of tribes into the valley such as the Delaware, Nanticoke, Munsee, and Shawnee. By the mid-1750s the Iroquois sold the valley to a Connecticut land company much to the chagrin of their vassal tribes in the valley. With the end of the French and Indian War, Connecticut settlers began to move into the valley in the early 1760s, but it was short-lived and bloody. In 1763, Native warriors struck the fledgling settlement killing 20 people and forcing the rest to retreat back to Connecticut. The Yankee settlers, however, would be back.

Before they returned, Pennsylvania settlers nicknamed Pennamites began moving into the valley in 1768. When the Yankees returned the next year, violence erupted and would continue for the next six years. By 1774, the Yankees were in firm control of the Wyoming Valley and it was annexed by Connecticut and now known as Westmoreland County.

The following year in the valley the 24th Connecticut Militia Regiment was formed and placed under the command of Colonel Butler, a leading settler. In August of that year, Congress also approved the raising of the two Independent Continental companies to help defend the valley from the Tories and Indians. They would eventually leave the valley to serve elsewhere, as did Butler as he was appointed to the rank of lieutenant colonel in the 3rd Connecticut Regiment of the main Continental Army.

By early June of 1778, Colonel Butler had returned to the Wyoming Valley on a furlough only to find the inhabitants in a state of alarm. Tories and Indians had been attacking settlements on the upper Susquehanna River about 25 miles upriver from Wilkes-Barre. Scouts had clashed

with the enemy as well. Rightly believing an Indian attack was imminent, Colonel Butler rode to where the Continental Congress was meeting in York Town, Pennsylvania, to seek help. He managed to get the two depleted Wyoming Independent Continental Companies ordered back to the valley, while at the same time Butler was permitted to remain in the valley to command forces being collected there.

Some of the settlers establishing homesteads on the Upper Susquehanna and the Wyoming Valley, many of whom were from New York, sided with the Crown with the outbreak of the American Revolution. They were the Loyalists who faced severe persecution from their Patriot neighbors in the valley. A number of these Loyalists were sent off in chains to Connecticut where they were packed into prisons. A number had fled the valley and made their way to Fort Niagara, joining numerous Loyalist refugees flooding in from the frontier of New York. Capt. Richard Lernoult of the British 8th Regiment writing from Niagara to the Governor of Quebec, Sir Guy Carleton, on April 28, 1777 noted that Loyalist refugees staggering in "are almost naked and have been so long hiding in the woods and almost famished that it is distressing to behold them."

Many of the Loyalists from the Wyoming Valley and the upper Susquehanna enlisted in the newly formed Butler's Rangers. John Butler had received permission from Carleton on September 16, 1777, to form a Corps of Rangers to consist of eight companies. This would later be expanded to 10 companies. Two of the companies were "to be composed of people speaking the Indian language and acquainted with their customs and manner of making war."

John Butler, himself, could speak various Indian languages and was well acquainted with the intricacies of Native affairs and wilderness warfare. Although born in Connecticut, Butler had spent much of his life in the Mohawk Valley of New York. There he served in the British Indian Department under the tutelage of Sir William Johnson, the Superintendent of Indian Affairs. Butler proved himself a key Indian Department officer during the French and Indian War and afterwards. During the Revolution he would continue to serve as an Indian Agent even after his Rangers were formed.

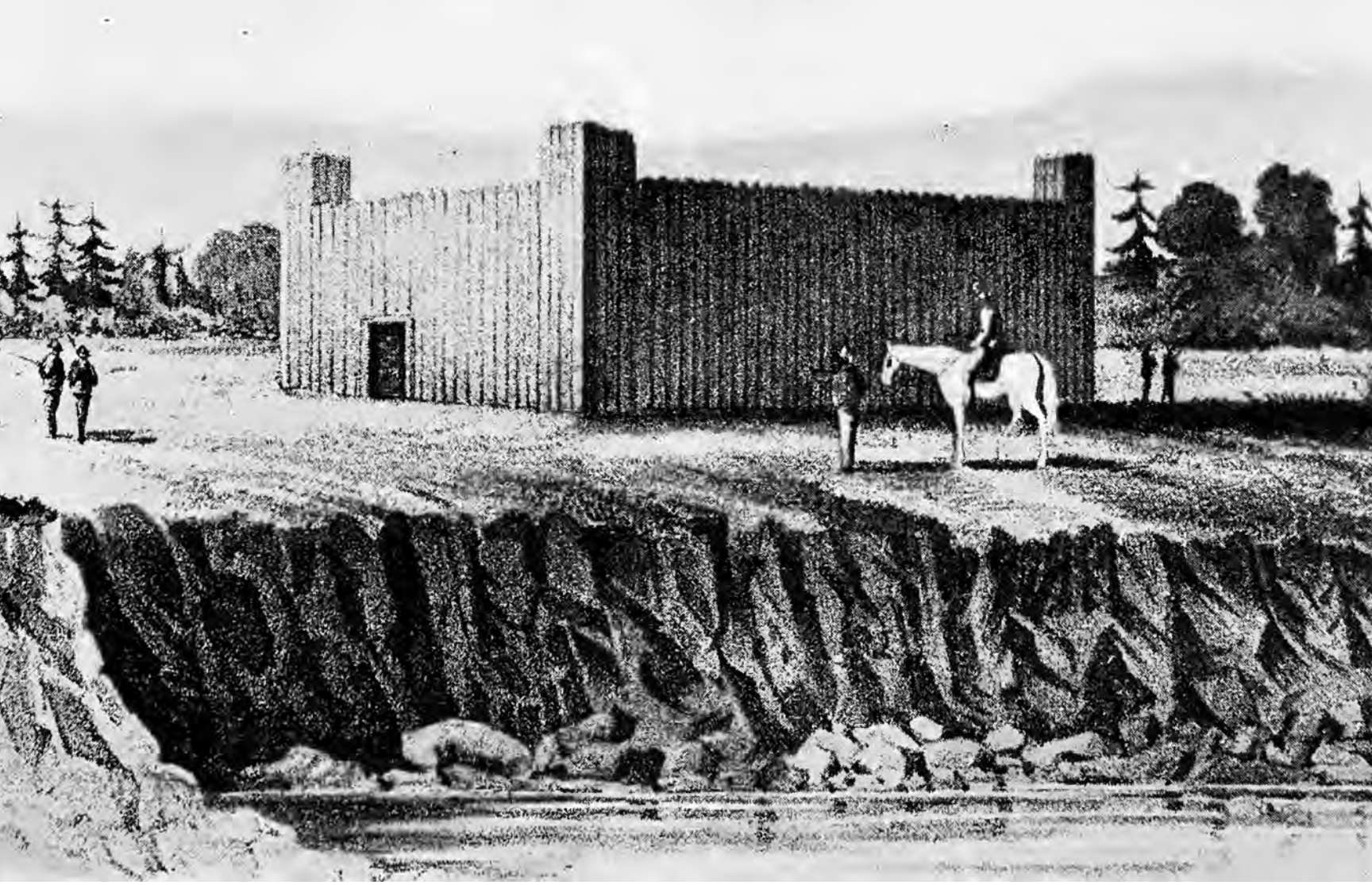
With his Rangers and Indian allies, Major Butler planned to "break up the back settlements of Pennsylvania and Jersey and other parts of the Province of New York in order as well to distress the enemy." At the same time he intended to draw away much needed Rebel troops facing the main British army under Sir Henry Clinton.

In early May 1778, Major Butler set out with about 70 Rangers and a small contingent of Indian Department Rangers for the Seneca village of Canadesaga with a pack train of arms and ammunition to be used by Natives and Loyalist recruits. There Butler met with Old Smoke, a tall Seneca leader who was nearly 70 years old, and some other principal chiefs of the Seneca. The Seneca were one of six tribes that made up the Iroquois Confederacy with the other tribes being the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Tuscarora and Cayuga. The Seneca and Cayuga were adamant on launching an attack against the Wyoming Valley to neutralize any threat from the Rebels there.

From Canadesaga, Butler and his Seneca allies pushed on for the town of Unadilla located at the junction of the Susquehanna and Unadilla Rivers. The Indian town was a Loyalist stronghold that

New York Public Library

ABOVE: This 1858 engraving depicts three Delaware (Lenape) warriors raiding a Quaker family farm in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, on November 2, 1778. Five-year-old Frances Slocum (far right) and her brother Ebenezer, center left, were abducted, though he was quickly released. Frances was adopted by a Delaware chief and later married a man who became a chief in the Miami tribe in Indiana. OPPOSITE: *Wyoming Valley, Pennsylvania*, by Jasper Francis Cropsey, highlights the beauty of the fertile valley along the Susquehanna River that was in dispute even before the Revolutionary War, as it had been granted to Pennsylvania and Connecticut. In the summer of 1778 Loyalist forces burned and pillaged Patriot homesteads and forts in the scenic valley.



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Forty Fort on the Susquehanna River was built by settlers in Wyoming Valley in 1770. During the Revolutionary War, it served as the headquarters for the 24th Connecticut Regiment until it was surrendered to Loyalists and their Iroquois Confederacy allies under Major John Butler on July 4, 1778.

boasted two much-needed gristmills and was strategically situated near the back settlements of Pennsylvania and New York. Butler had difficulty keeping his Rangers and Indian allies fed on their journey as Ranger Richard McGinnis would later write in his journal, "I was under the necessity of giving a hard dollar for 4 small Indian cakes, and sometimes could not get it at all."

Messengers were dispatched to inform Mohawk war leader Joseph Brant and Lt. Barent Frey of Butler's Rangers to join them at the Seneca village of Tioga. Brant and Frey had been harassing New York settlements along more than 150 miles of the frontier since mid-May, destroying enemy property, rescuing Mohawk and Loyalist families, as well as securing provisions and recruits for Butler.

Upon reaching Tioga, located along the Susquehanna about 90 miles northwest of the Wyoming Valley, Butler and Old Smoke held a council on June 24 with the Natives which were mostly Seneca, Cayugas, Delawares and a handful of Shawnee. When Frey and Brant joined the forces gathered at Tioga, the Ranger lieutenant with his men rejoined Butler. Brant, on the other hand, had no intentions of joining the expedition or taking orders from Butler. When the council broke up, Brant left, much to the chagrin of Old Smoke and other Native leaders.

On June 27, about 500 warriors and 110 Rangers climbed in canoes and rafts and set off down the Susquehanna River. They continued by water for two days until they reached Bowman's Creek. On June 30, they set off overland in a southerly direction for about 12 miles before arriving at Mount Lookout. In a message to the commander of Fort Niagara, Lt. Col. Mason Bolton, Butler wrote, "I sent parties to discover the situation and strength of the enemy, who brought in eight prisoners and scalps."

One of these parties included McGinnis, who recorded how they "came to a mill belonging to the rebels and the savages burnt the mill and took 3 prisoners, two white men and a negro whom they afterwards murdered in their own camp." Another couple of Rangers and some warriors attacked settlers working in a cornfield. It was the survivors from the attack on the mill, actually a tannery, that sparked the alarm guns that were fired from Wilkes-Barre Fort.

The two Loyalists who had slipped out of Fort Wintermoot driving 14 head of cattle informed Major Butler "that the rebels could muster about 800 men who were all assembled in their forts." Their estimation of the Patriot strength was considerably high. The arrival of the cattle was much welcomed as McGinnis recalled, "We were much distressed for provisions, having nothing to subsist on except a little parched corn." The cattle were quickly butchered and divided among the Rangers and warriors.

With the two Loyalists acting as guides, Butler and Old Smoke quietly set out with their Rangers and warriors on the evening of July 1. They slipped through a gap in the mountain and halted about half a mile from Fort Wintermoot. Lt. John Turney of the Rangers and a drummer were ordered by Major Butler to carry a flag of truce to the fort and demand its surrender.

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ABOVE: Small fortifications similar to this one, Stewart's Block House, dotted the Wyoming Valley region along the Susquehanna River in the 1700s. Many were burned by Loyalist forces under Major John Butler in 1778. LEFT: From left, Major John Butler, Loyalist commander, and Lt. Col. Zebulon Butler, Patriot commander. Both men were originally from Connecticut, though they were not related.

Butler's surrender terms were generous, promising that the garrison and their families would be unharmed in return for remaining "neutral during the present Contest with Great Britain and America." Most of the inhabitants of the fort were Loyalists and they urged Lt. Elisha Scovell to surrender with his small detachment of the 7th Company of the 24th Connecticut. Scovell agreed and Major Butler quickly set up headquarters in the fort, while his Natives allies made camp in the nearby woods.

The following day, July 2, Captain William Caldwell and a small party of Rangers was sent to offer surrender terms to nearby Jenkins' Fort. The fort, which was a stockade constructed around the home of John Jenkins, was held by a small detachment of the 7th Company under Captain Stephen Harding. Seeing little option, Harding surrendered the small fort. Butler dispatched foraging parties to reconnoiter the other Rebels forts in the valley and drive in cattle and collect much needed provisions.

A prisoner taken at Fort Wintermoot, David Ingersoll, was sent by Major Butler on July 3 under a Ranger and Indian warrior escort to Forty Fort with a flag of truce. As ordered, Ingersoll delivered Butler's capitulation terms which not only demanded the surrender of Forty Fort, but the rest of the forts in the valley as well. If the forts unconditionally surrendered, Butler promised the inhabitants would be given good terms. However, should the forts not surrender then Major Butler would waste no time in moving against them.

Dennison, still headquartered at Forty Fort, desperately needed time for the militia to assemble. He refused Major Butler's demands stating he first needed to consult with Colonel Butler at Wilkes-Barre. While Ingersoll and his guards returned to Major Butler, a messenger was dispatched to Wilkes-Barre. Orders were also issued to the two Wilkes-Barre militia companies (1st and 6th), the Hanover (5th) and Pittston (4th) companies, and those members of the Alarm List companies not already garrisoning the other forts, to march for Forty Fort immediately. The Alarm Companies were made up of men over the age of 50. By noon all had arrived except for the Pittston's company.

The Pittston's commander decided to ignore the order as his fort had a considerable number of women and children seeking shelter there. He did not want to leave them defenseless as just across the Susquehanna, the Tories occupied Fort Jenkins. Messengers had earlier been sent to militia companies downriver, but no one was expecting much assistance from the Pennsylvanians.

Colonel Butler soon rode into the Forty Fort and again took command of the militia. Consulting with the officers present, it was decided the fort, which boasted 12-foot-high stockade walls, barracks and enclosed about an acre of land, would be held at all hazards. Word soon arrived that one of the Independent Continental Companies was on the march and would arrive in about two days. Butler, meanwhile, sent an adjutant galloping to the Board of War at Philadelphia with news of the critical situation in Wyoming.

In an effort to buy more precious time for reinforcements to arrive, Colonel Butler sent a messenger with a flag of truce to Major Butler asking to discuss his surrender terms. Scouts, meanwhile, were attempting to determine the strength of Butler's Rangers and their Native allies with little success. The Patriot messenger carrying the flag of truce was fired upon by Indians and forced to return to Forty Fort. Another messenger sent bearing a flag of truce was forced to return as well.

Officers now began to assemble their troops which consisted of an incomplete company of Continentals being raised in the valley under Capt. Dethick Hewitt, the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 5th, and 6th companies of the 24th Connecticut Militia Regiment. Also joining the command were elements of the 7th, 9th and 10th militia companies, as well a handful of men from the two Alarm Companies. These troops were assigned to strengthen the other five companies. Finally, about 25 men from one of the Independent Continental companies had reached Forty Fort ahead of the rest of their company and were absorbed in Hewitt's Company.

Leaving behind a small garrison, Butler and Dennison marched out of Forty Fort with a force of 375 men about 2 p.m. with their flag fluttering and fife and drummers playing "St. Patrick's Day in the Morning." Heading northeast, the Patriot column reached Abrahams Creek about a mile from the fort where they stopped to rest. Scouts were again sent out ahead to locate the enemy.

The situation was growing critical for the Patriots as scouts soon brought in alarming news that the enemy were starting to burn some of the settlements and were driving away all the cattle they could gather. Scouts further warned that the Tories and Indians would likely burn, plunder and destroy all the upper settlements. It was also thought they would cross the river and capture Pittston Fort.

A Council of War was immediately held to discuss the report. Some of the officers argued that the Tories and Indians should be attacked immediately, while others, including Dennison, pre-

ferred to wait for reinforcements. Things turned ugly when accusations of cowardice were hurled at the officers who advised caution.

This bitter disagreement spilled over to the men of the militia. The 5th Company, for example, ousted their captain who advised caution and voted in a firebrand named Lazarus Stewart. In an attempt to keep unity, Butler and Dennison made the fateful decision to attack.

Indian parties collecting cattle spotted the Rebel force and quickly reported this to Major Butler and Old Smoke. "This pleased the Indians highly, who observed they should be upon an equal footing with them in the woods," Butler later reported. Major Butler dispatched runners to recall his Rangers and Indian allies back to Fort Wintermoot. Caldwell was ordered to torch Jenkins' Fort and soon smoke from it was billowing skyward.

By 3 p.m., Colonel Butler had his men formed again into column and set off from Abrahams Creek. About a mile from Fort Wintermoot, Colonel Butler formed his regiments into a battle line two ranks deep. The right of the Patriot line halted at where the ground sloped down to the bottomlands near the Susquehanna. The rest of the line stretched for about 300 or 400 yards northwest across a meadow known as Abrahams Plains. Hewitt's Continentals held the right of the Patriot line, with the 1st Company being to their left. The 6th Company was next in line. These three companies made up the right wing of the Patriot's command and were directly under Colonel Butler's command. Next in line was the 2nd Company with the 5th Company to their left under the firebrand Steward. Finally, holding the far left of the line was the 3rd Company. These three companies on the left wing of the Patriot line were under Dennison's command.

Another column of smoke billowed upward as Major Butler ordered Fort Wintermoot to be burned. With his headquarters on fire, John Butler hoped the Rebels would be deceived into believing he was retreating. To northwest of the burning fort was a six-acre field where on its far boundary was a log fence. Behind that fence Major Butler posted most of his Rangers and ordered them to lie down and wait for the approach of the enemy. On Butler's right was a heavily wooded swamp where Old Smoke and the Native warriors, bolstered with Indian Department personnel and a handful of Butler's Rangers, waited. Butler dispatched some Indian warriors and Rangers dressed in native garb to act as skirmishers. Rebel prisoners, along with Loyalist women and children, were sent to the rear under guard. It was now almost 4 p.m. and the Rebels were advancing toward Major Butler's trap.

With the enemy not far away Colonel Butler reminded his men that,"We come out to fight, not only for liberty, but for life itself, and what is dearer, to preserve our homes from conflagration, our women and children from the tomahawk." As he ordered an advance, Butler added, "Stand firm at the first shock, and the Indians will give way." The Patriots advanced toward the burning fort. The Tory and Indian skirmishers, working in pairs, fired on the Rebels before withdrawing to their own lines.

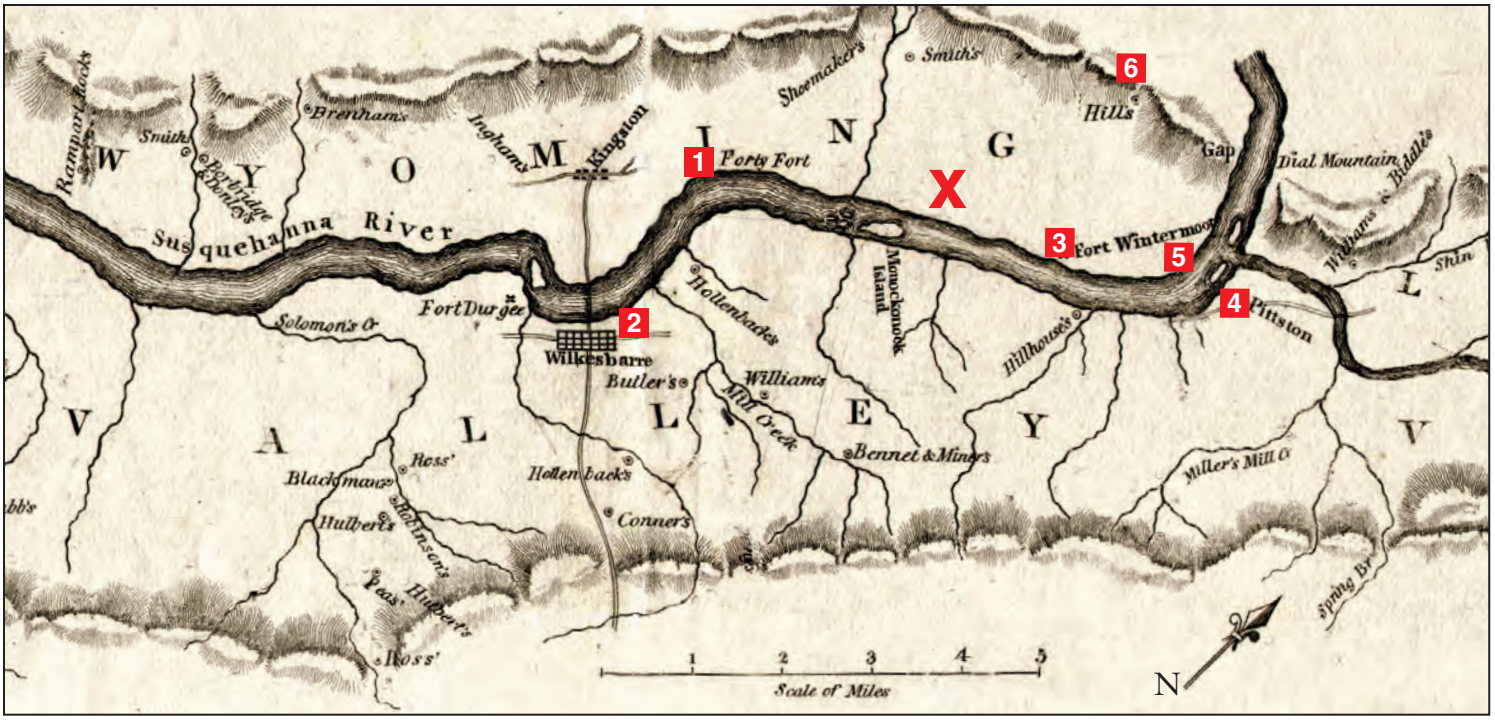
Now convinced they were facing the rear-

LEFT: This illustration shows a uniform that would likely have been worn by the Loyalist soldiers at the Battle of Wyoming. Many of Major John Butler's men, who fought alongside the Iroquois Confederacy (including Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, and Seneca), wore a combination of military and Native American clothing. ABOVE: Historical artist Don Troiani's painting depicts warriors of the Iroquois Confederacy attacking Patriot militia on the bank of the Susquehanna River as they try to escape the battle. At right, hiding in the brush, is Ensign Daniel Downing, who served with the first company of the 24th Connecticut Militia Regiment.

guard of the retreating Tory force, the Patriots pushed ahead. At about 200 yards from the fence, they spotted the prone rangers through the gaps in the logs. Colonel Butler gave the order to fire and soon the militia line erupted in the flash and crash of musketry. Advancing another 30 yards, the militia loosened a second volley. The militia advanced another 30 yards and unleashed yet another volley.

Major Butler ordered his men to hold their fire. McGinnis remembered some of the Rebels shouting "Come out, ye villainous Tories! Come out, if ye dare, and show your heads, if ye durst, to the brave Continental Sons of Liberty!" The Patriots continued their advance until they were within 100 yards of the prone Rangers.

A blood-curdling yell erupted from the Indian warriors waiting in the swamp on the Rebel left. Butler's Rangers took to their feet and let out a piercing war cry as well. A deadly volley erupted from the Ranger's position tearing gaps in the Rebel line. As the Rangers fell



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ABOVE: This map of the Wyoming Valley was created in 1830 by George Jones, a Yale graduate and native of York, Pennsylvania, from an original by Colonel John L. Butler. The principal locations of the events of July 1778, are shown: 1-Forty Fort, 2-Wilkes Barre Fort, 3-Fort Wintermoot, 4-Pittston Fort, 5-Jenkins' Fort, 6-Mount Lookout, X-Battle site. OPPOSITE: This 1902 drawing by Frederick C. Yohn, *Departure of the Indians From Wyoming, After the Battle and Massacre,* depicts Iroquois warriors celebrating their victory on the battlefield, as Iroquois women scavenge for valuables. Like the legend of "Queen Esther," this image depicts part of the widely publicized propaganda alleging atrocities surrounding the events in the Wyoming Valley.

back to reform and reload, Colonel Butler cried out to his men, "See the enemy retreat! Stand fast and the day is ours!"

Believing the Tories were in retreat, the right wing of the Rebel line advanced another 30 yards. The Rangers, however, were not retreating and the Patriot's casualties began to mount as they endured a deadly fire from the Rangers on their right and Natives on their left. Quickly spotting the Native threat, Dennison ordered the 3rd and 5th companies to refuse the left flank by facing about and wheeling to reform on a right angle to the 2nd Company. Over the deafening noise of the battle the order was misunderstood and some of the troops thought a retreat had been ordered. As part of the Patriot battle line began to retire, the warriors under Old Smoke came crashing out of the swamp and slammed into the confused Rebel left.

Colonel Butler, seeing the turmoil on his left, could do nothing to prevent a panic overtaking his men. Lt. Col. George Dorrance, an aide to Dennison, shouted at the wavering left flank: "Stand up to your work!" It did little good and Dorrance fell wounded and was later killed. At the other end of the crumbling Patriot line, Captain Hewitt refused to budge despite his company giving way. "The day is lost, shall we retreat!" shouted one of his men. "I'll be damned if I do," Hewitt replied and shortly afterward he died fighting with the handful of his men who stayed with him. With most of their company commanders killed or wounded, and Butler's Rangers charging forward, the Patriot line broke. Now the slaughter began.

Many of the Patriots fled toward Forty Fort, but a contingent of Natives attempted to cut them off. A good number of the fleeing Rebels were now pressed toward the Susquehanna. Here at the river near the wooded and broad Monocanock Island, the slaughter continued as the Rebels were shot down in the water. Sixteen Rebels were lured back to shore with the promise of not being killed. They were then led into the woods and placed in a ring around a large rock. Here their heads were smashed in with a war club, possibly at the hands of a vengeful Queen Esther Montour who recently had her son killed. Other captured Rebels fared little better as they were led off to the smoldering Fort Wintermoot. Here they were tortured and killed by the Natives.

The bloody battle had only lasted half an hour. "In this action were taken 227 Scalps and only five prisoners," reported Major Butler. He added that the Natives were so exasperated from their losses suffered in previous engagement the year before, "that it was with the greatest difficulty I could save the lives of these few." Dennison, who had made it safely to Forty Fort, claimed they had lost 34 officers and 268 men. According to Major Butler the Natives had suffered one killed and eight wounded, while the Rangers had two wounded. Casualties for the Natives, however, may have been higher.

The next morning Major Butler offered Dennison surrender terms which would have the inhabitants lay down their arms and be allowed to return to their farms. The forts were to be demolished and any Continentals to be delivered up. Butler further promised to "use his utmost influence" to preserve the private property of the inhabitants. The Tories upriver were to be allowed "to remain in peaceable possession of their farms, and unmolested in a free trade in and throughout this state." Finally, Dennison and the rest of the inhabitants were "not to take up arms during the present conflict."

Before agreeing to these terms, Dennison requested time to meet with his other officers. Major Butler agreed and Dennison quickly headed to Wilkes-Barre Fort to meet with Colonel Butler, who had also escaped the previous day's carnage. The Patriots had no choice but to surrender, but before they did Butler and a small number of surviving Continentals would immediately escape the valley before Dennison agreed to Major Butler's terms.

Dennison then met with Major Butler and agreed to the capitulation terms. Despite Butler's

promises, he could not control his Indian allies or some of his Loyalist forces. Dennison elaborated on this in a report: "Nevertheless, the enemy, being powerful, proceeded, plundered, burned and destroyed almost everything that was valuable; murdered several of the remaining inhabitants, and compelled most of the remainder to leave their settlements, nearly destitute of clothing, provisions and the necessaries of life."

The Natives, some Rangers and Loyalist irregulars in small parties had scattered over the valley and torched barns, homes and mills. About 1,000 buildings would be smouldering ruins before they were done. They also rounded up or killed about 1,000 head of cattle, sheep and pigs. Ranger McGinnis elaborated: "the rebels begged of us to restore them something back, but no, we replied ... remember how you took their [Loyalist] property and converted it to rebel purposes; and the persons fell in your hands you immediately sent them off to prison clean into Connecticut, and left their numerous families in the utmost distress. Be contented, rebels, that your lives are still spared and that you have not shared the same fate with your seditious brethren."

McGinnis added, "This was the argument we made use of to the surviving rebels of Wyoming. But on the whole my heart was affected for the women and children who came after us crying and beseeching us that we would leave them a few cows and we told them it was against the orders of Butler, however, privately we let them have 4 or 5 cows."

Many Patriot families collected what possessions they could into wagons, oxcarts or boats and fled the valley. These beleaguered families' horrific accounts spread like wildfire in the nearby Pennsylvania settlements causing many settlers to abandon their homes in what was called the "Great Runaway."

