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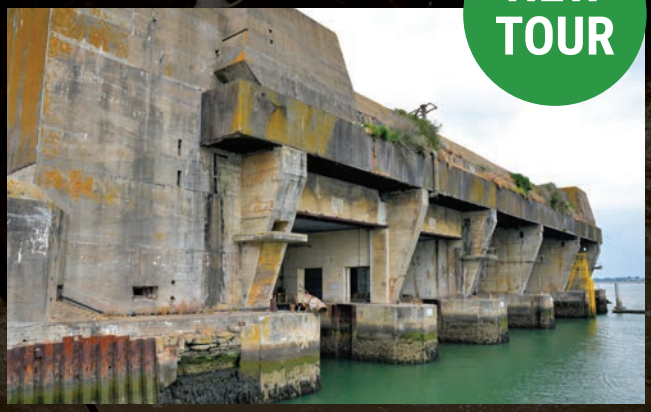

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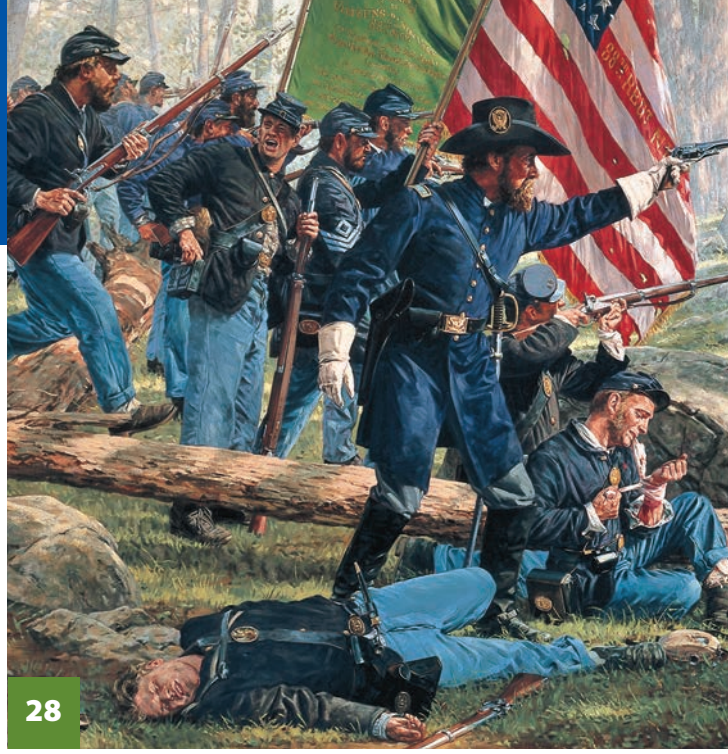
Summer 2026

FEATURES

Cover: A Sherman tank from U.S. First Army enters a village after driving off German defenders. See story page 64. Photo: National Archives



COLUMNS

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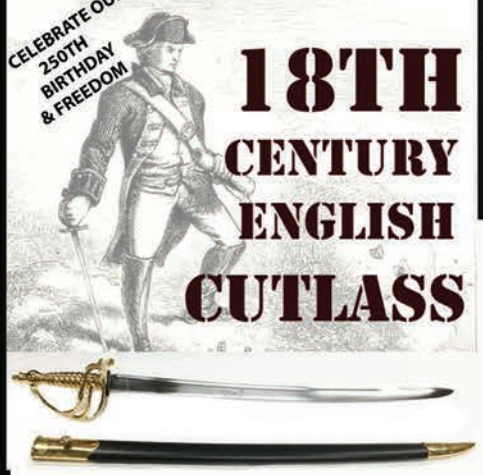

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EDITORIAL

The battle for Britain … and much more.

Writers and soldiers don't go together. Soldiers are men of action. They are out in the elements. They command men. They make decisions, by which they live or die. Writers are bookish, contemplative. They live indoors and are often students of history. They command no one. Their utterances typically vanish like smoke in the wind.

Thus not many soldiers have been good writers. Only a few come to mind. Xenophon, whose journal of his march with the Ten Thousand is still compelling. Caesar, whose genius for war and administration was matched by his trimmed prose, to this day a model of Latin after two thousand years. Rarer still is the writer whose military skills saved a nation at war. But so it was 60 years ago this June when Winston Churchill's prose congealed the purpose of his nation and carried it through its darkest hour to eventual triumph over free nations' foes.

This is overstating the case, of course. Churchill was more than a writer. He had the soul of a warrior, and in his youth he killed men in close combat. But he also possessed the soul of a writer. He loved words. Although a poor student at Harrow, he memorized hundreds of lines of poetry (much of which he retained with astonishing clarity throughout his life). By age 16, he realized he had a flare for crafting an English sentence.

He honed that gift as he passed through the Royal Military College, then used it to snare correspondence assignments in war zones.

From this time through the 1930s he was a soldier, politician, political strategist, combatant in the trenches of France and cabinet minister. But he was also a prolific writer. Not only did he prepare countless speeches for Parliament and political rallies, he effused volumes of history, reportage and biography. He wrote a two-volume history of his father, Lord Randolph Churchill (1905), a four-volume history of World War I, The World Crisis (1923-29), and a six-volume biography, Marlboro, His Life and Times (1933-38).

He knew history exceptionally well. He could recite the 14th chapter of Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. From his understanding of the past sprang his optimism. He was keenly aware that Britain had for centuries fought whichever power in Europe was threatening conquest of the continent—Spain in the 16th century, France from Louis IV through Napoleon, Germany in the early 20th century. He knew that Britain through much travail had always endured and prevailed. For him, it could not be otherwise in 1940.

When the conflagration broke, his notion of history and talent for words were ready. During the "Phony War" and before he was Prime Minister, it is said that by virtue of his Parliamentary speeches alone, members who listened to them realized they had found their leader in the crisis rolling over them.

Whether Churchill induced the British to their supreme effort, or merely gave voice to their swelling defiance of so foul a regime threatening to crush what Britain had stood for through the centuries is still worthy of debate. But it is doubtful whether he or anyone else could have rallied the British so well without his knowledge of history and craft of expression. Bound on paper, Churchill's words look like prose, but those of his speeches as Prime Minister in the darkest days of 1940 have the soul of poetry.

Upon taking office: "You ask: What is our policy? I will say: It is to wage war, by sea, land and air, with all our might and with all the strength God can give us…. You ask: What is our aim? I can answer in one word: It is victory, victory at all costs, victory in spite of all terror, victory however long and hard the road might be."

And shortly after Dunkirk: "We shall not flag or fail. We shall go on to the end … we shall fight in the seas and oceans, we shall defend our island, whatever the cost may be … we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender."

Were ever words put to better use? Who cannot say that a writer did not save the free nations?

—Brook C. Stoddard

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Freeman's 23rd Regimental Combat Team takes on a Communist Chinese Force of 30,000 at the Battle of Chipyong-ni.

By John E. Spindler

On a cool November day in 2018, the U.S. 2nd Infantry Division dedicated Freeman Hall, its new headquarters building in Camp Humphreys in Pyeongtaek, Republic of Korea. In the ceremony, a pair of soldiers unveiled a plaque honoring General Paul L. Freeman Jr., the headquarters' namesake, 30 years after his death. A colonel at the time of the conflict, he commanded the 23rd Regimental Combat Team and demonstrated outstanding leadership from initial deployment along the Naktong River to his crucial direction in the February 1951 Battle of Chipyong-ni, sometimes called "the Gettysburg of the Korean War." While his regiment earned two Presidential Unit Citations, Freeman received the Distinguished Service Cross, a Purple Heart, and the French Croix de Guerre with Palms. Although not returning to the action in Korea upon recovery, he went on to become a four-star general with an illustrious career that ended with his retirement in 1967.

The son of an Army surgeon, Freeman was born in the Philippines on June 29, 1907. Following his father's career path, he graduated from the U.S. Military Academy in 1929. After a few years stateside he was assigned to Tientsin, China (now called Tianjin). After another tour in America, he was sent to the China, Burma, and India Theater during World War II for two years—greatly increasing his knowledge of China, its culture and the Mandarin language. Transferred to various assignments in America, Brazil and Latin America during the late years of the WWII and the post-war years, he

U.S. Army

INSET: Gen. Paul L. Freeman Jr. as Commanding General, U.S. Continental Army Command (CONARC). TOP: The painting *First Victory*, by James Dietz, depicts then-Lt. Col. Paul Freeman, commander of the 23rd Regimental Combat Team, in the 1951 Battle of Chipyong-ni, sometimes called "the Gettysburg of the Korean War."

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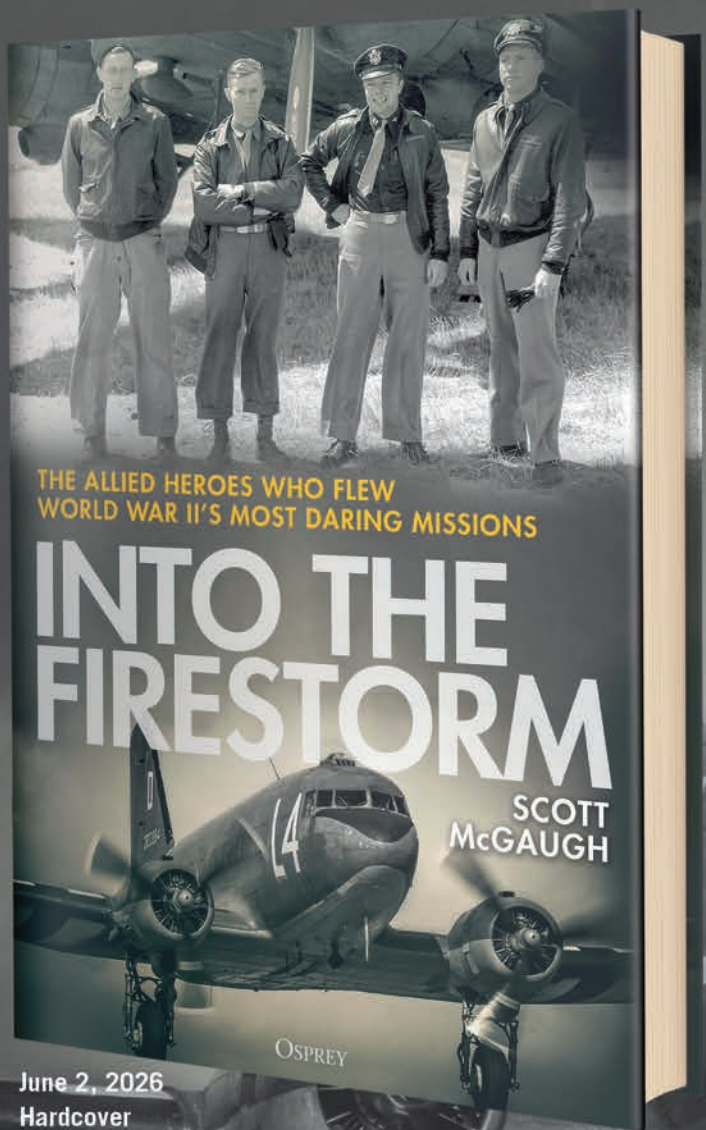

Drawing on after-action reports, letters, and personal diaries, *Into the Firestorm* takes readers into the cockpit of the C-47, revealing the extraordinary courage of these crews in the first complete history of their experiences. Aircrews of the C-47 were ordered to fly straight, low, take no evasive action, and arrive "on time and on target." On every single mission they were, quite simply, sitting ducks. Readers are introduced to the college students, farmhands, and store clerks who were thrust into service, many of whom would never return. Award-winning author Scott McGaugh restores these unsung heroes to their rightful place in the legacy of the Greatest Generation

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ABOVE: The war in Korea was irrevocably altered on October 18, 1950, as 200,000 troops of the Chinese People's Volunteer Army (PVA) began secretly crossing the Yalu River to join the remnants of the North Korean KPA to launch a devastating counter-offensive. The scale of the intervention caught UN Command and South Korean forces completely off-guard. OPPOSITE: The 1st Cavalry Division assaulting a hill on February 4, before their historic stand at Chipyong-ni (February 13–14, 1951) where, supported by elements of the 1st Cav, the U.S. 23rd Infantry Regiment successfully repelled a massive Chinese onslaught, inflicting the first major defeat on Chinese forces since their intervention—shattering the myth of Chinese invincibility.

met Gen. Matthew Ridgeway when both served on the Joint Brazil-United States Military Commission. At the end of his stint on this commission in June1950, Freeman received his first unit command. His assignment would be the 23rd Infantry Regiment of the 2nd Infantry Division, stationed at Fort Lewis, Washington. A planner who saw almost no combat time, he had little time to become familiar with his unit.

On June 25, 1950 the armed forces of North Korea invaded their neighbors to the south with the intent to unite the Korean people. America immediately responded by dispatching military forces to the country, including the 2nd Infantry Division. Arriving in August, the division and its three regiments went into the fray. Stationed along the Naktong River near Taegu, it would experience its first action against the North Korean People's Army (NKPA). In late August and again in the first part of September, the 23rd Infantry Regiment, "Tomahawks" as the unit was nicknamed, and its fellow 9th Infantry Regiment took the brunt of the NPKA's 2nd Infantry Division attempts to breach the defensive line. Hindered by his divisional commander's discouragement of strong defensive positions, the colonel adapted to situations as they arose.

Freeman's command style and philosophy of being seen by his men and giving orders in person whenever possible derived from his experiences of serving under able and competent officers. This philosophy and being devoted to his men resulted in their undivided loyalty. As demonstrated in the heavy fighting along the Naktong, he felt best to stand one's ground as the regiment would inevitably incur severe losses during a retreat. Forced to endure ammunition shortages, this problem plagued Freeman and the 23rd Regiment until his final battle at Chipyong-ni.

Momentum shifted on September 20 as the United Nations's forces went on the offensive and the regiment crossed the Naktong River. For the next two months the "Tomahawks" drove north without issue. As United Nations (U.N.) forces closed upon the border with Communist China, Beijing issued warnings that went unheeded. After crossing the Sunchon River, Freeman believed that his men had already encountered Chinese Communist Forces (CCF). Unfortunately for the American soldiers and allied troops that would be directly impacted in the near future, senior American officials leading the United Nations's forces dismissed such warnings even those backed by provable evidence. Starting in late November, he kept his regiment together along the Ch'ongch'on River for what felt would be the inevitable Chinese response. Fluent in Mandarin, Freeman interrogated recently captured prisoners and learned they were from the 40th Chinese Army. The CCF launched their First Offensive to the total surprise of U.N. divisions and forced them in a pell-mell manner south. Although the other 2nd Infantry Division's infantry regiments, the 9th and 38th, received maulings, the 23rd remained intact, largely due to Freeman's leadership.

At Kunu-ri on rearguard duty, the 23rd Regiment defended while American forces crossed the bridge. Seeing the potential of disaster and the endless traffic snarls, the colonel sought an alternate route for his men. He found one at Anju, however that was assigned to the U.S. I Corps. Controversy arose as he sought permission to use this path. After a delay, the reply from the 2nd division's assistant commanding officer was for Freeman to do whatever necessary to avoid further losses. Deciding to use the Anju route no matter the consequences from above, he had his accompanying artillery fire off their remaining 3,206 rounds before spiking the guns, then led the "Tomahawks" safely to their destination without major casualties.

Pulled out of the line to recuperate and refit, on December 11 Colonel Freeman made a decision that would significantly strengthen his unit

National Archives

in numbers and fortitude as well as provide the means for future success—he accepted the French battalion that had been sent to Korea. Having been rejected by the division's other regiments due to unfounded prejudices, the all-volunteer unit would prove itself invaluable. As important as the men themselves would be the battalion's commanding officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Ralph Monclar (nom de guerre of Raoul Magrin-Vernerey). At 58, Monclar actually held the rank of lieutenant-general but took a voluntary demotion to lead the French Battalion in Korea. Sharing a similar combat leadership style to Freeman, Monclar stayed visible to his men and visited their positions routinely. The two commanders' bond of respect and trust would quickly extend between the American and French soldiers.

During this time, Freeman also added field artillery, engineers, and an anti-aircraft battery equipped with M-16 quad-50 caliber and M-19 dual 40mm self-propelled guns to become the 23rd Regimental Combat Team (RCT). Also joining the newly-created RCT would be a company of U.S. Army Rangers. Additional changes took place that were out of his control. After the tragic death of American Lt. Gen. Walton Walker in a traffic accident, General Ridgeway took command of the U.S. Eight Army and essentially overall leadership of U.N. forces in Korea. Ridgeway assigned the 2nd Infantry Division to Maj. Gen. Edward Almond's U.S. X Corps. Freeman and Almond would not get along well. He knew he was on short leash as Almond often replaced subordinate commanders with officers he favored.

In January 1951, the 2nd Infantry Division participated in Operation Thunderbolt and the 23rd RCT was tasked with occupying and holding the road hub of Wonju. From January 9 to 17 in sub-zero temperatures, the battle for Wonju took place. Freeman's decision to accept the French proved to be astute where their fighting mentality worked well with Freeman's leadership style. The 23rd RCT was then ordered to take a location known as the Twin Tunnels. At the onset of this engagement, a reconnaissance unit sent by Freeman was ambushed and took severe casualties. Instead of dwelling on his mistake, he used this error as an expensive learning experience for the future. During this battle, both Freeman and Monclar walked the lines, made themselves visible and talked with the men. The American colonel experienced an uncomfortable moment when he had to reprimand Monclar because the French troops had lit fires. Wanting to maintain the element of surprise, Freeman got Monclar on the line and told him to have the fires put out to keep from attracting the enemy. Without a trace of irony, the Frenchmen asked if that was not desirable, so that they could be killed. A speechless Freeman hung up, but within 30 minutes all fires were out. Between Wonju and Twin Tunnels, he learned the value of employing the self-propelled AA guns in a ground support role as they were the best method of clearing ridges of enemy soldiers. After the success at Twin Tunnels, Freeman received orders to proceed further northwest to another crucial road hub at Chipyong-ni. On the afternoon of February 3, the "Tomahawks" arrived and set up a defensive perimeter.

A series of hills surrounded the town and valley, offering an ideal defensive perimeter, but only if enough troops were available to man the four-mile ring. With only a reinforced RCT, Freeman was forced to adopt a much smaller and less ideal defensive perimeter. He would have ten days to position his three battalions and Monclar's Frenchmen. Having personally experienced the Chinese infiltration and attack tactics, he had infantry, artillery, armor and flak wagons located in best possible positions among the hills and frozen rice paddies. Fougasses (barrels of napalm) were buried and set up to surprise the enemy. Both GIs and French dug trenches in front of their main ones which would be occupied during the day and vacated at night. Once overrun by the enemy, the artillery would rain down on these pre-registered targets. For the first time since arriving in country, Freeman's regiment had accumulated a surplus of ammunition. He aggressively patrolled the area to learn when the Chinese would arrive. On February 11, the Chinese Fourth Offensive came down upon the U.N. forces. Six hours after it began, Freeman learned about the attack. Final preparations were initiated.

As Chinese forces quickly arrived to the north, west and east of Chipyong-ni, the need to head south became more imperative. Freeman requested a withdrawal southwards before the enemy severed the route. Both General Almond

Both/National Archives

ABOVE: In December 1951, SFC Jack McGerinnis of the 23rd Infantry Regiment provides suppressive fire with his M-1 carbine near Kumhwa, part of the Chinese and North Korean strategic staging area known as the "Iron Triangle." Almost a year after Chipyong-ni, the 23rd IR were veteran "hill fighters"in the terrain around the 38th Parallel. RIGHT: Lt.-Col. Ralph Monclar, commander of the Bataillon de Corée (French Battalion). Monclar, the nom de guerre of Raoul Magrin-Vernerey, was a French three-star general who took a voluntary demotion to lead the French volunteer unit in Korea.

and the 2nd Infantry Division's commander recommended to Ridgeway to withdraw the 23rd RCT back to Yoju. Knowing its importance, Ridgeway adamantly rejected the recommendation. The "Tomahawks" must remain at Chipyong-ni. A successful defense there would disrupt the enemy's great offensive. Freeman was promised close-air support and to be supplied by air. He was informed that a relief force would clear a route if extraction of the regiment became necessary. On February 13, Freeman called his battalion commanders together and explained the situation. The Chinese had surrounded them and they were to stand and fight. Freeman had 5,400 Americans and Frenchmen facing off against a significantly larger foe.

That night at 10:07 p.m., the Chinese launched their first attack against the defenders of Chipyong-ni. Shortly after the suppressing barrage blanketed Chipyong-ni, horns, whistles, and bugles announced the pending infantry assault. Americans and Frenchmen withstood these initial assaults. Freeman remained visible, which kept up morale despite the incoming artillery and mortar fire falling at a rate not felt since along the Naktong. Within a few hours, the rate of ammunition usage by the RCT concerned the colonel enough for him to send the word to not waste ammunition. In the early hours of February 14, CCF forces again tried. Perhaps over the din of battle, Freeman heard an air siren. Confused, as he knew the enemy possessed no air support, he noted the siren emanating from Monclar's position on the west. Learning later, the French used the hand-crank siren to give the Chinese a taste of their own psychological warfare. Their ensuing bayonet charge not only pushed back the Chinese but secured 15 prisoners.

Mid-morning, Freeman personally interrogated them and from an officer learned that elements from five divisions were attacking the 23rd RCT with a strength of 30,000 men. In reality, at least 18,000 men from six different regiments fought at Chipyong-ni. Less than thirty minutes after the interrogation, the colonel went back to his tent to finally get some rest. Having a few last words with a pair of officers, a CCF 120-mm mortar round hit next to his command post. One officer was killed immediately and another knocked down. Freeman did not escape unscathed. According to him, "A fragment of it, I guess, about two or three inches hit the bottle of Old Grandad (the last bottle of whiskey in the camp); glass and whiskey flew all over the place and then it went into my leg and it made a very nasty looking hole." Although wounded, Freeman continued to direct the battle.

Hearing about Freeman's wounding up at X Corps headquarters, Almond dispatched his own chief of staff, Lt. Col. John H. Chiles, to take command at Chipyong-ni without consulting the 2nd Infantry Division's commanding officer. Freeman became enraged upon receiving the order to evacuate on the helicopter bringing in Chiles. Upon its landing later on the 14th, he managed not to be near the evac site. Freeman, whose senior officers expressed outrage at Almond using a minor wounding to remove him and replace with one of "his boys," told Chiles to stay out his way as a battle was still going on, one he intended to see through. He believed an officer being replaced in the midst of battle was the worst possible disgrace. A discussion with the 2nd Division's assistant commander resulted in a compromise; Freeman would follow X Corps' order but depart at time of his choosing. For the rest of the day, he kept visible to his men, instilled confidence, and prepared for the next assault.

The night of February 14/15, the Chinese struck again, targeting the 2nd Battalion on the southern portion of the perimeter. Freeman was forced to improvise to retake lost positions because almost all reserves engaged in battle. One example that was not successful but not a total failure saw some artillerymen being employed as an ad-hoc infantry squad. By morning, the situation stabilized sufficiently with the much-welcomed assistance by close-air support. Learning an armored task force was on its way to the 23rd RCT, Freeman agreed to be flown out that day.

Around noon, he made his way near the French Battalion's positions where he boarded a medical helicopter. Those who accompanied him remarked seeing tears coming from their commander. The helicopter flew him to a M.A.S.H facility at Chungju where General Ridgeway greeted him. Back at Chipyong-ni, Chiles wisely let the regiment's executive officer continue to command the unit due to his familiarity with the situation and the men fighting the battle. The uninterrupted performance of the 23rd RCT reflected Freeman competence as a leader.

After a U.S. armored task force arrived at Chipyong-ni, the Chinese withdrew by February 16, leaving their dead. While the enemy suffered dearly with an estimated 5,000 dead and wounded, the 23rd RCT lost 51 killed, 250 wounded, and 42 missing. Of this figure, the French Battalion comprised 10 dead and 80 wounded. Freeman's preparedness and confidence in his unit's abilities, plus a solid working relationship with Monclar, contributed to the relatively low casualty numbers.

The heroic stand by the 23rd RCT plus another successful defense at Wonju broke the Chinese Fourth Offensive. After having recovered from his wounds, Freeman expected to return to Korea. Instead, he was sent upon a public relations campaign that used his heroic actions to build public support. After graduating from the National War College, he rose through the ranks and performed various roles including taking command of the 2nd Infantry Division in 1955. Freeman received his fourth star on May 1, 1962, and became Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. Army in Europe, a duty he performed until 1965. His final assignment was as Commanding General, U.S. Continental Army Command before retirement in 1967.

Freeman earned many medals and awards in his career, both U.S. and foreign. For his leadership and action in Korea he received the Distinguished Service Cross. For being wounded at Chipyong-ni, he earned the Purple Heart. Other awards included the Silver Star Medal with 2 Bronze Oak Clusters, Korean Service Medal with 4 Bronze Stars, Army Presidential Unit Citation, the French Legion of Honor, and the previously mentioned French Croix de Guerre with Palm.

In World War II, Freeman had served on staffs in the China, Burma, and India Theater, and those years as a planner had helped when he earned his first command, taking over the 23rd Infantry Regiment only weeks before being sent to Korea. He proved to be an adept planner as well as an excellent leader in combat, bonding with his men by being seen and getting to know them.

Freeman died April 17, 1988, in Monterey, California, and was buried at Arlington National Cemetery. ■

Imperial Landsknecht Halberdier 1486-1600

By Giuseppe Rava

HALBERD: A heavy polearm with an axe-shaped head, and a hook for pulling mounted troops to the ground.

ARMOR: This halberdier wears a cuirass with steel breastplate and leather back.

SWORD: A short sword called a *Katzbalger*,"cat-gutter," for close combat.

HAT: A slashed wool hat with bright colored feathers worn over a metal skull cap.

UNIFORM: Landsknecht soldiers had no specific uniform, instead wearing their own, elaborate, and brightly colored clothes. This typically included a heavy wool doublet with slashed and puffed sleeves, wool chausses trousers, including a codpiece (not visible), and slashed leather shoes.

The Landsknecht were German mercenaries originally recruited by Maximilian I, the Holy Roman Emperor from 1486-1519. Influenced by the success of Swiss pikemen, Landsknecht mercenaries were formed into a Landsknecht army, defeating the Hungarians during the Austro-Hungarian War of 1490.

The Holy Roman Emperor's Landsknecht troops continued to be victorious in battles in the early 16th century, including at the Battle of Pavia in 1525, during the Italian War of 1521-26. The Emperor was unable to pay his troops after defeating the French at Pavia, so many of his troops, including the Landsknecht, marched on Rome and sacked it in 1527.

The fearsome Landsknecht were recruited from every German social class, including nobles, and criminals. Organized into battalions of 500 each, most men were armed with pikes, while others were armed with halberds, matchlocks, long swords, and other weapons, frequently used outside massed pike formations.

The Landsknecht halberd typically included a hook for pulling mounted troops off their horses. Most Landsknecht carried a short sword called a *Katzbalger* (cat-gutter). There was no standard uniform, with individual soldiers wearing very colorful, and frequently expensive clothing, as a mark of distinction.

By the 1550s the Landsknecht reputation for bravery and discipline was overshadowed by the elite Spanish tercios. Their status continued to suffer from increasing questions regarding their discipline, eventually leading to their replacement by a German army less reliant on mercenaries. ■

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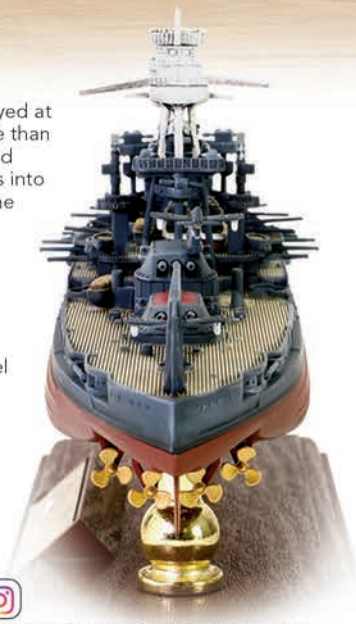

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The Royal Navy's disguised 'Q-ships' did their best to lure Germany's deadly U-boats in for the kill during World War I.

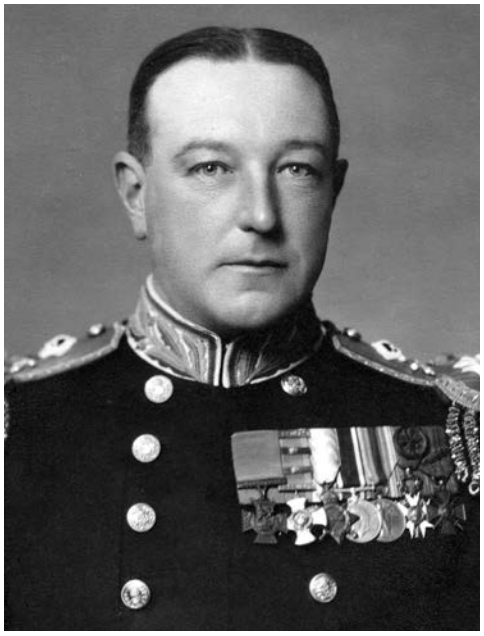
By Mark Carlson

During the Great War, the German navy's most effective and deadly warship was the U-boat, the key to cutting Great Britain's lifelines from the rest of the world and forcing the island nation to its knees. By mid-1915, U-boats were running virtually unchallenged around the British Isles and eastern Atlantic, sinking allied merchantmen and even armed warships at will.

But there was a time when the U-boats ran scared, when they feared to approach and attack lone, defenseless merchant ships on the high seas. Was that plodding old rust bucket sailing into the war zone exactly what it appeared, or was it in fact a predator, a wolf in sheep's clothing? One of those innocent-looking tramp steamers was commanded by a man who would go down in history as the most successful U-boat killer of the First World War.

In early 1915 the British Admiralty's greatest fear was that Germany would begin unrestricted submarine warfare, sinking every ship that came close to the British Isles, neutral or not. Before the war many Royal Navy admirals had considered U-boats to be "dastardly, unethical, and un-English, the weapon of cowards." But by late 1914, after U-boats had sunk four British cruisers and scores of merchantmen, it was obvious that the threat was becoming an unstoppable horror.

U-boats had been conducting their attacks under an article of the 1907 Hague Convention governing



Royal Navy Rear-Admiral Gordon Campbell earned a Victoria Cross for sinking two u-boats as commander of the Q-ship HMS *Farnborough*. TOP: This painting by Willy Stöwer depicts the sinking of the *Linda Blanche*, one of three ships sunk in the Irish Sea on January 30, 1915, by *U-21*—commanded by Otto Hersing, the first man to sink a warship with a self-propelled torpedo. These raids on commercial shipping threatened to throttle the British war effort.

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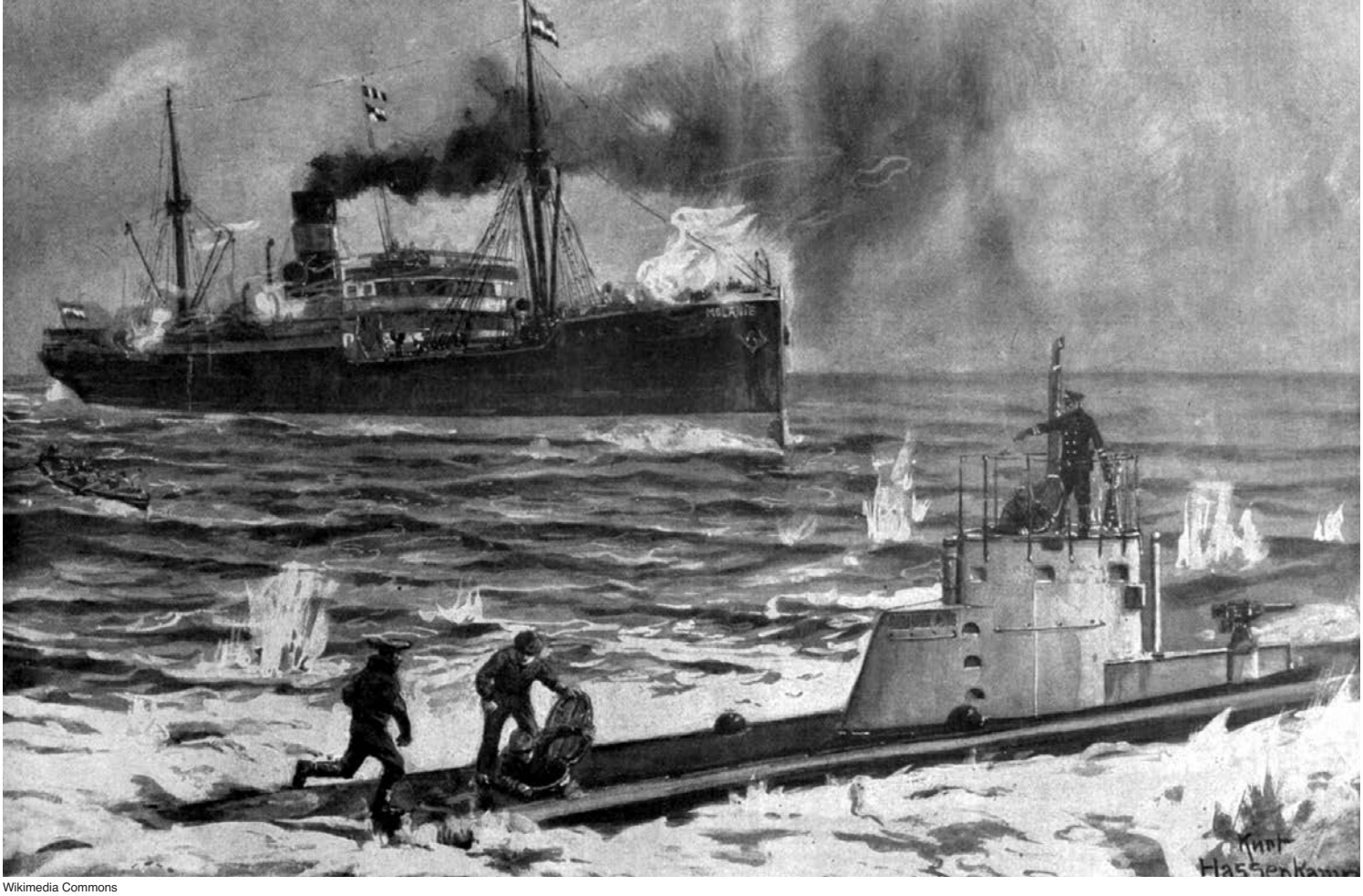

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This illustration by Kurt Hassenkamp, published in the German series *Der Krieg 1914/19 in Wort und Bild*, depicts the encounter between the British steamer *Melanie* and a German submarine. For the Germans, such false-flag tactics from "Perfidious Albion"—a British vessel flying a neutral Dutch flag to get close enough to ram or fire upon a U-boat—justified the eventual move toward unrestricted submarine warfare.

war at sea, generally known as "cruiser warfare." A submarine, upon stopping a ship, must board her to determine its nationality, destination and cargo. Ships of any nation carrying war materiel for Great Britain could be sunk, but only after the crew and passengers were safely off in lifeboats.

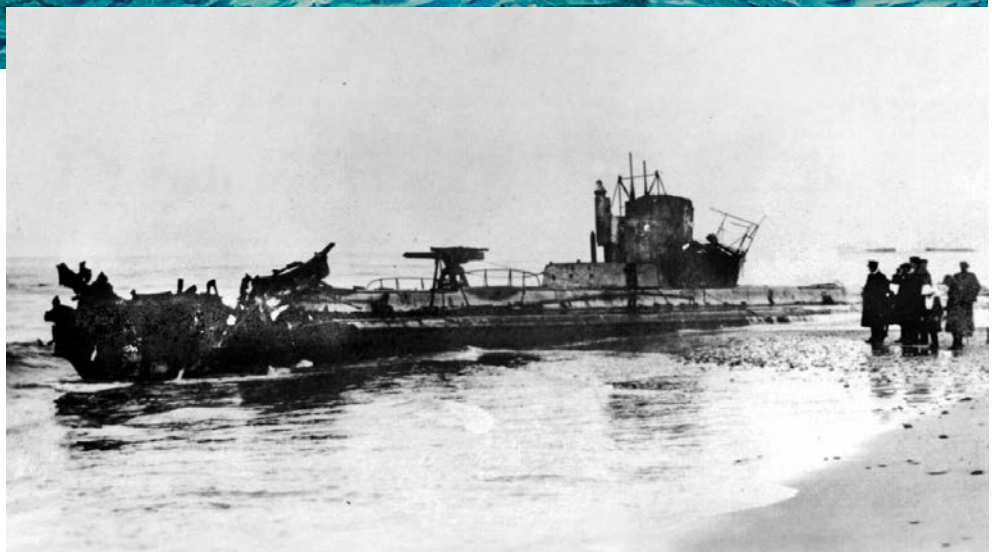
But this changed after *U-20* torpedoed the liner *Lusitania* in May 1915. There were 118 Americans among the 1,261 who died. The "deed for which a Hun would blush" inflamed American passions and pushed President Woodrow Wilson closer to the decision to declare war on Germany. In Berlin, Chancellor Theobald Bethman-Holweg, a moderate, was desperate to avoid a war with the huge nation across the Atlantic. He knew full well it would mean Germany's defeat, but he was fiercely opposed by Adm. Alfred von Tirpitz, Secretary for Naval Affairs. Tirpitz and the naval high command insisted that unrestricted submarine warfare on Allied and neutral shipping would cripple Britain in six months—then Germany could face America on nearly equal terms.

Kaiser Wilhelm II vacillated until September 1915 when Adm. Hugo von Pohl, Commander in Chief of the High Seas Fleet, chose to withdraw all U-boats from the sea, soothing simmering American emotions. But the pressure was still on. With the land war in an endless stalemate, the only certain means to bring the war to a close was to starve Great Britain by putting its merchant fleet on the bottom. This was a daunting proposition. Throughout most of the war the Kriegsmarine possessed about 130 U-boats, of which half were operational at any given time. In the first seven months of 1915, U-boats sank 790,000 tons of Allied and neutral shipping, of which about 570,000 tons had been British. This was nowhere near the total that would have to be sunk if U-boats were to force Britain to surrender. They would have to sink at least 600,000 tons each month for a year—7.2 million tons. This was absolutely impossible under the strict rules that governed submarine warfare.

In February 1916 Kaiser Wilhelm chose a compromise. All Allied ships in the War Zone were to be attacked without warning, as were all armed Allied ships on the open seas. Passenger ships were to be unmolested. Regarding neutral and unarmed ships outside the War Zone around the British Isles, Wilhelm insisted that the rules of cruiser warfare be observed. While this was about as civilized as a naval war could be, it put the U-boats at considerable risk. With no other choice, they went on patrol with this restriction. But the winds of war were already turning against the U-boats.

The British Admiralty considered ways of blunting the U-boat threat. Using the limited number of destroyers, most of which were assigned to screen the huge Grand Fleet, was impractical. Anti-submarine tactics and weapons were primitive and ineffectual. It became apparent that the only sure way to sink a U-boat was to bring it to the surface, where gunfire could be used to penetrate the pressure hull. Submarines were deadly underwater, but fragile on the surface. The trick was in enticing the sub to come up. The early-war U-19 class carried as few as six torpedoes, while the later U-boats boasted as many as sixteen. A sub commander used his meager supply of torpedoes sparingly for large merchantmen and warships. Small freighters of less than 5,000 tons displacement could be sunk by fire from the U-boat's deck gun or by placing scuttling charges in the hull. In either case, a U-boat had to be on the surface. This led to the genesis of the "Q-ship."

The most famous Q-ship was USS *Intrepid* of 1804, commanded by Lt. Stephen Decatur, disguised as a harmless Tripolitan ketch. *Intrepid* was loaded to the bulwarks with armed sailors and explosives to board and destroy the captured



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ABOVE: Some 18 months after the German submarine *U-20* earned lasting infamy for sending the RMS *Lusitania* and 1,200 passengers to the bottom in just 18 minutes, the sub ran aground in a thick fog off the Danish coast in November 1916 and was detonated by its crew to prevent her from falling into Allied hands. TOP: This watercolor by Charles Edward Dixon (1872-1934)—*Q Boat, H.M. Topsail Schooner "Prize" sinking German Submarine U.B. 85. April 30*—shows the three-masted Q-ship, originally a captured German vessel, luring the *U-93* to the surface by posing as a helpless merchantman. Though battered by the sub's deck gun, the crew dropped its disguise and returned fire—damaging *U-93* enough to capture its commander and crew.

American frigate *Philadelphia*. Guile and audacity enabled Decatur to accomplish his mission.

Even before the sinking of *Lusitania*, Winston Churchill, in his role as First Lord of the Admiralty made the first move in Britain's covert war on the German submarines. Churchill, in his zest for daring and even foolhardy schemes ordered that British trawlers tow submerged Royal Navy submarines and communicate by telephone cable. When a U-boat was sighted, the trawler sent an alert to the British sub, which then cut the tow and maneuvered to attack the U-boat. This unusual ploy worked in June and July of 1915, resulting in the sinking of two U-boats. The captain of *U-40*, sunk by the C-24 and rescued by the trawler *Taranaki*, loudly declared that his sub had been sunk by a "dirty trick."

In order to advance the use of disguised armed ships, First Sea Lord Admiral Sir John Jellicoe appointed Rear Admiral Alexander Duff as head of an official anti-submarine division in December 1916. Duff began by establishing specific routes for merchant ships that changed on a regular basis to confuse U-boats, and most significantly, arming the next generation of Q-ships.

He collected scores of small, nondescript freighters of less than 6,000 tons displacement. They looked like the tramp steamers found in every port in the world—rusty, old, and of basic construction. But their engines and boilers were upgraded to give them more speed and their deckhouses were cut down to conceal gun mounts hidden behind collapsible walls.

Duff originally called them "special service ships" or "mystery ships." The term "Q-ship" may have come from Queenstown in Ireland, where many of the ships were based. They were manned by trained reserve navy crews and not averse to flying the flags of neutral Brazil, Argentina, Norway, Finland, Iceland or the United States.

Even in the ultra-traditional Royal Navy, Q-

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A German U-boat engages in a high-stakes duel with an armed merchant ship in this 1917 illustration by maritime artist Willy Stöwer. Originally produced as a hand-tinted postcard, the colors capture the grim reality of the Central Powers' "unrestricted submarine warfare" campaign. In response, the Royal Navy's Q-ships or "Mystery Ships" were born—an armada of small, nondescript freighters that looked like the tramp steamers. Their engines and boilers were upgraded to give them more speed and their deckhouses cut down to conceal gun mounts hidden behind collapsible walls as they tried to lure subs within their gun range.

ships had much leeway to do and try any subterfuge, any deviousness that would persuade a wary U-boat captain to surface.

Image was everything. Q-ship crews had to assume they were always under scrutiny through a U-boat's periscope. In order to make the crack Royal Navy reserve crew appear as harmless, slovenly foreign sailors and passengers, they grew long hair and beards and wore nondescript civilian clothing. Every aspect of "spit and polish" was buried in favor of sloppy, lazy and even insubordinate behavior. They assiduously avoided acting like trained sailors, going so far as to have fistfights on deck, refusing to salute, and adopting forbidden habits like smoking pipes and chewing tobacco. The more unkempt the ship appeared, the more likely it was to entice a U-boat to surface for a gun attack.

When a periscope was sighted the Q-ship's captain began watching the sub's movements through concealed holes in the superstructure. A common ruse was for specially trained "panic parties" to throw themselves into lifeboats and frantically row away to escape the attack. In order for this ploy to work, Q-ships often carried double the normal crew needed for a small freighter.

Well before the creation of an official Q-ship program, there had been engagements between disguised ships and U-boats. Lt. Com. Gordon Campbell was clever, daring and audacious to a fault. He was also patient, the one quality that Q-ship captains needed in abundance. The Sussex-born Campbell was 30 when he took his first Q-ship to sea in 1915. But he and HMS *Farnborough*'s crew had to wait nine months for their first chance at a U-boat. In the meantime, Campbell, exercising a latent skill as a theater director, refined the deception. He disguised one crewman as his wife, complete with a simulated baby, to sit in a lounge chair and read a book. He ceaselessly drilled the crew on the two 6-pounder and five 12-pounder guns. His chance came on March 26, 1916, off the southern coast of Ireland. A crewman spotted a torpedo coming at them. It passed harmlessly behind the ship. Campbell told his men to show no reaction. It took great courage and presence of mind to maintain the deception even under torpedo attack.

While a hit might kill some of the crew, the ship would probably not sink. Q-ships often had their holds stuffed with cork, empty barrels, balsa wood and other "unsinkable" materials. The gunners were ready when the *U-68* surfaced directly astern and passed alongside the *Farnborough*. "Let go!" Campbell bellowed. The white Royal Navy ensign was raised and the guns opened fire. In minutes, the U-boat's hull was riddled with shell holes and it sank. This was only the first of three victories for Gordon Campbell.

It was around that time the Q-ship threat became known to the Kriegsmarine. From that point on, every unescorted merchantman sailing alone was suspect and the U-boats became extremely wary in approaching a possible Q-ship. Sub captains carefully studied any rusty old ship, now referred to as *Unterseeboot-Falle* (U-boat trap), searching for any sign of false bulwarks or depth charge racks.

If there was any doubt, one of the safest tactics was to surface two or three miles from the rust bucket and shell it with the U-boat's deck gun.

Having to remain concealed beside their own guns while enemy shells exploded among them was often the most nerve-racking time for a Q-ship crew. All they could do was hope the U-boat commander chose to come closer. Then it would be their turn. Some U-boat captains chose to use a torpedo to assure a kill without the risk.

It took almost a year for Gordon Campbell to face another U-boat. On February 17, 1917, now under the aegis of Admiral Duff's new division, *Farnborough* was hit by a torpedo 100 miles southwest of Queenstown. While any competent naval officer would consider this a catastrophe, Campbell's standing orders were for the deck officer to alter ship's course and speed to assure a hit. Immediately the "panic party" went into action,

making their headlong dash into the lifeboats as haphazard as possible. But as the two boats hit rowed away, the sub still had not risen.

