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COVER: Napoleon orders General Oudinot to pursue the Russians army at the Battle of Friedland, June 14, 1807. Copyright Réunion des Musées Nationaux/Art Resource, NY.

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When asserting the Monroe Doctrine, Theodore Roosevelt wielded the "big stick" of the U.S. Navy.

NEVER WAS THEODORE ROOSEVELT'S FAMOUS dictum, "Speak softly and carry a big stick," used to greater effect than in the high-stakes standoff between the American president and prickly, pugnacious Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany over the debt crisis in Venezuela in December 1902.

Roosevelt and Wilhelm, superficially at least, were much alike. Born within three months of each other, they were both athletic, competitive, and high-strung. Both had overcome debilitating childhood ailments—Roosevelt suffered from severe asthma; Wilhelm was born with a withered left arm—by sheer force of will, and had risen to lead their nations. Both men, too, were avid readers, particularly of military history, and shared a healthy respect for the use of sea power in national affairs.

But there were significant differences between Roosevelt and the Kaiser, as well. Roosevelt was a prototypical extrovert, a man who, it was said, "wanted to be the bride at every wedding and the corpse at every funeral." His toothy smile was world-famous. Wilhelm was a great deal more reserved. Most importantly, Roosevelt had actually fought in a war, charging up Kettle Hill in the Spanish-American War at the head of his Rough Riders and winning a (long-delayed) Medal of Honor in the process. Wilhelm's military service amounted to riding in parades and sporting a largely self-awarded rack of medals on the breast of one of his 300 different uniforms.

It was inevitable, perhaps, that two such larger-than-life individuals would clash. The stage of their confrontation was South America, specifically corrupt, debt-ridden Venezuela. When Cipriano Castro, "an unspeakably villainous little monkey," in Roosevelt's view, seized power after a revolution in 1899, he repudiated his country's mountain of debts to European nations, specifically Germany and Great Britain. Three years later, the two powers announced that they were preparing to blockade Venezuela's ports and demand repayment of their debts.

Roosevelt, who as vice president had stated that "if any South American country misbehaves toward any European country, let the European country spank it," now let it be known that the United States would look unfavorably upon any European efforts to seize Venezuelan territory as part of its forcible debt recovery.

This was precisely what Roosevelt feared the Kaiser would attempt. He became convinced, Roosevelt said later, "that Germany intended to seize some Venezuelan harbor and turn it into a strongly fortified place with a view to exercising some measure of control of the future Isthmian Canal and over South American affairs generally." To forestall such an occurrence, the president sent Admiral George Dewey steaming into the Caribbean at the head of a 53-ship armada to monitor affairs.

Having made a public show of strength, Roosevelt privately gave the German ambassador to America, Theodor von Holleben, a personal message for the Kaiser. The United States, he said, would be obliged to meet with force any German efforts to acquire territory in South America. He would give Germany 10 days to issue a public disclaimer of such intentions. As further inducement, Roosevelt advised von Holleben to tell the Kaiser to look at a map. "A glance would show him," said the president, "that there was no spot in the world where Germany ... would be a greater disadvantage than in the Caribbean sea."

Roosevelt's deadly serious warning, issued in private, ultimately induced Wilhelm to back down and submit the Venezuelan controversy to international arbitration. More to the point, by not making such threats publicly, the president had allowed the touchy German leader to save face by seeming, on his own, to favor diplomacy over force. The president had gone eye-to-eye with the Kaiser, and the Kaiser had blinked first.

Roy Morris Jr.

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By William J. McPeak

The "white arm" of weaponry, the sword, went through many designs to make it ever more lethal on the battlefields of Europe.

A handsome young warrior clad in Italian light field armor stands ready to draw his German-made *Kalzbalger* sword.

PERHAPS NO OTHER WEAPON IN HUMAN HISTORY HAS LENT ITSELF so well to so many combat adaptations as the sword. From its first modest appearance 5,000 years ago, the "white arm" has remained the military's Queen of Weapons. At no time was the functional variety of the sword more apparent than during Europe's Middle Ages and in the early 17th century.

All illustrations from author's collection

Beginning with the learning curve of making soft-metal swords—bronze was the only practical success—that preceded the Iron Age in about 1000 BC, swordsmithing grew into an assembly line process by around the 14th century. The bladesmith made the blade by repeatedly tempering and hammering into shape an iron blank in a bellows-driven fire. The characteristic groove, impressed down the middle of the flat of most blade surfaces in the late stage of tempering, was a clever stylistic means of decreasing weight at the center so that structural strength would not be sacrificed. (It was never some sort of gutter to let the blood flow more freely off the sword, as some have claimed.) The smith punched one or several maker marks onto the blade and sent it along for market distribution. Great sword centers of Europe shipped stock blades all over, and although trade with Islamic countries was forbidden, demand kept a steady flow of contraband shipments moving eastward, where western sword blades were highly prized for their variety and size.

A sword needed a handle or hilt to hold the blade. The hilt maker was next in the assembly line, fitting an appropriate combination of cross guard, grip of bored-out wood wrapped in leather or metal wire, and pommel and nut to hold it all together. He might leave an additional maker mark on the blade. Medieval hilts had the simple cross shape to the guard, but by the early 15th century the cross

ABOVE: Rival swordsmen fight to the death in Peter Paul Rubens' 1605 painting, *The Battle of Anghiari*. RIGHT: Curved swords shown in detail.

guard was being modified to meet the needs of sophisticated swordplay and to better protect the hand. A hook-shaped branch, sometimes called a finger ring, appeared from one side toward the blade, followed by a second branch from the other side of the cross guard. From these so-called "arms of the hilt" sprouted a perpendicular arc. Adjacent to the grip, a branch curved upward out of the cross guard to become the knuckle bow or knuckle guard. Diagonal branches came up to meet from the cross guard and others began looping around the arms and ring on the blade side. These guards and counter guards—the "swept" hilt—would take on a progressive cage-like look that would continue to transform into a solid shell, triangular sail, and eventually the basket-and-cup hilts familiar in 17th-century swords.

In terms of the blade, there were basically two diverging paths: curved European swords were for the most part adaptations, while straight swords were not. In either case, combat functionality drove the designs. Horsemen usually needed a longer sword to reach down and smite foot soldiers or trade strokes with enemy horsemen. In the press of close-quarter combat, a shorter sword was worth its weight in gold to a foot soldier with nothing but a staff weapon or something like a two-handed sword. A short sword was always a sure-fire backup.

On the eastern borders of Europe, the curved sword was the usual product of Asian cavalry warfare. An arcing stroke—the slashing draw cut—of a curved blade was the most efficient means of striking an opponent, especially while on horseback, with the blade quickly removed from the victim by simply following through on the stroke. Contrary to the notion that the saber was an exclusive cavalry weapon, it was also used extensively by foot soldiers. On the western side of the border, European sword makers adapted the basic curved blade of the east into forms less curved to make them more functional for thrusting.

There were many variations on the western curved blade, but like the eastern designs, it was a single-sided blade and mostly a short sword. An early medieval European means of providing a crude curve to a blade edge was to simply clip the front at an oblique angle. For the common soldier, wielding this early chopper sword was easier to master than the finesse of thrusting. Out of a variety of such weapons came the early 13th-century falchion (from the French, to mow) with its refined can opener-like point, convex back edge, and cleaver-like fore edge, highly effective for hacking or thrusting at the thick contemporary armor of infantry and cavalry. The form would get a reconfiguring by the 15th century with other styles, often resulting in straighter and longer blades, sometimes with little or no clipped point for more of a saber look, known as the saber-falchion.

The falchion, which continued to be used into the 17th century, was a popular adaptation for the seagoing cutlass, something of a short saber. Another variation on the falchion kept the wide, short blade but traded the clipped point for a straight-back edge; this was the dusack (or dusagge) of the later 16th and 17th centuries, also used as a cutlass. From the same general family of the falchion came a typical infantry soldier's sidearm of the 15th century, which retained the curved fore edge but sported a narrower straight blade. This was called simply a "hanger," and continued as a typical sidearm throughout the 18th century and notably in the New World.

Another short sword of the falchion variety was erroneously linked to the name of a mercenary Scottish lord and his demise. The man was George Sinclair, lord of Caithness, a colonel of 300 mercenary Scots who crossed Norway on his way to hiring out to the Swedes in their ongoing war with the Danes. But Norway was under Danish rule at the time, and the Norwegians were watching the intruders' passage. They planned an ambush in a steep mountain valley called Gudbrands. On August 26, 1612, the Scots marched into the trap, and Sinclair and most of his men were wiped out by the superior Norwegian force.

Sinclair was described as having carried an unusual short sword of his own design. The sword was called a *Sinclairsabel* (*sabel* being German for saber). The blade had the thick, curved fore edge of the dusack or cutlass. The back edge toward the point was raised slightly to provide a straighter back edge, a modification seen on contemporary saber blades to give them a better thrusting function. The full blade was only about 25 inches long, which made it very efficient in close-quarter combat. The hilt used a sail guard that would become familiar on 17th-century dueling daggers.

The European saber did not have the severe arc of its eastern cousins, the Turkish *kilij* and the Persian *shamshir*, and came in both longer cavalry lengths and a shorter infantry version. Again, it was not just a cavalry weapon but was very popular for infantry throughout Europe. Usually,

European blades with lengths 30 inches or less were reserved for foot combat, but not always. The 16th century also introduced an essentially straight-bladed saber, the single-edged backsword. The Swiss particularly favored this weapon, which they used as a long sword but often with a curved fore edge and sharply pointed upper portion called the *Sweitzersabel*. This sword was often relatively narrow because all the force was concentrated on the fore edge, with little or no point. Both cavalry and infantry used the backsword.

The relatively long, straight, and slightly tapered blade that became the broadsword was basically a European original that appeared in rudimentary form in the hands of the Celts 3,000 years ago. It moved on with the barbarian invasions and gained further reliability and distribution by Norse invaders from the 9th century on. The broadsword's beveled, double-edged blade would be the foundation of many variations to follow in the later Middle Ages.

The basic broadsword blade stayed a functional favorite well into the 17th century. The classic, slightly tapered medieval broadsword blade is perhaps the most recognizable form. With a little more thinning down, it was essentially the blade for the heavy rapier of the 16th and early 17th centuries. More sophisticated plate armor appearing in the early 15th century brought another form of full tapering to provide a sharper point for thrusting and puncturing the weak points in armor.

If there was much of a change in the overall broadsword configuration, it was in length. Already by the mid-13th century, longer swords began appearing for better reach and a more forceful swing. Blade lengths were moving up to and beyond 40 inches, and required a grip of at least six inches to serve as a counterbalance. Both increases required at least a hand and a half to effectively wield these swords. The later version of the weapon became known as a hand-and-a half, or bastard, sword. Blade length alone did not define it, for a shorter, thicker blade that required extraordinary handling was also known as a bastard sword.

By the late 13th century, the basic two-handed sword entered the battlefield with a blade of 45 inches, but its use as a knightly sword was limited. However, for the common mercenary, the two-handed sword provided a new means of bringing down noble cavalry. Early in the 14th century, the Swiss took up the weapon and became the most sought-after shock troops in Europe, using the two-handed sword to disrupt attacking cavalry or infantry for the next 100 years. After the mid-15th century, the Germans adopted the weapon as the Swiss began to discard it in favor of the 18-foot pike spear. By the 16th century, the blade had grown to 55 inches and required a 10-inch hilt with a 16-inch cross guard for proper balance. It would continue into the 17th century as yet another specialty sword of the European battlefield.

ABOVE: A German soldier practices swordplay with a falchion. At his feet is a pair of two-handed swords. LEFT: The hand-and-a-half, or bastard, sword was a later version of the broadsword.

A dull selection of hangers and the ever-present saber would remain battlefield staples through the 19th century in Europe, but the tactical worth of the varied swords had run its course and passed from the battlefield into history.

A final word should be said about patina, the naturally aged color of an old blade. This color can vary—usually various shades of gray or brown—and there may be dark blotching from impurities in the steel and wear. Patina is part of a blade's provenance and should never be polished or buffed away like simple rust. Nor should one try to resharpen an old blade. Another point to keep in mind is that the hilt on an early sword is seldom original. A single sword was often re-hilted several times through its life from necessity or for stylistic reasons. Many styles of early blades were copied with great detail during the 19th century British crafts movement—even patina and aging—so that sometimes these swords have been mistaken for much older originals. □

By Robert Barr Smith

Indian Army veteran William Hicks was given the unenviable task of ridding the Sudan of the Mahdi and his followers.

THE YEAR 1883 WAS ONE OF HORROR FOR THE PEOPLE OF northern Africa. Grim tidings made their way down the Nile from the benighted wastes of the Sudan, ghastly tales of rebellion and massacre in the holy name of God. The Egyptian government seemed powerless to stop the bloodshed. Venal and complacent, its officials were largely corrupt and its army vicious and undependable. The Sudan, long tottering on the verge of anarchy, was an arid, graceless place where life was cheap and the government's control did not extend much beyond rifle range.

The Sudan's Muslims believed they had found a savior of their own. His name was Mohammed Ahmed, a 40-year-old apprentice boat-builder and an ascetic Sufi religious leader from Dongola. Given to self-abnegation and visions, Ahmed had proclaimed himself the Mahdi—the Expected One. He had made it his holy mission to expel the hated Turks from the Sudan and carry Islam across the earth, killing all who opposed him. He was welcomed, not only by the ignorant, devout tribesmen, but by others moved by less elevated motives—Arab slavers who had been deprived of their livelihood by the charismatic,

Surrounded by the inflamed Muslim warriors of the self-proclaimed Mahdi, British General William Hicks makes a hopeless stand in Shaykan forest outside El Obeid.

Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

enigmatic British soldier Charles George Gordon, better known to history as Chinese Gordon.

Gordon had come to the Sudan in 1874, first as governor of a single province, then as governor of the entire vast region. Armed with little more than his reputation and a profound Christian religious faith, in only five years he had destroyed the roots of the slave trade, freeing miserable columns of chained black prisoners and shooting or hanging slavers. In a single mass hanging, he had executed the son of the Sudan's leading slaver and 11 of his lieutenants. Now Gordon Pasha was gone from the Sudan, the victim of a political quarrel with Egyptian leaders, and the old corruption and oppression had quickly returned. The whole region was a powder keg, and the self-proclaimed Mahdi became the spark.

The conflagration started in a small way. Gordon's successor, an inept oaf named Raouf Pasha, made a half-hearted attempt to extinguish the Mahdi. In August 1881, Raouf sent an officer and sometime slaver named Abu Saud to Abba, an island in the White Nile, to capture the upstart messiah. On August 12, two companies went ashore in the hot and humid night—a major mistake, for the darkness deprived them of their only real advantage, their firepower. Abu's troops blundered carelessly about in the gloom and fell into an ambush. Overrun by a howling mob of Mohammed's ragged followers armed with spears, clubs, and rocks, the Egyptians fled in panic, leaving six officers and 120 other ranks dead on the island.

Word of the astonishing Egyptian defeat spread across the Sudan. New recruits for the Mahdi's cause appeared in the thousands, many of them experienced fighting men from the bands of discontented ex-slavers. In December, the revolt escalated when the Mahdi destroyed a 1,400-man Egyptian force near Fashoda, south of Khartoum on the White Nile. The Mahdi swept into Darfur, west of the great river, and on Sennar, more than 150 miles up the Blue Nile toward Ethiopia. A year after the revolt began, 4,000 Egyptian troops were wiped out in desolate Kordofan, southwest of Khartoum, at the confluence of the White and Blue Niles. The lethal tide of fanaticism was creeping closer and closer to Cairo itself.

In September, the Mahdi led a large army against El Obeid, the principal town of the western Sudan. Repulsed with huge losses by the garrison's Remingtons, the Mahdi's people simply starved the town

into submission. Hideous scenes of privation followed, with corpses strewn so thickly that carrion birds gorged themselves until they could not fly and were in turn eaten by the besieged. At last, in January 1883, with every sort of animal eaten and children dying of starvation, the city surrendered. In the process, the Mahdi acquired some 6,000 Remington rifles and five excellent Krupp artillery pieces to add to the weapons he had looted from the other Egyptian garrisons.

The Egyptian government heard the desperate calls for help. Some 10,000 men, many of them veterans of the old Egyptian army, were sent south to defend the Sudan. By and large, they were an unwilling, wretched lot, some of whom had to be marched in chains to ensure that they would arrive at all. Two recruits threw lime in their own eyes, hoping to avoid service in the Sudan by blinding themselves. Even those men who might have fought well—in particular the black Sudanese troops—endured such humiliating conditions that their morale was at rock-bottom by the time they arrived. The government attempted to ensure that the demoralized mob was professionally led, hiring Colonel William Hicks, a retired officer of the Indian Army, and making him a lieutenant general.


Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

William Hicks, better known as "Hicks Pasha."

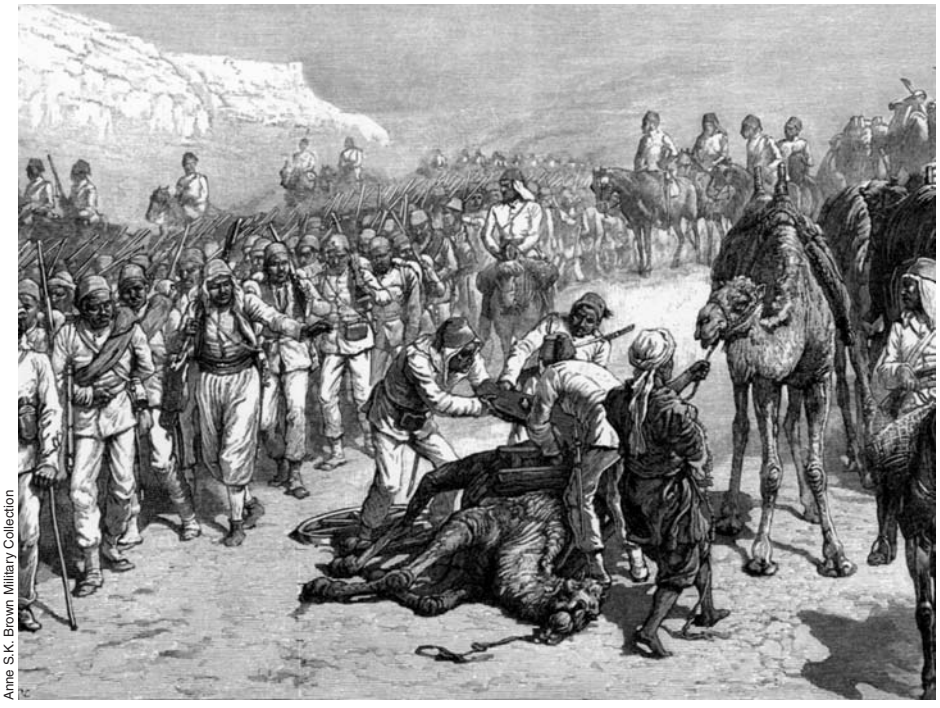
Hicks needed the best officers he could obtain. Colonel Freiherr Götz von Seckendorf was German, and there were two Austrian captains and another officer from the Balkans. Hicks had five British officers, and his chief surgeon, Georghis Dimitrious Douloughlu, was Greek. An able Coldstream Guardsman named Arthur Farquhar was his chief of staff, and Hicks depended heavily on Major Edward Evans, the only one of his cadre who spoke Arabic. He could also rely on a splendid British sergeant-major named Brady, and Hicks was pleased with the performance of an Austrian, an officer named Herlth, whom he assigned to lead the cavalry.

With a few exceptions, Hicks's Egyptian officers were less promising, and few of them spoke English. Most were not only unreliable and terrified of the Sudan, but indifferent to their leadership responsibilities. "I reduced a Capt. To the rank of Lieut. the other day," Hicks wrote home, "but it seemed to have no effect for I caught him neglecting his duty next day." Every day Hicks struggled with endless inefficiency and lack of discipline. "It is no good giving orders," he reported. "It is no use trying to put things straight. They promise to do what you direct without the slightest intention of acting, and are utterly indifferent, and not in the least ashamed when you find them out."

Hicks himself was a sapper, an officer of considerable experience, having served 34 years in India, including the desperate days of the Mutiny. He was 53, and if he could not be called a military intellectual, he was a true Victorian fighting officer. He began a rigorous training program, and he and his officers did their best to weld the unpromising mass of reluctant humanity into an army. The first results were not promising. "When the guns were attempted to be brought into action, dire confusion reigned," Hicks noted. "Men ran against each other; the ground was strewn with cartridges. No one appeared to have the slightest knowledge of how to feed, aim, or discharge the pieces."

In addition to general apathy and incompetence, Hicks was also plagued by endless disorder among his irregular cavalry, the Bashi-Bazouks, a vicious lot of thieves and killers in the best Turkish tradition. On at least one occasion, Herlth had to draw his pistol to enforce his orders. There were also some curious Sudanese cavalry encased in chain-mail seemingly left over from the Crusades. No matter how hard Hicks's officers pushed the army, it remained, in the words of correspondent Frank Power of the *London Times*, "a cowardly, beggarly mob."

Hicks lacked any reliable intelligence of the Mahdi's strengths. Nevertheless, he decided on an offensive strategy. He would march west to recover the lost areas of the Sudan, even though he had serious doubts whether his well-armed but spineless force would fight. He was unable to move them except in a monstrous hollow square, a formation that reduced his rate of march to only a few miles a day. To boost the troops' confidence, they formed three



Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

Hicks's army goes on the march. The training, motivation, and discipline of the Egyptians were abominable. Here an overloaded camel falls dead.

ranks deep, and each man was issued a handful of iron caltrops to throw out in front of him, presumably to puncture the feet of onrushing enemies.

Strangely enough, Hicks's troops won a surprising victory at Al-Marabi, where several thousand of the Mahdi's people stormed the unwieldy hollow square. The hail of lead from the square killed several hundred attackers and drove off the rest. It was a good beginning, but the next campaign would be a far more serious proposition—nothing less than a plan to clear the huge province of Kordofan of the Mahdi and his horde. The odds were long, and Hicks knew that his command was still unready. "I shall have over 21,000 men on the two rivers," he wrote, "and I would give the whole for two Brigades of English, German, or Indian troops." Correspondent Power sourly noted, "Even the most sanguine look forward to [this march] with the greatest gloom. We have here 9,000 infantry that fifty good men could rout in ten minutes, and 1,000 cavalry that have never learned to ride to beat the 69,000 men of the Mahdi. I pity Hicks. He is an able, good, and energetic man, but he has to do with wretched Egyptians, who take a pleasure in being incompetent, delaying and lying."

Hicks collected 5,500 camels for transport and turned west into the wastes of Kordofan in September 1883. Along for the ride were correspondents Power, Edmund O'Donovan of the *Daily News*, artist Frank Vizetelly of the *Illustrated London News* and *The Graphic*, and a couple of German orderlies. Also accompanying Hicks was a collection of Egyptian administrators sent to re-establish civil control of El Obeid. Power was lucky; he became sick early in the campaign and returned to Khartoum. The rest, close to 10,000 men and a couple of thousand camp followers, marched west—into limbo.

Hicks's dispatches to Khartoum bore little good news. He could not bring the Mahdi to bay, for that canny desert warrior simply fell back before Hicks's plodding advance. Water and reliable intelligence grew scarcer as the army felt its way westward under a terrible sun, in temperatures that reached 127 degrees. The vital camels were ill cared for and died in droves. At Dueim, Hicks decided to abandon his supply line to the Nile, depending entirely on camel-borne supplies. He also elected, apparently on the advice of his officers and the insistence of the new Egyptian governor-general of the Sudan, to forego the direct way to El Obeid in favor of a much longer route. There was a better chance of finding sources of water, but the route was flanked by heavy scrub

Author's Collection

The Mahdi's swarming holy warriors overwhelm the Egyptian Army and its European officers at Shaykan. All 10,000 soldiers were killed.

and swarming with hostile tribesmen. The ponderous squares moved slowly, less than 10 miles a day, consuming precious water at a prodigious rate. Every village was hostile, and many had been burned to deny the army either supply or shelter.

The column began to feel the enemy's presence. One scout hunting water found a well and started back to report. He realized he had forgotten his rifle—a poignant comment on the military prowess of Hicks's force—and turned back. The column found him the next day, sitting by the well with both hands cut off. Halfway to El Obeid, the army halted at Akila, which had an excellent water supply. The army rested and drank its fill, but a group of men who wandered away from camp were slaughtered by the enemy. One orderly was found disemboweled.

Worse was soon to come. Hicks discovered that the Egyptians had filled less than a third of the water containers at Akila. Morale plummeted still further as four soldiers and more than a hundred animals died of thirst. After a skirmish with the Mahdi's followers, Hicks found that the artillery had been so neglected by its commander that it would not fire. There were also disputes over the reliability of the local guides, and further dissension between Egyptian and European officers. Nevertheless, as an admiring foe remembered years afterward, "Hicks was full of courage like an elephant, and he feared nothing."

The last word from Hicks came in a letter to his wife dated October 4, 1883. "I now hear," he wrote, "that there is a broad belt of impenetrable jungle along the Khor or water course we are depending upon. If this is true I don't know what I shall do, for the Army cannot march through it. At present too I know nothing of the water supply whether there is any or not, and with the very existence of the Army, the lives of 10,000 men, dependent upon my decision and no reliable information, the anxiety is very great—almost too much. Fancy marching an Army of this strength through a country where one is entirely dependent upon pools of rain water—10,000 men and 6,000 animals to be supplied daily and no certainty of finding a pool."

The army finally reached Er Rehad, 40 miles from El Obeid, where there was some water. The bedraggled force took a four-day halt and Hicks sent out a fruitless reconnaissance. It was said that the Mahdi had summoned a reinforcement of 40,000 angels to aid the faithful in the final fight. Orderly Gustav Klootz decided he had seen enough and deserted, preferring the chains of the Mahdi's camp to the fate he foresaw for the army. Klootz would survive years of captivity to tell his tale.

Morale was nonexistent, destroyed by shortage of water, the Mahdi's propaganda, and the terrible feeling of isolation. Hicks had only one course of action open to him—he had to press on. Along the way, he received a letter from the Mahdi, offering mercy to anybody who would surrender and accept the authority of the Prophet. A follower of the Mahdi recalled Hicks's defiant response: "I am Hicks: my arm is an arm of iron and my army carries an army in its belly. If the heavens fall, I will hold them up with my bayonets, and if the earth quakes I will hold it fast with my boot." There would be no surrender.

Moving in three hollow squares, Hicks's force was only 15 miles from El Obeid. As the army reached a patch of dense scrub, a spot called Shaykan or Sheikan, the Mahdi's riflemen opened a murderous fire on the Egyptian square. As the front of the square buckled and panic spread, the great mass of the Mahdi's men struck the flanks. A desperate fight continued throughout the afternoon. By nightfall, Hicks still maintained some sort of perimeter, although bullets thudded into his massed men and animals all through the night. One of the Mahdi's men remembered that "so fierce was the fire that all the bark was stripped from the trees and they gleamed white as if washed with soap." Herlth's diary, later picked up on the field of battle, gives some feeling of the depression that pervaded the army: "These are bad times; we are in a forest, the bullets are flying from all directions, and camels, mules and men keep dropping down. We are all cramped up together, so the bullets cannot fail to strike. We are faint and weary, and have no idea what to do, the bullets are falling thicker." The entry ended suddenly—Herlth had been killed.

The next morning, Hicks kicked the remnants of his force into motion. His men were terrified and desperate with thirst, but somehow he got them a mile or so closer to El Obeid. There the fire of the jihadiya and the massive weight of the Mahdi's torrents of howling spearmen stopped the squares cold and they began to come apart. Thousands of warriors rushed screaming at the collapsing squares, urged on by the Mahdi's solemn assurance that "all the angels and all the jinns will fight for you. [The Egyptians'] souls are already caught in our hands."

They were. As one side of a square dissolved, some of the troops on the other faces of the square turned around and opened fire, catching the Mahdi's people in a crossfire, but also hitting many of their own comrades across the square. The Egyptian defense fell apart amid hideous scenes of panic and slaughter. When the squares broke, many of the Egyptians took to their heels and were cut down as they ran. Some fought to the end, others tried to surrender, and a few survived by hiding under piles of their dead comrades.

One who survived was Hicks's cook, who was captured and spared, having somehow

managed to convince the Mahdi that he was a doctor. He appears to have practiced medicine—God help his patients—with the Mahdi's forces until he escaped five years after the debacle at Shaykan. But for Hicks and his surviving officers there was no thought of surrender. One survivor told the story much later: "Hicks Pasha and the very few English officers left with him, seeing all hope of restoring order gone, spurred their horses and sprang out of the confused mess of wounded, dead and dying. These officers fired away their revolvers, clearing a space for themselves, till all their ammunition was expended. They killed many. They had got clean outside. They took to their swords and fought till they fell."