One escaping Patriot, William Maclay wrote, "I never in my life saw such scenes of distress. The river and roads leading down it were covered with men, women and children flying for their lives." Maclay confessed he once did not like the Connecticut Yankees of Wyoming Valley, but now felt sorry for them.

On July 8, Major Butler began the return trip back to Tioga with his Rangers and Indian allies. Not long after reaching Tioga, Butler was struck by a violent illness forcing him to retire to Fort Niagara to recover his health. He left Captain Caldwell in command of the Rangers with orders to send out raiding parties to "burn and destroy everything they possibly can," adding, "If we can prevent the enemy from their grain, their Grand Army (who are already much distressed) must disperse and their country, of course, become an easy prey to the King, their Father."

The Patriots, meanwhile, in the coming weeks moved back into the Wyoming Valley sending in Continentals troops. Among them was Colonel Butler who, with 113 Continentals and militia, constructed Camp Westmoreland upon the ruins of Wilkes-Barre. Settlers also slowly began to return to the Wyoming Valley to re-establish their farms and homesteads.

In late September, a Patriot force under Col. Thomas Hartley, which included troops from the Wyoming Valley who were breaking their parole earlier given to John Butler, moved up the Susquehanna River and torched Tioga and nearby Queen Esther's Town. The following year a large Continental army under Maj. Gen. John Sullivan would partially assemble in the Wyoming Valley for a destructive invasion into Iroquois country, laying numerous Native villages, orchards and cornfields to waste. The bloody frontier war raged on, however, as Butler's Rangers and their Indians allies continued to strike the Rebels from the Mohawk Valley, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, western Virginia and Kentucky. ■

Allen County Public Library/*A history of Wilkes-Barré, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania*

During the Second Punic War, Syracuse defended itself against the Roman war machine with a secret weapon—antiquity's greatest mathematician.

BY JOHN E. SPINDLER

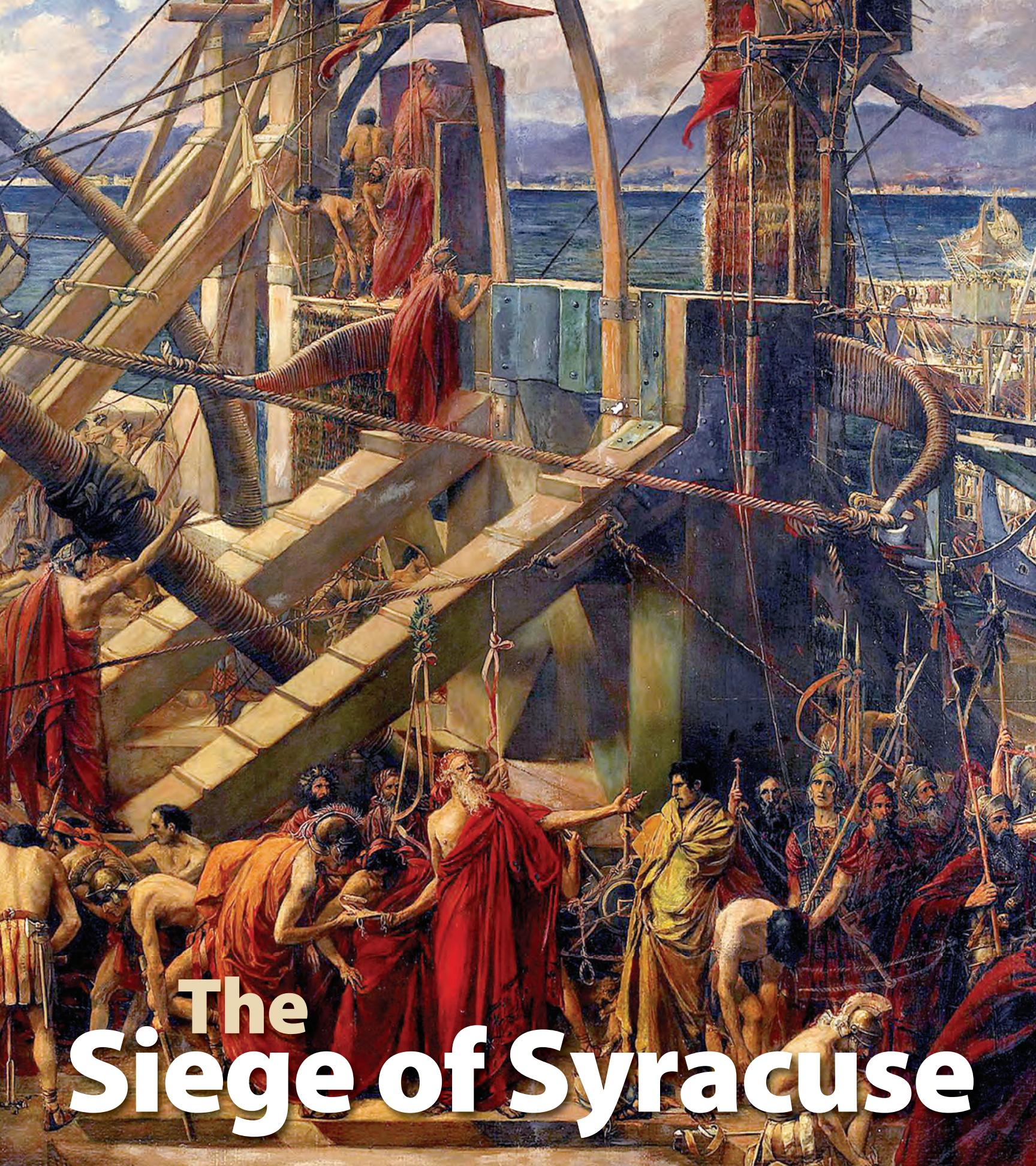
From the deck of a quinquereme, one of 60 in his invasion fleet, Roman Consul Marcus Claudius Marcellus surveyed Syracuse's Little Harbor on the coast of Sicily. He had anticipated that a direct assault on these sea walls of Achradina would greatly test the Romans, but the reception from the Syracusan defenses had been a surprise. Catapults and other missile-throwing weapons harassed the fleet throughout its entire approach. There had not been the normal respite by an enemy forced to readjust for changing ranges.

Marcellus felt better as he saw that his specially prepared ships had survived the Syracusan barrage to arrive at the base of the sea wall. Eight quinqueremes had been lashed together in pairs to form four massive platforms that bore a siege weapon specifically built for this attack. Secured to the bow of each was a solid four-foot-wide scaling ladder that could be raised using ropes and pulleys. Earning the name *sambuca*—after the triangular-shaped, multi-stringed musical instrument—they would be the way his Roman soldiers would storm Achradina's sea wall. Additional warships with archers and slingers accompanied the floating siege platforms.

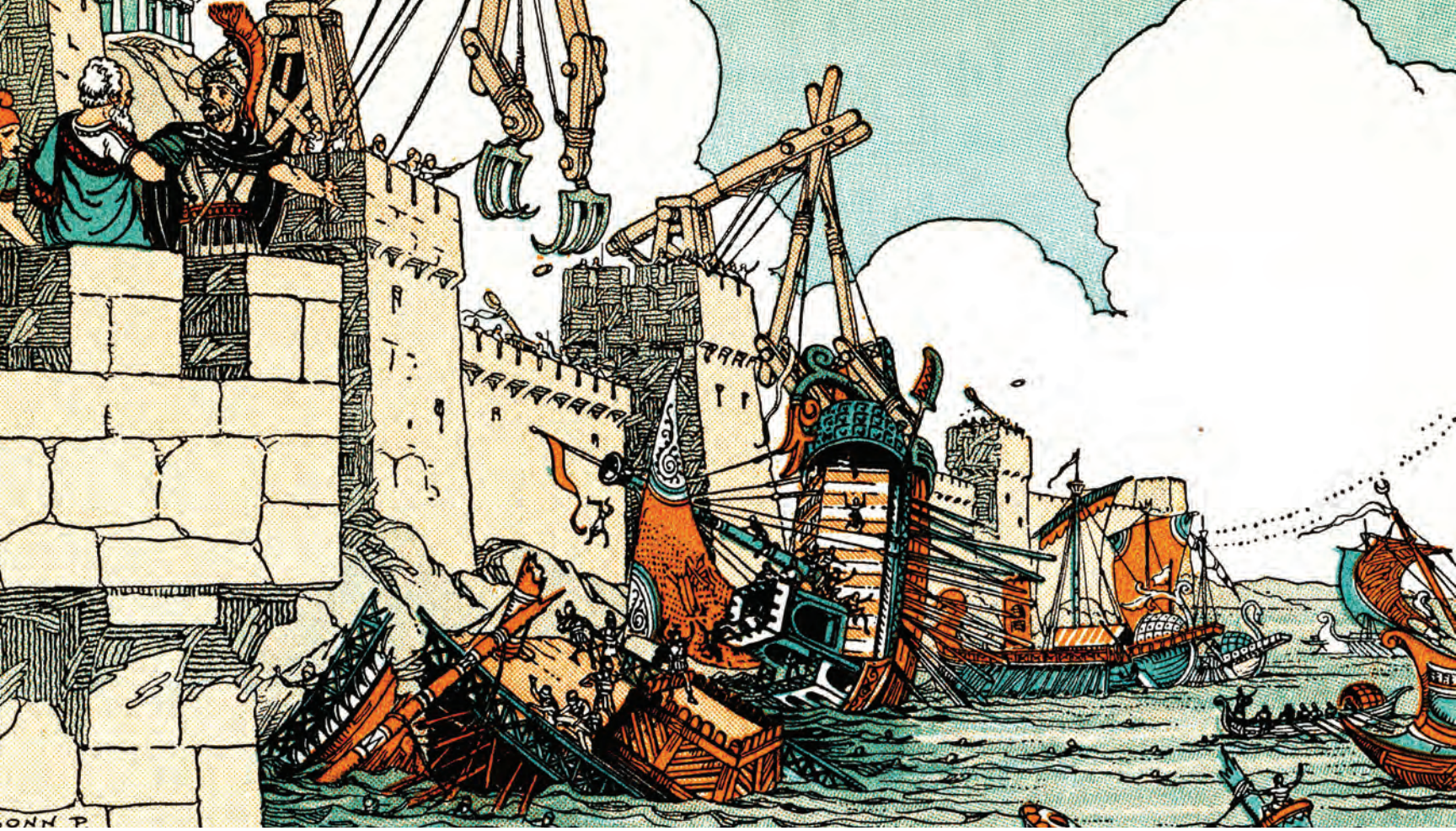
Before the sambucae could be raised, several wooden beams swung out from the battlement atop the seawall. The Romans worked frantically to get their over-sized scaling ladders up, but couldn't help but gape as huge grapnels on chains swung out from each beam. As they stared at these large "claws," large stones began striking their vessels from above. As the stones punched through upper decks, men and debris went into the sea. Encased in metal armor, the soldiers sank rapidly and drowned.

Keeping the Romans off-balance, the grapnels dropped onto the prows of the closest quinqueremes. Using a series of pulleys, these grappling hooks were dragged around until catching on a piece of the upper structure. The claws were attached to counter weights that the Syracusans then released. Already possessing great instability

The white-bearded Archimedes (bottom, right), Greek mathematician, physicist, engineer, astronomer, and inventor, directs the defense of his home city of Syracuse against the Roman attack.



The Siege of Syracuse



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due to being top heavy, it did not require much effort to tip or capsize the huge Roman warships. In some cases, the prow was lifted into the air, then sent crashing back to the water when the grapnel was released. After losing a number of ships and men, Marcellus called off his direct assaults on the fortification. He had been aware the simultaneous land attacks against the city had also been repulsed.

Probably unknown to the consul at the time, the defense of Syracuse had been designed and implemented under the guidance of antiquity's greatest geometrician, Archimedes. From this initial assault in the spring of 213 BCE until the city's capture in the fall of 212 BCE, Archimedes successfully defended his home city during the Roman siege. After months of land attacks ended in failure, Marcellus and his Roman commanders would never again attempt a frontal assault during the siege. Opportunism, treachery and guile would lead to the successful capture of Syracuse.

Founded by colonists from the Greek city-state Corinth in 733 BCE, the site of Syracuse was defensible and situated between two natural harbors. The core around which the future city was built began on the off-shore island of Ortygia. While increasing Syracuse's position and influence, its tyrant Gelon made enemies of Carthage, who controlled western portion of Sicily. During the First Greco-Persian War, he defeated his Carthaginian opponents in the little-known Battle of Himera, solidifying Syracuse's status as the island's greatest city.

From 415 to 413 BCE, as part of the Peloponnesian War, the city successfully withstood a siege by the Athenian-led Delian League. Through the strength of its own populace, along with Spartan assistance, and aided by a plague that swept through the Athenian army, Syracuse emerged victorious. Not wishing to endure those brutal conditions in the future, tyrant Dionysus I commenced a plan of improving the city's defenses.. Dionysus expanded Syracuse's defensive perimeter from along the harbors to include the high ground known as the Epipolae. In six years, a series of fortifications encompassed the Epipolae and urban districts in a 17-mile-long defensive structure that would be named the Wall of Dionysus. A pair of key gates allowed for access control. These were the Hexapyla (or Hexapylon) located in the northern section of the Wall of Dionysus, and on the western end of the Epipolae, the Euryalus. The tyrant also promoted the development of siege engines.

In 270 BCE, Hiero II (sometimes spelled Hieron) became Syracuse's king. In the early years of his reign, relations with Carthage seemed to thaw. That changed during the First Punic War, which lasted from 264 to 241 BCE as Rome battled Carthage for dominance of the Mediterranean. Hiero II sided with Rome and as a reward for their assistance during the war, Syracuse was exempt from paying tribute to the Empire. They were allowed to remain independent and in control of southeast Sicily.

For the next quarter century, Hiero II used the existing peace to further develop and expand Syracuse. Ruling moderately, he used the growing economy to build and expand the city's infrastructure. The king was an important sponsor of the arts and science. He welcomed men of learning and literature into his court, among them Archimedes. The 12th Century Byzantine historian John Tzetzes wrote, "Archimedes, that machinist, was a Syracusan by race, an old geometrician, [who drove] past seventy-five seasons." Being killed in 212 BCE, this places Archimedes' birth in the year 287 BCE. Allegedly related to the royal family, he was asked by the king to use his innovative mind and unmatched imagination to design and build war engines. This expanded into "modernizing" the Wall of Dionysus as well as the city's sea walls. Perhaps Hiero II foresaw a time when Rome would turn against Syracuse.

The peace lasted 23 years, before Rome declared war on Carthage after the latter captured and razed the Iberian pro-Roman city of Saguntum. Later that same year, 218 BCE, Hannibal invaded the Italian peninsula after crossing the Alps. Carthaginian forces also raided Sicily caus-

ing the Roman Senate to install a garrison on the island, supported by a naval contingent. Over the next two years, Carthage's masterful general inflicted a series of catastrophic defeats on Roman armies. After the loss at Lake Trasimene, King Hiero II dispatched a force of light infantry, which included Cretan archers, to help bolster the Eternal City. As Hannibal also ravaged the countryside, the Syracusan tyrant sent food to help feed Rome's citizens.

Any further military or economic assistance to Rome ended with the death of Hiero II in late 216/early 215 BCE. He had ruled Syracuse for 54 years and was reportedly 92 when he died. His only son had preceded him in death. Taking up the mantle of tyrant of Syracuse would be Hiero's 15-year-old grandson, Hieronymus, who ancient authors described as "the personification of a third-generation tyrant, brought up in wealth and privilege."

Citizens of Syracuse watched their young king grow increasingly arrogant and cruel. A rift began to grow between those who desired to remain allied to Rome and a rising pro-Carthaginian side, who were encouraged by Hannibal's victories. In 215 BCE, the young tyrant sent a delegation to visit Hannibal on the Italian mainland. Seeing the potential of eliminating Roman control on Sicily, Hannibal dispatched his own diplomatic delegation. It consisted of a Carthaginian and a pair of brothers whose maternal grandmother was Syracusan. Hippocrates and Epicydes arrived in Syracuse and soon afterwards won over the teenage ruler by regaling him with accounts of Hannibal's spectacular victories. Negotiations of an alliance between Syracuse and Carthage began in earnest. In return for severing ties with Rome, Syracuse would sign a treaty with Carthage under two conditions. First, Carthage will assist Syracuse with land and naval forces. Second, after expelling Rome from Sicily, Syracuse and Carthage would divide the island with the River Himera set as the boundary. Carthage readily agreed to the terms.

Word of the ongoing negotiations between Syracuse and Carthage reached Rome's praetor on Sicily, Appius Claudius Pulcher. He sent his own delegation to convince Syracuse to remain Rome's friend. Per Polybius, Hieronymus told the Roman diplomats that his city would abide by the Rome-Syracuse treaty—if Rome repaid all the gold given to them by his grandfather; returned all the corn and gifts given to them during Hiero II's reign; and acknowledged that all towns and land east of the River Himera belong to Syracuse.

In early 214 BCE, Hieronymus sent a force of 15,000 infantry and cavalry to the city of Leontini, 22 miles northwest of Syracuse. At the same time, he gave Hippocrates and Epicydes each 2,000 men to attack pro-Roman towns and villages to "liberate" them from the Empire's influence. Hieronymus was assassinated in Leontini by members of his bodyguard, ending his 13-month reign. The brothers made their way back to Syracuse after having been deserted by their men. Hippocrates and Epicydes began spreading dissent about the leadership of the city, talking with Roman deserters, mercenaries and the lowest class of the city and deceitfully informing them that a secret plan to sell Syracuse to Rome existed. Plots and political factions rose to the forefront. A leaked plan of rebellion led to the slaughter of the royal family. As public unrest appeared to be proceeding towards an uprising at the same time of the increasing popularity of the two brothers, senior magistrates declared Hippocrates and Epicydes as magistrates of Syracuse.

Rome responded to the news by dispatching Gen. Marcus Claudius Marcellus, who was serving his third time as Consul. He arrived in Sicily in 214 BCE. with the core of his 10,000-strong force being Cannae survivors who desired redemption. Presumably the two legions and naval forces previously sent had been recalled to fight Hannibal. An assembly was called in Syracuse, and after much debate a diplomatic mission was sent to the Romans suing for peace. Appius Claudius received the delegation who asked for a 10-day peace—much to the ire of the recently-appointed brothers. Part of a Roman fleet sailed into Syracuse's Great Harbor on orders from Appius Claudius to boost morale of the pro-Roman faction. While the envoys met with Marcellus, a delegation from Leontini arrived. They presented a request for Syracusan troops to assist in protecting their city from Roman forces. The request was granted and Hippocrates was sent with a force of 4,000 men, primarily Roman deserters.

Based out of Leontini, Hippocrates and his men conducted raids on Roman-controlled lands. Appius Claudius reacted to the aggressive acts by sending men to protect the farmlands of those still allied to Rome. Joined by Epicydes, Hippocrates responded by openly attacking a Roman garrison and annihilating it. The two rapidly spread false rumors that Syracuse was ready to ally with Rome

ABOVE: From left, coins bearing the likenesses of Roman commander Appius Claudius Pulcher; Hiero II, King of Syracuse (275-15 BCE); and Hieronymus, King of Syracuse (215-14 BCE). TOP: Bust of Roman general and politician Marcus Claudius Marcellus, known as "the Sword of Rome." OPPOSITE: This illustration by Donn P. Crane shows how the Claw of Archimedes, also known as the "Iron Hand," might have been used to capsize attacking Roman ships during the siege of Syracuse (213-212 BCE) during the Second Punic War.

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ABOVE: This 15th century manuscript illumination by Jean Fouquet most likely depicts the Battle of Cannae (August 2, 216 BCE) on the Italian peninsula during the Second Punic War between Rome and Carthage. OPPOSITE: The painting *Archimedes at the Siege of Syracuse*, attributed to Scipione Compagno (1624-1680), shows an interpretation of an idea mentioned in the 2nd century CE, by Roman satirist Lucian, who wrote that Archimedes set fire to the ships of Marcus Claudius Marcellus through "artificial means." Lucian never mentioned mirrors or lenses, but that idea remains popular, though unlikely, to this day.

and had worked out a deal that would have a negative impact on the citizens of Leontini.

While approaching Leontini with his two legions, Marcellus issued an ultimatum to Syracuse that the peace between the two cities had been broken and in order to consider repairing it, the city must surrender Hippocrates and Epicydes to him. Marcellus arrived at Leontini to find its population efficiently aroused against Rome and Syracuse by the agitation of the two brothers. With negotiation attempts rebuffed, Marcellus assaulted Leontini. His forces successfully captured it in their first attack. Any Roman deserters that had been captured were subsequently beheaded. In the chaos of battle, Hippocrates, Epicydes escaped to the town of Herbesus with a small force.

The Syracusan councilors, to show their allegiance, had sent 8,000 troops to reinforce Marcellus at Leontini. While en route, they learned the city had already fallen. Reports of Romans slaughtering soldiers and civilians rapidly spread through the Syracusan army. The Syracusan generals learned Hippocrates and Epicydes had sought refuge in Herbeus and headed towards the town. Upon learning that a Syracusan force was in the field, the brothers rode to intercept them. Luck was on their side. The first troops they encountered were 600 Cretan archers. These archers were originally sent by Hiero II to assist Rome, but had been captured by Hannibal. After having been treated with honor, the Cretans were released. As a result of this gesture, the Cretan force sided with the brothers and protected them. Through treachery and false speeches designed to play on the soldiers' emotions, the brothers won over the men and advanced upon Syracuse.

Upon arrival at the Hexapyla, Hippocrates and Epicydes contacted allies within Syracuse to stir up the population with anti-Rome propaganda. These allies subsequently opened the Hexapyla Gate, allowing the force into the city. The magistrates who opposed the brothers fled to Achradina with their supporters. Spearheaded by the remaining Roman deserters, Achradina fell on the first try. Ever calculating, Hippocrates and Epicydes released criminals from prison and freed slaves on the day after taking Achradina. These actions helped lead to the election of both Hippocrates and Epicydes as generals of Syracuse. Marcellus established the Roman camp near the Temple of Olympus Jupiter, the same location Athenians forces based themselves in the great siege of 415—413 BCE.

Marcellus, upon hearing of the rise of Hippocrates and Epicydes, marched to the Hexapyla. The Roman general sent envoys ahead to demand the surrender of the two brothers. At the gate, Epicydes denied the delegation entry into the city. After arriving themselves, Marcellus and Appius Claudius discussed with Syracusans in the Roman army the layout and strength of the port city's defenses. Livy recorded that Marcellus, Appius Claudius, and other senior Roman officers believed that Syracuse would fall almost as easily as Leontini.

Whether it was Roman optimism or arrogance, history would show they could have not been more wrong. Marcellus devised a simultaneous assault on two fronts. Appius Claudius would lead the land attack portion of the operation with a direct assault at the Hexapyla. Marcellus took charge of the naval force that would storm the city's sea wall at Achradina, north of the Little Harbor.

Both Marcellus and Appius Claudius led their men against a Syracuse stirred up by Hippocrates and Epicydes. The soldiers manning the Wall of Dionysus and the sea wall stood ready to defend their city. Romans had successfully conducted sieges in the past and had confidence in their ability to take the rebellious and rich city of Syracuse. However, the soldiers and seamen experienced a great shock as Syracuse was not just defended by Syracusans, mercenaries, and Roman deserters. The men were greatly assisted by mechanical devices, devised and organized by the most intelligent men of the city, chiefly by Archimedes.

The fortifications varied, depending on what was required in the location to be defended. Those countering naval attacks utilized modifications that their counterparts situated along the Wall of Dionysus did not require. All defenders used varying types of missile-throwing weapons, such as catapults and mangonels, calibrated at specific ranges. Attackers would find themselves under a barrage without any respite, an incoming bombardment of heavy stones whose purpose was

to sink enemy ships. The catapults fired more than boulders, an anti-personal catapult called a "scorpion" fired salvos of iron darts.

Described more in the records of Marcellus's amphibious attack, the sea walls had built into them a calculated system of apertures. Wide enough for a smaller design of catapults to fire through, the openings were too small for an enemy soldier to fit through. While archers fired mercilessly from some of the apertures, "scorpions" unleashed their arrows and darts from loopholes closer to the fortification's foundation. Along the tops of the battlements, hidden beams, had grapnels attached to them. Although their use against the Roman vessels received more notoriety, scaled-down versions of these claws, which one author labeled "Archimedes Iron Hand," were also positioned on the Wall of Dionysus. Instead of snagging warships, these claws hooked unlucky Roman legionnaires. If the enemy made it to the base of the wall, the Syracusan defenders on top of the battlement could continue to fire missile weapons or drop a variety of objects including large stones, wooden beams, and anything else at hand.

It would be against these siege engines and defensive measures that Marcellus at sea and Appius Claudius on land launched their simultaneous attacks in spring 213 BCE. Aboard the Roman warships, archers, slingers, and javelin-throwers prepared themselves to eliminate or drive the Syracusans defenders from the positions atop the sea wall as the invasion fleet approached the targeted section of sea wall in Achradina. Believing the attack would be successful on its first try, Marcellus sailed straight at Achradina. The 60 quinqueremes found themselves subjected to a reception whose strength and ferocity outdid expected responses. The wooden vessels were subjected to incoming fire from catapults and stone-throwers at an extreme range. As the force rowed closer, smaller siege weapons took over bombarding the Romans who became demoralized at unending salvos. Normally remaining out of range of the Syracusan siege weapons, Marcellus used the sambucae when he felt the opportunity existed and then the oarsmen put on a burst to get the special craft to the base of the wall. At these moments, the grapnels dropped down and latched onto it or whichever Roman warship happened to be within reach. Archimedes probably would have known that the quinquereme's instability greatly increased the effectiveness of the claw. During one of the attack attempts, an unlucky vessel disappeared under the weight of a ten-talent (670-pound) boulder. Marcellus got so desperate that he even tried a surprise night assault. The number of attempts to breach the sea wall remains unknown. At some point the loss of men, increasing number of damaged or destroyed ships, and a decreasing morale caused Marcellus to end the sea-borne invasion.

The accomplishments of Archimedes' weapons grew over time. Centuries after the siege, the success of the grappling claws increased from simply causing ships to capsize to stories of the enormous quinqueremes being hooked and pulled completely out of the sea before being released to crash into the harbor stern first. Another myth developed in late 5th/early 6th century, was that the Syracusans used mirrors to focus the power of the sun rays onto a Roman warship causing it to burst into flames. As none of the contemporary historians such as Livy or Polybius mention incendiary devices, let alone a "death ray," records of Archimedes constructing such a weapon are nothing more than embellished creations of these later historians.

On land, Appius Claudius Pulcher fared no better. Starting with an army reportedly numbering 16,000 men, the legionnaires advancing on the Wall of Dionysus experienced the same torment as their naval comrades, with catapults and mangonels set to varying power and ranges. Smaller versions of the claw hooked individual soldiers, yanking them off the ground. For eight months Appius Claudius kept up the frontal attacks, focusing on the Hexapyla. Having incurred serious casualties and plummeting morale among the troops, Appius Claudius ended direct assaults. For the duration of the siege, the

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Romans would never again attempt an open frontal attack on either land or sea.

Marcellus and Appius Claudius held a war council. On both land and sea, the Romans resorted to a blockade of Syracuse, hoping to starve the city into submission or set conditions right for treachery. Appius Claudius kept two-thirds of the remaining Roman military forces and proceeded to set up a siege line along as many of the enemy's fortifications as feasible. Taking a third of the army, Marcellus struck out for the rest of Sicily with the purpose to bolster pro-Roman towns and force those towns supporting Carthage and Syracuse to submit. Helorus and Herbesus capitulated without a fight. Megara was sacked and annihilated as an example to dissuade Sicilian towns from siding with their foe. Towards the end of Pulcher's attempts to seize the Hexapyla, Carthage decided to take advantage of Roman attention on Syracuse. Under the leadership of Himilco, a Punic army of 25,000 infantry, 3,000 cavalry, and 12 elephants landed on the southern coast of Sicily. The cities of Heraclea Minoa and Agrigentum (originally called Akragas) fell quickly, with the latter becoming the Carthaginian base of operations on the island.

Upon hearing of the Carthaginian landing, Marcellus headed for Agrigentum before learning it had fallen to Carthage. While en route, Marcellus unexpectedly ran into a Syracusan force. This army of 10,000 infantry and 500 cavalrymen led by Hippocrates, had found an unguarded section of a wall and during the cover of darkness escaped to rendezvous with Himilco. Taking the Syracusans completely by surprise, the Romans killed or captured everyone, except for Hippocrates and the cavalry detachment. These survivors arrived at Agrigentum.

Both sides then raced to Syracuse. Himilco and Hippocrates stopped their advance eight miles from the Wall of Dionysus along the River Anapus. Morale received a boost upon news that a Carthaginian fleet of 55 warships under Bomilcar broke through the Roman blockade and entered the Great Harbor. Soon afterwards, a Roman legion arrived at Panormus. Its commander managed to evade an ambush Himilco had prepared and reinforced the Roman army encamped around Syracuse. Marcellus had four legions plus allied auxiliary troops to take control of Sicily. Syracusan and Punic hope sank when Bomilcar sailed back to Carthage upon the arrival of Roman naval reinforcements.