The *U-83*, under Kapitanleutnant Bruno Hoppe, was not taking any chances. Aware of the existence of Q-ships, he continued to study the ship, noting that it did not seem to be sinking, even though most of its crew had fled in panic.

Hoppe's periscope came so close to one of the lifeboats that the crew spoke in whispers so as not to be heard by the prowling German. *U-83* moved so close to the *Farnborough* that Campbell could see the gray hull under the surface.

Only then did Hoppe decide to come up, breaking the surface only 100 yards away, a perfect target for Campbell's skilled gunners. The first 12-pounder shell decapitated Hoppe as he climbed from the conning tower hatch. His gun crew was caught unawares as their skipper's headless corpse fell back into the conning tower. Real confusion and panic ensued as the British guns fired again. With 45 holes torn in the hull, *U-83* sank, killing 35 and leaving only two survivors. Campbell was awarded the Victoria Cross. Fifteen members of his crew also received decorations. The details of Campbell's VC were never released, prompting the name "The Mystery VC."

Continued on page 96

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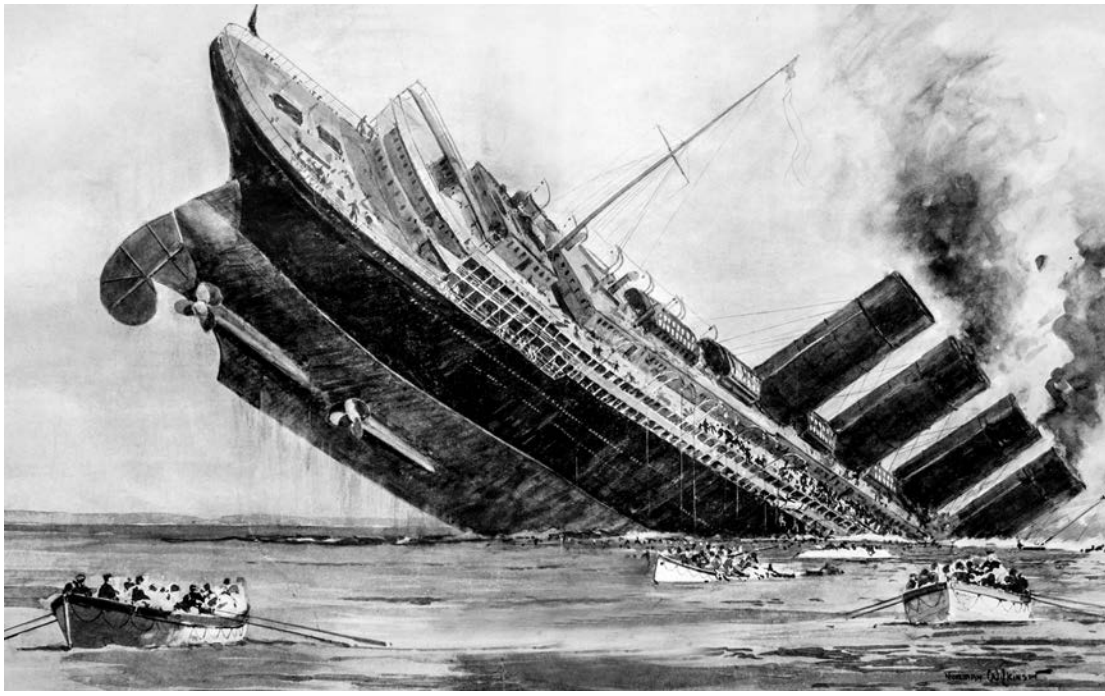


This engraving by Norman Wilkinson appeared in *The Illustrated London News* on May 15, 1915, only a week after the sinking of the *Lusitania* by Walther Schwieger's *U-20* —fueling the intense public outrage that swept through Britain and the United States. Struck off the Old Head of Kinsale, Ireland, the liner's rapid sinking highlighted the brutal effectiveness of submarines and the birth of the "total war" mentality, forever blurring the lines between civilian commerce and military targets.

VALOR

Naval History and Heritage Command

Coast Guard Commander Quentin Walsh earned the Navy Cross in fight to secure the vital deep-water Port of Cherbourg.

By Kevin Seabrooke

The gray, churning waters of the English Channel slammed against the steel ramp of the landing craft on June 10, 1944. It was D-Day plus four, and Coast Guard Commander Quentin R. Walsh was stepping into the sprawling, violent chaos of Utah Beach. The beachhead was secure, but it remained a tangled mess of men, machinery, and the lingering debris of the initial invasion.

Walsh was not there as a standard infantryman. He led a special 53-man reconnaissance team consisting largely of Navy Seabees and a handful of officers. Their mission was highly classified and absolutely vital to the survival of the Allied invasion—push inland, reach the deep-water port of Cherbourg at the tip of the Cotentin Peninsula, and secure its harbor facilities before the retreating German army could completely destroy them.

The temporary artificial harbors—Mulberries A and B—built off the coast primarily from concrete, steel, and old scuttled ships would not hold up forever. The heavily mechanized Allied war machine needed massive amounts of fuel, ammunition, and other supplies to be shipped over from England. The German high command knew this, and Adolf Hitler had ordered the city's defenders to hold the port to the last man.

"The name of the game was Cherbourg," Walsh later wrote. "We had to capture, clear and operate a deep water port to stay ashore." This was especially true in the stormy English Channel where good weather rarely lasts more than a few days. After that, Walsh said, "an amphibious operation cannot be allowed to

U.S. Coast Guard

INSET: U.S. Coast Guard Commander Quentin R. Walsh wearing his Navy Cross Medal. TOP: German prisoners in Cherbourg on June 28, 1944. USCG Commander Quentin Walsh, leading a naval reconnaissance unit, used a tactical bluff to secure the surrender of 750 Germans at the city's arsenal and liberate 52 American paratroopers.

Revolutionary Paths

250 STORIES THAT IGNITED CHANGE

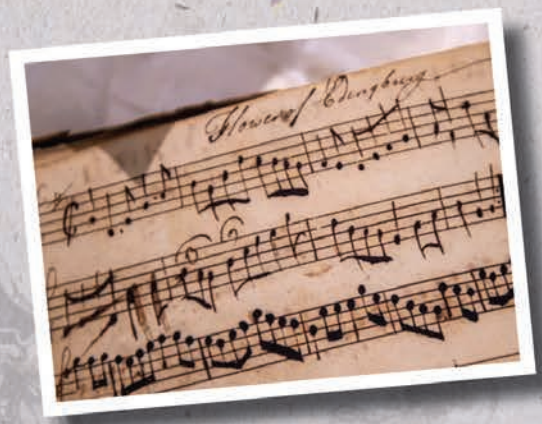
Discover the forgotten stories of Massachusetts' role in the American Revolution. Learn about Revolutionary Women, Black and Indigenous soldiers, notable firsts, and the paths patriots like Henry Knox traveled. From hidden landmarks to acts of courage, these stories bring history to life.

TOOLS OF INDEPENDENCE

In 1777, Isaac Maynard of Sudbury, MA owned a tool that played a small but vital role in the fight for independence: the Step-Down Bullet and Shot Mold, now preserved at the Sudbury Historical Society. This brass mold, engraved with "Isaac Maynard" and "Sudbury 1777," has cherry wood handles and a clever step-down design that allowed multiple sizes of bullets or shot to be cast from a single tool. In an era of scarce resources, this adaptability was essential for local militia preparing for battle. More than a simple tool, the mold embodies the resourcefulness and self-sufficiency of everyday colonists. It connects us to a time when ordinary homes and workshops became extensions of the battlefield, and when citizens like Maynard supplied the means for freedom with their own hands.

THE SOUND OF REVOLUTION

At just 13 years old, Thomas Nixon Jr. of Framingham, MA, enlisted as a fifer in the Continental Army, marching to Lexington and Concord in the opening days of the American Revolution. Carried with him during the war, Nixon's tune book is one of only fourteen known to survive from this era—and among the rare few to include harmony parts. Spanning 104 pages and 143 tunes, it captures the music that guided soldiers through marches, battle signals, and camp life, preserving it as it would have been played in 1776 and offering a rare firsthand glimpse into the Revolutionary War. Within its pages are songs like "March to Boston," "Farewell to Peekskill," and "Yankee Doodle". Today, Nixon's tune book and fife, preserved at the Framingham History Center, offer a rare, personal glimpse into Revolutionary War life—through the eyes and ears of a young Patriot.



COURAGE HAS NO AGE

On April 19, 1775, as the first gunfire of the American Revolution rang out across Massachusetts, 79-year-old Deacon Josiah Haynes of Sudbury, MA, did the unimaginable—he shouldered his musket and marched to Concord to face the British. A seasoned veteran, Haynes bore the honorary title of "Captain" from his service in the French and Indian War. At the North Bridge, he confronted Captain Nixon with a bold challenge: "Sir, if you do not take up arms against the British, I shall call you a coward!" Undeterred by age, Haynes fought shoulder to shoulder with younger Patriots, capturing a British soldier and seizing his weapon in the chaos of battle. Tragically, during the pursuit of retreating troops, he was struck down while reloading—one of fifty Americans killed or mortally wounded that day. Haynes' story stands as a powerful reminder that courage knows no age, and that true patriotism is measured not by years, but by action.

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INSET: This image from a Coast Guard LCI (L) in June 1944, shows a wave from the worst storm to hit the French coast in 40 years battering the line of 23 freighters scuttled by the Coast Guard to form a breakwater known as a "Gooseberry" to protect the artificial Mulberry harbor, drastically reducing the toll of destruction and ensuring the flow of supplies to the front. TOP: Under constant threat of German artillery and sniper fire, American troops secure a beachhead at Normandy for the massive logistical buildup of men and machines to come. USCG Commander Quentin Walsh and his naval reconnaissance unit landed on June 10 because the capture of the deep-water port of Chergourg was scheduled for D+6, but it was moved to D-20 because more German units had been deployed to the area.

bog down. Momentum must be maintained."

Walsh was born on February 2, 1910, in Providence, Rhode Island, but grew up in Groton, Connecticut, which sits directly across the Thames River from New London, the home of the United States Coast Guard Academy.

Growing up on the New England sea coast, defined by its harsh weather, bustling shipyards, and deep naval traditions—and the white hulls of USCG cutters constantly in view along the Thames River, it seemed Walsh was destined for the sea. He was 19 when he enrolled in the Coast Guard Academy in 1929. Legislation passed that year required cadets to be instructed in both line (deck) and engineering duties, forcing a four-year workload to be completed in three years, along with rigorous training designed to quickly weed out those lacking physical stamina and mental fortitude.

Competitive, aggressive and a natural athlete, Walsh developed into a formidable boxer, eventually serving as the co-captain of the Academy's boxing team. That experience would later define his command style and his ability to hold his nerve under intense pressure.

Though he graduated in a time of peace in 1933, the young ensign saw action on the former Navy destroyer *Herndon* at the height of the "Rum War," the Coast Guard's aggressive campaign to enforce Prohibition—patrolling the the turbulent waters between the Gulf of Maine, Cape Hatteras, and Nova Scotia, relentlessly hunting down armed, high-speed rum-runners. Later that year, he found himself serving on a ship sailing out of Key West to protect American citizens during the volatile Cuban Revolution of 1933.

In May 1937, he began a year acting as a whaling inspector—and effectively a government observer—aboard the American-flagged factory ship *Ulysses*, where he spent 132 consecutive days out of sight of land, sailing over 30,000 miles through the frigid, treacherous waters of the Indian Ocean and Antarctica.

By July of 1943, Walsh found himself in Gourock, Scotland, serving on a Coast Guard Hearing Unit handling problems concerning U.S. ships and personnel in U.K. ports. In September he was called to London because Adm. Harold R. Stark, Commander of the U.S. Naval Forces in

Europe, had requested a Coast Guard officer for his staff. Walsh would serve in the Planning and Logistics Section handling the plans for the "Advanced Bases"—ports that would be captured on the continent during the invasion. Walsh became the chief staff officer responsible for plans to clear, occupy and operate captured French ports under U.S. Navy Captain Norman Ives, the designated "Commander Advanced Bases."

A new highest-level security classification had been created for Operation Overlord that was more sensitive than "Top Secret." Information on plans for the Normandy landings, covering the invasion date, landing beaches, and target details, could only be accessed by those designated as a "BIGOT" or were on the "BIGOT list." This included all personnel handling the key secrets of Neptune, code name for the Invasion of Normandy, the assault phase of Operation Overlord.

In order to get Cherbourg's port up and running as soon as possible, the Navy would need first-hand information on the condition of the harbor—sunken ships, mine fields and other impediments.

Walsh suggested the best way to do this would be for the Navy to have its own reconnaissance party on the ground with the VII Corps of General Omar Bradley's First Army assigned to capture it. The plan was approved and Walsh was chosen to lead USN Task Unit 127.2.8 into Cherbourg on D+6. In April 1944, Walsh went north to Scotland to Rosneath Naval Base on the Firth of Clyde, which served as a major U.S. Navy installation and receiving station, to organize and train the recon party.

The first thing Walsh did was ask for three Nissen huts for quarters for about 55 men, four motorcycles, two 2.5-ton trucks, nine jeeps and a communication truck—along with rifles, pistols, bazookas, hand grenades. His request was denied–Walsh couldn't tell them what it was for and "special mission concerning the invasion wasn't good enough." After a few phone calls, Walsh got what he asked for from the skeptical base commander.

About 300 men, mostly from draw units, volunteered for Walsh's mission, but only 53 were selected. They trained from 5 a.m. to 8 p.m., seven days a week. In the evenings, they watched instructional films on topics like bomb disposal, booby traps, and urban combat. "My idea was to make the training so tough and arduous that combat would seem easy by comparison," Walsh recalled. Those long days of physical and tactical exertion would soon be put to the ultimate test.

In southern England before crossing the channel, Walsh reported to Admiral Don Moon, commander of Assault Force "U" at Utah Beach and then to Gen. Lawton J. Collins, 7th Corps, U.S. Army at Breamore. Informed of the reconnaissance mission at Cherbourg for the Navy, Collins ordered Walsh to land at Utah on D+4 because he planned to capture the city on D+20 instead of D+6 as originally planned because more German units had been deployed to Normandy.

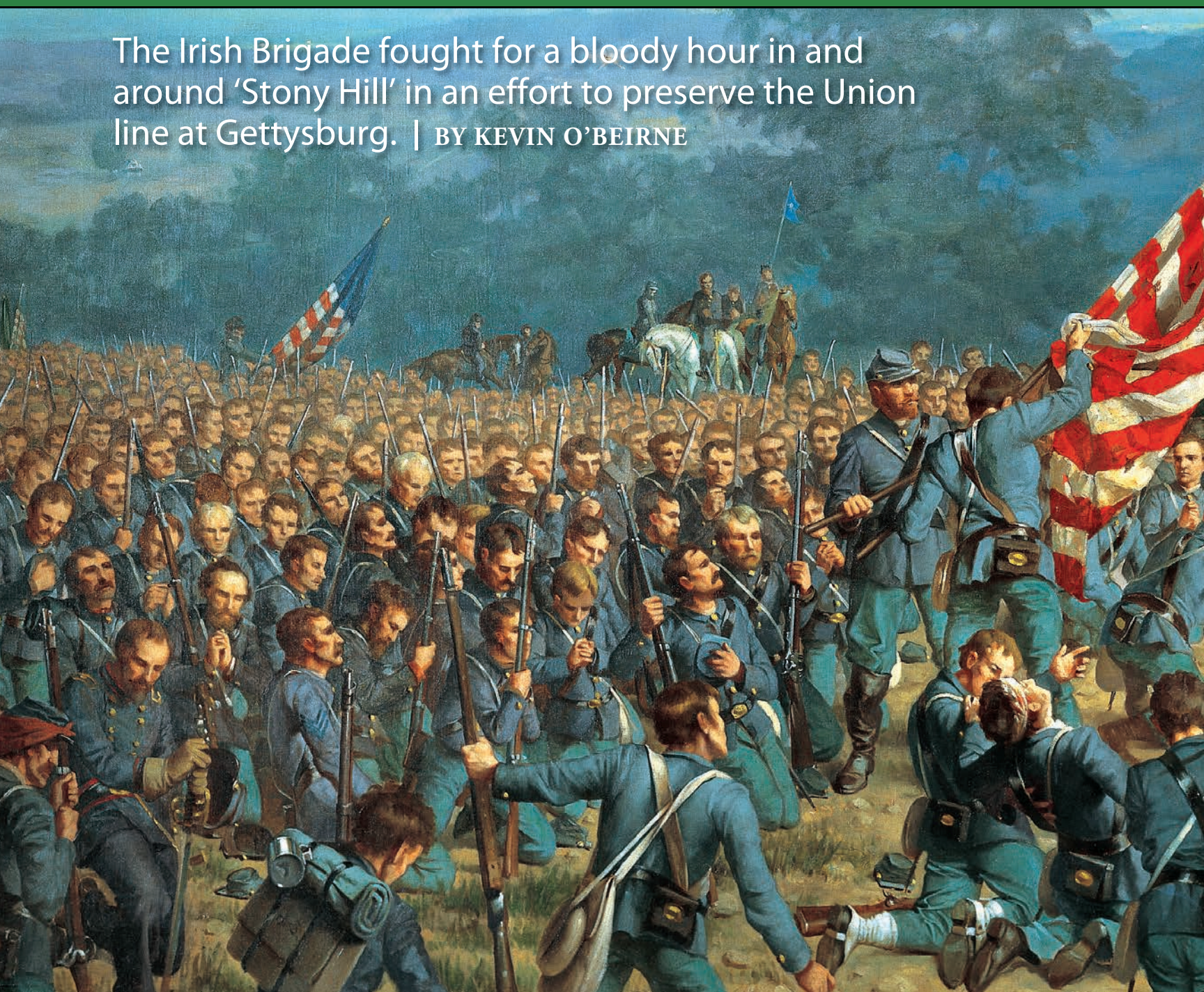
"I was to report to his headquarters later in Normandy and ordered not to carry written orders, operational plans, no diary, and no cameras," Walsh later wrote. "In my book Collins was one of our excellent, outstanding generals. With all his responsibilities he gave me at least thirty minutes of his time and had a staff member show me a wall map of the German Forces in Normandy."

After landing at Utah Beach, Walsh and his men pushed into the Norman countryside. The terrain, normally idyllic in the summer, was a shattered landscape of flooded fields, shredded hedgerows, and artillery-cratered roads. The spring rains had turned the dirt paths into sucking, knee-deep mud that grabbed at their boots and exhausted their legs. The distant, continuous thud of heavy artillery vibrated in their chests, a relentless reminder of what lay ahead. For more than two weeks, the tiny task unit slogged northward, keeping pace with the advancing

Continued on page 96

DEATH IN THE WHEATFIELD

The Irish Brigade fought for a bloody hour in and around 'Stony Hill' in an effort to preserve the Union line at Gettysburg. | BY KEVIN O'BEIRNE



The Snite Museum of Art, University of Notre Dame

The warm spring breeze blew the still-new green of the trees about Falmouth, Virginia, as the last of three rousing cheers echoed into the sky. Formed in a hollow square was the Army of the Potomac's Irish Brigade, and at their center was their famous commander, Brig. Gen. Thomas Francis Meagher. It was May 19, 1863, and the cheer was the last that would be raised for Meagher, as he was taking leave of his command, which was now merely a shell of its former self. The battle of Chancellorsville was barely a week past and, as usual, the Irish Brigade had again suffered heavy casualties. Meagher had made enemies in high places and again was refused permission to return to New York City to recruit for the Brigade's depleted ranks. Only five days earlier, he had tendered his resignation in disgust and protest—an action that he would later regret. As Meagher rode off, command of the Brigade, now numbering barely half of a single full regiment, passed to the senior colonel, Patrick Kelly of the 88th New York.

Kelly, 42, was a native of County Galway, who possessed a quiet demeanor and a calm assurance under fire; he was an ideal man to take charge after Meagher. Kelly took stock of his command, consisting of the 63rd, 69th, and 88th New York, 28th Massachusetts, and 116th Pennsylvania. The Brigade consisted of seasoned veterans, but had been reduced to only 530 men by more than a year of hard fighting in battles such as Fair Oaks, Gaines' Mill, White Oak Swamp, Glendale, Malvern Hill, Antietam, Fredericksburg, and Chancellorsville. Without replacements, there was nothing to do but pick up the pieces and carry on.

For almost a full month after Meagher's departure, the Irish Brigade returned to the routine of life along the Rappahannock River, including picket duty and fatigue details. On June 14, the Brigade quit their camps and began a long trek north. The Army of the Potomac, commanded

In this painting by Paul Wood, Father William Corby, the Irish Brigade's Chaplain, gives general absolution to his troops before the battle. Father Corby became president of Notre Dame University after the war.

by Maj. Gen. George Meade, had two-and-a-half weeks of hard marching ahead in their effort to catch up with Gen. Robert E. Lee's Confederate Army of Northern Virginia at the small Pennsylvania town of Gettysburg.

The Irish Brigade was part of the 1st Division of the II Corps. Before the Gettysburg campaign, command of the corps, considered perhaps the best unit in the Union army, had passed to Maj. Gen. Winfield Scott Hancock. The Irish Brigade's division commander was Brig. Gen. John C. Caldwell, a 30-year-old lawyer from Maine.

Kelly's veterans were ostensibly organized into five regiments, but only one, the 28th Massachusetts, had enough men, 224, to actually be called a regiment; the 28th was commanded by Col. Richard Byrnes a native of Ireland's County Cavan. The 116th Pennsylvania had only 66 men in four companies, reportedly making it the smallest battalion in the whole army; the 116th was led by Maj. St. Clair Mulholland, who hailed from County Antrim. The three New York regiments were so fearfully reduced—the 63rd New York mustered 75 men, the 69th had just over 70, and the 88th had about 90 in its ranks—that, earlier in June, they had been officially redesignated "battalions," each with only two companies. The three New York battalions essentially functioned as a single regiment under the command of Lt. Col. Richard Bentley of the 63rd, a native of Albany, New York. The 69th was commanded by Capt. Richard Moroney of Lockport, New York, and the 88th was led by Capt. Denis Burke of County Cork.

After a series of hot, dusty marches, Kelly reported, "About 10 p.m. on the 1st [of July], we arrived within 2 or 3 miles of Gettysburg, [and] bivouacked in an adjacent field." Kelly ordered pickets posted and the footsore soldiers bedded down along the Taneytown Pike. In less than six hours, the men were awakened, placed in line, weapons inspected and, "at 4:30 a.m. the next morning [July 2], marched toward Gettysburg." The II Corps arrived behind Cemetery Ridge by 7 a.m., where they waited to be assigned a place in the Federal line; at this location, an order from General Meade was read to the men of the Brigade. The order read, in part,"The commanding general requests that previous to the engagement soon expected with the enemy, corps and all other commanding officers will address their troops, explaining to them briefly the immense issues involved in this struggle.... Corps and other commanders are authorized to order the instant death of any soldier who fails in his duty at this hour."

After an hour, the II Corps was ordered to fill a hole between the I Corps on Cemetery Hill and Maj. Gen. Daniel Sickles' III Corps, farther to the left (south). The Irish Brigade arrived on the crest of Cemetery Ridge, a half-mile or so south of Evergreen Cemetery (near the present-day site of the Pennsylvania State Monument), probably at about 8 a.m.

On Cemetery Ridge, General Caldwell formed the division in columns of brigades, with each brigade in column of battalions closed in mass. Caldwell's men were on the II Corps left, and Plum Run creek was about 300 yards to the Federals' front. Two small hills, Round Top and Little Round Top, loomed a little more than a mile or so off to the left of the Irishmen. Arms were stacked and the colors furled and placed on top, the command, "Rest!" was given, and the men were allowed to fall out to boil coffee and eat while officers congregated in small groups. The day's fighting had not begun and for a time the air was quiet. A member of the 116th Pennsylvania recalled, "in the woods back of our line, the birds caroled and sang...our horses quietly browsed in the rich grass."

As the morning wore on, the sun climbed higher in the sky and the July heat became intense. From their slight eminence on Cemetery Ridge, the Irishmen strained to look west, past the high ground along the Emmitsburg Road, to the Confederate army's positions over a mile away

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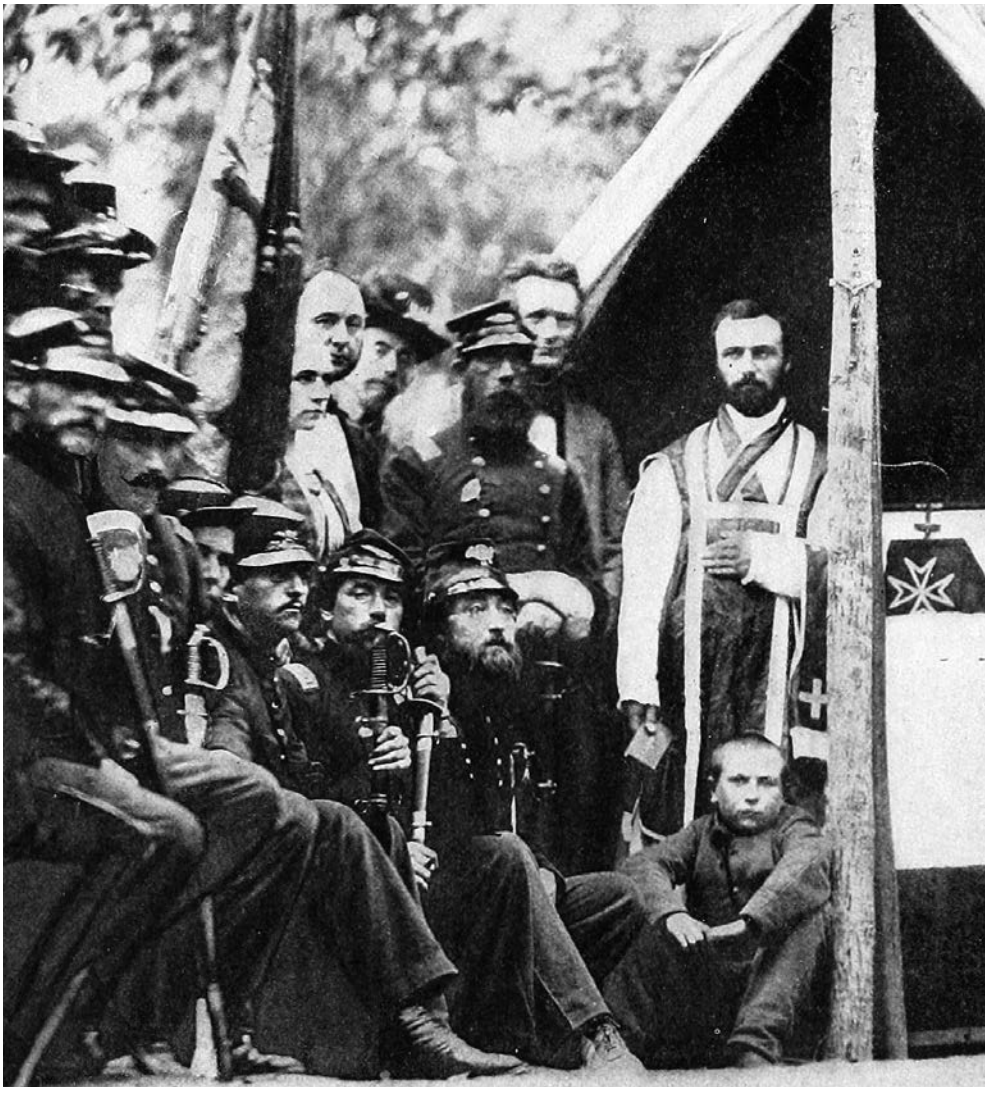


ABOVE: Father William Corby—chaplain for the 88th New York Infantry, one of the five original regiments in the "Irish Brigade"—pauses before celebrating mass at Camp Cass, Virginia, in 1861with the Ninth Massachusetts, composed mainly of Irish volunteers from the Boston area. Corby would become famous for giving general absolution to the Irish Brigade on the second day of the Battle of Gettysburg. OPPOSITE: Lieutenant Colonel James J. Smith and officers of the Irish Brigade's 69th New York Infantry. According to Smith's official report for the Battle of Gettysburg, the 69th "entered the field with officers and 69 enlisted men, and that we lost during the action 5 men killed, 1 officer and 13 men wounded, and 6 men missing." Down to roughly 530 men by the time they reached Gettysburg, the Irish Brigade would suffer 200 casualties in the Wheatfield on July 2, 1863.

Library of Congress

on Seminary Ridge. Everyone knew that the calm would not last through the day.

About 10 a.m., off to the Irish Brigade's left, the sound of picket firing started over on the III Corps's front, beyond the Emmitsburg Road. The "pop-pop" intensified into occasional volleys and soon artillery shells were falling in the vicinity of Caldwell's men. The Irish Brigade's Catholic chaplain, a 28-year-old Detroit native named Father William Corby of the 88th New York, thought that the unit was soon to be committed to battle. Receiving permission from Colonel Kelly, Corby mounted a "large rock" in front of the Brigade and prepared to give the Catholic rite of General Absolution to the men.

Battalion commanders ordered the men to their feet. The 116th Pennsylvania was in the first line and was closest to Corby, followed by part of the 28th Massachusetts in a second line; the third line comprised the balance of the 28th and all of the 69th New York, and the fourth line included the 88th and 63rd New York. Corby had given General Absolution to the Brigade before, most notably while under fire at Antietam the previous September, but never before had he done so in public with so many witnesses. Major Mulholland, who stood directly in front of Corby, later wrote of the Absolution, "the scene was more than impressive, it was awe-inspiring." The distant skirmish fire continued unabated as artillery shells continued to drop on Cemetery Ridge.

Corby first told the men what he was about to do, and noted that the benefit of Absolution would be valid only if each man made a sincere Act of Contrition. Corby further urged the men to do their duty well and ominously warned that the Church would "refuse Christian burial to the soldier who turns his back upon the foe or deserts the flag." With the priest's preparatory concluded, the 530 men of the Brigade fell on their knees, as Corby stretched out his hand and uttered the Latin words of Absolution. One officer recalled, "I do not think there was a man in the brigade who did not offer up a heartfelt prayer. For some it was their last—they knelt there in their grave-clothes." The act was witnessed by the entire II Corps, and even the usually-profane Hancock reportedly doffed his hat. The scene moved at least one minister in a nearby brigade to begin preaching to his own men. However, the artillery fire soon slackened and the order to stand down was received. The Irish Brigade would have to wait several more hours before again falling in.

Throughout the afternoon, some of the Irish "indulged in a quiet game of euchre, while others toasted their hardtack or fried a little bacon at the small fires in the rear of the lines." About 3 p.m., sensing that something was coming, the men dropped their cards and congregated on the crest of the ridge just as Sickles' III Corps began its fateful, unauthorized advance toward the Emmitsburg Road. After consulting with one of his division commanders, Brig. Gen. John Gibbon, General Hancock rode over to the Irish Brigade—always one of his favorite units—dismounted, kneeled down, and leaned on his sword. Hancock smiled tightly and said to Colonel Kelly, Colonel Byrnes, Lt. Col. Bentley, Major Mulholland, and the other Irish commanders, "Wait a moment, you will soon see them come tumbling back."

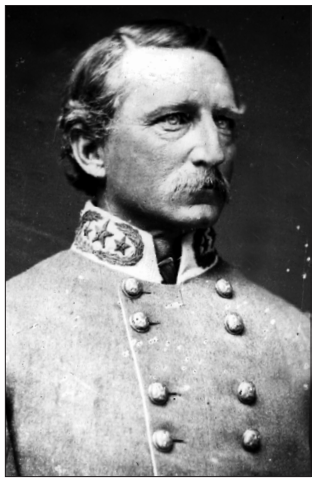
Hancock's smile must have belied some apprehension, as the Irish Brigade and the rest of the division was ordered to fall in, take arms, and was marched off toward Little Round Top, within supporting distance of Sickles. Kelly later reported that the Irish Brigade marched about a half-mile in this movement. Nothing happened and, when Federal troops of Brig. Gen. James Barnes's V Corps division were seen advancing to Sickles' support, Caldwell ordered the division back to its starting point on the crest of Cemetery Ridge. Anticipating action at any moment, the Irishmen resumed their wait.

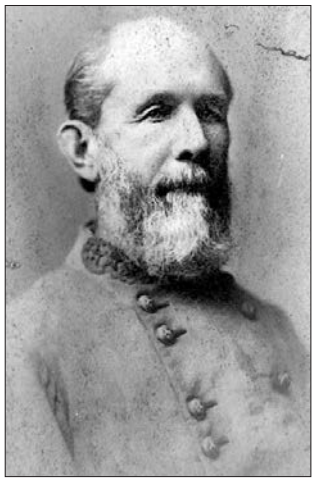
About 4:15 p.m., as the Irishmen watched, "someone called out,'there'...where a puff of smoke is seen arising out of the dark green woods across from the Emmitsburg Pike. Another and another, until soon the whole face of the forest is enveloped...the shells are seen bursting in all directions along the lines." Immediately after, the first wave of Confederate Lt. Gen. James Longstreet's assault broke on the left of the III Corps. Sickles had 10,000 men in two divisions, supported by Barnes's division, and fought stubbornly but was slowly forced back. Longstreet's attack rolled northward en echelon along the Federal line, as successive Rebel brigades moved to the assault in a series of shattering blows.

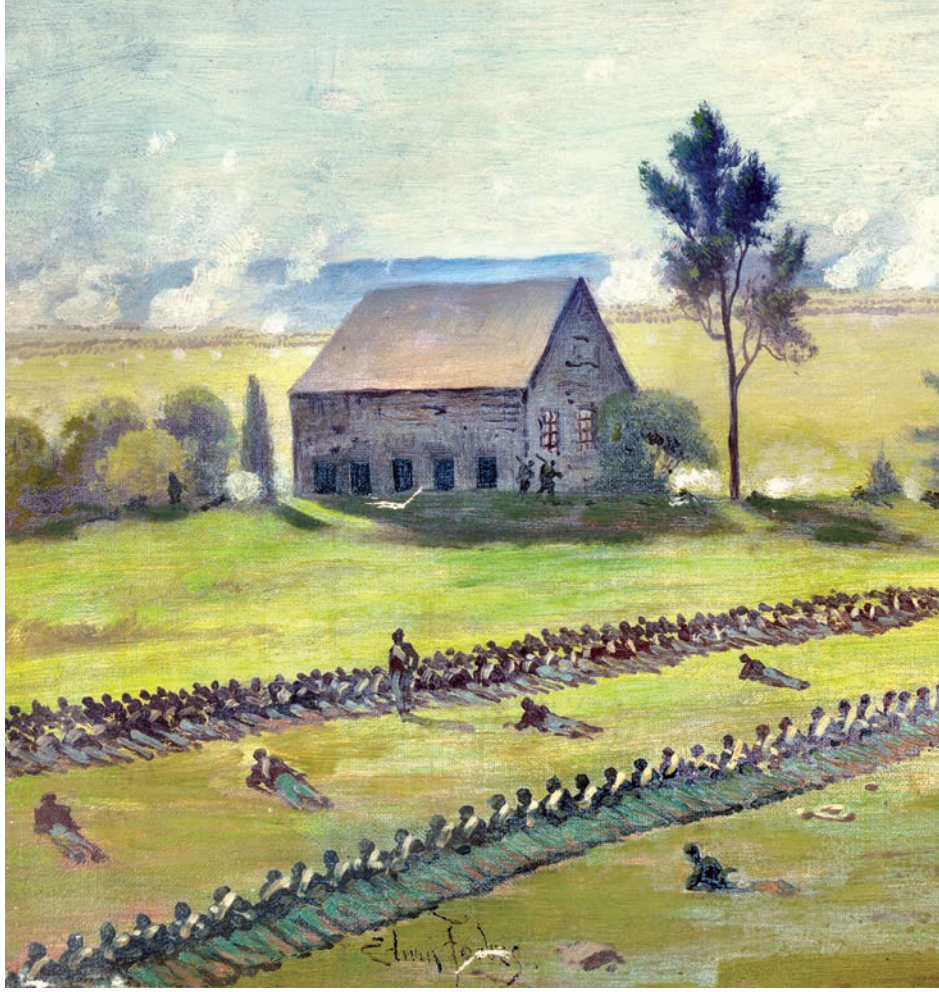
At 5 p.m., as the III Corps's situation worsened

BELOW LEFT: Brigadier General Joseph Kershaw led South Carolinians against the Irish Brigade in the Wheatfield. BELOW RIGHT: Brig. Gen. William Wofford commanded Georgians as they joined the attack on the Wheatfield. RIGHT: Major General Daniel E. Sickles rides near the Peach Orchard to inspect the lines of his III Corps, whom he has ordered to move in an unauthorized advance toward the Emmitsburg Road. As Confederate Lt. Gen. James Longstreet launches an attack, Sickles rides onto a knoll for a better view and is hit in the right leg by a 12-lb. solid shot. The amputated leg is on display at the National Museum of Health and Medicine (formerly the Army Medical Museum) in Silver Spring, Maryland.

Both: Library of Congress







and fighting began to move toward the crucial position of Little Round Top, Hancock ordered his left-most division, Caldwell's, to reinforce the III Corps. The battalions fell in and reclaimed their weapons from the neat stacks of muskets. "Left, Face!" was ordered and the division moved off southward in columns; Col. Edward Cross's brigade led, followed by the diminutive, regiment-sized Irish Brigade marching in four parallel columns, each four abreast and about 35-men long; the brigades of Col. John Brooke and Brig. Gen. Samuel Zook brought up the rear. All told, Caldwell's division numbered only 3,300 men.

The division moved by the left flank at the "quick time"—an average rate of marching—along the west face of Cemetery Ridge toward the fighting that raged in Devil's Den and around the Rose farm to the southwest. The left flank of Maj. Gen. Birney's III Corps division was being pushed northward through Devil's Den toward Little Round Top, while his right flank, Col. Philip de Trobriand's brigade supported by Barnes's V Corps division, was located in the woods near the northern boundary of the Rose farm—at the south edge of a large Wheatfield. De Trobriand's men beat back an assault by Brig. Gen. George Anderson's Confederate Brigade (Hood's Division) while Barnes fretted. Barnes had qualms about the position because his right flank, which stretched toward but did not touch the Peach Orchard, was unsupported, although Confederate troops had not yet appeared on that part of the field. Barnes's misgivings about his position would prove nearly disastrous for the Federals.

To Anderson's left, the next Confederate unit in line was Brig. Gen. Joseph Kershaw's South Carolina brigade of Maj. Gen. Lafayette McLaws's division. After falling back, Anderson's men rallied and with Kershaw's brigade, advanced and pitched into de Trobriand's and Barnes's line. DeTrobriand's men held their ground but, as Kershaw's right wing approached Barnes's division in the woods, Barnes inexplicably ordered a retreat. Unsupported and heavily engaged with Anderson, de Trobriand's men were forced to fall back fighting. Around this time, the Federal position in Devil's Den, to the east/southeast of the Wheatfield, crumbled. In the vicinity of the Wheatfield, a gaping hole had been opened in the blue coats' line. If the Federal position were to avoid total collapse, Caldwell's II Corps Yankees could not arrive too soon.

Caldwell's men continued their southward march toward the scene of the crisis. Unbeknownst to Caldwell, a III Corps staff officer intercepted Zook's brigade and diverted it southwest into Trostle's woods, northwest of the Wheatfield. Just as Caldwell's division came within sight of Weikert's farm, a staff officer from Federal V Corps commander Maj. Gen. George Sykes ordered Caldwell to bolster the Federal line south of the Wheatfield, where de Trobriand's and Barnes's men had just given way. As the Irish Brigade marched on, Rebel shells rained down and "threw the earth in showers over the men", wounding Lt. Col. Bentley of the 63rd New York.

Caldwell's brigades were ordered, "By file right, double-quick, march!" Led by Cross's brigade, the division turned west, splashed across Plum Run, and entered Trostle's woods at a jog, moving parallel to the north edge of the Wheatfield. Cross began to place his men into line in the eastern portion of Trostle woods and the Irish Brigade, next in line, marched around Cross's rear and emerged at the center of the north end of the Wheatfield. Upon Kelly's order, the Irish Brigade's tiny battalions halted, formed a single column, and fronted but, due to their initial alignment on Cemetery Ridge, they were facing the wrong way. The Irish commanders ordered "About face!," so that the battalions were faced toward the south; the file closers (sergeants and lieutenants who normally marched directly behind the two ranks of privates and corporals) moved to the new rear and the lines were straightened and aligned.

The Irish Brigade was arranged in a single two-rank battle line on a front that was barely 150 yards long, with the 63rd New York on the left, followed by the 88th, 69th, 28th, and 116th. The

Library of Congress

Irish formed at the center of the north edge of the Wheatfield, on Cross's right; to the west, Zook's wayward brigade was already advancing across the Wheatfield, and Brooke's brigade formed behind Cross and Kelly. Apparently, no skirmishers were thrown forward from the Federal line. As soon as their lines were formed, Cross and Kelly commenced their advance into the golden field of wheat.

Five hundred yards or more to the south, the 1,800 Confederates of Kershaw's brigade were advancing north from the Rose House toward the Wheatfield. Kershaw was supported on his right (east) flank by Anderson; Brig. Gen. Semmes' and William Wofford's brigades of McLaws' Division were advancing to support Kershaw's left. Kershaw detached the left wing of his brigade to deal with some troublesome III Corps artillery to the northwest of the Wheatfield near the Peach Orchard, while the 800 men of the 3rd and 7th South Carolina finished chasing off the last of Barnes's Yankees. Kershaw ordered the Carolinians forward into the woods that separated the Rose farm from the Wheatfield beyond. The tired Rebels clambered through the trees up a local topographical high point described by General Kershaw as, "a stony hill, covered with heavy timber and thick undergrowth, interspersed with bowlders [sic] and large fragments of rock"; this outcropping, more-or-less an extension of the rugged terrain of Devil's Den to the southeast, was known forever afterward as simply, "the Stony Hill." The time was about 5:30 p.m.

To the north, the Irish Brigade and Zook's brigade marched southwestward on a collision course with Kershaw's men. One officer of Kelly's command remembered, "As we advanced, portions of the Third Corps retired, passing through the intervals in our line." Caldwell's men were now the Federals' front line. The ripening wheat was almost to the middle of the men's chests, and the Irish battalion commanders ordered their men to "Right shoulder shift arms." The 28th Massachusetts was armed with modern 1857 .577-caliber Enfield rifle-muskets, but the rest of the Brigade, more than half of the men, carried .69-caliber 1842 Springfield smoothbores. The smooth bore weapons were of little use at extended ranges but, because their "buck-and-ball" ammunition comprised a .64-caliber slug and three .30-caliber buckshot, the weapons were deadly at the type of close-range fighting in which the Brigade was soon to be engaged. An officer of the 63rd New York recalled that each man went in with 60 rounds of ammunition.

Kershaw's 3rd and 7th South Carolina became jumbled in the advance to the Stony Hill and were not properly positioned when they began to climb up over the boulders to the crest. The Rebels gained the top of Stony Hill while the Irish Brigade was still 200 yards away. At this point, Zook's brigade was closer to the Stony Hill than Kelly's brigade, and much of the 3rd South Carolina opened fire on Zook's men. As the Irish approached, the South Carolinians identified the familiar green flags—Kershaw's men had helped defend the stone wall of Fredericksburg against the Irish Brigade the previous December—and the 7th South Carolina let loose the first volley. Kelly remembered, "they poured into us a brisk fire while [we were] advancing." The 116th Pennsylvania's Major Mulholland later recalled, "their shots, for the most part, passed over our heads." Knowing that most of his men's weapons were ineffective at this range, Kelly ignored the Southern volleys and kept his men moving forward.

The Irish Brigade marched on, finally halting at the west edge of the Wheatfield at the very foot of the Stony Hill, less than 100 feet from the South Carolinians. A member of the 116th Pennsylvania, looking up into the trees, spied gray movement and yelled, "There they are!" Reportedly without waiting for orders, the Irish aimed and let loose a deadly volley of .69-caliber buck-and-ball. Standing atop the Stony Hill, Kershaw remembered, "the advancing Federals...poured into us from their whole line." Because they had to stand and lean over the boulders to fire downward, the men of the 7th South Carolina were exposed and vulnerable. One Irish officer grimly

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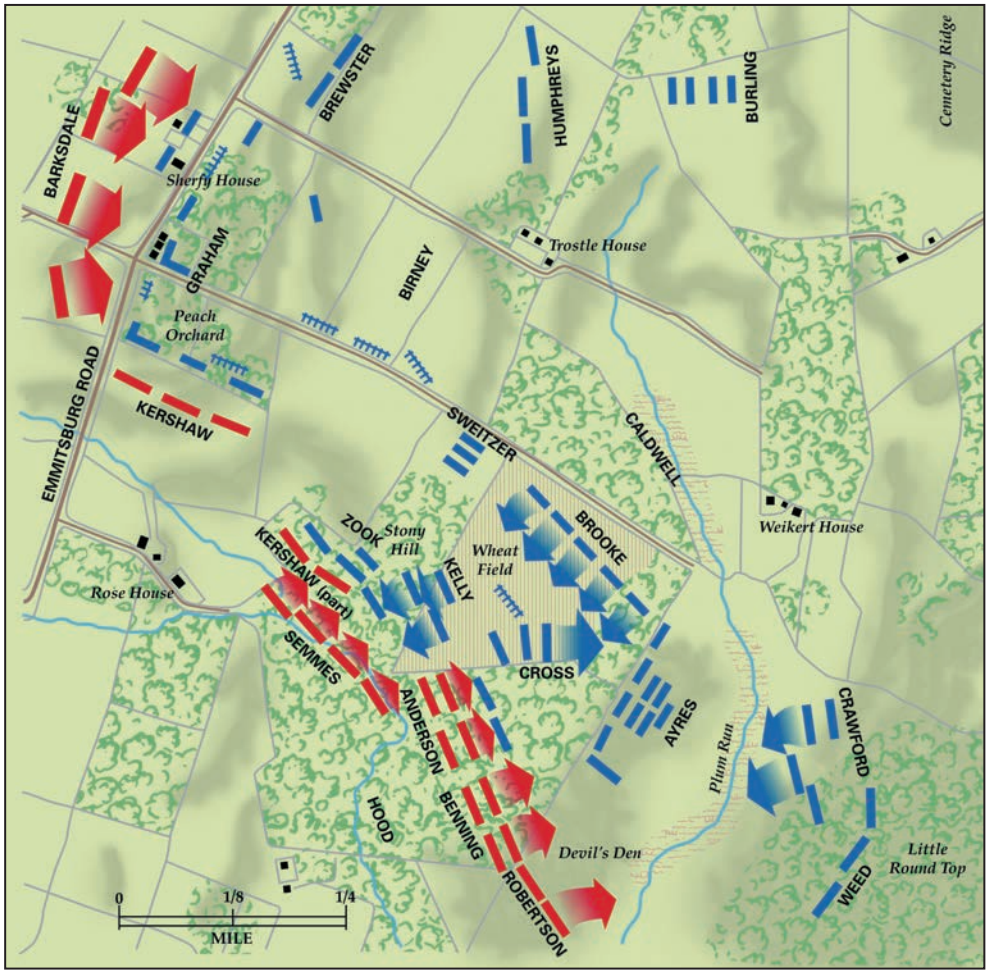
noted, "the effect of our fire was deadly in the extreme, for, under the circumstances, a blind man could not have missed the mark." A man in the 69th New York wrote, "after our line delivered one or two volleys, the enemy were noticed to waver." Kelly called for the Irish to charge up the Stony Hill to close with the enemy. The Brigade scrambled up the steep, rocky slope with muskets at "right shoulder shift." One Irish participant remembered that there was "a cheer, a few quick strides, and we were on the crest among the enemy."