They made their stand together under a large tree and fought to the last, brave men dying in a dubious cause. Hicks fought on foot with his saber until he fell in a shower of spears. His head and von Seckendorf's, impaled on spears, were sent in triumph to the Mahdi. Hicks's courage so impressed the Mahdi that the Englishman was buried with honor, but the rest of the Egyptian dead, something between 8,000 and 10,000, were simply left, stripped of clothing and equipment, for the hyenas and vultures. The few prisoners, naked and roped together, were dragged in triumph into El Obeid, together with the captured guns and the rest of the booty, while the Mahdi's followers shouted in adulation.

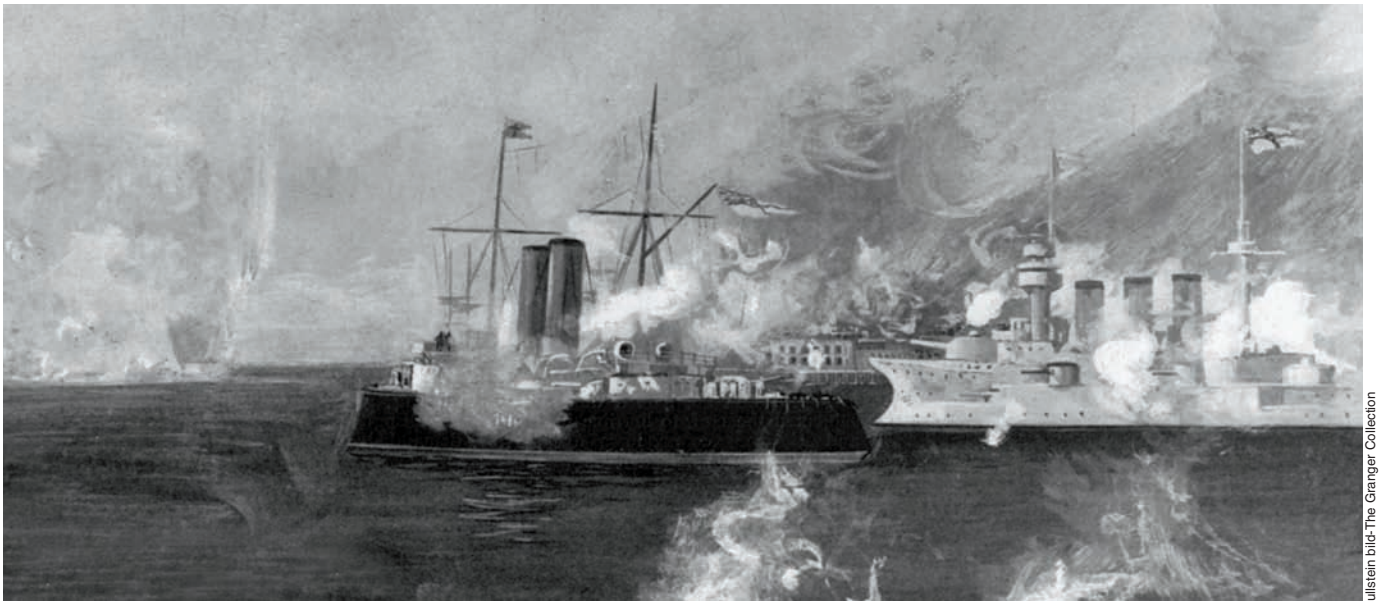
For a while, nothing but dreadful rumors reached Khartoum. Then the ghastly news filtered back across the great emptiness west of the Nile. The entire army had simply vanished. Not one man of all those who had marched west returned to tell the tale. The Egyptian government was in panic, Europe was appalled, and many westerners fled Khartoum, hurrying for safety downstream before the Nile was closed to them.

From that time onward, there were few people anywhere in the Sudan who did not believe in the Mahdi's divinity. Recruits flocked to his standard, and his fanatic followers would carry on his vision for years after his death in 1885. Khartoum would fall to his faithful, and in that doomed city would die Chinese Gordon, sent back into the Sudan too late to save it. The Mahdi's visionary spirit would hold sway until 1898, when the bubble burst forever before the magazine rifles and Maxim guns of a well-trained Anglo-Egyptian army under Sir Horatio Albert Kitchener, at Omdurman. On that day, Gordon and William Hicks would be avenged. □

By Frank Zedeck

Eager to assert German hegemony over the high seas, Kaiser Wilhelm II considered attacking the East Coast of America.

IN THE LATTER PART OF THE 19TH CENTURY, GERMANY'S YOUNG Kaiser, Wilhelm II, was anxious to play *Weltpolitik* (global politics) and expand his country's influence beyond the borders of Europe, where Germany was already an acknowledged power player. Inadvertently, the United States was proving to be an irritating obstacle to Wilhelm's goals.



ullstein bild-The Granger Collection

British warship *Charybdis* and German cruiser *Vineta* bombard Fort Liberatador at Puerto Cabello during the Allies' Venezuelan blockade of 1902-1903.

Although not actively seeking colonies, the United States, much like Germany, wanted to maximize its export advantages and make its trade presence known throughout the world. Moreover, it had what Germany was still notably lacking: a significant naval force.

Apart from Wilhelm's fear of America as a dangerous economic rival, two specific events fanned his mounting displeasure with the United States—the diplomatic standoff in Samoa and the Spanish-American War. The Samoan islands are a string of 14 Pacific islands. Both the Germans and the British had significant commercial interests there, but the Germans dominated the copra trade on the two main islands, Upolu and Savaii. The United States, by treaty, occupied the smallest island, Tutuila, which along with Pago Pago had the best harbor. Intertribal rivalries prevailed on Upolu, and the Germans proposed a one-nation protectorate—themselves—while the British and Americans wanted the Samoans to be independent and self-ruling. At one point, German and American warships faced each another for the first time when the Germans sought to impose a minority tribal chieftain on the islands. President Grover Cleveland felt that this was bullying a weaker nation and forcibly confronted the Germans by sending three warships to anchor off the islands in a test of will.

At the Berlin Peace Conference of 1889, the dispute was temporarily resolved with the introduction of a tripartite administration of the islands. German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck refused to let German business interests exploit the Samoan question, and this comparative moderation displeased the Kaiser, who wanted expanded German military bases and colonies worldwide. The Iron Chancellor, as Bismarck was known, viewed such enterprises dubiously. Shortly thereafter, Bismarck was abruptly dropped as the

"pilot" of Germany's destiny. The Samoan problem flared anew 10 years later, and this time the islands were largely settled upon Germany, with the United States retaining Tutuila and the British receiving compensation elsewhere for their claims.

In the wake of the Spanish-American War, Wilhelm sought to profit from the collapse of the Spanish empire in the Pacific, particularly since the Americans initially had not indicated any thought of keeping the Philippines. In fact, there was strong opposition within the United States to such a nakedly imperialistic undertaking. After Admiral George Dewey defeated the Spanish squadron at Manila Bay, the American Navy had instituted a blockade of the harbor, which meant that any foreign vessels had to submit to American surveillance, a customary maritime procedure. The subsequent failure of a German squadron under Vice Adm. Otto von Diederichs to identify itself by hoisting its flags or permitting boarding and searching led the Americans to fire a warning salvo over the German bows. Dewey, who saw the German force not as a neutral observer but as a potential enemy, at one point stated that if Diederichs wanted war, "I am ready." Tensions eased after Diederichs pointed out that a ship's identity could be established by its contour in lieu of flag-hoisting or boarding. Nonetheless, because the German force was far superior to Dewey's, the admiral viewed its presence with continued misgivings. The armed standoff confirmed the Kaiser's growing belief that *Weltpolitik* without a high-seas fleet was impossible.

In all the world's navies, it was customary for junior officers to work on ambitious "what-if" scenarios during idle periods. During the winter of 1897-1898, German Marine Lieutenant Eberhard von Mantey drew up a plan for striking the United States with a quick military blow that would force the Americans to give Germany a free hand on the high seas. Mantey's plan ruled out a blockade or a major naval battle, focusing instead on a strike against America's East Coast seaports between Portland, Me., and Norfolk, Va. It was there, said Mantey, that the heart of America could be most severely injured. Mantey's main targets were the Virginia seaports of Norfolk, Hampton Roads, and Newport News. The most important port, New York City, was rejected because of its strong defenses.

Mantey's theoretical exercise might have been forgotten had it not occurred at precisely the right moment, when the Imperial German Navy was still smarting over the confrontation with

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ABOVE: President Theodore Roosevelt leads a gaggle of soldiers and diplomats on an impromptu inspection of the American fleet. OPPOSITE: Kaiser Wilhelm II at the height of his power.

the Americans in Samoa. Many high-ranking admirals felt that war with the United States was just a matter of time. The Philippine crisis pushed Mantey's plan into high gear. The gifted young lieutenant was ordered to further develop his project, and by March 1899 a second study was ready. Now New York City was the main target. Once the United States Navy had been destroyed, he envisioned, Fort Sandy Hook could be softened up and taken by a mere two or three infantry and engineer battalions. Forts Hamilton and Tompkins, the last defenses before Manhattan, would soon follow. "In New York City the greatest panic will break out from fear of a possible bombardment," Mantey asserted confidently. Speed was everything. For the German Navy's Atlantic crossing, Mantey budgeted 25 days and 75,000 tons of coal, to be supplied by 40 to 60 accompanying freighters.

Beginning in 1899, Wilhelm II had taken over personal command of his Navy, assisted by the admiralty staff. By March he had a plan of his own prepared that, for the first time, set a timetable for the American invasion: departure from Wilhelshaven on the seventh day after mobilization, with the Azores being the immediate destination for coaling, and then proceeding directly to the U.S. East Coast. The Kaiser calculated that the crossing would take 30 days.

Neither of the plans would be possible without the requisite warships. Since the *Flottengesetz* (naval bill) of March 1898 did not budget sufficient ships for an American adventure, Admiral Alfred von Tirpitz, the state secretary of the Imperial Navy, was tasked with convincing the Reichstag to fund additional warships. Tirpitz proved a master at influencing public opinion. Although the fleet enlargement was clearly directed at the British, the "American danger" was not neglected in subsequent discussions for a new fleet. Admiral Diederichs, now chief of the admiralty staff, supported Tirpitz, arguing that the construction program had to be doubled to demolish the American fleet and seize several ports on the East Coast.

Finally, in the summer of 1900, the two strategists celebrated the passage of the Second Fleet Construction Program. At one stroke, the Imperial armada was doubled and now consisted of 38 battleships, 38 light cruisers, and 20 heavy cruisers. Diederichs proudly assured the Kaiser that by 1901 the German Navy would surpass the American. Ironically, the model for German sea hegemony was the work of American military theorist Alfred Thayer Mahan, whose seminal book, *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History,* Wilhelm had translated into German and placed aboard all his battleships.

Despite the success of the Second Fleet Construction Program, it seemed clear that no invasion of the United States could succeed without the involvement of the Army. To the chief of the general staff, Count Alfred von Schlieffen, it was just as clear that a war conducted 3,000 miles from the homeland would be an absolute fiasco, especially given the fact that the ships needed to transport the troops existed only on the engineers' drawing boards. Von Schlieffen was afraid that in the end the Army would be blamed for the failure. Still, being *Kaisertreu,* he prepared as best he could for the planned invasion.

In December 1900, Diederichs submitted to Wilhelm the Admiralty's latest plan. Either Boston or New York City should now be the main target of the attack—or perhaps both. The operations base was to be the Cape Cod peninsula. To the vexation of the Admiralty, however, the Kaiser suddenly insisted upon Cuba becoming the seat for operations, reasoning that not enough troops could be transported to the American mainland at the start of the war and, therefore, Cuba should become the preliminary assembly point. Von Schlieffen was to determine the necessary troop strength. His answer was a masterstroke of tactically disguised rejection through the marshaling of practical objections. Any evaluation of the necessary force needed to successfully establish a base of operations and capture Boston or New York City would depend on the size of the opposing forces, he said. To this commonplace reasoning, Diederichs commented ironically in the margin, *"Das ist sehr geistreich"*—"That is very illuminating." In any event, 50,000 men would be needed to secure Cuba and at least 100,000 for an operation against Boston. Many more would be necessary for the New York City phase of the plan. Diederichs became unnerved—a nonexistent fleet of troop ships was now being called upon to transport more than 100,000 infantry and equipment. It was impossible.

Meanwhile, Tirpitz had already instructed his naval attaché in Washington to find suitable places near Boston for a landing. At the end of August 1901, Lieutenant Herbert von Reuben-Paschwitz set out on an exploratory journey and concluded, despite an earlier report, that Cape Cod was not favorable because the advancing infantry would lack the necessary naval gun support because the area was not visible from the sea. Instead, the beach north of Manomet Point on the west side of the bay was ideal, he said, adding, "If the main body succeeds in capturing the Manomet Hill heights effective fire support from here could be maintained for the advancing troops." The tiny port of Rockport, north of Boston, was also seen as militarily advantageous. The lieutenant's recommendation was in line with a prior report by an American naval captain, Charles Train, to the United States Senate. Train predicted that in the event of war with Germany, New York City and the New England coastal cities would certainly be attacked, with Provincetown, north of Montauk, being the likely primary target and Rockport and its breakwater the secondary.

Reuben-Paschwitz's inexperience was just what von Schlieffen wanted. Coolly, he pointed out that Provincetown and Cape Cod could only be considered as the base of operations if the landing in the neighboring bay of Manomet Point were successful, which "in my judgment, would not be the case since, as the attaché reported, the ridges of Manomet Hill with their excellent artillery positions, command com-

pletely the Bay. A landing could only succeed if the heights of Manomet Point were neither or only lightly defended, which cannot be counted on." Moreover, as was clear from Train's report, the Americans fully expected any invasion to target Boston. "Therefore, a timely assembly of American troops necessary to defend a landing could be assured," remarked Schlieffen sarcastically. Diederichs would have to abandon his plans.


Library of Congress

In early 1902, William Büchsel, a confidant of Tirpitz, replaced Diederichs as chief of the admiralty staff. Under Büchsel, the plans for the American invasion—since November 1903 officially named Operationsplan III—reached their apogee. A necessary precondition for a war with the United States was a political situation in Europe that would allow the Germans a free hand elsewhere. The thought of using Puerto Rico as a possible assembly point was now broached, as it would give Germany the chance not only to control the proposed Panama Canal but also to break Washington's hegemony in Central and South America. That pleased the Kaiser, and once again von Schlieffen was ordered to calculate the men and materiel needed to succeeed.

Under Büchsel, for the first time, political considerations were made as well as military ones. The American undertaking was threatened from an entirely new direction—namely, the Venezuelan debt crisis arising from that country's obligations to various European debtors. The United States was determined to show not only its readiness to defend itself, but also Venezuela under the cloak of the long-standing Monroe Doctrine. No territorial seizures would be permitted against newly created republics in the Western Hemisphere. When the major debtors (Great Britain, Germany, and Italy) proposed a blockade after Venezuela's refusal to pay or even consider a repayment scheme, President Theodore Roosevelt sent all available warships under Admiral Dewey into the Caribbean as a "neutral observer." To Dewey's satisfaction, his 54-ship squadron outnumbered the Europeans several times over. It was America's greatest demonstration of sea might to that time.

The blockade was initially instituted by Great Britain in December 1902, and Germany followed its lead. The European blockade ultimately won Roosevelt's approval, since he was irritated by Venezuela's seeming indifference to its economic responsibilities. Ultimately, the dispute went to the Hague Tribunal for resolution. Significantly, Germany was publicly eager to assuage American suspicions about its intentions in the Caribbean—to the point that Baron Speck von Sternberg, its chargé d'affairs, stated in a *New York Times* interview: "The Emperor understands the Monroe Doctrine thoroughly. He would no more think of violating that doctrine than he would of colonizing the moon."

By 1906, Operationsplan III was dead, as ominous new European events had surfaced: the conclusion in 1904 of the Entente Cordiale between Great Britain and France, the uncertain attitude of Russia toward a military pact with Berlin, and the launching of the British Dreadnought, whose 10 12-inch guns made all other battleships obsolete and for which Germany had no immediate answer. It became clear that any war would take place in Europe, not off the coast of the United States. The Kaiser, accordingly, turned his attentions closer to home. But for Roosevelt and Dewey, nothing had changed. They both knew, in their heart of hearts, that Germany would be America's next opponent. They never realized, however, just how close the two nations had already come to war. □

By Peter Suciu

Four decades after his military debut, GI Joe is still reporting for duty on the imagined battlefields of youth.

The 1960s version of GI Joe came complete with dog tags and a scar on his cheek. RIGHT: The original footlocker containing many of GI Joe's early accessories is prized by collectors.

FOR CENTURIES, BATTALIONS OF ENTHRALLED BOYS—AND NOT a few grown men—have enjoyed playing with toy soldiers. By the end of the Victorian era, these toys included highly detailed three-dimensional soldiers made of lead and accurately painted in the colors of the various armies that would soon engage each other in a European War that engulfed the entire world. In the years between World Wars I and II, toys became cheaper to make. Consequently, more and more children could enjoy playing war with small soldiers.

The introduction of plastics changed forever the imaginary battlefields of play. In 1962 an American icon was born. Conceived originally as a tie-in for the television show *The Lieutenant*, a self-described "doll for boys" was the brainchild of Stanley Weston, who went on to sell the idea to Hasbro for a lump sum of $100,000—giving up untold millions of dollars in royalties in the process. Based on an artist's multijointed mannequin, the gender-delicate issue of a boy's doll had to be addressed, and Hasbro executives decided to market Weston's idea as a "movable soldier" or action figure. Since it wasn't possible to trademark the human body, the figure was given an identifying scar down the right cheek. The figure stood 11½ inches tall (1/6th human scale), in part because Mattel's wildly popular Barbie was the same height and it just seemed right. The name "GI Joe" was already in the common lexicon as a synonym for an American soldier, and a famous brand name was born.

Hasbro consulted military manuals and produced almost every existing uniform for the four branches of service before GI Joe made his debut in 1964. Joe signed up for the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force, with each branch represented by an action figure. Joe came complete with uniform, hat, dog tag, patches, and even a field training manual. Soon the new toy was sweeping America.

Originally selling for $4, today an original GI Joe complete with the packaging can fetch a hundred times that much. Numerous accessories, including everything from uniforms and equipment to a cot so that Joe could catch some sack time, sold from $1 to $5 and today remain highly sought after by collectors. "A

Photos by Ray Pellerito and Peter Suciu

whole generation of kids played with GI Joe for their military and backyard adventures," says Tom Bartsch, editor of *Toy Shop* magazine. "I liken it to an old blanket. Many of us like to hang onto old, familiar things."

GI Joe may have stood about a foot tall, but he didn't stand still—the line continually evolved. The first African American GI Joe was introduced in 1965, along with the popular GI Joe Footlocker, an item as prized today as the actual figures. In 1966 the fun really began as GI Joe went international. First, a Green Beret Action Soldier was introduced, allowing Joe to join the elite special forces. That same year, Hasbro also introduced a new line, Action Soldiers of the World.

Throughout most of the 1960s, GI Joe was a real American hero, but he didn't have an easily recognizable enemy to confront. That changed when Hasbro introduced the GI Joe Combat Series, with figures sporting World War II uniforms. There were six figures in all, including soldiers from Germany, Japan, Russia, France, England and Australia. None of the uniforms were as accurate as Joe's American garb, but for its time the gear was fairly detailed and authentic. Today these are among the most desirable and hard to obtain figures in the GI Joe line.

ABOVE: GI Joe Action Pilots flank the GI Joe Astronaut, all wearing complete gear. LEFT: Dragon Model's German paratrooper poses with Blue Box's American and British counterparts. BELOW: The Blue Box Japanese officer evokes the look of a soldier determined to complete the Bridge on the River Kwai.

Ironically, while GI Joe would continue to remain popular, his days as a soldier were actually limited. The series saw a number of updates, including the release of numerous accessories including a jeep, helicopter, and even a space capsule during the late 1960s. The one flop, however, was the GI Nurse. Popular with neither boys nor girls, the figure originally sold for $8. It has since gone on to become worth more than $3,000 in the original packaging.

By the 1970s, GI Joe was no longer a member of the U.S. military. He still sported military-style uniforms, carried a rifle, and looked like a soldier, but with the unpopular Vietnam War waging, it didn't make good marketing sense to continue to keep Joe in the Army. Thus the GI Joe Adventure Team, or A-Team, was born. This is also when Joe went from plastic painted hair to fuzzy "lifelike" hair. These figures, while less desired by collectors, have still jumped in price when offered in their original, unopened packaging. Large-scale accessories and some of the biggest vehicles arrived at this time. "GI Joe came with some great play sets and accessories for the time," notes Bartsch. "Having a vehicle is very powerful with action figures. A lot of the figures today are extremely detailed, articulated, and hold enough accessories to field their own army. But can they ride in anything? Do they battle sharks? That's why GI Joe still endures."

Anyone growing up in the 1970s will likely remember the "Kung Fu Grip" that was also added to Joe. Flexible rubber fingers on his hands allowed for more realistic gripping of weapons and objects—at least until the fingers eventually snapped off. A number of accessories were introduced throughout the early 1970s, including more vehicles and play sets. Joe even acquired "invader from space" rivals known as the Intruders. These caveman-like figures were a little hokey, but it was an attempt to offer new challenges to Joe when there was no ongoing war to fight. Hasbro tried to keep pace with other action figures, including such strange superheroes as Bulletman, the human bullet, and Atomic Man, no doubt to cash in on the popularity of TV's *Six Million Dollar Man.*

But even these superheroes couldn't counter the biggest threat to the 12-inch action figure, namely the energy

crisis. As petroleum was the main raw material for plastics, the sudden increase in prices made it almost impossible for Hasbro to continue to produce large-scale figures and still make a profit. The result in 1977 was a new line of smaller figures, called the Super Joe Adventure Team, which stood 8½ inches tall. The line only lasted two years, as fans weren't too excited about these replacements. It was also the year that a little film called *Star Wars* hit the box office and changed action figures forever. The success of *Star Wars* as a movie was only surpassed by Star Wars as a cultural (and marketing) phenomenon. And while there was an attempt to launch a 12-inch line of *Star Wars* figures, the real popularity was the 3¾-inch figures, which set a new standard for action figures. It allowed kids to have more figures, more vehicles, and more play sets.

In 1981, after a four-year break, GI Joe was back with the support of a comic book and eventually a 30-minute animated series that was essentially little more than an extended commercial for new toys. A feature-length film in the late 1980s reaffirmed that GI Joe was not only an American hero but also an American icon. Like other, smaller scale figures, Joe had an enemy to fight in the form of terrorist organization Cobra, and plenty of new vehicles and play sets. Most of these figures and accessories were true kid's stuff, with little interest for serious collectors. While there is a slight market for the smaller figures today, the hardcore collectors still gravitate to the larger Joes.

In 1991, GI Joe was again ready for action as a full-size, 12-inch figure, and Hasbro continues to produce both large and small-scale figures. Throughout the 1990s, these included special editions of World War II figures such as the Tuskegee Airmen and a D-Day Ranger. But GI Joe soon found himself facing a new enemy, and after this Hasbro's line would truly be deemed kid's stuff.

Hasbro had always had competition from rival action figure manufacturers. By 1998, these rivals included such new players as 21st Century Toys and Dragon Models of Hong Kong. GI Joe's enemy remained the fictional Cobra, and Hasbro shied away from introducing any German or Japanese figures aside from a few "classic" figures such as a Luftwaffe pilot. Several new companies decided to fill that void. Among the first was 21st Century Toys, which produced a line of World War II action figures that included American, German, Russian, and British figures, later adding Japanese soldiers and eventually covering the Vietnam War and modern conflicts. These 12-inch figures were available in both boxes and blister packs, with the boxed versions being the most popular with collectors. Compared to the previous international offerings from Hasbro, these were a major leap forward, with the soldiers featuring authentic details of insignia and weapons. Like Hasbro, 21st Century Toys removed any actual swastikas from the German insignia and vehicles, no doubt to make the product more appealing to mass retailers, such as Toys R Us, who might have otherwise refused to carry the toys. While an improvement over the more generic GI Joe, these were still more toys than collectibles, although some of the early offerings such as the British paratrooper have become sought after by collectors.

It was the introduction of Cotswold's Elite Brigade that really moved the 1/6-scale action figures forward. These figures featured even more detailed and authentic uniforms than those from 21st Century Toys, but unfortunately some of the figures had the look of mannequins rather than fighting men. However, the range of Cotswold's figures was impressive, extending from the Napoleonic Wars and the American Civil War to World War II. Since 1997 the company has released dozens of figures, while also selling uniforms separately. Cotswold actually began by selling vintage GI Joes, before realizing that collectors were interested in new figures that were more detailed and realistic. Several new companies would soon fill this void.

For serious collectors, the definitive military action figures come from Dragon Models of Hong Kong. This company, which had been producing scale models, entered the action-figure competition in the late 1990s, and from the beginning it

Sotheby's Auctions Rare Revolutionary War Flags

An anonymous buyer paid over $17 million for four flags dating from the American Revolution. The flags, regimental "colors" from two Continental Army units, were captured by notorious British officer Banistre Tarleton. The flags remained in the Tarleton family collection in Hampton, England, until they were sold at auction in June. Captain Christopher Tarleton Fagan said, "I am very sad to sell them. However, there comes a time when their value is such that one can no longer afford to insure them."

On July 2, 1779, Tarleton led his British cavalry unit in a surprise raid on Bedford, New York. Attacking the 2nd Continental Light Dragoons, an American cavalry unit, he captured the unit's flag, along with military stores and weapons. The silk flag consists of 13 red and white stripes, and includes a painted thunder cloud in the center.

On May 29, 1780, Tarleton again led his unit against a Virginia Continental infantry regiment commanded by Colonel Abraham Buford. Some accounts of this battle state that when Buford's men tried to surrender, Tarleton's soldiers massacred as many as a hundred of the Virginians. The controversy surrounding the incident earned Tarleton the nickname, "Bloody Ban."

Captured with Buford's unit were three flags, including two smaller "standards," and the unit's larger "colors." The two smaller flags remain intact while the larger flag is missing about a third of the original gold silk fabric. Painted on the larger flag is the image of a beaver, gnawing at a palmetto tree and the flag includes a canton with 13 stars.

The four flags are remarkably well preserved and are among a small number of surviving flags from the Revolutionary War. □

was clear that these weren't your father's GI Joes. Dragon's figures took sculpture up a notch, providing better facial details and even haircuts appropriate to specific nations. Overall, the figures were improved, and the details in equipment and insignia (including medals and awards) were a major leap forward. For collectors, these remain an excellent alternative to finding unique uniforms, even if only in 1/6 scale.

Since its introduction almost 10 years ago, Dragon has released more than a hundred figures, with an emphasis on the main forces of World War II, including the German Army as well as the SS, along with a few Luftwaffe and naval troops as well. Dragon Models made sure to represent the British, Americans, and Russians, with a range of troops filling their ranks. Likewise, the company branched out with modern forces from the Korean War and Vietnam. One area in which Dragon has led the way is by producing historical figures. Notables include German Field Marshal Erwin Rommel and SS Commando Otto Skorzeny. Likewise, a line of unofficial movie tie-ins has featured the likenesses of characters from such classics as *Kelly's Heroes, Cross of Iron,* and *Hart's War.* These figures are never out long—in part to avoid legal entanglements—and as a result are among the most desirable of any of Dragon's 1/6-scale figures.

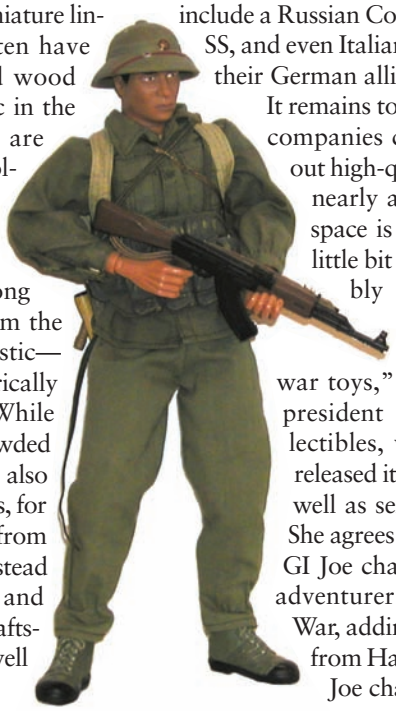
With each passing year, Dragon has managed to introduce figures from more diverse units and improve existing items. The helmets now feature miniature liners, while the weapons often have removable magazines, and wood has begun to replace plastic in the stocks. All of these details are designed to appeal to the collector, but Dragon isn't alone in that market, either.

Several other companies—Blue Box/bbi (also of Hong Kong), Sideshow Toys, From the Past Toys, and Drastic Plastic—have released lines of historically accurate 12-inch figures. While WWII remains the most crowded era, many other periods are also being covered. Sideshow Toys, for example, has steered away from World War II and focused instead on American Civil War and World War I figures. The craftsmanship of each has been well received by collectors.

From the Past Toys went a different direction, releasing a line of figures that some might consider to be in bad taste. These include War Criminals of the 20th Century, with notables like Adolf Hitler, Heinrich Himmler, and Reinhard Heydrich available in figure form, as well as a range of SS figures, complete with early black uniforms and the special ultra-formal SS figures. No longer available on the mass market, these figures have become almost impossible to find.