As winter progressed, both sides traversed Sicily to add towns as allies. A garrison betrayed Murgentia, a Roman granary storage site, to Himilco. To prevent the possibility of this happening in Enna, its Roman garrison commander rounded up all the men and killed them in the belief such action would act as a deterrent. Unfortunately for Marcellus, this brutal reprisal had the opposite effect, rallying more cities, towns, and villages against Rome. During this time Appius Claudius Pulcher's term ended and he returned to Italy. In Syracuse, Epicydes dealt with a plot by pro-Roman conspirators by having the 80 involved executed.

In the spring 212 BCE, fortune favored Marcellus. An envoy sent by Syracuse to Rome's bitter enemy, Philip V of Macedon, was intercepted and captured. The Syracusans wanted to ransom him and other prisoners. At first Marcellus was reluctant but as negotiations always took place near the Galeagra tower, either the consul or another Roman noted the area near the tower seemed to be scalable. The Romans dragged out negotiations in order for their engineers to calculate the wall height in the section by getting a measurement of the stone height and counting the number of rows. Scaling ladders were constructed to the estimated height. All that was lacking was an opportune moment for an assault.

That moment presented itself when a deserter brought much needed information. The three-day Festival of Artemis was about to take place. He also informed the Romans that certain food items were in short supply. As a result, Epicydes provided generous quantities of wine to offset the rationing. Marcellus and his senior officers devised a plan. On the third night of the festival, a selected company of soldiers stealthily arrived at

Städtische Galerie Liebieghaus, Frankfurt am Main, Germany.

ABOVE: As the Roman Consul Marcus Claudius Marcellus laid siege to the Hellenistic city of Syracuse (213-212 BCE) during the Second Punic War, he gave orders that Archimedes be spared, but he was not. This *Mosaic depicting the Greek mathematician and physicist Archimedes and a Roman soldier* depicts one possible scenario of his death, though the exact details were not recorded. On display at the Liebieghaus Sculpture Collection in Frankfurt, Germany, the mosaic was thought to be original Roman art, but research suggests it dates to the 18th century. OPPOSITE: The ruins of these limestone walls, some dating back to the 7th century BCE, were built to defend the ancient Greek town of Leontini, 22 miles northwest of Syracuse.

the base of the wall with their ladders. Behind them were 1,000 legionnaires ready to exploit any success. The commando force erected the scaling ladders. Finding the battlement guards asleep from being drunk, they quickly secured that section of the wall. More ladders arrived along the Roman-controlled section of the wall and an initial wave of 1,000 troops secured more sections including the Hexapyla. With surprise gone, a horn blared through the air. Roman soldiers poured through the Hexapyla.

Now on alert, most Syracusan troops fled to the fortified urban sections of Syracuse—Achradina and Ortygia. Those who chose to stand were overwhelmed. By daybreak the Epipolae was secured. Epicydes, unaware of the extent of the Roman success, rallied a small force to repel the invaders. Upon seeing at least one Roman legion marching forward, he returned to Achradina. Only the Euryalus Gate remained in Syracusan control. Its garrison commander, an Argive named Philodemus, stood fast and ensured negotiations stretched out. Philodemus believed that Himilco and Hippocrates would soon arrive to break the siege. Marcellus knew a frontal assault would be futile and soon recognized the negotiations were a dead end. He had most of the invasion force set up camp between the urban districts of Neapolis and Tyche. When Philodemus learned about the fall of these city districts, he surrendered the Euryalus without incident. With control of this key gate, the Romans no longer had to fear fighting a battle on two fronts.

Bomilcar took 35 ships and headed back to Carthage for help, but left 55 vessels in the Great Harbor. Hippocrates and Himilco brought their force south of the Wall of Dionysus and camped in a low-lying area. In late spring/early summer, the Syracusans and Carthaginians developed a coordinated effort between the two forces who received assistance from Bomilcar's newly-arrived reinforcements. At the prearranged time, from a fortified position along the Great Harbor, Hippocrates attacked a Roman outpost south of the city. Carthaginian troops landed to prevent reinforcements from reaching the embattled Roman troops. While the Romans dealt with these attacks, Epicydes surged out of Achradina. The Roman forces dealt with all three attacks without any difficulties.

The Syracusan and Carthaginian forces returned to their original positions and waited. As in the Athenian siege two centuries previously, a plague swept through Sicily during the autumn of 212 BCE, affecting both sides. Possibly due to having built up a resistance due to previous exposure to plagues, the Roman troops were not affected as badly as the Syracusans and Carthaginians. It also helped that Marcellus was able to rotate men into urban sections which provided much-needed shade. Hippocrates and Himilco both died from the disease.

While Sicilians in the Punic army brought towns and villages to their side, Bomilcar returned to Carthage and sailed back to the island with the large fleet of 700 transports escorted by 130 quinqueremes. Unfortunately, wind direction prevented the Punic fleet from progressing past Cape Pachynes. Having sent the transport back to Agrigentum, Bomilcar waited until the winds changed to a favorable direction. At the same time, Marcellus had decided to confront the Punic fleet. Upon seeing the Romans, Bomilcar lost confidence. Sailing past the Roman warships, he went straight to Tarentum on the mainland. Hearing this, plus the fact the Carthaginian transport ships went back to Africa, Epicydes slipped out of Syracuse and arrived in Agrigentum.

Negotiations began in earnest, but the large number of Roman deserters who knew capital punishment awaited if they surrendered, made the task almost impossible. Eventually the leaders of the Roman traitors convinced the mercenaries that they also awaited this fate. A governing system of six elected generals arose, with three presiding over Achradina and three on Ortygia. As this occurred, the mercenaries learned that they had been misled by the Roman deserters, their situation would be considered different to the Romans. Knowing over the past 18 months that frontal assaults and negotiation had not brought about the surrender of Syracuse, Marcellus looked for opportunities in which treachery would have best chances to succeed.

Secret communication evolved between representatives of Marcellus and a Spaniard named Moericus. Moericus was able to slip out of Syracuse and met with Marcellus. After finding what the Roman consul had to say, he allied himself with Rome. Back in Syracuse, Moericus persuaded the other five generals to end the exchange of envoys between the two sides. The Spaniard also convinced them that Achradina and the Island of Ortygia were each to be divided into three districts with a general assigned to a district. He made it known to the Romans that his sector ranged from the mouth of the Great Harbor to the Fountain (alternately called Spring) of Arethusa on the western side of Ortygia.

On a selected night, Marcellus sent a merchant ship loaded with troops that was towed by an old quadrireme. Landing near the Fountain of Arethusa, the Romans were secretly admitted

Continued on page 98

CONFEDERATE RAID *Panics Washington*

Confederate Brigadier General John McCausland's cavalry brigade, part of Jubal Early's Army of the Valley, fords the Monocacy River on July 9, 1864, a few miles south of Frederick, Maryland. Greatly outnumbered, Union Gen. Lew Wallace set up a defensive line at Monocacy Junction to delay Early's approach to Baltimore or Washington.

General Jubal Early led a daring strike through the Shenandoah Valley and into the very heart of the Union in the summer of 1864. | BY ERIC NIDEROST

Abraham Lincoln peered out of a west-facing window of the White House, scanning the distant Potomac River with his telescope. He anxiously focused on Washington's Sixth Street wharves, where lead elements of the Sixth Corps, Army of the Potomac, were due to arrive to rescue the imperiled city.

The day had dawned hot and humid, with a sultry promise of higher temperatures to come. The city was no stranger to such heat, but on July 11, 1864, it felt even more oppressive under the threat of imminent attack. Confederate Lt. Gen. Jubal Early's Army of the Valley had reached Silver Spring, Maryland, a scant seven miles from the capitol dome. Though the garrison defending Washington numbered some 31,000 on paper, the actual force was only about 9,600 according to Grant's chief engineer, Gen. John G. Barnard. The disparate collection of men—new recruits, raw reserves, wounded, worn-out veterans and even armed civilians—had been scraped together to mount a defense. Could they hold off 10,000 to 15,000 Confederates?

Painting by Keith Rocco for the National Park Service

As if an answer to a prayer, the steamers appeared on the river, loaded with troops ready to disembark. Unable to contain his joy, Lincoln dashed into a waiting carriage and went down to the docks to personally greet the soldiers. Lincoln was not alone. Crowds of Washingtonians gathered, filling the air with joyful cheers. "The danger is past! The Old Sixth Corps is here!"

In the distance, along the city's northern perimeter, the booming of artillery could be distinctly heard. The blue-coated veterans, surprised at a welcome that seemed almost a triumphal procession, marched from the docks up the Seventh Street Pike (now Georgia Ave NW) to the front. Their ultimate destination was Fort Stevens, where the rebels threatened to mount a major attack. But these were only the leading elements of the Sixth Corps. More were on their way, but would these be enough?

The spring of 1864 marked a dramatic new phase in the Civil War. Lincoln had chosen Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant to be the overall commander-in-chief of the Union war effort. Grant's responsibilities included directing and coordinating several Federal armies, making them act in concert towards a common goal: the defeat and destruction of the Southern Confederacy. Thanks to such relatively new inventions as the railroad and the telegraph, Grant's reach extended to half a continent, and he could have easily stayed in a Washington office far behind the lines.

Preferring to be in the field, Grant broke with tradition and crossed the Rapidan River with the Army of the Potomac (115,000-119,000 men) at the start of his Overland Campaign on May 4. Like Gen. George B. McClellan in 1862, his goal was to capture the Confederate capital of Richmond. But, unlike McClellan, Grant intended to pursue and destroy Gen. Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia.

The hard-fighting and long-suffering Army of the Potomac had suffered a series of humiliating defeats at Lee's hands, and even though it bested Lee at Gettysburg, an aura of invincibility still clung to the white-bearded Virginian. Grant was determined to exorcise the demon of Lee's invincibility from the minds of Yankee troops, showing them the Southerner was far from superhuman.

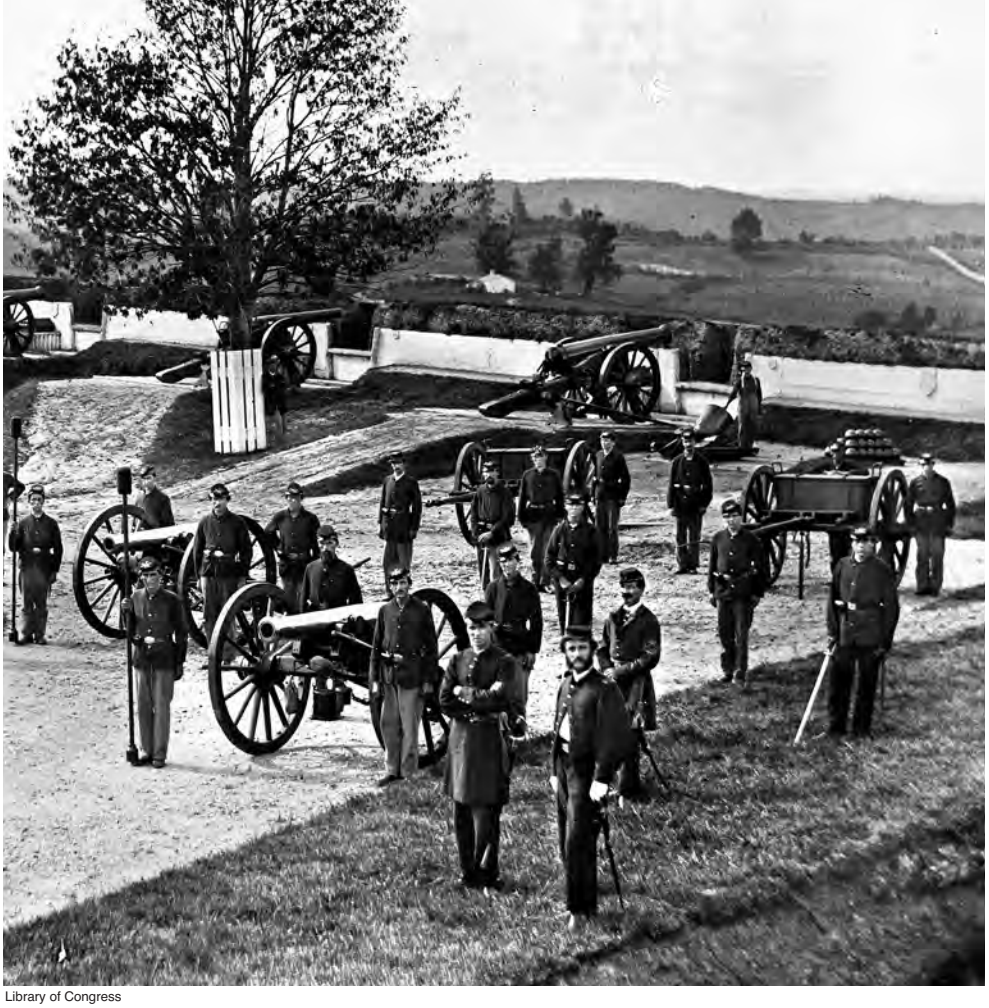
Union armies often found themselves trapped in a vicious cycle—advance on the enemy, sustain a major defeat, then retire to lick their wounds for weeks or months. Once recovered, they would advance again, only to repeat the melancholy process once more. Grant refused to continue this "game"—even if momentarily checked, he simply maneuvered to another position and attacked again immediately.

As spring turned to summer Lee and Grant became locked in an intense game of sanguinary chess, with Grant ever probing, looking for weakness, and Lee doing his best to block any Union moves towards Richmond. Both sides sustained heavy casualties, but in this battle of attrition the South's smaller population meant the Union Army could handle such losses, but the south could not. The Union army had suffered some 50,000 casualties in the campaign thus far, but Lee's army had proportionally suffered even more. The Army of Northern Virginia lost 32,000 men, about 46 percent of its total force.

More significantly, the Southern losses could not be replaced. The offensively minded Lee chafed at being forced into a purely defensive role. A strategic opportunist by nature, the Virginian was always looking for ways to turn the tables on his enemy, and in so doing alter the course of the war. But Lee had defensive success with entrenchments at Cold Harbor, just 10 miles northeast of Richmond. From May 31 to June 12, the Union suffered nearly 13,000 casualties—3,000-7,000 on June 3 alone. Confederate casualties numbered about 5,000. It was after this battle that Grant crossed the James River and turned his focus on the rail hub of Petersburg, a main supply base and depot for the Confederate army, 23 miles south of Richmond. Grant knew that Lee would have to defend it at all costs.

But Lee had other concerns as well, such as protecting the 140-mile-long Shenandoah Valley. Grant had ordered Maj. Gen. David Hunter to enter the fertile valley, known as the "breadbasket" of the Confederacy and destroy war production facilities and storehouses even, if circumstances warranted, civilian property as well.

Hunter's army rampaged its way through the verdant valley, destroying anything deemed crucial to the Confederate effort, with the ultimate aim of capturing Lynchburg, an important manufacturing and railroad center. Lee began to consider a plan to address this threat—one that was multifaceted, daring, and typical of the risks he was willing to take to reverse the Confederacy's fading fortunes.



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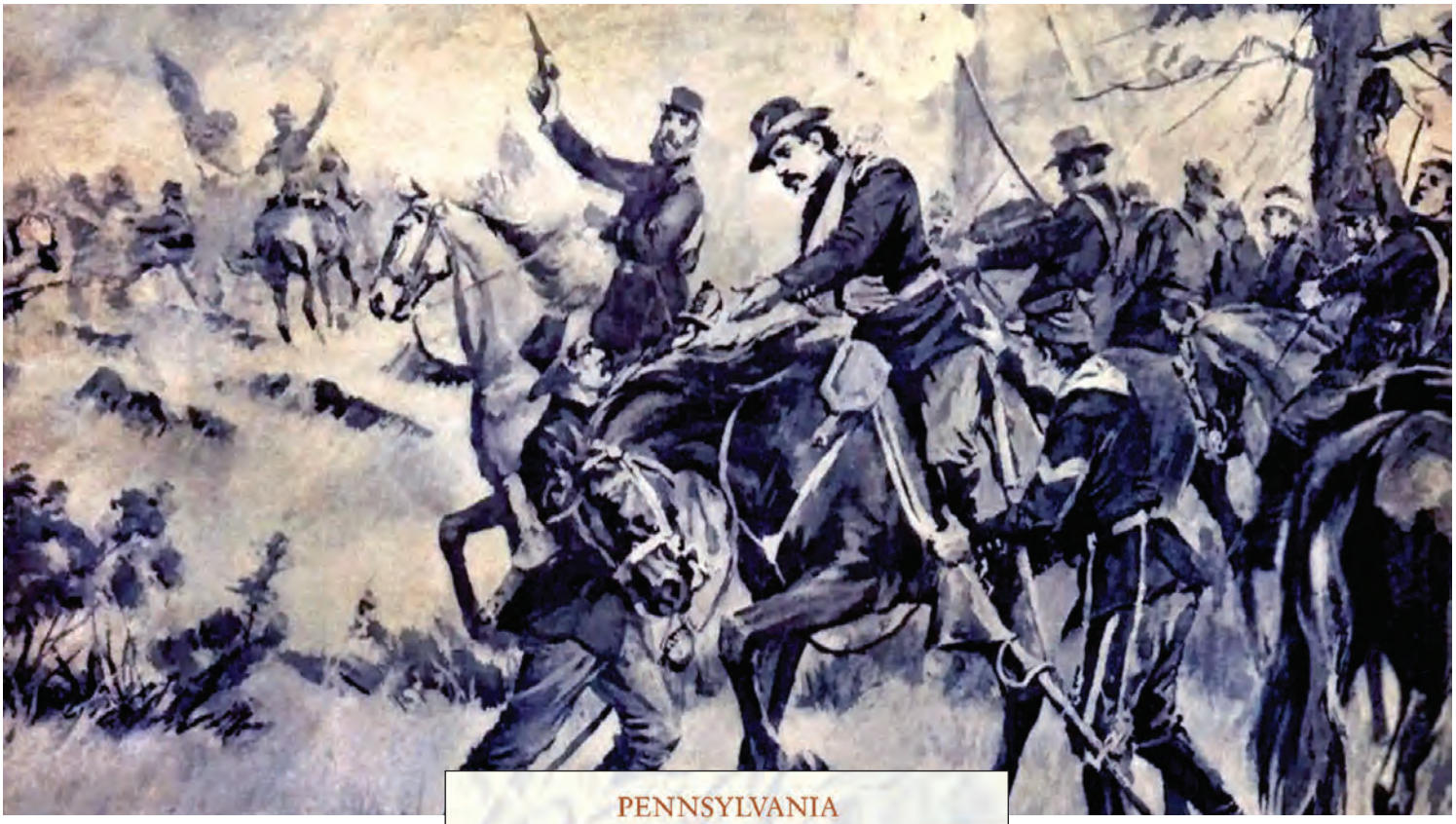
ABOVE: Company F of the 3rd Massachusetts Heavy Artillery at Fort Stevens, defending the northern approach to Washington City. Named "Fort Massachusetts" after the units that helped construct it in 1861, it was expanded and renamed in 1862 for Brig. Gen. Isaac Ingalls Stevens, killed at Chantilly. OPPOSITE: At the Battle of Piedmont on June 5, 1864, Union Gen. David Hunter routed a smaller Confederate force and occupied nearby Staunton. After engaging Jubal Early's Confederates at Lynchburg on June 17, Hunter was convinced he was outnumbered and retreated into West Virginia. OPPOSITE, INSET: Confederate Gen. Jubal Early's route from Richmond, through the Shenandoah Valley, to Washington in June/July 1864.

National Archives



National Park Service

The South no longer had the men or resources for a full-scale invasion after the defeat at Gettysburg. But a major raid was feasible, and could accomplish wonders if executed in the way Lee envisioned. The raid would have several tasks, each vitally important. The first step was marching to the Shenandoah Valley to save Lynchburg and expel Hunter and his marauding Yankees

Once the "breadbasket" was secure from Federal depredations, the raid would cross the Potomac and threaten Washington. Lee was no fool, he knew that the Union capital was heavily fortified, but he hoped an attack on Washington would force Grant to relieve pressure on Petersburg and Richmond by sending troops north to save the capital.

But war is unpredictable, and there was always a chance—to Lee, an excellent chance—that the raiders would find Washington vulnerable, its defenses not so formidable after all. Lee was a hard-headed realist, but the capture and possible destruction of the Union capital was a heady proposition, and one not easily dismissed. It was an election year, after all, and the rapidly mounting casualties Grant's offensives were taking a toll on public opinion in the war-weary North.

While Lee mulled over possible ways to counter Grant, the Union general had his own set of difficulties. The Army of the Potomac had been hit, and hit hard, during the weeks of bloody fighting. Some of the corps had been decimated, and if Grant had any hope of maintaining pressure on Lee, he needed replacements.

And then, inspiration—or at least what must have seemed like inspiration at the time. Why not siphon off portions of the garrison that defended Washington? The capital had been vulnerable in 1861, but in the last three years it had been transformed into one of the most fortified cities in the world. The statistics were impressive: more than 800 field, siege and seacoast guns had been placed in more than 100 earthen forts and batteries. Far from haphazard works, they had been constructed by competent engineers who knew what they were doing.

In 1863, a War Department Commission led by Barnard had concluded that Washington needed a garrison of 25,000 infantrymen and 9,000 trained artillerists, along with cavalry and a 25,000-man maneuver force. In practice, that number may have reached a total of 45,000 at some point, but it was constantly changing. True, there had been a few minor Confederate raids in the region, but nothing of consequence. For the most part, the troops manning the forts sat in idleness, their chief enemy boredom, not bullets. They would be an excellent replacement pool, and they weren't too far away to summon.

Grant did make it very clear to his chief of staff, Maj. Gen. Henry Halleck, that he didn't want a wholesale withdrawal that might imperil the safety of the capital as Washington garrison units began moving south. The experience of the 2nd Pennsylvania Heavy Artillery Regiment offers one example of this process. Transferred to Washington in January 1862, the regiment had grown to 3,300 men by April of 1864. With Special Orders No. 153, a provisional regiment of the 2nd Pennsylvania Heavy Artillery was formed on April 20. Made up of primarily new recruits, this

Both: Library of Congress

ABOVE: An engraving of Union troops guarding military supplies in Martinsburg, West Virginia, made from a drawing by battlefield artist A.R. Waud and published in *Harper's Weekly*. Confederate Gen. Jubal Early's men marauded the tri-state area of the West Virginia panhandle around Martinsburg, specifically targeting the B&O Railroad—tearing up track, cutting telegraph wires, as well as destroying bridges, culverts, buildings, and rolling stock. OPPOSITE: Confederate POW John Jacob Omenhausser was held at the Union Camp Hoffman at Point Lookout, Maryland, for about a year. He made many drawings of camp life during his time there. Gen. Robert E. Lee had ordered Gen. Jubal Early to liberate the estimated 15,000-20,000 prisoners held there to help him with his assault on Washington, D.C., but the scheme was never realized.

second regiment was sent to the front lines as part of IX Corps. The original regiment was assigned to XVIII Corps in late May and arrived at Cold Harbor on June 4, but didn't participate in the battle.

Though no reliable totals remain in the record, by early June more than 30,000 replacements had been sent to support the Overland Campaign. Secretary of War Edwin Stanton approved the measures, feeling that the forts and batteries could be manned by formations like the limited duty Veteran Corps, "walking wounded" convalescents, and 100-day limited service volunteers.

But questions arose, questions that Stanton and others chose to ignore. First, how many of these replacements were artillerymen, or had any experience in manning heavy fortress guns? Secondly, could these men stand up to a determined full-scale Confederate attack? On paper the Washington garrisons were comfortably whittled down to about 33,000 men, more than adequate for the capital's defense.

Barnard, who had designed the Washington defense system, protested that the real number of troops manning the forts and batteries was less than a third of that figure. Nevertheless the exigencies of the moment—Grant's desperate need for more troops—overrode any other consideration and his concerns were ignored.

In the meantime, Lee forged ahead with what would later be called the "Raid on Washington." Lt. Gen. Jubal A. Early and his Second Corps of the Army of Northern Virginia was chosen for the task. Early was a West Pointer, with past experience in the Seminole and Mexican Wars. Bushy bearded, proud and a bit profane, Early was often irascible and sometimes too independent-minded in military terms for his own good. While he was no Napoleon, he was experienced and competent, a man who Lee affectionately dubbed "bad old man."

"Old Jube,"as he was also called, would command about 10,000 infantry and 4,000 cavalry for the raid. He was ordered to proceed to Lynchburg in the Shenandoah valley, his immediate goal not merely to defeat Hunter, but destroy him. The local Confederate commander in the area, Maj. Gen. John C. Breckinridge, would extend his full cooperation on this task. The next step would be to cross the Potomac River, possibly at Harper's Ferry, and threaten and/or take "Washington City."

From June 12-16, 1864, the Second Corps marched to Charlottesville. From there, they took a train to Lynchburg, arriving at the city's trench defensive line the next day—just in time for a battle with the Federal troops under Hunter coming up in force. After some periodically heavy fighting, Hunter ordered a retreat and marched into the newly minted state of West Virginia, eventually reaching Parkersburg on the Ohio River.

Early allowed a half-hearted pursuit of the fleeing Yankees, and some bluecoats were captured, along with some supplies and artillery. But Hunter's main force was now ensconced in the West Virginia mountains, and it would have taken too much time and effort to dislodge them. Early pressed on, after giving his men a few days to rest and replenish supplies. The Early expedition, now dubbed the Army of the Valley, crossed the James River on June 23 and reached Staunton on the 26th.

At Staunton there was another reorganization. One of Early's priorities was to cut down on the cumbersome supply and baggage train that bedeviled every army of the period. The number of wagons permitted was reduced, and officers were ordered to leave behind all men, horses or equip-

ment not fit for the upcoming march.

The Army of the Valley left Staunton on July 28. Early's troop strength is disputed, and with formations coming and going, or assigned different duties, the precise figures may never be known. Most commentaries put his army at around 14,000, with about 50 artillery pieces, and 60 wagons. Though the July heat was becoming stifling, Early's troops were in an overall good mood. The valley was breathtakingly beautiful, and local farmers supplied food, happy to see gray uniforms instead of the usual blue.

Lee sent occasional messengers to update Early's orders, though the original plan was still in force. Lee wanted the Army of the Valley to disrupt and destroy the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal as well as the important Baltimore and Ohio Railway. Early's progress was slow, but steady: Harrisburg was passed on the 29th, and New Market on the 30th. The raiders continued pushing north until they reached Winchester on July 2, and Early received word from Lee to stay in the Lower Valley until he was fully prepared to cross the Potomac River. During that time he should also do what he could to disrupt the B&O Railroad and the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal.

On July 3, Early sent infantry under Breckinridge from Winchester to Martinsburg, hoping to capture supplies held there. Cavalry under McCausland was sent to burn the Back Creek railroad bridge near Hedgesville, then move to Hainesville on the Martinsburg-Williamsport Road, hoping to prevent a Union retreat toward Maryland. Brig. Gen. Bradley T. Johnson's cavalry was to pursue a line southeast of Martinsburg, through Middleway and Leetown to Kearneysville.

At Martinsburg, Union Major General Franz Sigel was protecting storehouses full of supplies as well as the B&O line with only 5,000-6,000 rear-echelon supply depot and railroad troops. As soon as pickets sent word of the Confederate presence, Sigel did all he could to empty Union supply warehouses and ship them to safety before Early's men arrived. He was aided by B&O railroad company president John Garrett and, by dint of hard work, the task was largely accomplished. Satisfied he had done all he could, Sigel ordered a retreat to Shepherdstown to cross the Potomac. From there, he would continue south to Maryland Heights above Harpers Ferry.

Finding the Federals and most of the supplies gone from Martinsburg, some of the men of Maj. Gen. John B. Gordon's division drank from stocks of liquor they found in the city. The men began looting, celebrating their good fortune by consuming "fruit, preserves, sardines, oysters, wines, liquors, and meat."

Early also turned towards Harpers Ferry, famous for abolitionist John Brown's raid on the Federal arsenal there in 1859. As the Confederates approached the little town at the confluence of the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers on July 4, Federal Brigadier Gen. Max Weber destroyed the B&O railroad bridge over the Potomac to Maryland and abandoned the town.

Troops under Gordon and Major General Stephen D. Ramseur reportedly looted the town from top to bottom and, since it was the Fourth of July, some jokingly justified their depredations as holiday celebrations. Knowing it would take too long to dislodge Weber's forces—joined by Sigel—from the fortifications on the Maryland Heights overlooking the town, Early marched 12 miles north to cross the Potomac River at Shepherdstown July 5-7. Once in Maryland, Early sent men to destroy the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal aqueduct over Antietam Creek. They also scuttled canal boats they found there and damaged the locks. The detour to Harpers Ferry slowed Early by four days. It was around this time that Stanton, Halleck, Grant and Lincoln finally awakened to the fact that Washington might be in danger.