At the top, hand-to-hand combat ensued amongst the rocks in the woods in a whirling melee as bayonets and musket butts were used with effect, while officers fired pistols at targets less than 10 feet away. Kershaw later wrote, "I was never in a hotter place." The bearer of the 28th Massachusetts's green flag wrote, "it was a hot place[—]our little brigade fought like heroes." Dozens of men on both sides fell in the clash, and soon the Confederates, who were in numbers more-or-less equal to the Irish, began to give way. On the Brigade's right, Major Mulholland later claimed that he jumped on a boulder and yelled, "Confederate troops! Lay down your arms and go to the rear!," which was supposedly obeyed by a large number of Rebels. Under pressure from Zook's brigade and threatened with flanking fire by the 116th Pennsylvania and the 28th Massachusetts, Kershaw's 3rd South Carolina also withdrew and a brief calm descended on Stony Hill.

As the survivors of the 3rd South Carolina's right wing took off southward toward the Rose House, the Pennsylvanians and Massachusetts men quickly examined the height they had gained. The effect of the Irish Brigade's fire had been devastating and one Federal later remembered that the crest of the Stony Hill was, "covered with [Rebel] dead, nearly every one of them being hit in the head and upper body. Behind one large rock five men lay dead in a heap."

Lieutenant Charles Grainger of the 88th New York related an amusing incident in which, "a captured Confederate colonel was sitting comfortably

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



ABOVE: The map shows movements into and around the Wheatfield, where the already greatly diminished Irish Brigade—shown advancing up the "Stony Hill"—would suffer roughly 40-percent casualties. LEFT: Bradley Schmehl's painting, *Fierce When Provoked*, portrays the Irish Brigade battling Confederates at the "Stony Hill" near the Wheat Field at the Battle of Gettysburg.

sheltered behind a rock and laughing until tears rolled down his cheeks, while a private of the 88th and one of the 69th N.Y. had dropped their muskets and were hammering on each other with their fists in order to decide which took the prisoner." Grainger himself, on his way to the rear with a "shattered elbow," escorted the Rebel officer away while the two men pummeled each other.

Meanwhile, to the Irish Brigade's left, Cross' Federals had engaged Anderson's Confederate brigade on the east end of the Wheatfield and, to the Irish right, Zook's men turned their attention to Kershaw's left (west) wing. Soon, Brooke's Yankees, who were Caldwell's only reserve, were committed to a gap between Cross and the Irish. Caldwell called for support from Col. Jacob Sweitzer's V Corps brigade.

On the left flank of the Irish Brigade, the New York battalions were steadily driving the 7th South Carolina's right wing back through the woods, threatening to flank Kershaw's entire brigade. A member of the 88th New York wrote, "officers and men....[were] cheering and encouraging their comrades in the thickest of the fight." The firing was hot and dozens of Irish veterans went down dead and wounded. Kelly later wrote, "We...drove them a considerable distance, and sent a great many prisoners to the rear."

The Irish continued to advance, driving the Carolinians southward as bullets and cannonballs continued to fall thickly. Near the center of the line, Colonel Byrnes of the 28th Massachusetts reported, "We...advanced over the top and almost to the bottom of the other side of the [stony] hill, being all the time exposed to a very severe fire of musketry." Zook's brigade continued to press Kershaw's left wing. Afterward, Kershaw related that both his flanks were turned but the Carolinians continued to fight doggedly; the 3rd and 7th South Carolina lost 197 men that day, many of them in combat with the Irish Brigade.

While the New Yorkers and Byrnes's men were engaged, firing in front of the 116th slackened for almost 15 minutes. Mulholland scouted off to his right and was alarmed to see to the west "what I believed to be a column of the enemy passing through the peach orchard and to the rear of our division." Kelly was notified, but smoke from the fighting near the peach orchard and from Zook's brigade to the right-rear prevented a clear view. Mulholland had, in fact, seen Wofford's Confederate brigade advancing on the right flank of Caldwell's division. To the south, the New Yorkers of the 69th, 88th, and 63rd observed elements of Semmes' Confederate brigade coming up to reinforce Kershaw's right flank in front of the Irish Brigade. The 50th Georgia of Semmes' brigade assaulted Kelly's New York units and the Irishmen "again opened fire, the enemy having rallied

to oppose our further advance."

Wofford's 1,400 Georgians were bearing down inexorably on the right flank of Kelly and Zook, while a renewed assault by Anderson and Semmes drove back Brooke's brigade and the Irish left. Soon, the Irish Brigade became the front tip of a salient that was rapidly being pinched off from both flanks. Kelly dryly remembered, "Finding myself in this very disagreeable position, I ordered the brigade to fall back, firing." The rest of Caldwell's division also retreated, first in a semblance of order and then in an urgent running mass.

Unsupported on both flanks, the Irish line collapsed like the rest. A member of the 69th New York reported, "It was impossible after falling back to rally the men" and "great confusion" reigned in the Federal ranks. On Kelly's left, the 63rd, 88th, and 69th New York broke for the rear at the double-quick. On the Irish right, Mulholland remembered, "I quickly told the men of my own command [the 116th] the danger and for each one to look to his own safety." The Major told the men to make for an area just north of Little Round Top and recalled, "I rolled up the colors and with some thirty men ran through the woods to the Wheatfield; here we were in a trap." The men of the Irish Brigade tumbled back down the Stony Hill, emerged from the forest, and reentered the Wheatfield.

Anderson's and Semmes' Rebels advanced from the south, Wofford's Georgians bore in from the west, and Kershaw's men advanced from the south/southwest back up the Stony Hill. All these units poured lead into Caldwell's Federals, who were retreating through the wheat. The Irish had to run a deadly gauntlet back through the Wheatfield where, noted a survivor, "we encountered the full sweep of the enemy's fire, which...was very destructive." Kelly averred, "we...encountered a most terrific fire and narrowly escaped being captured." Years later, recalling the horror of running back through the Wheatfield, Mulholland shivered, "we caught it from both sides, the slaughter here being appalling, but we kept on, the men loading and firing as they ran." With the colors, Mulholland reached safety with only 10 of the 30 men with which he had started the dangerous race. The fact that any of the Irish Brigade escaped at all is probably down to the fact that, as the Federal retreat started, Sweitzer's V Corps brigade (Barnes's division) advanced into the wheatfield in belated support of Caldwell, and wound up not only covering Caldwell's retreat, but also suffering heavy casualties for their trouble.

Kelly's survivors finally made it through Trostle's woods, kept going past Little Round Top, and reformed on the Taneytown Pike in back of Cemetery Ridge. Miraculously, the Irish Brigade brought all of its flags safely back to Federal lines. The tiny brigade had been virtually destroyed, losing 36 percent of its strength. Going into the fight with 530 men, the Irish Brigade lost about 193 of them in that hour; Byrnes's 28th Massachusetts bore the brunt of the loss, suffering 91 dead, wounded, and missing out of 224 who started the charge. Overall, Caldwell's division suffered as badly as the Irish, losing almost 1,300 men out of 3,300 in less than an hour of fighting.

Aside from the casualties, in the confusion of the hasty withdrawal, the Irish battalions were further scattered and reduced. When they emerged from the wheatfield, many officers of the Brigade later recounted, they had scant numbers of men with them—two to ten men per company was common. After rallying on the Taneytown Pike

COLONEL PATRICK KELLY

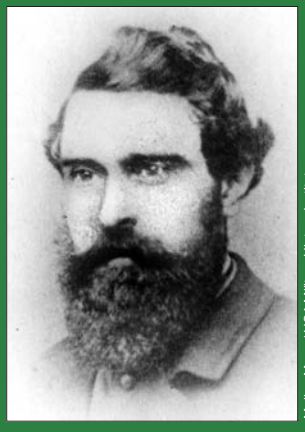
Colonel Patrick Kelly, who led the Irish Brigade into the Wheatfield on July 2, 1863, was born in Castle Hackett, County Galway, in 1821. Orphaned at the age of nine, he emigrated from Ireland to New York in 1850. At the outbreak of the Civil War, Kelly, a Brooklyn merchant and a widower since 1858, enlisted as a private in the 69th New York Militia's Company E, but was soon promoted to lieutenant.

Kelly fought at Bull Run with the 69th and was subsequently appointed a captain in the 16th US Infantry. But when Thomas Francis Meagher, then raising the Irish Brigade, offered him the rank of lieutenant colonel of the 88th New York Infantry, Kelly accepted.

The new lieutenant colonel of the 88th was described by one of his officers, Capt. William O'Grady, as a sturdily built man of average height, and "handsome, with a noble forehead, brilliant black eyes, the blackest hair and a dark complexion."

On June 1, 1862, Kelly led the 88th into its first battle at Fair Oaks, Virginia. In this and subsequent actions during the Peninsula campaign, he established a reputation as a brave and capable commander. At Antietam, Kelly lost a third of his men in stubborn fighting at the famed Bloody Lane.

The 88th next saw action in the forlorn-hope assault on the stone wall at Fredericksburg. Following that battle, in which the regiment lost half its men, the usually voluble General Meagher wrote that Kelly "displayed a courageous soldiership which I have no words, with all my partiality for them, adequately to describe." Kelly's stolid and courageous performance in combat also attracted attention further up the chain of command. Brig. Gen. Winfield Scott Hancock, no mean judge of men, noted in his Fredericksburg report that the Irish born officer, promoted to colonel before the battle, was "active and resolute, as he always is."



Mollus-Mass / USA Military History Institute

After Gettysburg, Colonel Kelly successfully led the Irish Brigade through the Bristoe Station and Mine Run campaigns. As winter set in, he returned to New York on recruiting duty and remained there until the following spring. At Cold Harbor, on June 3, 1864, Irish Brigade commander Colonel Richard Byrnes was mortally wounded, and Patrick Kelly returned once again to command of the brigade — but not for long. Kelly led from the front, and, as with many such officers, his luck ran out.

Following a June 16 attack on Petersburg, General Hancock regrettably reported that the "gallant commander of the Irish Brigade, Patrick Kelly, was killed at the head of his command while intrepidly leading it to the charge." The men of the Irish Brigade were less restrained, and one wrote that "strong old veteran soldiers wept like children and wrung their hands in frenzy" following the death of their popular commander.

Kelly was so well regarded in the Army of the Potomac that a redoubt in the Petersburg siege lines was officially named "Fort Patrick Kelly" in an order issued by army headquarters on September 23, 1864.Colonel Patrick Kelly was one of the solid mid-level officers who provided the backbone of the Army of the Potomac, and was a credit to the countries of his nativity and of his adoption. Honored in life, Kelly's heroism has faded into the mists of time, largely forgotten, even by Civil War buffs. He has always deserved better.

—Joseph G. Bilby

in the last hour or so of daylight, and while the fury of Longstreet's assault washed against the crest of Cemetery Ridge and then subsided, the remnant of the Brigade marched back to the center of Cemetery Ridge as full darkness fell, arriving back at the position where they had spent most of the day.

The Irish Brigade spent the morning of the next day, July 3, building breastworks from stones and rails, behind which they took shelter when the Confederate artillery bombardment that preceded Pickett's Charge commenced; only one man of the Brigade was wounded in the barrage. Kelly's men took no active part in repelling Pickett's assault, because they were posted about 500 yards south of the copse of trees that was ably defended by the Irish 69th Pennsylvania and the rest of Gibbon's II Corps division. However, several members of the 28th Massachusetts, armed with long-ranged Enfield rifle-muskets, took potshots at the gray brigades of Brig. Gen. Cadrius Wilcox and Colonel David Lang (Hill's Corps), and several surrendering Confederates entered captivity through the Brigade's lines in the aftermath of the Rebels' doomed assault. After helping to bury the dead on July 4, the Irish Brigade and the rest of the II Corps took up the southward pursuit of the retreating graybacks on the 5th.

Gettysburg would be another entry in the Irish Brigade's history of gallant actions. Though its ranks were sadly decimated, it was the bravery of the Brigade and Caldwell's division that stalled the Confederates' July 2 attack toward the undefended Federal center on Cemetery Ridge for that crucial hour—making an important contribution to the ultimate Union victory in the battle.

After Gettysburg, the Brigade would soldier on for almost two more years. Under Kelly's command, the small band of Celts would fight at Bristoe Station, Auburn, and in the Mine Run campaign prior to the close of 1863. In early 1864, recruited up to a strength of over 2,000, the rejuvenated Brigade saw furious action in the Overland and Petersburg campaigns. Kelly was killed in battle at the head of the Irish Brigade at Petersburg on June 16, 1864; many others who lived through Gettysburg would likewise not see the Confederate surrender at Appomattox Court House in April 1865.

The survivors of the Irish Brigade never forgot their valor at Gettysburg. Their charges in the 1862 battles of Fredericksburg and Antietam were more the stuff of legend but, in the post-war years, the old veterans nevertheless elected to build their monuments on the Stony Hill. Between 1888 and 1910, a total of four monuments to the Irish Brigade—the famous Celtic cross of the three New York battalions (which, oddly enough, was sculpted by an Irish immigrant who fought at Gettysburg in the Confederate ranks), the 28th Massachusetts monument, the poignant 116th Pennsylvania monument, and a statue of Father Corby giving Absolution on Cemetery Ridge-were placed on the field at Gettysburg. Until the 1990s, they would be the only monuments to commemorate the Irish Brigade, aside from the hundreds of smaller monuments-graves that Meagher's and Kelly's heroes left scattered across the fields of Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania. ■

Cory Hartman / Wikimedia

Sculpted by former Confederate soldier William R. O'Donovan, the bronze Celtic cross monument honoring the Irish Brigade's 63rd, 69th, and 88th New York Volunteer Infantry regiments was dedicated on July 2, 1888. At the base of the cross a life-size Irish Wolfhound, symbolizing honor and fidelity, mourns their loss.

BY KEVIN SEABROOKE

The Civil War's Most DEDICATED WITNESS

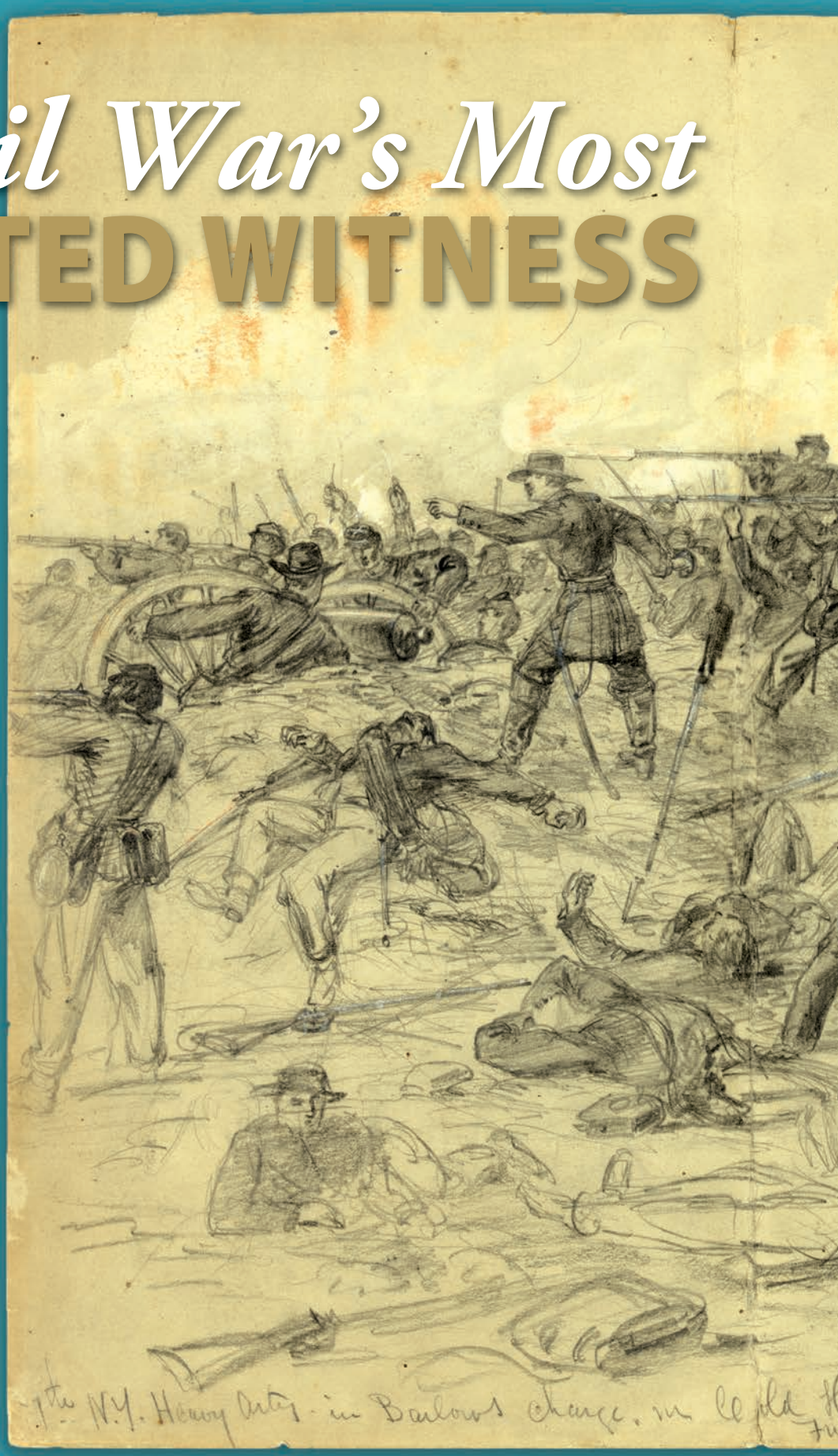
The smoke from the heavy artillery had barely begun to clear over the rocky, shattered landscape of Devil's Den when the camera shutter snapped. In the resulting photograph, taken by Timothy H. O'Sullivan in the days immediately following the Battle of Gettysburg in July 1863, a lone figure sits perched among the massive granite boulders.

He's not a soldier, though his rugged, weather-beaten appearance suggests the harsh realities of life in the field. He wears a dark slouch hat, a durable campaign jacket, and high riding boots. A long, unkempt beard frames a face that has witnessed more carnage than almost any general in the Union army. He has a pencil in his hand and a sketch pad on his lap. This solitary, intense figure is Alfred Rudolph Waud, the preeminent "Special Artist" of the American Civil War.

Generals and heroes from the conflict have been carved in marble or cast in bronze, but it was Waud's eye—and his frantic, brilliant pencil strokes that truly allowed the American public to see the war. In an era before photography had the ability to capture the kinetic violence of combat, Waud stood in the crossfire, translating the terrifying majesty and intimate horrors of battle onto paper.

His journey from a young, aspiring marine painter in England to the visual chronicler of America's bloodiest conflict is a testament to the power of journalistic art and the enduring need for eyewitness truth.

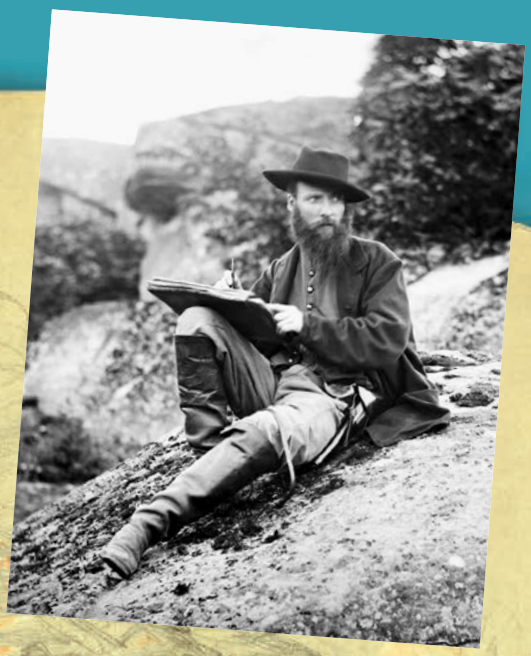
Born in London on October 2, 1828, Waud grew up during a period of massive industrial and cultural transformation in Great Britain. He was the eldest son of Alfred Waud Sr. and Mary Fitz-John, and



Renowned "Special Artist" Alfred R. Waud sketched the 7th New York Heavy Artillery during Brig. Gen. Francis C. Barlow's ill-fated charge at Cold Harbor on the morning of June 3, 1864—where the Union suffered 7,000 casualties in less than an hour of lopsided fighting. INSET: Alfred Waud, photographed by Timothy H. O'Sullivan at Devil's Den in 1863, following the Battle of Gettysburg . Embedded with the Army of the Potomac, Waud drew firsthand sketches of major battles for the *New York Illustrated News*, then *Harper's Weekly*, throughout the war.

All/Library of Congress

Special artist Alfred R. Waud accompanied the Army of the Potomac from Bull Run to Appomattox, recording drama, suffering, and the human cost of battle.



from an early age, he exhibited a profound natural talent for draughtsmanship. Seeking to channel this ability into a respectable profession, he enrolled at the Government School of Design at Somerset House in London. His initial ambition was to become a marine painter, capturing the elegance of the British fleet and the wild, unpredictable nature of the sea. But the harsh economic realities of the mid-nineteenth-century art world forced him to seek more practical employment.

As a student, Waud found work painting scenery and backdrops for the bustling London stage. This experience was crucial to his development, teaching him to work quickly under pressure, how to compose a scene for maximum dramatic effect, and how to utilize light and shadow to guide the viewer's eye. These skills would later prove essential on the battlefields of Virginia.

By 1850, the promise of opportunity in the United States proved too alluring to resist. Armed with his artistic training and a formidable work ethic, the 21-year-old Waud sailed to New York City on the *Hendrik Hudson*. He hoped to continue his work in the theater, seeking employment with the prominent actor and playwright John Brougham. But he found more money and stability in publishing, as the 1850s marked the dawn of the illustrated newspaper in America, a medium that sought to combine the timeliness of the daily broadsheet with the visual appeal of fine art. Waud initially settled in Boston, where he worked as an illustrator for various periodicals, including the *Carpet-Bag*, and provided engravings for books such as the 1857 publication of *Hunter's Panoramic Guide from Niagara to Quebec*. During this decade, he also married Mary Gertrude Jewell, a New Yorker, and settled in Orange, New Jersey, to raise their growing family. His younger brother, William Waud, also emigrated from England in 1855, bringing his own artistic talents to America and setting the stage for both brothers to leave an indelible mark on the nation's visual history.

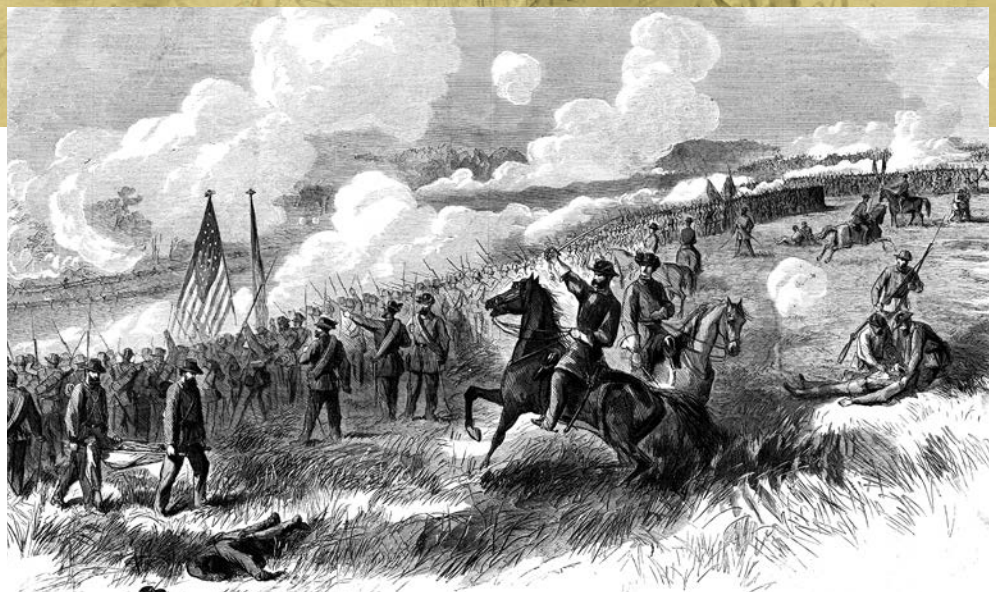
To fully understand Waud's later impact, one must understand the technological limitations of the era. The mid-nineteenth century is often celebrated as the dawn of photojournalism, spearheaded by pioneers like Mathew Brady, Alexander Gardner, and Timothy O'Sullivan. However, the wet-plate collodion photographic process used during the Civil War was incredibly cumbersome. It required heavy wooden cameras, delicate glass plates, and mobile darkrooms—often referred to as "What-is-it?" wagons by bewildered troops—to immediately develop the images before the chemicals dried.

More importantly, the required exposure times were agonizingly slow, ranging from several seconds to nearly a minute. If anything moved during the exposure, the resulting image would be an unreadable blur. Consequently, photography was largely confined to the aftermath of battle—shattered landscapes, ruined fortifications, stiffly posed officers, and corpse-littered fields. The wet-plate process could convey the war's grim toll, but it could not reliably capture the chaos of live action: the frantic infantry charge, the desperate hand-to-hand fighting, or the terrifying burst of an artillery shell.

Even so, the thousands of images created by Brady and his corps of photographers brought a new, photographic realism to the public understanding of the war. Brady's 1862 exhibition of photos by Alexander Gardner and James F. Gibson at his studio in New York, "The Dead of Antietam," shocked the nation. It was the first public display of images of a battlefield before the dead had been removed. In October, the New York Times wrote that, "Mr. Brady has done something to bring home to us the terrible reality and earnestness of war. If he has not brought bodies and laid them in our door-yards and along the streets, he has done something very like it…"

But until the development of halftone printing in the 1880s, newspapers could not reproduce photographs directly; illustrators like Waud were essential to translate scenes into printable blocks for mass circulation.

This technological gap was filled by the "Special Artists" or "Specials"—brave, highly skilled illustrators employed by illustrated weeklies to accompany the armies and sketch the action as it unfolded. In 1860, as the nation seemed destined for disunion, Waud was hired by the *New York Illustrated News*. When the Confederate bombardment of Fort Sumter ignited the Civil War in April 1861, the demand for visual news sky-



ABOVE: Alfred Waud's July 21 sketch of the scene on green paper with pencil, Chinese white, and black ink wash was handed over to a fast horse courier, rushed to the nearest railhead or steamboat, and sped to New York or Boston for engravers to finish. TOP: Engraving of a sketch by Alfred Waud published in the *New York Illustrated News*, August 5, 1861, with the caption: Colonel Burnside's brigade, First and Second Rhode Island, and Seventy-first New York regiments, with their artillery, attacking the rebel batteries at Bull Run. OPPOSITE: A Federal column breaching a Confederate line in Kernstown near Winchester, Virginia, in the early spring of 1862. "Special Artist" Alfred Waud's sketches from the front lines captured the intimate details of the struggle—the smoke, the debris, and the physical strain of the assault—long before the scene could be stylized and sanitized by engravers in New York.

rocketed. Families across the North, desperate to understand what their sons, brothers, and husbands were enduring, clamored for images.

The paper assigned Waud to cover the newly formed Army of the Potomac, the principal Union force in the Eastern Theater. His baptism by fire occurred in July 1861 at the First Battle of Bull Run near Manassas, Virginia. Before this battle, the Northern public, and even many of the artists, had romantic illusions about the war—widely expected to be a brief, glorious crusade culminating in a swift Union victory. Waud traveled to the battlefield in the company of reporters and his friend Brady, fully expecting to witness a triumphant march toward Richmond.

Instead, First Bull Run devolved into a chaotic, bloody nightmare. Waud's pencil flew across the page as he worked in the blistering summer sun, capturing the shattering Union lines and the panicked, headlong retreat back toward Washington. The terror and confusion of the rout were profound. At one point during the chaotic withdrawal, Waud was forced to draw his personal revolver to prevent a panicked Union soldier from commandeering his horse. Returning to the capital exhausted and covered in dust, Waud dispatched his sketches to New York. The resulting engravings published in the *Illustrated News* were a shock to the Northern public. The traditional, heroic imagery of warfare—characterized by immaculate uniforms, orderly lines, and painless, noble sacrifice—was immediately challenged by Waud's raw depictions of the disorganized, brutal reality of combat. Bull Run fundamentally changed Waud's approach to his art. He realized that this war would not be a romantic adventure; it would be a grim, grueling slog, and he committed himself to capturing the experience of the common soldier with unflinching honesty.

By the end of 1861, Waud's talent caught the attention of *Harper's Weekly: A Journal of Civilization*. *Harper*'s was the premier illustrated newspaper of the era, boasting a massive circulation and a roster of legendary artists, including Winslow Homer and Thomas Nast. Waud left the *Illustrated News* to join *Harper*'s as a Special

Artist, cementing a relationship that would define his career.

Unlike many other correspondents who rotated in and out of the field, Waud remained permanently attached to the Army of the Potomac. He was the only Special Artist to accompany the army continuously from Bull Run in 1861 to the final surrender at Appomattox Court House in 1865. This gave him an extraordinary perspective on the evolution of the army, the changing tactics of the war, and the shifting psychological state of the men he lived alongside.

Life as a Special Artist was physically punishing and relentlessly dangerous. Waud shared every hardship endured by the infantry. He marched through knee-deep mud, slept on the frozen ground, suffered through torrential downpours, and subsisted on the same meager rations of hardtack and salt pork. Contemporary accounts describe him as an unmistakable figure on the battlefield—tall, striking, and rugged. He was an incredibly brave man who exhibited a total disregard for his own personal safety. Driven by a reporter's instinct and an artist's demand for visual accuracy, he pushed himself toward the front lines and was known to ride his horse into active skirmishes, seeking the optimal vantage point. He developed a keen understanding of military tactics, allowing him to anticipate where the decisive moments of a battle would occur.

General George Meade, commander of the Army of the Potomac, recognized Waud's tactical eye and often granted him special access to the front, occasionally even using the artist's highly accurate panoramic sketches of enemy fortifications to help plan his own infantry assaults. Yet, despite his proximity to the high command, Waud's true affinity lay with the enlisted men. He spent countless hours sketching them in their winter encampments, cooking over small fires, writing letters home, and enduring the agonizing boredom punctuated by moments of sheer terror.

The process of translating Waud's battlefield sketches into mass-produced magazine illustrations was a complex, industrial feat. When an engagement began, Waud would seek out a vantage point—sometimes a prominent hill, the roof of a farmhouse, or even the high branches of a tree. Ignoring the hiss of Minié balls and the roar of cannon fire, he would sketch furiously on rough-textured paper. He rarely had time to complete a highly polished drawing; instead, he worked in a kind of visual shorthand. He outlined the topography, placed the masses of troops, and captured the direction of the action. He would then hastily scribble descriptive notes—"heavy smoke here," "rebels charging from these woods," or "men look very exhausted"—in the margins of the paper for the engravers in New York.

Once it was as complete as the combat conditions would allow, the sketch was handed over to a fast horse courier, rushed to the nearest railhead or steamboat, and sped to *Harper's Weekly* in Manhattan. There, a team of highly skilled wood engravers took over. A master draughtsman would redraw Waud's sketch in reverse onto a block of end-grain boxwood. Because a single block of boxwood was relatively small, a large, double-page illustration required several blocks to be bolted together. The drawing was split across the seams, and the blocks were unbolted and distributed to a dozen different engravers. Working by gaslight with sharp burins, the engravers carved away the negative space, leaving the black lines of the drawing raised in relief. Once the individual

ABOVE: Alfred Waud's sketch of Major General Ambrose Burnside's infamous "Mud March" of January 1863 captures the bent forms, the struggling animals, and the heavy wagons with a level of detail photography of the era could not match. Trying to reverse the disaster at Fredericksburg—14 failed charges across open ground that produced more than 12,000 casualties—Burnside ordered the Army of the Potomac to march toward the Rappahannock River to outflank Robert E. Lee, but they were defeated by torrential rain, sleet, and Virginia's notorious red clay. OPPOSITE, ABOVE: After the Battle of Sayler's Creek (April 6, 1865)—where Custer's Third Cavalry Division played a decisive role—Waud depicts Brevet Maj. Gen. George Armstrong Custer, recognizable by his personalized uniform and signature red necktie, in sharp contrast to the weary, defeated men in the background. To the right of center, Waud has included a portrait of himself on horseback. OPPOSITE, BELOW: In the field with the Army of the Potomac for five years, Waud also captured quiet moments, such as this vignette, "Quartermasters color bearer."

blocks were carved, they were bolted back together, and a master engraver smoothed over the seams to ensure a continuous image. This block was then used to create an electrotype metal printing plate. The entire process, from Waud's pencil stroke on a Virginia battlefield to the printed magazine landing on a doorstep in Massachusetts, could take as little as two weeks—an astonishing speed at the time.

This collaborative process introduced a layer of editorial control—the artists at *Harper*'s sometimes altered Waud's original sketches to suit the patriotic sensibilities of their Northern readership. If Waud drew an exhausted team of horses dragging an artillery piece through deep mud, the engravers might raise the horses' heads and add a flourish to their tails to make them look more spirited. If Waud depicted a gruesome field hospital amputation, the editors might soften the gory details to spare the delicate sensibilities of the Victorian public. Despite these occasional alterations, the core truth of Waud's observations survived the engraving process. His compositions were so dynamic, his understanding of anatomy and movement so precise, that the visceral impact of the war could not be entirely sanitized.

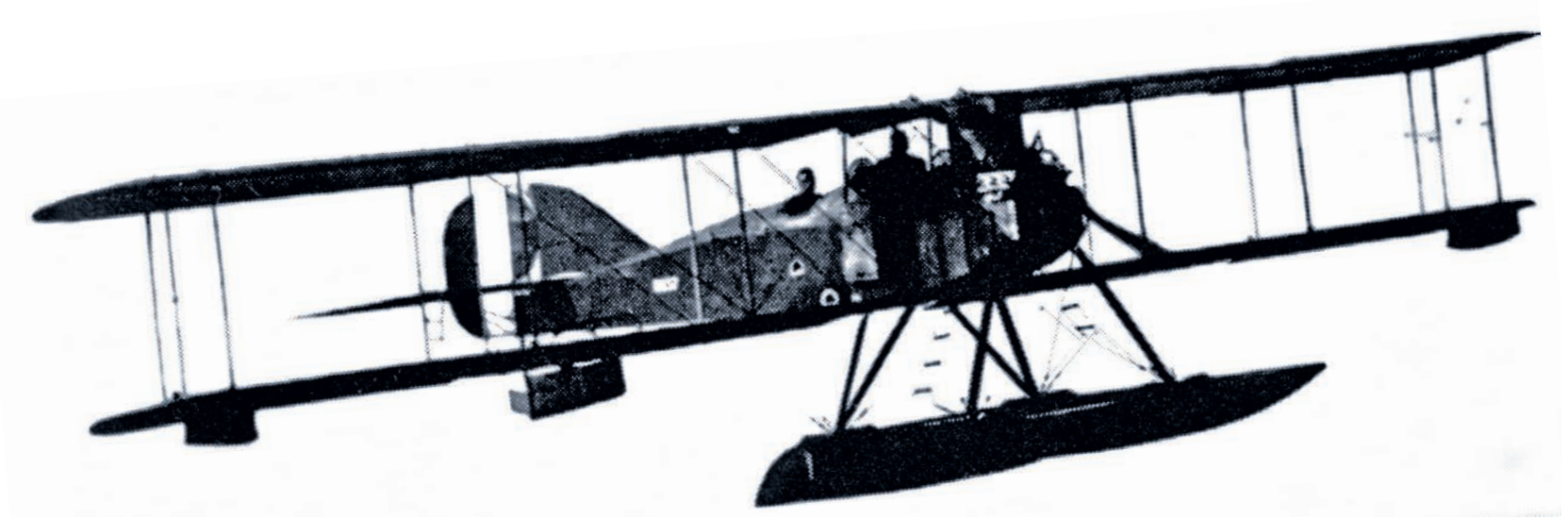
The year 1862 saw Waud chronicle the Army of the Potomac through the grueling Peninsula Campaign and the horrors of the Maryland Campaign. In September, he was present at the Battle of Antietam, the single bloodiest day in American military history. Working amidst a landscape choked with the dead and dying, Waud produced some of the most enduring images of the conflict. He sketched the desperate struggle for Burnside's Bridge, the aftermath of the fighting in the Miller Cornfield, and the grim reality of the field hospitals where surgeons worked frantically with bone saws. Later that year, in December, he witnessed the disastrous Union assaults at the Battle of Fredericksburg. The "Mud March" of early 1863 provided Waud with the material for one of his most famous genre sketches—the absolute misery of the Union army bogged down in freezing, knee-deep mud, physically illustrating the crushing despair that had gripped the northern war effort.

In July 1863, Waud traveled north into Pennsylvania to cover the Battle of Gettysburg. He was one of only two Special Artists to witness the engagement firsthand, and he was the only artist present to sketch the climactic Confederate assault known as Pickett's Charge on the third day of the battle. Positioned near the Union center on Cemetery Ridge, Waud watched as thousands of Confederate infantrymen emerged from the distant tree line and marched across the open fields. He sketched the horrific artillery bombardment that preceded the charge, the closing of the ranks as the men fell, and the desperate, violent melee at the stone wall. His frantic sketch of Confederate General Lewis Armistead, hat raised on the tip of his sword as he breached the Union defenses just moments before being mortally wounded, remains one of the few first-hand visual records of the high-water mark of the Confederacy.

Following the battle, Waud spent days roaming the corpse-strewn fields, capturing the devastating aftermath of the three-day slaughter, an effort that

Continued on page 97

Churchill's Cuxhaven Raid on German zeppelin sheds with biplanes on Christmas day 1914 pioneered the concept of modern naval aviation. | BY MARK CARLSON



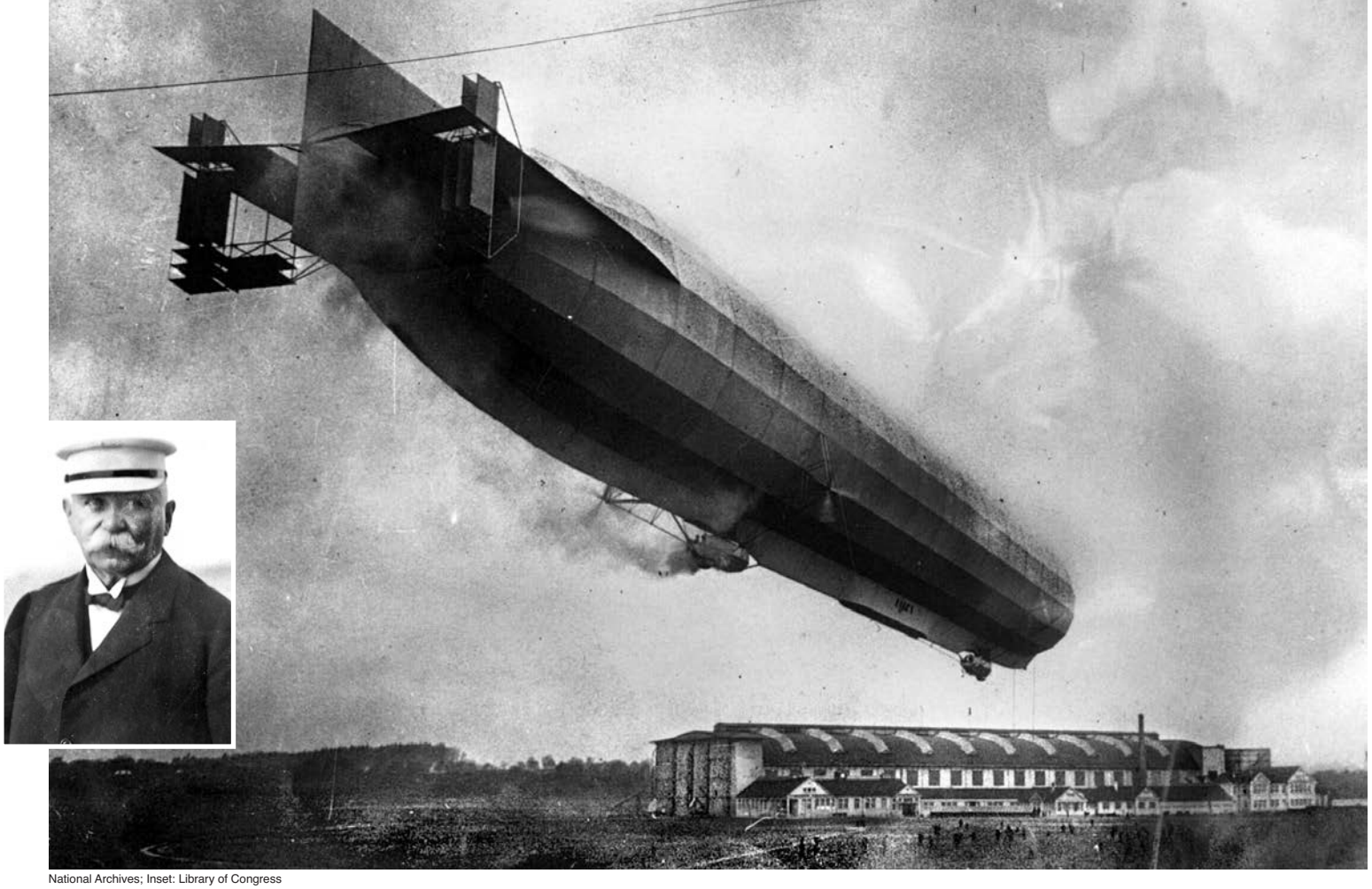
Christmas Day Air Raid on the Zeppelins at Cuxhaven

A quarter of a century before the epic Battle of Britain during World War II, England's capital city was threatened from the air for the first time. In late 1914, only 11 years after the dawn of heavier-than-air flight, fixed-wing airplanes weren't capable of flying long distances with heavy bomb loads—that was a task only the great German Zeppelin airships could manage. These huge, sleek rigid airships pioneered by Count Ferdinand von Zeppelin in 1900 were more than capable of carrying bombs as far as London. They were also useful as long-range air reconnaissance over the North Sea, keeping an eye on the movements of the Royal Navy's Grand Fleet. There was little doubt that Zeppelins, as First Lord of the Admiralty Winston Churchill believed, were a serious threat to Great Britain.

Even as early as 1912, German Zeppelins had made dozens of flights over the British Isles, evoking awe and fear. In the days after England declared war on Germany on August 4, 1914, a German Zeppelin bombed Antwerp, Belgium. It was obvious that London and England itself was in danger of air attack. With only 50 Royal Naval Air Service (RNAS) aircraft available for coastal defense, Minister of War Lord Kitchener was concerned whether they would be able to protect Britain's shores from air attack. Churchill, always an overzealous advocate of the navy, claimed they could. However, this was only part of his overall plan first proposed in early September 1914. The RNAS would protect London, while home-based Royal Flying Corps (RFC) squadrons were tasked with the defense of Britain itself, much as the RAF would do in 1940. Zeppelin air raid warning would be provided by RNAS planes based in Flanders, particularly Dunkirk. These squadrons would aggressively attack the Zeppelins as they approached and overflew the channel.

Above: Wikimedia / Right: Bridgeman Images

TOP: A 1915 Royal Navy Short Admiralty Type 184 similar to the aircraft used in the Cuxhaven Raid on Christmas Day, 1914. Wheeled aircraft take off (1910) and a landing (1911) had been demonstrated, but it was not yet practical. The planes had to be lowered into the sea by crane for takeoff, which was difficult or impossible in bad weather. OPPOSITE: On Christmas Day, 1914, three channel ferries converted to Royal Navy seaplane carriers steamed into Heligoland Bight and launched the first bombing raid by ship-borne aircraft against the zeppelin sheds at Cuxhaven, Germany. This painting depicts the first air-to-ship combat as German aircraft and zeppelins drop bombs on British ships in response.



National Archives; Inset: Library of Congress

ABOVE: Undated photograph of Zeppelin Z. VIII (LZ 23) over its hangar. On August 21, 1914, while flying low in support of ground troops pursuing retreating French forces, the 511-foot airship was damaged by small arms fire and forced to land in the woods near Badonviller, France. The crew was unable to burn the airship because it had lost so much hydrogen and the wreckage was later displayed as a trophy in Paris. INSET: The first notable builder of rigid dirigible airships, Count Ferdinand von Zeppelin, achieved flight in 1900.