Rival Drastic Plastic also released a Hitler figure, but as part of a Leaders of World War II series that included Franklin Delano Roosevelt, complete with wheelchair. The series was to have included Winston Churchill, Josef Stalin, Hedeki Tojo, and Benito Mussolini—which might have given Dragon's Otto Skorzeny someone to rescue during playtime—but unfortunately the company changed direction, and only Hitler and FDR were actually released. As a result, these figures have become extremely rare among collectors, who consider the Drastic Plastic version of Germany's dictator the most authentic.

With the continued "recruitment" of unique figures, it seems that collectors will always have something new. Many of these are from units whose real uniforms would be a pipe dream, even for advanced collectors. At this year's New York North American International Toy Fair, Dragon Models and Blue Box Imports unveiled the next wave of troops for collectors. These include a Russian Cossack volunteer to the SS, and even Italian paratroopers to join their German allies.



It remains to be seen if the various companies can continue to turn out high-quality products. After nearly a decade, the 12-inch space is beginning to show a little bit of a downturn, possibly due to the ongoing conflict in Iraq. "War is not a good time for war toys," says Tina Windeler, president of Cotswold Collectibles, whose company has released its own Elite Brigade as well as selling vintage GI Joes. She agrees that this mirrors how GI Joe changed from soldier to adventurer during the Vietnam War, adding, "We always heard from Hasbro that was why GI Joe changed."

ABOVE: Drastic Plastic's FDR and Hitler were the only two Leaders of WWII to be released. Hitler is guarded by In the Past's SS Honor Guard figure. LEFT: GI Joe may have stopped being a soldier by the war in Vietnam, but 30 years later 21st Century Toys released an NVA Regular figure. OPPOSITE: The GI Joe Action Sailor sports his signature scar and dog tags.

Windeler doesn't see a major shift, just a slowdown even as new players continue to enter the market. And like GI Joe, this could be the beginning of smaller scales, with 1/18 and 1/12 varieties coming on strong. Numerous smaller products continue to come from 21st Century, Dragon, and Plan B Toys (which has introduced figures tied to the World War II video game *Call of Duty*), but collectors will likely continue to be drawn to more detailed, larger scale figures. Whether it is GI Joe or one of the hundreds of Dragon figures, the 1/6 scale trooper is still ready for duty with collectors. "The quality is so much better," says Rick Berry of the Michigan Toy Soldier Company, whose store has carried the 12-inch figures for years. He notes that many baby boomers owned the old GI Joe figures as kids, and with the renewed interest in WWII over the last decade, this has fueled the interest in the figures. "I deal with collectors of one kind or another almost exclusively and it seems to always hold true," says Berry. "We collect what we had when we were kids." □

Trafalgar in Reverse

Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

THE BATTLE OF JUTLAND

By James Dunn

English battleships erupt in flames as their big guns answer German bombardment in the opening moments of the Battle of Jutland.
LEFT: Admiral Sir John Jellicoe commanded the British Grand Fleet.

MORE THAN A CENTURY AFTER LORD HORATIO NELSON'S VICTORY AT TRAFALGAR, A WILY GERMAN SET A TRAP TO END GREAT BRITAIN'S DOMINANCE OF THE HIGH SEAS.

In the spring of 1916, as the result of intense international pressure, Vice Admiral Reinhard Scheer called in all his submarines after Germany announced an end to unrestricted underwater attacks on transatlantic merchant ships. With his subs idle, Scheer, the newly appointed commander of Kaiser Wilhelm II's High Seas Fleet, had to come up with another plan for their use. He would send a portion of the fleet to attack a British port to draw out part of the Grand Fleet.

The Art Archive/Imperial War Museum

Meanwhile, the submarines would lie in wait at the mouth of the Firth of Forth, Moray Firth, Scapa Flow, and other enemy naval bases to attack the British ships as they raced out to protect the homeland. German surface ships would then draw the enemy fleet farther away from the British mainland into the waiting range of the German fleet. If done properly, Scheer's audacious plan could break the British North Sea blockade that slowly but surely was strangling Germany.

The plan was a good one, but there were multiple delays. Earlier damage to the 23,000-ton battle cruiser *Seydlitz,* armed with ten 11-inch guns, postponed the start of the operation. Captain Herman Bauer, commander of the U-boats, suggested that the submarines go out at the earliest moment for reconnaissance. Scheer agreed, sending the subs out in mid-May. This turned out to be a tactical error, since it took the U-boats out of the upcoming battle. Because of fur-

ther delays, *Seydlitz* was not ready until May 29. By then, the submarines were low on fuel and Scheer's ambitious plan had to be put into action quickly or else the window of opportunity would close. On that day, Scheer radioed his submarines with another change of plans. Instead of attacking a British coastal port, the Germans would scout for commercial ships around the Jutland peninsula of northern Denmark. There was a problem with the message—most of the German submarines did not hear it, but the men in Room 40 did. That was the top-secret room in the British Admiralty where cryptologists listened in on German radio signals and decoded their messages. The British knew exactly when the Germans had set sail, and Admiralty dispatched the entire Grand Fleet to attack them.

There was a blunder at the beginning on the British side, as well. Admiral Sir John Jellicoe, commander in chief of the Grand Fleet, was told that Scheer was still in his base on the Jade River. Jellicoe assumed from the message that the entire German fleet would not be offering battle, and that Scheer would only venture out to cover Vice Admiral Franz von Hipper's return. Since Vice Admiral Sir David Beatty, commander of the Battle Cruiser Squadron, was 70 miles farther out to sea and traveling a more southerly route than Jellicoe, this meant that Beatty most likely would engage the enemy first. Accordingly, Jellicoe proceeded at a leisurely 15 knots toward a rendezvous with Beatty, which was scheduled for around 1530 off the coast of Denmark. In the meantime, both Beatty's and Hipper's scouting ships spotted a Danish tramp steamer, *N.J. Fjord,* in the vicinity. The German ship *Elbing* sent two torpedo boats, *B109* and *B110*, to investigate. At the same time, the British light cruisers *Galatea* and *Phaeton* broke off from Beatty's force to get a better look at the lone steamer. Both pairs of scouts reported enemy ships on the horizon. At 1428, *Galatea* and *Phaeton* fired their 6-inch guns at the German torpedo boats, inaugurating the Battle of Jutland.

As soon as Beatty was told about the enemy ships, he turned south-southeast to meet them in battle. He wanted to get between the German line of ships and their home base near Horns Reef. As he turned to engage the enemy, Beatty had his flagman signal the change in direction. Owing to the distance between them, Rear Admiral Hugh Evan-Thomas did not see the signals. Evan-Thomas commanded the 5th Battle Squadron, which included four 27,000-ton *Queen Elizabeth*-class dreadnoughts with eight 15-inch guns apiece. A devotee of Jellicoe's who had been sent to Beatty's command only 10 days earlier, Evan-Thomas was used to taking orders and following them faithfully and dutifully. He received the first message instructing him to turn north, but when Beatty changed course, his second signal was not received. Although Evan-Thomas could see the turn being made, he continued north until there was a distance of 10 miles between the ships, well out of range to assist in the opening of the battle. Instead of 10 British capital ships against five German ships, the battle would begin with a much more even 6-to-5 ratio.

The giant ships spent the first tense moments deploying into battle lines. Beatty had effectively cut off Hipper's escape, and assuming that the rest of the German fleet was nowhere nearby, he was certain of victory. Hipper, in turn, steamed his ships south as though he were running away; instead, he was drawing Beatty into the trap set by the German High Seas Fleet—the same fleet the British thought was still sitting idly in the Jade River.

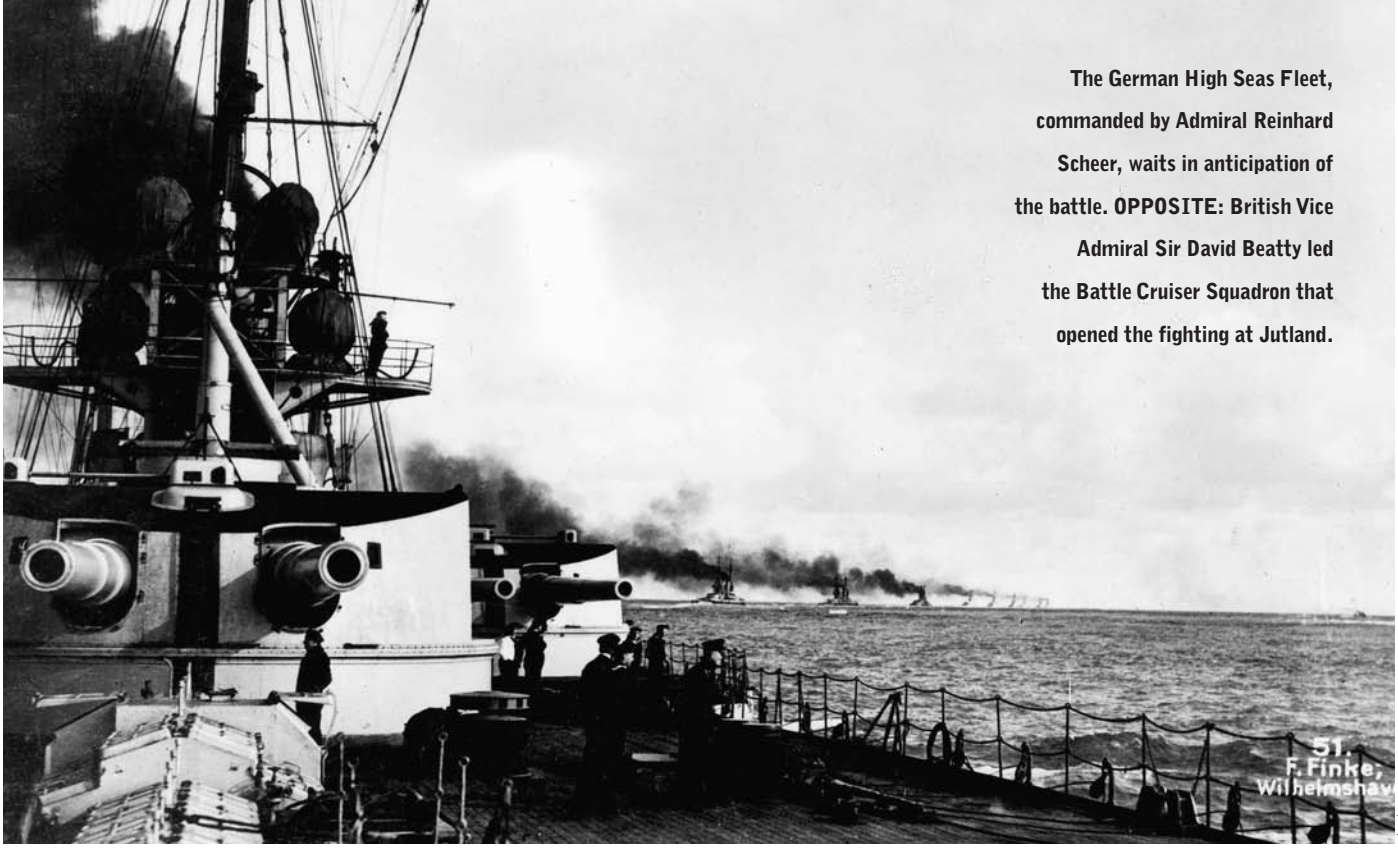
The British ships had been built for speed and power. Their guns ranged in size from 12-inches to 15-inches. The Germans, on the other hand, had smaller 11- to 12-inch guns. Only two of their ships had the larger 15-inch guns, but the Germans had thicker armor. Theoretically, all the British had to do was fire at the farthest range of their guns and keep maneuvering at higher speeds. This would keep their ships out of range of the Germans, while their own larger projectiles rained down on the enemy at will. But the German ships had a dull-gray eastern sky behind them that masked their precise position, while the British were exposed by a cloudless, sun-drenched western sky. Their vision was also obscured by smoke blowing in front of them. To make matters worse, the British rangefinders were inferior to their shooting distance, while the German scopes magnified their targets at 23 times greater than the naked eye. Unsurprisingly, they were better marksmen. The Germans were able to get the British in their sights and fired the first shots with their heavy guns. Thirty seconds later, the British line opened fire as well. The Germans had the better luck in the opening salvos. The British capital ships *Lion, Princess Royal,* and *Tiger* all took hits in the opening rounds. In return, *Seydlitz* was hit twice and *Lutzow* was struck by a salvo fired from Beatty's flagship, *Lion*.

At the same time that *Lion* scored a hit on *Lutzow*, she almost went down in a white flash of cordite charges. A lucky German shot had struck *Lion*'s center gun turret, blowing half of the turret roof into the air. It fell on the upper deck with a resounding crash, igniting the cordite charges in the loading cages, which were about to be entered into the guns. The explosion and subsequent fire killed every man in the gun house. Only the quick thinking of the turret officer, Major F.J.W. Harvey, saved both *Lion* and Beatty. After the initial explosion, the mortally wounded Harvey—he had lost both legs—ordered that the magazine doors be closed and the magazine flooded. His dying order prevented the fire from reaching the rest of the stored charges. For his heroism, Harvey was awarded a posthumous Victoria Cross.

Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

Indefatigable was not so lucky. She had been under heavy fire for about 15 minutes when there were fierce explosions in the center and rear of the ship. The 18,500-ton steel vessel disappeared from sight, the first ship sunk in the battle. The Germans were raining down hellish fire on Beatty's five ships, but salvation came in the form of Evan-Thomas's 5th Battle Squadron, which arrived at about 1610. Although the distance was still great and the German line was shrouded in smoke, Evans-Thomas's four ships were able to inflict enough pain on the German vessels to relieve the immediate pressure on Beatty, who smartly altered his course when he realized that Evan-Thomas had joined the battle. Hipper did the same. The fleets, which had been drifting apart and out of each other's line of sight, came back into range and resumed firing.

Queen Mary was hit next. According to observers on board *Tiger* and *New Zealand,*



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The German High Seas Fleet, commanded by Admiral Reinhard Scheer, waits in anticipation of the battle. OPPOSITE: British Vice Admiral Sir David Beatty led the Battle Cruiser Squadron that opened the fighting at Jutland.

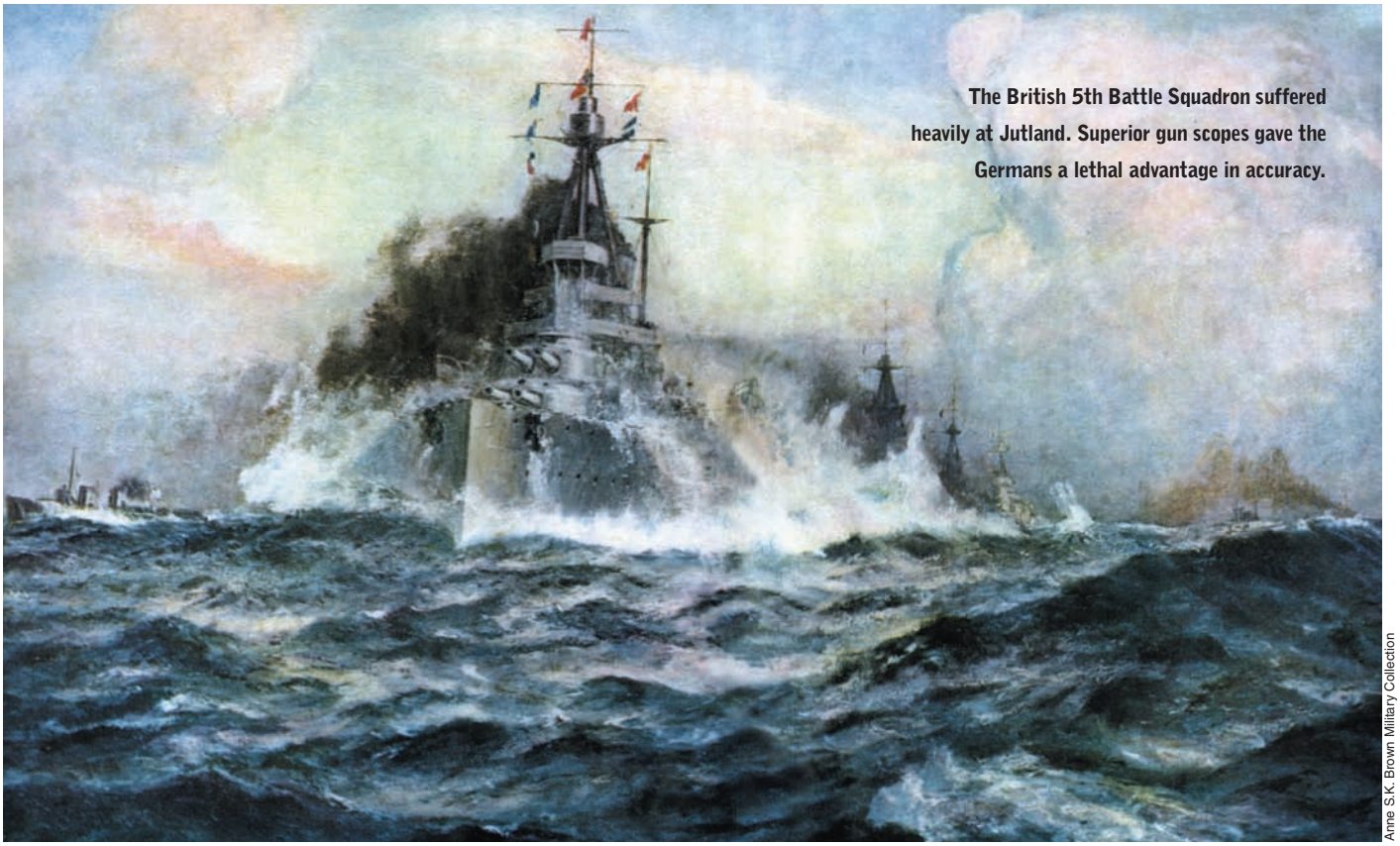
Then a tremendous dark-red flame and large MASSES OF BLACK SMOKE BELCHED FORTH AMIDSHIPS AND THE HULL APPEARED TO BURST ASUNDER.

three shells struck *Queen Mary* simultaneously. From the flying splinters and the deep-red glow of fire at the moment of impact, it seemed as though the shells had failed to pierce the armor. Two more shells struck the ship. Again, only a little black smoke, apparently coal dust, was seen to issue from the shot holes. Then a tremendous dark-red flame and large masses of black smoke belched forth amidships and the hull appeared to burst asunder. A similar explosion followed in the forward section of the ship. *Queen Mary* broke in two, the roofs of her turrets hurled 100 feet into the air, and in a moment she disappeared from view, with the stark exception of her stern and its still-revolving propellers. Only 20 men out of a complement of 1,286 survived the sinking.

Tiger* and *New Zealand, following *Queen Mary* in line of battle, barely avoided striking the two halves of the dying ship. When *Princess Royal* disappeared in a plume of water as well, Beatty said dyspeptically, "There seems to be something wrong with our bloody ships today." He sent 12 destroyers to deliver a torpedo attack on Hipper's ships. They raced toward the German ships at 34 knots. Hipper saw them coming and sent out the light cruiser *Regensburg* and 15 destroyers to meet them. Both sides fired torpedoes at the capital ships. Only one out of 20 torpedoes the British fired found its mark. *Seydlitz* was hit hard, taking in hundreds of tons of water, but she was able to retain speed and stay in line. The British ships managed to avoid all 18 torpedoes fired at them. The destroyers battled each other in the no-man's-land between the ships. Two destroyers were sunk on either side. During the melee, Beatty reversed course and turned north. His ships were taking the worst of it. Two of his ships had been sunk, as well as two destroyers, while the Germans had only lost two destroyers. To make matters worse, Scheer's force was now coming into view.

Beatty's light-cruiser squadron had been left behind and was just now resuming scouting positions in front of the larger ships. From this vantage point, they could see the entire German High Seas Fleet. In another 10 or 20 minutes, Beatty's eight capital ships would have been outnumbered 21 to 8. Without the light cruisers in the British vanguard, the whole battle would have truly been a disaster for the British. Beatty's turn left Evan-Thomas in position to inflict damage on the Germans with his huge 1,900-pound artillery shells. But Evan-Thomas, seven miles away, could not see Beatty's message flags, nor did any of the other ships signal him by searchlight. The first he knew of Beatty's change of course was when he passed *Lion* going in the opposite direction. Beatty had his signal man contact Evan-Thomas. The message flags went up at 1648 and were not hauled down until 1654, at which point Evan-Thomas made his turn. The six-minute time period brought his ships 4,000 yards closer to the Germans. *Barnham* was hit, *Valiant* was untouched, *Warspite* was struck three times, and *Malaya* avoided the concentrated fire by turning early.

The British guns scored some hits of their own on the enemy. *Seydlitz, Lutzow, Derfflinger, Konig, Grosser Kurfurst*, and *Markgraf* all suffered damage, and *Von der Tann* had her guns silenced and rendered useless as an offensive weapon, but gallantly stayed in the line to draw fire away from the other ships. The German guns were beginning to quiet down, and worse yet, the field of vision had changed. The



The British 5th Battle Squadron suffered heavily at Jutland. Superior gun scopes gave the Germans a lethal advantage in accuracy.

Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

Germans were now looking into a glaring sun, while the British had a clear line of sight.

At 1720, Scheer signaled Hipper to give chase. Beatty then altered his course from north to northeast to engage Hipper's ships again. This forced the German line to bend to the east to prevent Beatty's ships from gaining the advantage. Smoke from the guns mixed with a heavy mist to form thick clouds that hampered Hipper's vision. It was his job to keep the High Seas Fleet aware of changes, but because he was caught up in an intense battle with Beatty and was lost in one of the cloud banks, he did not spot the approaching British Grand Fleet. Rear Admiral Friedrich Bodicker, three miles ahead of him to the east, saw them first, reporting enemy dreadnoughts to the east. These could not be Beatty's ships, nor could they be Evan-Thomas's crew—someone else was entering the battle. At 1759 PM, Bodicker saw the British Grand Fleet stretched out on the horizon, 16,000 yards away.

When Jellicoe learned of the battle, he adjusted his course, stopped zigzagging, and picked up his speed from 15 knots to 20-—full-speed ahead. At the same time, he sent three *Invincibles* racing before him. They were 17,000-ton battle cruisers with eight 12-inch guns, commanded by Rear Admiral Horace Hood. These ships could steam at a full 25 knots and catch up with the running battle. The *Invincibles* at first had a hard time finding the battle in the open sea, appearing on the eastern side of the fight, where Hood encountered Bodicker's 2nd Scouting Group of light cruisers. The ships were not close enough to recognize friend from foe, so they continued to close in on each other. The German ships recognized the light cruiser *Chester* as British and unsportingly flashed the British recognition signal, drawing *Chester* even closer. When the Germans opened fire at 6,000 yards, *Chester* was engulfed in shells and lost her rangefinder, her communications systems and three of her four 6-inch guns. Although ravaged with gunfire, *Chester* was not slowed down—her engines were untouched. Hood saw *Chester* in distress, placed his ship between the crippled vessel and the German ships, and fired his 12-inch guns. The German ships fled the scene, but not before three of the four ships were hit. *Frankfurt* and *Pillau* escaped with minimal damage, but *Wiesbaden* was fatally injured. A 12-inch shell put her engine out of commission, and the wounded ship stopped dead in the water and drifted.

To rescue the German light cruisers, Hipper sent *Regensburg* and 31 destroyers to charge the *Invincibles,* but before they could launch their torpedoes they were met by a countercharge from Hood's second light cruiser, *Canterbury,* and four British destroyers. In a free-swinging brawl at close quarters, the Germans somehow got the impression that many more British ships were present than was the truth. As a result, the Germans only fired 12 torpedoes, after which the 31 destroyers turned back. During the brawl, the British destroyer *Shark* was hit and disabled. The small British losses were out of all proportion to the gain brought about by the surprise appearance of the 3rd Battle Cruiser Squadron on the starboard side of the German cruisers. Had it not been for the timely intervention of Hood's squadron, the German flotilla would have attacked Beatty's force full-on and brought the latter's encircling movement to a standstill.

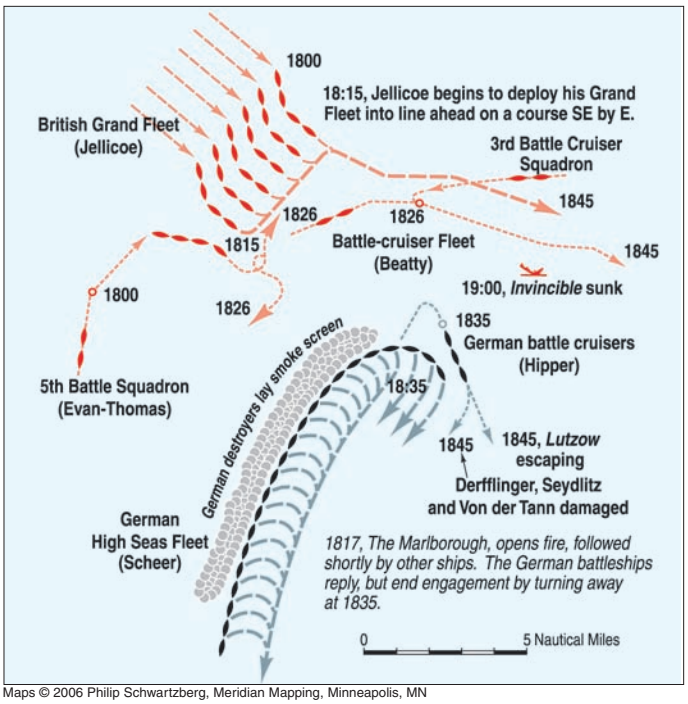
When Jellicoe arrived near the battle scene, he desperately needed accurate and precise information, but such information was the last thing he received. One of Beatty's most important jobs—and his greatest failure—was his failure to send messages to his commander. For over an hour and 15 minutes Beatty either ignored or forgot to inform his commander about where the enemy was, its battle strength and

bearing. Jellicoe had to deploy his ships into one long line of battle in order to bring his guns to bear on the enemy. If he deployed in the wrong direction, the Germans might cross his "T," sailing across the foremost ship in his battle line in a perpendicular fashion and inflicting heavy damage on the ships in the base of the "T."

At 1806 PM, Beatty sighted the enemy to the south and passed the information on to Jellicoe. Still, Jellicoe did not know their speed, direction, or number. Despite this lack of information, Jellicoe had no choice but to deploy. If he turned to the starboard, he would engage the enemy quickly, being well within gunnery range. He could also come under heavy torpedo and destroyer attack from the Germans. If he turned to port, he would avoid the torpedo attacks, being 4,000 yards away from the enemy line. This move would cross the German "T" and put the British fleet against the dull-gray sky, making it hard to see, while the Germans would be highlighted by the western sky.

Scheer thought he was sitting in the catbird seat before Jellicoe showed up. He had 21 dreadnoughts, with their corresponding complement of torpedo boats and destroyers, against Beatty's eight dreadnoughts and retinue. He was about to grab his grand prize when the whole British Grand Fleet suddenly appeared. Scheer, to his credit, reacted quickly. He saw only one way out—to order a carefully rehearsed fleet maneuver designed for exactly this situation, when it was necessary to break away rapidly from a stronger fleet. At 1836 PM, Scheer signaled for each ship to make a 180-degree turn onto the opposite course.

This maneuver caught Jellicoe off guard—he was not used to being on the defensive. The Germans, on the other hand, knew that they were the weaker force and had to be ready to escape if they were confronted by an overwhelming foe. They had often practiced escaping. Had it not been for the wounded *Wiesbaden* and the slower ships that Scheer mistakenly allowed to accompany him, he might have escaped with minimal damage after sinking two of the Grand Fleet's mighty dreadnoughts. But even though Scheer had made a great turning maneuver, his fleet could not outrun Jellicoe's fleet. Scheer ordered another turn to starboard. His decision to turn back and engage the enemy again has been criticized by many. Scheer himself seemed to be hard-pressed to justify his actions after the fact. In his report to the Kaiser, he claimed, "It was as yet too early to assume night cruising order. The enemy could have compelled us to fight before dark, he could have prevented our exercising our initiative, and finally he could have cut off our return to the German Bight. There was only one way of avoiding this: to inflict a second blow on the enemy by advancing again regardless of cost, and to bring all the destroyers forcibly to attack. Such a maneuver would surprise the enemy, upset his plans for the rest of the day and, if the blow fell really heavily, make easier a night escape. It also offered the possibility of a last attempt to help the hard-pressed *Wiesbaden,* or at least the rescue of her crew."