Maryland was a border state, where slavery was legal, but its population was divided between pro-Confederate secessionists and loyal Unionists. Early and his subordinates hoped for secessionist

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ABOVE: *Harper's Weekly* war artist Alfred Waud made this quick sketch on July 9, 1864, of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad bridge over the Monocacy River (right) destroyed by Confederate troops during Maj. Gen. Jubal Early's "Raid on Washington." The Georgetown Pike leading to Washington went over the river via the covered bridge on the left. OPPOSITE PAGE: A partial restoration of Fort Stevens, one of 68 forts built to defend the Capital. Delayed by the Battle of Monocacy, Maj. Gen. Jubal Early's Confederate force arrived here from the north on July 11, just as Union reinforcements landed in the city by steamboat.

help, which they did get on occasion, but they didn't go out of their way to look for it.

In fact, Early and his army could be positively harsh on the Maryland cities in their path. In Frederick, for example, the rebels demanded a $200,000 ransom, a high price now, astronomical in the 1860s. If city officials refused, gray soldiers stood ready to put Frederick to the torch.

Grant knew that Early's Second Corps had been moving down the Shenandoah Valley and recognized it as an effort by Lee to distract from the Siege of Richmond. That meant that the Confederates were mounting a major effort. He stood ready to send veteran troops to the capital's aid, if need be. Grant told Halleck "We want now to crush out and destroy any force the enemy dares to send north." But solid information was lacking; where was Early going? Would he march on Washington—or swing north to take Baltimore? Grant would not act until he knew the rebel intentions.

Meanwhile, Early received a visit from Captain Robert E. Lee, son and namesake of the Confederate general. The younger Lee was carrying orders for Early to dispatch Johnson and his cavalry brigade to free the estimated 15,000-20,000 Confederate POWs being held at Point Lookout, Maryland, near where the Potomac empties into Chesapeake Bay.

Johnson was a Marylander, knew the country, and it was hoped that he would be given food and support by Confederate sympathizers along the way. Supposedly, the Point Lookout prison was poorly guarded by Black Union troops—white southerners always had an ill-disguised contempt for black soldiers. Once liberated, the freed prisoners would live off the land until they joined Early, by then already besieging Washington.

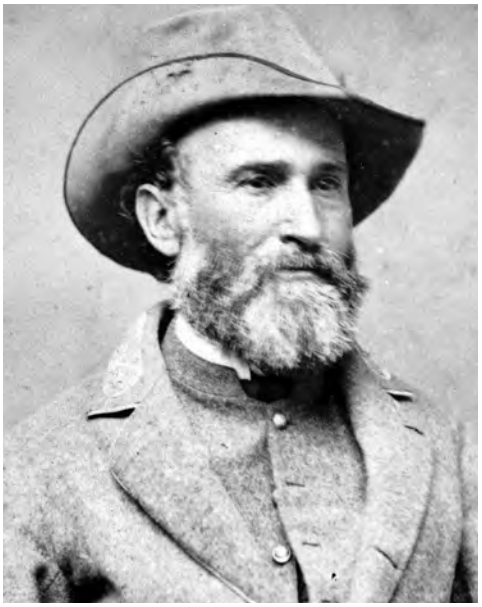
Prison conditions on both sides were abysmal, with captured soldiers suffering from starvation, disease, and brutality. The "prison liberation" raid was pure fantasy, though in war anything can happen. But the idea that 20,000 unarmed men, ragged, diseased, and ill-fed, could somehow organize themselves into an ad hoc "army" and march back to Virginia is a fantasy created by Lee's desperate need for additional soldiers.

Early probably didn't much appreciate this scheme, but he went through the motions of obeying it. As events unfolded, the prison raid never took place and his focus was now on Washington City.

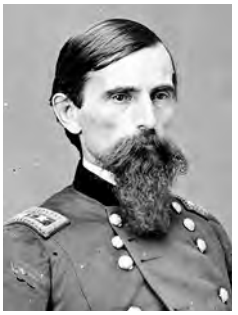
Confusion reigned both in the Union's military and political spheres. Accurate information compounded the problem, and even Lincoln found he was in the dark like all the rest. Where was Early? How many men did he actually have? Was he headed for Baltimore or Washington? Grant stood ready to send relief forces to the capital's aid, but understandably wasn't about to run around in a wild goose chase. He needed concrete information.

General Lew Wallace commanded the Baltimore-based 8th Corps, a relative backwater, where he was serving out a kind of "penance" for past mistakes, real and imagined. The Indiana-born Wallace was a pariah because his troops had arrived late for the Battle of Shiloh two years earlier. His tardiness was mostly due to bad roads, but Grant relieved Wallace of his command.

Wallace reasoned that Early had come to Monocacy Junction, a "vital crossroads where the National Pike (road) led to Baltimore and the Georgetown Pike to Washington," no matter which city was his objective. Wallace hopped



All three: Library of Congress



TOP: Confederate Lieutenant General Jubal A. Early, who led a raid down the Shenandoah Valley into Maryland and the outskirts of Washington, D.C., in June/July 1864. BOTTOM, LEFT: Union Major General Lewis "Lew" Wallace, whose one-day stand delayed Early long enough for troops sent by Gen. Grant to reach Washington in time to defend it. BOTTOM, RIGHT: Union Major General David Hunter, who captured Staunton, Virginia, then withdrew against Gen. Early at Lynchburg, even though he had superior numbers.

National Park Service

aboard a train for a midnight trip to Monocacy to get a firsthand look at the river crossing he was sure had a part in Confederate plans.

At the junction, Wallace surveyed the plain through which the Monocacy River meandered. There were three bridges in the vicinity as well as several fords. Northernmost was a stone bridge for the Baltimore Pike (National Road). Two miles downriver was the Georgetown Pike, leading to Washington, with a B&O railroad bridge just half a mile upstream. In all, Wallace would have to cover a front of at least six miles. Only three miles away, he could see some of Frederick's towering church spires in the distance.

Wallace immediately telegraphed Grant's City Point headquarters requesting reinforcements and scraped together as many men as he could to mount a defense of the Junction. He later admitted he could only find 2,300 men for the effort, many of them "raw and untrained." Even though not much was known about Early's command, "everything known, and everything surmisable," indicated that he was going to be vastly outnumbered by the gray raiders.

All seemed lost, yet Wallace felt he had to make the effort. He may not have known the details, but he knew Grant was poised to send relief forces sooner or later. If he could delay Early, gaining time for Grant, it was worth the possible sacrifice. Washington had to be saved, or the whole course of the war might change.

Then, at seemingly the eleventh hour, a glimmer of hope: B&O President J.W. Garrett told him that "a large force of veterans" sent by Grant had just arrived in Baltimore and would be sent on to Wallace, as soon as possible. But would they arrive in time?

Wallace went to bed the evening of July 7, but anxiety over the situation made sleep fitful at best. Then, in the early morning hours of July 9, when it was still dark, Wallace was awakened by a visitor, a slightly overweight man "quick and bluff in manner and speech, Celtic (Irish) in features." It was Col. James B. Ricketts of the Sixth Corps, announcing he had arrived with two brigades, some 3,350 veteran soldiers in all.

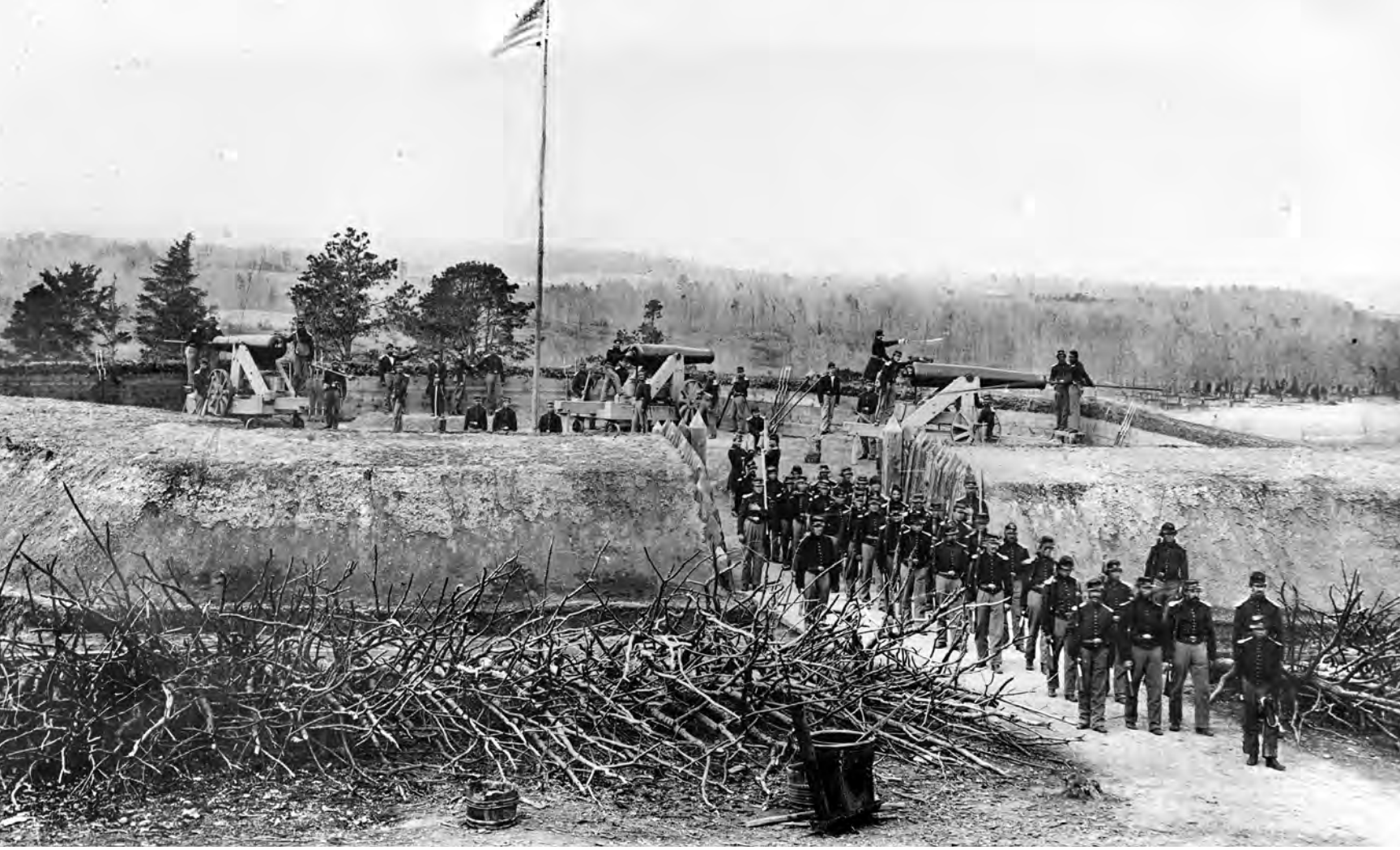
A relieved Wallace welcomed Ricketts and the two officers briefly discussed the overall situation. Wallace now had something close to 6,000 men, and was still outnumbered by the Confederates, but with Ricketts' veterans in the mix, the coming battle was not going to be an easy walkover for the gray tide. After a brief discussion, Wallace returned to his bed "and never slept more soundly."

After breakfast Wallace strolled along the bluff by the railroad bridge, making last minute inspections and possible corrections to his system of defenses. Black buzzards flew in lazy circles in the sky above, a sight that might have seemed to many an ill omen, and a forecast of the deaths to come, but Wallace was still confident. The Indiana general later gained fame as the author of *Ben Hur,* and he did have a way with words.

Wallace described a future battlefield where "there was not a speck in the sky…and the departing night had left a coolness in the air delicious and refreshing." But this almost poetic idyll was rudely interrupted when Confederate cavalry under Gen. John McCausland crossed the Monocacy River. Dismounting, the gray cavalry proceeded through a farmer's fields, in a skirmish line. Suddenly a line of Union infantry arose from behind a fence, and, resting their rifle-muskets on that fence, opened up a "murderous volley" on the surprised rebels.

A local farm boy witnessed the scene from afar, and later remembered that, "watched from a distance the whole rebel line disappeared as if swallowed up by the earth." The survivors fell back in disarray, but launched a second attack a few hours later. This was also met with failure, but more of Early's troops arrived as the day wore on, and the Federals started taking casualties, too.

The battle seesawed back and forth, degrading into a bloody quagmire where both sides performed bravely, but could not gain the upper hand. Finally rebel numbers began to make them-



Both: Library of Congress

ABOVE: Part of Fort Stevens, manned by the 2nd Pennsylvania Heavy Artillery, in 1864. The earthen fort was surrounded by abatis and a moat. OPPOSITE: Abraham Lincoln arrives at Fort Stevens in the evening of July 11 as Confederate skirmishers fire on the fort. Chimneys in the distance are all that remain of a house that was destroyed by Union gunners so that it could not be used by the Confederates. Lincoln visited again the next day and C.V.A. Crawford, Assistant Surgeon of the 102nd Pennsylvania, was hit in the leg by a sniper's bullet standing only three feet from Lincoln.

selves felt, and Wallace was forced to retreat. Early had scored a victory, but his momentum had been slowed, and his forces bloodied. "A sense of relief came over me," Wallace later wrote, because " if the day was lost to me, General Early might not profit from it."

Indeed, Wallace's clash with Early, though a defeat, fully redeemed the semi-disgraced Union general. His stand at Monocacy Junction gained valuable time, enabling Grant to send veteran reinforcements to Washington. It didn't seem so beneficial at the time, because panic spread as the gray juggernaut approached the nation's capital. By some estimates the city's forts and batteries were manned by a formidable force, though in reality it was closer to 9,600 troops, including those ill-trained and unfamiliar with the guns they were supposed to use against the enemy

Times of crisis can bring out both the best and the worst in people. Some lost their heads in unreasoning panic, ready to flee at a moment's notice. Others rose to the occasion, finding in themselves reserves of unexpected courage and resolution. Every able bodied man capable of shouldering a rifle was called upon to join in the city's defense. Federal workers, scribblers fresh from government offices, discovered that in these times the sword is mightier than the pen.

Once his forces approached the outskirts of Washington, Early went forward with his telescope to have a distant look at the capital's defenses. According to some sources, Early rode up a hill, and could see the then-unfinished capitol dome in the distance, perhaps four miles away. So near, and yet so far. But Early's immediate concern was the Federal defense system, with its forts with their interlocking fields of fire, and trenches for infantry support.

A local secessionist farmer told him these forts were basically a sham, "just earthworks." Early's professional eye told him otherwise. Still, he could also see they were not adequately manned. Maybe, just maybe, the Confederates could take Washington. But there was a problem. His men were exhausted from long marches under a blazing sun. Some didn't have shoes, and others were down with sunstroke in the 95-degree heat.

Early decided to wait until the next day, the morning of July 12, 1864, to launch a full-scale attack. In the meantime, gray sharpshooters would go forward, harassing the enemy, softening him up, probing and possibly discovering weaknesses not obvious to the naked eye.

As events unfolded, Fort Stevens became the focal point of the Confederate attack and the keystone of the Union defense. It was a "large enclosed work situated on high ground." Called a fort, engineers would have classified it as a "lunette." It boasted the usual array of artillery, including four 24-pounder seacoast cannon firing in a barbette, six 24-pounder siege guns firing from an embrasure, and two 8-inch howitzers.

The Union command structure in Washington's defense was confused, with overlapping levels of authority. However, Maj. Gen. Alexander McCook took care of Fort Stevens and its immediate environs. His command was a mixed bag of the experienced and inexperienced, the able bodied and "walking wounded," the regular military

and the volunteers.

The celebrated incident of Lincoln coming under enemy fire is true; the sources are clear and firm. However, there is confusion and vagueness about the details, and how many times he visited. Lincoln was present on Monday, July 11, and witnessed the skirmishing that was taking place at that time. He stood in plain sight on the top of a parapet, and with his 6-foot-4 frame and celebrated top hat, must have attracted the attention of the many Confederate sharpshooters in the area. Bullets whizzed by him, and he only stepped down when repeatedly urged to do so.

It was at this time that, as bullets flew perilously close, a soldier yelled at Lincoln "Get down, you damned fool!" Several names have been put forward as the soldier who rudely ordered his commander in chief. Probably the most famous candidate is Capt. Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr, later a Justice of the Supreme Court. In any case Lincoln, more amused than offended, obeyed.

There apparently was a second visit the next day. Some of his official entourage were present, including Secretary of State William H. Seward, Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles, and First Lady Mary Todd Lincoln. After Mrs. Lincoln returned to their carriage, the president insisted on viewing the skirmishing from the top of the parapet. Once again, Confederate bullets whizzed past him like a swarm of angry bees.

Major General Horatio Wright, commander of the Sixth Corps, was also with him on the parapet, as well as C.V.A. Crawford, Assistant Surgeon of the 102nd Pennsylvania. As Lincoln and Wright were talking, Crawford was hit in the leg by a bullet while standing not three feet away. It was said that Wright pleaded with Lincoln to take cover, and finally the President complied.

In another twist of historical irony, when Lincoln visited Fort Stevens, Confederate Gen. John C Breckinridge was about a mile away with the rebel forces. Breckinridge was the presidential candidate for the Southern Democrats in the election of 1860. For the first and only time in American history, two men who had been presidential contenders faced each other across opposing battle lines.

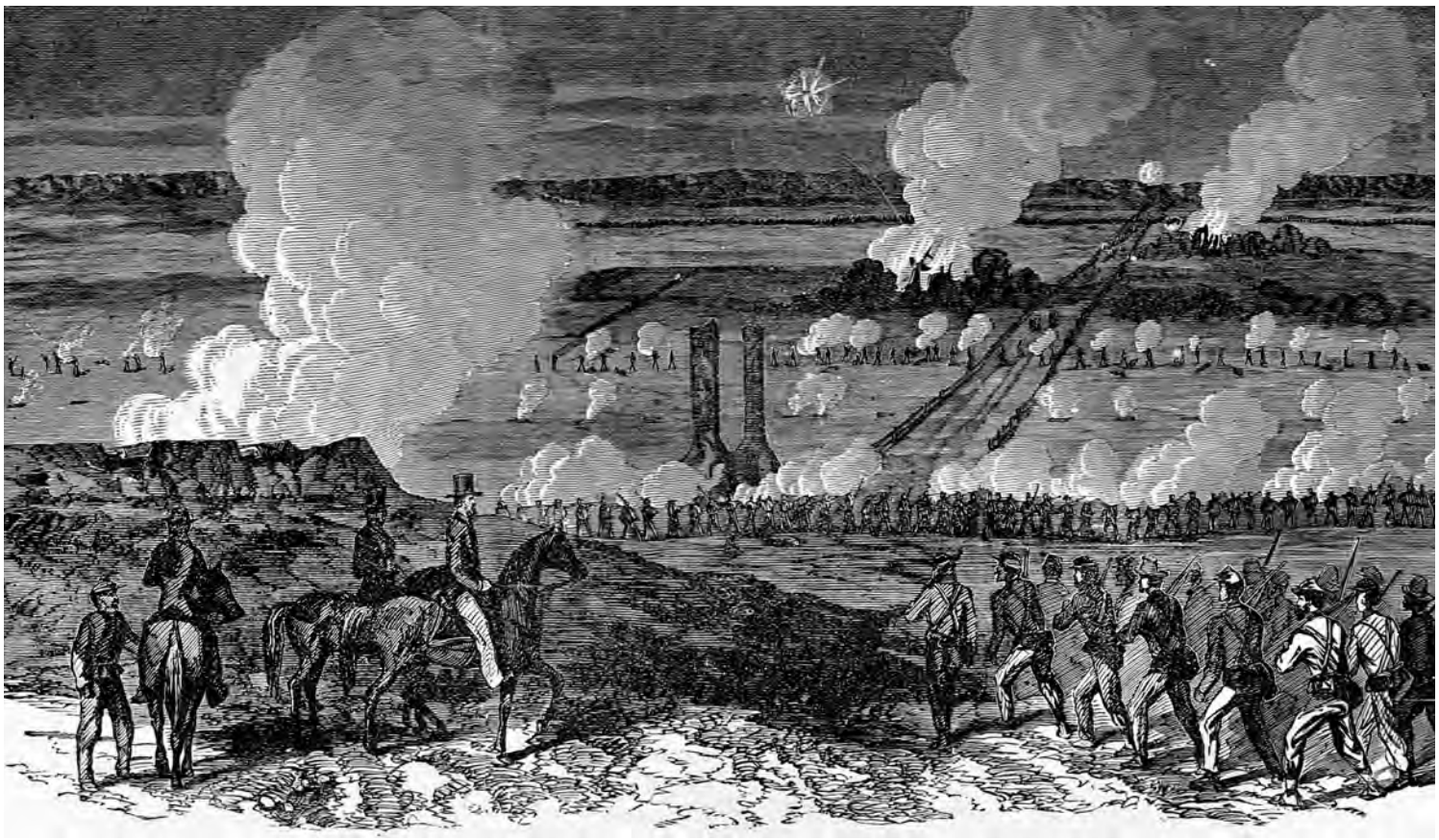
Much of the action was skirmishing, but if a battle is the "purposeful movement of troops against an enemy," the "Battle of Fort Stevens" did occur at this time. Initially the Union troops fell back, abandoning their picket lines and manning the rifle pits that were protected by Fort Stevens' powerful guns. When it became apparent that Confederate moves were not the beginning of a major attack, McCook ordered his dismounted cavalry to reclaim their forward posts, which was "done smartly" by 1:30 p.m.

Undaunted, the Confederates probed other locations, including nearby Fort DeRussy, west of Rock Creek. This was a job for the Veteran Brigade, and by all accounts they performed well. Without hesitation they "formed a line and advanced, firing rapidly, and, under heavy fire, driving the enemy's right flank back, occupying their ground."

Night fell, and both sides prepared themselves for a major battle the next day. But when morning dawned, Early looked once again at the works in front of him and didn't like what he saw. Fort Stevens and the other works were now filled with men in faded blue uniforms, and the flags told him they were men of the veteran Sixth Corps.

Discretion is the better part of valor, and Early had sense enough to understand the opportunity to take Washington had passed. He decided to withdraw, no doubt to the relief of at least some of his men, who could see storming the forts would now be near suicidal. Casualties were still fairly heavy as various sources list between 500 and 600 dead for the Confederates and more than 300 for the Union.

Early continued to campaign in the Shenandoah until the end of the war, but with decreasing effectiveness. A new commander, Gen. Phil Sheridan, took command of Union forces in the area. Sheridan, unlike his predecessors, proved to be effective and even charismatic. But that was in the future. In the immediate aftermath of the Washington raid, Early took comfort that though he didn't take the capital, he "scared Lincoln like hell." ■



The Most Serious REVERSE

Taking the brunt of Hitler's surprise counteroffensive in what would be known as the Battle of the Bulge, the inexperienced 106th Infantry Division was torn to shreds.

BY FLINT WHITLOCK

The HMS *Queen Elizabeth*, the largest passenger liner afloat, took only five days to transport the entire 106th Division from New Jersey to Glasgow, Scotland, making port on November 17, 1944. The troops were then taken by train to Portsmouth, England, and transported across a storm-tossed English Channel to France and up the Seine River.

The young soldiers of the "Golden Lion" Division who had hoped to spend a few days in Paris were disappointed. The division was loaded like cargo into hundreds of unheated trucks and hauled eastward, crossing into Belgium on December 10. The troops did not see Paris.

What they saw instead were miles and miles of a burned and broken landscape that bore grim testimony to the ferocity of the fighting that had taken place for the past six months. The ruins of homes, shops, churches, and factories—the enormous reality of which exceeded a thousandfold what the young soldiers of the 106th had expected—spoke mutely of the desperate battles that had been waged across the European continent during the past six months.

Scattered along the roadsides and in the fields were the twisted and blackened hulks of tanks, trucks, half-tracks, ambulances, artillery pieces, jeeps, aircraft, and military hardware of all kinds. Not all of it, however, was German; plenty of wrecked and bloodstained American vehicles littered the fields, farms, roads, and towns. The men of the 106th collectively gulped and hoped that things were considerably quieter wherever they were going.

The half-frozen Golden Lions finally arrived at the quaint little town of St.-Vith in eastern Belgium on December 11. Named in honor of the martyr St. Vitus, the first settlers had put down roots in the area in AD 863. The town that has found itself in the center of numerous wars over the centuries was once again in the path of great armies at the end of 1944.

At St.-Vith, the Ardennes Forest of Belgium melds with the Schnee Eifel region of Germany, and the two areas are virtually indistinguishable from one another. Broad farmlands and thick groves of trees are spread over a series of rolling hills and deep river valleys, intercut by narrow, winding roads. To call the region "mountainous" would be overstating the case. Steep in places and heavily forested in others, the region's undulating terrain is perhaps more akin to the gently rolling Appalachians of central Pennsylvania. In January 1944, the Schnee Eifel, a high, pine-covered ridge that runs from the northeast to the southwest, was heavily fortified with bunkers, pillboxes, and antitank obstacles—part of the German Westwall, or Siegfried Line, of defenses.

The broad Allied push had come to a dead stop in autumn along the German-Belgian border at Aachen and the Hürtgen Forest, due to a variety of factors, which included bad weather, heavy

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This captured German film shows a grenadier of Kampfgruppe Hansen posing in front of burning vehicles of the U.S. 14th Mechanized Cavalry Group during the Battle of the Bulge.

Both: National Archives

casualties, a serious shortage of fuel and ammunition, increased German resistance, and plain exhaustion. On December 7, 1944, Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, head of the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force, met with his highest American and British commanders in Maastricht, Belgium, to map out plans for future operations. It was decided that a fresh offensive, in early 1945, must be mounted to keep the German defenders on their heels and prevent any further loss of offensive momentum.

The Allies held a 400-mile front, running from Nijmegen, Holland, to the French-Swiss border at Basel. Occupying the northern front, or left flank of the Allied line, was British Field Marshal Sir Bernard Law Montgomery's Twenty-first Army Group, while General Omar Bradley's Twelfth Army Group occupied the area to the south.

Holding the northern half of Bradley's line was Lt. Gen. William H. Simpson's U.S. Ninth Army and Lt. Gen. Courtney Hodges' First Army, the divisions of which had seen months of heavy fighting. On their right flank, from Monschau south, were spread the 99th, the 106th, and the 28th Infantry Divisions. Next to the 28th, which was badly stretched-out, was the exhausted 4th Infantry Division. Below Luxembourg stood Lt. Gen. George S. Patton's Third Army. At Saarbrücken, the front turned east and was the responsibility of General Alexander Patch's Seventh Army, which had landed on the French Riviera in August.

It was decided that Montgomery would send his forces in an all-out thrust toward the Rhine north of the Ruhr. Simpson's Ninth Army would be attached to the British force. Farther south, as part of a one-two punch, Eisenhower would send Patton's Third Army racing toward Frankfurt-am-Main.

Hodges' First Army, consisting of the V, VII, and VIII Corps, would also play a major role in the coming fight. The VII Corps, commanded by Maj. Gen. J. Lawton Collins, would spearhead the offensive and head for Cologne. Maj. Gen. Leonard T. Gerow's V Corps would exploit any VII Corps successes. Chosen to take part in the V Corps offensive, the battle-weary 2nd Infantry Division was pulled out of its positions east of St.-Vith and trucked northward to the vicinity of Dom Butgenbach. Maj. Gen. Troy H. Middleton's VIII Corps, on First Army's southern flank, had no immediate role in the upcoming operations, but was told to be ready to follow up Allied gains. December 13 was set as D-day for the start of the operation.

Guarding the supposedly "impenetrable" forest east of St.-Vith in the VIII Corps area were the inexperienced 99th and 106th Infantry Divisions. There they would get a taste for living near the front, hear the distant rumble of artillery fire, and act as reserves.

Although a veteran of World War I, the 106th's commanding general, 52-year-old Maj. Gen. Alan Jones, had never led a unit of any size in combat, let alone a 14,253-man infantry division. Most of his officers, noncoms, and enlisted men were equally green.

Through no fault of its own, the 106th was about as ill-prepared for combat as any division America ever put into the field. From activation to departure for its port of embarkation, the 106th lost a total of 12,442 of its best-trained men. These were pulled out during training at Camp Atterbury, Indiana, and either sent overseas as replacements or transferred to divisions that had been alerted for overseas movement. Bringing the division back up to full strength was a flood of Army Specialized Training Program students, fresh from their college classes, as well as the rookies from the infantry replacement centers at places such as Camp Wheeler, Georgia, whose military training was minimal at best.

The division had other problems as well. One historian noted, "Unlike Regular Army and National Guard divisions, [the 106th] had no distinctive history or achievements, unit pride, or connection with any particular state or region."

Once it arrived at the front, the 106th began to acclimate itself to its new positions. While the 2nd Infantry Division, which the 106th replaced, had earlier plotted out preregistered artillery concentrations and established liaison with the 14th Mechanized Cavalry Group to its north, the 106th had yet to adequately carry out either of those two essential tasks. The officers of the 106th may have thought that, as new arrivals at the front, they would be given time to get their feet wet before anyone expected them to engage in any "real" soldiering. They may also not have realized that the division, in its positions in the Schnee Eifel, represented a deep penetration into German territory. It was a situation ripe for disaster.