But the self-proclaimed defender of Britain had no anti-aircraft guns, no searchlights, and no fighters that could reach the lofty Zeppelins. In any event a British fighter could do little more with lead bullets than poke holes in the airship's skin and gas cells, which could easily be repaired by their skilled crewmen. Only incendiary ammunition could ignite an instant conflagration in the explosive hydrogen and incinerate the Zeppelin and its crew in seconds. Yet in 1914 no British fighter could reach the Zeppelins. They would have to be attacked in the only place they were vulnerable—on the ground.

In the first British air raid of the war, four land-based RNAS Sopwith Tabloid biplanes took off at dawn from Antwerp on September 22, 1914, to target Zeppelins in their hangars in Dusseldorf and Cologne on the Rhine about 100 miles away. Using a compass to guide him through the clouds and thick mist covering the Rhine Valley that morning, only Lt. Charles Collet was able to make it to his target, the Army Zeppelin Z.IX shed at Golzheim, just north of Düsseldorf. At 6,000 feet, Collet cut his engine and glided down to 400 feet to drop his three bombs. Though they did not detonate, only breaking some windows, the raid was a psychological victory, proving that the German Zeppelins were not invincible.

Two Sopwith Tabloids flew a second raid on October 8, leaving about 1:30 p.m. Flight Lt. Reginald Marix, who was forced to turn back by weather on the first raid, managed a direct hit that destroyed Zeppelin Z.IX and its shed near Düsseldorf. Marix reported flames 500 feet high and German machine guns put 30 holes in his airplane No. 168. Pilot Lt.-Com. Spenser Grey, who was unable to find his target in Cologne, dropped his bombs on a train station.

For their daring efforts on what were among the world's first strategic bombing missions, both Collet and Marix were awarded the Distinguished Service Order (DSO).

The Germans greatly increased air defenses around these sheds after the attacks. The large Zeppelin sheds in Cuxhaven and Hamburg, however, were well out of range of land-based aircraft. The only way to reach them was by airplanes transported by ships. In 1914 there was no means

Naval History and Heritage Command

Commodore Reginald Tyrwhitt led the British Naval force that ferried nine seaplanes to attack the Zeppelin hangars on Germany's North Sea coast near Cuxhaven on December 25, 1914. Though the seven planes that took off missed their targets due to fog, the concept of naval aviation was proven.

of landing a wheeled plane on a ship, therefore they had to be equipped with floats to land in the water and be recovered by a ship's crane. Even this had severe limitations. The North Sea's often capricious weather could make a sea landing extremely hazardous, if not impossible. Already slow and unwieldy, floatplanes were also underpowered, prone to breakdowns, and hampered by limited range.

The fervently eager Churchill was undeterred. He commandeered four cross-channel passenger ferries—HMS *Engadine*, HMS *Empress*, HMS *Campania*, and HMS *Riviera*—to be converted into seaplane carriers with deckhouse hangars and cranes to carry three floatplanes each, one forward and two aft. The biplanes, all built by Short Brothers, were of Type 74 Admiralty Folders, Type 81 Folders, and Type 135 Improved Folders. They had folding wings and carried a pilot and gunner and three 20-lb. bombs. Their maximum speed was 70 miles an hour, with a range of about 350 miles. Slung between the floats, the bombs were released by a wire pulled from the cockpit. The hope was that a bomb, exploding through the thin roof of a Zeppelin hangar would detonate the 800,000 cubic feet of hydrogen gas in the airships.

After being commissioned, the newly converted, but decidedly experimental carriers were assigned to the Harwich Force of destroyers and cruisers in the North Sea port of Harwich. Due to Churchill's eagerness, the very first time they would see action was to send their slow and vulnerable biplanes to bomb the Zeppelin sheds at Cuxhaven. But the carriers themselves, which were neither armored nor armed, needed to be escorted by Royal Navy warships to the German coast.

The plan was put together in late October by Commodore Reginald Tyrwhitt, who commanded the destroyer and light cruiser squadrons that scouted and screened the giant dreadnoughts of the Grand Fleet. Tyrwhitt's ships would play significant roles in the battles of the Dogger Bank and Jutland over the next two years. The raid was planned for October 25, when forecasts were for clear weather over the southern North Sea. But that morning high winds and rains hampered the carriers as they lowered their planes into the water near Heligoland Island. Only two managed to take off. One flew 12 miles but had to return with engine trouble, and the other was forced to come back when it was obvious that bad weather would make it impossible to find its target. Tyrwhitt was disappointed, but Churchill urged him to try again. Escorted by destroyers, two carriers went out again on November 23. The mighty Grand Fleet sortied from Scapa Flow in case the German High Seas Fleet emerged to attack the Harwich Force. But even before the planes had been lowered into the water, the Admiralty canceled the operation. No solid reason was given, but Churchill was not ready to give up.

Wikimedia

An artist's rendition of the bombing of Antwerp, Belgium, on the night of August 24-25, 1914, by Zeppelin Z.IX (LZ 25). In the first aerial attack of the war, nine bombs killed five civilians, wrecked houses and damaged King Albert's palace. In October, then-Royal Naval Air Service Flight Lieutenant Reginald Marix destroyed Z.IX in its hangar at Düsseldorf with bombs dropped from his Sopwith Tabloid.

By now Tyrwhitt, along with Admiral Roger Keyes, commanding the Royal Navy submarines had expanded the operation to three carriers and included submarines to assist in rescuing downed flyers. *Engadine*, *Empress* and *Riviera* would be escorted by the light cruisers *Arethusa*, *Aurora*, and *Undaunted*, along with eight destroyers to the Heligoland Bight on the morning of December 25. The surface force was small because Tyrwhitt believed that a smaller force would have more success in approaching the German coast undetected. The launch point was 15 miles north of Heligoland Island, well within German territorial waters. The area was heavily mined and close to Germany's largest naval base at Wilhelmshaven,

Imperial War Museum

Naval History & Heritage Command

TOP: An artist's depiction of the HMS *Riviera*, one of three cross-channel steamers (*Engadine* and *Empress*) outfitted with canvas hangars to house three seaplanes each for the 1914 raid on the Zeppelin base near Cuxhaven, Germany. Derricks were used to lower the floatplanes into the water for takeoff, then to hoist them back aboard after landing nearby.INSET: Most likely a Royal Naval Air Service Short Type 184 Folder seaplane with wings folded for storage on a carrier ship. These planes were carried on conventional ships fitted with canvas or, later, steel hangars and winched in and out of the water for take off and landing.

home of the High Seas Fleet

Keyes ordered 11 of the newest British submarines to the area. Some were to stay close to the carriers; others were to wait at the recovery point, while more would wait to ambush any German ships that came out of the Jade Estuary to attack the surface force.

Each submarine bore a red and white checkerboard stripe around the conning tower to make it easier for the flyers to find and identify them if they were forced to land or ditch short of their carriers. All in all, nearly 50 Royal Navy ships were employed to deliver to Germany exactly 81 pounds of explosives, the combined weight of the 27 bombs carried by the planes.

Departing Harwich at 5 a.m. on December 24, Tyrwhitt and the carriers arrived off Heligoland at 4:30 the following morning. It was Christmas Day, 1914, coincidentally the very day of the famous Christmas Truce on the Western Front.

When four small German patrol boats were spotted 40 miles short of the launch point, Tyrwhitt considered withdrawing. Even with the cruisers and destroyers close by, the carriers would be vulnerable. But unwilling to turn back after having come so far, he ordered the force to continue despite the risk. Half an hour before dawn the carriers stopped and began to lower the nine floatplanes into the calm dark water. It was bitterly cold and a stiff breeze from the east caused the crews' breath to condense in misty clouds as they worked feverishly to fuel, arm and launch the planes. Each plane carried three bombs and enough fuel for three hours of flight. To the east the dawn rose to reveal clear skies. At almost exactly the same moment, the German Navy Zeppelin L6 slid out of its huge shed at Nordholz and rose majestically into the clear morning sky and turned north to begin its patrol of the North Sea.

On board his flagship *Arethusa*, Tyrwhitt raised the signal flags to commence the operation at 6:59 a.m. Things immediately began to go wrong. Two planes were unable to take off due to engine trouble. The other seven floatplanes clawed their way into the cool morning air and headed south to the German coast and Cuxhaven. As soon as the last plane disappeared over the horizon, the ships turned west towards the recovery point near the island of Norderney. Two of Keyes' subs remained on station. The planes carried no radios so there was no communication or coordination between the aircraft.

Unknown

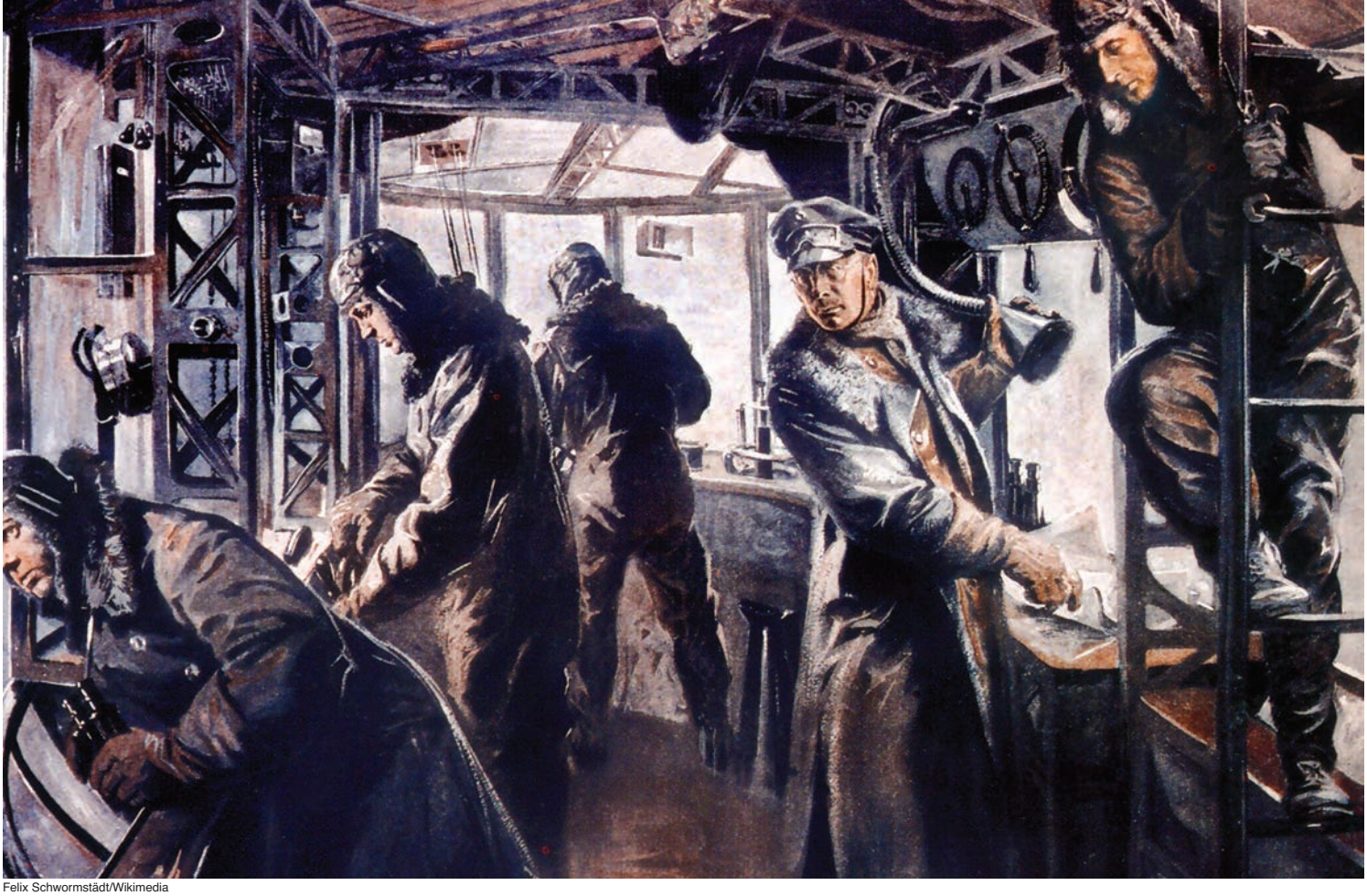
Naval History & Heritage Command

TOP: Painting of what is most likely a Short Admiralty Type 74/Type 81 Folder rendezvousing with the Royal Navy submarine *E11*, which has a band of red and white checkerboarding around its conning tower to make it identifiable to the seaplane pilots. INSET: A seaplane with extended wings photographed near Gibraltar during WWI. The equal-span wings, with three "bays" (spaces between strut pairs) and tractor engine (as opposed to a rear-mounted pusher engine) makes this most likely a Royal Naval Air Service Short Type 184 Folder, widely used in the war for reconnaissance and bombing.

The targets were two German Navy Zeppelins, nestled in their massive shed at Nordholz eight miles south of the harbor of Cuxhaven. The gently rolling terrain around the sheds was mostly fruit orchards and farming land. The colossal building was mounted on a massive turntable, allowing it to be turned into the prevailing winds for takeoff and landing. Two more Zeppelins were in a similar hangar near Hamburg. These four comprised the total German Navy Zeppelin force in December 1914, although more were under construction. While only a third the size of the gargantuan Hindenburg 22 years later, the airships were nearly 600 feet long and filled with 800,000 cubic feet of hydrogen gas. Powered by three Daimler engines, they could carry nearly a ton of bombs at 60 mph for 1,000 miles. But even with their size and sophistication, the four great ships were as helpless as infants in their sheds. One small bomb could turn each Zeppelin into flaming pyres of smoking, twisted duralumin in moments.

An hour after takeoff the seven planes and their crews crossed the German coast. But then the weather, so clear over the North Sea, turned against them. A thick mantle of gray fog obscured the rolling pastures and roads beneath them. Ensnared in the thick fog, the airmen never saw nor heard the dreadnought-sized Zeppelin L6 passing them headed north. Under ideal conditions, the pilots could easily have spotted their targets looming in the distance. But as they passed Cuxhaven they could not see the giant sheds at all. Descending to 150 feet, they still could not see the ground. One pilot spotted railroad tracks and followed them. To his surprise he found himself over the Jade Estuary and the outer harbor of Wilhelmshaven, home of the German fleet. Below his plane he saw seven light cruisers and a massive battle cruiser, all of which began firing at his plane without scoring any hits. Not wanting to waste his bombs, he dropped them on two German light cruisers but failed to hit them.

Another pilot, also far off course, dropped his three bombs on what he hoped was a seaplane



Felix Schwormstädt/Wikimedia

ABOVE: This German illustration shows a Zeppelin crew at the controls during an air attack. Both the German Army and Navy operated airships independently during World War I and, though bombing attacks met limited success, they did demonstrate the potential of airships for strategic attacks against cities, foreshadowing the terror tactics of mass bombings of civilian populations to come during World War II. OPPOSITE: This Italian illustration depicts Zeppelin LZ 6 (Z.III) and other aircraft bombing the Royal Navy Fleet as it waits for the seaplanes to return from their (unsuccessful) raid on the Zeppelin hangars near Cuxhaven, Germany, on Christmas Day 1914. One of the earliest air-to-ship encounters, the attack was unsuccessful as all bombs missed their targets. The LZ 6 was hit by some 600 machine-gun rounds, but managed to return to base.

hangar. It turned out to be fish-drying sheds. British luck did not improve. Of the seven floatplanes that took off that morning, only one managed to reach the Nordholz Zeppelin base. But in the thick fog and because they had been given inaccurate information, the crew failed to recognize the Zeppelin sheds. The pilot contented himself with dropping his bombs on an antiaircraft battery.

In fact, the only British RNAS plane that performed any useful service had an observer named Lt. Erskine Childers in the back seat. Childers was an expert on the German coastline and harbors. When he saw that the plane was over Schillig Roads near Wilhelmshaven, he spotted seven German battleships and three battle cruisers. He made note of their locations and other important details. This improvised reconnaissance constituted the first real aerial survey of an enemy naval base in history.

On the ground, there was no alarm. German townspeople and farmers had no idea an air raid was in progress. Some may have heard the rattle of an airplane engine passing overhead in the fog, and others might have noted the dull rumble of gunfire from the naval base. But despite all efforts, there was no massive fireball erupting from a burning Zeppelin that Christmas Day. Ten bombs had been dropped in water, fields, sheds and sand. Not a single German life had been lost. Three Zeppelins were unharmed, and one was now over the Heligoland Bight, patrolling and looking for the Royal Navy ships that had attacked the Fatherland. The hunted had become the hunter. But bad luck also cheated the Germans of an easy victory. The German Admiralty was sure the Royal Navy was planning a raid on the Bight, but navy intelligence estimated that it would be a seaborne attempt to sink several old merchant ships in the Jade Estuary, thereby blocking Wilhelmshaven for months. This raid, which was never contemplated, was to be escorted by the battleships of the Grand Fleet. Kaiser Wilhelm II, determined that the weaker German fleet not be risked, would only allow Zeppelins and submarines to confront the British. That is why L6 was hunting the Harwich Force. The Zeppelin spotted the westward-bound cruises, destroyers and carriers at 7:35 a.m. and reported the size and course of the enemy force to its headquarters.

At just before 9 a.m., HMS *Empress* had engine trouble and began to fall back. Alerted by the L6, two German seaplanes, each carrying 10-lb. and 22-lb. bombs, moved in to conduct history's first air-sea battle. The Germans had no better luck in hitting their targets than the British. The first plane, with seven 10-lb. bombs, missed by 200 yards. The second plane, attacking from a higher altitude, managed to drop its bombs only 40 feet from *Empress*. None of the crew were injured as they fired rifles at the German seaplanes. Then the L6 approached to drop its own bombs on the ship. But the *Empress*' captain realized the huge Zeppelin could not maneuver as nimbly as his ship. He easily avoided the three 110-lb. bombs dropped from 5,000 feet. Out of bombs, L6 turned and headed for Nordholz.

Seventy miles west of the launch point, the Harwich force slowed and waited for their airmen to return. It was shortly before 10 a.m. Without radio communication, there was no way to know if the planes had successfully completed their mission. Six of the seven planes, with fuel dangerously

low, tried to reach the recovery area 30 miles off the coast. For several interminable minutes the sky remained empty of British planes. Then at last two of the floatplanes came in for landings next to the *Riviera*. One of these carried Childers with the information on the German fleet at Wilhelmshaven. At nearly the same moment another floatplane landed near the destroyer HMS *Lurcher*. The plane was taken in tow. Meanwhile Tyrwhitt's cruisers were attacked by two more seaplanes, which dropped seven bombs, all of which missed. This convinced Tyrwhitt that given sufficient sea room, ships had little to fear from aerial attack either from planes or Zeppelins. He later wrote, "Zeppelins are not to be thought of as regards to ships. Stupid great things, but very beautiful. It seems a pity to shoot at them."

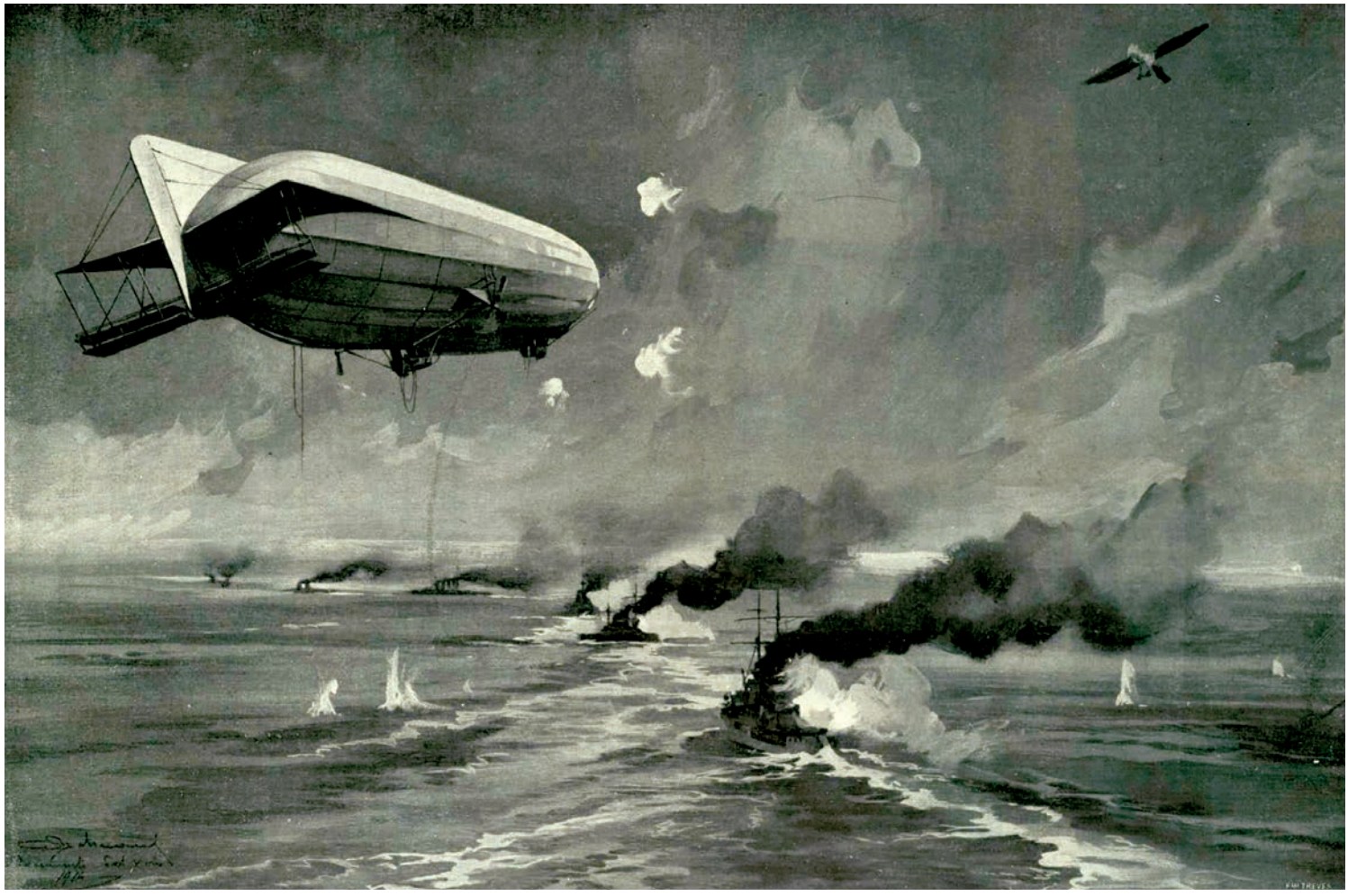
Four of the floatplanes had yet to return. Knowing they had to be out of fuel by now, Tyrwhitt turned his force for home. However, three of the missing planes had almost reached the recovery area. Running submerged nearby was the submarine *E11*, commanded by Capt. Martin Naismith. He spotted one floatplane in his periscope and surfaced. When the airmen saw the vivid red and white checkerboard on the conning tower, they landed and taxied closer. With the plane in tow *E11* headed north. Then everything happened at once. First the Zeppelin L5 appeared and moved in. Then another British sub, the *E6*, which was not part of the Cuxhaven operation, surfaced and came over. Naismith feared the sub might be German. The *E6*'s commander spotted the Zeppelin and dived, which further cemented Naismith's belief that the other sub was German and preparing to attack. But then two other planes arrived, desperately low on fuel. He cut off the tow and came so close to the planes that their crews were almost able to step onto the sub's deck. The L5 was only a mile away when Naismith used his machine guns to destroy the planes to keep them out of German hands. The Zeppelin dropped bombs on both subs without success. The seventh floatplane ditched near Norderney and was picked up by a Dutch fishing trawler.

The Cuxhaven Raid was over. Not a single life was lost on either side. As for the Zeppelin menace, they did conduct many bombing raids on Britain, killing more than 1,100 people. But soon the technology of war made them obsolete. The year 1915 saw the destruction of the LZ38 when two RNAS Henry Farmans caught it in its shed, on the night of June 6-7, destroying it with bombs. That same night saw the first true air-to-air Zeppelin kill of the war when Flight Sub-Lt. Reginald Warneford caught the LZ37 on her return from a raid and bombed it into a flaming meteor. On September 3, 1916, the airship SL11 was shot down in flames by Flight Lt. William Robinson. He used incendiary ammunition.

Strictly speaking the Cuxhaven Raid was not the very first time a ship-based plane attacked a naval base. That happened in August when a Farman floatplane from the auxiliary seaplane carrier Wakamiya Maru flew over and bombed Tsingtao in China. Ironically, it was a Japanese navy plane attacking a German naval base.

Interestingly, HMS *Engadine* played a small role in the opening hours of the Battle of Jutland 17 months later when Flight Lt. Frederick Rutland spotted the leading elements of Adm. Franz von Hipper's battle cruisers in the North Sea. She turned up in the Philippines in 1941 after being reconverted back to a channel ferry. Named the *Corregidor*, she was carrying 1,200 refugees from the Japanese attack on Manila when she struck a mine. *Engadine* was the last vessel of the Cuxhaven raid to be sunk, 27 years later. ■

Aldo Molinari/*L'Illustrazione Italiana*



Imperialistic overconfidence leads to the bloody defeat of British riflemen at the

Commandant Robert Lonsdale of the Natal Native Contingent (NNC) had a bad case of sunstroke that left his head pounding and his senses reeling. He was also exhausted and hungry, but took his command responsibilities seriously. His men hadn't eaten in two days, and he was riding back alone to the main camp at Isandlwana in the hope of procuring some supplies for his famished troops.

The British were in the opening stages of a campaign against the Zulu, the most powerful tribe in South Africa, and so far the search for its main impi (army) had been largely in vain. It was about 2 p.m. on the afternoon of January 22, 1879, when Lonsdale finally rode into camp. His head was swimming in a heat so intense it felt as if he were standing in front of a blast furnace. His befuddled senses could barely make out his surroundings, but the sight of British soldiers in their distinctive red tunics going about their business was reassuring. A bullet zipped past Londale's ear, but he took it in stride. The African tribal troops of his own NNC were notoriously inept at handling rifles, and someone's gun had probably gone off by mistake.

A Zulu warrior gripping a bloodied spear then emerged from a nearby tent. The shocking sight brought Lonsdale to his senses, and a single sweeping glance told him the camp had been captured by the Zulu. He was surrounded by thousands of warriors milling about, searching dead bodies and rifling through tents and commissary stores. The red-coated soldiers he had seen earlier had been Zulu wearing bits of British uniforms.

Lonsdale pulled the reins of his horse, dug in his spurs and rode off as fast as he could, the Zulu in hot pursuit. A few spears were flung, and a few

On display at the National Army Museum in London, Charles Edwin Fripp's 1885 painting, *The Last Stand at Isandlwana*, depicts the desperate British 24th Regiment of Foot hopelessly outnumbered during the 1879 Zulu War at the battle of Isandlwana.

Bridgeman Images

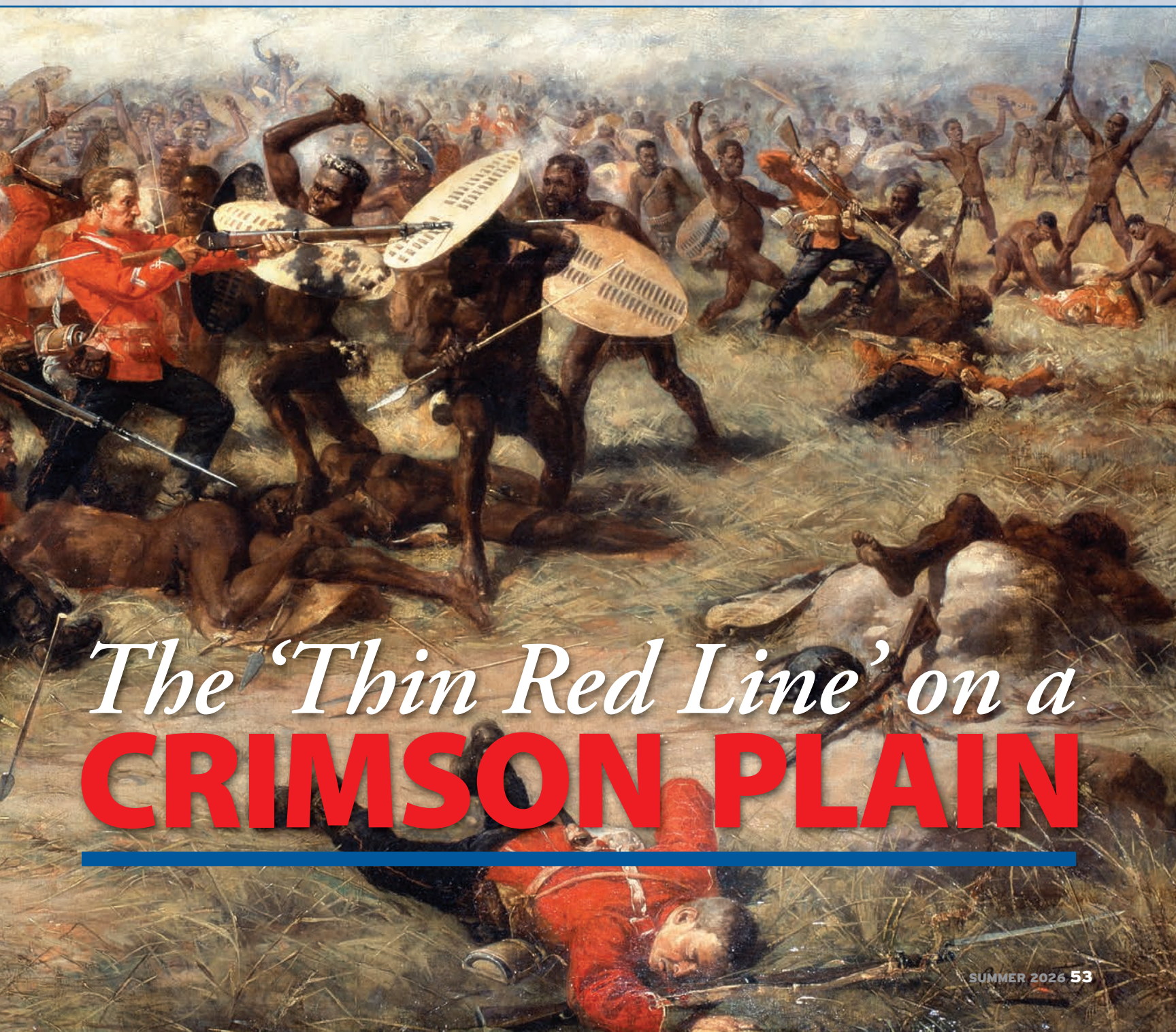
Battle of Isandlwana during the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879. | BY ERIC NIDEROST

scattered shots were sent in his direction, but the Zulu were too busy plundering to give much attention to a solitary rider. When his horse could stand no more Lonsdale was forced to dismount and stagger along on foot.

Finally, about five miles from Isandlwana, Lonsdale stumbled upon his own 1st Battalion, 3rd Regiment, NNC. Lord Chelmsford, the British commander in chief, was with the NNC and could scarcely believe the horrible news. Stunned beyond words, all he could mutter was: "But I left a thousand men to guard the camp."

Gathering what remained of his army, Chelmsford led it back to Isandlwana. It was around 8 o'clock when the British approached their stricken camp, and night had fallen. It was so dark that the soldiers were literally stumbling over the bodies of their dead comrades. The camp proved free of Zulu, so Chelmsford ordered his troops to snatch a few hours' rest. There was no choice but to bed down on the battlefield, and soldiers later were haunted by the chilling experience of sleeping among the dead. Faced with a demoralized command, Chelmsford ordered that the camp proper was to be off-limits. A number of officers and a journalist, Norris Newman, ventured into the camp anyway.

Isandlwana was an open-air charnel house, the dead piled in heaps where they fell, sightless eyes staring blankly. The bloodied corpses had been stripped naked, their stomachs slashed to expose entrails. The mutilation was the Zulu way of releasing an enemy's spirit. Horses, mules and oxen had also been dispatched, and even pet dogs were not spared. Commandant George Hamilton-Browne of the 1/3rd NNC went to



The 'Thin Red Line' on a CRIMSON PLAIN

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ABOVE: Zulu warriors in front of a traditional dome-shaped hut in 1882 with isihlangu war shields and iKlwa stabbing spears in this photo from *A Holiday in South Africa,* written by Royal Geographical Society Fellow Ralph Watts Leyland, who toured areas affected by the Anglo-Zulu War. Some Zulus did carry firearms, but their use was generally ineffective. OPPOSITE: British troops march down Market Street (later Paul Kruger Street) in Pretoria, South Africa, in 1877. When Britain annexed the bankrupt Transvaal Republic that year, it inherited the Boer's unresolved border dispute with the Zulu. Soon after his arrival, High Commissioner for South Africa Sir Henry Bartle Frere, who viewed the Zulu nation as a source of "festering barbarism," did all in his power to foment violence, leading to the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879.

his tent, only to find his servant dead, his two spare horses slaughtered—still tethered to a picket line—and his dog pinned to the ground by a Zulu spear. It was said that the green grass was red with blood, and littered with the brains and entrails of the fallen.

Horror piled upon horror in mind-numbing succession. Some decapitated British heads were found neatly arrayed in a circle, and a drummer boy was discovered lashed to a wagon wheel upside down with his throat cut. Debris was everywhere, including half-burned tents, bits of uniforms, smashed boxes and scattered personal effects. The camp had been thoroughly looted, the Zulu rifling through the commissariat boxes and littering the ground with flour, sugar, tea, oats and other supplies. Spent cartridge shells lay thick amid the debris, mute testimony to the heavy fighting that had occurred. When dawn broke the vultures would appear, ready to feast impartially on the dead of friend and foe alike.

For the British it was a tragedy almost beyond human comprehension, shaking smug Victorian complacency to its very core. The idea that native warriors, most of whom were armed only with a spear and shield, could overcome a modern European army was utterly fantastic—yet the terrible proof lay all about them. Around 800 British soldiers and 400 Native levies had been wiped out—one of the worst military disasters in British colonial history.

The origins of the Zulu war can be traced to the machinations of one British diplomat, Sir Henry Bartle Frere. A colonial administrator of vast experience, Frere landed in South Africa in April 1877 determined to implement a policy called confederation. To Sir Henry, South Africa was in chaos, a seething cauldron of national, economic, and racial animosities that might boil over at any time into open conflict.

South Africa in 1877-1879 was a patchwork of British colonies, Boer states and native kingdoms, all mutually antagonistic. The British had taken South Africa in 1806; it had little intrinsic value at the time, but was considered an important port for the route to India. The Boers—descendants of the original Dutch settlers—resented British rule and set up two independent republics, Transvaal and Orange Free State, in the 1830s. In the meantime, the British were entrenched in Cape Colony and Natal.

In the 1820s a dynamic king, Shaka kaSenzangakhona, put the Zulus on the road to greatness and power. Shaka had real military genius, and introduced such innovations as the short stabbing spear that revolutionized native warfare. The Zulu were not professional soldiers, but they became very adept at war. Zulu territory expanded, as did Zulu military prowess, and by 1877 the tribe could muster an impi of around 40,000.

As High Commissioner for South Africa, Sir Henry decided to roll up his sleeves and bring order to the chaos by imposing confederation. In essence, confederation would unite all parties and factions and make them subject to the British crown. Of course, there would be elements within South Africa that would resist such a move, but Frere was certain he could accomplish the task.

He began to cast eyes across the *Mzinyathi* ("Waters of the Buffalo"), the river that marked the boundary between Natal and Zululand. The current Zulu king was Cetshwayo kaMpande, who had been crowned by the British after his father's death in 1873. Frere became obsessed with Cetshwayo, and his nearly paranoid suspicions deepened as the months wore on. Sir Henry's greatest fear was a Zulu invasion of Natal, and soon his fevered imagination was conjuring

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images of Cetshwayo's "man-killing gladiators" descending on Natal to slaughter, pillage and rape. And behind that imagined threat was the looming specter of a general native uprising against the white population. Suppose the Fingos, Swazis, Mashonas, Griquas and others joined the Zulu in an all-out campaign of white extirpation?

No, in Frere's view the massive Zulu military threat was a cancer that had to be excised from the South African body politic, and the sooner the better. The Zulu nation had to be brought under British control, and its army destroyed, before the supposed blessings of confederation could take effect.

Frere decided a Zulu war was an absolute necessity, but his superiors in London were far from convinced. They saw the bigger picture, since Great Britain was at the height of her power and had global responsibilities. A potential war with Russia was looming in Afghanistan and under the circumstances the British government didn't want to be tied down in a senseless colonial adventure. Frere was told in no uncertain terms to treat the Zulu with a "spirit of forbearance." But Frere was not about to let official disapproval stand in his way; his plans were too far advanced for that.

There had to be a pretext for starting a war, a cloak to cover naked British aggression. Sihayo kaXongo, a Zulu border chief, had the misfortune of having adulterous wives, and his domestic difficulties provided Frere with an excuse for war. Two of the wives fled with their lovers into Natal, but the British colony did not prove a refuge. Mehokazulu, one of Sihayo's sons, took a party that crossed the border, tracked the fugitives down, and dragged them back for execution. It was said the adulterous wives were clubbed to death.

The incident gave Frere two "reasons" for war. First, Mehokazulu had been guilty of violating the border by "invading" Natal with a force of indeterminate size. The wives had then been killed without trial or due process, another "violation" of British—though not Zulu—moral principles. Over the years European missionaries in Zululand had complained of Cetshwayo's rule, generally denouncing him as a bloodthirsty tyrant who arbitrarily killed his victimized subjects. These tales played into Frere's hands.

By the fall of 1878 Frere's statements were becoming more shrill and outrageous. He spoke darkly of Cetshwayo's "faithless and cruel character" and "atrocious barbarity," even though he had never met the king and most of the stories were hearsay. In truth Cetshwayo wanted peace with the British. He knew that Queen Victoria's empire, the realm of the "Great White Queen," stretched around the globe. Much of the misunderstanding stemmed from cultural, not political, differences. The king did execute people on occasion, but such "barbarities" were well within the norms of Zulu society.

The Boer Transvaal Republic became bankrupt, so insolvent it was annexed by Britain in 1877. In taking over the Transvaal, Britain also inherited a long-standing, festering border dispute between the Boers and the Zulu. Both sides had claimed a slice of land along the Blod River, so a boundary commission was formed to arbitrate the dispute. The commission ruled in favor of the Zulu, but Frere refused to let the tribe occupy the lands before some of his demands were granted.

In December 1878, the Zulu were presented with what amounted to an ultimatum. The British demanded that Cetshwayo disband his army, permit a British resident to live in Ulundi, surrender Sihayo's son to British justice and pay a cattle fine of 500 head. Above all, the demand that Cetshwayo disband his army struck at the very heart of Zulu society. Most of these demands—with the possible exception of the cattle fine—were impossible, as Frere well knew. The ultimatum was a legal façade to mask Frere's aggression, but the High Commissioner felt the die was cast.

Because war was now a certainty, Sir Henry turned matters over to the commander-in-chief of British forces in South Africa, Lt. Gen. Frederic Thesiger, 2nd Baron Chelmsford. The subsequent disaster at Isandlwana had put his reputation under a cloud, but he was far from the stereotypical "dunderhead" mold of so many British army officers of the 19th century. His plans were sound, his preparations thorough, but he couldn't seem to shake the feelings of superiority that many Victorians felt when dealing with native peoples.

Chelmsford had fought in South Africa before, and had been instrumental in bringing the Ninth Cape Frontier war to a successful conclusion. There were lessons to be learned from this cam-

Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

paign against the amXhosa, but unfortunately Chelmsford probably drew the wrong conclusions.

The amXhosa had resorted to hit-and-run guerrilla tactics, and when they did attack in force, withering British rifle volleys swept them away. Chelmsford probably felt the Zulu campaign would be a near carbon copy of the Ninth Cape Frontier war. He had no intention of wasting his time fruitlessly scouring the hills and valleys in search of an elusive foe. On the contrary, he was determined to "drive the Zulus into a corner and make them fight."

Early on it was decided the main British objective would be oNdini, which the Europeans called Ulundi. It was Cetshwayo's principal homestead, which made it a prime target. The logistical problems of supply and transport were formidable, almost overwhelming. Ulundi was about 70 miles from the border, over primitive tracks that could well be inundated by rain. More than 12 tons of ammunition would have to be carried, as well as 60 tons of tentage, and also one ton of food a day per battalion. Three of the British columns alone needed 5,391 oxen and other draught animals, as well as 756 carts and wagons.

Chelmsford divided his forces into five columns, three offensive and two defensive. The three offensive columns would converge on Ulundi; the two defensive columns would guard against the possibility of a Zulu incursion into Natal and Transvaal while Chelmsford was away.

The right flank column (No. 1), under the command of Col. C.K. Pearson, was to cross into Zulu territory at a place called the Lower Drift (crossing) on the Thukela River. The Center, or No. 3 column, under what turned out to be the nominal command of Col. R. Glyn, 24th Regiment, was to cross the Mzinyathi (Buffalo) River at Rorke's Drift. The final offensive column, the left flank column (No. 4) was led by Col. H.E. Wood of the 90th Light Infantry. No. 4 was to invade Zululand from the Ncome River.

Colonel Anthony Durnford took charge of No. 2 column with orders to stay on the defensive near the Middle Drift of the Thukela River. In similar fashion Colonel Rowlands was based at Luneberg in the Transvaal with No. 5 column. Rowlands had a kind of dual mission. He had to protect the Transvaal from Zulu attack, but he also had to "watch his back" and monitor the Republican Boers who were still unhappy over British rule.

On January 11, 1879, the British ultimatum expired and the war officially started. The No. 3, or center column, was a strong one, composed of some 4,700 men, of whom 1,852 were Europeans. Altogether it was a mixed group of British regulars, colonial volunteers and native levies.

Since the British government did not have the funds or the desire to fully garrison colonial outposts, units like the Natal Volunteer Corps filled the void. These were generally white settlers who were good shots, could ride well and in some cases could speak native tongues. Their discipline varied, but their sartorial splendor made up for any lack of formal training. Officers of the Alexandra Mounted Rifles, for example, sported a gray "frogged" tunic in a kind of hussar style. And their names were as exotic as their dress; No. 3 column had the Natal Mounted Police, Natal Carbineers, Buffalo Border Guard and the Newcastle Mounted Rifles.

Chelmsford also raised native levies, an intelligent move that was squandered by mishandling and white apprehension. Because blacks far outnumbered whites, many colonials feared arming blacks. After all, European technology—firearms—was the one edge that whites had over native Africans. There was always the possibility that the blacks, once armed and trained, would use their weapons on the whites.

In spite of these concerns, Chelmsford raised several regiments of the Natal Native Contingent, or NNC. Only one man in four was given a rifle, usually an obsolete model, and was issued only four rounds of ammunition. Most of the NNC were armed with traditional spears and clubs, augmented by a cowhide shield. Their officers and NCOs were white, the latter often from the dregs of society. Comdt. George Hamilton-Browne's 1st Battalion, 3rd Regiment of the NNC, provides an example of such a unit. Hamilton-Browne's memoirs are filled with contemptuous references—"these cowards"—to the natives under him. It is little wonder their morale was so low. Denied their own leaders, ill-trained, buffeted and scorned, used as cannon fodder by contemptuous whites, the NNC could never live up to its potential.

The backbone of No. 3 column was composed

of the two battalions of the 24th Regiment (2nd Warwickshires, later South Wales Borderers). They were regulars, highly trained and disciplined, and armed with the Model 1871 Martini-Henry rifle. The Martini-Henry (MH in some accounts) was a single-shot breechloader that fired a heavy .450-caliber bullet. Artillery support for the column was provided by N Battery, 5th Brigade Royal Artillery, Maj. Stuart Smith commanding. The N/5th was equipped with six 7-pounder guns.

No. 3 column began crossing the Mzinyathi or Buffalo River in the early morning hours of January 11. A cold, heavy fog hung close to the ground and caused the troops to shiver. Hamilton-Browne conceded that while the white troops were cold, the nearly naked natives were "blue" and had "chattering teeth." Natal Volunteer Cavalry were the first to cross, plunging into the cold waters supported by Royal Artillery guns on the Natal side.

The first objective was the homestead of Chief Sihayo kaXongo in the Banshee River valley. It will be recalled that Sihayo's sons had violated the Natal-Zululand border in search of his adulterous wives, an incident that provided a pretext for the war. Chelmsford could have bypassed the stronghold, but he didn't want to have a potentially dangerous enemy at his rear, threatening his communications. The Sihayo stronghold was assigned to four companies of the 2nd Battalion, 24th Regiment and the 1st Battalion, 3rd Regiment of the NNC, Hamilton-Browne's outfit.

Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

ABOVE: This color lithograph depicts British commander Lord Chelmsford and his staff watching on the morning of January 11, 1879, as his 3rd column engages Zulus under Chief Sihayo kaXongo in a skirmish that would escalate the Anglo- Zulu conflict into a bloody war. OPPOSITE: Standard practice for British troops was to marshal the supply wagons around camp to create a defensive fortification called a laagar. Capt. Robert Duncombe and other officers questioned why this was not done at Isandlwana.

Sihayo's homestead was set in a gorge, precipitous hills rising all around. Strict orders were given that special care was to be taken to spare women and children. Although the British did not know it, Sihayo and most of his men were with the king, and so the homestead was not, in fact, heavily guarded.

In any event, as the British forces converged on the homestead, a Zulu voice boomed out a challenge, demanding to know by whose orders they came. An officer on Hamilton-Browne's staff, Capt. Robert Duncombe, replied, "By orders of the Great White Queen." The exchange was the nearest the Zulu would ever get to a formal declaration of war.

Shots rang out from the Zulu positions, but the ragged volley was ineffective because the Zulu had little real experience with firearms. Hamilton-Browne led his NNC men forward, but the going was rough owing to boulders strewn over the ground. The commandant himself was in the forefront with his pride and joy, the No. 8 company, following close behind. He considered them his best men, and with good reason. The whole company was composed of disaffected Zulu, and their change of allegiance did nothing to lessen their fighting abilities.