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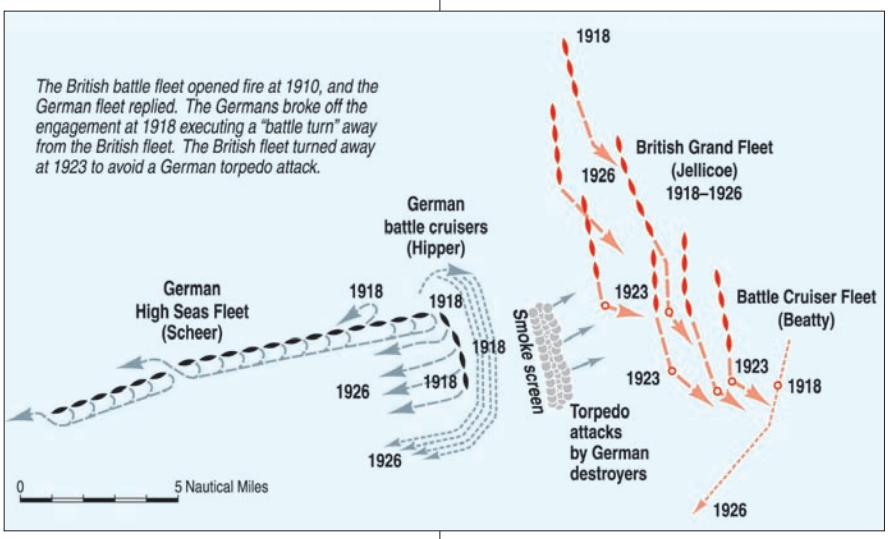
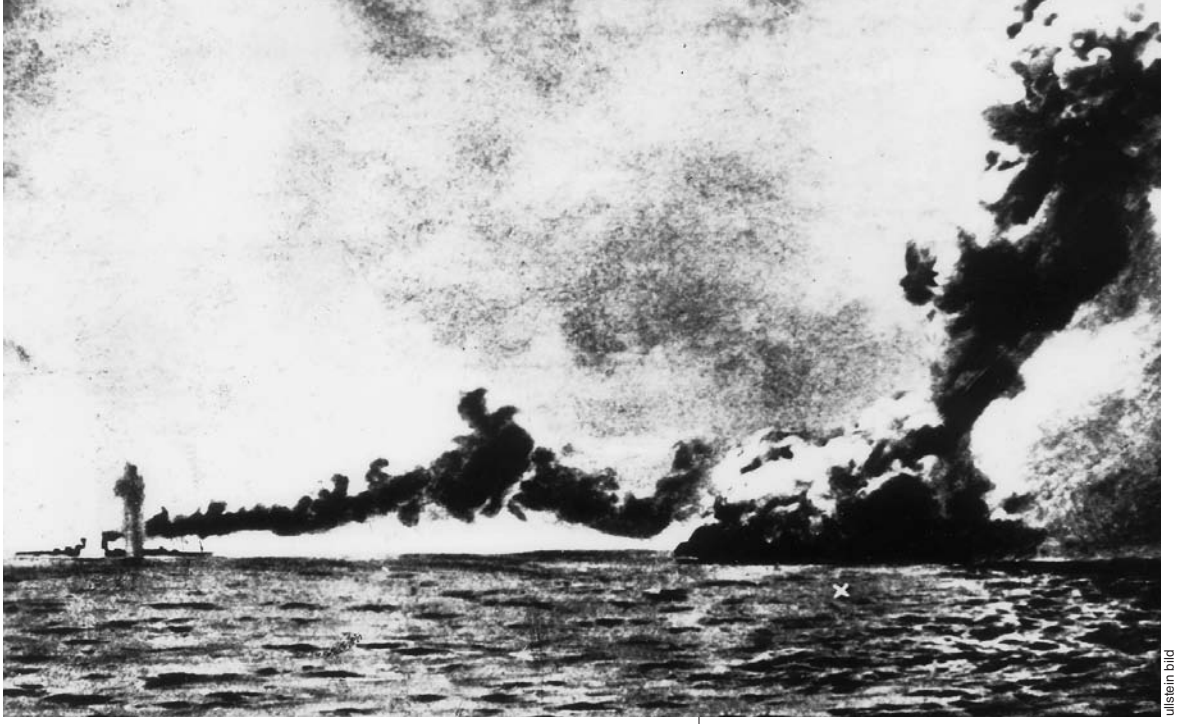
At 1855, Scheer sent the High Seas Fleet steaming straight at the full force of the British fleet. This move surprised the British, but the gamble did not pay off for the Germans. The British could see the German ships clearly, while the late-afternoon sun was blinding the German gunners, who could only make out the flashes of the British guns. Without a good target to shoot at, the Germans were sitting ducks waiting for the British hunters. *Hercules* fired on *Seydlitz*; *Colossus* and *Revenge* on *Derfflinger*; *Neptune* and *St. Vincent* on *Derfflinger* and *Moltke*. *Marlborough,* ignoring her own torpedo injury, fired 14 salvos in six minutes and saw four of them hit home. *Monarch, Iron Duke, Centurion, Royal Oak, King George V, Temeraire, Superb,* and *Neptune* all reported scoring hits. The German ships were being slaughtered and could hardly see well enough to try to hit back. During the whole time the British were ravaging the German ships, the Germans only landed two shots, both on the luckless *Colossus*.



Ten minutes of withering attacks was all Scheer could stand—he would have to extricate his ships again. He sent his battle cruisers and torpedo boats to attack the enemy's battleships and leave a smoke screen to shield their retreat. Signal flags went up commanding: "Battle cruisers at the enemy. Give it everything!" *Derfflinger* with eight 12-inch guns, *Seydlitz* with ten 11-inch guns,



ullstein bild

LEFT: Struck by three shells simultaneously, the *Queen Mary* lost all but 20 of her 1,286-man crew.

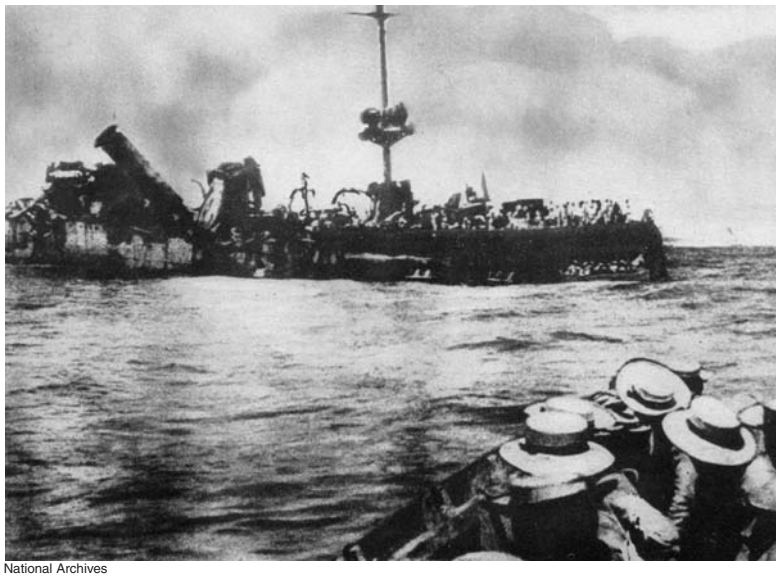
BELOW: German cruiser *Emden* was destroyed by British fire at Jutland.

OPPOSITE: English sailors "Serving the Gun" in the heat of battle.

Moltke with its ten 11-inch guns, and *Von der Tann* (which could not fire its fore turret) would have to shield the German fleet from the entire British fleet, while having scores of 12-, 13- and 15-inch shells raining down upon them. The four ships were facing down the British battle line, while the German ships attempted to make another 180-degree turn. During the 10-minute-long bombardment by the British, the German battle line became bunched up, making tight maneuvering extremely dangerous. Scheer turned to port instead of starboard to make room for other ships to turn. Still, some of the ships almost collided as they attempted to turn.

The battle cruisers were followed by torpedo boats. Their job was to lay down a line of torpedoes to cover the escape of the High Seas Fleet. This they failed to do, but the secondary result of their attack nevertheless helped save the Germans. The British used a turn-away tactic that was common at this time by most navies. Upon seeing the track of an enemy torpedo, a captain would turn his ship away from it and attempt to outrace it. Some 31 torpedoes were fired at the British line, and though none of them hit their targets, by forcing the British to turn they changed the outcome of the battle. Had Jellicoe turned toward the torpedoes and pursued Scheer, instead of turning away, he might have inflicted heavy damage on the Germans and perhaps even brought about their total destruction. Instead, he sacrificed his advantages of time and range, while Scheer made good his escape. Afterward, Jellicoe was accused of forsaking the Royal Navy's chance for a new Trafalgar. The ghost of Nelson would haunt him for the rest of his life. But to be fair to the British commander, turning away from a torpedo attack was the accepted practice of the day. Moreover, he was still between the German High Seas Fleet and their path home. The Germans would have to cross the British line to find safe harbor. As far as Jellicoe was concerned, they would do battle again at daybreak the next day.

Scheer had extricated his fleet from imminent disaster for a second time, but he still had a problem. He had to take his battered ships to Horns Reef off the Denmark coast. From there the Germans had a clear lane back to the Jade River, 100 miles to the south. Jellicoe had to deliver the death blow to Scheer's fleet before they reached Horns Reef. Scheer had one more ace left up his sleeve. The Germans were



National Archives

practiced at night battles, while the British were not. But daylight would come early in this northern section of the earth. Sunrise was around 0300. Scheer would have to act quickly.

At 2215, four British light cruisers met five German light cruisers. In the near-total darkness, it was hard to identify the ships. Commodore W.E. Goodenough on *Southampton* came in contact with some unidentified ships crossing his path and fired a shot at them. They returned fire in a barrage of shells. Although much damage was done to the British ship, she was still able to fire a torpedo, which hit and sunk the light cruiser *Frauenlob*. The rest of the British ships seemed reluctant to engage or even to disclose their positions at night. Because of this fear, two of Scheer's dreadnoughts, *Moltke* and *Seydlitz,* were allowed to pass through the British lines unmolested. Both ships were heavily damaged and ripe for attack, but both were allowed to limp away.

At about midnight, the British 4th Flotilla of Destroyer Escorts, which was keeping station with the 5th Battle Squadron, converged with the van of the German High Seas Fleet. *Tipperary* was leading

12 destroyers when she spotted unknown ships to the starboard, about 1,000 yards away. Searchlights and a barrage of 5.9- and 3.5-inch shells turned *Tipperary* into a blazing hulk. *Spitfire,* which was behind *Tipperary,* had to maneuver to avoid hitting the burning ship. As she turned, she encountered the German battleship *Nassau* coming at her from the other direction. *Nassau* altered her course straight for *Spitfire* and the two ships collided port bow to port bow, then screeched by each other. *Nassau* fired her 11-inch guns at the smaller ship. Although the projectiles went over the top of the destroyer, the blast still wrecked the bridge, the foremost funnel, and the mast. Spitfire was able to limp away, but she was badly damaged and useless for the rest of the battle.

Another British captain was reluctant to fire first and paid the price. Commander Allen on the destroyer *Broke* signaled an unidentified ship and was met by a hailstorm of blinding lights and shells. In less than a minute, *Broke* was decimated and spun out of control, ramming the next ship in line, *Sparrowhawk*. *Contest* also rammed *Sparrowhawk,* taking off 30 feet of her stern. *Broke* and *Contest* were able to pull out of the mess, limping out of action. *Sparrowhawk* floated around until the next day, when she was scuttled by her crew. The German light cruiser *Rostock* was hit by a torpedo, taking on 930 tons of water but was able to follow the German ships slowly and from a distance.

Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

In the 4th Flotilla, command passed to Commander Hutchinson of *Achates.* He was followed by *Ambuscade, Ardent, Fortune, Porpoise,* and *Garland*. It was *Fortune* whose luck would run out. Hutchinson wanted to reconnect with the British line and steered a course merging instead with the lead of the German line. *Westfalen* and *Rhineland* opened fire. It took less than a minute to send *Fortune* to the bottom. *Achates* and *Ambuscade* thought they were being chased by a German cruiser. It was actually one of their own, *Black Prince,* an armored cruiser, which had fallen behind the British line because of damage to her engines. Soon after 0100, both *Nassau* and *Thuringen* sighted the ship, which did not reply to their signals. *Thuringen* open fire on *Black Prince* from a range of 1,000 yards. All her shots were direct hits. *Nassau, Ostfriesland,* and *Frederick der Grosse* pitched in with more fire. *Black Prince* blew up and sank into the North Sea, sending hundreds more British sailors to a watery grave.

***Ardent* was the final destroyer** of the 4th Flotilla to meet the German line, be illuminated by the searchlights, and be destroyed by a hailstorm of small-caliber shells. None of the British destroyers had radioed Jellicoe about the action with the German dreadnoughts. Had they done so, they might have altered the course of the battle. The battle of destroyers versus dreadnoughts was a mismatched fight from start to finish and quickly turned into a massacre. All the while, Jellico had no idea that Scheer was successfully cutting across the rear guard of his ships and escaping. Despite other minor encounters, the German ships managed to break free. At 0415, Jellicoe learned that the High Seas Fleet had gotten away. It was only now that Beatty got around to telling Jellicoe of the loss of battle cruisers *Queen Mary* and *Indefatigable.* Jellicoe was shocked to hear the news, especially when he learned that they had been lost early in the battle and that his battleship commander had failed to keep him informed of such a catastrophe. It might have changed Jellicoe's attitude of pursuit in order to seek revenge for the losses.

As it was, the Germans claimed a great victory at Jutland. Few observers would have given the German fleet a fighting chance against the British. The naval battles of the war up to this point had gone poorly for the Germans. Great Britain reigned supreme on the oceans. But with the German fleet sinking 14 British ships and claiming a staggering 6,600 casualties, including 6,097 killed, German newspapers exulted that Trafalgar had been reversed. In a limited sense, they were correct. The German High Fleet had certainly given as good as it got. But the British still maintained a great numerical superiority in ships over the Germans, and they were building new ships faster than the Germans. Even though *Queen Mary* and *Indefatigable* had been lost, there were already ships to take their place. Nor was there a change in the relative position of the two navies. The German fleet was still stuck in its corner of the North Sea and British ships still blockaded it.

To the British public, unaware that a major sea battle had even taken place, Jutland came as a bombshell. Within an hour, London newsboys were on the streets shouting, "Great Naval Disaster! Five British Battleships Lost!" Flags were lowered to half-staff, stock exchanges closed, and theaters darkened. Overseas, on breakfast tables from New York to Chicago to San Francisco, the headlines read, "Britain Defeated at Sea!" and "British Fleet Almost Annihilated!" Soon, however, the British newspapers put things into cold perspective. "Will the shouting, flag wagging [German] people get any more of the copper, rubber, and cotton their government so sorely needs?" asked the British press. "Not a pound. Will meat and butter be cheaper in Berlin? Not by a pfennig. There is one test and only one, of victory. Who held the field of battle at the end of the fight?"

Even Scheer seemed to lose hope in the ability of the High Seas Fleet to have a definite impact on the war. In a confidential report to the Kaiser, he stated his opinion that most of the ships would be ready for action by August, but that he doubted whether even a successful attack could reduce Great Britain's control of the North Sea. Then he added ominously, "A victorious end to the war within a reasonable time can only be achieved through defeat of the British economic life—that is, by using U-boats against British trade." The German Navy had put up a valiant fight against the superior British Navy at Jutland, but by resuming unrestricted submarine warfare, Germany would foolishly antagonize a powerful neutral nation, the United States, and bring it into the war. By threatening America, Germany needlessly made a new enemy. When Scheer convinced the Kaiser to allow unrestricted U-boat activity to resume, Germany in effect threw away her victory at Jutland and planted the poisonous seeds that eventually would lose Germany the war. □

The Granger Collection, New York

BRIAN BORU:

For more than six decades, Brian Boru was at the forefront of Ireland's seemingly endless wars. Clontarf, his ultimate victory, came at a heavy price.

In 941 AD, in the fortress of Kincora overlooking the River Shannon just south of Lake Derg, Queen Be Bhionn gave birth to a son, Brian Mac Cennétig. Brian's father, Cennétig mac Lorcain, was a petty king of the Dal Cais clan of the district of Thomond, north of Munster. To the south of Kincora, another of King Cennétig's fortresses, Béal Boruma, guarded a river ford. There the Dalcassians paid cattle tribute to the powerful Munster clan, the Eoganacht. It was from the name of the ford that the newborn received his surname Boru (tributes), a fitting moniker for one destined to receive the tribute of all Ireland in his time.

As a child, Brian sat at the hearth in his father's great hall, listening to tales of ancient Irish heroes. Thus inspired, Brian began to practice with the throwing spear as soon as he was old enough to walk. It would take more than martial skills, however, for him to become a great lord. Young Brian was sent to the monks of Inisfallen, in the lake lands of Killarney, for instruction in religious matters, science, and law. Ireland at that time

Ireland's Mighty Warrior King

With one of his four wives at his side, King Brian Boru prepares to lead his men into battle in Gregory Manchess's contemporary painting, *Lion of Ireland*. INSET: An elderly Brian Boru still shows the warrior fire in this 19th-century color engraving.

Painting by Gregory Manchess

by Ludwig Heinrich Dyck

was roughly divided into the regions of Ulster in the north, Connacht in the west, Meath in the middle, Leister in the east, and Munster in the south. Each region was dominated by a king and a major clan, but there were also numerous sub-kings and minor clans. Alliances were quickly made and unmade as the kings and clans constantly fought each other. Into this political cauldron were thrown the country's longtime foreign occupiers, the Danes and Norwegians. First as Viking raiders, then as merchants and traders, the Norsemen had established coastal bases at Waterford, Wexford, Cork, Limerick, and above all at Dublin, the future capital of Ireland.

When Brian was 11, the Eoganacht allied themselves with the Danes to defeat the Dalcassians. The war claimed the lives of Brian's father and mother. Four years later, the Danes not only attacked the Dalcassians again, but also turned on the Eoganacht. In Munster, the Eoganacht surrendered territory after territory. In Thomond, by contrast, the Dalcassians led by their new king,

Brian's brother Mathghamhain, refused to submit. The Danes drove the Dal Cais resistance farther and farther into the ancient forests and barren limestone uplands of the Clare wilderness. Brian, now 17, fought at his older brother's side. It was during these troublesome times that Brian married the first of several wives, Mor, who bore him three sons.

VIKING SHIPS PILLAGED up and down the Shannon's shores at will, their Norse dragon ships pushing up waterways untried by the Irish. The ships' shallow drafts, less than four feet, allowed the raiders to jump into the water and dash unexpectedly upon riverside villages. Defeat for the Dalcassians seemed inevitable until 962, when Osraighe, a tributary kingdom of Leinster, came to the rescue by inflicting a crushing defeat on the Norsemen. With his own forces worn out, Mathghamhain welcomed the opportunity to negotiate a temporary truce with the Vikings. Brian, however, could not forget his slain parents and opposed any sign of weakness. With only a hundred followers, he carried on the war. From hidden mountain caves and woodland strongholds, Brian and his guerrilla fighters ventured forth, weapons ready, light bags of provisions slung around their necks. At night they sneaked up on Norse outposts along the Shannon's banks. At Brian's signal, javelins swooshed without warning into the Norse guards. Brian and his men sprang forth, wielding their fearsome battle-axes and cleaving off whole limbs at one blow. Others drew their short swords for close-in combat, often using one in each hand. The tall Norsemen fought back fiercely, their powerful blades swinging in great arcs to slice through the hide and tanned-leather armor of the Dalcassians.

Brian's ambushes so unnerved the Danes that there were rumors of a large Dalcassian army massing in the hills. Brian and his hungry little band paid a heavy price for their successes, finding themselves hunted incessantly through the chilling, wet winter. Brian's followers were reduced to only 15 men, but still he did not give up. Mathghamhain, meanwhile, rebuilt his power and subdued the Eoganacht. Eventually, Brian's unbroken spirit won Mathghamhain back to his side. In 964, the two brothers took the fight to the Danes in Limerick. There followed four years of war, culminating in the decisive Battle of Solchoid. The Irish held the higher ground and defended from behind the cover of low willow trees and shrubs. The Norsemen, under their leader Ivar, began their assault at sunrise, but the Irish lines refused to break. At midday, the Irish stormed down to slaughter their exhausted foes. Brian and Mathghamhain marched on Limerick in the dark. The city capitulated without resistance, and the Dalcassians butchered and burned without mercy. The spoils were plentiful, but Ivar escaped to the island of Inis Cathaigh.

Solchoid paved the way for Mathghamhain's inauguration as king of Munster in 970. The deposed Eoganacht smoldered with resentment and bided their time. Six years later, the Eoganacht king of Desmond, Maolmhuadh, ambushed Mathghamhain on a lonely mountain road and skewered his sword through Mathghamhain's heart. When Brian heard of his brother's death, he swore that Mathghamahain's murderers "shall forfeit life for this deed, or I shall perish by a violent death." First to feel Brian's wrath was Ivar, whom Brian suspected had taken a hand in the murder. Ignoring the traditional sanctuary of St. Seanan on Inis Cathaigh, Brian killed Ivar in personal combat, then slaughtered two of his sons and looted his fortress and the surrounding islands. Brian killed two more of Maolmhuadh's allies, the treacherous Donnabhan of Fhidhghinte and Harald, Ivar's third son and the reigning king of Limerick. Limerick was sacked again amid much killing and looting. Maolmhuadh's end came with his defeat at the 978 Battle of Bealach Leacht, after which he was tracked down and killed by Brian's eldest son, Murchadh.

Brian rode to the seat of the kings of Munster at Cashel. Under the royal tree of Maigh Adhair, he took the white wand—the royal symbol of justice—in his hand, and the royal diadem was placed on his head. In an oath of obedience, the assembled nobles of Munster placed their hands between those of Brian. The beginning of his reign was filled with battles, plundering, ravaging, and general unquiet. To face such troublesome times, Brian consolidated his position among the defeated Eoganacht, making allies of his former foes by marrying his daughter to Cian, son of the late Maolmhuadh. The marriage was a wise diplomatic move on Brian's part, for Cian proved to be an unwavering ally.

In 988 Brian showed himself a true opportunist when he enlisted the help of his erstwhile enemies, the Vikings of Waterford, to inflict a devastating defeat upon the king of Connacht at Lough Ree.

As king of Munster, Brian faced new and more dangerous rivals. Munster and the Danes of Limerick may have been subjugated, but to the north there were more Norse strongholds and other powerful Irish kings. In 979 Brian recorded victories over the Danes of Waterford and King Ua Faolain of the neighboring Decies clan. Brian then instigated war with Leinster by demanding an 800-year-old tribute that Leinster owed the king of Munster. When Leinster refused to swear allegiance to Munster or to pay the required 300 gold-handled swords, cows with brass yokes, horses, and cloaks, Brian invaded.

Meanwhile, the new high king of Ireland, 32-year-old Moal-Seachlainn mac Domnall II, was determined to quash anyone who questioned his authority. In 983, before he defeated the rebellious forces of Leinster and Dublin, Maol-Seachlainn veered into Munster. To warn Brian to stay put in Munster, Maol-Seachlainn uprooted Maigh Adhair. Instead, Brian riposted with a raid into Maol-Seachlainn's realm of Meath. For the next 15 years, Brian and Maol-Seachlainn were at odds with each other. Evenly matched, they at first avoided fixed battle, instead choosing to plunder each other's lands and prey on neighboring Irish kingdoms and Viking settlements. In 988 Brian showed himself a true opportunist when he enlisted the help of his erstwhile enemies, the Vikings of Waterford, to inflict a devastating defeat upon the king of Connacht at Lough Ree. To establish ties with the defeated King Cathal, Brian took Cathal's daughter Dubhchobhlaigh as his wife. In 992 and again in 994, Brian's forces met Maol-Seachlainn's army in battle, but Brian was routed each time.

In 998, Brian and Maol-Seachlainn concluded a peace treaty, and the following year they faced the alliance of King Sigtrygg Silkbeard Olafsson of Dublin and King Maol Mórdha of Leinster. The fact that Maol Mórdha was also Sigtrygg's uncle, while Sigtrygg himself was Maol-Seachlainn's former stepson, showed just how closely tied the warring factions were. Sigtrygg hoped to engage Maol-Seachlainn and Brian in

The Irish Scandinavians continued to live in Ireland after their defeat at Clontarf. Today, Viking artifacts and footpaths are being excavated in Dublin.

the open plains of Kildare, where his superior cavalry would give him the advantage, but he underestimated the speed of his foes. Brian and Maol-Seachlainn force-marched their men to intercept the Dublin-Leister army in the hills of Gleann Mama. Holding the higher ground, Brian and Maol-Seachlainn emerged victorious. Brian, not Maol-Seachlainn, claimed the battle honors, and Dublin subsequently submitted to Brian. For a week the city was sacked, yielding much gold, silver hangings, and other precious loot.

Murchadh dragged Maol Mórdha from hiding in a yew tree. Maol Mórdha's life was spared and he was allowed to remain king of Leinster. Sigtrygg fared even better. Not only did Brian allow him to remain king of Dublin, but Brian gave him his daughter in marriage. Brian himself married the alluring Gormfhlaith, Sigtrygg's mother and ex-wife of Maol-Seachlainn. Gormfhlaith became Brian's fourth wife (he also had 30 concubines). Brian hoped that his generous treatment of the defeated king and his newly forged marriage bonds would ensure Sigtrygg's loyalty in the future.

His victory at Gleann Mama showed the rest of Ireland that Brian's star was on the rise while that of Maol-Seachlainn was on the wane. Brian immediately turned on Maol-Seachlainn and led a great host of chiefs and forces toward Tara, a stronghold that dated back to Neolithic times and was the traditional parliament of the high kings until the 6th century. Tara remained an easily defended military position, overlooking the plains of Meath. Sent ahead of his main army, Brian's Norse cavalry prematurely clashed with Maol-Seachlainn's army and was nearly wiped out. Brian ignobly withdrew. King Cathal of Connacht consequently rebelled against Brian, but a year later, in 1002, Brian defeated him once again. Brian struck for Tara and demanded the high throne. By now he had intimidated all the other Irish kings. None came to fight beside Maol-Seachlainn, not even Maol-Seachlainn's own kinsmen, the northern Ui Neill clan of Ulster. Maol-Seachlainn had little choice but to yield. At Cashel, Brian took up the diadem of high king and emperor of the Gaels. Three quarters of Ireland was now under his control.

To cow any potential challengers, Brian built fortresses, strengthened the fortifications of Cashel, took hostages, and sent Murchadh on punitive raids. Although Cashel was his capital, Brian preferred to rule from his boyhood home, Kincora. He was fortunate that his sons proved loyal and did not turn on each other—or on him. In the subjugated Norse towns, trade with Europe flourished in slaves, wine, walrus tusks, spices, furs, and silks. From Brian's vassal kingdoms, a ceaseless tribute of cows, hogs, cloaks, iron, and wine flowed into Munster. Decades of raids by Vikings, by Irish lords, and even by Irish abbots had caused much damage to the land. Brian used his growing wealth to improve roads, build bridges, restore old churches and monasteries, and build new ones alongside schools. For nearly a decade, minor feuds aside, Ireland enjoyed untypical peace and a cultural renaissance.

TROUBLE BREWED WHEN Brian became estranged from Gormfhlaith, who left Kincora to return to Dublin. Consumed by hatred for Brian, she egged on her son, Sigtrygg, and King Maol Mórdha to rise against Brian. Brian responded with a severe new tribute that sent Leinster into near-starvation and summoned Maol Mórdha to Kincora for a show of obedience. Coaxed into an argument by Murchadh, Maol Mórdha stormed out of the castle before consulting with Brian. A messenger sent after him by Brian was later found with his skull smashed in.

Whether the threat was real or imagined, Maol Mórdha reforged his alliance with Sigtrygg. Maol-Seachlainn, however, stayed loyal to Brian. He even sent his army against Dublin, but suffered a crippling defeat. In 1013, Brian and Murchadh arrived to plunder Osraighe and southern Leinster before heading on to Dublin. Early in September, Sigtrygg watched as Brian and Murchadh's army set up camp outside the city's landward walls. This time, however, Sigtrygg wisely did not sally forth. The fortifications of the Viking strongholds were more formidable than those of the Irish forts and, when resolutely defended, were beyond Brian's or any other Irish king's power to overcome. After more than three months of blockade, Brian's forces stirred with mutiny because supplies were running low and the foul winter weather was on the way. Sigtrygg jeered as Brian's humbled army broke camp, but he knew that Brian would return. In search of allies, Sigtrygg set off to the hall of Sigurd Hlodvirsson the Stout, the Norse earl of the Orkneys. In return for bringing a few hundred half-heathen, half-Christian men as reinforcements, Sigurd demanded Gormfhlaith's hand in marriage and an Irish

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Murchadh, the eldest son of Brian Boru, races to capture the Danish standard. Like his father, Murchadh was a fearsome warrior. He died in hand-to-hand combat with Danish champion Amrud at Clontarf.

kingdom to rule. Gormfhlaith was pleased with her son, but counseled Sigtrygg to gather an even greater force. He found more help in the pirates of the pagan Dane, Brodar of the Isle of Man. The cunning Sigtrygg promised Brodar the same reward he had promised Sigurd. Brodar and Sigtrygg reckoned that, at the comparatively advanced age of 54, Sigurd could well die in battle.