In the autumn of 1944, Nazi Germany was being crushed from three sides. From the east, the huge Soviet army was slowly pushing back the enemy. From the west and south, American, British, and Free French forces were inexorably forcing the German army into a massive retrograde action. From overhead, daily raids by thousands of Allied aircraft were pounding the Third Reich into shattered, smoldering, unrecognizable rubble.

To save his nation, Adolf Hitler, Germany's supreme commander, decided to gather as many forces as he could and strike back hard in the west. His hope was to inflict serious casualties, causing public opinion in Britain and America to force Prime Minister Winston Churchill and President Franklin D. Roosevelt to negotiate a peace. Then, perhaps with Britain and America as allies, the Germans could defeat the Soviet army and fore-

ABOVE: A platoon of green troops from the U.S. 106th Infantry Division, somewhere near St. Vith, Belgium. Expecting to occupy a quiet sector of the Allied line in December 1944, the "Golden Lions" found themselves in the path of Hitler's last major offensive—*Unternehmen Wacht am Rhein* (Operation Watch on the Rhine). OPPOSITE: At Camp Atterbury, Indiana, home of 106th Infantry Division, soldiers from the 422nd Regiment prepare to attack a simulated enemy pillbox with flame throwers during a large-scale training assault in September 1944. Within two months these soldiers, mostly new recruits, would be on their way to Europe and the Battle of the Bulge.

stall a takeover of Europe by the Communists.

Hitler scanned maps for a suitable place from which to launch his counterassault. Then he saw it, the Ardennes, the same improbable place through which his divisions had begun their surprise invasion of France and Belgium in 1940. Here he envisioned scores of divisions and thousands of panzers and artillery pieces crashing through the "impenetrable" forest and straight into the soft spot of the American front lines—a soft spot currently occupied by the unsuspecting 106th Infantry Division.

While the Allies would later call the operation the "Battle of the Bulge," Hitler codenamed it *Wacht am Rhein* (Watch on the Rhine). It was not the Rhine River, however, that Hitler planned to secure. It was instead the vital port at Antwerp, some 75 miles west of Aachen, that he hoped to reach, while simultaneously driving a wedge between American and British forces.

The American high command saw no reason to expect a German counterthrust of any great magnitude in the Ardennes. Intelligence reports indicated no major enemy buildup or unusual "chatter" in communications that might suggest the Germans were about to launch a major attack. Even ULTRA, the system that had broken the German ENIGMA codes, deciphered nothing conclusive. Just as the Allies had hoodwinked the Germans about the Normandy invasion, the Germans had devised a deception plan to convince the Allies that Germany was going to stay on the defensive. They made sure that the Allies received this carefully planted information.

On the night of December 11, 1944, a number of high-ranking German generals were summoned to the Führer's underground forward headquarters, known as the Adlerhorst, in the resort city of Bad Nauheim. There, Hitler announced that in four days the German army would launch the largest offensive since the invasion of the Soviet Union. He would throw almost everything he had at the Americans. Three armies with 13 infantry and seven panzer divisions, plus an additional five infantry divisions in OKW reserve on alert or en route to the front, totaling some 290,000 men, 2,617 artillery pieces, 1,038 tanks and self-propelled guns, and a handful of aircraft.

Only 80,000 Americans held the 75-mile line between Monschau and Luxembourg City. Hitler believed the 99th and the 106th divisions, occupying the *schwerpunkt* (point of attack) in front of St.-Vith, were too inexperienced to put up much of a fight.

Stunned, the generals could not believe their ears. Many privately believed that the Führer had long ago lost all touch with reality, and this scheme confirmed their beliefs. They did their best to change Hitler's mind, pointing out that their formations were much too weak, the Allies were much too strong, and the chances for victory were nonexistent. Hitler had heard this type of defeatist talk from his generals before, however, and he would not be moved. The operation would go ahead as planned, whether they liked it or not.

While the five infantry and four SS (*Schutzstaffel*) panzer divisions of the Sixth Panzer Army, under SS *Obergruppenführer* (lieutenant general) Sepp Dietrich, would strike Gerow's V Corps between Aachen and Monschau, the center thrust would send *General der Panzertruppen* (general of panzer troops) Hasso von Manteuffel's Fifth Panzer Army

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into the 28th, 99th, and 106th divisions. Von Manteuffel's force consisted of four infantry and three panzer divisions totaling 90,000 men, 396 tanks and assault guns, and 963 artillery pieces. To the south, General der Panzertruppen Erich Brandenberger's 60,000-man Seventh Army would hit Middleton's extended VIII Corps line, comprising one regiment each from the 4th and 28th Infantry Divisions, and a Combat Command from the 9th Armored Division, along the Germany-Luxembourg border.

A thousand paratroopers would also drop behind American positions. As an extra surprise, hundreds of English-speaking Germans dressed in American uniforms, driving captured American vehicles, and commanded by SS *Obersturmbahnführer* (lieutenant colonel) Otto Skorzeny would be employed in "Operation Greif" to sow confusion and disinformation behind the lines as they dashed ahead of the panzers. It seemed that Hitler had thought of everything.

Although German ammunition and fuel stocks were low, and much of the equipment was in poor condition, Hitler gambled that German desperation, surprise, and audacity would be enough to help ensure victory.

On the night of December 15-16, 1944, two regiments of the 106th Infantry Division were thinly spread atop 4.5 miles of a gently sloping ridge in the Schnee Eifel, just inside Germany's border with Belgium.

The left flank of Colonel George L. Descheneaux, Jr.'s 422nd Infantry Regiment touched the village of Schlausenbach, while the right flank met Col. Charles C. Cavender's 423rd Regiment near Oberlascheid. The 423rd's lines then extended southwest to the town of Bleialf. The third regiment, Col. Alexander Reid's 424th, was located four miles southwest of Bleialf, around Winterspelt. Division headquarters was six miles behind the front line in St.-Vith.

To the 422nd's and 423rd's front lay wide farm fields and groves of fir trees. No one expected much action in this sector. Except for the distant and sporadic thud of artillery and occasional patrols by both sides, the situation along the front was about as quiet as war could get. That situation suited many of the new arrivals just fine.

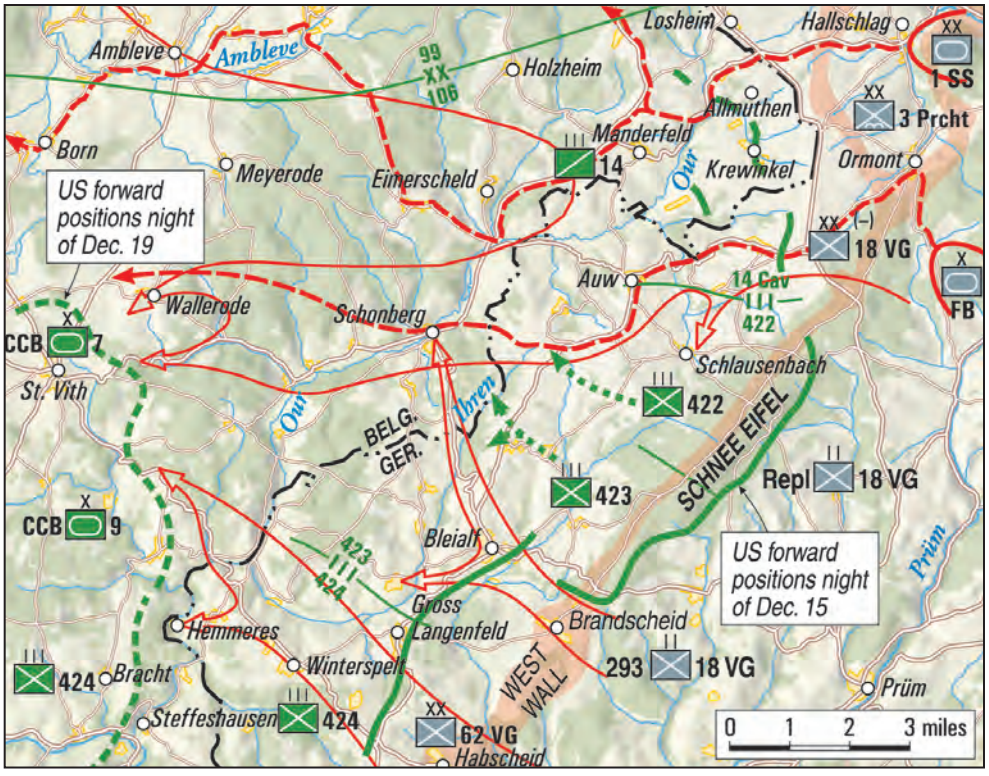
Scanning the far side of the valley with binoculars, officers saw no reason to think that a major attack was imminent. Binoculars, however, could not penetrate the thick woods to see the stores of ammunition and fuel being built up, the hundreds of panzers, half-tracks, and self-propelled artillery pieces lined up track-to-track, the thousands of armed men assembled for the great operation.

Aerial reconnaissance did show heavy concentrations of men and equipment, but this was misinterpreted as enemy units merely passing through the Eifel area on their way to bolster German lines to the north or south. Even General Bradley failed to attach adequate importance to the ominous signs, admitting later, "I had greatly underestimated the enemy's offensive capabilities.… We could not believe he possessed sufficient resources for a strategic offensive."

For most of the men of the 106th Division, trying to keep warm in bunkers and foxholes along the Eifel ridge, everything was peaceful. According to 19-year-old Pfc. Peter Iosso, a machine-gunner with Company E, 422nd Regiment, dug in eight miles east of St.-Vith, the loudest thing in his sector was "the snow that fell off the branches of the evergreens."

Iosso noted that his unit had only been on line for a few days. "We had just arrived there and replaced the 2nd Division. The guys in the 2nd Division told us there wasn't much going on. We had a machine-gun nest in a pillbox with logs over it—kind of a primitive shelter. We thought we would probably serve a couple of weeks there and then get R and R [rest and recuperation] and have a good time somewhere else, then return to this kind of phony war."

Map © 2026 Philip Schwartzberg, Meridian Mapping, Minneapolis, MN



Photos courtesy (left to right): Mary E. Smith; Peter Iosso; Dr. Robert Kline

ABOVE: From left, Private James V. Smith, Pfc. Peter Iosso, and Sergeant Robert Kline were three members of the 106th Infantry Division who survived the opening hours of the Ardennes offensive. TOP: A map of the positions held by the 106th Infantry Division—widely dispersed and unable to provide effective mutual support—when the Germans struck in the opening hours of the offensive. OPPOSITE: A German reconnaissance patrol in winter camouflage moves through a snowy forest during the Battle of the Bulge, early January 1945.

Robert Kline, a communications sergeant with Company M, 423rd Regiment, was in a log-covered dugout. "The Germans ran patrols up through us about every night. You weren't supposed to shoot at them, because you'd give away your position. One guy had a dog jump in on him—scared him to death."

All along the American lines, the night of December 15-16 was pretty much like the previous few nights. There was a little distant gunfire; a lot of hand-rubbing and foot-stomping by sentries trying to keep warm; hours of monitoring the radio net to hear if anything important, or even interesting, was happening; trying to sleep in the wet and cold; and thinking about what tomorrow and the day after would bring. For those who had been "gung-ho" and had enlisted enthusiastically for the cause, their military ardor had waned. War was a cold, dirty business, uncomfortable, and, at times like this, exceedingly boring.

For many married soldiers, that night's thoughts drifted homeward, picturing what their wives might be doing at that exact moment. Thousands of freezing men in the woods and hills east of St.-Vith thought about home and pondered their future—one that would never come for many of them.

A few miles east of the American lines beneath the towering, frosted pines of the Ardennes, the massive German war machine stirred to life. Soldiers shouldered their rifles and Panzerfausts and climbed aboard their trucks and half-tracks. Panzer commanders gave their men the signal to move out, and the cold night air was suddenly filled with the roar of engines and clouds of choking diesel exhaust. All along the 80-mile front, the snow crunched beneath the tires and tracks of the vehicles as over a quarter-million men headed west, grimly determined to do their holy duty to save the Fatherland or die trying.

In the small hours of December 16, 1944, as the sleepy, unsuspecting American sentries scanned the terrain in front of them, the pre-dawn blackness of the eastern horizon suddenly lit up like an artificial dawn, as though the end of the world were at hand. Thousands of German guns flared as their rounds screamed toward the American lines. Seconds later, the projectiles began splattering on the ground, bursting in the air, and tearing into the trees, hurling hot, jagged fragments into their unsuspecting victims.

Men who had been dozing just moments earlier were now jerked out of their slumber by noise and concussions that none had ever before experienced. Shaking the sleep from their brains and suddenly fueled with adrenaline, soldiers grabbed for their rifles and rushed to their assigned defensive positions. Others, terrified at the bright white-orange flashes and the splintering of tall pines that accompanied the eruptions of thousands of shells, took off running to escape the steel storm.

After a barrage that seemed to last several eternities, the fire lifted. Those soldiers who had survived saw ghostly shapes moving toward them through the trees—whitewashed panzers accompanied by infantry in snow camouflage. While elements of the 18th Volksgrenadier Division kept the men of the 106th occupied to their front, the rest of the enemy division was already slipping around the flanks, between the seam of the 422nd Regiment and the 14th Cavalry Group to the north, and the 423rd and the 424th to the south at Bleialf. The immediate objective of the German units was Schönberg, behind the 106th.

When the first German shells began falling, Peter Iosso dashed back out to his machine-gun post, but a round exploded nearby, knocking him unconscious. When he awoke, he was lying in the snow with a bloody chin and throbbing feet. "Though my stiff legs and frostbitten feet resisted," he said, "I managed to get back to company HQ. At another time I would probably have been taken to the 'rear,' but the Germans had broken through our lines. Somebody bandaged my chin. But the battle began and the aid station was no help to me because they were getting ready to retreat. I was cut off from my company and had to retreat with the company headquarters people."

Pfc. Joseph Mark, a communications specialist, was at his switchboard in a pillbox that served as headquarters for the 3rd Battalion when the battle erupted. "I was putting through switchboard calls from our artillery observer in the front to our artillery in the back. Our position held initially. We stopped them cold in front of us, but they got around us on both sides."

Pfc. James V. Smith, an ammunition bearer for a mortar platoon in Company H, 423rd Infantry Regiment, was with his section near Bleialf. "We started having these three-quarter-ton trucks passing us, heading for the rear. We could see all these dead soldiers stacked up in the trucks. That didn't cheer us up very much."

Smith's mortar section began firing toward the

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ABOVE: Killed in action during the early German advance at the Battle of the Bulge, bodies identified as soldiers from the 106th Infantry Division lie beside their M5 antitank gun. OPPOSITE: A German photograph of American POWs, including men from the 106th Infantry Division, captured during the Ardennes Offensive. About 23,000 GIs were taken prisoner during the Battle of the Bulge, more than 6,500 of them from the surrender of the 422nd and 423rd Regiments of the U.S. 106th Infantry Division at Schnee Eifel in late December 1944.

enemy. "The first round we fired hit a church steeple in the town and blew the church steeple apart. The next round—we had used a magnesium round—hit very near a tank that was coming around a corner in the town. Our observers said a lot of Germans came out of the tank and several things were on fire there."

By late morning on the 16th, the 14th Cavalry Group was being pushed back to the Holzheim-Andler line, uncovering the 422nd's left flank in the process. On the 423rd's right flank in the village of Bleialf a street battle resembling a Wild West shootout was taking place. The seam between American units was torn. The German breakthrough above and below the 422nd and 423rd Regiments was about to snare the division in a classic double envelopment.

St.-Vith was in a panic. Civilians were attempting to flee while German shells, fired from batteries at Prüm 15 miles away, bombarded the town, and German armored columns were spotted closing in. No one, least of all Jones, seemed to know what was happening to his forward regiments.

At his Paris headquarters, Eisenhower was not panicked or even terribly concerned by the reports coming from the front. To him, the Ardennes counteroffensive signaled that the war was nearly over. He wrote, "We had always been convinced that before the Germans acknowledged final defeat in the West they would attempt one desperate counteroffensive. It seemed likely to Bradley and me that they were now starting this kind of attack."

The SHAEF brass decided that the 7th Armored Division, part of Hodges' First Army to the north of the penetration, and the 10th Armored Division, in Patton's Third Army operating to the south, should be immediately rushed to the area of the breakthrough to pinch off the threat

The situation for the Americans on the front lines, however, was fast becoming untenable. On December 17, the Germans had driven the 14th Cavalry Group back to St.-Vith. Southeast of St.-Vith, the Germans had pushed back the 424th Regiment and taken the town of Winterspelt. A plan was formulated to gather whatever troops could be found in and around St.-Vith and head for Schönberg, thereby opening an escape corridor for what was left of the 422nd and 423rd Regiments.

If Eisenhower was calm and confident, Jones was despondent. Incorrectly informed that Combat Command B (CCB) of the 7th Armored Division, just starting out from Maastricht, Holland, 60 miles to the north, would arrive early on the 17th, Jones hoped that his besieged regiments could hold out that long.

Speeding south from Maastricht several miles in advance of his CCB tanks was Brig. Gen. Bruce C. Clarke. He first reported to VIII Corps headquarters in Bastogne, where General Middleton informed him of the deteriorating situation in the 106th's sector. The next morning, the forward elements of the 7th Armored reached Poteau, five miles west of St.-Vith. Already there were problems. The SS spearhead had cut the 7th's route of march and killed Col. Church M. Matthews, the division's chief of staff.

The situation around St.-Vith quickly came to a head on the 17th. At about 1430 hours that afternoon, with two of his three infantry regiments—about 9,000 men—surrounded and the third fighting for its life, two-star general Jones made the remarkable decision to turn over the defense of the St.-Vith sector to one-star general Clarke. Clarke, however, could do little to change the situation for the better as he was still waiting for his tanks to arrive.

At last, on the evening of the 17th, the first tanks of the 7th Armored clattered down the cobblestone streets of St.-Vith. The next day, CCB linked up with the 9th Armored Division moving up from the south. The two armored units, along with an ad hoc assemblage of infantry, engineer, artillery,

and support units, formed a defensive line east of St.-Vith and prepared to hold back the attack.

Following behind the 7th Armored column was Battery B of the 285th Field Artillery Observation Battalion. The small convoy had passed through Malmédy and was a few hundred yards south of Baugnez when it came under fire from SS Obersturmbahnführer Joachim Peiper's panzers. The lightly armed Americans who survived the initial assault surrendered, but were then lined up in a field and shot. Altogether, 86 GIs were murdered in cold blood by Peiper's SS battlegroup.

Sergeant Robert Kline, Company M, 423rd Regiment, felt that the situation was going from bad to worse. "The second or third night of the Bulge," he said, "they sent 12 tank destroyers up but they all got knocked out. In the afternoon, Captain Hardy told us to get into the foxholes that were all around there. The corporal and I crawled into these slit trenches and a German patrol came through there—boy, they're good; you don't hardly see 'em. The corporal was off to my right and one of those 'potato-masher' grenades landed about a foot from his head and went off. It made a hole in the ground but it never touched him.

"A little bit later, I heard somebody say, 'You gotta turn in your gas mask.' I said the hell with that; I'm not turning in my gas mask. I didn't know who they were—just a bunch of guys in American uniforms. I found out later that they were Germans in American uniforms."

Kline's company commander maintained contact with Lt. Col. Earl Klinck, the battalion commander, while Kline stood guard all night long outside the bunker "with a little carbine and two clips—16 bullets to fight a major battle! I hadn't had any sleep for about two or three days. Captain Hardy told me that Colonel Klinck said, 'We're going to pull out and he wants you to go with him'—which is the dumbest thing we've ever done in our life. When you're dug in, you don't pull out. Where're you gonna go? If you're dug in, make 'em come get you." Kline reported to battalion headquarters, where the colonel ordered him to pack up the battalion's radio and move out.

Kline noted, "About 10 o'clock at night, we stopped in the woods, and Colonel Klinck pulled a 'klinker.' He took out his flashlight to look at a map without covering up and all hell broke loose. We started getting bombarded with all these shells. A shell went off to the right of me and it must have been concussion—or else I was so damned tired because I hadn't slept for three or four days—I didn't wake up until daylight the next day. There wasn't one person in sight; everybody went off and left me. Maybe they thought I was dead. There I was by myself, in the daylight.

"I was also supposed to be the reconnaissance sergeant, but I didn't have a compass or a map—not a damned thing. I had an idea which way everything was going, so I walked and walked, and pretty soon I met the executive officer from our company. He had his head all bandaged up and his eyes were staring. I should have told him to stay with me, 'cuz he was in shock and was going the wrong direction. He told me that Captain Hardy had been killed." Shortly thereafter, Kline was wounded in the calf with a wooden bullet and taken prisoner.

At dawn on the 18th, Jones ordered the 422nd and 423rd Regiments to disengage with enemy units to their front and fall back to St.-Vith. To accomplish this mission, the already confused regiments, their communications in tatters, many of their leaders dead, and the weather worsening, would need to make their way through the dense forest, descend a steep hillside, cross a stream, and climb another slope. The wounded would be left behind with medics who volunteered to be taken prisoner.

A few hours later, the regiments received another even more startling order from Jones. Instead of merely withdrawing, they were to go onto the offensive against the enemy that had captured Schönberg! Even for seasoned troops, this would have been a tough assignment. For cold, frightened, inexperienced, and disorganized troops who had lost hundreds of comrades and who had never before been in combat, it was an

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ABOVE: A view of Stalag IX-B, near Bad Orb, Germany, where 350 American soldiers, including Jews and Gentiles, were separated and sent further east to Berga-an-der-Elster, a subcamp of Buchenwald, for "extermination through labor." There the men dug tunnels in a mountain for a planned synthetic oil plant that was never built. OPPOSITE: Two German motorcyclists armed with MP-40s follow a Königstiger tank as American POWs march along Rollbahn D towards Merlscheid, Germany.

impossibility. The attack never stood a chance. The men who chose to stand and fight were killed; the others were taken prisoner.

The Germans had managed to encircle the 106th Division and were attacking it from the rear. Further, the tankers who had come to save the two cut-off regiments were themselves now fighting for their lives between St.-Vith and the Schnee Eifel. Forced to pull back, they were unable to rescue Cavender's and Descheneaux's men.

Having failed utterly in his first action as a combat commander, the disgraced Maj. Gen. Jones departed his command post in St.-Vith and joined the long procession of men and vehicles heading west toward safety.

Pfc. James V. Smith's unit, Company H, 423rd Regiment, was still lobbing mortar rounds from a barnyard when German shells began crashing all around. "There were two large oxen there that the farmers used for plowing the fields," Smith said, "and with all the mortars landing all around us, the oxen began to run everywhere, their bellowing making a terrible noise."

With the situation worsening, Smith's unit was ordered to redeploy once more. "All of a sudden, we got pinned down by German mortars again, and we were held in that field for quite a long time. I took cover in a deep tank track in the mud."

After about two or three hours in that position, the enemy fire let up and Smith's unit was told to move forward. "We moved up to the edge of the woods and found our company commander; he had been run over by his jeep driver—his right arm and shoulder. He had his .45 out and he was very nervous. He was waving it around with his left hand—we were glad to get away from him. He told us to take a certain road and go into the next town. He had already sent Sergeant Webb, who was the platoon sergeant of one of the machine-gun platoons."

What the captain didn't know was that Sergeant Webb was already dead, killed in an ambush. "We went down that same road and ran into the same ambush that Sergeant Webb had run into. They opened up on our line of jeeps with machine guns—I think there were three of us at that time, three jeeps and trailers—just raking the jeeps and trailers. A lot of people got hit." Faced with annihilation, Smith's section leader ordered his men to cease firing and surrender.

Pfc. Joseph Mark, Headquarters, 3rd Battalion, had managed to avoid capture for three days and, on December 19, was riding in a jeep in a long line of American vehicles trying to reach St.-Vith. It was pandemonium. "The Germans were laying in some fire on the road," Mark recalled, "so I jumped out and ran into the woods. The firing was up front so I went the other way. I saw hundreds of Americans giving up in a field. I broke up my rifle and surrendered. I thought that the war was over for me and that the worst was over but I was wrong. The worst was coming."

On the same day Mark surrendered, Pfc. Jack Crawford, with the 590th Field Artillery Battalion, was also taken prisoner. "It was early in the morning and I had managed to get my breakfast. All of a sudden, we started getting shelled again, and everybody started taking cover in the wooded area there. Finally, the shelling stopped and the fellows started saying, 'Throw down your weapons; they've got us surrounded,' and the Germans started coming out of the woods. We didn't even see them coming; they just started coming out of the woods. Some of the guys didn't even have a chance to get dressed; they got captured without even their boots on. I managed to get my coat and we were led away."

Pfc. Pete House, also of the 590th FA Battalion, was high-tailing it to the rear, towing a 105mm howitzer behind a weapons carrier. After daylight on the 19th, he said, "We pulled off the road and up a hill to the left and went into firing position. Only had three rounds in the battery. Took tremendous fire from the Germans. … After the shelling lifted, Joe Krause came by and told me we're going to surrender. [But] we decided not to become prisoners [and] started running through the woods. We came to a clearing where a number of officers were standing around, including our battalion commander. With his permission, about 20 of us attempted to get back to our lines. We ran in a westerly direction for what seemed about an hour until we came over the crest of a hill where we came under direct fire from German anti-aircraft guns in position along a north-south road. Those of us that survived surrendered.

"After capture, we were assembled by the side of the road. While waiting, the Germans prepared their AA weapons for transport. A German officer told one of the Americans to help. The American said it was against the Geneva Convention to help. The German said, 'Ja, Geneva Convention,' and shot him."

After the Germans had collected several hundred Americans, the group started walking eastward. House said, "We had to carry our wounded the best we could until we arrived in Bleialf where we were told to leave them. The road east through the mountains was crowded with German men and equipment moving into battle. What surprised me were the number of horses used to move men and equipment. Their armored infantry were riding bicycles.

"The roads that day were packed with tanks, artillery, and other gear.… We were under the command of a German warrant officer who was

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riding in what looked like a Volkswagen. As soon as he could get by the equipment on the road, he would come speeding through our column blowing his horn. Then he would be stopped by more tanks and trucks.

"I was a very tired 20-year-old who finally was too stubborn to move out of his way. This upset him, so he got out of his vehicle, pulled out his pistol, and aimed it at my head. I heard a click. The German in the turret of a tank alongside the road had cocked his machine gun, aimed it at the warrant officer, and yelled something in German. The warrant officer put his pistol back in the holster and got back in his vehicle. This German tank commander who saved my life wore the silver skull [insignia] of the SS."

At a December 19 meeting in Verdun with Bradley, Devers, and Patton, Eisenhower decreed, "The present situation is to be regarded as one of opportunity for us and not of disaster. There will be only cheerful faces at this conference table."

Patton, as befitted his brash, aggressive nature, dared the Allies to "have the guts to let the sons of bitches go all the way to Paris. Then we'll really cut 'em off and chew 'em up."

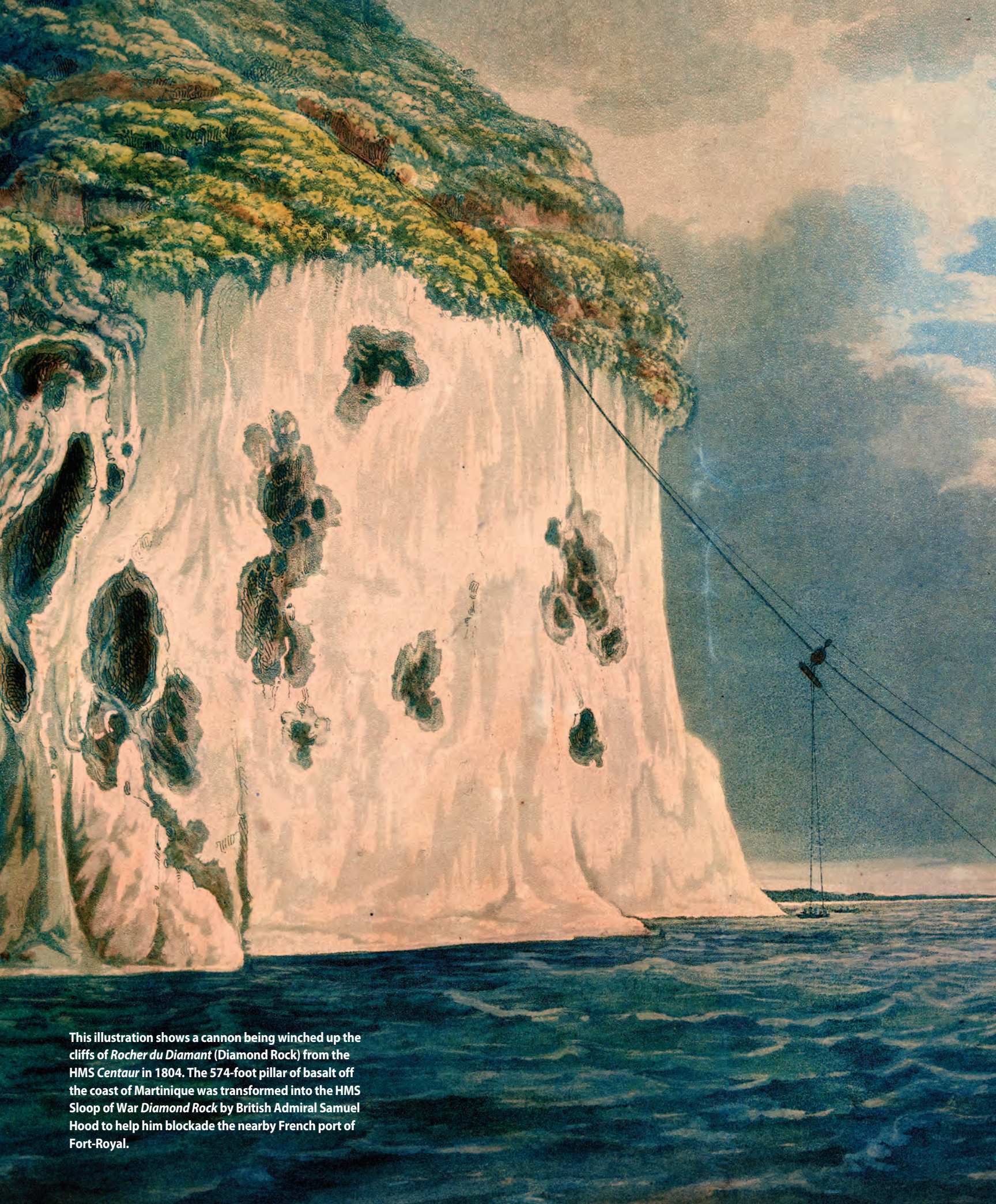
Ike smiled and replied that the enemy would never be allowed to cross the Meuse. He was true to his word. After shattering the 99th and 106th divisions and roaring through St.-Vith, the German juggernaut rolled eastward, past Stavelot and Malmédy, around Bastogne, and toward the Meuse. It never got there, nor anywhere close to its ultimate objective of Antwerp. The salient that the attack had created now became a spearpoint that was broken into small, ineffective pieces by the hammer blows of the American First and Third Armies.