The attack seemed to be going well, when Hamilton-Browne looked around and found to his surprise that almost his entire command—with the exception of No. 8 company—had taken to their heels. The stampede was checked by the redcoats of 2nd/24th, advancing with bayonets fixed. Caught between two fires, the NNC chose the "lesser of two evils" and renewed their advance on Sihayo's stronghold. "Encouraged" by the prickly line of bayonets to their rear, the NNC timidly advanced. There was some heavy skirmishing, and even an episode of hand-to-hand fighting as the Zulu of No. 8 company tested their mettle against their former comrades.

Sihayo's homestead was finally taken by about 9 a.m. on January 11. About 20 Zulu were killed in the fighting, and the remainder surrendered on promise of good treatment. Some 500 head of cattle were taken, and the homestead put to the torch. It was said that two of the chief's sons had been killed in the skirmish, and some of his daughters were prisoners. Lord Chelmsford later visited Hamilton-Browne's camp and thanked him for a job well done. The commander-in-chief was pleased, writing in a letter that "I am in great hopes that the news of the storming of Sihayo's stronghold and the capture of so many of his cattle may have a salutary effect in Zululand and either bring down a large force to attack us or else produce a revolution in the country."

Illustrated London News

ABOVE: In pursuing the Zulu army, Lord Chelmsford divided his forces into five columns—three for offensive operations, and two for defense. This illustration shows the third column arriving on January 20, to set up camp in the shadow of Isandlwana, an irregular sandstone outcropping that looms above a plain that spreads along its eastern flank. OPPOSITE: Zulu warriors with traditional short spears and shields. Lieutenant Charles Raw was scouting for the enemy seven miles north of the camp at Isandlwana with a cavalry troop of Natal Native Horse when he saw a small party of Zulu herdsmen driving some cattle and gave chase. Rounding a rocky outcrop, Raw and his men saw a plain below them covered with 20,000 Zulu warriors quietly waiting for the order to attack.

In the missive, Chelmsford shows he was substituting wishful thinking for hard-nosed reality. He even released two wounded Zulu to spread the news about "how the British make war." Chelmsford still clung to the belief that the Zulu would "fade away" and conduct a hit-and-run guerrilla campaign; thus his obsession in bringing them to battle. And the notion that some "revolution" might topple Cetshwayo from his throne was also to prove illusory.

Yet the small-scale Sihayo skirmish was to loom large in light of subsequent events. Far from cowing the Zulu, the Sihayo skirmish galvanized them into action. The British had unknowingly sown the wind; now they were going to reap the whirlwind.

Back at Ulundi, King Cetshwayo had been both baffled and alarmed by the British ultimatum. Fulfilling the terms was clearly impossible, and the Zulu king could not understand why the British were pushing him into a corner. Not knowing what to do or who to turn to, Cetshwayo was paralyzed with indecision. He didn't want war with the *abeLungu* (white men) yet war was being forced upon him. The king and his councilors were finally stung to action by news of the Sihayo homestead skirmish.

The British had shown their hand, so Cetshwayo's path was clear. The king issued orders for his regiments (*ambutho*, singular *ibutho*) to be called up and readied for war. Cetshwayo decided on a purely defensive stance, since the king hoped for an accommodation even at this late date. His impis would drive the invaders from Zululand, but under no circumstances would they cross into Natal. A defensive campaign would show the world that the British, not the Zulu, were the true aggressors. Because of the Sihayo homestead skirmish the central or No. 3 column was rightly considered the greatest threat. Cetshwayo's main impi, variously estimated at between 20,000 and 25,000 strong, would concentrate its efforts on the central column.

In the meantime the British were establishing a camp at Isandlwana, an irregular sandstone outcropping that looms above a plain that spreads along its eastern flank. Isandlwana Mount is about 300 yards long, its southern end thrusting into the sky. To the Zulu it looked like a clenched fist, but to members of the 24th Regiment it looked like a crouching beast, and bore an uncanny resemblance to the sphinx badge they sported on their collars.

Isandlwana Mount was connected to a stony *kopje* (hill) by means of a nek or col. A rough track—the road to Ulundi—passed over this backbone of land at right angles. To the north and northwest, a range of hills formed an escarpment of the Nquthu Plateau. As indicated earlier, a plain rolled out to the east of Isandlwana Mount, rocky grass-carpeted ground widened to four miles and running for some eight miles. The plain was also scarred by one or two *dongas* (watercourses), and not far away a conical kopje poked up out of the ground.

Tents were soon erected, white "mushrooms" springing up in neat white rows some 800 yards along the foot of Isandlwana. Chelmsford was well pleased with the site; it afforded good views to the east, toward Ulundi, where Cetshwayo's main impi must be lurking.

But other officers were troubled by the camp's location. For one thing, the wagons were all clustered in a park, not arranged in a defensive laager. Based on an old Boer method of defense, a laager was a circle of wagons arranged in a manner rem-

iniscent of American movies of the Old West. Chelmsford's own field regulation mandated laagers on campaign, but at Isandlwana the instructions were ignored.

Hamilton-Browne was surprised at the openness of the camp, declaring that "someone's mad." Captain Duncombe added, "Do the staff think we are going to meet an army of schoolgirls? Why in the name of all that is holy do we not laager?" Even Col. Richard Gyn, the nominal head of No. 3 column, felt the camp was "very" extended and vulnerable. He too wanted to laager, but was overruled by Chelmsford.

Some of these objections can be found in memoirs written years after the events they describe, and may in some cases have the special clarity of hindsight. But it is probably true that many, including the colonial volunteers, were disturbed by the camp's lack of defensive arrangements.

Chelmsford did have his excuses. He felt the wagons had to be free to keep a steady stream of supplies coming up from Rorke's Drift. Wagons in laager would be stationary and therefore useless. Besides, why go to all the trouble when Chelmsford intended to move in a day or two? And behind all these reasons lay a basic assumption that British firepower could smash any native attack. British soldiers in formation, the celebrated "thin red line," didn't need wagons to hide behind—massed volleys were their laager.

On January 21 Chelmsford decided on some preliminary reconnaissance to the east. Lonsdale was sent with 16 companies of the NNC to scout the area southeast of the Nhlazatshe Hills, while Major Dartnell was dispatched with some colonial mounted volunteers to the Nkandia Hills. By the afternoon of the 21st the two units had met not far from the Mangeni River. Spectacular waterfalls lay along the river, but nature appreciation was the last thing the British had on their minds. Dartnell had encountered perhaps 1,500 Zulu. He camped for the night and requested reinforcements, which Chelmsford initially denied. Awakened at about 1:30 a.m. with a second message from Dartnell, Chelmsford decided to act. Those 1,500 to 2,000 Zulu confronting Dartnell might well be the "tip of the iceberg," an indication that the main impi was somewhere around the Nkandla Hills.

Dartnell had perhaps 1,400 men, but the bulk of his troops were the ill-trained and thoroughly demoralized NNC. They could hardly be expected to mount an adequate defense, much less an offensive, if the main impi of 20,000 or so showed up. No, Dartnell might not be in immediate danger—but when the coming dawn broke, what might he face in the morning? Chelmsford decided to reinforce Dartnell, because he was probably certain the long-hoped-for battle with the main impi could be found there.

Chelmsford dictated a flurry of orders to his military secretary Col. John Crealock. A message was sent to Col. Anthony Durnford ordering him to take his No. 2 column—up to this point assigned a passive defensive role—and move up to the camp at Isandlwana. Chelmsford was going to split his force, leaving roughly half in camp while he took the rest and marched in support of Dartnell. Splitting a force when lacking adequate intelligence of enemy movements was a violation of sound military principles. But to Chelmsford, sound military principles were only valid against European foes, not "savages."

Lieutenant Colonel Henry Pulleine of the 24th Regiment was placed in charge of the camp at Isandlwana, with strict orders to defend the camp if attacked. The Isandlwana camp garrison consisted of five companies of the 1st Battalion, 24th Regiment (1/24th), one company of the 2nd Battalion, 24th Regiment (2/24th), and more than 100 mounted Infantry and volunteers, along with four companies of the NNC. Artillery support was provided by Maj. Stuart Smith RA (Royal Artillery) and two 7-pounder guns of N/5 battery. Once Durnford reinforced Isandlwana there would be 67 officers and 1,707 men to guard the camp, a number that Chelmsford deemed more than adequate for the task at hand—not that he felt the camp would be in any danger. Chelmsford left Isandlwana about 4:30 a.m. on January 22,

confident he was going to make contact with the main impi and defeat it.

Pulleine had a screen of cavalry vedettes posted on the Nquthu Plauteau as well as a few on the conical kopje that rose about a mile from camp. To augment this early-warning screen, an infantry picket line was posed in a curve about 1,500 yards from camp. All seemed in order, with every precaution taken.

At 8 a.m. a cavalry vedette rode in with some surprising intelligence: A force of Zulu was spotted approaching the plateau moving northeast. Pulleine ordered a "fall in," and the brassy notes of British bugles reverberated and rebounded off the ancient crags of Isandlwana Mount. The various red-coated companies formed up in front of the tents, but incoming reports did not seem to indicate an immediate threat to the camp.

The situation was fluid, and somewhat confusing, because the Zulu that had been spotted were divided into three groups—two of which had suddenly disappeared. It was as if the very earth had swallowed them. Around 10:30 a.m., Durnford's supporting No. 2 column reached Isandlwana with about 500 men and a body of cavalry called the Natal Native Horse. The NNH were good fighters, tribesmen who were devoted to Durnford and had animosity toward the Zulu.

Durnford, who had been in South Africa since 1872, was one of the few whites who didn't look at natives with contempt. An engineer, Durnford had an independent spirit that sometimes brought him into conflict with Chelmsford, a no-nonsense Victorian officer of the old school. A colorful figure, he had lost the use of his arm in an earlier campaign against the amaHlubi. He sported a hat with a scarlet puggaree, which he humorously said made him look like a "stage brigand."

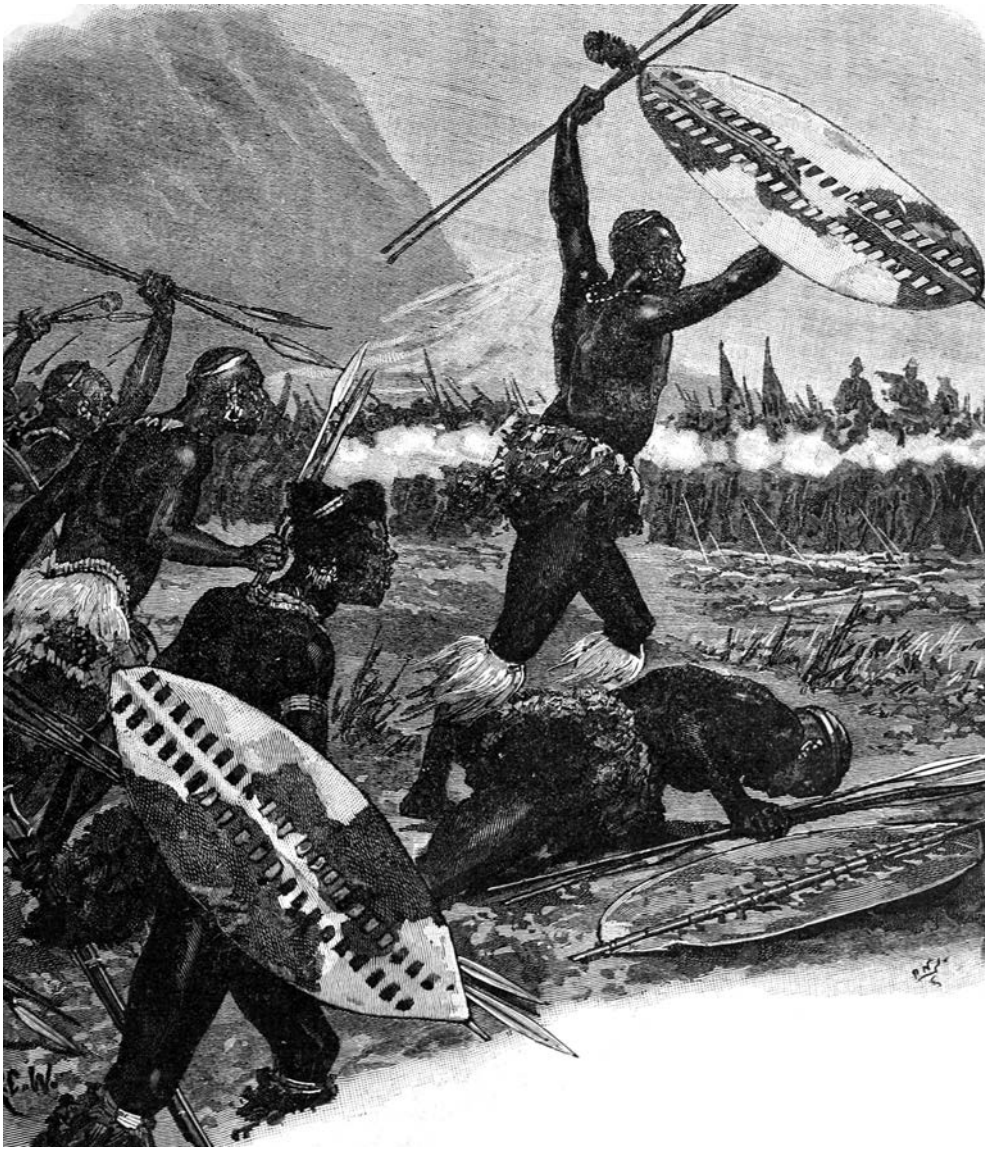
Once he reached camp, Durnford had a quick consultation with Pulleine, which some subsequent reports blew up into a heated argument. But apparently the two men got along and parted amicably. Durnford's position at Isandlwana was ambiguous, since he was technically senior over Pulleine. Because Chelmsford told Durnford to support Isandlwana but not expressly take command, the latter felt he could act independently.

Judging from the reports filtering in, it was clear that at least some Zulu were in the northeast, and it was possible they were planning to fall on Chelmsford's rear. Durnford decided to prevent such a move by making a thorough reconnaissance. Durnford himself led part of his forces along the base of the Nquthu escarpment, while other horsemen were sent to scout the plateau.

One of these units, a cavalry troop of Natal Native Horse under Lt. Charles Raw, spotted a group of Zulu herdsmen driving some cattle and gave chase. The herdsmen ran, disappearing behind a rocky outcropping. Raw's men followed, then abruptly drew rein when the ground fell away to form the Ngwebeni Valley. The troopers could not believe their eyes, because there, sheltering in the valley spread at their feet, was the main Zulu impi—an awesome spectacle of some 20,000 warriors quietly waiting with scarcely a murmur. They were basically marking time, waiting for an auspicious time to attack. The evening of January 22 would have a new Moon, a time when evil supernatural forces would be abroad.

But all notions of auspicious times were quickly forgotten when the Zulu caught sight of Raw's patrol gazing down on them from the valley lip. The Zulu regiment closest to the valley rim, the uKhandempemvu ("white headed"—probably a reference to their headdresses), rose as one man and began to climb the slope toward Raw's tiny patrol. The uKhandempemvu—also known as the umCijo, "sharpened points"—closed rapidly, forcing Raw into a fighting retreat.

Other Zulu regiments followed the uKhandempemvu's lead, a movement that was instinctive and initially beyond the control of their leaders. Without orders the impi formed the *impondo zankomo*, "horns of the beast" (or buffalo). In such a formation, the "chest" advanced against an enemy, while the right and left horns enveloped



ABOVE: Armed with short thrusting spears and shields, some 20,000 Zulus surprised about 1,800 British riflemen on the morning of January 22, 1879. Though the British had Breech-loading Martini-Henry rifles with metal cartridges, they were caught at least 1,000 yards from the ammunition in their supply wagons, and were overwhelmed. OPPOSITE: A modern view of Isandlwana Mount and the battlefield that includes a white stone cairn marking one of about eleven British mass graves containing the estimated 1,300 killed in the attack—possibly the worst defeat ever suffered by the British army at the hands of an indigenous foe.

Wikimedia / Unknown

them on either side. The loins, stationed behind the chest, became a kind of reserve.

At Isandlwana the *induna ekulu* (field commander) was Chief Ntshingwayo kaMahole Khoza. He was somewhat obese; he may not have looked like a warrior, but he was a trusted adviser to the king and a man with considerable military experience. The horns and chest of the impondo zankomo had been formed without direction, but Chief Ntshingwayo and other officers successfully formed a "loins" reserve.

The uKhandempemvu and elements of the uMxhapo formed the chest; the uMbonambi, iNgobamakhosi, and uVe the left horn; and the uDududu, iMbube, isAngqu and uNokohenke the right horn. The uNidi Corps formed the loins, namely the uThulwana, iNdluyengwe, iNdlonglo and uDloko regiments.

Pulleine could hardly believe that the main impi was attacking the camp. Earlier the colonel had sent Captain Cavaye's A Company, 1/24th up to a spur of high ground on the Nquthu Plateau, and then sent Captain Mostyn's F Company, 1/24th, in support. As more Zulu—ambutho from the chest—appeared, Pulleine recalled Cavaye's and Mostyn's companies, which were dangerously exposed. Pulleine also sent his two guns forward to a low rise about 600 yards in front of the camp.

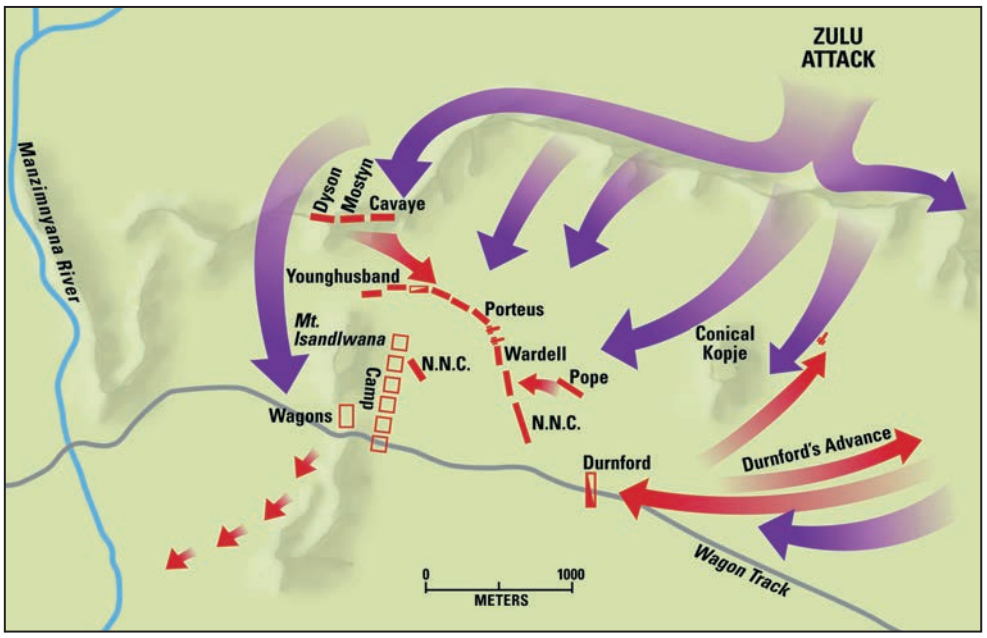
When Durnford received a message that the main impi was attacking he, too, could scarcely comprehend the news. It seemed too incredible that an entire Zulu army had in effect marched around the British—until he got confirmation in the form of the Zulu left horn as it sped toward him in full attack mode. The Zulu army was an undulating carpet of humanity, a black flood that spilled over the plateau and seemed to gain momentum with each minute. The left horn started to engage Durnford, who conducted a fighting retreat back to camp. The chest came forward, and the right horn ran along the edge of the Nquthu Plateau in a westerly direction, sweeping behind Isandlwana Mount. If the right horn's envelopment continued, it could cut the road to Rorke's Drift, and all possible hope of retreat would be gone.

Having retreated almost all the way back to the camp, Durnford reached a deep donga which was a ready-made trench in which to position his men. Besides his own native horsemen, Durnford had picked up a few odds and ends, including a vedette of Natal Carbineers. Durnford placed his men on the lip of the donga, and soon his entire command was blazing away. The donga was deep, so deep Durnford's men could even shelter their horses with perfect safety. As his men fired, Durnford walked all along the line, talking, laughing and encouraging their marksmanship with a hearty, "Well done, my boys!"

Just before Durnford reached the donga near the camp, the Zulu had scored their first local success by overrunning a rocket battery that had accompanied him. The unit was commanded by Maj. Francis Russell, and used Hale rockets that carried an explosive charge of between nine and ten pounds. Although they had a range of 1,200 yards, they were clumsy and inaccurate weapons. Considered obsolete for European warfare, rockets were deemed valuable against unsophisticated natives who might be frightened by their noise and flame. The Zulu certainly were not cowed, and Russell and six of his men were speared. Three wounded crewmen survived.

Major Smith and his artillery tried to keep a hot fire down on the Zulu, but the 7-pounders were less effective than the massed rifle fire. The guns discharged case (a kind of shrapnel), but little execution was done. The Zulu were very observant, even in the heat of battle, and noticed that just before the blue-coated artillerymen fired they stood back from their pieces. Alerted as to when a gun was about to fire, the Zulu would cry "uMoya!" ("air!") and fling themselves lengthwise on the grassy ground. Their timing was perfect, and the case whistled harmlessly over their heads. One warrior remembered, "The shots didn't do us much damage. It only killed four men in our regiment."

The massed rifle fire was a different story. By now a defensive perimeter had been formed in a kind of half-moon in front of the camp. The companies were overextended, and some historians



ABOVE: The main force of the Zulu, some 20,000 warriors, hid from the British forces under Lord Chelmsford in Ngwebeni Valley on January 21, 1879. Accidentally discovered by a cavalry patrol the next day, the Zulus charged, forcing the British back into an increasingly small defensive perimeter. Separated from their ammunition supplies, the British were overwhelmed and only some 60 Europeans and 400 African allies managed to escape with their lives. OPPOSITE: On May 29th, 1789, five months after the battle of Isandlwana, a British force was sent to the campsite to retrieve the wagons and any other salvageable material.

maintain there were gaps as wide as two hundred yards between some of them. In any case the defense was spread thin, too thin, almost like a sheet of tissue paper. One breakthrough, and the whole defense would be torn asunder.

The British line was composed of regular redcoat companies interspersed with colonial and native units. From left to right there was Captain Younghusband's C Company, 1/24th; some native units; then Captain Mostyn's F Company, 1/24th; Captain Cavaye's A Company, 1/24th; and Lieutenant Porteous's E Company, 1/24th. The redcoat line was broken by the artillery, then there was Captain Wardell's H Company, 1/24th, and Lieutenant Pope's G company from the 2/24th. There may have been some NNC on the far right, and then there was the donga where Durnford was putting up a good resistance.

British volley fire was deadly; few if any warriors had ever experienced anything like it. Martini-Henry rifles flamed, and with each crashing volley scores of Zulu fell dead and wounded. British .450-caliber bullets scythed down warriors with grim impartiality, leaving survivors hugging the ground with mounting frustration. NCOs barked the command "Load-Present-Fire" with clockwork regularity, Martini-Henrys spitting death with every disciplined volley. There were veterans in the red-coated ranks, grizzled soldiers who laughed and chatted with each other between volleys. Their faces were bearded, their red coats matted with dust and stained with sweat, but they were soldiers of the Queen, not parade-ground mannequins, and they took pride in their profession.

But the redcoat companies were starting to run out of ammunition; they had begun the action with 70 rounds each, but the firing was so rapid that their white ammunition pouches were almost empty. The overextended defense line was also a factor; the reserve ammunition wagons, for the 2/24th, for example, was in the center of camp about 1,000 yards from Lieutenant Pope's Company G position.

And just when the ammunition crisis was at its peak, narrow-minded obsession with regulations made matters that much worse. Quartermaster Bloomfield was in charge of the reserve ammunition for the 2/24th, represented in camp by only Company G. When bandsmen from 1st Battalion companies tried to get fresh supplies from Bloomfield, he sent them away empty handed. He insisted his ammunition was for the 2nd Battalion only, so he sent runners a further 500 yards to the 1st Battalion reserves being distributed by Quartermaster Pullen. Lieutenant Smith-Dorrien gathered up the flotsam and jetsam of the camp—stragglers, officer's servants and the like—and organized them into a party to retrieve ammunition. Seeing Smith-Dorrien breaking some ammunition boxes open, Bloomfield cried, "For heaven's sake, man, don't take that—it belongs to our Battalion." Smith-Dorrien, frustrated, replied, "Hang it all, you don't want a requisition, do you?"

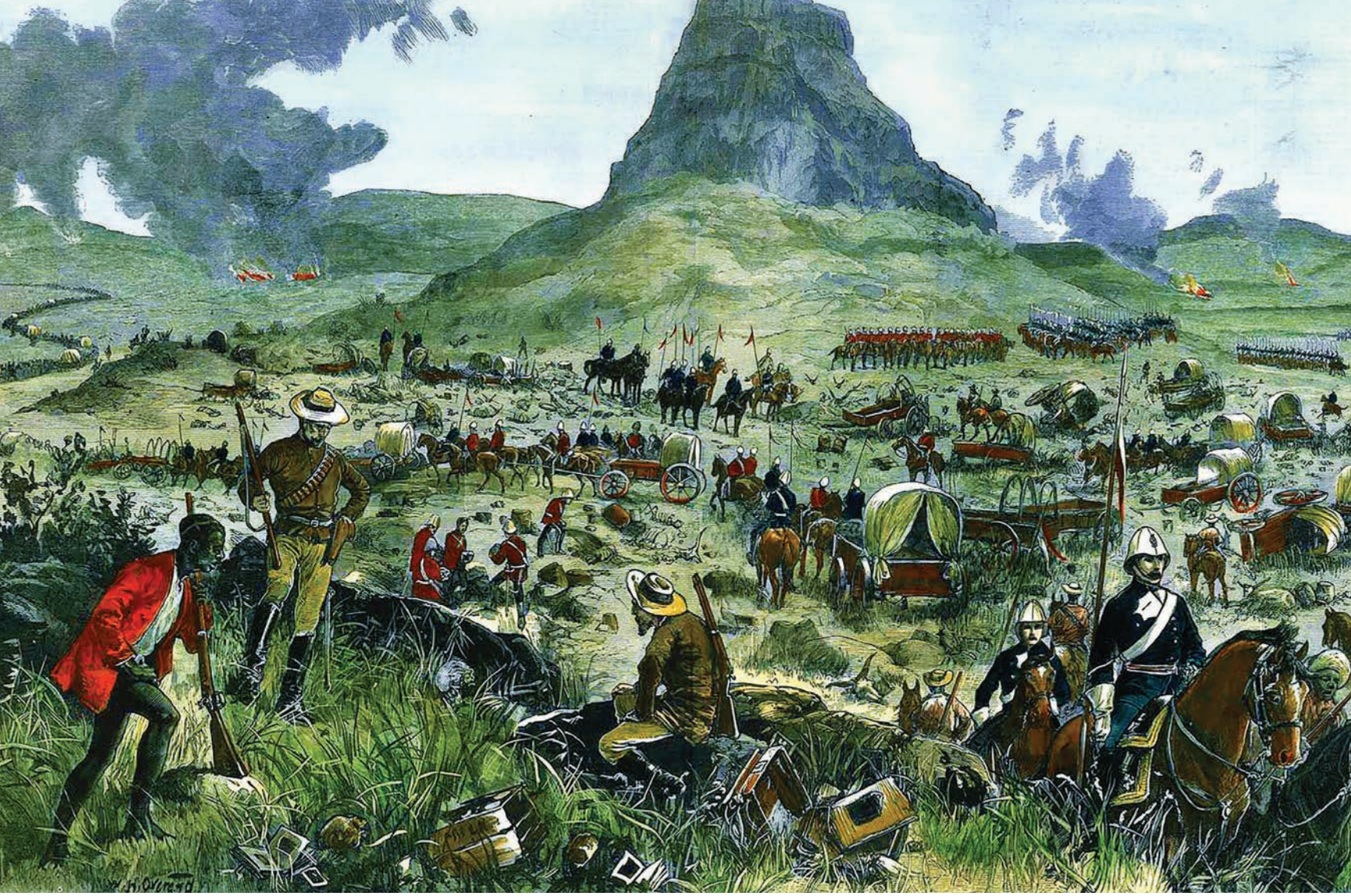
Later, much of the disaster was blamed on the alleged fact that the ammunition boxes could not be opened fast enough, since their lids were tightly fastened by six to nine screws, and also some of the screws had rusted into the wood. There was supposedly a lack of screwdrivers in camp as well. The allegation is fantasy; the lids of the Mark V and Mark VI ammunition boxes were secured by a single brass screw. It was bad luck, poor intelligence and faulty dispositions, not lack of screwdrivers, that caused the disaster.

The British volleys were still doing terrible execution, and to hearten their comrades some Zulu shouted "Nqaka amatshe!" (Catch the hailstones!)—in other words, treat the hail of bullets with the contempt it deserves. Nevertheless the uKhandempemvu and uMxhapo regiments, among others, were being decimated. Many warriors lay flat on their stomachs to avoid the leaden storm, occasionally crawling forward as circumstances permitted. A Zulu officer by the name of Mkhosana kaMvundlana came on the scene and was disgusted by the sight of so many warriors taking cover. Standing upright amid the rain of bullets, he shouted "The Little Branches of Leaves That Extinguished the Great Fire (an honorific title of Cetshwayo's) did not order you to do this!"

Shamed, the uKhandempemvu and umMxhapo rose and renewed the assault. Mkhosana was killed instantly when a Martini-Henry slug tore a bloody hole through his skull, but his words had taken effect. It was the decisive moment of the battle, because just at this time Durnford's men ran out of ammunition and were forced to abandon the donga. NNC units on the right also began to fall back, and soon the entire defensive line was in shambles. It was said that the Zulu regiments, scenting victory, began stamping the ground and shouting "Usuthu!" (Cetshwayo's royalist cry) before moving forward at a run.

British bugles sounded the "Retire," the shrill notes heard clearly above the rising cacophony of battle. Pulleine had apparently decided on a fall back to consolidate a new and shorter defensive line. It was a decision that for the redcoats was too little and too late. A wagoner named Dubois remarked to Smith-Dorrien, "The game is up. If I had a good horse I would ride straight to Maritzberg."

The game was indeed up, and the various companies succumbed one by one, red islands swallowed up in a black tidal wave. A and F Companies of the 24th were taken from in front and behind and slaughtered before they could even fix their bayonets. Bloodied spears took on fresh coats of gore as the redcoats were stabbed



again and again. Soon, E and H Companies were also wiped out, and the guns overrun in the human wave.

The Zulu burst into the camp like avenging furies shouting "Gwas abeLungu! Gwas Inglubi!" (Stab the white men! Stab the pigs!). Since the defense had lost all cohesion, it was simply a matter of groups of men or even individuals selling their lives as dearly as possible. A British sailor from the HMS *Active*, servant of Naval Attaché Lieutenant Milne, defended himself with a cutlass while standing with his back to a wagon wheel. All avoided the sailor's sharp blade until a warrior crawled under the wagon and stabbed him from behind. Color Sergeant Wolf of the 1/24th, hastily gathered some 20 soldiers near the officers' tents and put up a desperate fight until overwhelmed by sheer numbers.

Durnford dismissed his Natal Native Horse and gave them permission to save themselves. Any member of the Isandlwana garrison, white or black, who had an opportunity to at least try to escape, did so. All had done their duty to the last; now that hope was gone, it was not dishonorable to escape to fight another day. For his part, Durnford chose to remain with a handful of men, including a few members of his NNH that chose to stay with him. He organized a last stand on the nek, successfully blocking the Zulu left horn from completing the envelopment of the camp. His sacrifice opened a small corridor of escape to the Buffalo River at a crossing later known as Fugitive's Drift. That any escaped at all was due to the courageous stand of Durnford and his collection of NNH, colonial volunteers and a few men from the 24th.

Some distance away Captain Younghusband's C Company was in the midst of his own last stand. Their ammunition was virtually exhausted, but they had had time to fix bayonets. Younghusband then led them up the slopes of Isandlwana itself, instinctively taking the high ground. When the last round was fired the Zulu closed, and it was bayonet and clubbed rifle against stabbing spear. The last few men of Company C gathered together, then rushed forward in a final bayonet charge, the slanting slopes giving their run added momentum. Lunging, parrying and thrusting, they disappeared into the masses of Zulu warriors. About 100 yards away, Lieutenant Pope's company suffered a similar fate.

The main battle was over by about 1:30 p.m., and the various last stands by 3:30. A solitary redcoat held out in a cave high up in the crags of Isandlwana, but he was finally shot, and then all was silence. Smith-Dorrien survived after many narrow escapes, lived, in fact, to lead British troops as a general in World War I. He always felt he owed his life to wearing a blue patrol jacket, not the red tunic. It seems—or so the story goes—Cetshwayo had told his warriors to concentrate on the "red soldiers," the others being of little account.

The Battle of Isandlwana, probably the worst defeat the British army ever suffered at the hands of a native foe, was over. On the morning of January 22 the Isandlwana garrison had consisted of 1,700 men; now about 1,300 were dead. Only around 60 whites and 400 blacks lived to tell the tale. The 24th Regiment was decimated, losing 21 officers and 581 other ranks. The British would recover from this disaster and eventually triumph over the Zulu, but subsequent victories could never erase the memory of what happened near the wind-swept peaks of Isandlwana. ■

FURIOUS DELAYING ACTION *at* HOSINGEN

A stand by elements of the U.S. 28th Infantry Division upset the German timetable and prevented the capture of Bastogne during the Battle of the Bulge. | BY LEO BARRON

A voice crackled over the radio. "Hosingen is falling slowly. They are out of ammo and the tanks cannot hold them. They are hand-grenade fighting from building to building. Hand grenades are all they have."

The signalman operator scribbled the message in the radio log. It was from Major Harold F. Milton, the battalion commander of 3rd Battalion, 110th Infantry Regiment. The operator looked at his watch and shook his head. It was 6:50 p.m. on December 17, 1944. The last 36 hours had changed everything.

It was the beginning of Hitler's winter offensive *Unternehmen Wacht am Rhein* (Operation Watch on the Rhine), now popularly known as the Battle of the Bulge. Facing the two German panzer corps, which numbered more than five divisions, the 28th Infantry Division had only three understrength infantry regiments—the 112th, 109th and 110th. It was a disaster. Within a matter of hours, outposts disappeared as the tidal wave of German armor, artillery, and infantry swept over them. By the morning of December 17, entire companies and battalions started to vanish as the German tsunami roared westward toward the Meuse River. The Germans seemed unstoppable everywhere—except in Hosingen.

At Hosingen, two companies from the 110th Infantry Regiment blunted and delayed an entire German Volksgrenadier regiment for more than 48 hours.

Hosingen was a small, picturesque town that sat astride a north-south artery along the heights of the Our River, which marked the border between Germany and Luxembourg.

For many of the soldiers, the area reminded them of the Shenandoah Mountains so they called the road Skyline Drive. The most distinguishing feature of Hosingen was its water tower that dominated the skyline. The builders had erected it on the northeast side of town, and from there, an observer could see across the Our River and deep into Germany. Because of this, it provided the 28th Infantry Division a perfect observation post to monitor German activities.

In addition to the tower, on the southern outskirts of Hosingen

GIs fire a water-cooled M1917 Browning machine gun from the window of a house during the Battle of the Bulge in December 1944. The 3rd Battalion, 110th Infantry Regiment, delayed the Germans for a critical 36 hours at Hosingen, Luxembourg.

National Archives

Alice M. Flynn / www.heroesofhosingen.com

The tranquil and picturesque hamlet of Hosingen, Luxembourg, would play a pivotal role in the ultimate Allied victory over the Germans in the Battle of the Bulge. Approximately 300 American soldiers from K and M Companies of the 110th Infantry Regiment, 28th Infantry Division, held onto the town for 36 hours (December 16–18, 1944) delaying the German Fifth Panzer Army as it raced toward the strategic crossroads of Bastogne—allowing reinforcements in the form of the 101st Airborne Division to get there first.

was an east-west road that started at the Our River and meandered westward to the Clerf River several kilometers away. This east-west road was crucial for any attacker or defender who wanted to control this part of the Ardennes. To control both of these roads then, the attacker needed to control the town.

General Heinrich von Lüttwitz, the commander of the XXXXVII Panzer Corps, had foreseen that Hosingen was key terrain, and in his operation order he placed it along his panzer corps' main axis of advance. Luttwitz then tasked the 26th Volksgrenadier Division, under the command of Gen. Heinz Kokott, to neutralize the town. He wanted Kokott to push four battalions across the Our River at 5 a.m. on December 16, and then push westward to Drauffelt on the banks of the Clerf River. From there, the Panzer Lehr Division would assume the vanguard and conduct a forward passage of lines so that it could push its panzers to the Meuse River. Meanwhile, if the Panzer Lehr could not capture Bastogne through a coup-demain, then the task would fall to the 26th Volksgrenadier Division. Kokott, though, understood that Bastogne was out of the question if he could not neutralize Hosingen first.

To ensure its neutralization, Kokott developed a plan to isolate the town and then bypass it. This task fell to the 77th Volksgrenadier Regiment under the command of Col. Martin Schriefer. Because of the new task organization, the 77th Regiment now had only two battalions instead of three. A Captain Weber was the commander of 1st Battalion, while Capt. Josef Raab commanded 2nd Battalion. All the senior officers were seasoned veterans who had spent months fighting on the Eastern Front.

Furthermore, right behind the 77th was Reconnaissance Battalion 26 and the Panzer Lehr Reconnaissance Battalion, whose mission was the capture of Bastogne and to assist the 77th if the need arose.

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LEFT: Colonel Hurley E. Fuller was the last to surrender to the Germans at the 110th Infantry Regiment's Regimental Headquarters in the Claravallis Hotel in Clervaux, Luxembourg. RIGHT: Major General Norman "Dutch" Cota commanded the 28th Infantry "Keystone" Division that delayed the German 5th Panzer Army at Hosingen at the launch of the German Ardennes Offensive on December 16, 1944.

Waiting for the 77th Volksgrenadier Regiment on the west bank of the Our River was the 110th Infantry Regiment. Because of the huge area it had to defend, Col. Hurley E. Fuller, the regimental commander, decided to strongpoint sev-

eral villages instead of trying to cover down on a front of 10 miles. To add to his woes, his division commander, Gen. Norman Cota, needed a reserve and so he detached Fuller's 2nd Battalion to act as one, leaving Fuller with only two infantry battalions. This forced him to determine which strongpoint was the most important. Hosingen seemed the likely choice, and so he directed his 3rd Battalion to defend it with several companies: K Company, a section from M Company, one platoon from the Anti-Tank Company, and Capt. William Jarrett's B Company of the 103rd Division Engineers.

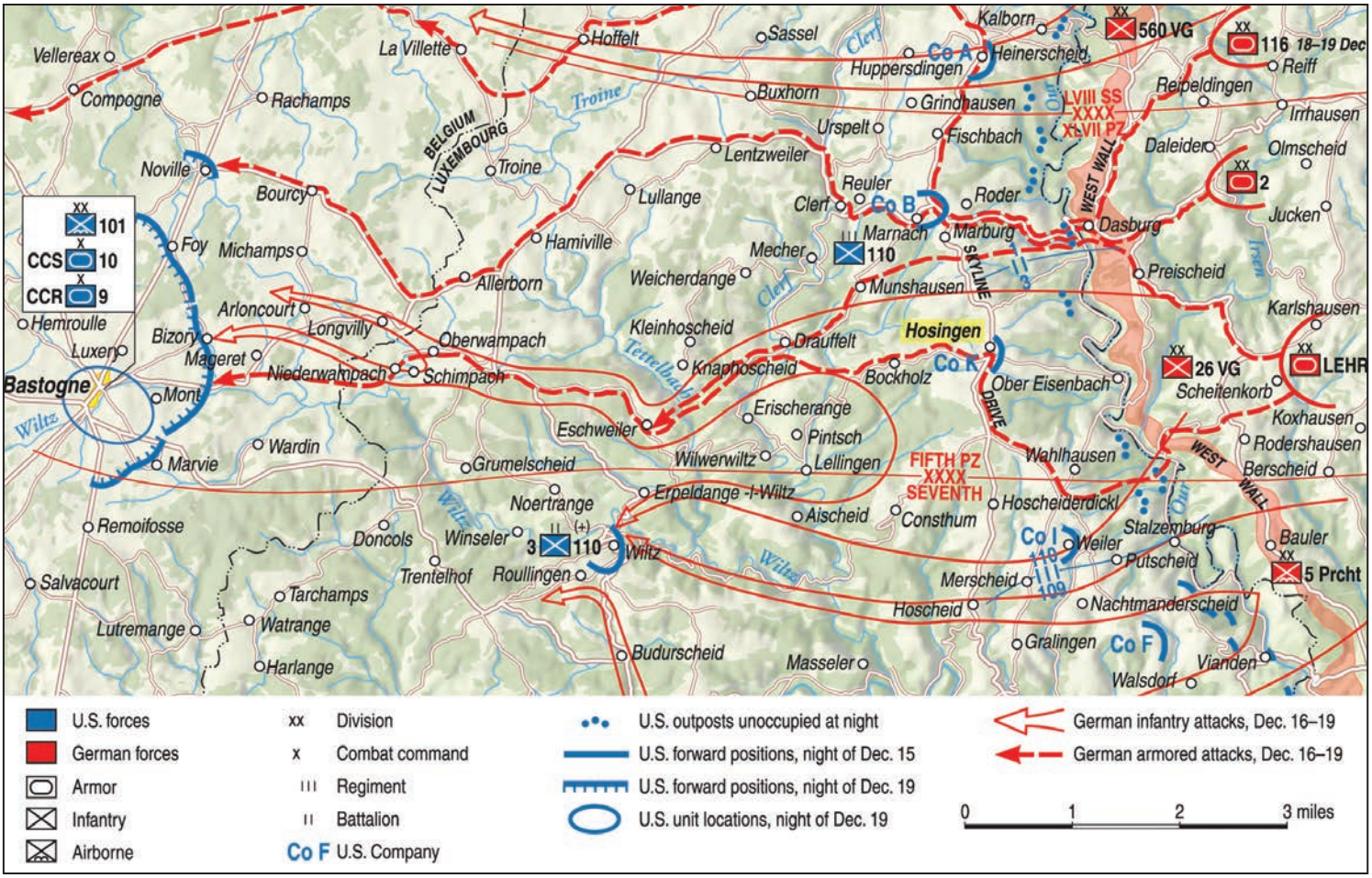
Company K was under the command of Captain Frederick Feiker, and his executive officer was Lt. Thomas J. Flynn. Like the rest of the regiment, K Company's new sector was far too large for a rifle company to defend. Therefore, Feiker and Flynn decided to concentrate their defenses within the town.

First, Feiker covered the southern approaches with antitank guns since that was the likely avenue of approach for enemy armor. Then, he positioned two of his platoons to cover the northern and eastern sides of the town. In addition to his 1st and 2nd Platoons, he placed his 3rd Platoon to watch south of town. For artillery, Feiker had both his 60mm mortars and an 81mm mortar section from the battalion. Finally, he sited his observation posts on high ground just southeast of the town, one in front of 3rd Platoon, and another one in the water tower. That was all Feiker had to fight an entire German regiment. Company B, 103rd Engineers was also in the town, but not under Feiker's command—their mission was to maintain the roads, not fight Germans.

During the afternoon of the December 15, the soldiers of K Company began to see abnormal things. Their previous patrols had reported that the German unit opposite them was only capable of patrolling, and though the officers considered an attack possible, no one at battalion cared to discuss it and so the subject remained moot. The patrols, though, claimed a different story. Their observation posts (OPs) reported hearing an increase in vehicle traffic and heavy equipment, but the thick forests hid the suspicious vehicles from view.

At 6 p.m. on the evening of the 15th, the OPs reported hearing more noises. Flynn decided to hear for himself, so he trudged down to the southern observation post. He listened for a bit, but he could not figure out where the sounds were emanating from or what they were. They sounded like motorcycles, but he was not totally convinced. He shrugged his shoulders and marched back to the command post. It was getting dark, and he was cold. Anyway, he figured tomorrow's morning patrol might find out more information about the odd sounds coming from across the river. Unfortunately, he would not get the chance to send out that patrol.

As acting company commander of 6th Company, 2nd Battalion, 77th Volksgrenadier Regiment, Sgt. Ludwig Lindemann adjusted his gear as he prepared to march into battle again, this time against the Americans. Several years of war against the Russians had inured him to combat, but the Americans were a different enemy, and



Tasked with holding a 10-mile front with a severely depleted force, the 110th Infantry Regiment faced the full might Hitler's Ardennes Offensive in December 1944. Lt. Thomas J. Flynn's K Company found themselves in the crosshairs of two German Panzer corps at the village of Hosingen, Luxembourg. Their desperate 36-hour stand stalled the Fifth Panzer Army's advance, buying the American forces the narrow window of time needed to secure the pivotal city of Bastogne.

he was fighting on different ground, too. This new terrain was a tangled mess of deep gullies, countless streams, precipitous cliffs, and never-ending evergreen trees.

This would be a knife fight.

His company stepped off around midnight on the 15th and started its descent to the Our River. When they reached the river, Lindemann and his Volksgrenadiers crossed a temporary bridge which the pioneers had built out of rafts and planks. When they all had reached the western bank, Lindemann then led the men up the steep hill toward Hosingen. After several hours, the Volksgrenadiers reached a road just east of town. There, the company halted and laid down in the wet and chilly brush. In front of them was a treeless valley and Hosingen itself. He looked down at his watch. It was 3 a.m. They had two more hours before the reckoning.

It was almost 5:30 a.m. on December 16 and nothing had happened for several hours around Hosingen. As the K Company observer atop the water tower rubbed his hands together and cupped them over his mouth to try to warm them, he caught a glint out of the corner of his eye. Turning, he noticed more and more lights flickering along the ridgeline that marked the border of Germany. They looked like hundreds of camera flashes going off during a boxing match. He quickly picked up his field telephone and started his report.