IN THE COMING CONFLICT, Brian depended on his loyal Munster warriors, as well as the Danish stewards of Waterford and Limerick. Only a few reinforcements strode forth from Connacht, and none came from Ulster. Fortunately for Brian, Maol-Seachlainn promised to help, and a new ally was found in Brian's son-in-law, King Malcolm II of Scotland, who sent a small force commanded by Domhnall, the great steward of Mar. It was also heartening to hear that southern Leinster had refused to aid Sigtrygg and Maol Mórdha. With his 5,000 warriors, Brian still held numerical superiority over Maol Mórdha and Sigtrygg, who barely commanded more than 3,000 Vikings and Irishmen between them. Nevertheless, Brian had to act quickly to wipe out Dublin's and Leinster's newfound independence before the neutral Irish kings could turn against him.

Brian's youngest son, Donnach, took a few hundred men to keep an eye on southern Leinster. Brian set up his own camp north of Dublin on a hillock in the Wood of Tomar. From there he could see the city to the south, its harbor thick with Norse longboats, and between Brian's camp and the city, the sprawling tents and campfires of his enemies. Maol Mórdha, Sigurd, Brodar, and Dubhgall, Sigtrygg's brother, had set up their camps near the little fishing weir of Clontarf. Sigtrygg remained in Dublin with a reserve force.

On Thursday, April 22, 1014, Brian sat down to take council with his lords. Tempers flared, and as a result Maol-Seachlainn withdrew his forces to Meath. The hot-headed Murchad might well have been to blame. Brian now no longer held the numerical advantage. He immediately sent word for Donnach to hurry back, but there was little chance his son would arrive in time. Brian's hair was now silver, and he was 73 years old. Too old to personally lead his warriors in battle, Brian would have to depend on Murchadh, who was unquestionably brave but also reckless. That night, Brian's mind was haunted by worries. According to legend, a banshee visited Brian and warned him that he would fall in battle, and that "this plain shall be red tomorrow with your proud blood." On the Viking side, Brodar, who was widely believed to be a sorcerer, prophesied that should they fight on Good Friday, Brian would die, but his army would be victorious. Whatever the truth behind such tales, Maol Mórdha, Sigtrygg, Sigurd, and Brodar all knew that they had to strike before Donnach returned.

Brian had lost none of his regal bearing as he reviewed his army at dawn of Good Friday. He looked to his brave Dalcassians, who Murchadh

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would use to spearhead the attack. Ready to fight beside Murchadh was his 15-year-old son, the crown prince Tordhelbach, and Murchadh's brothers, Conchobhar and Flann. Behind them fluttered the banner of Brian's nephew, Conaing, king of Desmond. Also present that day were the Eoganacht lords Cian and Domhnall, Domhnall, the great steward of Mar, King Tadhg of Connacht, and an array of lesser kings and princes. On his wings, Brian stationed his 10 Danish stewards and their troops.

BRIAN'S ARMY FOLLOWED Murchadh's blue banner to meet the oncoming Dublin-Leinster coalition at Clontarf. The latter advanced with Sigurd and Brodar's Vikings in the lead, followed by the Danes from Dublin and, behind them, Maol Mórdha and his Leinster men. Murchadh recklessly initiated the attack by bolting ahead of the main army. Alarmed, Brian called for him to fall back into line. Murchadh replied that he would not retreat one step backward. Inspired by Murchadh's valor, the rest of Brian's army surged forward. Meanwhile, Brian knelt down before his pavilion to pray for victory. Below him the two armies collided in a deafening crescendo of clashing arms and battle cries. From behind their large round shields, protected by leather and ring-mail byrnies, the Danes slashed and thrust their axes, spears, and swords. Their Irish foes lacked armor but not spirit, and fought back with unbridled fury. There were few lulls in the fighting.

The Granger Collection, New York

Viking warrior Brodar catches a grieving Brian Boru in his tent after the Battle of Clontarf. Brodar killed both Brian and the hapless page boy looking on behind him.

Engulfed in a semicircle, the Dublin and Leinster men slowly gave way to Brian's battle-crazed Irish and Danish troops. Although their army fled around them, Sigurd and his guard stood like an unbroken bastion, the legend-shrouded Raven banner of the Orkneys fluttering at Sigurd's side. One Viking warrior after another took up the banner, only to be cut down again by Murchadh's relentless assault. The last hands to grasp the fateful Raven banner were those of its lord. Sigurd wrapped the banner around himself before he was decapitated by Murchadh with two powerful blows to the neck. Scarcely had Murchadh caught his breath from slaying Sigurd than there appeared the fierce Norse champion, Amrud, who had carved a bloody path through the Dalcassians. Murchadh grappled Amrud to the ground and tore away his sword. Murchadh leaned the pommel of the sword against his own breast and drove it three times into Amrud, piercing the earth beneath him. Gurgling blood, Amrud plunged his own blade into Murchadh, killing him simultaneously.

Panicked Norsemen and Leinstermen threw themselves into the ocean, hoping to reach their longboats. Heedless of their own safety and hungry for blood, their pursuers followed them into the waves. The high tide carried both to their doom. His hands locked upon the hair of a Dane, Murchadh's son Tordhelbach was washed upon the Weir of Clontarf. A stake shot through his body, and he drowned. The number of men killed on both sides was great. Conchobhar and Flann, King Tadhag of Connacht and Domhnall of the Eoganacht were among the 30 Irish chiefs and kings who died that day. Except for Sigtrygg and Brodar, all the Norse-Leinster leaders were slain among their annihilated army. Maol Mórdha and Conaing, king of Desmond, fell by each other's hand.

From Dublin's ramparts, the Danish women anxiously watched the battle. Brian's proud daughter stood there too, and at sight of the Norsemen rout she mocked her husband Sigtrygg. "It appears that the foreigners have gained their their natural inheritance—the sea," she scoffed. In anger, Sigtrygg hit her in the face, knocking out one of her teeth. Sigtrygg rode forth too late to rally his men and was lucky to flee back into Dublin alive.

On the battlefield Brodar stood panting, the muscles of his tall and powerful frame exhausted and his long black locks thick with sweat. The cuts and dents in his splendid coat of mail and crimson axe bore silent witness to the havoc he had inflicted on the Irish. Only two of Brodar's men remained at his side, and on a whim he decided to lead them not to the sea but northward instead. Brodar hoped to circumvent the battle and reach his ship in safety that night. His route led him to the Wood of Tomar and Brian Boru's camp. Brian, grieving over his sons' fallen standards, had given up all hope and was dictating his will to his only companion, a page boy. Finding Brian, Brodar could scarcely believe his luck. Below them the Norse and Leinster pavilions lit up the darkening sky in flame. Brodar caught his breath—now was his chance for revenge. As Brodar fell upon him, Brian barely managed to draw his sword and slash its blade across Brodar's leg. Ignoring the wound, Brodar smashed his axe into Brian's skull. With a spurt of blood, Brian fell dead, and Brodar cried out, "Now let man tell man that Brodar felled Brian." A second blow of his axe struck down the hapless page boy. Brodar did not survive Brian's assassination for long. Found hiding in the wood by Brian's men, his belly was cut open and he was wrapped around the trunk of a tree by his entrails.

When Donnach arrived from southern Leinster on Easter Sunday, only Cian of the Eoganacht remained alive to tell him of his father's death and those of his older brothers. Brian was buried in a marble coffin at Ireland's chief church, St. Patrick's at Armagh, and for 12 days masses were held for Brian and Murchadh throughout the country. The Battle of Clontarf was immortalized as a heroic feat of Irish arms and the doom of the Vikings in Ireland. In reality, although Clontarf ended any chance of Norse dominance over Ireland, neither the Norse lords nor their trade disappeared from Ireland after the battle. In Dublin, Sigtrygg managed to stay in power until his death in 1042.

Clontarf did, however, spell the end to the ascendancy of the Dalcassians. Without the leadership of Brian and Murchadh, the weakened Dalcassians were unable to maintain their hold on Ireland. Maol-Seachlainn became high king again but was too old and weak to build on Brian's final success. For the next 150 years the Irish reverted to their old habit of infighting. When the Normans invaded in the 1160 AD, there was no second Brian to rally the tribes. Ireland fell to the invaders, and Scandinavian influence too dwindled away. Brian's death ended his dream of a united Ireland, but the memory of Brian Boru, Ireland's mightiest warrior-king, remains unforgotten and unforgettable. □

By Peter Suciu

THE ART OF HISTORY

An Interview with Gerry Embleton

English Artist Gerry Embleton goes to great pains to make the past come alive in his unique life-size historical figures.

Gerry Embleton works on a figure of powder horn maker and company clerk John Bush, an African American soldier from Massachusetts who was captured at the fall of Fort William Henry and died in captivity.

If a picture truly paints a thousand words, then Gerry Embleton has painted volumes in his career. As a freelance illustrator of military subjects, he specializes in highly detailed, accurate studies of historical costumes, including period uniforms. He has written and illustrated two photographic studies of medieval costumes and has created the artwork for more than 40 titles for the well-known military publisher Osprey.

Born in England, Embleton's early life was much like that of the young boy in the film *Hope and Glory,* as he lived through the German blitz of London. After World War II, he studied part time at art schools in London and Brighton. After leaving school, Embleton became a freelance illustrator, working in comic strip publishing and advertising before finding his true passion illustrating historical subjects.

RIGHT AND OPPOSITE TOP: These meticulously researched drawings of a British Redcoat in North America show some known variations and field adaptations. ABOVE: Ninya Mikahila works on the costume of a French officer for the "Clash of Empires" exhibit.

Embleton moved to Switzerland in 1983 to research 15th-century Swiss costumes, uniforms, arms, and armor and has lived in the mountainous country ever since. He was invited to work for the Swiss Institute of Arms and Armor at Grandson Castle and became its official artist and later head of the castle's creative arts department. In 1988 he founded his own company, Time Machine AG, or TMAG, which produces life-size historical figures for exhibitions and museums. Much more than mere mannequins in uniforms, Embleton's displays put costumes into a historical context. His first big assignment was the refurbishment of Lenzburg Castle, and the results were so well received that he won a European Prize. Since then, his company has completed more than 60 commissions in eight countries.

The past is very much alive in Embleton, who has had a lifelong passion for the medieval age. In 1986 he formed an international group to recreate the daily life of the late 15th century, and was invited to participate in Switzerland's 700th anniversary. In 1991 he served as art director for the 600th anniversary celebration in the Swiss capital city of Bern.

Throughout his career, Embleton has always tried new things, and in his late sixties he took up landscape painting. He has exhibited his work in the United States, Switzerland, England, Scotland, and Canada. Today, Embleton divides his time between illustrating, designing, and making museum exhibitions and painting historical and modern subjects. He also finds time to write and do research. He has served as a historical consultant for exhibitions, museums, and even the odd film, and while his primary interest remains in history, he retains a lively interest in fantasy as well, consulting on director Peter Jackson's epic movie trilogy *The Lord of the Rings*.

Military Heritage: How did you become interested in history? Was there one particular event that captured your imagination?

Gerry Embleton: I've always been interested in the past. I don't see it as separate from the present and future. We all are what we are because of what's happened to us, what our parents and grandparents were and did, and what sort of society we've grown up in. It's totally inescapable, and even a slight knowledge of history shows how each generation or two repeats endlessly the same mistakes, and will doubtless do so until the end of time. We've made enormous technological progress, but none morally. War is still mankind's main preoccupation.

MH: Growing up in a nation with a long military heritage and living during World War II with German planes coming over to bomb your city must have had some impact on your views of history as well.

GE: Like many children, I played knights, soldiers and explorers, cowboys and Indians, pirates and, of course, war. Myself, two older brothers, and my mother lived just outside London, on the Luftwaffe's and the V-1's flight path to the capital. Our grandparents lived in the East End of London, not far from London's docks. My father was away in the army, four years of patching up wounded in Africa, Italy, and Greece. Overhead daily were vapor trails crisscrossing the sky. I was tiny, but clearly remember the wailing sirens, countless alarms day and night. On occasion there were more than 20 in 24 hours. The staccato banging of antiaircraft guns, thump and crash and sometimes enormous concussions, and the unforgettable gurgle of the engine of the V-1. We took cover in an Anderson shelter, a corrugated iron box half-buried in the back garden. My mother wrapped us in blankets and rushed us down to it when the sirens sounded. The shelter was damp and smelled musty, the air of burning. It was exciting to watch the searchlights cutting the night sky, the red glow on the horizon, the sky-flash of explosions. It must have been very hard for my mother. Many times during an alarm when it was too late to get to the shelter, she sat with us in a cupboard under the stairs. I suppose I felt the tensions and fears through my family, but I don't remember them. For my two older brothers in their early teens, it was a huge adventure. We watched countless planes flying over. I remember one day particularly, scores of them going over, flying low, with white bands painted on their wings and everyone in the back gardens waving. D-Day? Arnhem? I'm not sure. So I grew up with vivid impressions of historical events and a family awareness of the effects of two world wars.

MH: It has been said that history taught in schools can be boring. How could history be made more interesting?

GE: My history master at school did his best to crush my passion and enthusiasm for history. Thankfully, my good old British bloody-mindedness kept the flame of interest alight. It's amazing how such a potentially exciting subject is so often taught as if it is the dullest on earth.

MH: You've strived throughout your career to bring history to life, or at least to make it interesting. Where do you draw your inspiration and what sources do you use when you're creating an illustration or 3-D model?

LEFT: Embleton and his TMAG team created a little corner of the battlefield at Culloden for the Frazier Arts Museum in Kentucky. In the background is David Morier's painting of the battle, generally agreed to be the best reference for Highland dress. At this period it is absolutely clear that clan tartans had not been developed.

RIGHT: Embleton and his team constructed a cutaway reconstruction of a Roman villa, every detail based on archaeological finds.

ABOVE: Embleton had a lot of fun creating this portrait of an 18th-century pirate hunter in the Bahamas.

GE: I've been working on the interpretation of the past, writing, illustrating, and doing it three-dimensionally and "live" almost since I left school. I've learned that you must work with all possible sources and, if they can be found, the original sources. Tracking them down is fun but terribly time-consuming, and one needs easy access to a good library system. I have amassed a huge collection of reference books and folders containing documents, illustrations, photographs, archaeological reports, eyewitness accounts, and my own sketches and notes on surviving uniforms and equipment. But I'm very fortunate. I've worked with scores of specialists, experts in their fields who are generous with information. My work has opened doors to private and museum collections. Most people don't have that chance, nor frankly do they have

the passion and time. I'm actually paid to do it and I've learned who I can go to for help.

MH: You've illustrated more than 40 books for Osprey. Why do you think they've become so popular with collectors, modelers, and others with an interest in history?

GE: The Osprey series of books has brought an amazing volume of work to the public, relatively cheaply and easily purchased. I've worked for them on and off for years. Not every title is great. In such a large, far-ranging series involving many authors and artists, with a strictly limited budget and the demands of a competitive market, some failures are inevitable. But many of the titles are a good, solid foundation for future research, and some are simply the very best that's available on a given subject.

The result of close cooperation with several American colleagues, this piece shows a Mohawk and French Canadian portaging their canoe. The replica was made using original techniques and materials.

MH: Considering that some of the subjects you and other artists capture in illustrations, or in the 3-D models, were never photographed, how do you keep the work accurate?

GE: What is accuracy? The dictionary says that it's "faithful measurement or representation of the truth," but how can we apply that to a historical event, a physical happening involving one or hundreds of people? "Eyewitnesses," goes the cry. Well, that's what we usually have to rely on. People see things differently. One may notice details, remember what was said but not the most important events; another grasps the tactics and movements but none of the details. At worse, they will contradict each other. They frequently don't even see correctly what they've witnessed. The historian must take these conflicting accounts and any other information he can lay his hands on and write his own interpretation. But rarely do historians agree. Each may interpret the material differently ... and so it goes on. It's enormous fun, but often frustrating.

MH: How do you piece together a period uniform when you're doing your 3-D models? Uniforms may have survived and there may have been regulations, but how do you know for certain how things were actually worn?

GE: I suppose that my ideal set of references for a uniform reconstruction would be (a) the dress regulations, (b) an account of what was actually worn by someone who wore it, (c) a sketch or photograph of it being worn, and (d) some surviving examples to study. Then you would still only have my interpretation, which might differ from Angus McBride's or Don Troiani's.

MH: How important are period photographs—from those eras when photography was available, of course—to an illustrator?

GE: Photographs as the only reliable source? Don't you believe it. Photographs are also difficult to interpret without a thorough knowledge of other sources. Is the photograph captioned correctly? Many aren't, by accident or design. Those famous Civil War photographs after Gettysburg showing the fallen of both sides at key spots in the battle are actually shots of the last few clusters of bodies to be buried, taken from different angles and falsely labeled. The photographers arrived too late to take pictures of most of the field, and the burial parties had nearly finished their work. Soldiers wore or held photographer's props for their portraits. World War I and II pictures were labeled to suit the news headlines. German storm troops clearly exercising behind the lines become "Huns in Battle." Battle scenes have been faked after the event. Nonregulation items of dress and kit appear. Were they really one-off exceptions put on just for the photograph, or common field adaptations?

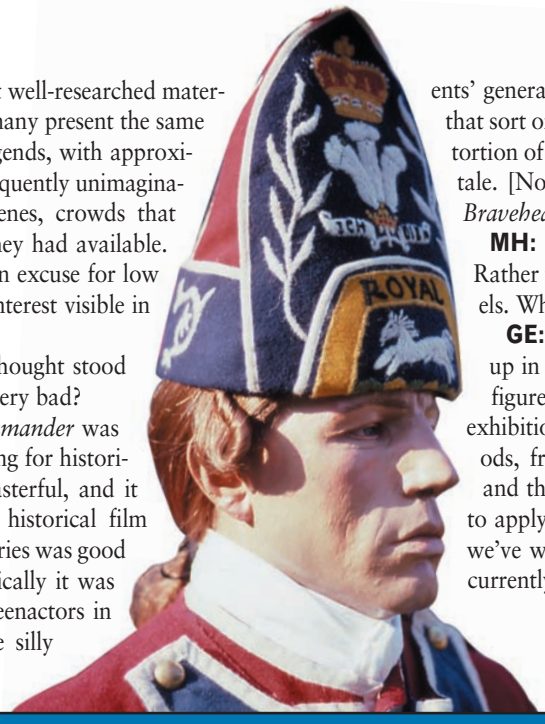
MH: How do you view more modern sources, such as TV or film?

GE: Well, some certainly serve to create interest and even enthusi-

asm for the subject. A few present well-researched material pretty accurately, but far too many present the same old boring clichés, myths, and legends, with approximate costumes from stock and frequently unimaginative representations of battle scenes, crowds that look exactly like the 25 extras they had available. Too many use "low budget" as an excuse for low standards, the director's lack of interest visible in every scene.

MH: Any examples that you thought stood out as particularly very good or very bad?

GE: The film *Master and Commander* was a brilliant interpretation, the feeling for historical accuracy and atmosphere masterful, and it was damn exciting, too. That's historical film making at its best. The *Sharpe's* series was good in a totally different way. Historically it was nonsense; it was dominated by reenactors in bad uniforms and every possible silly cliché about the British Army

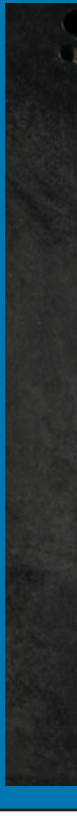


ents' generation died fighting a war against a regime that did do that sort of thing, and many of us deeply resented this vicious distortion of the historical truth and that many viewers believed the tale. [Note: Mel Gibson, who starred in both films, directed *Braveheart,* but Roland Emmerich directed *The Patriot.*]

MH: Your company does some pretty interesting things. Rather than illustrations, these are basically life-size 3-D models. What eras have you recreated?

GE: Time Machine AG, that's my own company that I set up in 1988 to make life-size, accurately costumed historical figures for museums. Since then we've made more than 60 exhibitions worldwide. We've covered many subjects and periods, from Bronze Age and Roman to pirates, Napoleonic, and the two world wars. From the very beginning I've tried to apply the highest standards of research and execution, and we've won a reputation for quality. We have two exhibitions currently running in the States.

LEFT: This sergeant of the Royal Welch Fusiliers at Minden in 1759 was made for the Regimental Museum at Caernarfon.



appeared. But it was fun, good to look at, and if you closed your historian's eye it was enjoyable and certainly encouraged great interest in the subject. Apart from a fair number of 1950s B-movies, *Braveheart* gets my award for the worst historical film, with not two minutes' worth of accuracy of story, basic morality, or costume, coming second only to the same director's *The Patriot,* which I detested, because it was well made, good to look at, seductive but truly atrocious fictitious propaganda. Patriots of both sides committed many an unpleasantness during that early civil war, but no British troops ever filled a church with women and children and set fire to it. Far too many of my par-

MH: These aren't just mannequins with replica uniforms standing against a white wall, either. What do you do to put these in a historical context?

GE: They are made as 3-D illustrations, the painting is adapted to the lighting, and we aim to create a pose that strikes the viewer as completely real. We get the uniforms and equipment looking right by making them out of the real materials. Buff leather is buff leather, brass is brass, and the textiles are as near the real thing as we can find. We study the cut of the clothes and all the tiny variations found on campaign—wear and tear, little repairs, and dirt of the same color as the

geographical location. We have fun getting this right. The mud on our figure of the young George Washington actually came from the Fort Necessity battlefield.

MH: What are some of the exhibits you have done?

GE: Time Machine AG created a permanent exhibit with the sculptor David Hayes at the Frazier Historical Arms Museum, Louisville, Kentucky. Another exhibit entitled "Clash of Empires," which brings together the finest collection of French and Indian War artifacts and paintings you are likely to see in one place, was done for the Senator John Heinz Pittsburgh Regional History Center. Dr. Scott Stephenson is the curator and much more. It has been a huge success. In fact, it's received the American Association of State and Local History's Award of Merit. It was an enormously enjoyable experience, working on some of my favorite subjects with a great team and a more or less free hand to recreate the models. I always judge the projects I work on by how much I learned doing them. This one rates first-class.

MH: You're also involved in historical reenactments, which is another aspect of living history. How did you become involved in these?

GE: Well, to me it's just another way to bring the past alive. How valuable is it? Well, it's a tricky subject. I have played a part in medieval reenactment in Europe. I was a founding member and captain of the Company of Saynte George. We were refugees from other groups who wanted to go more deeply into the game. We had all played Hollywood medievals in our youth and needed something more challenging. Many of the participants who are visible in my two photo books are company members past and present. Some of the things we did were pretty well researched and executed. But reenactment is a difficult subject. Most participants want to enjoy playing in the past without too much effort. They have strictly limited budgets and have difficulty getting accurate references and reconstructions. Their fun comes from the company and comradeship, thickly mixed up with history. Others derive their pleasure from creating as accurately as possible clothes, uniforms, weapons—in fact everything they need—eating food, sleeping rough, trying to really experience another reality. Of course, both are having fun, both perfectly entitled to enjoy their different approaches. One can only judge them on how well they do whatever they claim to be doing. I think if you claim to present the past accurately, really "as it was," you are claiming more that most reenactors can deliver.

MH: For your Time Machine AG models, do you use reenactors?

GE: No, I generally don't use reenactors as models. Photographs of individuals with really good kit make very useful reference if everything is correct—cloth, cut, and details—but I usually adapt and change them. I know many historical artists these days do work closely from photographs of reenactors, but then it's dangerous. You risk painting modern reenactment, not the past.

MH: You've done a lot of things in the historical context already, so what's next?

GE: Well, I have future exhibition work and paintings on 18th-century North American subjects bubbling in the cauldron. I'm working on my own book on the Redcoats of the period. And figure-wise, I'd like to do something on Hogarth's London, the common soldier's daily life, the western front in World War I, which is another subject that's interested me for a long time. Certainly more pirates and putting an entirely different hat on a classical fairy tale or fantasy subject. But I usually get enthusiastically involved in any subject that I work on. □

LEFT to RIGHT: A good example of the immediately realistic effect Embleton and his TMAG colleagues are after is the carpenter created for the reconstructed Bronze Age village at Unteruhldingen, Germany.

This is George Washington just before he signed the surrender document at Fort Necessity. Embleton says, "As a limey I loved doing this one."

Another of Embleton's favorites is this Hungarian Redcoat serving in the Independent Company with Braddock at Monongahela. He wears the linen waistcoat and britches adopted by Braddock's regulars, marching gaiters, and his hat unflapped for the march.

One of TMAG's first works for the National Army Museum in London, this "Tommy in the trenches" remains one of Embleton's favorites.

For more information on Gerry Embleton, visit his website: www.gerryembleton.com. *More about Time Machine AG's work may be found at* www.time-machine.ch.

Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

Still reeling from his disastrous invasion of Russia, Napoleon marshaled all his organizational talents to create another army out of thin air. It would soon be tested by a new allied threat.

NAPOLEON'S
{Unlikely Comeback at Lutzen}

BY FRANK JAMES ROTTMAN

After his disastrous invasion of Russia in 1812, French emperor Napoleon Bonaparte desperately needed to reassert his military dominance over Europe. His hold on France depended entirely on his success on the battlefield. As he would later tell Austrian peace envoy Prince Clemens von Metternich, "Your sovereigns born on the throne can let themselves be beaten twenty times and still return to their capitals. My domination will not survive the day when I cease to be strong and therefore feared." Half a million men had fallen in the past six years to reaffirm Napoleon's hold on power, and yet by the end of the year the emperor's much-vaunted Grande Armée was virtually back where it had started when the emperor first seized control of his country's destiny in 1799 and made all of Europe tremble at his name.

In the immediate aftermath of the Russian campaign, Napoleon almost wistfully told Marshal Louis Alexandre Berthier, his chief-of-staff, "Come, Berthier, come my old friend, let us fight the campaign of Italy all over again." Napoleon was eager to return to the offensive quickly, before the newly allied forces of Russia and Prussia could concentrate their armies in Germany and freeze the French Army into place in a purely defensive position. But before Napoleon could begin a new campaign, a number of urgent questions remained unanswered. Could the master of Europe recoup from his Russian disaster? Would his young, inexperienced conscripts fill the huge void left by the death and destruction of 400,000 crack troops in the Grande Armée? Would his cavalry, now only 7,500 strong, still be able to act efficiently as his eyes and ears for the upcoming campaign? Napoleon pondered these questions obsessively as he made his way toward the city of Leipzig, Germany, in the spring of 1813.

The army that Napoleon brought to the plains of Saxony that spring—outwardly, at least—was not unlike his earlier armies. Morale was high, marching and maneuvering were quick, and individual courage was not lacking. However, the effects of the previous year's terrible campaign in Russia could not be easily erased with additional levies of untried men. The indomitable French infantry, "the sinew of an army," was filled with brave, young, but only half-trained conscripts. Neither the surviving officers nor the NCOs had the requisite time or experience of their own to thoroughly train the new men. This lack of experience would hamper Napoleon throughout the ensuing campaign.

The artillery corps, always Napoleon's first love, was quickly supplied with new cannon of all caliber and teams of horses to make up for the grievous losses of some 1,200 pieces in Russia. Because of a shortage of gunpowder, new mills were built and armorers were goaded to increase production. "France was one vast workshop," cavalry general Armand de Caulaincourt observed. "The entire French nation overlooked his reverses and vied with one another in displaying zeal and devotion. It was as glorious an example of the French character as it was a personal triumph for the Emperor, who with amazing energy directed all the resources of which his genius was capable into organizing and guiding the great national endeavor. Things seemed to come into existence as if by magic."

To alleviate the shortage of artillerists, National Guardsmen and green conscripts were made into gunners on the march. Although the artillery had first pick of all horses throughout the empire, they faced the same shortage as the cavalry. Complicating matters was the fact that the new draft horses had to be carefully matched in teams and trained to move heavy loads at a quick, sustained speed. Despite the shortage and training required, Napoleon somehow managed to provide the artillery with an adequate supply of horses. His superhuman rebuilding efforts were successful, and the emperor believed that the reconstituted artillery would compensate for the shortage of cavalry in the upcoming operations.

After the Russian debacle, the cavalry was in desperate shape. One example of the level of cavalry losses suffered was the experience of the 11th Hussars, which had brought 1,133 men and horses into Russia in the summer of 1812 and escaped six months later with a mere 10 officers and 79 enlisted men. These prolific losses could not be easily replaced, and Napoleon needed more time to gather sufficient numbers of healthy horses and troopers—time he would not be given. With no other choice, he collected and

Amid cries of *"Vive l'Empereur!"* Napoleon rallies the untested conscripts of his III Corps at the height of the fighting at Lutzen. With the battle hanging in the balance, Napoleon constantly exposed himself to enemy fire.