The outcome was little consolation to hundreds of men of the 106th Infantry Division who had been caught in the blast furnace of the violent German assault and lay dead, their corpses frozen in the snow, their blood turned to ice. The thousands who surrendered were marched eastward to the nearest railheads at Prüm and Gerolstein and packed in groups of 65 or 70 into boxcars, with no idea where they were going or what lay ahead.

A medic remembered that the latrine facilities inside the boxcars were "horrendous and appalling: two simple boxes placed somewhere in the middle of the car. It added to the chaos among the men when someone had to defecate. Urination was generally done against the walls or through the cracks in the floorboards. The air was putrid and fecal-smelling and made worse by being confined in a very tight space. The stench was unbelievable.… It led to loud arguments and fighting between the men as to when, where, and how to urinate or defecate."

Although out of the battle zone, the POWs were not out of danger, as Allied aircraft attacked the trains daily. Once the Yanks arrived at their assigned camps, the nightmare was just beginning. Most of the soldiers were transported to Stalag IX-B at Bad Orb, near Frankfurt, where they were subjected to horrible living conditions, inadequate food and medical attention, and brutal treatment by their guards. Even worse, the Jewish-American soldiers were separated from their comrades at Stalag IX-B and taken farther east to work as slave laborers in tunnels at Berga-an-der-Elster, near Gera. It was a journey from which many would never return.

As Army historian Hugh Cole wrote on the destruction of the 106th Division, "The number of officers and men taken prisoner on the capitulation of the two regiments and their attached troops cannot be accurately ascertained. At least seven thousand were lost here and the figure is probably closer to eight or nine thousand. The amount lost in arms and equipment, of course, was very substantial. The Schnee Eifel battle, therefore, represents the most serious reverse suffered by American arms during the operations of 1944-45 in the European theater." ■

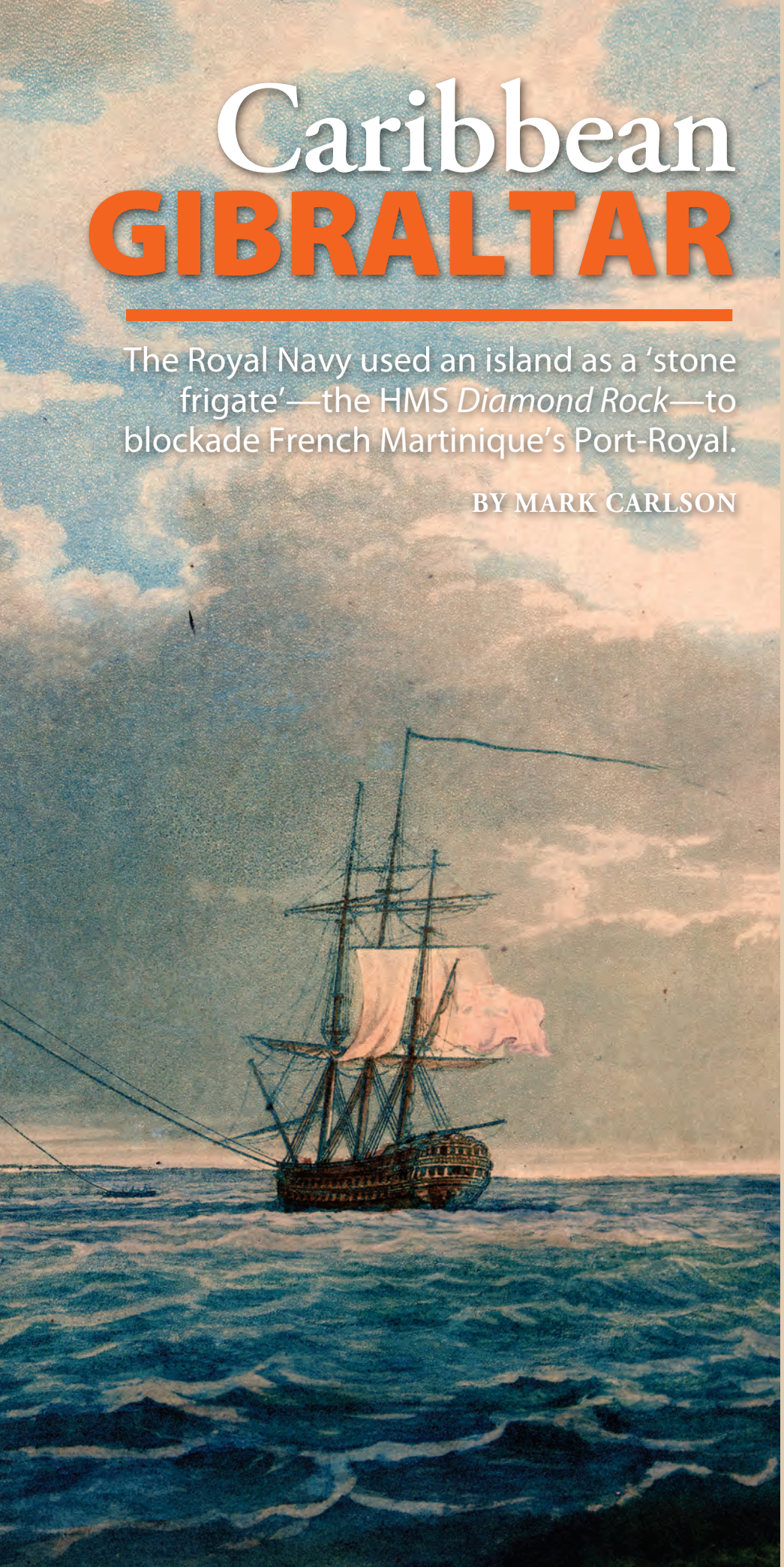


This illustration shows a cannon being winched up the cliffs of *Rocher du Diamant* (Diamond Rock) from the HMS *Centaur* in 1804. The 574-foot pillar of basalt off the coast of Martinique was transformed into the HMS Sloop of War *Diamond Rock* by British Admiral Samuel Hood to help him blockade the nearby French port of Fort-Royal.

Caribbean GIBRALTAR

The Royal Navy used an island as a 'stone frigate'—the HMS *Diamond Rock*—to blockade French Martinique's Port-Royal.

BY MARK CARLSON



For more than a year and a half, 120 British sailors and Marines led a successful blockade of the French "Sugar Island" of Martinique, birthplace of Gen. Napoleon Bonaparte's wife, Josephine. That they did so from one of the strangest ships never to sail the seas—HMS Sloop of War *Diamond Rock*—remains a lesser-known but fascinating chapter in the history of the Royal Navy and the Napoleonic Wars.

The wars were a series of conflicts around the world from 1803 to 1815 between Great Britain and its allies and Republican France and its allies—including, at times, Russia and Denmark, but mainly Holland and Spain. When the French Directory took control of the French government after the French Revolution, Napoleon was tasked with the invasion of Great Britain in the spring of 1798. But he knew invading England would be almost impossible as long as the powerful Royal Navy controlled the seas. Napoleon had the idea of invading Egypt and threatening the crown jewel of England's colonies, India. What came of this was his year-long campaign in Egypt and Turkey after his battle fleet was destroyed by Adm. Horatio Nelson at the Battle of the Nile in August of 1798.

Eventually Napoleon abandoned his army and made his way back to France, eying military control of Europe and the French throne. The war had taken its toll on both sides, with allegiances coming and going, but always influenced by the powerful Royal Navy and its mighty ships of the line. After Nelson defeated the Danish Fleet at Copenhagen, the short-lived League of Armed Neutrality between France, Denmark, Prussia and Russia was dissolved—a blow to Napoleon.

In March of 1802 Napoleon proffered peace with Great Britain, but no one in London or the Royal Navy was fooled. To consolidate his control of Europe and France, Napoleon needed time to rebuild his forces. King George III, tired of war and the mounting expense—not to mention the loss of life and property—urged Parliament to accept the offer. This led to the "Peace of Amiens." Signed and ratified in March 1802, the treaty allowed both countries to rebuild their economies and their navies.

Almost immediately food prices dropped and the increased trade with the continent was a boost to the British economy. Prisoners of war were returned home, which further improved national morale. The return of fleets that had spent months, or even years, on blockade duty also lightened the load on the Royal Navy's purse.

One of the stipulations of the treaty was that Great Britain release controls of most of the territories seized from France and its allies. This included Egypt, Malta, and the Cape of Good Hope at the southern tip of Africa. Others included islands and bases in the rich colonies of the West and East Indies. Only the Former Spanish island of Trinidad in the Caribbean and the Dutch island Of Ceylon in the Indian Ocean were retained.

The Mariners' Museum and Park, Newport News, Virginia

The Mariners' Museum and Park, Newport News, Virginia

Royal Museum Greenwhich / Wikipedia Commons

TOP: Seamen hauling spars up the cliffs on Diamond Rock off the coast of Martinique. The Queen's Battery is in the foreground, with Commodore Samuel Hood's *Centaur* and *Blenheim* at anchor in the distance. INSET: Admiral Samuel Hood, 1st Viscount Hood.

The Peace of Amiens was only a pause in a war that would go on for more than a decade. But the Royal Navy, under the aegis of the First Lord of the Admiralty (John Jervis, Earl of St Vincent), had drastically reduced the size of the fleet, maintaining only enough vessels to protect Britain's colonies and merchant ships. It was an austerity measure that ultimately cost more to reverse.

Napoleon used the time to rebuild his shattered fleet and enlarge his army while he consolidated his control of France. This was no surprise to the war-weary people and armed forces of Great Britain. By the spring of 1803, it was obvious the so-called peace was eroding fast and it would be necessary to recall the Royal Navy to arms.

King George III, realizing that France was about to throw away the treaty and resume the war, feared the threat of invasion. He sent a letter to both houses of Parliament stating "as very considerable military preparations are carrying on in the ports of France and Holland, His Majesty had judged it expedient to adopt additional measures of precaution for the security of his dominions."

Through his ambassadors, Napoleon insisted that France was only building up its forces for the protection of its colonies—an obvious falsehood believed by no one in Parliament, or the Admiralty.

But putting the scores of ships back into service would take time, money, and tens of thousands of men. Few former seamen were eager to rejoin the Navy even in their country's time of need. So began what was called the "Hot Press," a massive campaign to force into service the men needed

In the Caribbean, the reduced fleet was tasked with reclaiming the islands and territories so recently returned to France. Great Britain was going to get them back, if for no other reason than to increase trade and create problems for France. Among them were what were known as the "Sugar Islands," in the West Indies. Rich in spices, tobacco, and sugar, they were valuable territories. But the problem was the lack of warships to enforce the retaking of the islands, and even more, holding them against enemy attack. When war was again declared in May 1803, The British Commissioner in Trinidad was Commodore Samuel Hood, an experienced and clever officer. But even Hood's abilities were severely limited without ships. When his orders from the Admiralty named him Commander in Chief of the Caribbean Squadron, he only had two large warships, HMS *Centaur* and HMS *Blenheim*, six small frigates and a handful of sloops and transports. It was hardly enough to capture French islands and protect British commerce in a region more than 800 miles long, stretching from Trinidad off Venezuela and as far as the Virgin Islands to the north.

Built by the French in 1754, the *Centaur* was a 74-gun ship of the line captured by the British in 1759 during the Seven Years' War. She served with Adm. Sir George Bridges Rodney at the 1782 Battle of the Saintes and throughout the American Revolution.

Hood's first target was the island of St. Lucia

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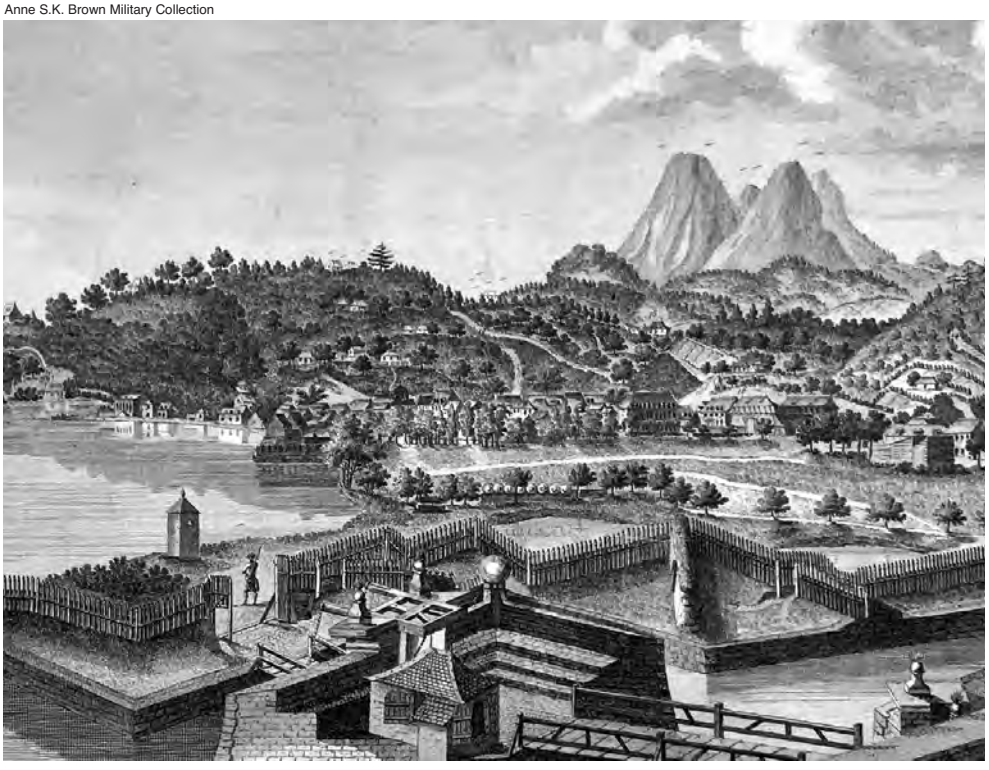


ABOVE: Historic view of the Royal Fort of Martinique that was drawn, dedicated and presented to Madame Élisabeth, sister-in-law of King Louis XVI, by Mr. le Chevalier d'Epernay, Captain in the Royal Artillery Corps, some time around 1780. TOP: The position of Diamond Rock made it ideal for controlling navigation between Martinique and St Lucia in the Carribbean. Commodore Samuel Hood had only two ships and the "stone frigate" to use against French privateers raiding British merchant shipping.

40 miles south of Martinique in the Antilles. He was fortunate in that there were few French ships in the area, so in June he was able to take St. Lucia in two days and the neighboring island of Tobago fell only a few days later. He then turned south to take the Dutch islands off Guyana, which he had captured by September. Another small squadron was blockading French ports on the island of Hispaniola. This was where one of Napoleon's biggest political blunders worked against him. He had decreed that slavery, which had been banned by the British in the region, was to be resumed. The black slaves rebelled at this and supported the British. French troops on Hispaniola were set upon by the slaves and only found refuge by surrendering to the British. By the beginning of 1804, Hispaniola became the free black island of Haiti.

The last French-held naval ports in the Caribbean were on Guadalupe and Martinique, the only islands from which French privateers could still operate against British shipping. This threat forced Hood to divert his limited warships, particularly the frigates, to escort convoys of valuable trade goods to Europe.

With his fleet stretched thin, Hood realized that an effective blockade of Martinique's primary port of Fort-Royal (renamed Fort-de-France in 1807) would cut off the small French garrison and protect British merchant shipping. He examined charts and made a study of the waters of the St. Lucia Channel at the south end of the island. The prevailing winds and currents forced ships to approach the port from the south, hugging the coast, passing between Martinique's Pointe du Diamant and a 574-foot pillar of basalt known locally as *Rocher du Diamant* (Diamond Rock).

Considered unscalable by the French, the Rock looms over the St. Lucia Channel used by ships approaching Fort-Royal. Hood reasoned that a garrison with some heavy guns could virtually cut the French off from Martinique. It was dotted with caves and gullies, and the only safe landing was on the western side away from the channel. Hood, who thought it was about as perfect a natural fortress, would later write that "about thirty riflemen could hold off ten thousand."

On January 7, 1804 the landing party of 50 sailors and 25 Royal Marines was commanded by *Centaur*'s First Lieutenant, James Wilkes Maurice, and midshipman John Donaldson. They were all volunteers. It was an excellent assignment and would get them off the ship and away from the tedium of blockade and patrol duty. They were provided with two weeks' worth of provisions, regularly supplemented from the *Centaur*. Exploring the small island, they discovered a large natural cave almost exactly opposite the landing site. It was big enough for the forges, carpenters and artificers to work. The only limitation was in fresh water. Diamond Rock had a few natural springs, but not enough for the needs of the garrison. Eventually concrete, some sources say stone, cisterns would be built to collect and store the water from the springs or from the frequent tropical rains. There were soon more than 100

The Mariners' Museum and Park, Newport News, Virginia

ABOVE: Crewmen of the stone frigate HMS *Diamond Rock* hoist mail up the cliffs to the caves and tents being used as living quarters for the 120-man garrison. OPPOSITE: The British built cisterns to collect water and did have some livestock on the rock, but were mainly dependent on other ships in the fleet for supplies. A cave served as a hospital for fever victims and other casualties. The British held Diamond Rock from January 1804 until June 1805 when, after numerous tries, the French finally captured the island as the garrison's water and ammunition ran low.

sailors and Marines on the island.

In his journal, Donaldson wrote that "the mirth and fun of the party at getting onshore after long confinement onboard and our very novel employment at fitting out a nondescript vessel as His Majesty's Sloop *Diamond Rock* made this evening pass off very cheerfully."

With a bit of tongue-in-cheek humor, the garrison soon began calling their new post "HMS Sloop of War *Diamond Rock*," which eventually became official and was registered with Hood and the Admiralty. The Royal Navy practice of using ship names for shore installations remains to this day—HMS *Dryad*, or Southwick House, is home to the navy's Anti-Submarine Warfare School.

As the garrison expanded and fortified their new home, they found the rocky escarpments were difficult to climb, so among their first tasks was to widen natural paths and erect rope ladders.

Other caves were found and explored, some being enlarged to provide shelter from the relentless sun and tropical storms. The caves served as barracks and messes for the sailors and Marines, who hung their hammocks from the ceilings, while the officers slept in tents on the shore.

All supplies were brought by boat from the fleet that remained just over the horizon. And after Maurice had surveyed the rocky escarpments, Hood decided that two 18-pounders would be mounted on the highest point, a larger 24-pound gun would face the channel from a platform halfway up the cliff, and two more 24-pounders would occupy the shoreline, angled so as to cover the widest area. From the heights they could reach a thousand yards. Together they would send a volley of heavy shot into any ship attempting to pass through the channel. The problem for Maurice and his garrison would be in getting the heavy guns onto the island from the *Centaur* and into place. The barrels of the 24-pounders were about eight feet long and weighed close to two tons.

In February the *Centaur* was anchored about 400 feet from the cliffs and a cable was looped between the mainmast to a strong foundation drilled into the cliff, with the difference in height from end to end about 500 feet. One of the 24-pounder barrels was slung under the cable and moved toward shore using pulleys and the ship's anchor capstan, a process that took about seven hours. The barrel was lifted by block and tackle into its carriage and secured with heavy bolts driven into the stone. The gun was christened "Hood's Battery." Two more 24-pounders were hoisted up, then the 18-pounders to the highest point.

Diamond Rock was in business by March 4. Provisions, powder and shot for a hundred men for four months were regularly brought to the island by one of Hood's sloops. This did not go unnoticed by the French, but apparently unwilling to believe their eyes, they did nothing and lost their chance to stop what would soon become a serious problem.

Martinique Governor Pierre de Laussat proposed improving the road from Fort Royal out to the peninsula opposite Diamond Rock, but again Napoleon's resumption of slavery made the local black population resist, going so far as to smuggle food and information to the British.

A French engineer and troops attempted to bring guns out to the point but Maurice raided the small party and captured them without bloodshed. The French on Martinique did nothing more to interfere with the occupation of Diamond Rock.

A fast six-gun sloop HMS *Fort Diamond* was available to intercept any ships attempting to enter the harbor. The sloop would also carry mes-

sages to Hood at St. Lucia of any French warships spotted. Maurice had a heavy sling run from a block and tackle in the main cave to the summit. Originally intended for the transport of ammunition, it was also used to keep the upper battery supplied with food and water. From the start, Maurice commanded the garrison like a Royal Navy warship, with bells and watches.

A flag bearing the red cross of St. George and the Union Jack flew above the island. When any British warship passed the Rock, salutes were exchanged according to Admiralty regulation. While Maurice ran a tight "ship," by most accounts he had a very content and devoted crew. They wove broad-brimmed hats from the local grasses, and an indigenous plant resembling spinach proved to be useful in preventing scurvy. In addition, goats, guinea hens and chickens ran wild, further enhancing the diet. Natives in canoes, unheeding of their French masters' wishes, brought fresh meat, fruit and even rum to the garrison, a welcome change from the salted rations. But Maurice was careful not to let the drinking get out of hand. Life on the Rock was as close to paradise as was possible for a Royal Navy crew in that era.

Hood was so impressed by Maurice's handling of the project that he was promoted to Commander and the island officially commissioned as a sloop of war. Maurice was given a permanent garrison of 120 men, which allowed for 24-hour observation of the channel and rapid firing of the guns. A surgeon ran a hospital in a cave capable of housing 30 men so successfully that British ships would drop off their sick and wounded.

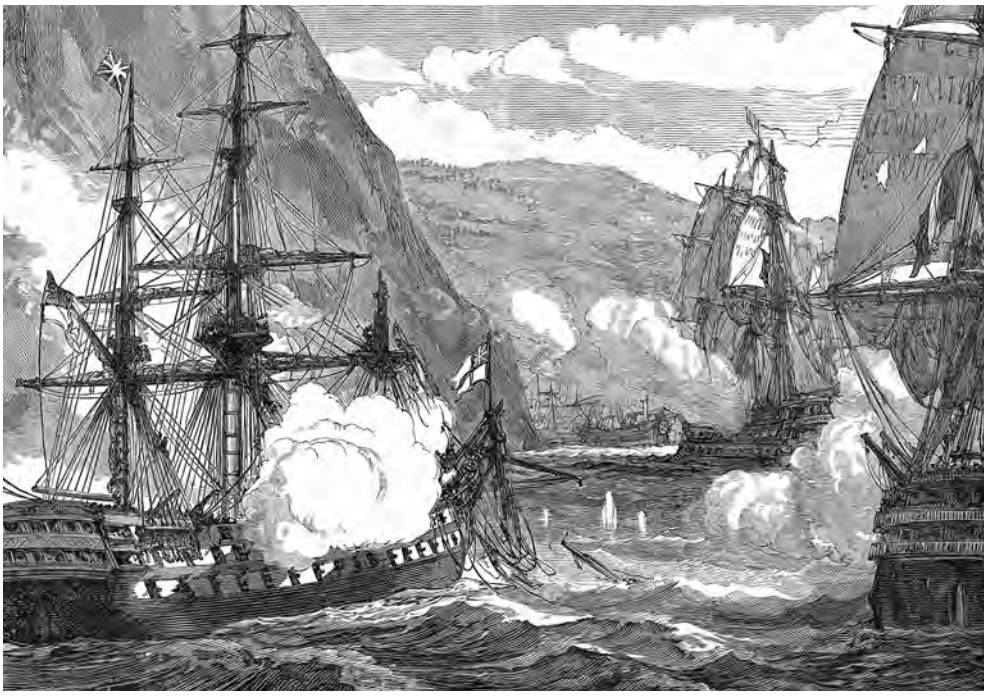
Outlining his progress to the Admiralty, Hood wrote that "I hope their Lordships will approve this measure which will be executed with little expense and may save thousands to the country, independent to its utility in consequence to the enemy and protection of the trade caught in this channel." Their Lordships did approve, but it must have raised a few eyebrows at such an offbeat scheme.

Sure of the Rock's ability to handle matters at Martinique, Hood sent the *Centaur* to find and capture French privateers. With the big warship absent, four boats loaded with French Marines set out from Fort-Royal to capture the Rock. But the contrary currents and long distance soon exhausted the men at the oars. By the time they managed to approach the one landing beach, they could not fight the offshore current and had to turn back. Since this happened at night, Maurice's lookouts never saw the boat, which returned to the port. After this failed attempt, the French abandoned any hope of capturing the Rock and sent word to France for help.

From its location at the north end of the St. Lucia Channel, the Rock commanded a wide area under the eyes of Maurice's lookouts. They could see for about 40 miles, meaning no ship could approach the bay unseen. When a French ship did attempt to enter the bay, a few ranging shots, not always intended to hit, forced it to steer close to the shore where the contrary currents and winds meant it had to tack several times. This always made progress slow and Maurice sent the *Fort Diamond* to move in. Sometimes the prize got away, while others were ransacked by British sailors for useful provisions. But even the ships that got away were considered victories, as they were unable to reach Fort-Royal. This went on through the summer and fall months of 1804, interrupted only by bad weather and the occasional hurricane or tropical storm. By the winter of 1805, Diamond Rock was one of the most successful British outposts in the Caribbean.

Napoleon, perhaps at the urging of Josephine, who had been born on Martinique and still had relatives there, decided to do something about the island's blockade. He had crowned himself Emperor of France in May 1804 and brought Spain

The Mariners' Museum and Park, Newport News, Virginia



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ABOVE: An undated engraving of the HMS *Centaur*, Samuel Hood's flagship, at Diamond Rock, Martinique, in the West Indies. OPPOSITE: The painting *Taking of the Rock Le Diamant, near Martinique, 2 June 1805* by Auguste Étienne François Mayer shows Adm. Pierre Charles Villeneuve's 74-guns ships of the line *Pluton* and *Berwick*, the 36-gun frigate *Sirène*, a corvette, a schooner and 11 gunboats, with 300-400 soldiers, bombarding Diamond Rock. Begun on May 27, the siege of the Rock was over on June 2, as the British were out of water and almost out of ammunition.

into war against Britain. His invasion fleet was assembled at Boulogne on the Channel Coast, but until the Royal Navy's blockading fleet was destroyed or decoyed away, it languished in harbors.

An opportunity arrived in January 1805 when a storm disrupted the Royal Navy blockade, allowing Adm. Pierre Charles Villeneuve and some of the French fleet to escape. His orders were to disrupt British shipping in the Caribbean, and to capture Diamond Rock. Napoleon assumed Nelson, in command of the blockading fleets, would chase Villeneuve, leaving the Channel unguarded for the rest of the French fleet to escape. The plan was for Villeneuve to rejoin the combined French and Spanish fleets and block Nelson's attempts to halt Napoleon's invasion of Britain, but it proved impossible.

Villeneuve knew Nelson was probably not far behind him, but hoped to capture the Rock and then attack a British convoy headed for Europe. His squadron reached Martinique on May 14 where he assessed the situation. He had plenty of firepower, but it's a fact of naval warfare that ships can do little real damage to an armed fortress. The Rock was hardly a fortress, but his ships would be vulnerable to its cannons.