"This is the OP in the water tower and I can see a hundred pinpoints of light coming from Germany—."

He was cut off by the roar of a hundred steam locomotives, and then the entire world exploded as hundreds of shells rained down on the town, severing all wire communication. The dark, early morning sky became day several hours early as 300 pieces of artillery and mortars blanketed the Allied lines with a deadly rain of steel.

Inside Hosingen, it felt like God had unleashed death and destruction on Sodom and Gomorrah. Fire shot down from the heavens, and within seconds several buildings went up in flames. In response, Captain Feiker tried to raise his battalion on the phone, but the shelling had already cut the line. Luckily, the SCR 300 radios still worked, and he alerted Milton, his battalion commander, that all hell had broken loose in Hosingen.

Meanwhile, Flynn decided his best place to assist in the control of the company was in a foxhole on the north end of town. He dodged through the explosions toward a position that was behind the light machine gun section that watched Skyline Drive from the north. From there, he reasoned he could place suppressive fire on a likely avenue approach for the enemy.

A kilometer south of Hosingen, a rifle squad from 3rd Platoon, K Company, was trying to stay warm while on OP duty. Their observation post was a rustic farmhouse, which was practically a concrete bunker with 18-inch thick concrete walls. That morning, all the men were lounging around upstairs in one of the three small rooms. The squad's medic, Pvt. James F. Sansom, recalled after the war that Sgt. John Reardon, the squad leader, was giving his morning report over the field telephone when the barrage came crashing down around them. All of them instinctively ducked. Several blasts rocked

Bundesarchiv Bild 183-J28510; Photo: Heinz Rutkowski

ABOVE: Members of a Volksgrenadier division (VGD) in the opening hours of the Ardennes Offensive, December 16, 1944. The Germans used the rugged Luxembourg forest to try to bypass the American strong points in the overstretched Allied "Ghost Front." After losing close to a million men fighting in Normandy and Russia in the summer, Germany was forced to create VGDs mixing seasoned veterans and fresh recruits armed with submachine guns (like the MP40 or the newer StG 44) to compensate for their smaller size. OPPOSITE: German tanks and other vehicles parked on a snowy road during the opening of the Ardennes Offensive of December 1944. The German plan to bypass Allied strongpoints on their way to the Clerf River, and eventually Bastogne, was held up by stiff American resistance at the village of Hosingen on "Skyline Drive." The need to move heavy equipment and supplies along the road forced the 901st Panzergrenadier Regiment and the tanks of Panzer Lehr Division to commit to the fight.

Bundesarchiv Bild

the farmhouse and the line went dead. Mortar rounds were detonating around them like giant kernels of popcorn.

One soldier peered through a window and could see what looked like muzzle flashes from the wood line 1,000 yards away. Before he could get a second look, a German machine gun opened up, peppering the walls like hailstones.

The soldier dove behind the wall as the windows exploded, showering him with glass shards. No one in that room thought that the attack on this lone farmhouse was part of a much larger offensive.

For Lindemann, the artillery bombardment also was terrifying. Most of the Volksgrenadiers were lying prone when the howitzers and mortars roared. He listened as the rounds whistled over his head, and then he watched the hillside in front of him erupt. Geysers of dirt and branches shot up into the air as each shell exploded. Meanwhile, the ground shuddered and shook. Suddenly, one shell burst near them, instantly killing one man and wounding several others. It was war, and the barrage needed to be that close to be effective. It was unfortunate, but the hellish barrage continued. Between the blasts, Lindemann kept looking at his watch.

Finally, after 30 minutes the hurricane ceased swirling—at that exact moment, the Luftwaffe antiaircraft gun crews switched on their searchlights, and the heavens came alive as beams bounced off the clouds and bathed the area in light. That was the signal, Lindemann recalled. He stood up and then waved his hand forward. The forest floor sprung to life as the rest of the company emerged from the ground. Their task was securing the avenue of approach to Bockholz while bypassing Hosingen to the north. Even though it was still dark, Lindemann could make out the first houses of Hosingen to his right, and he continued to push his men forward through a meadow.

After 45 minutes, the barrage finally petered out. Captain Jarrett instinctively took stock of his losses while he tried to reestablish security around his perimeter. The initial news was mixed. Seven of his trucks were out of commission as result of the shrapnel puncturing all of the tires. Conversely, his company had not suffered any casualties. Thinking this was a prelude to an attack, he quickly reestablished communications via an SCR 300 radio and runners with K Company. Next, he ordered his engineers to mine the north-south approaches into town. After his men finished their tasks, they all settled into the foxholes and waited.

It was now 7:05 a.m. Sensing a lull, Jarrett decided to get a better look at his lines from his company OP, which he had set up in Hosingen's church tower. He clambered up the stairs and looked toward the wood line. As he peered to the south, he saw shapes inching towards the southern edge of the town and Skyline Drive.

They were German grenadiers.

He immediately called over to Lieutenant Morse, the platoon leader for the 81mm mortars, and requested a fire mission to target the columns. Soon, Jarrett could hear the thumping sound of mortar rounds swishing out of their tubes. The rounds wreaked havoc on the column.

Like a leaderless mob, the grenadiers scattered in every direction. Then, another K Company squad position that was in a farmhouse southeast of the town center joined in the melee. It was a slaughter, and it initially stunned the German advance in this sector.

Jarrett was not the only one who had a placed a bull's eye on a German column.

Between 6:15 and 7:15, K Company OPs reported hearing infantry coming up from the draw to the east. Around 7:30, the north side of town exploded as Company K's light machine guns opened up on another force that had emerged from the draw. Flynn then directed one of his 60mm mortars to drop more rounds on the

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GIs man a Browning .30-caliber M1917A1 water-cooled machine gun in the rugged Ardennes forest during the winter of 1944. These heavy-hitting crews, who often mixed alcohol or antifreeze into their cooling water to keep the guns from freezing, were the backbone of the Allied "Ghost Front" in Luxembourg—where units like the 110th Infantry Regiment, outnumbered 10-1 at Hosingen—were tasked with holding vital ridgelines against the sudden surge of the German Ardennes Offensive.

unsuspecting column.

For the Volksgrenadiers, it was a rude awakening that the Americans were still there.

Without warning, .30-caliber machine gun rounds ripped into the lines of troops. Like their comrades to the south, this group scrambled in a desperate search for cover while machine gun tracers lanced through their column. The ditches provided little safety from the mortar storm that burst around them.

Farther south, the Germans had better luck.

After the bombardment ended, Lindemann pushed forward through the fields south of Hosingen. Unlike his brethren just outside of town, Lindemann faced little resistance. He could hear the machine-gun fire off to his right, but to his front it was silent. When they reached a group of buildings, a few American soldiers appeared, wearing only their undergarments.

Instead of fighting, they retreated through a garden and then faded into the darkness. Lindemann smiled. They had secured their first objective with few casualties. Holding his hand up, he halted his company and then directed them to form a perimeter for security. After a few hours of waiting, Lindemann received some welcome news from his headquarters.

The 2nd Battalion had succeeded in its mission of isolating Hosingen from the south, and unbeknownst to Lindemann his company had severed the lines between K Company and its 3rd platoon. Now, Lindemann's orders required him to push his company onto the next objective—the forest between Hosingen and the town of Bockholz, further west.

Battalion wanted his 6th company to clear the forest of American forces. Reading the order, Lindemann nodded his head and shot a glance at the woods to the west. With a wave of his hand, he ordered his company to move out. As they were marching away from the road, Lindemann glanced back at Hosingen. For his company, the battle for Hosingen was over, but for his division the battle had only begun.

Meanwhile, at the 26th Volksgrenadier Division headquarters in Herbstmühle, General Kokott flipped through the latest reports. The news so far was good. The assault detachments of the 77th had advanced west of Hosingen, and his artillery had pinned the defenders of Hosingen inside the town, allowing his units to bypass it to the south. The reports of the desultory flanking fire coming from Hosingen did not trouble him, though it should have.

For Feiker back in Hosingen, the situation was beginning to calm down, but it was far from ideal. After the initial attack, Feiker and Flynn realized they had lost all contact with their 3rd platoon, the OP on Steinmauer Hill, and the company's attached anti-tank sections.

In short, a third of their infantry and nearly all their anti-tank capability were gone. Luckily, thanks to his battalion commander, Feiker still had Captain Jarrett's entire engineer company.

Jarrett and Feiker next decided the best place for B/103rd Engineers was on the west side of town and in direct support of other K Company positions to the south and north. Feiker watched with a smile as the engineers dismounted their lethal Browning M2 .50-caliber machine guns. Each of Jarrett's platoons had one of them. The M2 was a belt-fed killing machine that could outshoot most direct fire weapons and could punch through light armor. With them, Jarrett and Feiker had turned Hosingen into a fortress.

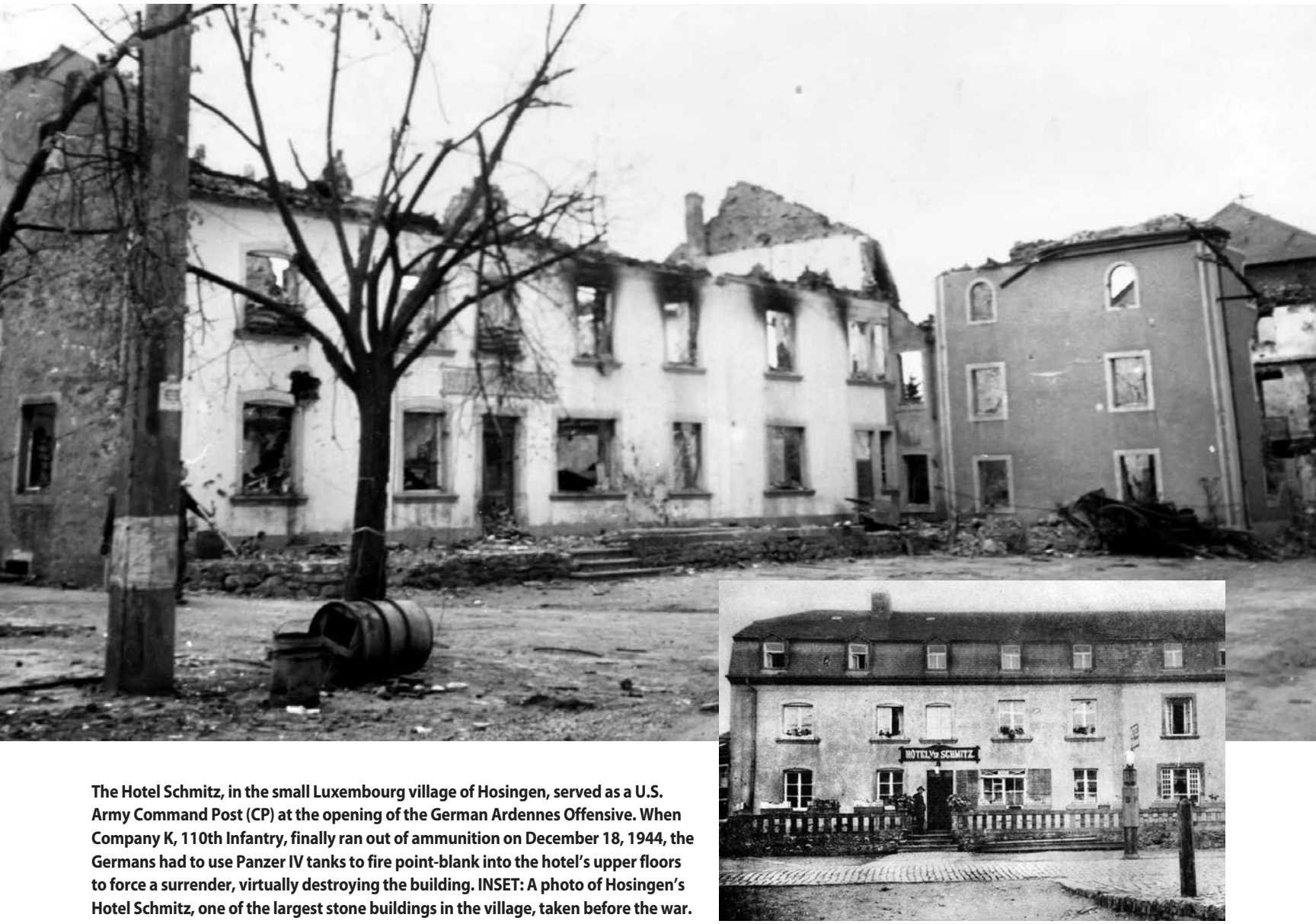
Unfortunately, the Germans initially chose to bypass it from the south. Feiker watched as the German columns continued to plod their way westward from the Our River to Bockholz. To disrupt this, Feiker decided that a fire mission of 105mm howitzer rounds might upset the German timetable. He then placed a call on the radio to Milton, and he requested a fire mission. Milton, though, had only bad news for Feiker. Lindemann and his company had pushed ahead into Bockholz where C Battery of the 109th Field Artillery had set up its howitzers.

Thus, instead of providing on-call indirect fire missions, the artillerymen of C Battery were desperately trying to defend their own positions. By 8:40 a.m. they reported that they were: "being overrun and need help immediately." Therefore, Milton told Feiker that he could not provide any howitzer support. Meanwhile, German troops continued to march westward past Hosingen unmolested.

As the morning dragged on, the soldiers of K Company and the engineers of B Company waited. Their order from Milton was to hold the town of Hosingen and expect reinforcements.

At 10:30, Feiker, sensing that the battle could be a long one, requested more ammunition. Milton told him he would receive an ammunition

Both: Alice M. Flynn / www.heroesofhosingen.com



The Hotel Schmitz, in the small Luxembourg village of Hosingen, served as a U.S. Army Command Post (CP) at the opening of the German Ardennes Offensive. When Company K, 110th Infantry, finally ran out of ammunition on December 18, 1944, the Germans had to use Panzer IV tanks to fire point-blank into the hotel's upper floors to force a surrender, virtually destroying the building. INSET: A photo of Hosingen's Hotel Schmitz, one of the largest stone buildings in the village, taken before the war.

push the following morning. It would never reach Feiker.

Private Sansom and the others south of Hosingen did not know how bad their situation was. With the Germans in Bockholz, 3rd platoon was now several kilometers behind enemy lines, and with each passing hour those lines were moving farther away. Around 1 p.m., the Germans drew first blood. Shots rang out, and then Sansom heard the awful cry for a medic.

Sansom ran into the barn and bounded up the stairs to the loft. Joe Glick, the BAR gunner, was lying on the floor. Sansom quickly knelt down next to Joe. Searching with his fingers, he could feel the exit wound above Glick's right ear, and he could see that Glick had lost consciousness. Immediately, he injected a shot of morphine to numb the pain, and next he bandaged the wound to staunch the bleeding. He then checked Glick's pulse, and it was weak. In response, he started CPR. After nearly 30 minutes, he surrendered. Glick was dead.

Another soldier then picked up the BAR and took up his position on the perimeter since the Germans outside would not allow them to mourn the loss of their friend.

By now, Kokott's morning enthusiasm was beginning to fade as the day dragged on into afternoon. Around noon he received reports that the 77th Volksgrenadier Regiment's forward momentum was sputtering to a halt just east of Bockholz. Meanwhile, enemy resistance in Hosingen was increasing, and as a result the pesky Americans had blocked his main supply route from Hosingen to Bockholz with mortar and anti-tank fire.

Kokott knew he did not have the forces on hand to take Hosingen. Therefore, he would have to call on soldiers from a replacement training battalion to attack the town. Then, he got another piece of discouraging news—they would not be ready until 3 p.m. at the earliest. In addition, his reserve regiment, the 78th Volksgrenadier, would not arrive in the battle area until later that night. In short, Hosingen would remain in American hands until at least the evening of the 16th.

In Hosingen, the situation had stabilized, but it was an uneasy stalemate. Colonel Fuller decided that tanks might swing the balance back in his favor. The 707th Tank Battalion was the armored reserve for the 28th Infantry Division, and Col. Richard W. Ripple, the 707th's commander, had developed and rehearsed a plan to rush his tanks into predesignated sectors to counter any potential German attack. On the 16th, he put that plan into action.

Lieutenant Robert A. Payne was part of that

plan. Payne was the platoon leader for 3rd Platoon, A Company, of the 707th Tank Battalion. At 3 p.m., his commander ordered him to advance south down Skyline Drive to Hosingen and provide armored support to the troops trapped there. At 3:15, Payne's platoon of five M4 Sherman tanks started to rumble down the road toward K Company, and they all arrived safely at Hosingen around 4 p.m. after running a gauntlet of machine-gun and small arms fire.

Payne and Feiker then quickly dispatched the tanks to positions around the town. Payne sent three of the Shermans to a piece of high ground southeast of town to cover the east-west road.

In addition, Payne sent another tank to the north side of town to provide 1st Platoon, K Company some firepower. The tank then rolled into a defilade position and aimed its 75mm gun northward down Skyline Drive. Finally, Payne drove his own tank into town to guard the southern approaches of Skyline Drive.

Meanwhile, to the south, Private Sansom watched the sunset. Around 4 p.m., his squad had wounded and captured two Germans who had passed too close to the barn and farmhouse. While Sansom bandaged and guarded the prisoners, he heard the unmistakable sound of clinking and clanking coming from outside the house. He stood up and then went over to the window. Outside, a German tank had rolled into the yard. The tank came from the Panzer Lehr Reconnaissance Battalion. Because of the dogged resistance of the Americans, Kokott had committed the Panzer Lehr Reconnaissance Battalion to clear out the defenders of Holzthum and Consthum west of Sansom's farmhouse.

This *kampfgruppe* (battle group) was under the command of Maj. Gerd von Fallois. Now, one of the tanks from Kampfgruppe von Fallois had halted next to the farmhouse on its way to Holzthum. One of the panzer crewmen then shouted something in German at the house.

One of the prisoners hollered back at the crewman in response. Sansom, deciding that it was no longer a good place to hide, scampered downstairs. Before he reached the bottom, a terrific explosion hurtled him into the air before he came crashing down on the floor. Shaking his head, he struggled to his feet.

As he slowly regained his wits, he glanced out the window and watched the tank belch smoke like a dragon. Then, it lurched back and drove away, leaving him unharmed. He decided to abandon the prisoners. When he thought the coast was clear, he sprinted back toward the barn to tell his squad leader, Sergeant Reardon, what had just happened. Some of these tanks would end up in the fight to capture Hosingen.

For the antitank gunners and heavy machine gunners from M Company, the sudden German attack had left them stranded in the southern part of Hosingen. They no longer had contact with the rest of K Company, or for that matter with anybody else. All day long, the battle for the southern edge of Hosingen raged, but the Germans could not breach the defenses. The antitank guns took a fearful toll on German vehicles trying to race down the road. Fortunately, American casualties had been light with only one man sustaining a leg wound.

For Sergeant John Forsell, the situation looked grim as dusk rapidly turned to night. The men could not stay and fight since they were low on ammunition. Together with the platoon leader from M Company, the NCOs decided the best course of action was to sneak through German lines and head west to the battalion headquarters. They probably figured that the rest of K Company was facing the same dire conditions and would do the same thing. Therefore, Forsell and the rest of the NCOs collected the men and conducted a final headcount.

Forsell recalled the incident after the war. "I gave a lieutenant an azimuth by which to lead the men back to headquarters and after a final check, I would bring up the rear with anyone that was left behind." With that, the platoon leader moved the column out. Forsell then bounded from house to house, ensuring no one was left. At one house, he heard some noise coming from the cellar.

When he wandered down the old stone stairs, he found two soldiers, huddled in a corner and shaking from fear. Forsell grabbed them and hurried them outside like a bouncer kicking out unruly customers. When they stepped onto the street, Forsell saw a house that had its lights on.

"I want you stand by the door and pull security," Forsell ordered the two soldiers.

Forsell then pulled out his Colt Model 1911 pistol. With a deep breath, he pushed open the front door. Inside, he stumbled on two German soldiers, a man, his wife, and a priest eating dinner around a table. Forsell leveled his pistol, but before he could fire, the priest jumped up, waving his arms. Blocking Forsell's line of sight, the priest pleaded to Forsell not to shoot the startled German soldiers.

Not wanting to shoot a man of the cloth, the merciful sergeant stepped back with his weapon drawn, and then instructed the priest. "Tell the German soldiers not to make any moves because

National Archives

A 60mm mortar team unleashes a high-angle volley against advancing German elements near the border with Luxembourg. Despite being dangerously low on supplies during the opening salvos of the massive Ardennes Offensive, the U.S. Army's 110th Infantry Regiment (28th ID) in Hosingen repulsed the initial German assaults, stalling the enemy's drive toward Bastogne for 36 hours before surrendering.

National Archives

Battle-weary survivors of the 28th Infantry Division gather in Bastogne after narrowly escaping the German "Watch on the Rhine" offensive. While the division bore the brunt of the initial surprise attack, the cost of their stand was devastating. From the fierce defense at Hosingen, Luxembourg, only a small remnant of the original garrison managed to evade capture—some 300 GIs were taken prisoner—and navigate through enemy-territory to rejoin Allied lines.

I have two other soldiers waiting for me outside. Tell them to wait 15 minutes before they even move." The priest nodded his head and then conveyed the sergeant's warning to the soldiers who were sitting, frozen in their seats.

One of the GIs ran inside the house, sputtering, "Sergeant, someone's coming down the street." Forsell took one last glance at the Germans.

Then, he turned and stepped outside onto the road. Grabbing the two soldiers, they darted west to a nearby field. Using the haystacks in the meadow as concealment, the men scurried to each one until they were beyond the German lines. After several hours, they arrived at their battalion headquarters. They were the last of only a handful of men who escaped from the Hosingen encirclement.

Back in Hosingen, Payne's tanks were already getting into trouble. Around 5 p.m., two German tanks appeared on the road from Eisenbach. Immediately, the three Shermans on the southeast side of Hosingen opened up with their 75mm guns. Within minutes, the tank commanders realized their position was indefensible, and they requested permission to fall back into the town. Payne approved their request, and the Shermans rolled back into Hosingen. In addition to the tanks, Feiker pulled back the infantry that was with them, allowing German vehicle traffic to resumed along the road.

Around 10 p.m., Feiker contacted Milton to remind him of his supply situation. He informed his commander that Payne's tanks did not bring more ammunition. Milton reassured him that he would try to get more supplies to Feiker and his company. Unfortunately, the Germans had other ideas.

That night the Germans harassed the defenders of Hosingen, and the Americans returned the favor. On several occasions, German grenadiers would try to run the gauntlet and dash across Skyline Drive south of Hosingen. Feiker's riflemen, though, saw them and would make the crossing a risky affair. Using their .50-caliber machine guns and rifles, the American soldiers would sit cross-legged in the street and pick them off like ducks at a shooting gallery.

Meanwhile, the Germans peppered the town with desultory small arms fire to remind the Americans they were still there. Furthermore, K Company observers could see that German scouts were edging closer to the town as the night dragged on.

On the morning of the 17th, the 77th Volksgrenadier Regiment settled on harassment attacks to keep the pressure on the Hosingen defenders. In the early morning hours, the grenadiers set up several fighting positions southeast of Hosingen, and from there they engaged targets in the town with small arms fire. These attacks were more of a nuisance than a threat, and after sunrise 2nd Platoon, K Company had a clear line of sight to the German positions. Within minutes, machine guns, BARs, and Garands blasted away at the luckless grenadiers who were now out in the open. The Germans yielded and fell back towards the wood line.

As the morning passed, soldiers in 1st Platoon, K Company began to detect sounds echoing north of town. The gurgling and humming of diesel engines and the clanking of tank treads alerted the defenders that it was only a matter of time before the Germans tried again. The men of 1st Platoon sensed the Germans would bring tanks next.

At 8:30 a.m., reports that German tanks were moving began to filter into Milton's battalion command post. The report claimed that the Germans had concealed a column of 20 tanks just east of Hosingen in the wood line. Ten minutes later, Major Carl Plitt, the division's operations officer, reported that the tanks were indeed east of Hosingen and they were not alone. The Germans had an unknown number of infantry with

National Archives

After their legendary stand at Hosingen—stalling the German juggernaut against overwhelming odds—an estimated 300 members of the 110th Infantry Regiment surrendered on December 18, 1944. Their stubborn resistance for nearly three days bought the Allies precious hours to reinforce Bastogne, but for many, it ended in the grim reality of a POW column.

them, and they were "firing point-blank at buildings setting them on fire." By 9 a.m., the Germans were attacking again, and this time it was from the east. Payne reported back to his battalion that this attack had tanks and infantry, and by 9:35 they were penetrating the outskirts of town.

While the Germans tried to push into Hosingen from the east around 10 a.m., the water tower observers watched as two halftracks approached the town from the north down Skyline Drive. The first halftrack was clearly an American M3, but they could not make out the trail vehicle. No one had received any reports to expect a pair of halftracks. Payne had to make a snap decision since they were now about 1,500 yards from the town and closing fast. He paused for a moment and then ordered the Sherman commander to check fire and remain in its defilade position. It was a lucky move. Waiting for the Sherman to reveal its position were two German tanks hiding in the wood line. The halftrack drivers, realizing that the ruse had failed, swung around to escape. As they turned around, the men in the water tower could see the second vehicle was a German halftrack. The Germans had failed, but they would try again, and soon.

Further south, the remnants of 3rd Platoon were beginning to yield to the overwhelming German attacks. For Sansom, the night had passed uneventfully as he and other soldiers had stayed in the barn's loft while German tanks and trucks rumbled by the farm.

Fortunately, they had discovered a small room behind a stack of hay bales, which provided them a place to hide. Throughout the morning, various groups of German infantry would walk into the barn, turn over some hay bales, and satisfied no one was hiding in the building, would finally leave. Around 10 that morning, another German patrol stepped into the barn.

This group was far more thorough than the previous ones. Suddenly, one of the grenadiers pulled back the bale of hay and found the entrance to the hidden room. Standing before him was a squad of American soldiers.

Waving his submachine gun, he shouted in German, "Hier! Rause!" Sansom and the rest of the squad then raised their hands and walked out, with Sansom in the lead. They were going to survive, but for them, the war was over.

Kokott wanted Hosingen destroyed, but his intelligence section estimated that the Americans had a reinforced battalion and some armor defending it. It was now almost noon on the 17th, and Hosingen remained in American hands. As a result, Hosingen was seriously jeopardizing the corps's entire supply system.

As ordered, the German replacement battalion was in position to attack Hosingen from the north, and in addition to that battalion, Kokott had brought his 2nd Battalion from the 78th Volksgrenadier Regiment to provide more firepower. To help these battalions, he authorized the 78th to have additional flamethrowers and antitank guns.

Kokott figured that if he could not get the stubborn Americans to surrender Hosingen, then he would burn and blast them out. The replacement battalion would attack that afternoon, but 2nd Battalion would not be ready until the following morning. As for the 77th, he ordered it to push westward, leaving the 78th and the replacement battalion to deal with Hosingen.

Around 1 p.m., the two German tanks that had been waiting in an ambush position northwest of town began firing at the water tower. Luckily for the American observers hiding in the tower, the builders had constructed it using reinforced concrete. Hence, even if the 75mm rounds breached the concrete walls, the steel that served as the tower's skeleton frame easily deflected the shrapnel. The water tower was a tailor-made observation bunker, so the observers remained in operation, identifying targets for the mortars and the tanks in the town.

The grenadiers from the replacement battalion began their attack and six more tanks linked up with the original two, bringing their overall strength to eight. Meanwhile, the grenadiers began to advance from the woods to the west. The engineers on the west side of town opened up on them with murderous fire.

To the north, another group of grenadiers appeared. In response, 1st Platoon roared to life, ripping into the pockets of grenadiers with light machine guns and 60mm mortars. The initial results were mixed. 1st Platoon had pinned the grenadiers in the north, but the German infantry from the west was making headway.

The tempest of small arms fire coming from the north prevented U.S. bazooka teams from closing with the troublesome tanks. In response, Feiker decided to support the platoons with some Shermans, and they rolled north to stop the German armor. The tanks traded shots, but neither scored any lethal hits.

Gauging the ferocity of the German assault, Feiker decided that this was the big push. The battle was bitter. As the afternoon dragged on, the grenadiers were beginning to score some successes. The 1st Platoon, contesting each house, lost all its light machine guns, one of its 60mm mortars, and one heavy machine gun. As the Germans continued to hammer away at the water tower Flynn used his radio to report the action. Finally, one round got close and he felt the blast wave suck the air from his lungs as the concussion shook the confined space.

When he returned to his senses, he found his radio was no longer transmitting because the concussion had damaged the crystals. He could still

National Archives

Weeks after the Ardennes forest fell silent, an U.S. soldier examines the charred remains of a German self-propelled gun on the outskirts of Hosingen, Luxembourg. The wreckage serves as a grim monument to the stubborn defense mounted by the 110th Infantry Regiment (28th ID), which turned this small crossroads town into a costly bottleneck for the German advance.

hear Feiker's voice on the receiver, but he could not respond. He needed to report the Germans were inside the north end of town now.

Flynn had only one option. He climbed down the tower and then dashed into the open street. He could hear the crackles as bullets zinged by him and ricocheted off the building walls. In addition to the bullets, huge 75mm rounds from German tanks whooshed through the air, ripping out chunks of masonry and showered him with flecks of stone. Finally, he reached Feiker at the K Company CP and informed him of the German penetration at the north end of town.

Meanwhile, Jarrett had his men conduct a scorched earth tactic to prevent the Germans from taking advantage of the buildings as cover. Using explosives, they blasted apart the buildings or set them on fire. It was a deliberate process. When the soldiers determined that the house was no longer tenable, they would fall back to the next house, and the engineers would go to work.

At sunset, the German tanks were firing away at the water tower at point blank range and groups of grenadiers had infiltrated into the town and were clearing each section with typical German efficiency.

Feiker gave the order, and the men in the water tower escaped unharmed while the maelstrom swirled around them. Sensing that the Americans were falling back, the grenadiers pressed home their advantage. Using snipers, along with panzerfaust and bazooka-like *panzerschreck* (tank's dread) antitank weapons, they blasted their way into each house.

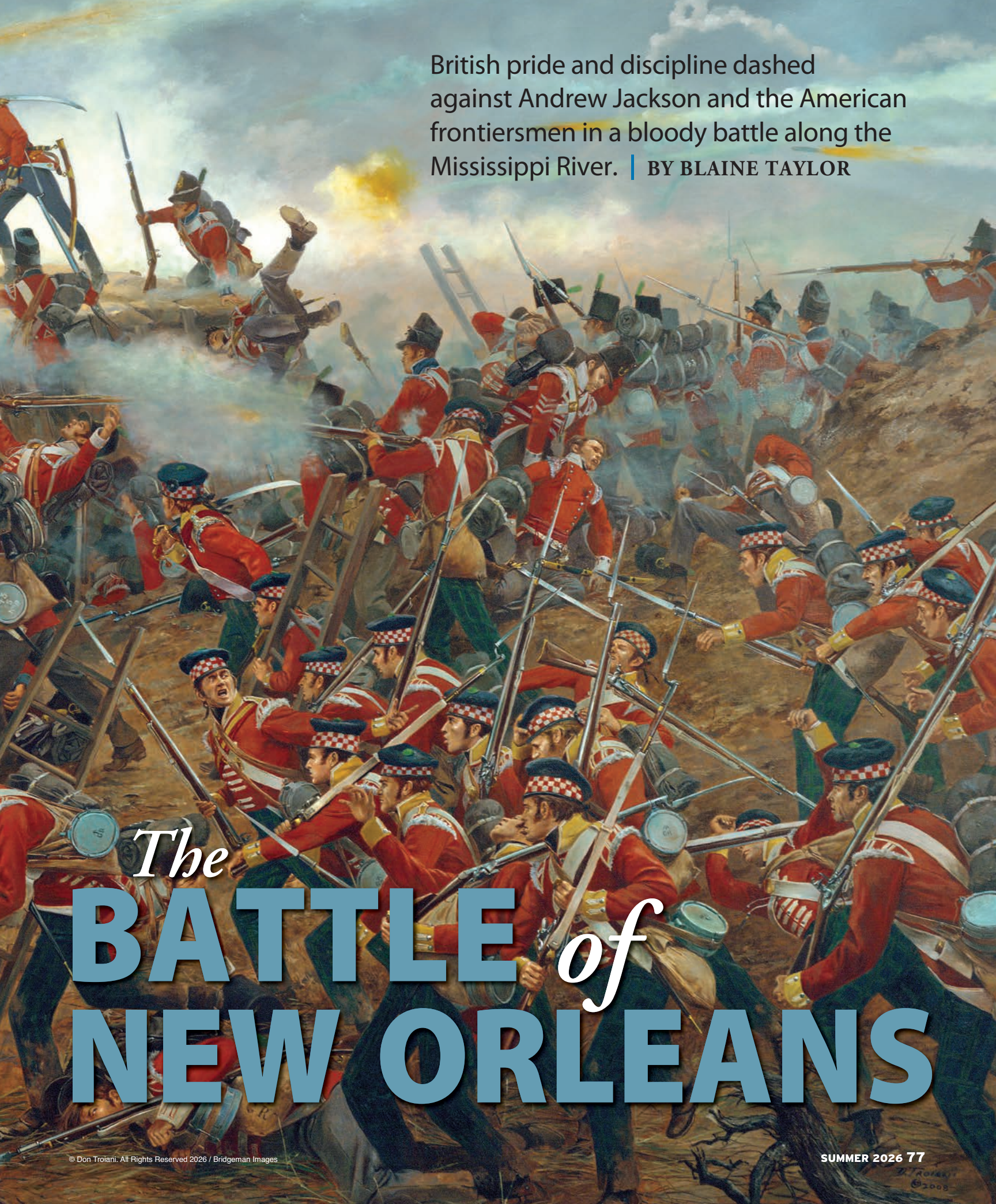
The Americans, though, were waiting for them on the other side. When it looked like their position in a house was untenable, the infantrymen from K Company would sneak out the back door and lie in ambush when the grenadiers appeared at the front door. The GIs were exacting a terrible toll on the Germans. Each house now was a bunker and each floor a mausoleum. No one had given the order, but most of the men from 1st Platoon assumed the rally point was the Company CP at Hotel Schmitz, and that is where they ended up as the fighting continued into the night. However, not all could escape, and isolated pockets of 1st Platoon and 2nd Platoon continued to battle in the northern section of town.

For Payne and his tank platoon, the situation was not much better. When the fighting kicked off, Payne's tanks supported the K Company infantry in the northern section of town, but eventually they started to suffer losses, too. A panzerfaust knocked out one of the Sherman tanks, and another Sherman was lost to enemy fire. This left Payne with only three tanks. As the Germans squeezed the perimeter, Payne ordered his three remaining tanks to establish a cordon around the K Company CP. To add to his list of woes, Payne no longer had communications with his higher headquarters at the 707th Tank Battalion.

Meanwhile, Feiker continued to request artillery to harass the German units moving along the east-west road and attacking the town. Each time, battalion denied his requests. Milton could no longer provide fire support because his how-

Continued on page 98

Don Troiani's painting, *Jackson's Flank Attack*, depicts the assault on Gen. Andrew Jackson's right flank on the Levee Redoubt by British Light Infantry companies, including the 7th (Royal Fusiliers), 93rd Sutherland Highlanders, and 43rd Light Infantry. The redoubt was defended by a company of the 7th U.S. Infantry and a detachment of the 44th U.S. Infantry, manning two guns.



British pride and discipline dashed against Andrew Jackson and the American frontiersmen in a bloody battle along the Mississippi River. | BY BLAINE TAYLOR

The BATTLE *of* NEW ORLEANS

After Napoleon I, Emperor of the French, abdicated in April 1814, the British could at last turn their attention from the coalition wars to North America, where they had been at war with the Americans since 1812. Now they would make their former subjects there squirm, and maybe even grovel to re-enter the British Empire. The plan was to invade the former colonies from three points: Niagara, Lake Champlain, and New Orleans, while at the same time raiding the Chesapeake.

The Lake Champlain route, a classic invasion path going back to the French and Indian War, would divide New England from the rest of the country. The Niagara invasion might well wrest the whole Great Lakes region from the United States. The invasion at New Orleans was meant not only to block trade out of the Mississippi River but to reseize the Louisiana Territory. Linked to the invasion out of Niagara, the nascent United States would be surrounded on the north and west by British territory.

By summer, however, the Niagara invasion was checked at the battles of Chippewa and Lundy's Lane. The raid up the Chesapeake disgraced the Americans, who had to evacuate their capital to the arsonists of Gen. Robert Ross. But they rallied to defend Baltimore and so end the threat in the Chesapeake theater of the war. Then in September, Americans wrecked the plans of a formidable force in Canada by ruining the British fleet on Lake Champlain in the Battle of Plattsburg.

But the invasion from the south continued.

Admiral Sir Alexander Cochrane, who had commanded in the Chesapeake, readied his fleet at the Caribbean island of Jamaica, then sailed north to land British soldiers on the east bank of the Mississippi on December 10. These were veterans who had served under Wellington, and they thought they would have a relatively easy sojourn into Louisiana's then-capital and largest port. Indeed, they expected most of the Spanish and French descendants who had never been particularly wedded to American rule to acquiesce to, even champion, the British occupation. And they did not foresee much military trouble with the "dirty shirts" who emerged from the woods to form the American army.

Cochrane instructed an advance guard of 1,600 men to march from the south to within seven miles of the city, now in a state of much apprehension.

But there the aggressiveness of the Americans proved decisive. Inadequately prepared with a stout defensive position, American commander Andrew Jackson immediately ordered a night attack on the newly arrived and unsuspecting British. Such a sudden night attack would not likely have happened on a European battlefield, and the British for a time were disoriented. When the firefight through the darkness was over, the Redcoats had lost 400 dead and wounded. For the American frontiersmen, there were 213 casualties—24 killed, 115 wounded and 74 taken prisoner. But the offensive spirit of the British was blunted, and the Americans had won themselves time to prepare a strong defensive line closer to the city.

On Christmas morning Major General Sir Edward Pakenham arrived to take command of the British ground forces. A vigorous 38, Sir Edward was known as "the Hero of Salamanca" from the Peninsular War, from which he knew most of the regiments he now commanded. The former Adjutant General to the Duke of Wellington's Peninsular Army as well as the Duke's brother-in-law, he was a popular and competent officer.

Considered a ruthless general in pursuit of a defeated foe, "Ned," as he was known, served with Wellington again at Vitoria and delivered a smashing blow on the French flank at the Battle of Sorauren. Later, in order to stop plundering in Spain, Pakenham had been named head of the military police, and in this capacity went about "roaring like a lion," according to one contemporary.

Pakenham surveyed his command on Christmas

U.S. Marine Corps

This painting, *Christmas Day 1814*, by Colonel Charles H. Waterhouse, USMCR, shows Marines fortifying a defensive position along the Rodriguez Canal, south of New Orleans during the War of 1812. An unsuccessful British attack on the line led Gen. Andrew Jackson to have redoubts constructed for his artillery, which proved to be the deciding factor in the battle. OPPOSITE: This c.1890 illustration, *General Jackson's victory at New Orleans*, shows one of the key factors in the American victory on January 8, 1815—a line of artillery with some heavy guns along the Rodriguez Canal that included at least one 32-pounder naval cannon. These were crewed by a mix American soldiers, sailors, and "Baratarians," Jean Lafitte's privateers and smugglers based in the bayous of Louisiana.

Historic New Orleans Collection / Wikimedia

Day, 1814: 6,000 British Regular Army troops and 1,000 black soldiers from two West Indian units. They would face Jackson's combined force of American Army Regulars, slaves, state militia and Jean Lafitte's colorful pirates at a breastwork of earth, sugar barrels and some cotton bales behind an empty wide ditch—called the Rodriguez Canal—stretching three-fifths of a mile, anchored on one end by the Mississippi River, and on the other by an impenetrable swamp.

On January 1, Pakenham advanced cannon toward the American line in an attempt to bombard the fortification into submission, retreat, or perhaps to assault it by infantry with bayonets if the cannonade opened an exploitable breach. But the American gunners answered in kind. They knocked out a significant number of British cannon and the Redcoat infantry had no opportunity to rush the breastwork. Pakenham had to call for a withdrawal, which, together with the night action of December 22-23, was the second wounding in 10 days of British pride and morale.

Now, faced with the prospect of a frontal attack or quitting his position and perhaps the campaign, Pakenham chose assault. But it would not quite be frontal.

His battle plan called for Colonel William Thornton to cross to the west side of the Mississippi the night before the main attack and to assault a line of Kentucky militia and cannon that were supporting Jackson's line on the east bank. If Thornton could break through the line, he would be on Jackson's flank, though across the river. In such a position, he could at least turn the American cannon onto the rear and flank of the Americans on the east bank in aid of Pakenham's more massive frontal attack, and perhaps force the "dirty shirt" back from the strong defensive position. Thornton's success and consequent flanking fire was to signal the start of the more massive frontal assault on Jackson's ditch and earthworks.

Thornton set off on the evening of January 7 with 1,500 picked Regulars. But the lack of enough boats slowed the effort in ferrying the British across. Even with dawn approaching he did not have the assault forces he wanted on the west side of the mighty river.

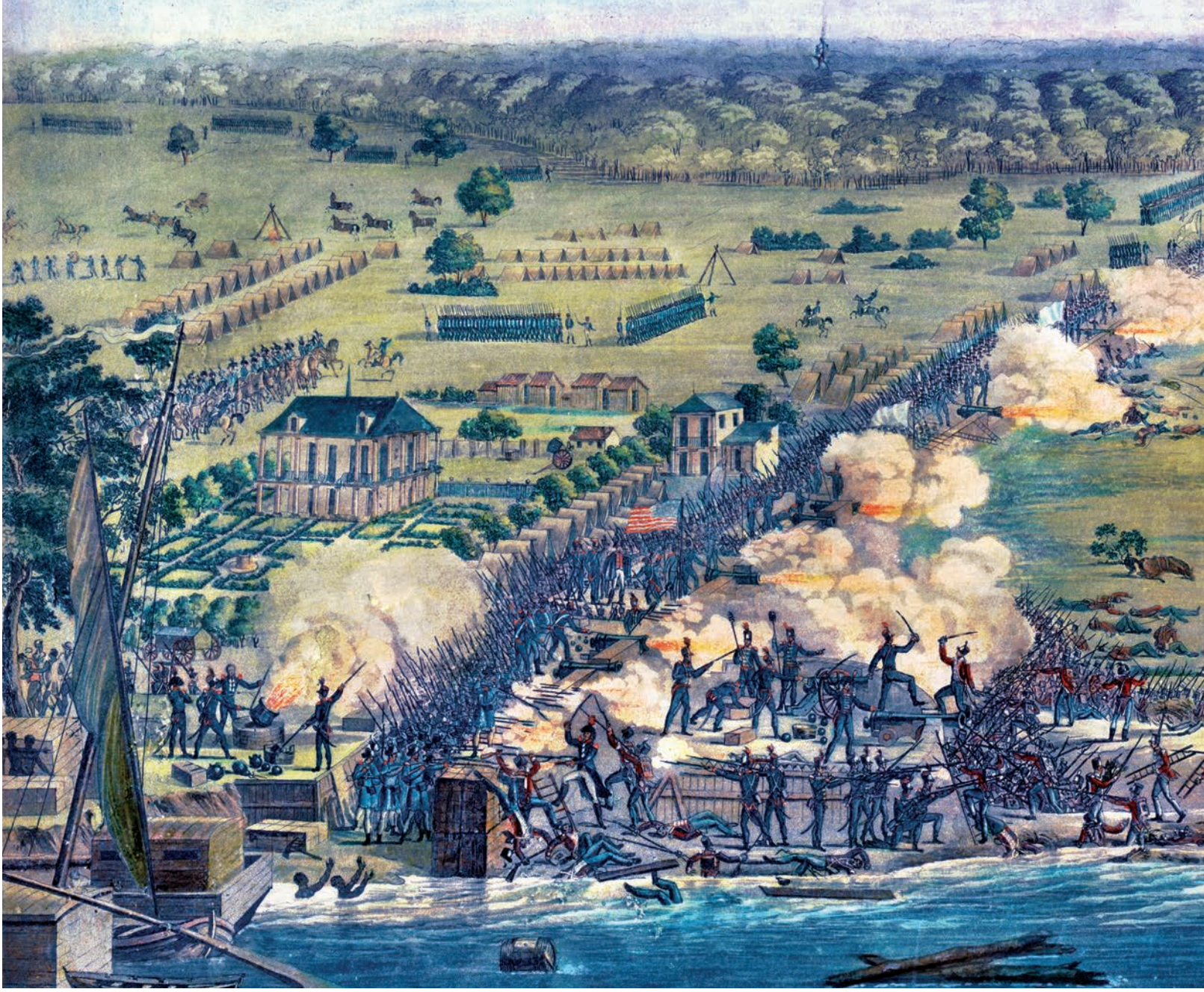
Meanwhile the main assault was readying. Pakenham had divided it into two columns. The primary thrust was to be on the right commanded by Maj. Gen. Samuel Gibbs. Part of his force was to advance without firing and throw fascines—bundles of branches—into the dry ditch in front of the Americans, with a second wave carrying ladders with which soldiers could climb the earthworks and come to grips with the Americans beyond.

On the left, the attack was to be commanded by Maj. Gen. John Keane. If Thornton succeeded in silencing or turning the American cannon on the west side of the river, Keane was to assault the river side of the main American line. But if Gibbs broke the line in a significant way, Keane was to pour his troops into it. A portion of Keane's attack, to be led by Lt. Col. Robert Rennie, was to advance up the river road on the east bank.