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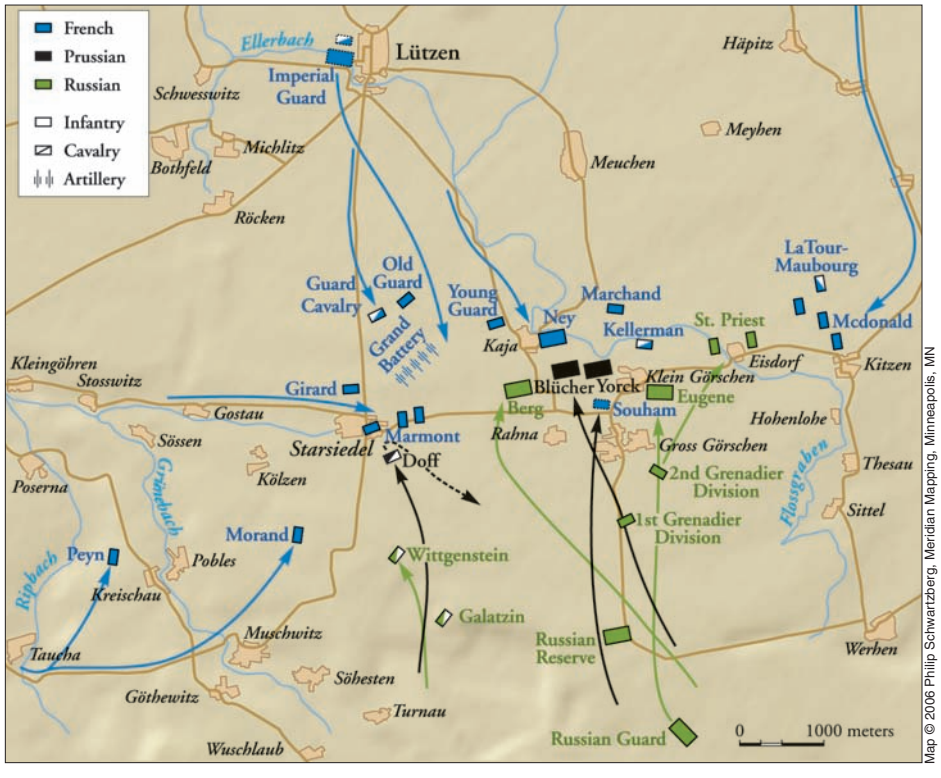
ABOVE: A crestfallen Napoleon tries to comfort Marshal Jean-Baptiste Bessieres, his jack-of-all-trades, who was mortally wounded by a stray cannonball during the approach to Lutzen.
BELOW: Thanks in part to a lack of cavalry, Napoleon's army was dangerously exposed as it headed toward the historic killing ground at Lutzen. Allied blunders prevented them from capitalizing on the emperor's unexpected vulnerability.



attempted to train the resources he had available. The remounts were few in number and poor in quality. The officers and men were no comparison to the Allied veterans they would soon be fighting. Many French conscripts in the *cuirassiers,* the French heavy cavalry, were too slight to carry their large swords and heavy helmets. Others were preoccupied with learning the proper way to ride and fight man-to-man in combat, and thus could not spend precious time training for mass maneuvers. Experienced light horsemen, the *chasseurs-a-cheval,* were also in short supply. Without his light cavalry, Napoleon would be hard pressed for accurate information about his enemies' dispositions.

The Imperial Guard, Napoleon's veteran reserve, had also suffered greatly in Russia. One hard-bitten survivor, Sergeant A.J.B. Bourgogne, told the story of a fellow Guardsman who inquired as to the whereabouts of the Dutch grenadiers. Bourgogne responded, "You didn't see it? That big sledge that overtook you contained the entire Dutch regiment." There were seven men left. After the Russian campaign, the Old Guard was a mere skeleton of its original 30,000-member elite force. After removing the sick and wounded, the Guard consisted of 1,065 infantry, 663 cavalry, 265 artillerymen, and 26 engineers. Knowing that he would need their fighting ability and élan to steady his green conscripts in line and possibly snatch victory from defeat, Napoleon set about rebuilding the Guard as quickly as he could. He refitted the ranks with veteran soldiers from Spain and France, used seamen to reinforce his Guard artillery, and scrounged all over France for mounts for his Guard cavalry regiments. Every department in the empire was directed to supply men and equipment for the Guards, including 5,000 retired Municipal Guards who were recalled to the colors. At the same time, the entire Class of 1814 from the nation's various military academies was called into service a year early.

Ever watchful of his beloved Guard, the emperor continued to insist that the criteria for joining the Guard must remain stringent. In March 1813, Napoleon wrote, "A non-commissioned officer may not be admitted into the Old Guard until he has served twelve years and fought in several campaigns. If nominations contrary to this rule are made they shall be presented for confirmation to the emperor before taking effect." Clearly, Napoleon knew that the coming campaign's success would rely upon his beloved Guard's fighting prowess. The Guard would either help lead the French forces to victory or, as in Russia, safeguard their retreat.

With his young and inexperienced army, Napoleon would attempt to check the Allied advance into the Confederation of the Rhine and possibly regain his near-hypnotic spell over the Russian Czar Alexander I. Napoleon's master strategy was to capture Berlin and give Prussia reason to doubt its decision to declare war on March 13. Napoleon's attention in the north did not mean that he would forget the south. In fact, he hoped to gain a quick victory in the south in order to bloody his new recruits and build up morale, while giving Austria pause to reconsider its newly antagonistic relationship with France. He hoped that quick success over the Allies in the south would keep the disaffected members of his own army under wraps.

Napoleon believed the Allies would begin a major spring offensive with an attack on Leipzig. Therefore, on May 1, he ordered his

forces to advance onto the Saxony plain. The French military machine came toward Leipzig from two directions. The Army of the Elbe, with an overall strength of 30,000 men under the direction of Prince Eugene Beauharnais, Napoleon's stepson, moved toward Leipzig from the north. The Army of the Main, numbering 115,000 under Napoleon's direct command, came up from the south toward Weissenfels. As Napoleon moved forward, he gave Marshal Michel Ney's III Corps the responsibility for securing his right flank by occupying the historic village of Lutzen, site of a major victory by Protestant forces over their Catholic adversaries in the Thirty Years' War 180 years earlier. Ney was also tasked with taking and holding the nearby villages of Kaja, Rahna, Gross Görschen, and Klein Görschen. This action would safeguard the French right, while allowing General Jacques Lauriston and Marshal Jacques Macdonald to advance on Leipzig unmolested.

In the early hours of May 2, Napoleon continued to expect a confrontation with the Allies at Leipzig or just south of the city. However, he became uncomfortably aware of the precarious position of his supply line and entertained the possibility of a strong Allied advance from the direction of Zwenkau that would cut his Army of the Main in two. To guard against this happening, Napoleon warned Ney that if an Allied attack came from the direction of Zwenkau, his III Corps would have to take a defensive posture and pin down the enemy near Lutzen while the Army of the Elbe moved around to attack the Allied left. At 4 AM, Napoleon, still unaware of the Allies' intentions, issued a written order to Ney to send out two strong reconnaissance forces, one toward Zwenkau and the other toward Pegau.

For some reason, Ney failed to implement the order. Instead, he sent two of his five divisions out toward Kaja and Starsiedel, but they made no attempt to continue forward into Zwenkau and even failed to fortify their positions. Instead, the men were allowed to forage for their lunch. One possible explanation for Ney's dereliction may be that because he lacked sufficient numbers of light cavalry, he was unaware that the Allies were present in any great force.

At about the same time, the Allied commander, Count Ludwig Wittgenstein, sent out a reconnaissance force to scout the French positions near Lutzen. Wittgenstein could hardly believe his ears when he heard their report. The main body of French troops was moving toward Leipzig on the Weissenfels-Lutzen highway. A small detachment of French soldiers was present near Kaja, and stronger detachments were near Teuchern. Wittgenstein surmised, a little wonderingly, that he had surprised the French. The French, without a sufficient cavalry arm, had no idea that the Allies were concentrated near Kaja. For the first time in his experience, Wittgenstein had managed to seize both the battlefield initiative and a superior concentration of forces over Napoleon.

The Allied commander quickly formulated a plan of attack. He would make a lightning strike at Lutzen and cut the Weissenfels-Lutzen highway. The result would be a complete split of the French forces. Wittgenstein envisioned the entire operation taking six hours, commencing at 1 AM and concluding at 7 AM. Meanwhile, he ordered General Friedrich Kleist to hold the Allied right at Leipzig while General Mikhail Miloradovitch moved toward Zeitz to protect the Allied left. The rest of Wittgenstein's 71,000-strong forces would quick-march to Gross Görschen. From there, Wittgenstein planned to capture Kaja and position his artillery to cut the highway, thus forcing the French to retreat toward the River Elster or else be cut in two.

All Library of Congress

TOP LEFT: General Auguste Frederic de Marmont commanded the French VI Corps.
TOP RIGHT: Allied commander Count Ludwig Wittgenstein.
ABOVE: Marshal Michel Ney unaccountably failed at Lutzen.

Unfortunately for Wittgenstein, his careful timetable quickly started to unravel. Beginning their march in near-total darkness, his lead formations did not reach Gross Gröschen until 11 AM. However, although their timing was off, his forces still held the tactical advantage of surprise and superior numbers. Confident of complete victory and wishing to make up for lost time, Wittgenstein ordered Marshal Gebhard Blücher's cavalry to attack the French force, believed to be 2,000 men, near Gross Gröschen. The Prussians soon received a rude surprise when they found themselves facing two complete French divisions instead of 2,000 hapless troopers. Likewise, the French received a comparable shock when a large Prussian force materialized in front of them.

Both sides quickly took action. Blücher called for artillery, while the French commander, General Joseph Souham, following Napoleon's precept that lost territory could be recovered but time never could be, took advantage of the Allied pause by occupying Gross Görschen. On his immediate right, General J.B. Girard consolidated his forces around the village of Starsiedel. Because of the Allies' poor reconnaissance and subsequent delay, the French found themselves in defensible positions. Both Souham and Girard felt confident that they could hold out long enough for General Auguste Frederic de Marmont VI's Corps to come to their aid.

After the arrival of his artillery, Blücher unleashed a devastating cannonade, consisting of 45 guns, against Souham's position at Gross Görschen. After sustaining an estimated 4,000 rounds of artillery, the French were hard pressed to hold the village and moved behind Gross Görschen. The Prussians took the village and, with two Russian columns, attacked Kaja. At midday, the French retired behind Kaja to hold fast until help arrived. Unfortunately for

Souham's forces, helping the men of the III Corps was not yet part of Napoleon's plans.

As a desperate struggle was taking place at Gross Görschen, Napoleon, with Ney at his side, followed the trouncing of Kleist by Lauriston's V Corps at Leipzig. Napoleon still believed that the Allies were concentrated there. Macdonald recalled, "He gave me orders to support him [Lauriston] if necessary, but at that moment he received intelligence that the allies who had debauched from Pegau were advancing towards us. The Emperor would not believe it, because he was firmly convinced that their main force was at Leipzig." However, after both Napoleon and Ney heard the increasing cannon fire to the southwest, he ordered Ney to return to his command at Lutzen with all possible speed. At the same time, Napoleon began to formulate a new plan to meet the growing threat to his right.

"We have no cavalry and must do it with infantry, as in Egypt," Napoleon told subordinates. Orders were sent out for the III Corps to hold all its present positions at all costs. The Imperial Guard would wait in reserve. Marmont's VI Corps was to move up to Ney's right around Starsiedel, while General Henri Bertrand's IV Corps moved west from Tauchau to threaten the Russian left. Meanwhile, the Russian right would be assailed by Macdonald's XI Corps and two divisions from Lauriston's V Corps, which would swing southward toward Eisdorf. Napoleon felt his personal presence on the field might be necessary and quickly followed Ney toward the fighting.

The events between 11 AM and 1 PM showed just how well the Allies had surprised the French. Of all Lutzen's outlying villages, only parts of Kaja remained in French hands. The Allies were close to pushing the French from their defensive positions and creating a wedge between the divisions of Souham and Girard. In fact, Souham was being driven back by a heavy concentration of artillery fire. Fortunately for the French, Girard held his position. Ney arrived at Lutzen in time to gather his three remaining divisions and rush them forward to stop Souham's retreat. He ordered an aide to "go tell the Emperor that it really is a battle and a battle such as he has never seen before." While this was being done, Ney joined the battle with his usual courage and élan.

The fighting was fierce—both sides realized that Lutzen was the key to victory. If the Allies succeeded, they would split the French in half. If the French held, they might succeed in enveloping the Allies. Ney, covered by dust from his ride, soon lost his horse to a cannonball and was wounded in the leg by an enemy musket, but stubbornly remained at the center of the conflict. Girard fared no better. While leading his division forward, he was wounded twice. Gathering his remaining strength, he called out a ringing challenge: "It is here that every brave Frenchman must conquer or die!" Hit by a third bullet, Girard reluctantly relinquished command.

Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

Like the battle-tested veteran he was, Napoleon calmly directs the fighting at Lutzen. No less an expert than General Marmont believed that the emperor faced the greatest personal danger of his career during the battle.

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R.F. Delderfield, *Napoleon's Marshals.* New York, Stein and Day, 1962.

The French and Prussians continued to pound away at each other. Decimated villages were won and lost within minutes by both sides. The French were running out of ammunition for their cannon and muskets. Along with Ney and Girard, Souham and his chief of staff had been wounded. French morale, however, remained intact. The Guard artillery performed prodigious tasks of marksmanship, and Ney's small cavalry brigade, although outnumbered, continued to protect the rear from the dreaded Cossacks. The French still held Kaja, the largest and closest village to Lutzen. Meanwhile, the Allies suffered an incalculable loss with the mortal wounding of the Prussian chief-of-staff, Gerhard von Scharnhorst, the developer of the modern general staff system.

Even with the death of Scharnhorst, the Allies felt confident of victory. They had surprised the French and held them on the defensive for most of the day. However, to claim a complete victory they would have to drive the French out of Kaja and Lutzen before Napoleon managed to consolidate his forces. They renewed their attacks with a determination bordering on desperation. Prussian cavalry and Guards made a coordinated strike toward Kaja. Their attack was overwhelming. In one brief lightning strike, they captured Klein Görschen and Rahna and almost reached the key village of Kaja. They believed the battle was as good as won.

French confidence quickly dissipated. Even with Marmont's VI Corps joining Ney's right, they believed the battle to be lost. Cries of "*Sauve qui peut!* [Every man for himself]" were heard as the young conscripts threw down their arms. The French army that Napoleon had forged from nothing was beginning to crack under the intense Allied advance. Veteran troops might have been able to withstand the intense three-hour fight, but the inexperienced conscripts were wavering quickly. Unlike 1812, this defeat could not be attributed to the force of nature or unreliable allies. The French were about to be defeated fairly and squarely by the Prussian and Russian armies. All was lost—or was it? Word began to pass from man to man: the Emperor had arrived. Excited shouts of "*Vive l'Empereur!*" filled the air.

At 2:30 PM, Napoleon personally joined the fray. French morale rose accordingly. In a moment, the customary French élan returned. Napoleon's first order was to rally the III Corps conscripts who were in full flight. He commanded the Light Horse of the Old Guard to "bar their passage between our squadrons." Meanwhile, Napoleon rode among his troops instilling his confidence in both veterans and recruits. "This," recalled Marmont, "was undoubtedly the day, of his whole career, on which Napoleon incurred the greatest personal danger on the field of battle. He exposed himself constantly; leading the defeated men of III Corps back to the charge." The Saxon translator E. d'Odeleben recalled, "Hardly a wounded man passed before Bonaparte without saluting him with the accustomed vivat. Even those who had lost a limb, who would in a few hours be the prey of death, rendered him this homage."

Getty Images/Roger Viollet

Disregarding their own wounds, Napoleon's ever-faithful soldiers greet his electrifying eleventh-hour arrival on the battlefield.

During the afternoon, both armies fought fiercely, but neither side could claim complete victory. With each passing hour, Napoleon's plan of envelopment was taking shape. Macdonald came into contact with the Allied right and made his presence felt with devastating fire on the enemy infantry and cavalry in that sector. With Miloradovitch's Russians coming up from Zeitz, Bertrand deliberately slowed his movement toward Marmont until 3 PM in order to ensnarl the Russians in the flank. Feeling that Miloradovitch's forces were sufficiently exposed, at 4:30 PM Bertrand's corps began to assemble on Marmont's right. Napoleon's enveloping movement was beginning to materialize.

Faced with a growing menace on both his right and left flanks, Wittgenstein needed a steady flow of additional men to hold his present position near the village of Kaja. What reserves he had arrived at a trickle because Czar Alexander, believing that the Allies were victorious and wishing to emulate Napoleon's practice of sending his Imperial Guard forward for the coup de grace, held back Russian general A.P. Tormassov's Guards. In spite of the czar's personal intervention, by 4 PM Wittgenstein had a sufficient number of reserves on hand and rushed them forward to Kaja. The Prussians were making the supreme effort to breech Napoleon's center. The emperor wondered if his worn-out, severely punished III Corps and untested Imperial Guard would hold their positions or falter. "You will defend these batteries," Napoleon told the veterans, "and if the enemy attacks you shall give a good account of yourselves."

As if to underline the emperor's words, Allied grapeshot immediately smashed into two files of grenadiers. The Guard flinched. The cannonade increased in quickness and accuracy. A derisive Napoleon wondered aloud, "What does the Guard duck?" A bomb fell in front of the first division and destroyed 30 muskets. This time, not one man winced. Satisfied that the Guard was holding fast, Napoleon ordered the Young Guard and remnants of III Corps to counterattack.

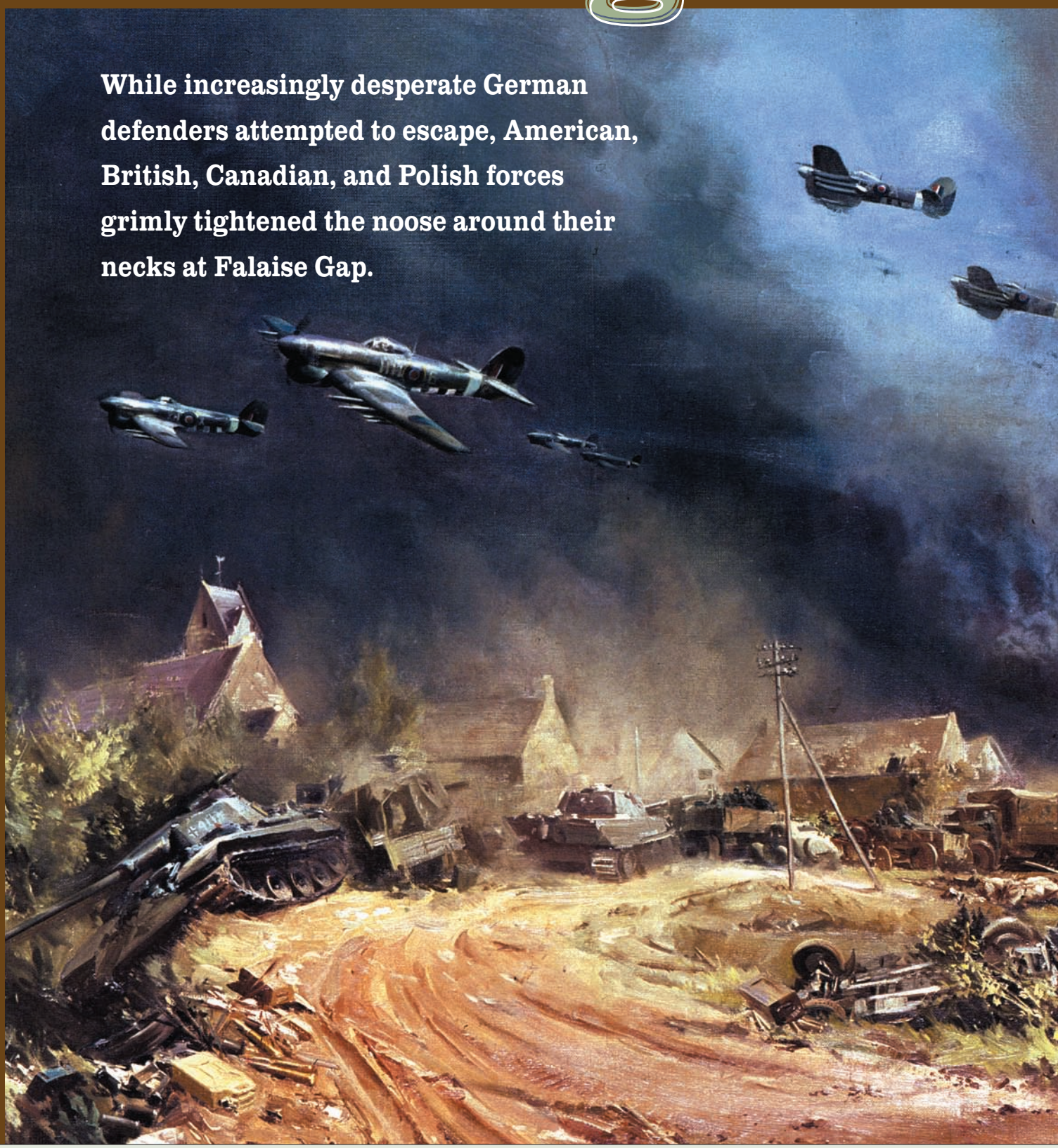
Although very nearly successful, Wittgenstein's all-out effort used up his reserves and proved to be his last serious threat on Napoleon's center. By 6 PM, Macdonald took Eisdorf on Ney's left, and Bertrand was fully deployed on Marmont's right. Napoleon ordered Marshal Adolphe Mortier and his 10,000 Young Guardsmen to assault the enemy forces remaining in and near Kaja. At the same time, he directed General Auguste Drouot to concentrate all available artillery southwest of Kaja to support the Guard's advance. Finally, Napoleon moved six battalions of Old Guard, Guard Cavalry, and remnants of III Corps behind the artillery to support the Young Guard's breakthrough. Ever the gambler, Napoleon was sure that the odds were now on his side and that the time was right for a final thrust.

"*La Garde au Feu!*" Napoleon barked, ordering Mortier to lead 16 battalions of the

Continued on page 74

Closing the

While increasingly desperate German defenders attempted to escape, American, British, Canadian, and Polish forces grimly tightened the noose around their necks at Falaise Gap.



Falaise Gap

Rocket-firing British Typhoons lay down a deadly barrage on German armor attempting to escape through the Falaise Gap in Normandy following the American breakout at St. Lo.

The Art Archive/Imperial War Museum

AFTER ALMOST TWO MONTHS of bloody and desperate fighting, the Allies had failed to break through the German defenses that had been limiting their hold on Normandy since D-Day. On July 25, 1944, the situation changed when the American Army launched Operation Cobra. With surprising suddenness, the VII Corps of the U.S. First Army smashed through the German line along the Periers-St. Lo highway. The breakthrough quickly widened as the VIII Corps liberated Avranches on July 31. The following day, the U.S. Third Army under the command of Lt. Gen. George S. Patton swept into the Brittany peninsula and southern Normandy. The breakthrough had quickly turned into a breakout.

Since the landings in early June, the British and Canadian forces to the left of the Americans had been fighting and pinning down the bulk of the German panzer divisions in Normandy. With the breakout of the American forces, the Germans had trouble finding reinforcements and began shifting away troops that had been facing the British and Canadians. On July 30, the British launched Operation Bluecoat on the American left flank, moving toward Vire and Mount Pincon. General Sir Bernard Montgomery, operational commander of Allied forces in Normandy, believed that the Germans would have to pivot their lines eastward due to the American breakout and that the British needed to do all they could to support the operations of the American forces west of St. Lo.

Two days later, Lt. Gen. Guy Simonds, commander of the Canadian II Corps, presented his written plans on breaking through the German

BY MIKE PHIFER

defenses south of Caen to Lt. Gen. Henry D.G. Crerar, commander of the newly arrived Canadian First Army, which had only become operational on the 23rd. At 41, Simonds was a tough, intelligent, hard-bitten commander who had already seen action in Sicily and Italy. The object, Simonds explained to Crerar, was to pierce the German defenses along the main road that ran from Caen to Falaise, halting north of the city.

This was strategically crucial ground for the Germans—the area south of Caen served as a hinge that they would need to swing their retreating units back into line.

Word came on August 4 to put the plans into operation. Montgomery wrote to Crerar: "The situation is very good. The enemy front is now in such a state that it could be made to disintegrate completely." Montgomery wanted the Canadians to smash the German defenses south and southeast of Caen and push on toward Falaise, cutting off the enemy facing the British Second Army and driving them back to the Seine River. The heavy attack was to be launched no later than the 8th and preferably the day before.

THE COUNTRY SOUTH OF CAEN through which the Canadian First Army was to attack was ideal for the German defenders. The terrain was mostly open, with a series of ridges allowing the Germans' concealed long-range guns such as the deadly 88mms to play havoc on advancing tanks. Fields of corn and wheat, small woodlots, and haystacks provided cover to German armor, machine guns, and infantry, as did the small Norman villages in the area, which had been turned into stone fortresses by the Nazi defenders. Experts at defense, the Germans had turned the countryside into a veritable death trap.

Defending the area was the 89th Infantry, which had replaced the 1st SS Panzer Division on August 4. Bolstering their defense were a couple of motorized artillery battalions and the 3rd Luftwaffe Flak Corps. When Simonds drew up the plans for what was called Operation Totalize, intelligence reported that the 1st and 9th SS Panzer Divisions were holding the forward line. Counterattacks were expected from the 12th SS Panzer Division, which was thought to be southwest of the front line. The Canadians knew only too well that this unit was comprised of fanatical young soldiers (most of them 17 or 18 years old) led by Eastern Front veteran NCOs and officers. Bloody battles had raged between the 12th SS and the 3rd Canadian Division since June 7. The fighting intensified after the 12th SS reportedly murdered a number of Canadian prisoners.

Although Simonds altered his original plan somewhat when he was informed that the 89th was taking over the front-line defenses, the fundamentals of the plan remained the same. Since the lay of the land favored the defenders, Simonds decided on a night attack, with attacking columns streaming down either side of the Caen-Falaise highway and ramming a hole through the enemy line. This phase of the operation was to consist of two armored brigades and two infantry divisions, with some of the foot soldiers traveling in armored vehicles at the same pace as the tanks. To carry the troops, it was decided to convert the M7 self-propelled 105mm guns commonly called "Priests," on loan to the Canadians from the Americans, into armored personnel carriers. Canadian and British engineers put in 18-hour days to remove the guns and weld on armor, some of which was scavenged from beached landing craft—much to the chagrin of the Navy. In three days the engineers had constructed 72 "Kangaroos," as the improvised carriers were nicknamed. Each carrier could hold 12 men. Besides the Kangaroos, other vehicles were put to use, including half-tracks, Universal carriers, and armored trucks.

Moving men and armor through the darkness on unfamiliar ground would not be easy—Simonds had to come up with imaginative ways to keep the attacking columns on target. Artificial moonlight, which consisted of bouncing beams of light from large searchlights off low-lying clouds, would be used to help the troops find their objectives. Bofors antiaircraft guns firing tracers would help identify the boundaries of the columns. Two radio signals beaming dots and dashes would be directed at the advancing columns and picked up on the tank radios. As long as the radioman heard a series of dots and dashes, he would know that they were on the right path; if he heard just dashes or just dots then he would know that they were veering too far to the east or west. If worse came to worst, there were always maps.

After some negotiating, air support was obtained to bomb along the flanks of the Canadian First Army just before it launched the assault. When the bombing stopped, the artillery was to lay down a heavy rolling barrage as the advance got under way. While 720 guns were allotted to the operation, only half

Imperial War Museum

ABOVE: Canadian armored forces raise a cloud of dust as they take up battle positions in the drive to Falaise in August 1944.
OPPOSITE: An artillery crew belonging to the 12th SS Panzer Division covers the German withdrawal at Falaise.

would be used in the first phase. Most of the support would come from heavy bombers unleashing a massive strike on the German defenses. Two more armored divisions would then smash the German line, opening the way to Falaise or moving into position to race northeast for the Seine.

ON AUGUST 7, THE GERMANS counterattacked the Americans at Mortain. Scrapping together what panzer units he could, Field Marshal Gunther Hans von Kluge, supreme German commander in the west, launched Operation Luttich with the hope of recapturing Avranches and cutting off Patton's Third Army. That same night Operation Totalize was launched as well. While 1,019 RAF bombers flew overhead, the tanks of the Canadian 2nd Armoured Brigade and the troops of the 4th Brigade of the Canadian 2nd Division in armored vehicles divided up into columns four vehicles wide and waited on the west side of the Caen-Falaise highway for orders to move out. On the east side of the highway, also waiting in columns, were tanks from the 33rd Armoured Brigade and troops in armored vehicles from the 154th Highland Brigade of the 51st Highland Division. This division had recently been assigned to the British I Corps, which was part of the Canadian First Army and temporarily under Simonds's command for the operation. The rest of the brigades were to travel on foot, seizing German positions bypassed by the armored columns.

With red smoke shells and green flares to identify their targets, Halifax and Lancaster bombers began to bomb five targets on either flank around 11:30 PM. Dust and smoke clouding the targets prevented the bombers from dropping all of their bombs. Despite the obstructions, some 3,462 tons of bombs were unleashed on the German position with mixed results—some of the bombs barely touched their targets. When the bombing ended, the artillery began laying down a barrage while the Bofors guns opened with tracer fire to help guide the armored columns that had begun rolling forward. Dust clouds seriously hampered visibility, making navigation through enemy territory difficult. The artificial moonlight was not proving to be as effective as hoped due to all the dust and smoke. Staying on course became even more difficult when the tanks and armored vehicles had to detour around newly created bomb craters. Despite the various impediments, most of the armored vehicles and tanks managed to reach their objectives.