His orders also stipulated that he wait for the squadron commanded by Vice Adm. Honoré Joseph Antoine Ganteaume, which Napoleon had sent with reinforcements for the French occupation of the West Indies. However, Ganteaume was delayed by a storm and never arrived. On May 27, 1805, Villeneuve detached the 74-guns ships of the line *Pluton* and *Berwick*, the 36-gun frigate *Sirène*, a corvette, a schooner and 11 gunboats, with 300-400 soldiers, to bombard and capture Diamond Rock. The bombardment lasted almost two hours. While Maurice's gunners did sink at least two of the gunboats, the heavy guns of the warships forced him to spike and abandon the two 24-pounders on the lower battery. Their crews retreated to the large cave where they continued to support the upper guns. More than 300 French troops under the command of Capt. Julien Cosmao made it ashore under fierce defensive fire from Maurice's sailors and Marines. *Pluton* and *Berwick* kept up a steady fire on the upper batteries, limiting their ability to provide defensive fire, while the French troops climbed the rock walls without scaling ladders. Maurice's Marines and sailors continued to put up a vigorous defense.

Unfortunately for the British, the stone cistern they used for drinking water had been damaged by a recent earthquake, creating a leak that expanded under the heavy bombardment. At first Maurice made allowances by collecting rainwater and reducing each man to one pint per day. An attempt to send the sloop *Fort Diamond* to St. Lucia was thwarted when it was intercepted by the French fleet. It was only a matter of time before the Rock's men ran out of water.

After almost three days of savage fighting during which the bombardment never ceased, Maurice's men were so weak they could hardly load and fire their muskets. The store of ammunition and powder was almost depleted. With few options, Maurice consulted with his officers and Marines. They would have to surrender. After lowering the shot-rent Cross of St. George flag, they raised a white flag, and the bombardment ceased just after five on the afternoon of June 2, 1805. The commander of the French landing forces met with Maurice and accepted the British surrender.

The British found their French conquerors to be congenial, bringing fresh water from Fort-Royal. As to casualties, accounts vary, with French dead and wounded estimated to be 50 or 100, the former being more likely. Maurice's casualties were two dead and one wounded.

He and his men had successfully interdicted French shipping for 17 months, a remarkable feat for a small and isolated garrison. For Villeneuve,

who had not been in favor of the assault from the beginning, it was his only military victory.

Surprisingly, the French paroled Maurice and his men, allowing them to leave Martinique on board the *Fort Diamond*. They sailed to Barbados, where Hood learned of the defeat. Pursuant to Royal Navy regulation, since Maurice was in command of a "vessel" of His Majesty's Navy, he had to appear before a court-martial board.

Maurice did write a letter to Admiral Nelson, who was in command of the fleet. "Barbados, June 6, 1805. My Lord, It is with the greatest sorrow I have to inform you of the loss of the *Diamond Rock*, under my command, which was obliged to surrender on the 2nd, inst., after three days' attack from a squadron of two sail of the line, one frigate, one brig, a schooner, and eleven gunboats, and from the nearest calculation 1,500 troops. The want of ammunition and water was the sole occasion of its unfortunate loss. Although I shall never cease to regret the accident, yet it is of some consolation to think so many valuable lives are saved to His Majesty's service, having only two killed and one wounded. The enemy, from the nearest account I have been able to obtain, lost on shore 30 killed, and 40 wounded, independent of the ships and boats: they also lost three gunboats and two rowing boats. Allow me to speak in the highest terms of the officers and men under my command; and I trust when the Court Martial shall have taken place, that their hardship, fatigue and gallantry will merit your Lordship's approbation, having been 19 nights under arms, and some of them obliged to drink their own water [their own urine]. I beg leave to enclose the Articles of Capitulation, I have the honor to remain Your Lordship's most obedient and humble Servant, J. W. Maurice"

The Court martial was held on June 24 aboard HMS *Circe* in Carlisle Bay, Barbados. There are no surviving transcripts of the trial, but it was obvious that Maurice and his men had performed valorously. Their surrender was unavoidable.

One account, printed in the Naval Chronicle, reads: "The Court cannot dismiss Captain James W. Maurice without expressing their admiration of his conduct in the whole of the occasion; and also they express the highest approbation of the support given by the officers and men under his command; a circumstance that does high honor to them; does no less credit and honor to the discipline of Captain J. W. Maurice; and therefore we do unanimously and honorably acquit the said officers and ship's company."

Exonerated, Maurice was given command of the Danish island of Anholt in the Kattegat, where he was acting governor from 1810 to 1812.

Villeneuve, whose orders were to return to Europe for the invasion of Britain, found himself bottled up with the Spanish fleets in Cadiz, Spain, where they waited for an opportunity to break out and head north to the Channel. Lurking just over the horizon was the fleet under Admiral Horatio Nelson. When Villeneuve did finally emerge on October 21, it was to be defeated at the Battle of Trafalgar. ■

The Last Epic Battle of ANTIQUITY

Byzantine Emperor Heraclius defeated the Persians at the Battle of Nineveh, regaining Roman territory, riches and the 'True Cross.' | By Michael D. Greaney

Though the Western Roman Empire had fallen with the deposition of Romulus Augustulus at Rome in 476, elements of the Empire remained, in fact and influence, for centuries to come. Justinian I, whose rule of the Byzantine, or Eastern Roman Empire, from Constantinople began a half century later was successful in reconquering North Africa, Italy, and parts of Spain.

But after the death of Justinian I "the Great" in 565, the Roman Empire fell on hard times as unpopular or incompetent emperors plagued the Res Publica. Then came Phocas, who in 602 deposed the unacceptable Maurice.

Physically hideous, Phocas was a depraved, sadistic monster who delighted in torture and the sight of blood. He dragged the former emperor from sanctuary, forced him to watch the execution of his family, had him put to death, then murdered all Maurice's suspected supporters.

Unfortunately for Phocas, Maurice had not only concluded peace with the Persians, but had made a friend of their ruler, Great King Chosroes II. Soon after Phocas usurped the throne, Chosroes resumed war with Byzantium, using Phocas's treatment of Maurice as his pretext.

Phocas further worsened his situation by burning to death Narses, his most effective general for refusing to recognize the legitimacy of his rule. Narses had rebelled, but had been given a safe-conduct to discuss returning to his allegiance in the face of the Persian threat.

Centurion Phocas led a revolt at Constantinople in 602 CE, beheading Emperor Maurice and his sons, before declaring himself emperor.

British Museum

Look and Learn

Of his two most able remaining commanders, Phocas imprisoned one while the other died of wounds received in battle. Within four years the Persians overran much of the Empire in the east and had reached the outskirts of Constantinople, while Slavs and Avars poured into Greece.

Phocas then ordered the persecution and forcible conversion of all the Jews in the Empire. Christian and Jewish fanatics massacred and tortured indiscriminately. Ordinary Jews and Christians, blamed for the excesses of extremists, sought refuge in Persian-controlled territory.

Plots against Phocas multiplied beyond number as did the assassinations and judicial murders of anyone suspected of complicity. People of every sect, faith, and philosophy rioted throughout the Empire. They slaughtered each other as Phocas sank deeper into blood-soaked paranoia and the Empire dissolved into anarchy.

In Carthage, Heraclius and Gregorius, two brothers who had been generals under Maurice, raised an army and assembled a fleet of warships. Nicetas, son of Gregorius, commanded the army, while Heraclius, named after his father, was given the fleet. Nicetas set out for Egypt where he eventually captured Alexandria and then began making his way overland to Constantinople.

Heraclius did not rush headlong into anything

In the typically allegorical fashion of medieval religious art, the Byzantine Emperor Heraclius, shown in gold armor (center right) is in combat with Chosroes II, the Sasanian *Shahanshah* ("King of Kings") of Iran, at the Battle of Nineveh in 627 CE. Chosroes II was not present, but was killed three months later in a Persian civil war.

Taq-e-Bostam, Kermanshah, Iran

Dumbarton Oaks / Wikipedia

ABOVE: Chosroes II, "the Invincible," shown as a cataphract—armored heavy cavalrymen—riding his famous black stallion *Shabdiz* ("Midnight") in a sculpted relief from Taq-e-Bostam, Iran, from the late 6th or early 7th century BCE. RIGHT: Reproduction of a period coin with a bearded Byzantine Emperor Heraclius. Traditionally Roman leaders had been clean shaven, but by the time of Phocas and Heraclius, beards had become the norm.

or launch initiatives without considering their effectiveness or having a reasonable expectation of success. Instead, he acted with meticulous care, in a composed manner some mistook for lethargy or despair.

In 609, Heraclius set sail for Thessaloniki in Central Macedonia. Enthusiastic crowds greeted him at every port of call. On reaching Thessaloniki, he spent months collecting more ships and organizing with those opposed to Phocas's rule. He also opened secret negotiations with Priscus, Phocas's son-in-law in Constantinople. Priscus was another of Maurice's generals so far fortunate to have escaped the purges. He seems to have assured Heraclius of the support of the Greens, one of the four original chariot racing factions of the empire and a powerful religious-political force, should it be necessary.

Finally, in the summer of 610, Heraclius embarked for Constantinople. Proceeding with deliberation, he stopped at virtually every port along the way, adding more ships and large numbers of recruits. In early October, he anchored at the entrance of the Golden Horn, the inlet dividing the European side of Constantinople from the Asian side, forming a natural harbor.

After a virtually bloodless coup, Heraclius received the captive Phocas on his flagship around October 5. Following a brief interview, he summarily executed Phocas and his chief supporters. Accounts differ as to specifics of the victims' terminations but all agree as to their grisliness. Heraclius then went ashore, married his fiancée, and was crowned emperor, all within the space of hours.

Contemporary sources are virtually silent about Heraclius's military activities over the next dozen years. Modern historians have wondered why he waited so long to act as the Empire continued to fall apart. As historian John Julius Norwich pointed out, however, Heraclius took over an empire in disarray. It was out of money, the mil-

Ailsa Mellon Bruce Fund/National Galler of Art

***Heraclius Sentencing the Tyrant Phocas*, an engraving by the 16th-century French artist Pierre Woeiriot. Phocas may have been betrayed by his son-in-law, Priscus, commander of the Imperial Guard, who let Heraclius into Constantinople. Upon seizing Phocas, Heraclius is believed to have immediately beheaded him.**

itary was demoralized and the civil government was corrupt and incompetent.

"Confronted as he was by two such formidable enemies [Avars and Slavs in the west, Persians in the east], there could be no question of victory until he had subjected the whole state to a thorough reorganization, moulding it once again into an efficient fighting machine," Norwich writes.

The heavily fortified city of Constantinople and the Bosphorus would keep Heraclius safe while he undertook this formidable task, and took his time doing it.

"To march against [his enemies] without adequate preparation would be to risk not only the defeat of the Roman army but . . . of Heraclius himself," Norwich continues, "And that, almost certainly, would be the end of the Empire."

Without exaggeration, the situation could be described as desperate. The Slavs controlled virtually the whole of the Balkans. Enthusiastically aided by Jews alienated by Phocas's persecutions, the Persian general Shahr-Baraz took Antioch sometime between 611 and 613. In 613 he added Damascus, strategic key to the Holy Land, and in 614 Jerusalem fell easily into his hands—too easily. Accepting equitable terms, the citizens admitted a Persian garrison, while Shahr-Baraz continued his campaign.

A month later the Christians rebelled and killed every Jew and Persian they could find. Shahr-Baraz turned back and besieged Jerusalem. The short siege ended, and the long massacre of the Christians began after the Persians mined the walls and took the city by storm. Led by Jews who had survived the earlier bloodbath, the carnage lasted three days, at the end of which hardly a building remained standing. The victors carried off what was claimed to be the "True Cross" (which, according to Christian tradition, is the actual wooden cross used to crucify Jesus of Nazareth) and other holy relics to Persia.

Long before these events, however, Heraclius had set to work. His first step had been to reorganize the territories remaining to him along military lines. He divided the land into Themes, a term previously used for a division of troops. In place of the former centralization, he devolved power. Each Theme was semi-autonomous under a Strategos, who served as both civil governor and military commander.

Many new villages were established, colonized by soldiers and potential soldiers. All beneficiaries were given what amounted to freehold grants of land. This was subject only to hereditary military service by the landowner or his eldest son. Each received a small stipend. This helped defray the cost of arms, armor, and the horses and mules every man was expected to maintain.

At one stroke, Heraclius created a national army of native, land-owning, battle-ready reservists who could be called up at a moment's notice. This replaced the haphazard use of conscripts and mercenaries, notoriously uncertain in number, unreliable in battle, and untrained in organized warfare. Simultaneously he repopulated abandoned districts and began a restoration of the tax base.

Although the settlement program was of immense military importance, economic benefits of widespread ownership were not immediately realized. Heraclius still had to reorganize the exchequer and raise cash to finance the coming war. Increased taxes, forced loans, advances from rich relatives and friends, and heavy fines on corrupt bureaucrats provided some funding.

Perhaps not surprisingly, however, considering the desire to recover the True Cross, the Orthodox Church was the primary source of money. Patriarch Sergius considered the conflict a holy war, the final conflict between the Roman armies of Christ and the fire-worshipping Zoroastrian dualists of Persia.

Sergius overlooked irregularities in Heraclius's private life, notably marrying his own niece after his first wife died. His All-Holiness put the finan-

cial resources of the entire Church, from the smallest parish up to the largest monastery and archdiocese, at Heraclius's disposal.

After 12 years, Heraclius was ready and carefully selected as a training ground in an area only a few stadia from where Alexander the Great had landed in his campaign against the Persians.

There Heraclius spent the entire summer of 622 engaged in intensive training and morale building—repeatedly telling his soldiers they were "God's Chosen Instruments against the Forces of Antichrist" and that "The Lord of Hosts would Himself ensure their victory."

Though modern skeptics might scoff, the appeal to faith and patriotism was apparently effective. Heraclius succeeded, although the following war was long and difficult. After reaching a truce with the Avars by unknown means, he moved against the Persians in the autumn of 622.

Heraclius was the first Roman emperor in centuries to lead his troops personally into battle. Although now using the old Greek title of baselios (βασιλιάς) or king instead of imperator ("commander"), he met the Persians in what was probably the Cappadocian highlands. He routed them completely, then rushed back to Constantinople. Possibly encouraged by Heraclius's absence, the Avars had broken the truce. His army went into winter quarters in the field.

Over the next few years Heraclius made steady if unspectacular progress against both the Avars and the Persians, winning as often by negotiation, diplomacy, and cunning, as by force of arms. Increasingly unstable and descending into paranoia, Chosroes began giving impossible commands to his generals to stop Heraclius at all costs; to die in battle or suffer at the hands of the Great King's torturers—or both.

According to Norwich, after the Persian general Shahin died in battle against Heraclius's brother Theodore, Chosroes had the body preserved in salt and brought to him to be scourged and flayed in his presence. This raised serious doubts about the Great King's sanity. Another authority, however, suggested the story may be a garbled report of Zoroastrian burial rites. In any event, although Chosroes's fears of the danger Heraclius represented were warranted, his methods of attempting to achieve victory virtually ensured he would be unable to do so.

Early in 627, Heraclius decided to move directly against Chosroes. He began plans to mount a campaign to take the royal palace at Dastagird, 20 or so miles north of the Persian capital of Ctesiphon. The prolonged siege of Tiflis (modern Tbilisi, capital of Georgia), however, which he had undertaken in alliance with the Kök Turks, delayed him for months. Finally, in mid-September he moved out, leaving his Turkish allies to continue the siege of Tiflis, possibly supported by a token Roman contingent.

This left the Persian general Shahr-Baraz and his army still at large in Chalcedon on his flank,

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Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris / Wikimedia Commons

ABOVE: An illuminated manuscript by French artist Robinet Testard anachronistically shows the Battle of Nineveh in 627 CE with the Byzantine and Sasanian combatants clad in 15th-century French armor, weapons, and heraldry, instead of accurate historical equipment. OPPOSITE: Hardly a building was left standing after the capture of Jerusalem by the Persian general Shahr-Baraz in 614 CE. The Persians carried off many holy relics, including the "True Cross" (which, according to Christian tradition, is the actual wooden cross used to crucify Jesus of Nazareth).

yet Heraclius did not treat him as a threat. Heraclius had negotiated the Persian and Avar withdrawal from a siege of Constantinople a short time before. The possibly apocryphal story is he gained the neutrality of Shahr-Baraz in return for promises of Roman support for a possible coup in which Shahr-Baraz would overthrow Chosroes. Heraclius allegedly did this with the aid of a few judicious beheadings and an intercepted letter from Chosroes ordering Shahr-Baraz's death, creatively edited by Shahr-Baraz to include all senior officers, thereby retaining their loyalty.

Tiflis had held out against the siege after the citizens received word of a Persian relief force headed north under the command of Sarablangas (the Greek form of his name; *Shahraplakan* in Armenian). Prudently, however, Sarablangas' inferior force never relieved Tiflis and later failed to engage Heraclius during the latter's advance into Persia. Tiflis fell to the Kök Turks in a subsequent campaign, taken by storm after a two-month siege, with reportedly no survivors.

Chosroes is said to have expressed surprise when word reached him that Heraclius appeared to have begun a winter campaign. This is a little ironic, as he himself seems already to have ordered a third newly appointed general, the inexperienced Armenian Rhazates (the Greek form of his name; Roch Vehan in Armenian) to attack Heraclius as soon as the Baselios and his army were settled into winter quarters.

In any event, both Sarablangas and Rhazates were caught off-guard by Heraclius' abandoning the siege of Tiflis, his invasion of Persia, and by his overall strategy. This too is ironic if not baffling. Centuries-old Roman memoranda, likely based on the success of Alexander the Great, dictated the proper way to invade Persia was to make a direct, swift strike into the heart of the country.

Church of Francesco, Arezzo, Italy

This scene depicting the Battle of Nineveh is part of the "Legend of the True Cross" fresco cycle by Renaissance artist Piero della Francesca. Chosroes II, near defeat, appears to be on his knees at the far right. The frescoes were painted in the 15th century in the Basilica of San Francesco (dedicated to St Francis of Assisi) in Arezzo, Tuscany, Italy.

Sarablangas and Rhazates therefore should have done everything in their power to delay Heraclius. They should have harried his columns while at the same time turning the Roman's own Fabian tactics against him and avoiding a set battle.

Instead, probably greatly assisted by Rhazates' understandable caution as a new commander, Heraclius eluded and outran both Persian armies. Sarablangas seems to have given up the chase, while Rhazates was left trying to catch up with the Roman army. Possibly reinforcing the Roman army were as many as 40,000 Kök Turks, although this figure is almost certainly greatly exaggerated.

Although evidently relying heavily on more experienced advisors, Rhazates failed to appreciate what Heraclius intended. With the summer campaigning season over, the Persian general had expected Heraclius to withdraw to the west after the failed siege of Tiflis.

Rhazates clearly expected Heraclius would take up winter quarters on the shores of Lake Van in Anatolia. This is what the Roman commander had done a few years before. The Persian general and his advisors doubtless believed they would be able to take the Romans by surprise as soon as they were settled in and off their guard.

Instead, Heraclius turned his army south. He followed a line of march roughly along what is today the border of Turkey and Iran. It is not clear at what point Rhazates realized the Romans had not merely evaded his trap but were invading the Persian homeland. The delay, however, was long enough for Heraclius to have time to rest his troops in the Camaetha region for a week after a forced march from Dvin (near Yerevan in modern Armenia) to Her (Khoy, Iran) and along the western side of Lake Urmia.

Once he grasped what Heraclius had in mind, Rhazates set out in pursuit. Probably wary of being caught in an ambush or following advice and showing caution, he went by the eastern side of Lake Urmia. Reaching Ganzak (today's Takht-I Suleiman in Azerbaijan) on the south side of the

lake, he picked up Heraclius's trail in Camaetha. After breaking camp, the Baselios had headed in the direction of the Greater or Upper Zab River, part of the Tigris-Euphrates River system.

Rhazates found Heraclius had stripped the country of provisions. The Persian general had serious difficulty in supplying his army. Failure to secure adequate fodder harmed the livestock on which the mobility and effectiveness of his army depended. This greatly slowed his progress and, although Heraclius seemed to be proceeding at an unhurried pace, he could not catch up to him.

If the Romans' slow advance did not alarm Rhazates and make him and his advisors suspicious, it should have. In contrast to the speed with which the Roman army had made its way to Camaetha, it took nearly a month and a half for it to reach the banks of the Greater Zab. The much longer distance from Tiflis to Camaetha had been covered in about four weeks. Uncharacteristically for someone who preferred to rely on negotiation and diplomacy, Heraclius was almost certainly attempting to force a battle with the Persians, and on ground of his own choosing.

Coming out of the mountains, Heraclius went south, then west, crossing the Greater Zab around December 1, 627, onto the rocky Nineveh Plateau on the east bank of the Tigris River (near modern Mosul, Iraq). There they camped near the ruins of the ancient Assyrian city of Nineveh, sacked in 612 BCE by a coalition of Babylonians, Medes, and Persians.

Due to wide fluctuations in water levels and volatile rates of flow making fording dangerous at times, local people during the Middle Ages believed demons infested both the Lesser and the Greater Zab Rivers. It is not clear, therefore, how long it took Heraclius to get his army to the other side of the Greater Zab. Some authorities report it took a single day, but this is unlikely. By crossing the Greater Zab and taking up the position he did, however, Heraclius seems to have convinced the Persians he might be trying to withdraw without engaging.

The size of the Persian host is open to question. Norwich described Rhazates's command as "immense." There is a significant dispute about this, however. Two other authorities claim the Romans outnumbered the Persians by at least three to one.

This does not appear to be credible. Even the inexperienced Rhazates would have known it would be foolhardy for him to go anywhere near the Romans if outnumbered. In any event, Heraclius's tactics and the fact the Persians were on their home ground favors the likelihood the Persians were numerically superior, although probably not by a wide margin.

Whatever the size of the Persian army, Heraclius' maneuver would allow him to make his way back to the west by crossing the Tigris River. He could then take a better watered and provisioned route than the one by which he had come and which he had virtually denuded of foodstuffs.

Heraclius' goal was indeed to put the Romans in an excellent position to withdraw in orderly fashion—once he brought the Persians to battle. Naturally, they were more likely to come to grips with the Romans if they thought the Romans were retreating. Further, careful as ever in his planning, the Baselios knew he had the best chance of defeating the Persian forces after tiring them out with the long chase and crossing a treacherous river in pursuit of him.

When at last he caught up with Heraclius, Rhazates found an alternative crossing, likely about three miles or so upriver. Heraclius sent out a probing mission with hand-picked soldiers under the command of Baanes, his stratelates, or senior officer, of the Eastern Army. They engaged a Persian unit, killed the officer in charge, and took 27 prisoners.

Among these was Rhazates' spatharios, or sword-bearer. Under interrogation, the spatharios revealed Rhazates was anxious to engage the Romans. The Persian general was, however, awaiting 3,000 fresh troops from Chosroes before risking it. Rhazates' enthusiasm for battle is another argument in favor of Persian superiority in numbers, although by how much it is difficult to know.

Some authorities claim Heraclius' army numbered nearly 350,000, a number that seems highly unlikely. A more reasonable figure would be 25-

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In this 20th century illustration, *The victory of Heraclius at The Battle of Nineveh, the climactic battle of the Byzantine-Sassanid War, 602-628*, Heraclius, leading from the front, strikes down Rhazates. Some historic sources have suggested that Rhazates sought to end the conflict in single-combat with Heraclius.

30,000. Reinforcements of 3,000 could determine the outcome of the battle, assuming the Persians already outnumbered the Romans.

Heraclius immediately sent his baggage train north as if making for the Tigris River. To Rhazates, it would have appeared the Romans were withdrawing. In a tactical retreat, Heraclius would naturally send the slow-moving baggage train ahead to be covered by the rest of the army as they crossed the Tigris and made good their escape.

To prevent Heraclius from getting away and incurring Chosroes' increasingly psychotic wrath for letting the Romans slip through the noose, Rhazates did exactly what Heraclius hoped he would do. Early in the morning on Saturday, December 12, 627, he attacked.

Precisely where the ensuing battle occurred is open to question, although from the chronicles the general location can be identified. It must have taken place somewhere on the broad plain east of the ruins of Nineveh. Whether this was at Karamlays (probable) or around nearby Bartallah (less probable), however, cannot be determined.

Consistent with wanting to give the appearance of a retreat, Heraclius likely removed the guards from the ford of the Greater Zab. He also probably pulled back all the troops in the area, leaving it open to the Persians. Meanwhile, he deployed the main body of his army on the open plain in close order. This gave the Romans the advantage owing to their skill in hand-to-hand fighting.

Further, the Roman close formations made defensive measures much more effective against the massive volleys of arrows on which Persian assaults typically relied. By raising shields, Roman soldiers could cover both themselves and each other with a protective roof—a variation on the testudo, or turtle, formation.

Finally, although the level ground allowed both Persian and Roman cavalry to maneuver freely, it is suicidal to throw cavalry against formed infantry. Of course, once the infantry of both armies came to grips and were engaged hand-to-hand, neither archery nor cavalry could be used to good effect against an opponent without endangering one's own troops.

Thus, by careful planning, capitalizing on Roman strengths in a way which would cancel out those of the Persians, and by having the weather as an unexpected ally, Heraclius was in the best possible position. He also had the advantage of pursuing limited objectives: throw the Persians out of the Roman Empire and recover the True Cross.

Rhazates on the other hand was charged with the nearly impossible task of annihilating the invaders instead of simply getting rid of them. In the latter case, the objective could have been accomplished by standing down and allowing the Romans to retreat—which Heraclius would have been forced to do had Rhazates refused to attack. It also would have made Heraclius look foolish to his subjects for having undertaken an expensive and dangerous military operation which accomplished nothing.

Great King Chosroes' orders (and concern for himself), however, compelled Rhazates to violate a fundamental principle of war—always leave the enemy a way out. Fighting an enemy who has nothing to lose is costly and often self-defeating.

Fortunately for Heraclius, the morning of December 12 was foggy, making it difficult for Rhazates to know how the Roman formations were positioned, or even where they were, with any degree of accuracy. It also nullified the Persians' superiority in archery—it is hard to hit what cannot be seen.

According to the somewhat sketchy reports, Rhazates formed his army into three groups. Evidence suggests the Persians were organized into a vanguard, main body, and rearguard instead of the main body and left and right wing with reserves bringing up the rear. This was prudent if Rhazates could not see the Roman formations and did not know from which direction they would attack, although bunching his forces ultimately proved to be the wrong decision.

For his part, Heraclius seems to have done what the Athenians did when outnumbered by the Persians at Marathon a thousand years before—and was equally successful. He deployed his forces with a weak center and strong flanks. The idea is for the center to give way to the enemy's early assault, lure him further on, then close in with the flanks. Surrounded, the opponents must then either surrender or die.

Some authorities claim the Romans surprised

Wikimedia Commons

***The Emperor Heraclius Bearing The True Cross Denied Entry To Jerusalem*, by Italian Renaissance painter Maturino da Firenze. According to medieval legend, as Heraclius tried to return the "True Cross" to Jerusalem, he was stopped by an angel who told him he could not enter in royal garb on horseback, but must enter on foot in humility, as Christ had done.**

the Persians. This is hardly likely considering the fact both sides were in combat formation and marching into battle. Any surprise would have been momentary. Instead, an initial attack by the Romans, a false retreat to lure the Persians in, and then turning about to attack again as the Roman flanks closed in on the Persian main body seems to fit the very loose descriptions of events.

The battle lasted for 11 hours straight, according to Norwich. This was not as long a period as it might seem. In ancient times, in contrast to the modern system of dividing the day into 24 hours of equal length, day and night were each divided into 12 hours of varying lengths depending on the time of year. Thus, by ancient reckoning, the battle of Nineveh began a short winter hour after sunrise and lasted until an early sunset.

Both commanders put themselves on the front lines. This was rash but good for morale. At the height of the fighting, Rhazates is said to have challenged Heraclius to single combat to decide the issue. Although the story is probably more legendary than factual, he might have done so in desperation if, as seems evident, the fighting was going against the Persians. If he lost and survived the battle, Chosroes would likely have him tortured to death. He would have had nothing to lose and everything to gain.

What Chosroes would have done to Rhazates is moot. He and two other senior Persian commanders were killed in the battle, either by Heraclius personally as reported (unlikely) or simply the misfortunes of war.

The battle itself was not the rout it would have been had Heraclius' forces outnumbered the Persians as some authorities believe. At the close of the day, although exhausted by the fighting and having lost their general, the Persians managed to withdraw in good order across a stream and camped within sight of the Romans.

Equally fatigued, the Romans remained in possession of the field, thereby technically becoming the victors. They had, however, neither the strength nor the will to follow up their success.

Instead, each side kept a wary eye on the other, the Roman cavalry watering their horses "two arrow-shots" from where the Persian horsemen kept watch over their dead. An hour or so after midnight the Persian army decamped, taking their baggage but leaving their dead behind. In the morning the Romans looted the Persian dead. Heraclius claimed the shield of Rhazates, set with 120 pieces of gold.

Although the Battle of Nineveh was indecisive, the Persian withdrawal gave the Romans free rein. After resting a few days, they turned south to Dastagird, the royal palace, the primary objective all along. Chosroes fled as the Romans approached, and they arrived to find the palace deserted. A brief search failed to locate the True Cross and other relics. Despite its magnificence, Heraclius ordered the palace destroyed. A few weeks later the Romans began the long journey back to Constantinople.