Several of the British units were veterans of the Washington, D.C., and Baltimore campaigns; the 4th, 21st, 44th and 85th regiments. The 85th was with Thornton, and would be facing Kentucky militia. The 44th would be carrying fascines and ladders. The 4th and 21st were also with Gibbs's column. With Keane were other crack troops, notably the 93rd Sutherland Highlanders (wearing Scottish plaid trousers or trews, not kilts as legend has it), the 95th Rifles, and two light companies of the 7th Royal Fusiliers and 43rd Monmouthshire Light Infantry, plus the West Indians. In all, the attack was mounting 8,000-9,000 men against Jackson's 4,000 at the Rodriguez Canal, of which only 800 were regulars.

Thornton's problems during the night of January 7 were shared by others in the British Army. The men of the 44th misunderstood orders and set off in the dead of night without their fascines and ladders. But by the time the error was detected and corrected, it was dawn—time for the sudden and surprising rush on the American defenses.

Both Gibbs and Pakenham were informed of the mistake in time to delay the attack, but Sir Edward was more worried by the lack of gunfire from across the river at the flank rear of the American line. In fact, only about a third of the 85th was in position to begin the attack up the west



Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

side of the river at 5:30 a.m., when they should have already achieved their objective.

Pakenham was urged to halt the attack because of the fascine/ladder delay and the lack of support that the thrust up the opposite bank would give. But Pakenham was frustrated with British reverses, especially the one on January 1 when he himself had called for the withdrawal. He wanted to get at this upstart general, familiarly called "Andy" Jackson, and capture the city so coveted by his men. The British have always denied it, but American legend has it that the British soldiers were eager for—even promised—the "beauty and booty" that awaited them when they marched into the queen city of the South. Pakenham gave the order to fire the Congreve rocket that would signal the general assault.

Reportedly the first to fire on the American side was a gun commanded by Antoine Garrigues de Flaujac, one of Napoleon's veterans from his Italian and Egyptian campaigns. This opened up when the dimly seen Red lines were 500 yards distant, followed by the other trio of American guns. With the bagpipes of the Scots wailing and the Congreve rockets hissing once more overhead, the Redcoats came on, until they were a mere 200 yards from the ditch and the parapet.

For a time, the British were fortunate. Across the river, Thornton did succeed in overcoming the weak defensive line held by the Kentuckians. Colonel Rennie overran the redoubt he was ordered to reduce along the western bank of the river. But Thornton's victory had come too late. Rennie, along with his fellow officers, were soon enough dead from a hail of American gunfire.

Then, as the main British lines closed on the American works, all hell broke loose as the entire line of riflemen opened up. Contrary to popular legend, it was not the Kentucky long rifles and the Tennessee squirrel guns that did the most damage, but the four artillery pieces.

Now Jackson's voice was heard above the din shouting, "Give it to 'em, boys! Let's finish the business today!" And they did indeed.

Returning at last with the ladders and fascines, the men of the 44th got mixed up with the main body of the advancing host, dropped the scaling gear altogether, and began firing wildly and blindly at the parapet, thus losing completely the effectiveness of their hitherto feared massed volleys. Their compatriots up front soon found themselves fired upon from both behind and ahead—or so they feared. Panic gripped the enlisted men, who broke ranks and fled.

Rushing up ahead to arrest this alarming development, Gibbs was swiftly cut down by four American bullets. Stunned, Pakenham couldn't

believe his eyes. Lunging forward, he began waving his lieutenant general's hat and berating the men thus: "For shame! Remember you are British soldiers!" Then, pointing to the American parapet ahead, bawled out, "That is the road you ought to take!" But Sir Edward was not able to stem the tide of retreat, and his horse went down under a hail of fire that also hit one of his knees.

Back on his feet, Pakenham seized Capt. Duncan MacDougall's mount and climbed into the saddle, only to take fatal shots to the spine and groin. Muttering, "Tell General. …" he fell out of the saddle into the captain's arms and died just a few minutes later. Before he, too, was brought down by wounds, Keane screamed out, "Bayonet the rascals!" then fell.

The rest of the British army lumbered forward, into the maw of waiting death and disaster. For them, no good came of it. The British that day suffered 2,000 casualties, including Gibbs, who died of his wounds. The estimated American loss was 13-71 killed, 39-181 wounded, and 19 missing or captured. It was an unqualified and resounding victory for Jackson, whose line had not been breached or even scaled.

It now turned to Major General John Lambert, who commanded regiments held in reserve, to take command of the British Army in the field. Despite the success of Thornton and the 85th, he halted the slaughter at 8 a.m. The fighting south of New Orleans was over.

A month later, Lambert captured Fort Bowyer on Mobile Bay in an attempt to restore British fortunes in this theater of the war, but the curtain had already been lowered. Even before the battle, on December 24, diplomats in Ghent, Belgium, had agreed to end the war. Word simply had not reached the combatants south of New Orleans.

An architect and artist living in New Orleans as the war closed in on the city, Jean-Hyacinthe Laclotte volunteered as an engineer in the First Louisiana Militia, where he was able to sketch the battle as it happened, later painting what is considered the most accurate depiction of the conflict. This engraving based on Laclotte's work, by Philibert-Louis Debucourt, was on sale by 1817. In the lower foreground, British troops move along the river, attacking, and briefly holding, the American redoubt. In the distance, Maj. Gen. Samuel Gibbs' British force attacks by the swamp but without the scaling ladders they were supposed to carry forward.

It is said that Admiral Cochrane was shattered by the news of the Treaty of Ghent. But his son, Capt. Sir Thomas Cochrane, was glad the fighting was over at last. It was too expensive a war, and now too bloody a one as well. ■

ANDREW JACKSON (1767-1845)

Hotheaded, but indomitable and effective

Library of Congress

ON DEC. 1, 1814, Andrew Jackson and his staff rode into New Orleans to take command of the defense of the American city. According to his biographer Robert V. Remini, "The crowd was startled when they saw this frail-looking man. He seemed emaciated and his complexion was sallow and ghostly … He was 47 years of age, his hair iron-gray, his face long and gaunt."

And yet, having lost all the members of his immediate family in the first war for American Independence we now call the Revolution, he was determined to defeat the British no matter what, asserting, "I will smash them, so help me God!"

Asked by his aide John Reid what he would do if the British should breach his lines on Jan. 8, 1815, he replied, "I should have retreated to the city, fired it and fought the enemy amidst the surrounding flames … I would have destroyed New Orleans, occupied a position above on the river, cut off all supplies, and in this way compelled them to depart from the country."

In this vein, it is interesting to speculate what might have happened at any of the earlier battles—at Bladensburg, North Point and Baltimore—had Andrew Jackson been in command.

For a man who fought and defeated Creek

EDWARD PAKENHAM (1778-1815)

A "blockhead" or "one of the bravest"?

"VICTORY HAS A THOUSAND FATHERS," the late President John F. Kennedy once said, "but defeat is an orphan." So it was for the third man in line for Great Britain's most important command in the American Second War for Independence. The Duke of Wellington had turned it down and lived to defeat Napoleon at Waterloo, but one is led to wonder if he, too, would've been beaten by Old Hickory. The next. Maj. Gen. Robert Ross of Bladensburg, agreed to come south to New Orleans, but only after the sacking of Baltimore (and perhaps also of Annapolis, Philadelphia and New York.)

Alas, he was cut down by American snipers just before the Battle of North Point on Sept. 12, 1814, and so the plum appointment dropped into the lap of the Irish-born Maj. Gen. Edward "Ned" Pakenham, brother-in-law to the Iron Duke and a commander whom Theodore Roosevelt in 1882 called "One of the bravest and ablest of all Wellington's brave and able lieutenants."

Others, however, have not been so sure down the years. Jackson biographer Robert V. Remini calls Pakenham "impatient, if not reckless.… Impetuosity in the Peninsular War had brought victory. Here outside New Orleans it would bring devastating defeat."

Asserts TR, "Pakenham left nothing undone to accomplish his aim, and made no movements that his experience in European war did not justify his making. There is not the slightest reason for supposing that any other British general would have accomplished more or have fared better than he did."

Reportedly, Pakenham was not one of the British Army's greatest commanders in the field, and allegedly the Iron Duke thought Ned a bit of a lightweight. His successful rival, Andrew Jackson, scorned him in utter contempt for protesting the American forces' sniping at his sentries at night while the British Army was in the process of invading the United States, American military author Col. John R. Elating goes a step further than the Iron Duke's evaluation to call him a "blockhead."

Of course, had he won the Battle of New Orleans and not lost it, he would have been named the Royal Governor of Louisiana by deposing Claiborne. Thence he would have over an English-Spanish fiefdom—and Andrew Jackson would never have become President of the United States. Such are the vagaries of history.

Up until his death under enemy fire at New Orleans, Pakenham had had a truly stellar military career, fighting throughout all of the French Revolutionary campaigns and the entirety of the Napoleonic Wars except being at the Duke's side at Quarte Bras and Waterloo. He had risen rapidly from lieutenant in 1794 to the permanent posting of Major General by 1812.

Called "tall, handsome and precise in dress and manners," Pakenham was wounded in combat several times, and in the same spot in the neck on two different occasions. He soldiered in his native Ireland during the Irish Rebellion, as well as in the Danish-Swedish West Indian Islands. In the Peninsular Campaigns of 1809-14, he served with bravery and distinction at the Battles of Bussaco, Fuentes de Onoro, Salamanca and the Pyrenees.

He was awarded the Knighthood of the Bath by the Prince Regent in 1813. This was upgraded to Knight of the Grand Cross of the Order of the Bath just before he was killed in faraway America.

Like Wellington, Pakenham was opposed to the war in the United States. Still, duty was duty. Faced with a tide of British soldiers retreating from Jackson's barricade, he rose high in the saddle to cry, "Shame! Shame! Remember, you're British! Forward, gentlemen, forward!" Then the American fire cut him down.

Pakenham's body was placed in a barrel of rum for shipment home, but it was deposited on the wrong vessel, a fact not discovered until the tars started complaining about their drink. The general is today honored, however, in the South Transept of St. Paul's Cathedral in London.

Indians, Spaniards and British Regulars in pitched battles, it comes as a startling shock to learn that, until he received his first military command at the age of 46, he had no practical experience in this "science" to speak of, and perhaps that is why his opponents tended to underestimate him, to their later everlasting regret.

"No man could have been better fitted for the task" of repulsing the British, wrote Teddy Roosevelt in 1882. "Jackson is certainly by all odds the most prominent figure that appeared during this war, and stands head and shoulders above any other commander, American or British, that it produced. It will be difficult, in all history, to show a parallel to the feat that he performed. In three weeks' fighting, with a force largely composed of militia, he utterly defeated and drove away an army twice the size of his own, composed of veteran troops, and led by one of the ablest of European generals.…

"The American soldiers deserve great credit for doing so well, but greater credit still belongs to Andrew Jackson, who, with his cool. head and quick eye, his stout heart and strong hand, stands out in history as the ablest general the United States produced, from the outbreak of the Revolution down to the beginning of the Great Rebellion" (i.e., the American Civil War.)

Left a small inheritance by his Irish grandfather, young Andrew floundered in life until he decided to study law at age 17, and three years later was admitted to the North Carolina bar. Hot tempered and passionate, Andrew married Rachel Donelson Robards and soon began his career as a duelist to protect on occasion what he considered to be her injured honor. Elected Tennessee's first Member of Congress, he later ascended to the U.S. Senate to replace a friend, and in 1802 was elected Major General of the State Militia.

Ignored in 1803 by President Jefferson to be Louisiana's first Governor, he briefly flirted with Aaron Burr's conspiracy to seize Spanish Florida and Mexico, then wisely backed off. The War of 1812 thrust him into military command and the national spotlight, and on March 27, 1814, he defeated the Creek Indians at the Battle of Horseshoe Bend. He also repulsed the British at Mobile, Ala., on Sept. 15th and took Pensacola from the Spanish on Nov. 7th, arriving in New Orleans on Dec. 1, 1814 to take up his most famous command. He would reinvade Florida in 1818 to begin the First Seminole War, and, starting in 1828, to win two terms in the White House as America's seventh President of the United States.

JEAN LAFITTE (1780-1826)

Absent from battle, but terrain advisor and guide

ACCORDING TO BOTH THE 1936 version with Frederick March and the 1958 remake with Yul Brynner (both films by Cecil B. Demille), the legendary Barataria pirate Jean Lafitte in "The Buccaneer," was in the very thick of the fighting outside the Crescent City. But reality was something different, according to American historian Gene A. Smith: "Contrary to rumor, Lafitte was not at the battle on Jan. 8, 1815. He was delivering a letter." He did, however serve as Old Hickory's "topographic advisor and guide on the general's volunteer staff."

Actually, there were two Lafittes, not one, in the campaign. Jean's brother was Dominique You, played in 1958 by Charles Boyer. Like just about everything on the Lafittes, their pasts and futures were murky and mysterious. It's not even sure where they where born, only that they "probably" arrived in Louisiana in about 1802, and that they used a blacksmith shop as a cover for their nefarious smuggling operations.

The Lafittes seized English, Spanish, neutral merchantmen and—yes—U.S. vessels on the high seas. Based on the Island of Grand Terre in Barataria Bay south of New Orleans, these pirates-with-a-purpose by 1810 could boast an armed force of almost 5,000 men ensconced in a fortress with cannons, homes, 40 warehouses (among them slave pens) and even a hospital. Their rule extended from New Orleans south through 50 miles of delta.

The Lafittes' bete noir was Louisiana Gov. William C.C. Claiborne, who in 1812, sent mounted troopers under Capt. Andrew Hunter Holmes to seize both the brothers and their illicit goods in a carefully planned ambush. Successfully obtaining bond, Jean Lafitte soon returned to his life of piracy. Soon, while Andrew Jackson was off winning battles to the east, he was battling tax officials over his stolen cargo. In one melee, a Federal agent was killed. Jean Lafitte then had a price on his head of $500.

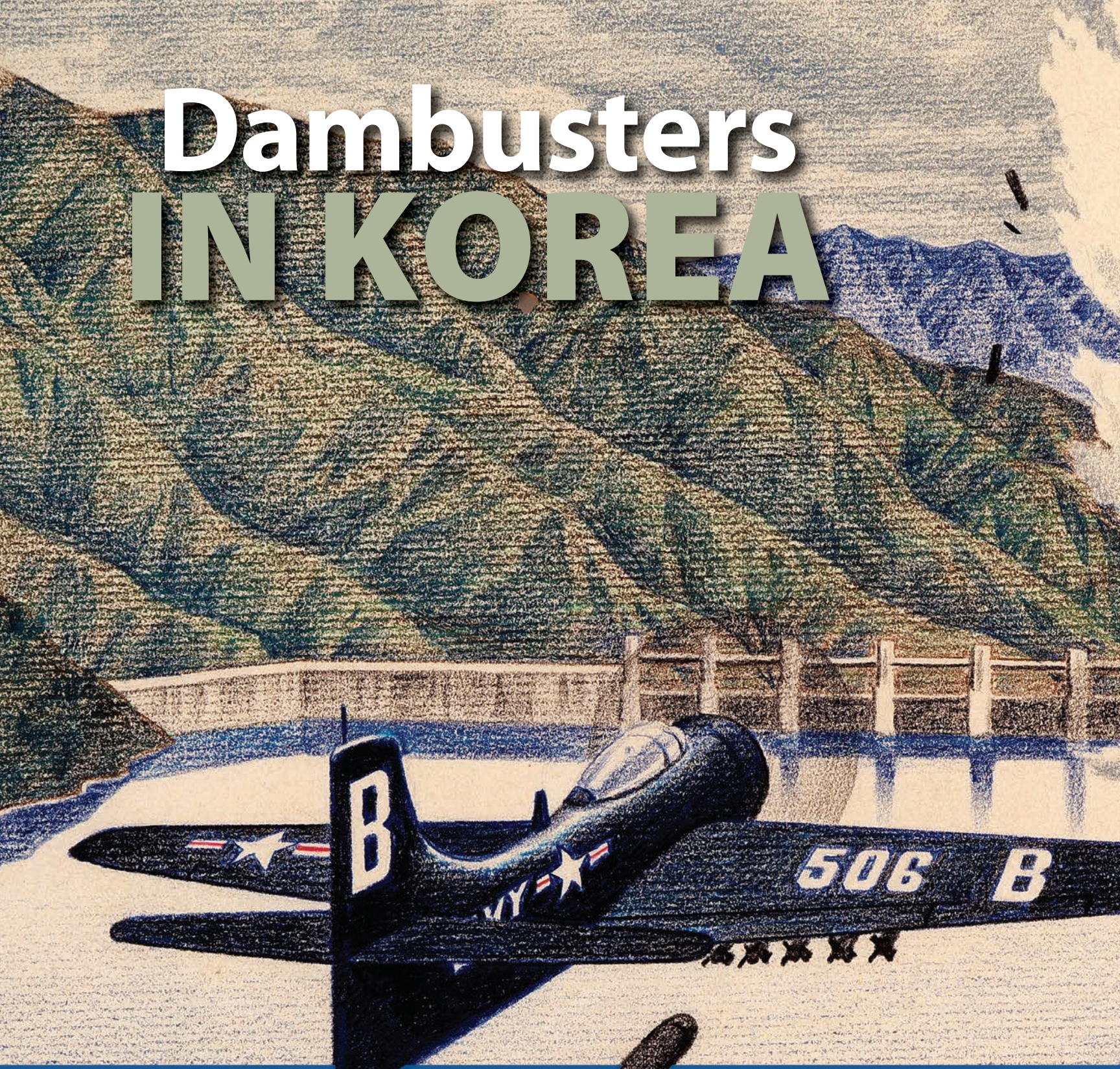
Yet another death resulted at a Lafitte-sponsored slave auction in January 1814 when U.S. customs agent John B. Stout—trying to abort the sale—was killed. Lafitte seemed certain to be headed for the gallows when the British Royal Navy intervened on Sept. 3, 1814, 11 days after the burning of Washington, D.C.

Sloop Sophie Capt. Nicholas Lockyer offered an alliance between the twin seafaring peoples of Barataria and Great Britain. In return for guiding the British through a backyard route of swamps to New Orleans, Lafitte would receive cash, land, a pardon and a captaincy in the British Army (not in the Royal Navy, Smith asserts.) Playing for time, the wily pirate took the plans instead to his enemy—Gov. Claiborne—who in turn passed them over to Gen. Jackson.

However it happened, Lafitte's base was blasted by a joint U.S. land-sea expedition on Sept. 16, 1814, with many privateers and their prizes taken, as well as 80 prisoners. Still, Lafitte wouldn't aid the British, and Jackson accepted his help after the defeat of U.S. gunboats on Lake Borgne on Dec. 14th.

Lafittes' men who chose to fight for the U.S. were pardoned by the Louisiana legislature, and the brothers themselves were pardoned by President James Madison the month after the battle was won. Nevertheless they returned to piracy, this time using Galveston, Texas, as a base. Expelled from there in 1820, Jean was rumored to have died of a fever in 1826, while others insist he perished in Mexico, and still others that he lived under an assumed name in Alton, Ill., until a natural death on May 5, 1851—the birthday of Napoleon I, Emperor of the French.

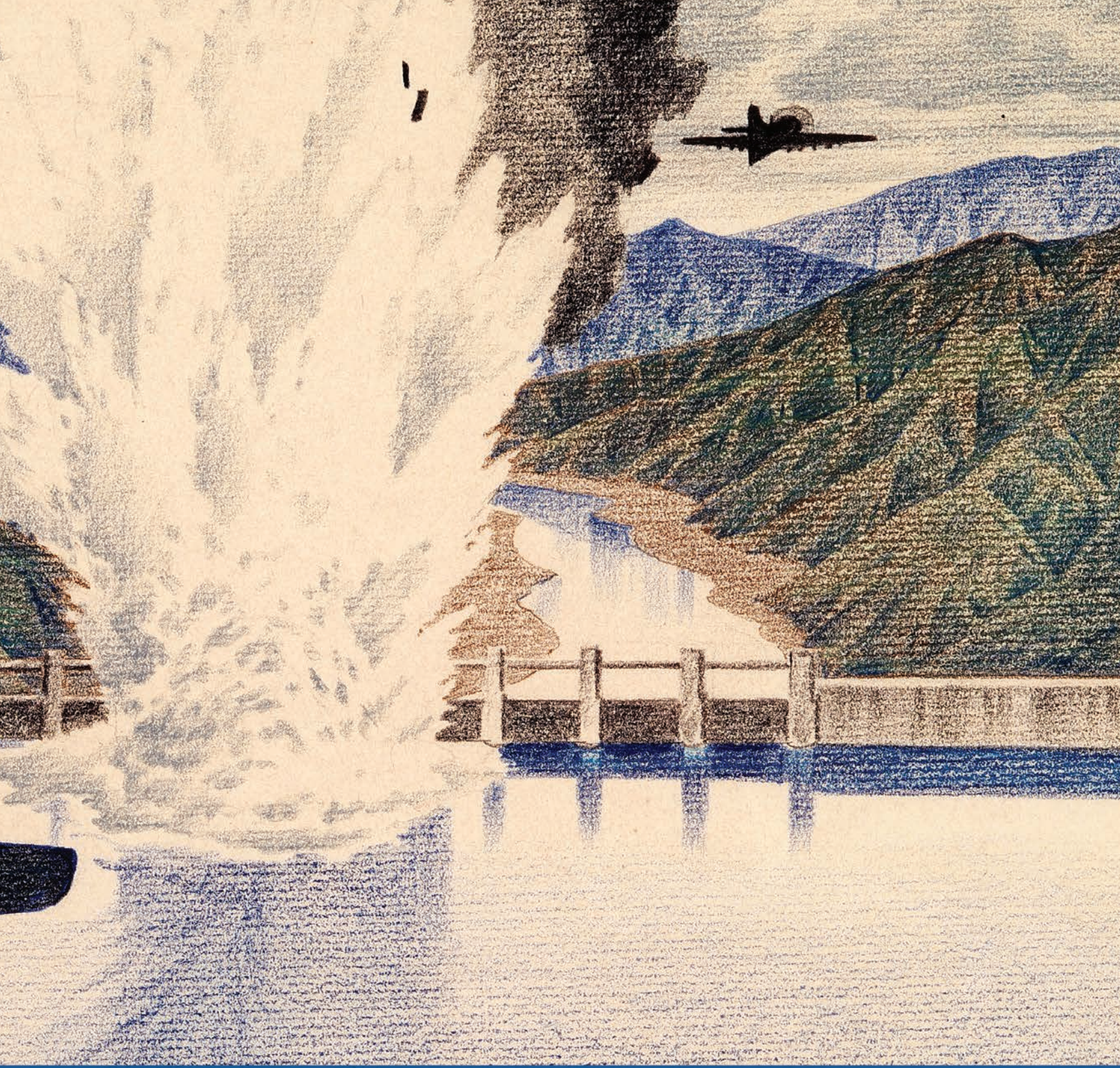
Dambusters IN KOREA



Daring U.S. Navy pilots carried out history's last aerial torpedo raid on the Hwachon Dam near Seoul, Korea, on May 1, 1951. | BY JOHN E. SPINDLER

High-level bombing raids, a dive-bombing raid, and a ground assault had all previously failed to destroy the sluice gates of the Hwachon Dam some 50 miles northeast of the South Korean capital of Seoul.

Lieutenant-Commander Harold Gustave "Swede" Carlson and a few pilots from Naval Squadron VA-195 had undertaken that dive-



bombing raid the day before. In their Douglas AD-4 Skyraiders, they had fired "Tiny Tim" rockets and dropped a pair of 2,000-lbs. bombs, managing to breach one spillway gate.

Now the Skyraiders were back, flying at the dam with the latest, and most unorthodox, idea—employing aerial torpedoes. Carlson knew about the famous 1943 British "Dambuster" raid over Germany that used unconventional munitions, and he knew that, like the British bomber pilots, the ordinance he carried had to be released at a specific height and an exact speed.

Leading the second group of four Skyraiders, Carlson prepared to line up on the required heading as he crossed the reservoir towards the dam. As with the previous day's sortie, escorting

This colored pencil drawing, *Hitting Home*, by Herbert C. Hahn, c. 1951, depicts the May 1, 1951, mission in which eight Navy AD-4 Skyraiders from the USS *Princeton* scored six hits with Mk. 13 aerial torpedoes on the Chinese-held Hwachon Dam in South Korea.

U.S. Navy Art Collection

Naval History and Heritage Command

A Navy Douglas AD-4 Skyraider from attack squadron VA-195, the "Dambusters," takes off from the deck of the carrier USS *Princeton* during the Korean War. Formerly nicknamed the "Tigers," the squad changed its name after their successful raid on the Hwachon Dam on May 1, 1951.

Vought F-4U Corsairs effectively suppressed the Communist anti-aircraft fire. These eight pilots had to successfully complete their mission or else the Communist Chinese and North Koreans would continue to use the dam to influence battle conditions in central Korea.

Unknown to Carlson or any involved in the Korean campaign, this strike on May 1, 1951 would be the last time aerial torpedoes were used in combat. For launching off the aircraft carrier U.S.S. *Princeton* required an enormous effort and quick learning by pilots and ordinancemen. Save for a handful of men aboard the carrier, no one had ever seen a Mark XIII Aerial Torpedo, much less installed one on an aircraft or launched one in battle. Against enormous odds, Carlson and his fellow pilots would return to the U.S.S. *Princeton* successful well beyond their expectations.

Constructed by the Japanese during the Second World War as a source of hydroelectric power, the Hwachon Dam used the combined flow of the Han and Pukhan rivers northeast of Seoul. At the beginning of April 1951, units from the North Korean People's Army (NKPA) and Chinese Communist Forces (CCF) controlled the region containing the dam. At midnight on April 8, United Nations (U.N.) troops learned the strategic implications of Communist control of the dam—with disastrous consequences. When the enemy opened up the spillway gates, water levels on the Han River rapidly rose four feet, causing the destruction of one U.N.-built pontoon bridge. Several others had to be dismantled to avoid irreparable damage. U.N. commanders and engineers realized that if CCF could release water levels to cause havoc, they would most likely shut the gates to lower river levels, thus allowing the Communist troops to easily ford it.

Quickly deciding that the dam had to be retaken or neutralized to prevent future use against U.N. forces, a land assault commenced the next day. The 2nd Battalion of the U.S. 7th Cavalry Regiment attacked from "Line Kansas" and battled northwards up a peninsula on the dam's western side. With no armor support and limited artillery backup, the American soldiers were unable to get to the dam's gates. A pair of CCF companies used the rugged terrain to their advantage with the attacking force hindered by poor roads.

The 7th Cavalry's battalion resumed its assault on April 11. This time the 4th Ranger Company conducted an amphibious operation across the Hwachon Reservoir. Poor logistics—only four engines for nine plywood assault boats—caused delays in getting the Rangers completely across before daybreak. The Chinese not only contained the land attack but stymied the Rangers. Holding out until nightfall, the amphibious attacking force was withdrawn.

After a five-day fight, the U.S. 1st Marine Division was able to retake the region on April 21. South Korean Marines arrived at Hwachon Dam on the morning of April 22 and began inspecting the sluice gates for demolition. Unfortunately, the Chinese and North Koreans renewed their offensive, forcing the withdrawal of the overextended Marine division, and retook control of the dam.

With the failure to maintain control of the dam, U.N. command decided to use air power to eliminate the dam as a threat by destroying or crippling as many of the sluice gates as possible. Intelligence forces looked at the design. A concrete gravity-type, the Hwachon Dam was 256 feet tall and 1,427 feet wide, with a pair of operational generators for its power plant. The Japanese had built the dam with a thickness of 240 feet at its base. For additional protection against attack, the Chinese and North Koreans reinforced both sides of the base with boulders. The steel sluice gates were 40 feet wide by 20 feet tall and 2.5 feet thick. Built during wartime, the designers had overhead protection against aerial bombs for the gates in the form of reinforced structural concrete.

The first attempt to destroy the sluice gates was assigned to the Boeing B-29 strategic bombers of the Far East Air Force. Dropped by an unspecified number of aircraft, the bomb load, which included some radio-guided bombs, failed to penetrate the overhead protection of the gates. A second aerial attempt using a precision dive-bombing strike from U.S. Navy Carrier Air

Group 19 (CVG 19) was assigned to attack the dam on April 30.

Led by Commander Richard C. Merrick, CVG 19 consisted of several squadrons, ranging from fighters to attack to reconnaissance. Squadron VA-195, based on the U.S.S. *Princeton*, was selected to supply six aircraft for the strike. Nicknamed the "Tigers," the squadron had been operating in the Korean theater since arriving in November 1950. Providing crucial close-air support during U.N. offensive operations as well as during the retreats caused by CCF offensives, VA-195 had performed well. From February to April 1951, they took part in the interdiction campaign against the enemy's railroad and bridge infrastructure. Their attack on the bridge at Toko-ri would be forever memorialized in the 1954 film, *The Bridges at Toko-ri*.

Merrick commanded the mission force with VA-195's Swede Carlson in charge of the strike force. Five Corsairs from VF-193 would accompany them for escort and flak suppression. To eliminate the sluice gates, each Skyraider carried a pair of 2,000-lb. bombs and twelve 11.75" diameter Tiny Tim rockets. This dive-bombing attack would be VA-195's first dam-busting mission. The Corsairs carried both 500-pound and 100-pound bombs for their assignment of eliminating enemy anti-aircraft cannons.

The Douglas Skyraider, known as the "flying dump truck," was designed during World War II as the replacement for the Grumman TBF Avenger, but the war ended before it could see action. From 1945 to 1957, Douglas Aircraft Company built 3,180 aircraft and went through seven versions, each having variants built for specific roles such as night-attack, electronic countermeasures, and airborne early warning. The aircraft flown by the "Tigers" was the fourth version, which began production in 1949. With 1,051 produced, the AD-4 would be the most numerous version of the Skyraider.

Powered by a 2,700-hp Wright R-3350 18-cylinder engine, the aircraft could carry 8,000-pounds of ordinance, almost equivalent to the bomb load of the World War II Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress heavy bomber. Internal armament increased from two to four 20mm cannons. Other upgrades to the AD-4 from previous versions included improved radar and strengthened landing gear. But these improvements came at a cost—its climb rate was noticeably less than the AD-1 and its top speed decreased to 320 mph.

Flying across the Korean countryside, the attack formation arrived at the target at 5:40 p.m. The Corsairs took the lead, eliminating enough of the enemy's flak positions to allow Carlson's formation to make their run. The six planes crossed the reservoir, executed their dive, and

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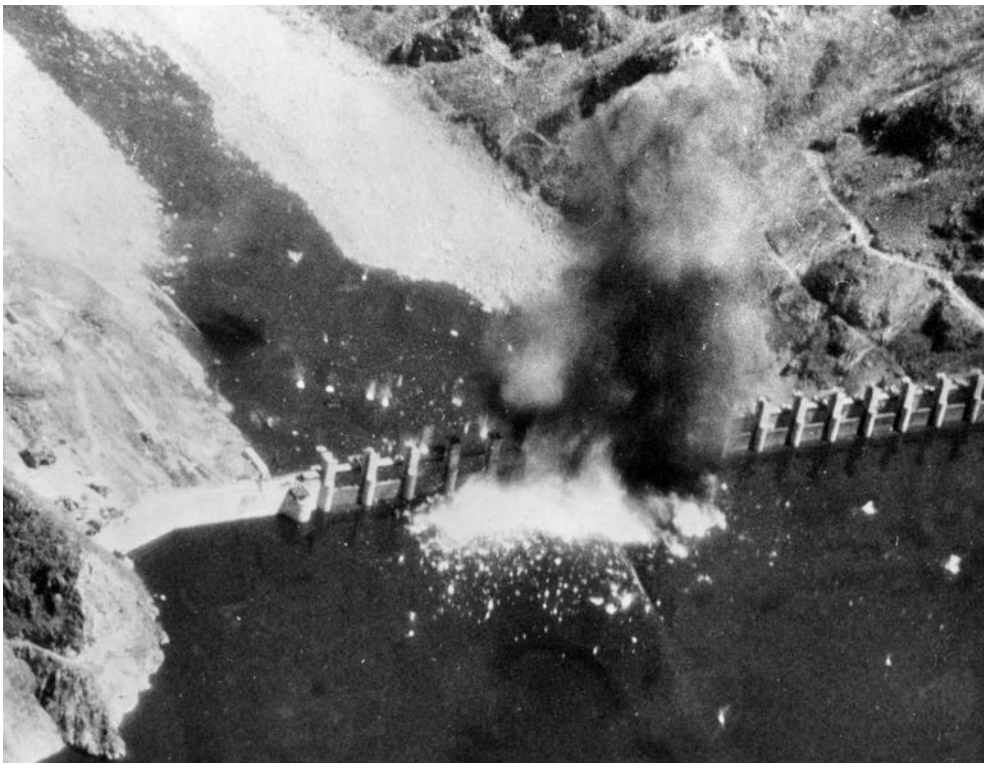
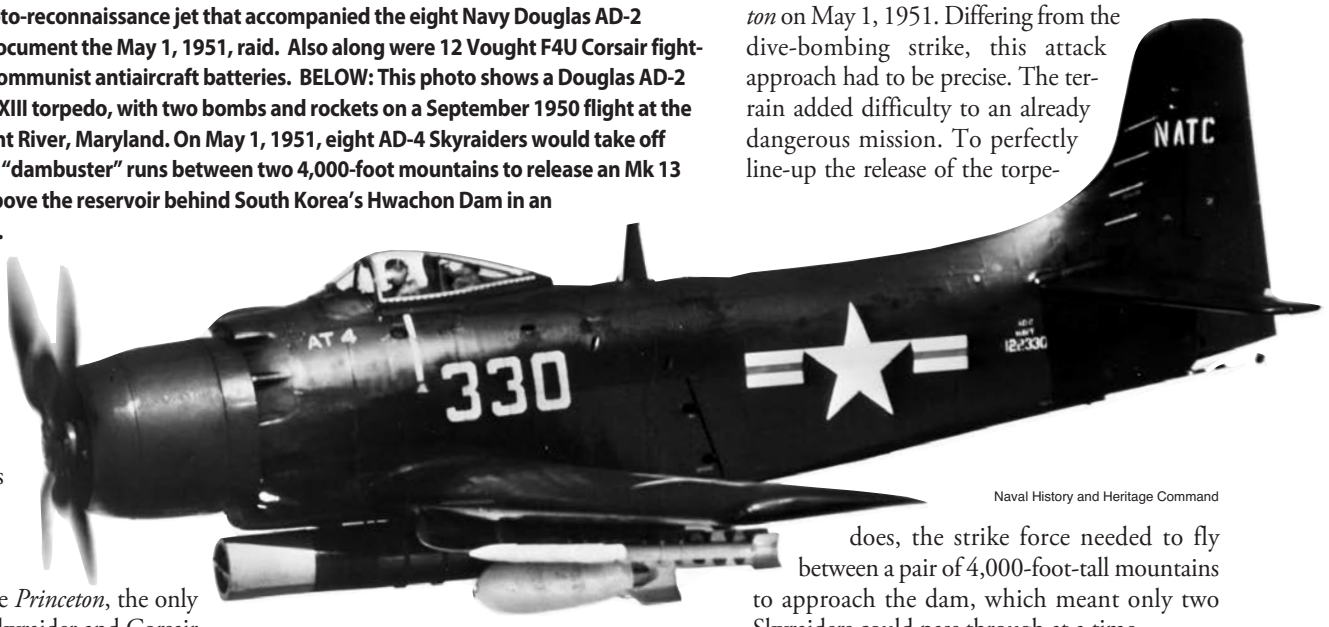
ABOVE: A diving Navy Douglas AD-4 Skyraider from Attack Squadron 195 "Dambusters" can be seen (in circle) just above the center of this photo of an attack on a North Korean lumber mill. TOP: A crew loads an Mk XIII torpedo being loaded on a Grumman TBF Avenger aboard the USS *Wasp* in 1944. At 13 feet long and 22.4 inches in diameter, a combat-ready Mk XIII weighed about 2,200 lbs, including 600 lbs of Torpex high explosive. To mount the Mk XIII on the Skyraiders in 1951, the dive brake in the middle of the fuselage had to be disabled. The plywood boxes protecting the torpedo's tailfins, propeller, and nose were designed to break off on impact.

National Museum of Naval Aviation



ABOVE: This image showing torpedoes finding their mark on the Hwachon Dam was captured by the Grumman F9F-2 Panther photo-reconnaissance jet that accompanied the eight Navy Douglas AD-2 Skyraider "dambusters" to document the May 1, 1951, raid. Also along were 12 Vought F4U Corsair fighter-bombers to take out the Communist antiaircraft batteries. BELOW: This photo shows a Douglas AD-2 Skyraider carrying one Mark XIII torpedo, with two bombs and rockets on a September 1950 flight at the Naval Air Test Center Patuxent River, Maryland. On May 1, 1951, eight AD-4 Skyraiders would take off from the carrier *Princeton* for "dambuster" runs between two 4,000-foot mountains to release an Mk 13 aerial torpedo only 50 feet above the reservoir behind South Korea's Hwachon Dam in an effort to destroy its spillways.



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unloaded their payload. Twelve 2,000-lb. bombs hit the target, but not one hit the critical sluice gates. One did manage to break off a little of the dam's surface. The "Tiny Tim" rockets fared even worse, merely bouncing off the dam. Upon returning to the *Princeton*, the only good news was that every Skyraider and Corsair had made it back. New ideas were needed.

That night, the carrier's skipper, Captain William Gallery, suggested using aerial torpedoes. Before sailing to Korea from Washington, the *Princeton* had been loaded with a dozen of the World War II-vintage Mark XIII aerial torpedoes. Obstacles to this unorthodox approach quickly arose. Apart from Merrick and Carlson, a call through the squadrons stationed aboard *Princeton* resulted in only three pilots that had experience with torpedoes. They remembered its less than stellar performance during the Second World War.

sion, with five pilots from attack squadron VA-195 and three from the composite squadron VC-35. (A composite squadron consisted of fighters and bombers). The eight men spent the night familiarizing themselves with the Mark XIIIs. Calculation determined that the Skyraider pilots had to drop their payload from a height of 50 feet at an airspeed of 160 mph. Any deviation from these parameters would cause the torpedo to either sink too soon or skip along the surface. Twelve Corsairs taken from fighter squadrons VF-192 and VF-193 would fly escort duty, primarily flak suppression. Accompanying the force was a Grumman F9F-2 Panther photo-reconnaissance jet to capture the raid and its results on film.

Even worse than the fact that only a handful of pilots had an understanding of torpedoes was that none of the aircraft carrier's ordnancemen had ever dealt with torpedoes. Developed after the 1942 Battle of Midway, the Mark XIII aerial torpedo carried 600-lbs. of Torpex. After locating the weapons, manuals had to be found and regularly consulted for on-the-job learning on how to mount the torpedo to the Skyraider. In order to mount the "tin fish," the dive brake in the middle of the fuselage had to be disabled. The ordnancemen also had to install a protective plywood box around the torpedo's tailfins and propeller—designed to break off upon impacting the water— as well as placing a plywood "drag ring" over the nose to slow its flight after release and entry into the reservoir. For a secondary mission against tunnels near the dam being used as shelters by NKPA troops, the AD-4s carried a pair of napalm bombs.

After the intense cram sessions by both pilots and ordnance crew to learn about the Mark XIIIs, Merrick led the strike force off the U.S.S. *Princeton* on May 1, 1951. Differing from the dive-bombing strike, this attack approach had to be precise. The terrain added difficulty to an already dangerous mission. To perfectly line-up the release of the torpedoes, the strike force needed to fly between a pair of 4,000-foot-tall mountains to approach the dam, which meant only two Skyraiders could pass through at a time.

"It was a little tricky because there was a bend in the reservoir and we had to come down at fairly high speed, level out and get down to about 160-165 knots and fly about fifty feet high," Carlson recalled.

Not until after the raid did intelligence reach U.N. forces that a few days earlier the North Koreans had strung a thick wire 800 feet above the waterline as an anti-aircraft measure. This obstacle was not encountered on either attack. The AD-4s were descending to reach the 50-foot requirement when they appeared at Hwachon

Dam at 11:30 a.m. Not expecting such a quick follow-up raid, the anti-aircrafts crews found themselves caught off-guard and offered only a light and inconsistent response. Those who fired at the naval aircraft soon found their positions targeted by the escorting Corsairs.

Pilots mentioned having struggled to maintain the necessary height and speed for proper release of the precious cargo. As each pair of Skyraiders made their attack run, torpedoes were released 400 yards from the dam. As quick as the Navy pilots arrived, their mission ended. Of the eight, one went off-course and missed the target. Another "tin fish" struck the dam but failed to detonate. Six of the eight torpedoes ran true, striking the sluice gates. The trailing photo-reconnaissance Panther captured the spectacular results. Hwachon Dam's center sluice gate disappeared after being struck. Another gate had a 10-foot hole blown in it

Although the message back to the *Princeton* was terse and efficient, the pilots could not help but feel a sense of triumph while watching millions of gallons of water empty into the river valleys. With the increased water levels on the rivers, Communist troops found routes blocked as they advanced in their latest offensive. Neither of the U.N.'s foes possessed the ability or time to repair the damage. The Chinese and North Koreans would no longer be able to use the dam to control river levels and impact the war in central Korea.

After taking care of the sluice gates of the Hwachon Dam, Merrick's pilots still had their napalm bombs. The Skyraiders and Corsairs turned towards the tunnels a few miles away. Again, the enemy was caught by surprise as napalm bombs rained down upon them. Intelligence later learned that some 610 soldiers from an NPKA infantry battalion sheltering in the tunnels had been killed or wounded.

All Skyraider pilots earned the Distinguished Flying Cross for this innovative and daring raid—including Merrick, who was downed by anti-aircraft fire on May 18. He was posthumously awarded the Navy Cross for Hwachon Dam and another mission. Since the end of the Korean War in July 1953, two more generators have been added to the Hwachon (now spelled Hwacheon) Dam, making it one of South Korea's most important sources of electrical power.

Chinese and North Korean forces having control of the Hwachon Dam forced the ranking U.N. officials in Korea to deal with an unfamiliar situation. After the Communist showed the devastating impact of being able to control water levels, efforts to deal with the problem using a ground assault then conventional bombs failed. An out-of-the-box idea to use aerial torpedoes to eliminate the dam's sluice gates arose. After crash courses to acquaint naval personnel with this World War II weapon, eight naval pilots flew their Douglas Skyraiders into history and successfully eliminated Communist ability to use Hwachon Dam to influence battlefield conditions by destroying a sluice gate and severely damaging a second. With their unique triumph on May 1—the last aerial torpedo raid in history—VA-195 changed their nickname to become the second aviation squadron named "Dambusters." ■

A Grumman F9F-2 Panther photo-reconnaissance jet captured this image of some of the six of eight Mk 13 aerial torpedos striking the Hwachon Dam on May 1, 1951, destroying one sluice gate and heavily damaging others.

Naval History and Heritage Command

The Dryden Flight Research Center's "NASA 831" SR-71B Blackbird—a trainer version of the SR-71 with a dual cockpit for the instructor—over California's snow-covered southern Sierra Nevada Mountains during a 1994 flight.

USAF/Judson Brohmer-Armstrong Photo Gallery

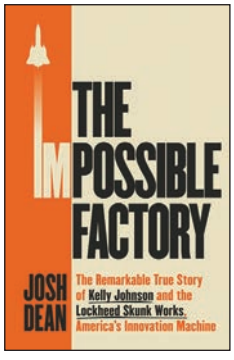
Lockheed's Skunk Works—those magnificent engineers and their flying machines going higher, faster, almost undetectable.

By Kevin Seabrooke

Few aviation organizations have shaped the modern world as profoundly as Lockheed's Skunk Works, formally known as Advanced Development Programs. Born in a rented circus tent next to an odorous plastics factory in 1943, the division has spent decades making the impossible fly as the aerospace industry's version of a "mad scientist's basement."

Under the legendary leadership of the brilliant and uncompromising Clarence "Kelly" Johnson, and later Ben Rich, Skunk Works produced a stable of "black projects" that redefined air power to become synonymous with radical innovation, secrecy, and engineering that seemed to leap decades into the future. Its aircraft weren't just machines; they were breakthroughs that redefined what flight could be.

In the late 1920s and early 1930s, aviation was a cultural phenomenon and pilots were as famous as movie stars, with the press covering every new record attempt. For a company that had already gone bankrupt once, 1927 was a watershed year thanks to the Vega—sleek, futuristic and fast. The high-wing monoplane was beautifully engineered, using a plywood monocoque (single shell) fuselage and a powerful Wright Whirlwind engine at a time when most airplanes were still fabric-covered biplanes. Fast, rugged, and reliable, the Vega didn't just sell well—it became a symbol of the Golden Age of Aviation.