Some tanks were set on fire and a few Priests were hit by German fire as the Highland columns pushed forward throughout the night. The 1st Black Watch of the 154th Brigade dispersed from their carriers as artillery fire slammed into the village of St. Aignan. Tanks from the 1st Northamptonshire Yeomanry added their fire to the village as well. When the fire lifted, the troops took the village and prepared for an expected German counterattack. To the right of the 1st Black Watch, the 7th Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders and 144th Royal Armour Corps seized Cramesnil around 7AM. An hour and half earlier, the 7th Black Watch and the 148th Royal Armour Corps had taken Garcelles-Secqueville north of the other two regiments.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The other infantry objectives were proving more difficult, especially Tilly-la-Campagne, located a mile south of the starting line. The 2nd Seaforth Highlanders of the 152nd Highland Brigade was given the task of clearing the bypassed village. The attack was halted by the German defenders. A company from the 5th Seaforth Highlanders was sent in as reinforcement, but after suffering heavy casualties, the Seaforths were pulled back from Tilly to allow the artillery to rain down shells on the town. The rest of 5th Seaforth Highlanders were now assigned to take the town at first light, but a heavy mist delayed the attack. A squadron from the 148th Royal Armour Corps was ordered back from Garcelles-Secqueville to help the Seaforths. With the added assistance of the tanks, the village was finally taken.

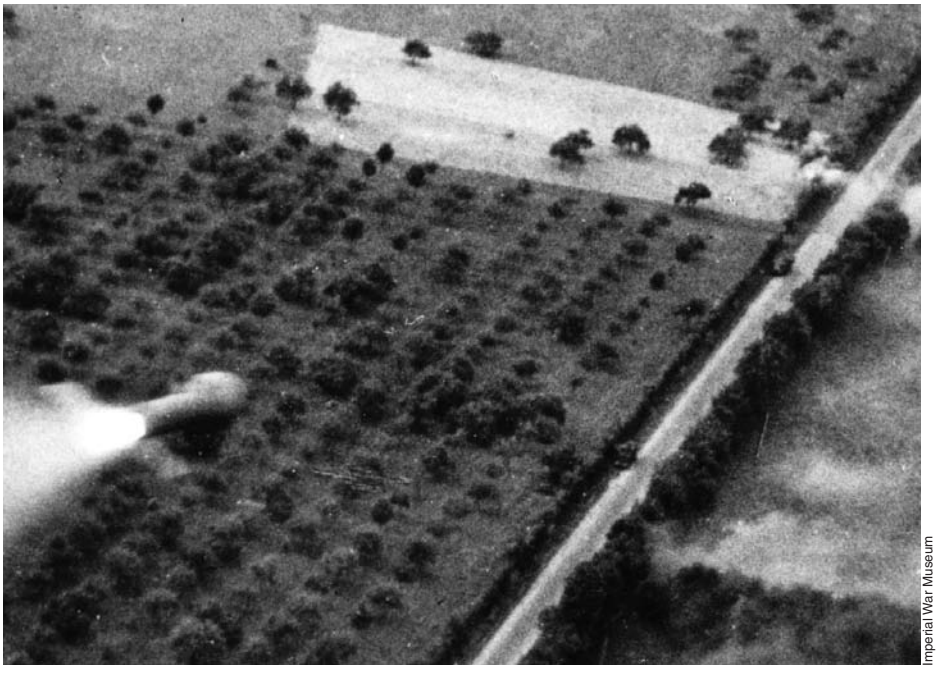
The village of Lorguichon, which straddled the Caen-Falaise highway, was seized by 5th Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders of the 152nd Brigade. The 51st Division and 33rd Armoured Brigade had now taken their objectives. Meanwhile, the Canadian 2nd Division and the 2nd Canadian Amoured Brigade pushing through the dust and smoke on the west side of the Caen-Falaise highway encountered heavy German fire that claimed some of their tanks. One column veered far to the east and rolled toward the German-held town of Rocquancourt. The Royal Hamilton Light Infantry of the 4th Brigade in their armored vehicles managed to drive right through town and reached their objective, while the Essex Scottish of the same brigade was not so fortunate—a number of their half-tracks were knocked out by an antitank gun. Held up by the Germans, it would be noon before the Essex Scottish reached their objective. The Royal Regiment of Canada of the 4th Brigade, meanwhile, missed their objective in the dark and disembarked from the armored vehicles north of Point 122.

Behind the armored columns came the 6th Brigade on foot, heading for their objectives. Following close behind the opening barrage, the South Saskatchewan Regiment swept through Rocquancourt, forcing the Germans to keep their heads down. The town was quickly captured, and around 4:30 AM, a German patrol returning to Rocquancourt was captured as well. The Fusiliers Mont-Royal had the job of taking Marie-sur-Orne on the western flank of the Canadian advance. Heavy bombing was supposed to take care of any serious German resistance. Unfortunately for the Fusiliers, the bombs missed most of the village, and heavy fire prevented them from taking the town. Artillery support was called in, and a second attack was ordered around 4:30 AM. This flanking attack proved to be unsuccessful as well. The village finally fell later in the afternoon when Crocodile-Churchill tanks spewing flames were sent to support the infantry.

TO THE SOUTHEAST OF THE Fusiliers Mont-Royal, the attack by the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders on Fontenay-le-Marmion ran into trouble as well. The bombing on the German-occupied village was largely ineffective. Enduring artillery and heavy machine-gun fire, the Camerons managed to seize the north part of the village and beat off enemy counterattacks all morning. With the help of a couple of companies of the South Saskatchewan Regiment and a squadron of tanks, the area was secured, and a large number of German prisoners were taken. The Canadians and Highlanders in the first phase of Operation Totalize had pushed almost 6,000 yards behind the German lines. The men quickly began to dig in and consolidate their position. More

counterattacks would be coming soon.

Watching the heavy bombing late on August 7, Standartenführer Kurt Meyer, commander of the 12th SS Division, knew that an Allied attack was about to get under way. He quickly began to prepare his force, which was reduced in strength to one battle group as the rest of the division was in action elsewhere. The division had been ordered west to reinforce the fighting at Mortain, but the move was canceled with the opening of Operation Totalize. Meyer drove to the front early on August 8 to see for himself what was going on. What he saw was startling—the Canadian Army was on the verge of a breakthrough. It would have to be checked until the 85th Infantry Division arrived and set up a defensive position north of the Laison River.



Imperial War Museum

Meyer spotted some panicked soldiers from the 89th retreating down the road to escape the bombing. Lighting a cigar, Meyer casually stood in the middle of the road to meet them and asked them if they were to going to leave him to face the British alone. After turning the soldiers around, Meyer moved on to the 89th headquarters, where he met with the division's commander and the 5th Panzer Army's leader to explain his plans for a counterattack. Not wanting to wait for the other two 12th SS battle groups to return from the Caen-Falaise sector, Meyer ordered Battle Group Waldmuller into action. Meyer's attacking force consisted of Tiger and Mark IV tanks, self-propelled guns, and an infantry battalion. It was around noon when Meyer got his force moving north. More Allied bombers were spotted. Meyer ordered his tanks and men to get as close to the enemy as they could in hopes of avoiding the bombing.

The bulk of Meyer's attack fell against the Scottish position near St. Aignan-de-Cramesnil. German tank ace Michael Wittmann, leading the Tigers, took his men, along with Mark IVs, Jagdpanzers, and other self-propelled guns following, into action. With British and Canadian tanks from the Northamptonshire Yeomanry, 144th Royal Armour Corps, and Sherbrooke Fusiliers on three sides, Wittmann's attack was repulsed. Five Tigers were knocked out, including Wittmann's, and Wittmann himself was killed. The German armor attack continued. Shermans and Mark IVs blasted away at each other until finally the fighting broke off around 1:45 PM. Then about 200 German infantry attacked. They were hit hard by artillery and machine-gun fire from British tanks, which doomed the attack. In the end, the Germans lost 15 tanks, the British lost 20.

WHILE THE GERMAN ATTACK was blunted, the second phase of Operation Totalize was underway. Some 678 B-17 Flying Fortresses from the U.S. 8th Army Air Force began a new bombing mission. Coming in from the west in two waves and enduring heavy German anti-aircraft fire, the bombers unleashed their loads along the Canadian 1st Army's front. Flak, smoke, and low clouds prevented 180 of the B-17s from dropping their bombs; 12 other bombers swung north toward Caen, where they bombed friendly troops by mistake. Another 12 bombers did the same thing shortly afterward, causing more casualties in the Canadian 3rd Division, an ammunition dump, artillery regiments, and a Polish antiaircraft regiment. Making matters worse, the bombs unleashed on the Germans failed to smash the enemy's defenses.

With the bombing over, the Polish 1st Armored Division, serving in the Canadian First Army, roared southeast past the Scottish troops at St. Aignan-de-Cramesnil. They would not get far. German antitank guns and armor in the woods a mile southeast of St. Aignan blunted the Polish advance, knocking out 40 tanks. To the west of the Caen-Falaise highway, the Canadian 4th Armoured Division was having difficulty moving past Gaumesnil because of nearby German antitank guns. The problem was finally solved when the Canadian Grenadiers Guards and the Lake Superior Regiment circled to the west and cleared the enemy guns from an orchard north of Cintheaux. The village was secured with a tank squadron from the South Alberta Regiment and soldiers from the Argyll and Sutherland Regiment. Two companies pushed on and captured the village of Hautmesnil. This was as far south as the Canadians would advance on August 8.

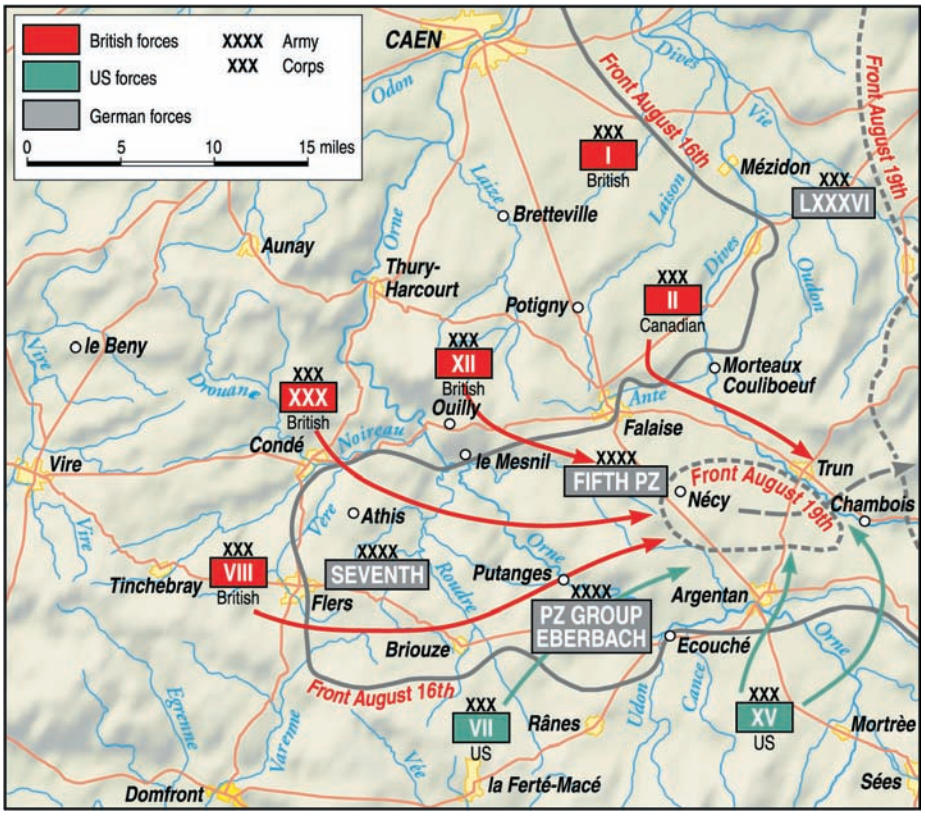
The Germans were alarmed by the depth of the Canadian advance. They knew that if the Canadians achieved a breakthrough, the Seventh Army fighting further to the west and part of Fifth Panzer Army could be cut off. That night the remnants of the 89th and 12th SS Divisions were ordered to establish a new defensive line north of Potigny. Meanwhile, Simonds urged his 4th Armored Division to press on. Bretteville-le-Rabet, Hautmesnil Quarry, and Langannerie fell to combined infantry and tank attacks during the afternoon of the August 9, bagging numerous prisoners. Not all went well with the advance, however. Lt. Col. Don Worthington was ordered to take his armored unit, the British Columbia Regiment, and a supporting infantry unit, the Algonquin Regiment, and capture Point 195, located west of the Caen-Falaise highway northwest of Potigny. Enemy fire and darkness separated part of Worthington's battle group as they pushed into enemy territory. Worthington's reduced force got lost and ended up on the east side of the highway and finally at Point 140, which they believed was Point 195. Taking up a position among some hedges and trees with his tanks and two infantry companies, Worthington reported back to brigade headquarters that they were on their objective.

The Germans were alerted to Worthington's presence and began to take action. For most of the day, the Canadians, with the aid of two

Typhoons overhead, beat back the German attacks. Polish armor, which had taken Robertmesnil and was pushing south and southeast with one of their objectives being Point 140, attempted to break through to Worthington, but was repulsed by the Germans. With most of his tanks destroyed, Worthington ordered his remaining eight tanks to make a break for it. They made it safely to the Polish troops. The infantry continued to hang on, but with casualties mounting—including Worthington, who was killed by a mortar bomb—the situation was looking grimmer. By late evening, with the Germans closing in for another assault, the surviving Canadians made a break for the Polish lines. August 9 had been bloody for the British Columbia Regiment, which had 116 men killed, wounded, or missing and 47 tanks lost. The Algonquin Regiment suffered 128 casualties.

THE GOVERNOR GENERAL'S FOOT Guards, along with a company from the Algonquin Regiment, was ordered to move on Point 195 and aid Worthington. The Foot Guards ran into trouble at Quesany Woods, about 2,000 yards north of Potigny, which was held by a 12th SS battle group. At the cost of 26 tanks, they were unable to clear the woods and take up a defensive position. Simonds demanded that Point 195 be taken. The task of taking it fell to the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, while the Lincoln and Welland Regiment was to seize Point 180 northwest of the Argylls. Both regiments decided to take their objective in a night attack. Daylight on August 10 found the Argylls on their objective and dug in. The Lincs also took their objective, but not before one company stumbled into Germans in a nearby village and a wicked firefight broke out.

With Point 195 in Canadian hands, the Grenadier Guards were able to push their tanks past the infantry onto Point 206, which was rumored to be bristling with 88mms. At noon, a 12th SS battle group attacked first. They were repulsed, but any further thought of taking Point 206 was scrapped. Meanwhile, the Polish 1st Armored Division was ordered to take Point 140 and then push across the Laison River and capture Point 168, a few miles north of Falaise. German counterattacks limited the Poles' advance, and they were not able to meet their objectives. The German stronghold at Quesnay Woods was hampering their movement, and Simonds wanted it taken quickly before the German 85th Infantry Division, which was beginning to arrive, had a chance to reinforce the elements of the 12th SS still holding it. The Canadian 3rd Division was given the task of clearing the woods. Two regiments from the 8th Infantry Brigade, the Queen's Own Rifles, and the North Shore Regiment, were sent in with artillery support. Fighting lasted into the night, but the Canadians were unable to take the woods. When the fighting died out so did Operation Totalize, which had driven nine miles into German lines and inflicted about 3,000 casualties.



ABOVE: Ever-aggressive American General George Patton wanted to push the XV Corps into Falaise, but General Omar Bradly had him halt at Argentan to wait for British support from the north. OPPOSITE: A still from film footage shows a rocket from a Hawker Typhoon heading toward German motor transports attempting to escape through the Argentan-Falaise gap near Livarot.

With the German offense against Mortain being repulsed by the U.S. 30th Division, Lt. Gen. Omar Bradley, commanding the new U.S. Twelfth Army Group, saw an opportunity to trap the German Seventh Army at Falaise and Argentan. Montgomery agreed and ordered Crerar on August 11 not only to take Falaise but also to push farther southeast toward Argentan and hook up with the XV Corps of the U.S. Third Army, thereby blocking the only retreat route the German could use to escape the encircling Allied armies. Pushing north, the XV Corps was stopped just outside Argentan on August 12 but seized control of the east-west highway, from which it could bring down artillery fire on the Germans.

Only 15 miles now separated the Americans from Falaise. Patton wanted the XV Corps to push on toward Falaise, but Bradley ordered him to halt at the edge of Argentan. Allied intelligence had reported that Germans were massing a counterattack against the XV Corps, and Bradley would say later that he wanted "a solid shoulder at Argentan" rather than "a broken neck at Falaise." He also said he was afraid the Canadian and the American forces might collide with each other and inflict heavy friendly casualties.

Besides ordering Crerar to take Falaise, Montgomery also ordered Lt. Gen. Miles Dempsey to push his British Second Army toward the town as well. To aid the British XII Corps in their advance, the Canadian 2nd Division was dispatched to assist. By August 13, Clair Trizon fell to the Canadians, and during the night they crossed the Laize River and took Point 176. After beating off a counterattack by a 12th SS battle group, the Canadian 6th Infantry Brigade was about six miles northwest of Falaise.

The long-term objectives of Simonds's new plan, called Operation Tractable, were to break through German defenses, take Falaise and the high ground northeast of the town, and swing southeast toward the village of Trun. What Simonds had in mind was similar

to Operation Totalize. The German defenses were to be blasted by RAF bombers and then broken with armored columns, while the infantry mopped up resistance the tanks and armored vehicles had bypassed. The new operation would be launched during the day with the cover of smoke instead of darkness.

Holding the German defenses north of the Laison River was the newly arrived 85th Division, remnants of the 89th Division, along with 88mms from the Flak Corps bolstered by a 12th SS battle group. Another 12th SS battle group was positioned in the rear near Trun, while the third was in action against the British and Canadian advance. Shortly before Operation Tractable was launched, an officer carrying plans of the operation accidentally ended up behind enemy lines and was killed. The Germans now had a copy of the plans.

IN AUGUST 14, AT 11:40 AM, CANADIAN tanks and armored vehicles roared forward as artillery lay down smoke shells to cover their advance. Just before the assault was launched, more than 800 Halifaxes, Lancasters, and Mosquitoes unleashed their bombs on five target areas. Unfortunately, 77 bombers mistakenly bombed their own troops near Potigny. The army was using yellow flares to identify themselves as friendly troops, but tragically the Air Force was using similarly colored target indicators. More than 390 Canadians and Poles were injured, including 150 killed. Tanks and armored cars from the Canadian 2nd Armoured Brigade rolled forward through the smoke. The Fort Garry Horse and the First Hussars, both of the 2nd Armoured Brigade, endured antitank fire as they made their way to the Laison River. The First Hussars pushed through fierce resistance on the north side of the river and crossed over.

By 11:30 PM, the Fort Garry Horse had reached their first objective as well, but not before losing a third of their tanks. Suffering even heavier casualties, the First Hussars also reached their objective. To the north of the 2nd Amoured Brigade was the 4th Canadian Amoured Brigade. The Canadians ran into trouble at Point 140 from enemy antitank guns, tanks, and mines. While one tank regiment engaged the Germans, the other two tank regiments rolled on, fighting their way across the Laison and pushing on to their objectives, but not before the brigade commander was killed. Behind the tanks, the 8th and 9th Infantry Brigades of the Canadian 3rd Division, packed in the Kangaroos and other armored vehicles, dealt with the enemy bypassed by the armored brigades. The Stormont, Dundas, and Glengarry Highland- ers of the 9th Brigade

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moved toward a fortified chateau near the river that was held by elements of the German 85th Regiment supported by Tiger tanks. A six-pounder antitank gun took care of one the German tanks, while a "Wasp," a Bren gun carrier equipped with a flamethrower, smashed the machine-gun nests. As the Glens consolidated their hard-won position, an M10 moved up to support them. The tank destroyer soon dispatched any remaining enemy Tigers.

Besides taking a large number of prisoners on the first day of Operation Tractable, the Canadians were across the Laison River and Falaise was in their grasp. German resistance would stiffen as they desperately attempted to keep the gap open between the Americans and Canadians. August 15 saw the 4th Armoured Division pushing northeast of Falaise for Point 159. The division's 4th Armoured Brigade, leading the way, was stopped by fierce 88mm antitank fire and was unable to reach its objective. Meanwhile, the 3rd Division, moving down the Caen-Falaise highway, was ordered to make an attempt on the point. The village of Soulangy, bristling with 89th and 12th SS troops and Tigers, lay in the way. The Royal Winnipeg Rifles of the 7th Infantry Brigade suffered 50 percent casualties in a failed attempt to capture the village. The Canadian Scottish Regiment of the same brigade, along with tank support from the 1st Hussars, swung east and headed for Point 159. German antitank fire stopped them in their tracks. The infantry pushed on alone, enduring heavy mortaring. The Canadians slugged it out with troops from the 12th SS and finally took their objective. The Germans quickly counterattacked with Tigers and armored cars. In desperate fighting, the Canadians held on dearly to their objective and drove off the enemy. By nightfall, the regiment had suffered 130 casualties.

While the Canadians struggled for Point 159, the Polish 1st Armored Division was ordered to move east and take Jort along the River Dives. This they did, capturing 120 prisoners and knocking out a number of Panzer tanks and antitank guns. The Poles were now in a position to advance on Trun.

Kluge finally got permission on August 16 from Adolf Hitler to withdraw from the "kettle," as the Germans were calling the pocket they were crowded into, through the Falaise-Argentan gap. The situation worsened for the Germans when American and French troops came ashore in southern France. Kluge would see little of the withdrawal, as he was recalled by a suspicious Hitler, who feared that he was negotiating with the Allies. In reality, Kluge had spent a good part of the day hugging the ground in a ditch as Allied fighters harassed his staff car and other vehicles in his convoy while he was making an inspection tour of the front. Field Marshal Walter Model was ordered to replace Kluge, who bit down on a cyanide pill and died en route back to Germany.

The 6th Infantry Brigade of the Canadian 2nd Division entered Falaise on the 16th and, after fierce fighting, secured the town the following day. While the Canadians battled it out with SS troop in Falaise, Simonds shifted the rest of his forces in preparation for a final push on Trun. Polish armor was already rolling toward the village and halted eight miles away for the night. The day before, Montgomery had met with Bradley and assured him that once the Canadians had taken Falaise he would order Simonds to head toward Trun to link up with the Americans. Bradley informed Montgomery

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PISM

ABOVE: Hard-charging Polish infantry and artillery troops destroyed this retreating German column at Mont Ormel on August 18, 1944.
OPPOSITE: British and American troops meet after sealing the gap at Falaise. Sixty thousand German troops were killed or captured in the fighting.

that the area around Argentan was now held by a French armored division and the American 90th Division. He had sent the rest of the XV Corps to strike east for the Seine. The American 80th Division was close by at Alençon for needed support.

With Falaise, the "corner pillar" of the German escape route, now in Canadian hands, the Germans shifted their defense farther east to hold open the gap. They attacked the American 90th Division on the high ground at Le Bourg-St-Leonard, near Argentan, hoping to deny them the key position overlooking their escape route. The Americans were thrown back, but regrouped and recaptured the ridge. Meanwhile, the Canadian 4th Armoured Division began its advance on Trun, but was soon thrown into confusion when it came under heavy enemy artillery fire. The Canadians altered their route for Morteaux-Coulibouef, on the Ante River and continued their advance. At nightfall they were two miles north of Trun. The Poles, meanwhile, continued to push back the Germans, halting for the night near the highway northeast of Trun.

The noose was tightening around the Germans. The American 90th Division was ordered to take Chambois, four miles southeast of Trun. The Poles advanced on the village as well, and the two Allied forces linked up to close the gap. On August 18, the Poles moved out toward Chambois. The commander of the Polish force, Maj. Gen. Stanislaw Maczek, decided to split his division. Part of his force was to continue toward Chambois, while the other half was to take a ridge north of the Dives River dominating a road that ran from Chambois to Vimoutiers. The Polish called the place Maczuga, a Polish word meaning mace, because of the shape of the ridge. Meanwhile, the Canadian 4th Armoured Division headed for Trun, which it took. Overhead Spitfires, Typhoons, Mustangs, and other aircraft pummeled the retreating Germans in the ever-shrinking Falaise pocket.

AT THE SAME TIME, THE AMERICAN 80th and 90th Divisions, along with artillery support from a French armored division, began to close the gap from their side. The 80th attack toward Trun stalled, but the 90th pushed to within three miles of Chambois before the attack was halted. With Trun in Canadian hands and the Poles on the verge taking Chambois, the South Alberta Regiment from the 4th Canadian Armored Division, along with a company of Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, was ordered to take St. Lambert-sur-Dives between Chambois and Trun. Commanding the Canadian force, which consisted of 15 tanks and 55 infantrymen, was Major David Currie. Their task would not be easy, as their object lay in the center of the German escape route. With the situation getting more and more desperate, the Germans were massing to break through the ever-closing gap. The 2nd Panzer Corps, which had earlier escaped from the pocket, was ordered back into the gap by Model while German paratroopers and other SS units attacked from inside the pocket.

At 6 PM, Currie's little force moved out for St. Lambert. After enduring friendly fire from the Poles, a tank was knocked out by an enemy 88mm. Two RAF Spitfires then attacked the tank column, setting Currie's tank on fire. He was almost killed while attempting to put out the fire when the Spitfires returned to strafe the tanks. After taking care of the wounded, Currie ordered his tanks to remain where they were, near St. Lambert. With darkness falling, he scouted the town to determine where the 88mm fire was coming from. Once back with his force, Currie ordered his lead tanks to fall back and cover the town while the infantry and most of the tank crews dealt with the enemy. The next morning Currie attacked. A tank was knocked out as they entered the village, but the culprits, enemy Tiger and Mark IV tanks, were spotted. Currie's tank knocked out the Mark IV, while the infantry took out the Tiger by shooting a couple of its crew members and putting a grenade down the turret. The Canadians then proceeded to take St. Lambert and capture a number of prisoners.

That afternoon, hordes of Germans attempting to retreat attacked the Canadians. St. Lambert was the key to the Germans' escape plan, as there was a stone bridge over the Dives in the town that could support the weight of their retreating armor. A second smaller bridge was just outside of town. Fighting intensified as the Germans attacked and swarmed the tanks. Currie called in an artillery barrage on his own

Continued on page 74

After learning of his brother's death in battle, a furious Nathan Bedford Forrest personally leads the attack on General William Sooy Smith's rear in Don Troiani's *Southern Steel*.

Painting by Don Troiani, www.historicalartprints.com

A HARD LESSON IN WAR

BY ARNOLD BLUMBERG

With the fall of Vicksburg in the first week of July 1863, the strongest remaining Confederate presence in Mississippi was a recently thrown together force of 26,000 soldiers under General Joseph E. Johnston at Jackson. Determined to remove all organized resistance in the Magnolia State, Union Maj. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant ordered his most dependable subordinate, Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman, to take 40,000 men and drive Johnston and his army completely out of Mississippi. Leaving Vicksburg on July 4, Sherman occupied Jackson on July 19. Upon Sherman's approach, Johnston headed for the town of Morton, 30 miles east of Jackson. After reoccupying Jackson (he had taken the city the first time on May 14, during the Vicksburg campaign), Sherman ordered his men to devastate the area's war-making potential by ripping up railroads, burning enemy supply facilities, and destroying much of the city itself. By doing so, Sherman hoped to prevent that portion of the state from ever again becoming a base of operations for the Confederates to threaten the Union's hold on the Mississippi River.

HOPING TO RUIN THE INFRASTRUCTURE OF MISSISSIPPI, UNION GENERAL WILLIAM T. SHERMAN TARGETED THE TOWN OF MERIDIAN FOR PARTICULAR DESTRUCTION.

As Jackson burned, Sherman gazed south and saw another point on the map whose capture might complete his plan for domination of the state. The hamlet of Meridian, 100 miles east of Jackson near the Alabama border, contained one of the largest concentrations of Confederate military stores, maintenance shops, and warehouses in the western Confederacy. Meridian was a hub for Confederate traffic through Mississippi to the rest of the South. Meridian stood at the junction of the Mobile & Ohio, Southern Mississippi, and Alabama & Mississippi River Railroads—crucial lines used to transport vast amounts of men and supplies. It was little wonder that Sherman viewed the seemingly insignificant speck on the map as a prize well worth eliminating.