Word of Chosroes' downfall reached Heraclius on April 3, 628, at Tauris (modern Tabriz in northwestern Iran). In the eventual peace treaty signed at Hierapolis in the summer of 629, the Persians agreed to vacate all the conquered territory, release all prisoners of war, and restore the True Cross and the other relics.

Exact circumstances surrounding the return of the True Cross are hazy; the important thing as far as people then were concerned was its return, not the specific details. Ultimately, it was restored to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem "to great ceremony" on March 21, 630.

Though Heraclius prevailed and Roman territories had been returned, both sides were diminished militarily, economically, and politically, leaving the Byzantine and Sasanian empires vulnerable to the new and rising power of Islam and the Arab Caliphates. ■

Escort fighters leave vapor trails in the sky escorting B-17 Flying Fortresses of the 390th Bomb Group, U.S. Eighth Air Force on November 23, 1943.

National Archives

The Luftwaffe's desperate fight against the dreaded *Viermot* ('four-engine') bombers relentlessly pounding the Reich.

By Kevin Seabrooke

The story of the Luftwaffe's *Reichsverteidigung* (Defence of the Reich) is the story of the U.S. Army Air Force (USAAF)—the Mighty Eighth based in England and the 15th Air Force, which included the Tuskegee Airmen, based in Tunisia and Italy.

Early in the war, some Luftwaffe pilots were intimidated by the huge formations of *Viermot* (four engine)—the Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress and the Consolidated B-24 Liberator. Given no tactical instruction on how to approach, pilots at first had to work out their own method of attack. Some of the more experienced pilots had success with head-on approaches, where there was little protection for the B-17. But this was dangerous and required skill.

Luftwaffe pilot Hans Philipp described the experience as curving in "towards 40 Fortresses and all your past sins flash before your eyes."

Later, pilots were ordered to attack formations from the rear, giving less experienced pilots more time to line up their targets, though many described this experience as "trying to make love to a porcupine that is on fire." By this time, anyway, the U.S. had introduced chin turrets on the B-17 to counter frontal attacks.

Promoted by Hitler in 1940 to the ceremonial rank of *Reichsmarschall des Grossdeutschen Reiches* (Reich Marshal of the Greater German Reich), Hermann Göring was also the *Oberbefehlshaber der Luftwaffe* (Supreme Commander of the Air Force). His mercurial temper and failure to recognize realities contributed to Germany's failure in the Battle of Britain and the Luftwaffe's inability to protect the Reich from Allied bombing, which in turn led to his falling out of Hitler's favor.

Hitler and the German high command had a poor opinion of the USAAF in 1942, largely influenced by Göring, who reportedly said that the B-17 was of "miserable fighting quality," and the only thing that Americans could build properly were "refrigerators." This despite detailed reports from their military attaché in Washington warning that the U.S. was gearing up to build thousands of quality aircraft.

As the number of American bombers in the skies over Germany grew from the hundreds in 1943 to the thousands in 1944, some in the high command of the Luftwaffe could see—if not the handwriting on the wall, at least the fact that something would soon be written there.

Forsyth writes that as early as July 1943, Adolf

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Galland, promoted General der Jagdflieger in command of Germany's fighter force, advocated that "only by carefully conserving strength and by efficient management of its most precious resources, namely its pilots, could the Luftwaffe hop to cause any damage to the bombers."

Göring dismissed this idea and "demanded that all available units be thrown against every raid wherever and whenever possible."

After another American attack in October 1943, Oberleutnant Rudolf Engleder recalls Göring flying into a rage during a meeting shouting, "How is it possible that American bombers can fly over the city in almost parade ground fashion? And further, German fighters were seen at altitude, not attacking!"

Göring then issued orders that there did not exist any "meteorological conditions which will prevent fighters from taking off and engaging in combat," that any pilot landing "a machine not showing any sign of combat, or without having recorded a victory, will be prosecuted by a court-martial," and that any pilot running out of ammunition "should ram the enemy bomber."

Indeed, such a squad would be developed—Sonderkommando Elbe (special command Elbe), whose sole mission took place on April 7, 1945, when 180 Bf 109s downed eight Allied bombers by ramming them in flight. Pilots were expected to escape the plane just before, or after, impact.

Defenders of the Reich: The Luftwaffe's War against America's Bombers (Robert Forsyth, Osprey Publishing, New York, NY, 480 pp., glossary, maps, 16-pages b&w photos, Nov. 4, 2025 $40 HC), is a fascinating look at the Allied achievement from the other side—the failures and the fears, the relentless destruction, the egos and the politics, fighting the industrial superiority of the Allies as well as their own sense that they could not ultimately win—whether they could admit it to themselves or not.

Not unlike Union General Ulysses Grant dur-

GAMES

MORE NEAR-FUTURE ACTION IN *BLACK OPS 7*, AND *HELL LET LOOSE* EXPANDS TO VIETNAM

By Joseph Luster

CALL OF DUTY: BLACK OPS 7

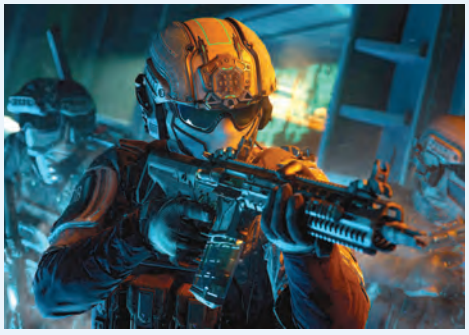
Genre: Shooter • **Platform:** PC, PlayStation, Xbox • **Publisher:** Activision

If the near-future takes on the *Call of Duty* series are your thing, you likely already have this. *Call of Duty: Black Ops 7* sees Activision and developers Treyarch and Raven Software returning to the high-tech well for a tale set a decade in the future and, naturally, the competitive shooting action that keeps folks playing well after credits have rolled.

For those keeping track of said story, the seventh (how is that possible?) entry in this sub-series finds David Mason leading an elite JSOC team on a cover mission into Avalon, a massive Mediterranean city. The plot they discover within those walls has implications for both the future of the world and the haunted pasts of the team members themselves, setting the stage for a suitably gripping campaign.

That campaign can be played both solo or cooperatively with others, the latter of which is usually the best way to go with these. The series has long been known for its intense and memorable set pieces, and that won't be changing anytime soon thanks to some breathtaking environments with plenty of variety, taking players from the Mediterranean coast to Japan and beyond.

How much you get out of *Black Ops 7* will come down to how much time you're willing to invest in its competitive play. The latest entry boasts a starting set of 16 six-v.-six maps and a pair of 20-v.-20 maps, with more to come in post-launch content. Treyarch's fan-favorite Zombies mode also makes a return, as the crew finds themselves trapped in the heart of the Dark Aether and tasked with the toughest objective of all: Survival.



It all comes together swiftly thanks to the "Omnimovement" system that was introduced in *Call of Duty: Black Ops 6*. This mechanic overhauls the way players move, giving them more control overall and letting them slide, dive and sprint in one direction while aiming in another. Evolving things further is a wall jump and roll that replaces the previous tactical sprint maneuver. It's a welcome addition that makes for more cinematic action and adds yet another layer of potential mastery, especially in online multiplayer.

As with any *Call of Duty* game, we'll have to see how well this one holds up in the long run. Support will no doubt be in place, and its growth will be a big test for current owner Microsoft's overall stewardship. Between this and the new *Battlefield*, the remainder of the year is going to be a busy one for action-focused wargamers.

HELL LET LOOSE: VIETNAM

Genre: Shooter • **Platform:** PC, PS5, Xbox Series • **Publisher:** Team17

The world of first-person shooter Hell Let Loose, which originally debuted as a World War II game in 2021, is getting ready to expand into new territory. The aptly-titled *Hell Let Loose: Vietnam* aims to do exactly what it says on the tin, taking the platoon-based multiplayer action into a new era of war with a focus on authenticity and prevailing through tightly-executed teamwork.

This time around, players can look forward to 50-v.-50 battles throughout the war spanning 1965 to 1973, highlighting many of the events that occurred in the process. The gameplay itself should remain familiar to anyone who played *Hell Let Loose*, so the real thrill here will undoubtedly be seeing how that translates to a dramatic new set of environments.

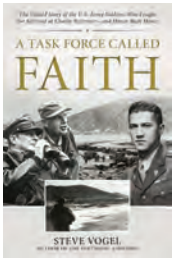
One of the most exciting aspects of the original game was the way in which vehicles were implemented. The sheer diversity and true-to-life nature of this combat mechanic made it all the more immersive, and developer Expression Games looks to carry that over in Vietnam. Aerial units like helicopters are key for everything from reconnaissance and cover fire support to basic troop deployment and supply deliveries, and can make or break your mission from the very beginning. You may also find your tactics depend on how well you can maneuver iconic U.S. patrol boats like the PBR.

Mixed in with all this is the sprawling network of tunnels for which the North Vietnamese forces were known. These can be used to move troops and conduct surprise attacks, so keeping this in mind will be key to victory in an already complex war. If this all comes together smoothly, it should build upon, and hopefully exceed, the quality established the first time around. ■

ing the Overland Campaign in the Civil War, the Allied bombing campaign of Germany, while still suffering great loss of life and materiel, was ultimately assured of winning a war of attrition.

A noted Luftwaffe historian, Forsyth makes use of both German and Allied archives, as well as interviews with former Jagdwaffe pilots to fill in the other side of the incredible campaign by the Eighth and Fifteenth army air forces to cripple the will and ability of the Third Reich to wage war—and to destroy the Luftwaffe in time to eliminate it as a threat to Operation Overlord in June of 1944.

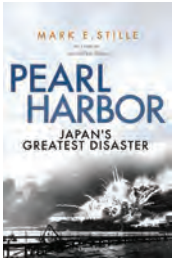
A Task Force Called Faith: The Untold Story of the U.S. Army Soldiers Who Fought for Survival at Chosin Reservoir—and Honor Back Home (Steve Vogel, Lyons Press/dist. Simon & Schuster, 500 pp., Nov. 25, 2025 $39.95 HC)



Seventy-five years after that deadly winter in Korea in 1950, a former *Washington Post* military correspondent and historian sets out to uncover what really happened at the Battle of Chosin Reservoir and the fate of the U.S. Army's 31st Regimental Combat Team (RCT)—part of 20,000 Marines and Soldiers overrun by 150,000 Communist Chinese soldiers. Of the 3,200 American and Korean soldiers in the 31st RTC, more than 80 percent were killed, captured, or wounded. Following the conflict, they were accused of surrendering and faking wounds.

Vogel was part of a *Post* reporting team nominated for a Pulitzer Prize in 2002 for its reporting on the U.S. war in Afghanistan. In addition to being embedded with an Army airborne brigade in Iraq in 2003, he covered the fall of the Berlin Wall and the first Gulf War, as well as military operations in Somalia, Rwanda, and the Balkans.

Pearl Harbor: Japan's Greatest Disaster (Mark Stille, Osprey/Bloomsbury Publishing, 368pp., 16-pages b.w photos, Nov. 4, 2025 $35 HC)



Author Mark Stille bemoans the "continuing flood of Pearl Harbor books [that] focus on the failure to avoid conflict in the months before the attack or on the deeply flawed concept that 'Washington' conspired to let the Japanese take the first shots of the war while not informing the commanders at Pearl Harbor what was coming."

Successfully clearing out the confusion and mythology that has entrenched itself around the event and producing what will surely be a definitive resource on the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Stille has produced a detailed and encyclopedic study of the Japanese mindset in the early part of the 20th century—incorporating seemingly every possible aspect of this epic event militarily, politically, geographically, culturally, psychologically.

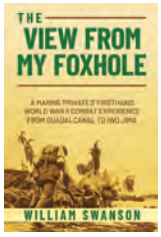
Crossing the Pass of Clouds: An Army Photographer's Vietnam Journal (Lon Holmberg, University Press of Mississippi, Jackson, MS, 196 pp., 147 b&w photographs, 2025, $40 HC)

A highly readable and engaging narrative of a University of Virginia English major who quit his teaching job in Brooklyn and found himself drafted into the Army in 1969.

After basic training, Lon Holmberg, who had once illustrated a children's book on the Civil War, found himself assigned the MOS (Military Occupational Specialty) of 84B20 (still photographer). But rather than send him to the Army's photo school at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey, he was sent to the 221st Signal Company at Fort Ord, California, home of SEAPC (Southeast Asia Pictorial Center) which produced photo-documentation for the Pentagon.

Holmberg is a documentary photographer and filmmaker whose work includes the PBS documentaries *Doing Time* and *Mending Hearts*. This collection of 147 photographs of Vietnam have never before been published.

The View from My Foxhole: A Marine Private's Firsthand World War II Combat Experience from Guadalcanal to Iwo Jima (William Swanson, Permuted Press, Brentwood, TN, 176 pp., 2022 $26 HC)



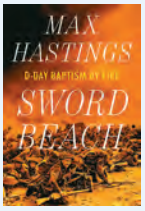
A ground-level view of island warfare by a U.S. Marine Corps rifleman who spent 27 months in the Pacific. William Swanson, who joined the Marines in 1942, landed on Guadalcanal as part of the Ninth Marines, Third Marine Division, in 1943 after most of the fighting was finished. Swanson gets his first taste of real combat at Bougainville in October. After two months and a brief respite at Guadalcanal, he was shipped to Guam to take on pillboxes and caves.

At Iwo Jima, Swanson is wounded "I have found that it is relatively easy to resign oneself to death and, on occasion, even welcome the thing. It is really the violence, the pain, the suddenness, and unpredictability of events that tear our insides. We cannot be sure of anything—not the next step or the next second—and that is the real terror."

SHORT BURSTS

King of Kings: The Iranian Revolution: A Story of Hubris, Delusion and Catastrophic Miscalculation (Scott Anderson, Doubleday, New York, NY, 512 pp., Aug. 5, 2025 $35 HC) This winner of the 2025 Kirkus Prize for nonfiction is a compelling history the Iranian Revolution and the rise of religious nationalism still reverberating around the globe today.

The Forgotten 500: The Untold Story of the Men Who Risked All for the Greatest Rescue Mission of World War II (Gregory A. Freeman, forward by Alex Kershaw, Dutton Caliber, New York, NY, 352 pp., Nov. 4, 2025 $32 HC) The daring rescue of hundreds of U.S. airmen shot down over Nazi-occupied Yugoslavia after bombing Romanian oil fields.



Sword Beach: D-Day Baptism by Fire (Max Hastings, W. W. Norton & Co., New York, NY, 400 pp., Nov. 11, 2025 $31.99 HC) Follows in stark detail a handful of British soldiers landing at Normandy on one of the most fateful days of the 20th century.

Facing Washington's Crossing: The Hessians and the Battle of Trenton (Steven Bier, Westholme Publishing, Yardley, PA, 356 pp., 20 illustrations, Sept. 2025 $35 HC) From newly translated documents, a fresh perspective on the Hessians at the Battle of Trenton.

Kennedy's Coup: How America Descended into Vietnam (Jack Cheevers, Simon & Schuster, New York, NY, 704 pp., Feb. 17, 2026 $35 HC) A decade of research went into this account of the secret role of Kennedy's White House in encouraging the 1962 assassination of South Vietnam president Ngo Dinh Diem.

Sweet Victory: How the Berlin Airlift Divided East and West (Joseph Pearson, Pegasus Books/dist. Simon & Schuster, New York, NY, 288pp., Dec. 2, 2025 $29.95 HC) A fresh look at the largest air op in history—277,500 flights, 2.3 million tons of essentials—during the Cold War. ■

His convalescence finished, he awaits reassignment for the upcoming invasion of Japan, but is spared of that by the events of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Chain of Fire: The Siege of Khartoum and the Campaign of Egypt and the Sudan (Peter Hart, Pegasus Books/dist. Simon & Schuster, New York, NY, 464pp., maps Oct. 7, 2025 $35 HC)

Hart, the oral historian for the Imperial War Museum in London, constructs a highly engaging narrative of the British Egyptian and Sudanese campaigns (Egypt in 1882, Sudan in 1883-85 and 1896-98) by alternating his own prose with first-hand accounts from soldiers and journalists who were there in the desert.

A fascinating insight into a violent period of European colonialism in North Africa and the roles of larger-than-life figures like Field Marshal Horatio Herbert Kitchener and one who would later be, Winston Churchill. Also present were men who would become senior officers during the Great War 16 years later: David Beatty, Douglas Haig, Ian Hamilton, Henry Rawlinson, Horace Smith-Dorrien and Charles Townshend.

Ring of Fire: A New History of the World at War: 1914 (Alexandra Churchill & Nicolai Eberhols, Pegasus Books, New York, NY, 448 pp., maps, Aug. 5, 2025 $35 HC)

Though now more nuanced, for many years historians have written about the "spirit" that surrounded the buildup to the Great War.

In their new book, historians Alexandra Churchill and Nicolai Eberholst acknowledge that, "a common image of those days in the summer of 1914 is one of enthusiasm, a universal 'spirit'; people waving flags and rushing forth in their eagerness to fling themselves at the enemy."

While recognizing that such feeling did exist in some places—cheering, singing crowds in Berlin—the authors, whose stated focus is more on the "how" the war began rather than "why," mine a rich trove of writings from all walks of life to detail experiences, motivations and reactions to this cataclysmic conflict.

Focused almost exclusively on August 1914, Ring of Fire aims to go beyond troop movements, generals and politicians and, indeed, beyond the confines of Europe and the trenches of France, to probe into a conflict that is much more complex and global in nature than is often portrayed. ■

SIEGE OF SYRACUSE

Continued from page 55

onto Ortygia by Moericus in the pre-dawn hours. At dawn, Marcellus launched a diversionary attack against Achradina's fortifications. Troops stationed in Ortygia flowed across the bridge and into Achradina. When he felt enough of the Ortygia's garrison had left, Moericus and his loyal supporters, along with the Roman troops took control. Resistance on Ortygia and Achradina was quickly eliminated. Wanting to prevent the looting of Syracuse's Royal Treasury, Marcellus had the majority of Roman troops withdrawn from the city. In this chaotic atmosphere, Roman deserters and anti-Romans snuck out of the city, escaping to pro-Carthage cities.

After brief negotiations with newly-formed Syracuse officials, Marcellus opened the gates of Achradina to his men. The Roman general sent a detachment ahead to secure the Royal Treasury. He issued two orders to his men before they were allowed to vent the frustration built up over the nearly two-year siege. First, the property of pro-Roman citizens was off-limits to looting. Second, Marcellus requested that Archimedes be spared and brought to him. The Romans found the treasury did not contain the amount that rumors had suggested. A significant amount of treasure had been used to help fund the Punic fleets aiding Syracuse. The Roman troops rampaged through Syracuse, pillaging and slaughtering civilians. For his crucial help, Moericus earned Roman citizenship.

Despite Marcellus' order, Archimedes was killed. Several accounts of the events of the geometrician's death have survived. Among the more notable include Archimedes peacefully surrendering. He went with the Roman escort while carrying brass scientific instruments. Along the way, the group was set upon by Roman soldiers who believed the scientific instruments were gold and killed him for it. Another tale has a legionnaire finding Archimedes working out a problem in the dirt and when Archimedes refused to leave his work, the Roman grew impatient and slew him. Feeling regret, Marcellus had Archimedes interred in his family's tomb.

As with many battles in antiquity, military strength and casualty figures can only be estimated by reading into what historians such as Livy and Polybius had recorded in their works. By the time Moericus and Marcellus collaborated, four legions and auxiliary allied troops had been fighting on Sicily. Naval involvement varied from 30 warships to 100 at any given time. The initial frontal assaults by Marcellus and Appius Claudius were repulsed with heavy losses. The Romans also incurred deaths in battles across Sicily as well as from the plague.

The opposition, which consisted of Syracusans, Carthaginians, Roman deserters, and mercenaries, varied in size depending on location and date. Casualties for Syracusans, deserters, and mercenaries were mainly caused by fighting, such as defending their fortifications or when Marcellus wiped out Hippocrates's 10,000-man force in an unexpected confrontation. A majority of the Punic losses can be attributed to the plague in 212. Civilian deaths through the siege probably numbered in the thousands. Besides the plague, Roman forces inflicted some with their attacks and then the sacking of the city.

Although Syracuse was finally in Roman control, Carthage continued to control a number of cities, towns, and rural areas. Marcellus led a campaign across the island to eliminate these enemy strongholds. In early 211 BCE, Carthaginian influence on Sicily ended at the Battle of the River Himera. Though Epicydes escaped, Punic losses were stated to be in the thousands. Roman forces captured eight elephants, which accompanied Marcellus when he returned to Rome, succeeded by a new consul. Later he would be killed in a Carthaginian ambush.

For 18 months, the city of Syracuse had defied Roman attempts to capture it. Rome employed a range of tactics and strategies before finally capturing the city with betrayal from the inside. The initial frontal assaults were a simultaneous land attack and amphibious assault to overcome Syracuse's fortifications. Unknown to them, the mighty Roman war machine met one of antiquity's greatest geniuses, Archimedes. Livy wrote that Rome's coordinated land-sea operation would have been successful if Archimedes had not been there. The geometrician devised and designed Syracusan defenses and siege engines, such as catapults as well as claws that hooked ships, that inflicted heavy enough casualties that Rome ceased frontal attacks. Using betrayal by disillusioned individuals at the most opportune of times, Consul Marcus Claudius Marcellus captured the most important city on Sicily. Within a couple of years, the island was Roman and provided grain to feed its armies and a naval base from which to exert dominance over the central Mediterranean. ■

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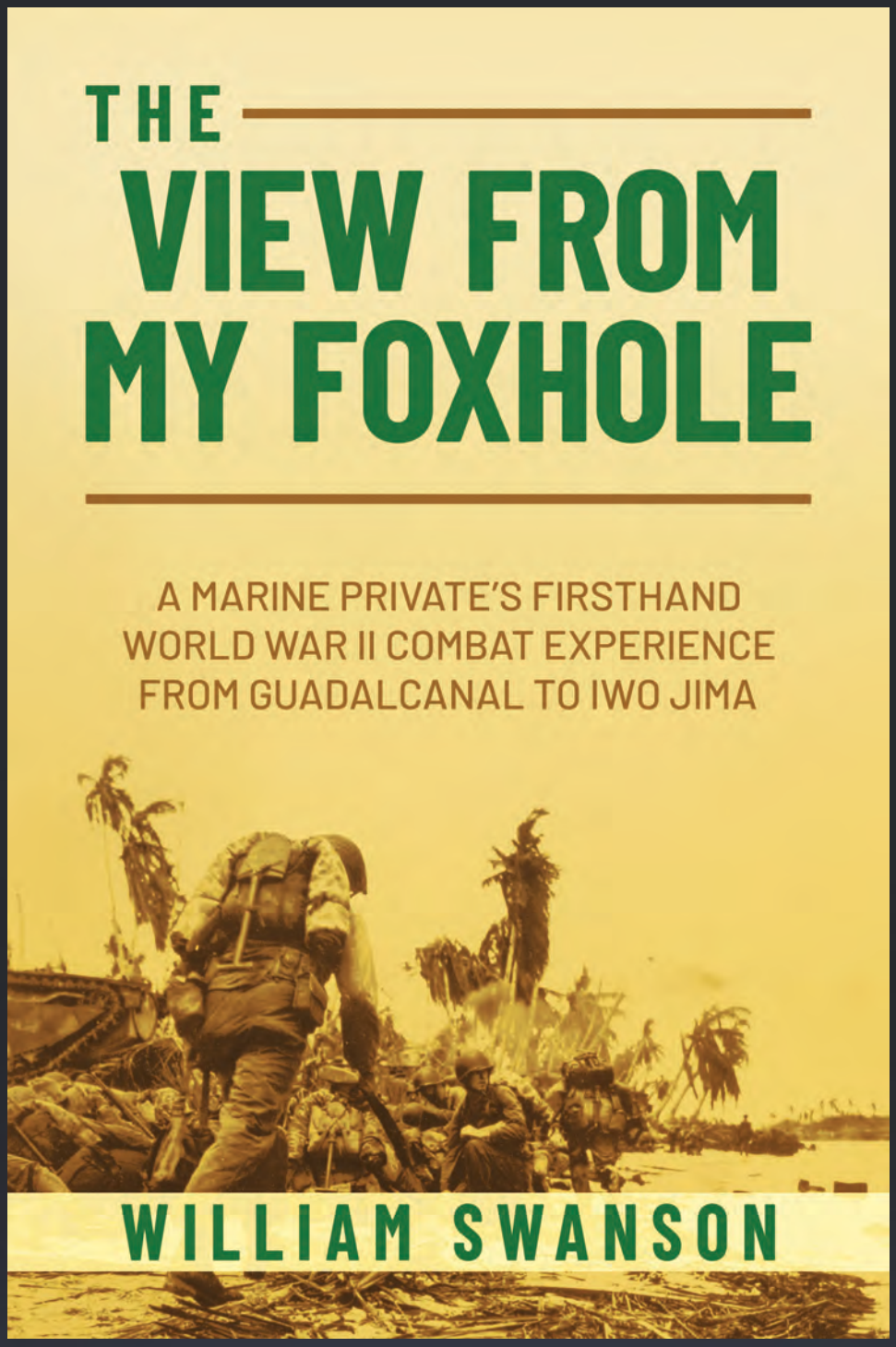

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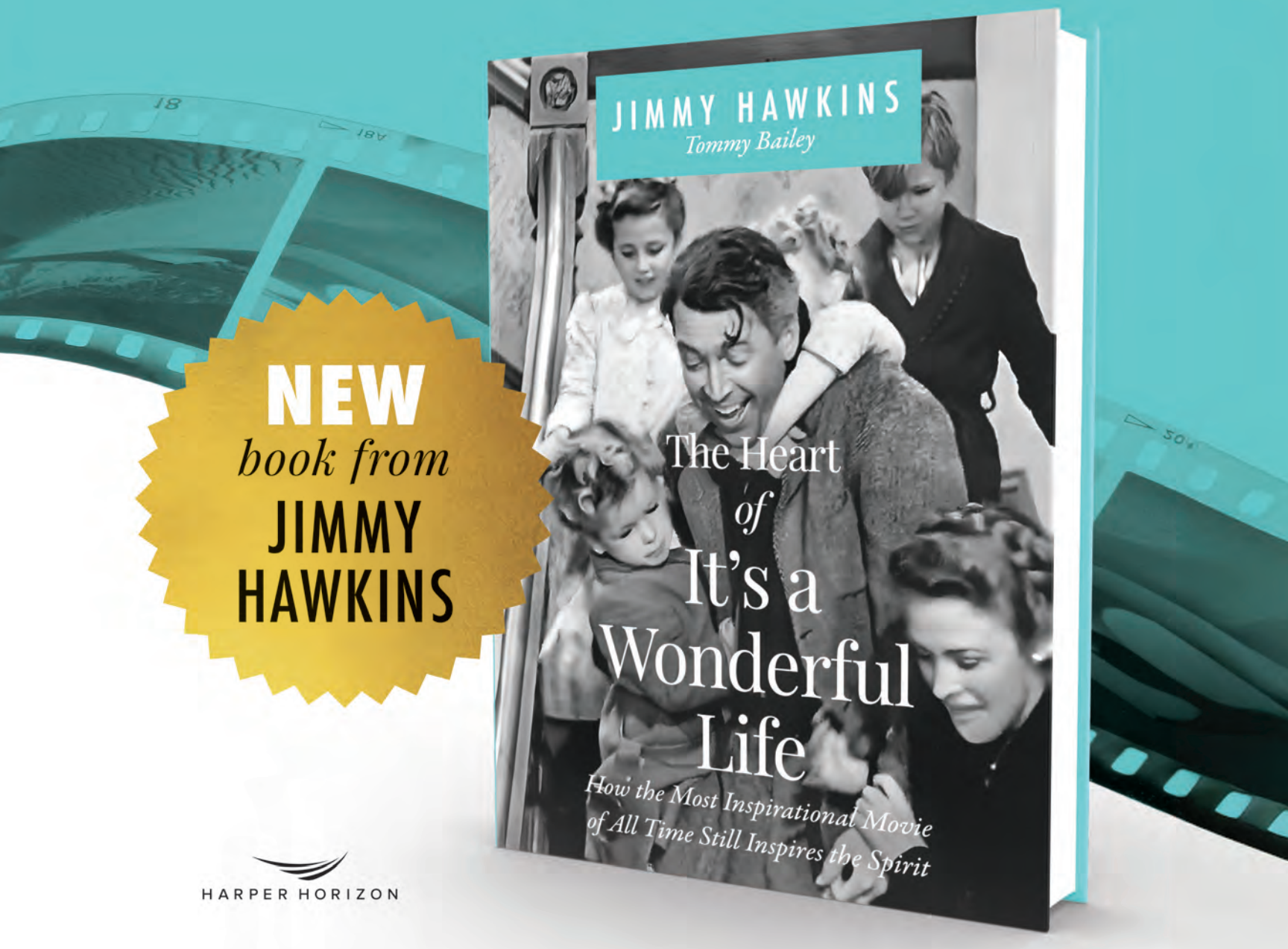

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