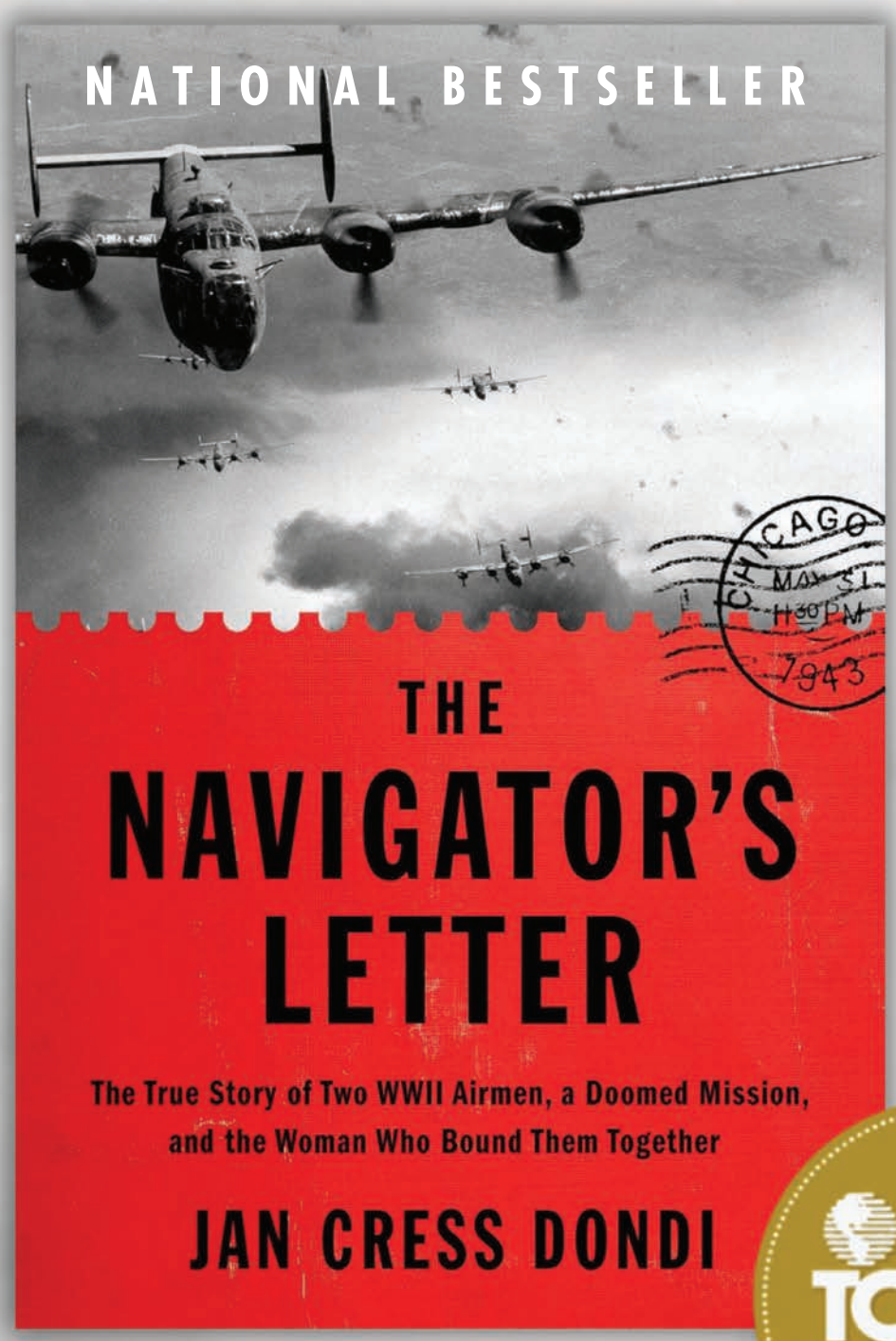
Celebrity pilots such as Amelia Earhart, Wiley Post, Ruth Nichols and air racer Roscoe Turner, who often flew with his pet lion, all flew the Vega.

This early celebrity association—the Hughes Aircraft Company, founded in 1932 at the Union Air Terminal in Burbank—where Lockheed also operated—helped cement Southern California as the center of America's aviation industry.

As much as it is about the incredible technology and engineering, this book is about the Johnson, who was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the National Security Medal and the National Medal of Science—and should perhaps be as famous as the Wright brothers in the public mind, but for the fact that so much of his work was classified. As he told *60 Minutes* in 1982, "If I can talk about it, it's obsolete."

Under Johnson, the Skunk Works' audacious "black projects" consistently turned the impossible into the operational. This legacy began in the 1950s with the U-2 "Dragon Lady," a high-altitude spy

WWII's Most Audacious and Overlooked Story–Finally Revealed



USA TODAY Best Seller

"... captured the tenor of the times. It took me back, reminding me of what went on. An honest and powerful portrayal."

–Brig Gen Richard 'Shotgun 1' Baughn, WWII P-51 fighter pilot, author of Hellish Vortex

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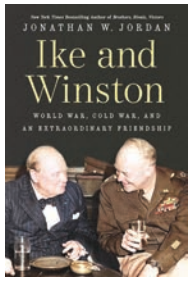
plane that cruised above 70,000 feet, and reached a pinnacle in the 1960s with the SR-71 "Blackbird." Capable of sustaining speeds above Mach 3 at altitudes exceeding 80,000 feet, the Blackbird remains the fastest air-breathing aircraft ever to fly.

Pivoting from speed to invisibility in 1981 with the F-117 Nighthawk, the first operational stealth aircraft, established the low-observable technology that paved the way for the F-22 Raptor and the F-35 Lightning II. Their RQ-170 Sentinel reconnaissance drone continues the unit's half-century tradition of dominating the high-frontier through "quick, quiet, and quality" engineering.

The Impossible Factory: The Remarkable True Story of Kelly Johnson and the Lockheed Skunk Works, America's Innovation Machine (Josh Dean, Dutton, New York, NY, 496 pp., May 19, 2026 $36 HC) is for everyone who has ever looked up in wonder at the amazing feats of engineering crossing the sky.

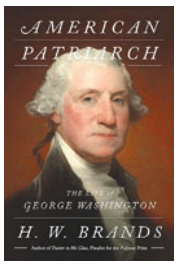
Ike and Winston: World War, Cold War, and an Extraordinary Friendship (Jonathan W. Jordan, Dutton, New York, NY, 576 pp., May 12, 2026 $40 HC)



Jordan, a *New York Times* bestselling author, explores the bond between Dwight Eisenhower and Winston Churchill—Kansas farm boy vs. aristocratic scion of Blenheim Palace—who would form one of the most consequential professional friendships of the 20th century.

Together they faced down Hitler, Stalin, two of the greatest threats to world peace. Later came the Cold War with the Soviets and the nuclear threat.

Where they differed most was in strategy. Remembering the trench warfare of WWI, Churchill was skeptical of a direct invasion of Europe such as Operation Overlord. He often lobbied for strikes in the Mediterranean, the Balkans, or Norway to weaken Germany before any "final blow." Eisenhower, on the other hand, felt the American "direct approach" was the only solution and viewed Churchill's ideas as distractions that jeopardized resources needed for the liberation of France.



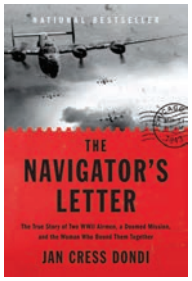
American Patriarch: The Life of George Washington (H. W. Brands, Doubleday, New York, NY, 640 pp., May 12, 2026 $40 HC)

Perfectly timed to coincide with the 250th anniversary of American independence, this biography offers a comprehensive, meticulously researched portrait of the man who embodies the very concept of what it is to be American—Founding Father and first president George Washington.

Brands—who likes to say, "as a historian, I don't know what's going to happen five years from now, but once it happens, I'm going to explain why it was inevitable"—incorporates excerpts from diaries, letters, speeches and publications to illuminate not only Washington, the man, but his times as well.

The holder of the Jack S. Blanton Sr. Chair in History at the University of Texas at Austin, Brands has written more than 30 books and is a two-time Pulitzer Prize finalist—The First American: The Life and Times of Benjamin Franklin (2000) and Traitor to His Class: The Privileged Life and Radical Presidency of Franklin Delano Roosevelt (2008).

The Navigator's Letter: The True Story of Two WWII Airmen, a Doomed Mission, and the Woman Who Bound Them Together ((Jan Cress Dondi, Union Square & Co., New York, NY, 400 pp., 2026 $32.50 HC)

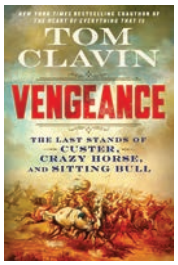


On "Black Sunday," (August 1, 1943) 178 B-24 Liberators flew from Benghazi, Libya, on a daring daylight raid on Germany's oil refineries in Ploiești, Romania—losing 53 planes, with 660 airmen killed or captured.

After the death of her mother, Polley Cress, the author found a footlocker full of letters from and to both her father, Bob Cress and her uncle, John B. White. Both left Hillsboro, Illinois, to join the U.S. Army Air Corps as navigators on B-24 bombers and flew multiple combat missions.

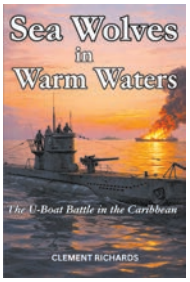
John was shot down and became a POW in Romania, those letters home to Polley becoming the only record of his survival. On May 31, 1944, Bob was also shot down, during a high-altitude bombing raid over Ploesti. Bob came home, John did not—but their letters tell a story of love, friendship, tragedy and the war that engulfed the world.

Vengeance: The Last Stands of Custer, Crazy Horse, and Sitting Bull (Tom Clavin, St. Martin's Press, New York, NY, 352 pp., May 12, 2026 $32 HC)



This book from journalist and #1 *New York Times* bestselling author Tom Clavin has been released to coincide with the 150th anniversary of the Battle of the Little Bighorn (June 25–26, 1876). Called the Battle of the Greasy Grass by the Lakota and other Plains Indians, "Custer's Last Stand" is one of the most studied and culturally significant engagements in American history, resonating today for its tactical shock, its long-term strategic consequences for Native American nations, and its enduring place in the American mythos. Modern writings downplay Custer's role as a "martyr," and the site of the battle was renamed Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument in 1991 and remains a symbol of resistance to Native American communities.

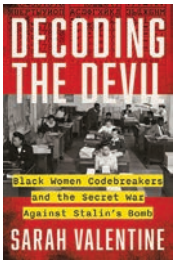
Sea Wolves in Warm Waters: The U-Boat Battle in the Caribbean (Clement Richards, Amazon, 290 pp., maps/photos, May 2, 2026 $24.95 HC)



Unlike many contemporary historians, Admiral Karl Dönitz, supreme commander of the Kriegsmarine's U-boat arm, did not see the Caribbean as an afterthought, a warm backwater far removed from the "real" war. In early 1942, he launched Operation Neuland (New Land) to cut the flow of petroleum from the Venezuelan oil fields and the large refineries of Aruba and Curaçao in the Dutch West Indies.

An author and activist from Dominica, Richards goes beyond the tactical in search of the impact the war had on those who experienced the rationing and fear of the u-boat campaign firsthand—covering the naval engagements, but examining how the war transformed the "paradise" of the Caribbean into a strategic frontline and how that affected local civilians.

Decoding the Devil: Black Women Codebreakers and the Secret War Against Stalin's Bomb (Sarah Valentine, Harper, New York, NY, 368 pp., June 2, 2026 $30 HC)

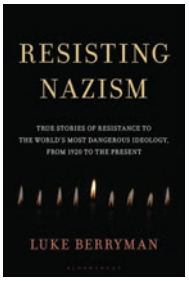


Time, declassification and diligent researchers continue to give us the untold stories of those who made significant contributions to the history of this nation. Stories like that of the "Code Girls"working in the U.S. Army cryptologic center at Arlington Hall Station in Virginia, 15 percent of whom were African American. Stories of the more than 50 African American women—of *Hidden Figures* fame—working as part of the segregated "West Area Computers" at the Langley Memorial Aeronautical Laboratory for the agency that became NASA.

Valentine's research now gives names and faces to another group of cryptographers, the 100 college-educated Black women who worked in the

Traffic Processing Division, known as "The Plantation." These women were part of the top-secret effort to gather and decrypt Russian messages sent to and from Moscow. Their work was only declassified in 1995 and then, it was mostly high-ranking military officers and a few select cryptanalysts who were given credit, not the segregated analytic units where the foundational math and traffic processing were done.

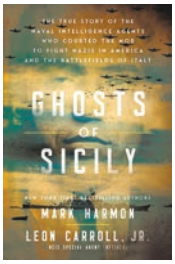
Resisting Nazism: True Stories of Resistance to the World's Most Dangerous Ideology, from 1920 to the Present (Luke Berryman, Bloomsbury Academic, New York, NY, 296 pp., 2026 $27 HC)



The founder of The Ninth Candle, a Chicago-based organization focused on Holocaust education and fighting antisemitism, Berryman was inspired to collect these stories of resistance after researching the life of his grandfather Sam Mindel. Prompted by an email from a distant relative, Berryman found out that "more than a dozen of my grandfather's relatives were murdered in the Holocaust." They had been among some 1,500 Jews working as forced farm labor near Anyksciai, Lithuania, in 1941, who were shot to death by Nazis and Lithuanian collaborators.

Resisting Nazism offers 12 chapters stories: from the "Edelweiss Pirates," working-class German teens rebelling by refusing to join the Hitler Youth, to Sebastian Haffner, a lawyer who fled Germany and wrote Germany: Jekyll and Hyde in 1940 to help the Allies understand Hitler and the Nazis.

Ghosts of Sicily: The True Story of the Naval Intelligence Agents Who Courted the Mob to Fight Nazis in America and the Battlefields of Italy (Mark Harmon and Leon Carroll, Harper Select, New York, NY, 304 pp., 2026 $29.99 HC)

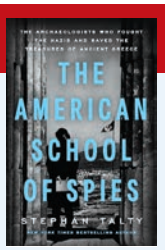


Naval Intelligence's "Operation Underword" extended to the five boroughs and New Jersey, for the help of surprisingly patriotic career criminals.

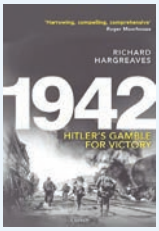
Mark Harmon, who starred as Leroy Jethro Gibbs on *NCIS* for 18 seasons, has teamed up with Leon Carroll for a series of books, *Ghosts of Honolulu* (2023) and *Ghosts of Panama* (2024), highlighting cases of the predecessor of the NCIS.

Harmon and Carroll humanize the men who made the world a safer place—that the public was never supposed to know about. ■

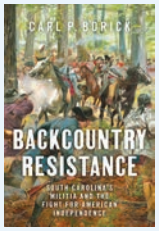
SHORT BURSTS



The American School of Spies: The Archaeologists Who Fought the Nazis and Saved the Treasures of Ancient Greece (Stephan Talty, Dutton, New York, NY, 320 pp., June 9, 2026 $35 HC) The Office of Strategic Services (OSS) "Greek desk" in Cairo employed the unlikeliest of spies—academics, classicists, and other specialists who supported the protection of Greek cultural heritage during World War II.

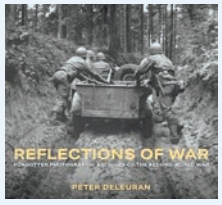


1942: Hitler's Gamble for Victory (Richard Hargreaves, Osprey, New York, 496 pp., 8 pp. b&w photos, June 16, 2026 $40 HC) The author spent 15 years researching in archives, museums and libraries across Europe examining Hitler's ambitious spring and summer campaigns in the Soviet Union and Africa in 1942.

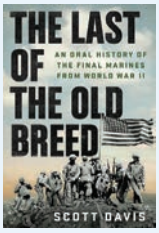


Backcountry Resistance: South Carolina's Militia and the Fight for American Independence (Carl P. Borick, University of South Carolina Press, Columbia, SC, 272 pp., 10 b&w halftones, 6 b&w tables, 4 maps, 2026 $27.99 HC) From the director of South Carolina's Charleston Museum, this book provides fascinating detail on the lives of a militia composed of farmers and tradesmen that staunchly resisted the British army in the southern theater of the Revolutionary War.

Iraq 2003: Precision warfare comes of age (Michael Napier, Gareth Hector, Illustrator, Osprey Publishing, New York, NY, 96 pp. with 65 photos and 16 pp. of color illustrations, maps, 2026 $25 SC) Examines in great detail— with artwork, diagrams, photos and maps, the role of aircraft in the largest air campaign of the 21st century—the U.S.-led Coalition that invaded Iraq to overthrow Saddam Hussain in 2003.

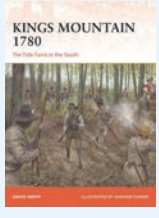


Reflections of War: Forgotten Photographic Archives of the Second World War Hardcover (Peter Deleuran, The History Press, Cheltenham, UK, 208 pp., 2026 $49.99 HC) After discovering a trove of nearly 300 glass negatives and photos from WWII press releases in 2020, Deleuran made a deal with the company that owns the rights to restore the photos for their archives in exchange for producing this visual time capsule.



The Last of the Old Breed: An Oral History of the Final Marines from World War II (Scott Davis, St. Martin's Press, New York, 336 pp., May 19, 2026 $35 HC) An oral history of U.S. Marines in the Pacific Theater of World War II, featuring more than 130 veterans, ranging in age from 90 to 103—some of the last witnesses to the brutal struggle against Imperial Japan.

Vietnam: My War—Over Five Decades Later (James Ike Schaap Ph.D., 436 pp., 100+ images, 2024 $25.95 SC) The author shares his personal experience as a low-ranking combat Marine rifleman and later, MP, in Vietnam in 1965-66—as well as his continuing struggle with the reality of surviving and living with PTSD.



Kings Mountain 1780: The Tide Turns in the South (David Smith, author; Graham Turner, Illustrator, Osprey Publishing, New York, NY, 96 pp., battle art, maps, 3-D diagrams, photographs, April 21, 2026 $25 SC) In 1780, the Patriot militia and Overmountain Men—Appalachian Mountain frontiersmen—marched 300 miles to defeat Major Patrick Ferguson and his Loyalists at Kings Mountain.

Tradecraft, Tactics, and Dirty Tricks: Russian Intelligence and Putin's Secret War (Sean Michael Wiswesser, Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, MD, 288 pp., April 21, 2026 $36.95 HC) Chock-full of detailed stories about the Russian Intelligence Services, from a veteran CIA officer—and an expert on Russian history and culture who is fluent in the language—who has debriefed many Russian intelligence officers and defectors.

Lords of the Salt Road: The Norse Earls of Orkney and the Viking World (Angus Konstam, Osprey, New York, NY, 320 pp., 8-page color plate section, June 2, 2026 $30 HC) The lands of their semi-autonomous empire once covered much of Scotland—400-miles from Shetland down to the Clyde Estuary in the 11th century. The influence of the Norse earls of Orkney extended as far as Scandinavia, continental Europe and even the Mediterranean.

QUELL UNREST IN THE LATEST *WARTALES* DLC, AND GET RICH OR DIE TRYING IN *TROPICO 7*. *By Joseph Luster*

WARTALES: FIRES IN THE CAPITAL

Genre: Strategy • **Platform:** PC • **Publisher:** Shiro Games • **Available:** Now

If you want to experience medieval times without booking dinner and a show, look no further than *Wartales*. The medieval open-world tactical RPG from developer Shiro Games recently expanded with a piece of Contract DLC titled *Fires in the Capital*, which aims to capture the flames of revolution as trouble brews in the heart of the city.

Fires in the Capital is set in the city of Isandrin, which is currently under the control of a new leader. Thanks to General Maxime's sweeping reforms, unrest looms large, adding to the already-present tensions of rival factions. It's up to you, through this tumultuous time, to wrest order from the throes of chaos in the streets of Isandrin.

To do so, you'll have to chip away at the source of the unrest itself. From removing propaganda posters to hunting down brigands and fleeing criminals, every move you make will hopefully work against the spread of destabilization, one neighborhood at a time. These moves also have cascading effects, and you won't be able to restore the flow of trade until you put out the fire of riots in the neighborhoods themselves. The calmer the residents become, the closer you'll be to restoring economic stability.

Not everything can be handled behind the scenes. Those who have played *Wartales* and its ilk know well that sometimes you have to get your hands dirty. This involves direct confrontation with the aforementioned brigands, as well as missions involving convoy escorts, civilian rescue and other essential means of aiding the populace. Like the base game, *Fires in the Capital* aims to serve up a deft balance of combat and grander, tactical decision making, both of which have their own unique consequences.

Wartales has done well for itself since its initial launch on Steam and GOG, and this update continues the tradition of a healthy number of DLC additions that arrived before it. *Fires in the Capital* marks the third *Contract* DLC, following *The Beast Hunt* and *The Fief*, and there are also two expansions in the form of *The Skelmar Invasion* and *The Curse of Rigel*. DLC has been coming out at a relatively rapid pace since *The Skelmar Invasion* dropped in 2024, and not all have been met with open arms, but *Fires in the Capital* looks like one worth checking out if you're already deep into your time with the main game. ■

TROPICO 7

Genre: Simulation • **Platform:** PC • **Publisher:** Kalypso Media • **Available:** 2026

It's time once again to step back into the shoes of El Presidente, securing your glorious rule by developing and expanding your island in *Tropico 7*. The simulation game series from developer Gaming Minds Studios and publisher Kalypso Media is back with another in-depth city-builder, gifting players with the ability to shape their own landscape and realize the perfect vision to complement their multifaceted style of leadership.

As usual, the pressure is on as El Prez is tasked with succeeding through five campaign maps complete with new challenges, the series's biggest islands to date, and even a new nemesis in the form of Victoria Guerra. There are more ways than ever to go about your duties, too, whether you're changing the shape of the land itself or navigating the tricky, mine-filled world of internal politics.

In addition to the larger islands and main campaigns, *Tropico 7* boasts 10 extra scenarios and over 20 sandbox maps, as well as the ability to throw further wrinkles into the mix with the help of the random map generator. The new terraforming feature also ups the customizability of it all, giving players a chance to form their islands as they see fit and even create new ones entirely. If you have a project in mind as the glorious leader, chances are you can shape the land to make them work in one way or another.

The military system has also been reworked for the new entry, giving players more direct control of military units to assist in fending off rebels and threats from foreign lands. Doing whatever it takes to maximize the use of your land and keep your citizens happy continues to be the name of the game here, and it's nice to see *Tropico 7* build on its storied past in more interesting, freeing ways.

The *Tropico* series has been a pretty safe bet for years at this point, so it should come as no surprise that we're happily embarking on the seventh entry. If it's anything like the sixth, we'll be playing this one until… well, probably until El Presidente sees fit to return yet again. ■

FROM THE PUBLISHERS OF
MILITARY HERITAGE MAGAZINE

D-DAY

Through A Soldier's Eyes…
Limited Edition Print

The storm was violent, the waves were huge and the noise was deafening for the soldiers in the landing craft on D-Day, June 6, 1944. As they neared the beach, the door dropped open … and this photo lets you see exactly what they saw, and feel what they felt: treacherous breakers, withering machine gun fire, a long beach, huge cliffs, and near-certain death.

None hesitated. These brave unselfish men jumped into the cold Atlantic waters. Two thirds of them died soon after, so that we could live in freedom.

This historic photograph shows American soldiers from Company E, 16th Infantry, 1st Infantry Division exiting their LCVP landing craft under heavy German machine gun fire on Omaha Beach. The photo was taken by Coast Guard Chief Photographer's Mate Robert F. Sergeant.

Company E landed on Easy Red Beach at 0645 in the face of murderous fire. Those few who survived kept wading right into everything the enemy had and took their objective, which provided the only exit from the beach that the entire Fifth Corps had for two days. Company "E," perhaps by strength of will and courage alone, helped keep the entire landing force from being thrown back into the sea. For a month afterwards, those who survived remained almost in a daze.

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In June 1917 Campbell commanded the heavily armed HMS *Pargust*, a 2,800-ton Devonport-converted collier that carried two 4.1-inch guns, four 12-pounders and two 14-inch underwater torpedo tubes. But the latter were not as formidable as they might seem. It was virtually impossible to aim and fire the torpedoes accurately, as the ship was almost never able to maneuver in the manner that a submarine could.

Off the south coast of Ireland, *Pargust* was hit by a torpedo from the mine-carrying submarine *UC-29*. Campbell had added to the appearance of the "panic party" with further touches, including a bowler-hat wearing "captain" complete with a stuffed parrot in a cage. Every aspect of his crew's reaction was intended to make the U-boat captain come closer to Pargust's guns or torpedoes.

After half an hour, the *UC-29* surfaced 50 yards away and Campbell gave the order for the gun crews to open fire. A torpedo was launched but missed the submarine. Several shells hit the sub, which then exploded, most likely from one of its own mines.

By the summer of 1917 the Q-ship versus U-boat war was reaching a climax—England had lost six Q-ships, while Germany had lost at least twelve U-boats. It was now virtually impossible to entice the subs to the surface. The most legendary battle between Q-ship and U-boat took place in the Bay of Biscay on August 8. The HMS *Durnraven* had added a new twist to the Q-ship concept. Instead of looking like an old tramp steamer, *Dunraven* portrayed a 3,000-ton armed merchant steamer. She had a single 4.1-inch gun visible on her stern, with four more guns concealed behind false bulwarks, in addition to torpedo tubes and two stern depth charge racks. The latter were more likely to work against U-boats. Having the ship appear as an armed merchantman was intended to goad a U-boat captain, who, unaware of *Dunraven*'s great firepower, into making a surfaced attack. Campbell the Q-ship ace was in command, but this was one battle he would lose.

At mid-day the *U-61*, cruising on the surface, approached *Dunraven* and submerged. Campbell made sure his ship gave the appearance of running in panic from the sub, even reducing speed to allow the submerged sub to catch up. His tactic worked and *U-61* surfaced and opened fire with its deck gun from two miles away. It was the opening of a battle unlike any ever fought at sea.

One shell came close and a great cloud of steam rose from the ship. It was another ruse, a special system that blasted steam as if from a ruptured boiler. Then the stern gun fired back, but missed intentionally, under orders from Campbell. He sent distress calls on an open frequency sure to be heard by the U-boat. When the *U-61* was half a mile away, Campbell sent off the panic party. It was a masterful performance, even leaving one boat dangling in the davits. The gunfire continued, and one German shell hit *Dunraven*'s stern among the ready ammunition. An explosion sent a fireball into the air, but this was no ruse. Dunraven was badly hit. A fire started and a depth charge went off. The concealed gun crews remained at their stations as the sub came closer. With the black smoke obscuring their aim, Campbell had to wait. Two more depth charges cooked off in what Campbell described as a "terrific explosion." This destroyed one of the concealed 4.1-inch guns, but the crew was unhurt. The fire was spreading quickly.

Blazing wood and hot shrapnel made the deck a deadly hell. The magnitude and number of explosions alerted the *U-61* that they were dealing with a Q-ship and they submerge. Campbell, even though his ship was burning and the fire was certain to reach the magazines, continued to watch and wait. At 1:23 p.m. *Dunraven* took a torpedo hit and Campbell ordered "Abandon ship!" A second panic party went into the boats, but the remaining gunners stayed aboard with their captain.

The battle of wits and courage continued as more ammunition exploded. *U-61* surfaced off *Dunraven*'s stern and continued to pour shells into the hull, safe from any return fire. At 2:53 the *U-61* submerged and passed *Dunraven*'s port side, whereupon Campbell, watching the periscope, launched a torpedo, which missed. The sub did not notice it. Another was launched but failed to detonate upon striking. Having had enough, the *U-61* moved off and returned to Germany. Now Campbell truly abandoned his ship, which sank later that evening, white ensign flying. Campbell was awarded a bar to his Victoria Cross, becoming the most decorated naval officer of the Great War.

Altogether there were more than200 Q-ships, of which 27 were sunk, having defeated between 12 and 14 submarines. They played only a minor role in the U-boat war, but their very existence was a factor in Germany's decision to unleash unrestricted submarine warfare in February of 1917. This, of course, was the spark that ignited the United States' declaration of war in April.

Ironically, the Germans, despite their claim that Q-ships were a "dirty trick," employed them for their own use. The most famous German Q-ship was the armed windjammer *Seeadler*, which prowled the South Atlantic and Pacific from November 1916 to July 1917, sinking more than a dozen Allied ships and capturing their crews. ■

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infantrymen of the U.S. Army.

The American forces reached the outskirts of Cherbourg by June 22, but the city was heavily defended. It wasn't until June 26 that Walsh's unit finally pushed into the city proper, linking up with elements of the U.S. Army's 79th Infantry Division. Cherbourg was a nightmare of intimate, urban warfare as machine guns echoed down the smoky cobblestone streets.

Fighting house-to-house and street-to-street defined the brutal advance. The German defenders were deeply entrenched, having positioned lethal MG-42 machine guns in basement windows at sidewalk level to create deadly funnels of interlocking fire that shredded anything attempting to move up the avenues.

Walsh recalled the Germans using wooden bullets painted red or green—that made an "ugly" wound at a certain range—during the street fighting in Cherbourg. He said a German prisoner told him they were used "only in the rifles of men engaged in close order firing, such as street fighting, where German troops were liable to fire in the direction of other German soldiers engaged in the same street fighting."

The Americans were forced to each building floor by floor, digging the enemy out of the rubble with grenades and close-quarters combat. Dead and wounded from both sides littered the streets. By nightfall, the Allies managed to wrest control of the eastern half of the port, but the western side—the industrial heart of the harbor—remained a heavily fortified stronghold.

The morning of June 27 dawned over a broken, smoking city. Walsh realized that to evaluate the port facilities, he first had to conquer the remaining defenses. The operation had already cost his small unit a staggering 25-percent casualty rate. Gathering just 16 men, he decided to seize the initiative and strike the old naval arsenal on the western waterfront.

The arsenal was a dark labyrinth of subterranean concrete bunkers and heavy steel doors, bristling with snipers. Under a hail of rifle fire, Walsh and his men made a coordinated assault using bazookas to blow the heavy steel doors off their hinges, followed with volleys of fragmentation grenades. The sheer ferocity and speed of the American assault completely shocked the defenders. Stunned by what they assumed was a massive vanguard, the German resistance in the arsenal collapsed—400 enemy soldiers emerged from the smoke, hands raised, surrendering to a Coast Guardsman and 16 Seabees.

But the fight was far from over as Walsh soon learned of a far more desperate situation looming

directly over the harbor. Fort du Homet, a formidable stone citadel, remained in German hands. Inside its thick walls, a garrison of 350 heavily armed troops was prepared for a protracted siege. Even worse, they held 52 American paratroopers prisoner within the fortress.

Calling in an artillery barrage or mounting a frontal assault would be a death sentence for the captive GIs and brute force would only result in a tragic massacre. Walsh needed a radically different tactic. Turning to Navy Reserve Lt. Frank Lauer, Walsh asked him if he had ever played poker.

Lauer watched as Walsh tied a piece of white parachute silk to a makeshift pole to act as a flag of truce, and the two men stepped out from the cover of the ruined arsenal. Leaving their heavy weapons behind, the two men began the long walk toward the citadel gates, knowing that hundreds of German rifles and machine guns were tracking their every step. It was audacity personified.

They demanded an audience with the garrison commander and the stunned guards led them into the fortress full of battle-hardened soldiers. Deep behind enemy lines and entirely cut off from rescue, Walsh executed the biggest bluff of his life.

He did not negotiate; he dictated terms. Staring the German commander directly in the eye, Walsh painted a terrifying, entirely fictitious picture. He claimed that Cherbourg had completely fallen. He stated with absolute conviction that he had an overwhelming force of 800 combat-hardened American troops waiting just outside the fortress walls, backed by heavy armor and artillery. He warned the German officer that if the fort did not capitulate immediately, his massive force would reduce the citadel to dust, killing everyone inside.

The tension in the stone command post was suffocating. The German commander weighed his options, staring intensely at Walsh, searching for any flicker of hesitation or any crack in the American's armor. He found none. Walsh's demeanor was absolute ice. The seconds stretched into an eternity as the lives of 52 American paratroopers hung precariously in the balance.

Finally, the German officer's resolve broke. He handed over his sidearm and surrendered the fortress unconditionally. Without firing a single shot at the citadel, Walsh and his tiny element disarmed three hundred and fifty enemy troops. The heavy steel doors of Fort du Homet swung open, and 52 ecstatic American paratroopers walked out into the daylight as free men. In less than three weeks, starting from a muddy beachhead, Walsh had captured 750 enemy combatants, liberated his fellow Americans, and secured the most vital strategic port in the European theater, earning the Navy Cross for his unparalleled bravery. ■

WITNESS

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brought him to the rocks of Devil's Den where Timothy O'Sullivan forever captured his likeness.

As the war ground on into 1864, Waud accompanied the army through Ulysses S. Grant's relentless Overland Campaign. The war had changed, shifting from grand, open-field maneuvers to brutal, continuous trench warfare. In the dense, burning thickets of the Wilderness and the muddy, blood-soaked trenches of Spotsylvania Court House, where he produced a famous sketch titled "The toughest fight yet," depicting the savage, hand-to-hand combat at the Mule Shoe Salient.

During this campaign, Waud's bravery verged on the reckless. Perched in a tall tree to get a better view of the Confederate lines, he drew the attention of enemy sharpshooters and calmly finished his sketch as bullets clipped the branches around him, showering him with bark and leaves. His dedication often put his life in jeopardy, but his images provided the Northern public with an unflinching look at the war of attrition that Grant was waging against Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia.

The final year of the conflict saw Waud sketching the grueling siege of Petersburg. His drawings from this period are incredibly detailed, showing the complex network of bombproofs, zigzagging trenches, and heavy mortar batteries that scarred the Virginia landscape. He documented the disastrous Battle of the Crater in July 1864, where Union forces detonated a massive mine beneath the Confederate lines, only to suffer a horrific defeat in the resulting crater. Waud's eye for the granular details of soldier life never wavered; he sketched the men attempting to stay cool in the sweltering heat, the endless digging, and the ever-present danger of sniper fire.

When the Confederate lines finally broke in April 1865, Waud was there to ride with the victorious Union army into the burning capital of Richmond. Days later, he was present at Appomattox Court House to sketch the emotional scenes surrounding the surrender of Lee, bringing his four-year odyssey with the Army of the Potomac to a triumphant, exhausted close.

Harper's Weekly rightly acclaimed Waud as the most important artist-correspondent of the Civil War. He had submitted hundreds of sketches, far more than any other artist in the field. But the cessation of hostilities did not end Waud's career as a visual journalist. In the years following the war, he utilized his reputation to explore the rapidly changing landscape of the reunited nation. *Harper's* sent him on extensive tours throughout the South and the American West. His postwar assignments were in many ways an attempt to visually knit the fractured country back together. He documented the devastating impact of the war on southern cities, the slow process of Reconstruction, and the struggles of newly freed slaves. His illustrations of the Freedmen's Bureau and African Americans exercising their newly won right to vote are vital historical records of the era's complex social dynamics.

Waud's travels took him down the Mississippi River, where he captured the steamboat culture, the bustling levees of New Orleans, and the sprawling Acadian homesteads of Louisiana. His eye for dramatic scenes remained as sharp as ever; in 1871, he traveled to Illinois to document the catastrophic aftermath of the Great Chicago Fire, rendering the smoldering ruins of the city with the same meticulous detail he had applied to the shattered landscapes of Virginia. As the nation moved toward the Gilded Age, Waud's work continued to appear in prominent publications, including *The Century Magazine*, and his wartime sketches were extensively utilized in the massive, multi-volume historical compilation *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*. In 1870, the British-born artist who had done so much to document the American experience officially became a naturalized U.S. citizen.

Despite his advancing age, Waud remained an active, working artist into his early sixties. In 1891, he embarked on a tour of the South to sketch the old, overgrown battlefields for a new series of war narratives designed to promote travel by aging veterans. The landscapes that had once been stripped bare by artillery fire and choked with the dead were now quiet and returning to nature. It was while touring these hallowed grounds that Waud's heart finally gave out. On April 6, 1891, at the age of 62, Waud suffered a fatal heart attack in Marietta, Georgia, his sketchbook in hand. He was buried at the Saint James Episcopal Cemetery in Marietta, a fittingly quiet resting place for a man who had spent his life amidst the deafening roar of history.

Preserved in the archives of the Library of Congress, which houses more than a thousand of his original, raw battlefield sketches that reveal the frantic, terrifying energy of the Civil War. The smudged pencil lines, the hastily scribbled notes, and the occasional stain of mud or weather provide a visceral connection to the past that no photograph of a static, post-battle landscape can ever achieve. Waud did not merely record the events of the American Civil War; he captured its soul, its misery, and its terrible grandeur. Through his unwavering courage and his extraordinary artistic vision, he saw that the sacrifices of the men who fought from Bull Run to Appomattox would never be relegated to the realm of abstract statistics. Through his sketches, Waud put a human face on the Civil War. ■

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itzer batteries had retreated further west. In short, Hosingen was far enough behind enemy lines that the 109th Field Artillery batteries could no longer support them except with prayers. They were on their own.

For Milton, K Company's situation was dire. At 6:02 p.m., Division intelligence confirmed the reports that at least eight German tanks were roaming inside Hosingen. After receiving more disquieting news, Milton reported K Company's situation to the division headquarters at 6:50. Company K had little ammunition left, and the men resorted to hand grenades. They were still battling building to building, but it was only a matter of time.

Around 7:40 p.m., the division switchboard operator received another message from Hosingen. Feiker's voice sounded defiant. "We are still making them pay—house to house. We are still in there but don't know for how long." As the 17th drew to a close, Feiker kept Milton apprised of his condition. The Germans were tightening the screws on his beleaguered company. All day, Milton had been pestering Fuller to allow K Company to withdraw, but Fuller had refused.

Now, it was too late, as elements of the 2nd Panzer Division had overrun Fuller's own headquarters in Clervaux earlier that evening. When Milton suggested that Feiker try to infiltrate through German lines to break out of Hosingen, Feiker rejected the suggestion. Feiker's answer was stoic: "It was impossible; too much heavy stuff around." Meanwhile, Milton kept trying to help K Company. At 3:05 a.m. on December 18, he called the acting regimental commander, Col. Theodore Seeley. The Germans had overrun the regimental headquarters earlier that night, and now Seeley had taken over. "Is there anything we can do for K Company?" he pleaded.

Seeley's answer was stark. "There is nothing we can do—all of us are in the same boat." On the morning of the 18th, the men in Hosingen watched helplessly as the progression of German vehicles and horse-drawn artillery continued their march westward. They had little with which to thwart the German steamroller.

They had only two rounds of smoke for the 81mm mortar, and all their 60mm mortars were out of action. In fact, the men were scrounging around for small arms ammunition for their rifles. In addition, their .50-caliber ammunition was nearly gone. They were saving it for one more worthwhile target. A little after 7 a.m., the target presented itself.

Lieutenant Hutter, one of the engineer platoon leaders, saw four horse-drawn carts, carrying ammunition. As they drew closer to the northern end of Hosingen, they reached a choke point 400 yards from his position, and a traffic jam ensued. He nodded his head and pointed at the congested mass of horses and carts. In response, an M2 machine gun and several other light machine guns opened up a blistering fusillade of steel death, and the rounds tore into the packed columns, tearing apart horse limbs while cleaving apart the wooden carts. The massive burst lasted two seconds, but that was all Hutter needed. The carts exploded into balls of flame that licked the sky. Chaos overwhelmed the column, sending horses and men everywhere.

Jarrett later remarked, "It was a grand sight." Unfortunately, it did not save them. At 8:25 a.m., Col. Daniel B. Strickler, the executive officer of the 110th Infantry Regiment, reported K Company's condition to Major Plitt at division.

His words left no doubt as to K Company's eventual fate. "K Company cannot do what was suggested to them," he told Plitt on the phone. "They are still holding out and cannot do anything else. They [K Company] reported considerable enemy artillery and trucks at Bockholz. They were at the following grid 814584. [Just west of Hosingen] They are taking care of it with what little they have because they are under observation."

Several minutes later, Milton reported over the phone directly to the division tactical operations center. "K Co has been pushed in more. They have destroyed all secret documents they have in their possession. Engineers that are also with them have done the same."

The Germans were closing in on the isolated pockets of Americans in Hosingen, and Jarrett could see that the end was near. His water was gone, his soldiers had little ammunition left, and the Germans had surrounded the town of Hosingen with tanks. Jarrett decided to speak to Feiker about the futility of resistance. Both of them then decided to surrender to the Germans, but only after they had destroyed most of their own equipment so it would not fall into enemy hands. The engineers used thermite grenades, TNT and gasoline to burn out the engine blocks of their vehicles, while they provided their excess TNT to the tankers and the infantry to do the same.

Sometime between 8 and 10 a.m., Feiker and Jarrett cobbled together a white flag made out of cloth and headed out to parley with the Germans while Payne's remaining tankers hung white panels across the fronts of their tanks. Seeing the panels and the flag, the Germans stopped shooting. After reaching the German lines, the two American officers discussed the terms, and then at 10 a.m., the Germans escorted the two back to Hosingen under guard. Back at the Company CP, the radioman sent his last report to Milton. He told the battalion commander they had completed their mission to best of their ability, and they were now surrendering to the Germans. The time was 10:07. When Feiker and Jarrett got back to the CP, they told the men to line up in columns of three with their hands placed firmly on their helmets.

Flynn estimated that the total number of American prisoners was around 300. When Flynn tallied the wounded and killed that were defending the town, the numbers were remarkably low—ten wounded and seven killed. The German commander who received the town's surrender was shocked when he learned the number of American wounded and dead. He was even more shocked to learn that only two companies had defended the town. The Germans believed they were facing a reinforced battalion.

The loss of Hosingen opened the east-west road for German military traffic. When Kokott learned of the size of the Hosingen garrison, he was impressed that such a little band had held out against such overwhelming odds. He wrote after the war that Feiker had earned Kokott's respect, and he singled him out in a post-war interview. Kokott finally had Hosingen, and his division and the Panzer Lehr Division could now push westward to Bastogne.

However, the damage had been done. The Panzer Lehr Division did not reach Bastogne in time. In fact, the U.S. 101st Airborne Division had beaten the German tanks by only a few hours. The consequences were dire for the Germans.

They surrounded Bastogne, but they could never take the crossroads town, and because of that, their supply lines were overextended and when they were within sight of the Meuse River their tanks ran out of gas.

After the war, General Fritz Bayerlein wrote that the failure of the German Army to take Bastogne seriously jeopardized the Ardennes offensive, and he then concluded that the chief reason why his Panzer Lehr Division could not reach Bastogne in time was the dogged defense of Hosingen, which held up the 26th Volksgrenadier Division and the Panzer Lehr for over 36 precious hours, hours they could not afford to lose. ■

Leo G. Barron served two tours during Operation Iraqi Freedom with the 101st Airborne Division as a rifle company executive officer and as a battalion intelligence officer. He holds a master's degree in history from Western Michigan University and a bachelor's degree in history from the College of the Holy Cross. An avid historian, he resides in Sierra Vista, Arizona, where he teaches at the U.S. Army's Intelligence Center.

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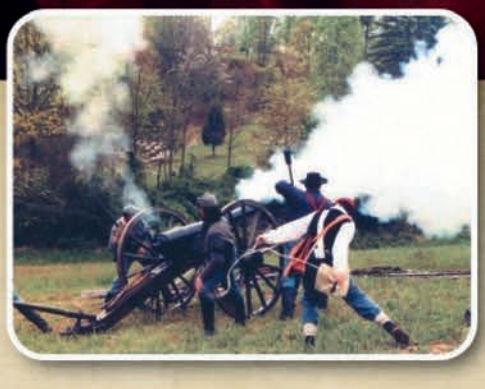

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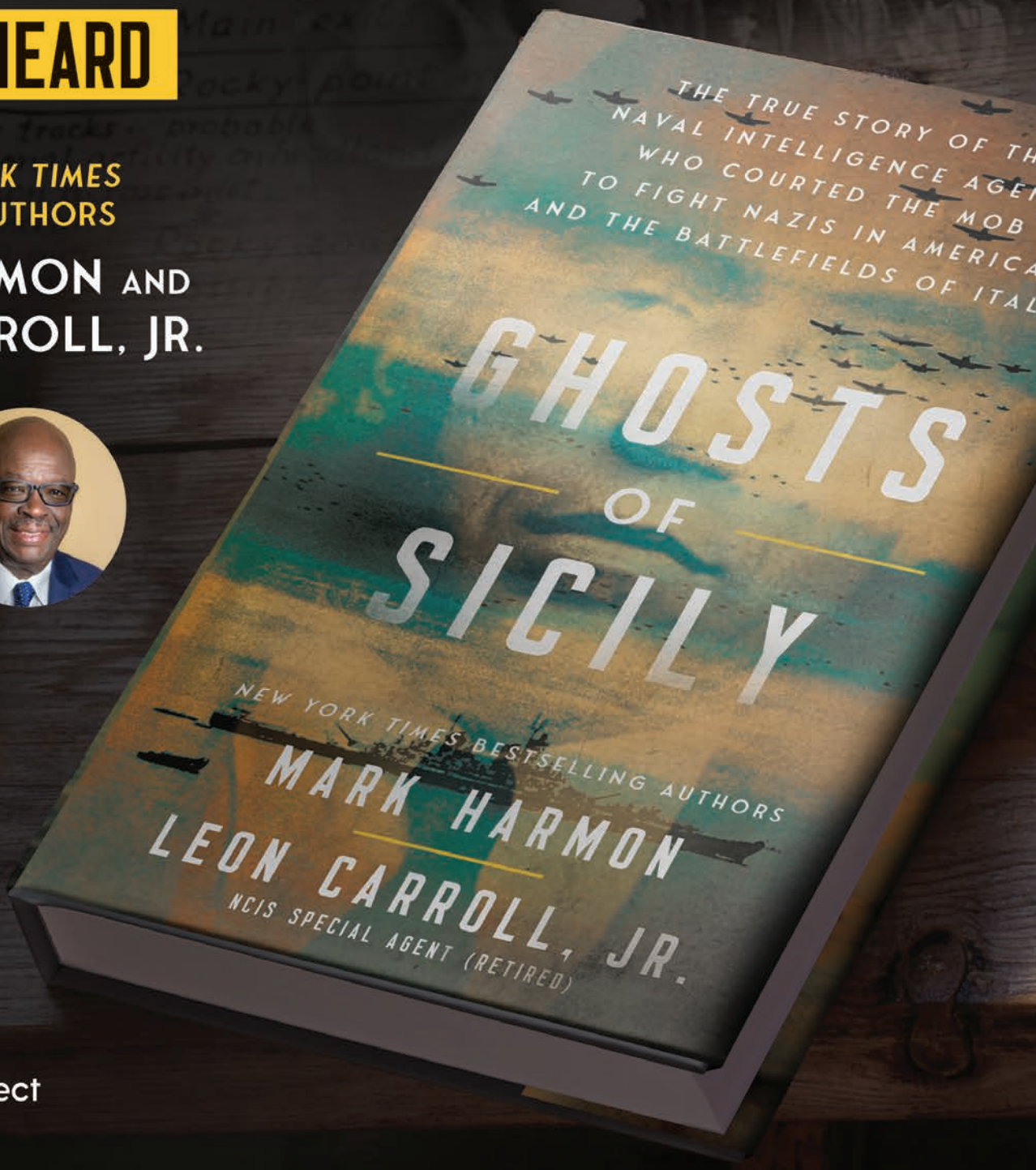

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