Although he was eager to move on Meridian in the summer of 1863, Sherman was deterred from doing so for a number of reasons. First, Grant wanted to attack the important port city of Mobile, Ala., and considered any major diversion of Union resources to be out of the question. Second, the Lincoln administration's attention had been drawn southwest to Mexico and the perceived threat from France, which had installed a puppet government in Mexico City. Washington wanted a major effort to reestablish Federal control in Texas as the surest way to keep Emperor Napoleon III from making trouble south of the Rio Grande. Finally, the defeat of the Union Army of the Cumberland at the Battle of Chickamauga on September 19-20 and the subsequent siege of nearby Chattanooga required massive Federal efforts to relieve the city. Grant and Sherman both rushed to Chattanooga, and any further move on the interior of Mississippi was impossible in the last half of 1863.

The defeat of the Confederates at Chattanooga in November 1863 allowed the Federals to look again at the

All photos Library of Congress

Brigadier General Wirt Adams's Confederates are driven off in furious action near Red Bone Church. Such encounters were common during the Union advance on Meridian.

removal of enemy threats on the Mississippi River. To that end, Sherman was given permission at last to implement his Meridian plan. By the time he reached Memphis, Tenn., on January 21, 1864, the general's scheme was ready to be put in motion. Sherman intended to march on Meridian with 20,000 infantry and a brigade of cavalry. Sixty artillery pieces would complete his force. Maj. Gen. Stephen A. Hurlbut would lead 10,000 men from his XVI Corps southward from Memphis to Vicksburg and join a like number of men from Maj. Gen. James B. McPherson's XVII Corps. Colonel Edward F. Winslow's 2,500-man mounted brigade would serve as the expedition's eyes and ears. From Vicksburg, the Union force would move to Meridian and, depending on circumstances, perhaps advance to capture Selma, Ala., as well. To fend off the almost certain interference from the redoubtable Confederate cavalry leader Maj. Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest, then operating in northern Mississippi, a 7,000-man cavalry division under Brig. Gen. William Sooy Smith would depart Memphis just before Sherman's main body left Vicksburg and move south along the Mobile & Ohio Railroad, destroying the road as it went, and meet up with Sherman at Meridian.

Sherman's raid on Meridian was to be a large-scale attack designed in part to devastate the transportation facilities and resources of the region. Occupation of territory was not an objective and, as a result, the Federal force would not have to depend on lengthy supply lines to sustain itself. Since the expedition was meant to be only a temporary foray into enemy country, Sherman's men would be able to live off the land as they went. Sherman himself was full of confidence. "I think in all January and part of February I can do something in this line," he told Grant. "To secure the safety of the navigation of the Mississippi River I would slay millions. I think I see one or two quick blows that would astonish the natives of the South and will convince them that, though to stand behind big cottonwoods and shoot at a passing boat is grand sport and safe, it may still reach and kill their friends and families hundreds of miles off. For every bullet shot at a steamer, I would shoot a thousand 30-pounder Parrotts into even helpless towns on the Red, Ouachita, Yazoo [Rivers], wherever a boat can float or a soldier march."

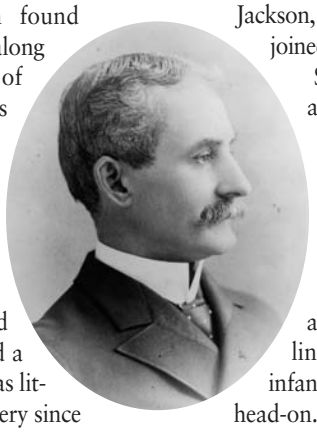
On February 3, the Federal advance to Meridian commenced as two long blue columns, Hurlbut on the left and McPherson on the right, departed Vicksburg heading for the Big Black River. Opposing the Union move was the recently created Confederate Army of the Mississippi under Lt. Gen. Leonidas Polk, an Episcopal bishop, West Point graduate, and close friend of Confederate president Jefferson Davis. Polk's infantry division commanders in the nascent army were Maj. Gens. William W. Loring and Samuel G. French, with Maj. Gen. Stephen D. Lee and Forrest leading his cavalry. All told, Polk could muster around 10,000 infantry and 4,000 cavalry to contend with Sherman's threat.

Hearing of the enemy concentration at Vicksburg and fearing that this meant an imminent offensive, Polk began to fortify key positions in Mississippi to block or delay any Federal advances into the eastern part of the state. Loring was instructed to build works at Canton, north of Jackson, while French was to dig emplacements in the state capital itself. Polk made no attempt to concentrate his forces. Instead, he tethered his infantry to several pockets in the Jackson area and allowed Lee's cavalry to remain scattered between Jackson and the Yazoo River, while Forrest's troopers remained in the northern part of the state.

By February 4, the Union cavalry leading Sherman's advance reached the Raymond Road just ahead of McPherson's plodding column. Passing near the old battlefield at Champion's Hill, the horsemen were attacked by two regiments belonging to Confederate Brig. Gen. Wirt Adams. A brisk mounted charge by the graybacks was repulsed, sending the attackers back toward Bolton Depot. Later that afternoon, Winslow's troopers again made contact with Adams's men, driving them back across Baker's Creek east of Bolton Depot. To the south, on the Bolton Road, another outfit belonging to Adams's brigade—Colonel Robert C. Woods's Mississippi cavalry regiment—skirmished with the head of McPherson's infantry column. A day-long running fight developed for more than 10 miles, with the Federals slowly pushing the Confederates back.

South of McPherson's formations, Hurlbut's men spent the day vying with Southern cavalry under Colonel Peter Starke, supported by two artillery pieces, along the Bridgeport Road leading to Bolton Station. Union infantry and a battery of guns finally pried the Confederates out of their blocking position and forced them to retire to Clinton, farther east. Losses on both sides numbered fewer than 20 men each.

The morning of the 5th found McPherson's brigades toiling along the Clinton Road. Ahead of them, Adams had posted his 800 men and several cannon atop a hill about 750 yards east of Baker's Creek overlooking the wooden bridge spanning the water. On reaching the creek, Federal infantry rushed in to the water, gained the opposite shore, and formed a line of battle. Their progress was little hindered by the enemy artillery since most of the fire directed at them fell short. An hour-long artillery and musket barrage then fell on the Confederate position, causing them to move back through Clinton after joining their comrades from Starke's command. At noon the Union cavalry entered Clinton. Jackson, 12 miles away, would be their next objective.



As Sherman's men neared the state capital, French started to move the stockpiled war materiel by rail to Meridian. He also ordered Adams to arrange his command so that his troops could cover French's withdrawal from Jackson east over the Pearl River. Joined by Starke's troopers, the Southern forces under Adams and Starke, numbering about 1,300 men, continued to skirmish with McPherson's and Hurlbut's advancing Federal infantry, which had merged at day's end and was marching in from the west.

Leaving the road to the infantry, Winslow took off across county toward the north, circled Adams's left and got between the Confederate cavalry and Jackson during the night of February 5. Dismounting his 4th Iowa Volunteer Cavalry Regiment to fight on foot and sending his 11th Illinois Cavalry Regiment on a hell-for-leather saber charge, Winslow scattered the unsuspecting Confederate horsemen. Starke fled north and Adams raced into Jackson with Winslow in hot pursuit. By sundown all Confederate forces had abandoned Jackson, and the blue cavalry was soon joined by their infantry comrades.

Surprised by the enemy's rapid approach, Polk directed a concentration of his dispersed forces at Morton, 17 miles east of Brandon on the Southern Mississippi Railroad. Frantically he wired Lee and Forrest, urging them to mount immediate raids on Sherman's supply lines while he gathered his infantry to confront the invaders head-on. After destroying any remaining military stores and rail property, the Federal army moved out of Jackson early on February 7, crossing the Pearl River on a pontoon bridge and taking the Brandon Road with Winslow's cavalry in the van. They reached Brandon later that day and burned it to the ground.

Meanwhile, French's and Loring's infantry entered Morton and began to dig in, while Lee's and Adams's cavalry dogged the Federals' southern flank and Starke followed in the rear. Polk, who mistakenly believed that Sherman's real objective was Mobile—despite a warning from Lee that Meridian was the Union goal—fired off repeated pleas for reinforcements to Joseph E. Johnston at Dalton, Ga., and P.G.T. Beauregard at Charleston, SC. Beauregard sent back word that he had no aid to give; Johnston never even bothered to reply.

On February 8, Sherman's men departed Brandon for Morton, halting four miles from their objective that evening. Waiting for them in Morton was the combined Confederate infantry of Loring and French, which was entrenched two miles west of the borough. Loring, in overall command, hoped to delay the enemy advance while Lee's cavalry struck the bluecoats from the rear. By the end of the day, however, Loring changed his mind. Realizing that Polk was not going to send him any reinforcements, Loring pulled up stakes and marched his men east toward Newton Station. Early the next morning the Union advance guard entered Morton, burned the town's principal buildings, and demolished railroad tracks and bridges in the area.

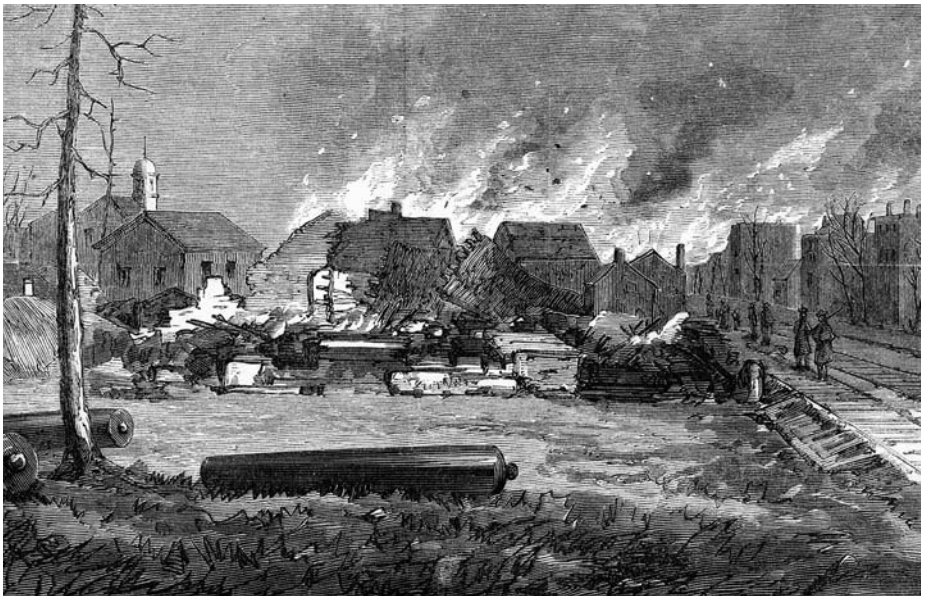
The next day Polk joined Loring and French. Still fearing that Mobile was Sherman's real goal, he directed half his available force under Loring to Mobile, while French was ordered to continue to Newton Station. As the Confederate forces split off in different ways, Winslow's troopers engaged in running skirmishes with the gray rear guard under Colonel W.L. Maxwell along the Brandon-Hillsboro Road. The 11th saw Maxwell's men moving back over an area filled with river bottoms, crisscrossing streams, and low-lying swamplands. Burning causeways and bridges as they retreated, Maxwell's men seriously delayed the Federal advance to Decatur, from which point Sherman intended to quickly move on Meridian, destroying the Southern Mississippi Railroad as he went.

By now even Polk realized that Meridian was in immediate danger. He started moving all the public property he could by rail to Demopolis, Ala. While Polk acted the part of a glorified stevedore, Lee determined to do what he could to halt the Union thrust at Meridian. To that end, he sent Colonel Samuel Ferguson and his small cavalry brigade from Newton Station to add its meager strength and slow Sherman's progress. Ferguson was forced back by Winslow after a short, sharp combat. Seeing that they could not halt the enemy, Lee and Loring headed toward Meridian just in front of the blue juggernaut.

On the 13th, Sherman determined to make

LEFT to RIGHT: Stephen D. Lee, Leonidas Polk, James McPherson, Nathan Bedford Forrest, Stephen A. Hurlbut.

TOP: William Sooy Smith.



Wherever Major General William T. Sherman's troops went, they left fiery ruins behind them. It was all part of the North's new approach to "hard war."

a rapid descent on Meridian. Leaving his 600 wagons and their 4,000 horses and mules behind, he ordered the men to carry only the essentials and five days' rations. An early start brought the Northerners to Tallahatta Creek, 15 miles west of Meridian, where they easily pushed back Lee's cavalry. As the main body advanced directly toward Meridian, a column of four infantry brigades and some cavalry headed north to Chunky Station to eliminate the rail line there. In the process they battered Wirt Adams's cavalry and captured three of his artillery pieces. The next morning, Winslow's horsemen crossed Tallahatta Creek, and with the aid of Union infantry from Brig. Gen. A.J. Smith's division, sent Ferguson's and Starke's riders streaming through Meridian in retreat. Smith occupied the town soon after. As the Federals reached Meridian, Loring and French started for Moscow, Ala., to the east.

The Meridian that Smith's men entered on February 14 had a population of 400 souls, 100 homes, four hotels, two churches, two inns, and four small dry goods stores. What made the tiny Lauderdale County town militarily important were the locomotive repair shops, the small arsenal that turned out rifles and pistols, two gristmills, and scores of wooden buildings containing war materials of all descriptions. The town's destruction began the next day and continued for five more days. The machine shops and warehouses were set on fire and the tracks and ties of the rail lines surrounding Meridian were torn up.

The neighboring towns of Enterprise, Marion Station, and Quitman were also hit by Federal burning parties, who consigned vast amounts of lumber and cotton to the flames. Other Federal forces conducted raids on nearby farms, seizing foodstuffs, cattle, and grain. Whatever they could not carry away they burned or slaughtered. Sherman wanted the forage expeditions not only to help feed his men but also to deny the bounty to the Confederates. He drew a biblical parallel to his destruction: "Satan and the rebellious saints in Hell were allowed a continuous existence in Hell merely to swell their just punishment," Sherman said. "To such as would rebel against a government as mild and just as ours in peace, a punishment equal would not be unjust."

THROUGHOUT THE WEEK Sherman spent bringing hell to Meridian, the Confederate cavalry under Lee could do no more than harass the columns of Federals that roamed the area. A concerted attack on the Federal wagon train left behind at Tallahatta Creek was attempted, but was beaten off. On the 17th, while Lee's cavalry moved north to Lauderdale Springs, Jefferson Davis personally ordered four infantry divisions from Johnston's army at Dalton to join Polk.

The next day, unaware of the Confederate efforts against him and still unclear about the whereabouts of the supporting cavalry force under Sooy Smith, who was to have been at Meridian before him, Sherman decided to return to Vicksburg. He reasoned that without Smith's mounted force he could not proceed into Alabama to destroy more rail lines. Even more pressing, Sherman's men were growing hungrier, despite their foraging at Meridian. The absence of a supply line was forcing Sherman to pull back—something the Confederates had not been able to accomplish. Sherman's withdrawal began on February 20, passing north of the Southern Mississippi Railroad. As the army marched, Sherman sent patrols to the north, east, and west looking for Smith's errant horsemen. Although Rebel cavalry continued to hang on the Federal flanks as they trudged west, most of Lee's troopers headed north to Starkville to link up with Forrest.

Sherman had expected that after his forces reached Meridian, they would be joined by Sooy Smith's 7,000-man cavalry division, which was to have left Memphis for the 250-mile trip to Meridian no later than February 1. Sherman wanted Smith to destroy the Mobile & Ohio Railroad as he advanced as well as protect the army's main column from the unwanted interference of Forrest's cavalry. Smith was scheduled to rendezvous with Sherman at Meridian on February 10. Sherman had warned Smith prior to the raid to avoid any "minor affairs" with the enemy as he traveled south to Meridian.

Instead of promptly departing Memphis as he was ordered, however, Smith remained in the city until the 10th to give a late-arriving brigade time to rest. Leaving Memphis on the 11th, he moved through New Albany, Panola, and Abbeville in the hopes of concealing his true destination and purpose. He could have saved his men the effort. Smith and his men were tracked every step of the way by the wily Southern cavalry leader.

By February 13, Smith's command had crossed the Tallahatchie River at New Albany after traveling slowly through the heavily timbered and swampy lowlands of northern Mississippi. The first contact with the enemy occurred that day when Smith's troopers met and dispersed a force of 600 state militia near Pontotoc. The snail's pace of the Union force continued as it crossed numerous swamps and creeks overflowing with winter rains. More threatening, the Federal flanks and rear came under repeated attacks from small bands of Forrest's men attempting to delay their advance. While the bluecoats struggled on, Forest concentrated his troopers at West Point, just south of the enemy.

The Federals reached Okolona on the 18th and commenced razing the land and tearing up track from the Mobile & Ohio at a leisurely pace. Smith's tardiness may have stemmed from a desire to abort the mission altogether because of the presence of Forrest. (The day before, he had broached this idea to his officers, citing the gathering of enemy forces at

West Point and the fact that they were already eight days late in joining Sherman at Meridian.) A skirmish on the 19th left Forrest determined to try to channel the enemy between the swollen Tombigbee River on the right and the overflowing Sakatonchee River 12 miles to the west. Meanwhile, after reaching West Point on the 20th, Smith said he was too ill to continue and turned over command to Brig. Gen. Benjamin Grierson, but not before he ordered Grierson to abandon all plans to meet Sherman at Meridian. When Grierson insisted that he would press on to Meridian, Smith reassumed command and immediately ordered a countermarch to Memphis. According to an officer in the 4th U.S. Regular Cavalry Regiment, "Our General Smith was a beaten man well before Forrest ever delivered a blow against him."

As the Federals headed north on the 20th, a spirited clash occurred between their rear guard and Forrest's main body. After a two-hour contest, the Federals failed to dislodge the Confederates, who were firing from behind a log and rail fence, and drew off to the north. For the rest of the day, the Rebs pushed after the enemy, not stopping until they reached the outskirts of Okolona. At Egypt Station on the 21st, a Confederate assault led by Forrest himself forced the Federals through Okolona to a small rise west of town. Forrest ordered a saber charge by Colonel Tyree Bell's brigade that shattered the 7th Indiana Cavalry Regiment and routed the remainder of its parent 3rd Cavalry Brigade on the road to Pontotoc. Forrest led the chase after the defeated enemy, but halted after five miles to give his disordered command time to regroup.

As the enemy pursuit slackened, Smith established a defensive line on a ridge atop Ivey Farms. Protected on both flanks by steep ridges and in front by thick underbrush and patches of oak trees, Smith's position was the best defensive terrain he had occupied since leaving West Point. Most of the men were dismounted, and a battery of four cannon supported them. An attack on foot by the Confederates was repulsed, and Colonel Jeffrey Forrest, younger brother of General Forrest, was killed. With a mixture of rage and despair over his sibling's death, Forrest led a second assault on the enemy lines. The blow was delivered just as the Union cavalry was mounting up to continue its retreat. The fight moved on for two miles to another improvised Union position, from which they were pried out of by the following graycoats. During the fighting Forrest had two horses shot from under him.

A mile up the road, the Federals made a last stand. Over 2,000 blue cavalrymen faced off against Forrest's 300-man vanguard, the only Confederates who were able to keep up with the rapid Union retreat. Seeing the miniscule Rebel force facing them, the Northern troopers attacked. The Confederates counterattacked, and a wild melee ensued. With the odds heavily against him, Forrest was on the verge of being overwhelmed when the brigades of Bell and Colonel Robert "Black Bob" McCulloch arrived in time to strike the enemy flanks and send them reeling toward the rear. Almost out of ammunition and exhausted after two days of combat, Forrest called off any further pursuit.

For all intents and purposes, the Union cavalry was a beaten force. Reaching Pontotoc on the night of the 21st, the command was thankful "that Devil Forrest" was no longer barking at their heels. According to Colonel George E. Waring of Smith's command, "The retreat to Memphis was a weary, disheartening and almost panic-stricken flight, in the greatest disorder and confusion." For the next week, elements of Smith's riders straggled back into Memphis, completely spent. In the running fight from West Point to Okolona, Smith had lost 47 killed, 152 wounded, and 120 missing. Forrest's losses amounted to 27 killed, 97 wounded, and 20 missing in action.

While Smith's cavalrymen were being driven back to Memphis, Sherman's infantry columns steadily marched for Vicksburg. In parallel lines, Hurlbut's and McPherson's men passed Decatur, then Union, while Winslow's horse brigade headed for Canton, 25 miles north of Jackson. On the 26th, the Union infantry corps passed over the Pearl River and entered Canton, destroying the town of 2,500 citizens and the rail lines surrounding it. On February 27, Sherman left his army and went to Vicksburg to discuss a planned joint operation on the Red River with Maj. Gen. Nathaniel Banks.

On March 1, in wet, freezing weather, Hurlbut's and McPherson's weary foot soldiers left Canton for Vicksburg, reaching their old camp grounds on the Black River east of the city on the 3rd. The entire march from Canton to the Big Black had been monitored by Lee's cavalry, which had set numerous ambushes for the infantry and the army's supply trains. Despite their best efforts, the Southern horsemen could make no headway against the massed, compact enemy formations. Meanwhile, Polk had received some much-needed reinforcements in the form of Lt. Gen. William Hardee's 10,000-man infantry corps, and was eager to throw them at the retreating enemy. However, the reinforcements had arrived at Demopolis on February 27, long after Sherman's army was out of harm's way.

In the end, Sherman's Meridian expedition was at most a limited and fleeting success. Considering the numbers of troops involved, there was no large-scale infantry combat. In fact, most of the fighting was done by mounted forces. Losses were small considering the number of troops involved. Hurlbut and McPherson lost 126 men, while Winslow sustained 70 casualties. The Confederates lost 359 men, including those from Forrest's command. Sherman had wanted to cripple the Rebel forces in Mississippi, thus removing any threat to Vicksburg or of reinforcements being used in other theaters of the war. On both counts he failed. For the remainder of the conflict, Confederate bands would harass Federal lines of communication and tie down large numbers of Union troops in Mississippi, Georgia, and Tennessee, while the transit of Southern forces to Georgia from the Magnolia State was never seriously interrupted.

Sherman's second aim, the destruction of the natural resources and infrastructure of Mississippi, was also minimally successful. Despite the elimination of 59 miles of rail track and the destruction of 21 locomotives, 45 railroad cars, and miles of telegraph wire, the Confederates were able to replace most of these losses in a matter of weeks. The devastation of the land and its farm produce created hardships for the local population but never seriously impeded the operations of the South's western armies in the last year of the war.

But whatever level of success could be attributed to Sherman's Meridian enterprise, one thing was certain: it heralded the start of a new Federal policy of "hard war" designed to beat down the Confederacy by not only eradicating its armed forces but also degrading Southern morale and undermining its economy. In that sense, Meridian was a dress rehearsal for the merciless struggle Sherman would later perfect in Georgia and the Carolinas. □

WITH A MIXTURE OF RAGE AND DESPAIR OVER HIS SIBLING'S DEATH, FORREST LED A SECOND ASSAULT ON THE ENEMY LINES.

By Al Hemingway

Before turning traitor, Benedict Arnold was a loyal sailor and soldier in George Washington's army.

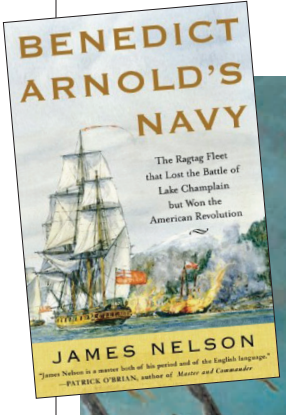
WHENEVER THE NAME OF BENEDICT ARNOLD IS mentioned, people immediately think in terms of the traitorous act he attempted to perpetrate against the fledging United States of America in 1780 by surrendering West Point, New York, to the British. There was, however, another side to Arnold. Just four years earlier, the brash, newly commissioned general in George Washington's Continental Army captured Fort Ticonderoga, nearly seized the Canadian city of Quebec, and saved the day at the Battle of Saratoga, almost losing a leg in the process.

American gondolas go head to head with the much larger British ships at the Battle of Lake Champlain.

Award-winning author James L. Nelson closely examines Arnold's early role in the American Revolution in his new book ***Benedict Arnold's Navy: The Ragtag Fleet That Lost the Battle of Lake Champlain but Won the American Revolution*** (McGraw-Hill, New York, 2006, 386 pp., illustrations, maps, notes, index, $24.95, hardcover).

From the outset of the conflict, the ambitious Arnold saw the importance of Lake Champlain and the occupation of Canada as paramount to the patriot cause. In the early days of the uprising, there was no real federal authority for acquiring men and supplies. Each state went in different directions to procure these important items. Convincing the Massachusetts legislature that guns and ammunition could be had by seizing Fort Ticonderoga, Arnold quickly received the authority to raise a force to accomplish this mission.

While traveling to upstate New York to capture the fortification, Arnold happened upon the famed



U.S. Navy Historical Center

Ethan Allen and his Green Mountain Boys. The motley crew of Vermonters agreed to join in, but only if Allen remained in command. Arnold acquiesced, much to his dismay, and soon learned to intensely dislike Allen and his band of hard-drinking ruffians. When the fort was later seized, Allen purposely neglected to mention Arnold in his report. This act cemented Arnold's hatred of Allen and his men.

Arnold led a force to lay siege to Quebec. His bold plan might well have worked, had it not been for the long, arduous trek his small army was forced to make during the winter months. Also, one of his best officers, Richard Montgomery, was killed when assaulting an enemy blockhouse. With Montgomery's untimely death, the attack fizzled and a golden opportunity was lost.

Arnold's greatest achievement was still to come. The British also realized the vast military importance of Lake Champlain. If they could move down the lake and take Albany, they could march into New York City and join forces with General Sir William Howe's army. The Continental Army would, in effect, be cut off and soundly defeated.

The British, however, did not realize that Arnold had foreseen just such a move and begun building a ragtag fleet to meet the greatest navy in the world. Arnold knew that he could not defeat such a powerful armada, but if he could inflict enough damage and slow the British down, they would have to wait until the following spring to put their plan into action. Arnold was buying valuable time for George Washington's army, which was in the process of being routed in New York.

Nelson does a masterful job of storytelling, describing not only the military actions but also the petty jealousies and backbiting that were all too common in the Continental Army at the time. Arnold spent two years in the field before returning from New York and Canada, and was not privy to the political shenanigans occurring within the Continental Congress and Washington's officer corps. Not politically attuned, he became bitter and disillusioned about his role in the newly forming country and decided to turn his back on all he had fought for.

Still, as Nelson states, "Benedict Arnold was responsible for the victory at Saratoga, as much as any one man could be. That honor is due him not just because of his leadership … but because he had set the stage for the battle itself. The defeat of John Burgoyne's army, the first great victory in the American Revolution, had its origins in the valiant, doomed stand made in

simulation gaming *By Eric T. Baker*

Civilization IV: Warlords adds spice to combat.

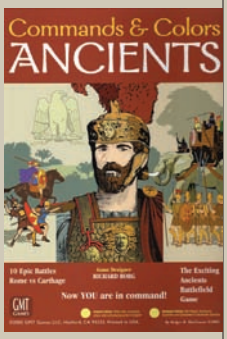
Sid Meier's Civilization IV is the preeminent strategy video game in the world. It optimizes all of the best features of the previous incarnations of the game and weds them to gameplay that was designed from the beginning to include multiplayer options. The only way to make it better was to add more to it, including spicing up its combat, and that is exactly what the first expansion to the game, *Civilization IV: Warlords,* does. The expansion includes new scenarios, new civilizations, new units, and new leaders as well as rules for vassal states. Yes, other civilizations can now be conquered instead of having to be wiped out.

Despite the expansion's name, warlords do not make the biggest change in the game, but they do round out the roster of great people that civilizations use for the extra abilities that differentiate them from each other. Warlords can increase the military potential of cities or be sacrificed to create academies or sent into the field to give bonuses to the troops they are stacked with. Warlords are not, as in some games, troops unto themselves and if sent out to fight, they are best stacked with the player's most invulnerable army. □

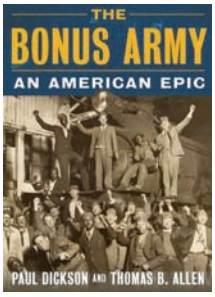
A video game on a more tactical level is Sierra's *Joint Task Force*, a squad-based anti-terrorist game. The players take command of a special multinational quick-response force tasked with battling terrorists and guerrillas around the globe. Players start with a basic squad and basic weapons and over the 20 single-player scenarios build up the numbers, experience, ability, and equipment of their men. The interface is third person in the style of an RTS game, but there is no factory building or resource capture. Instead, the player tries to complete the scenarios as quickly and cleanly as possible, earning good press with the world's news organizations that translates into more money that can be spent on improving forces.

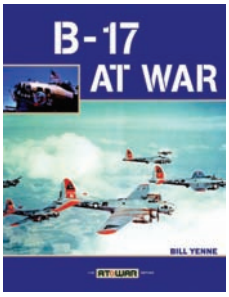
Included in *JTF* is the mechanic of heroes. Players start with one hero and by earning experience with their other men can create more. Heroes are the focus of the command rules, can learn special skills, and are the unit that can call in reinforcements and air strikes.

The current renaissance in board games includes a lot of tabletop games that model classic military conflicts in ways other than just hexes and counters. One of these games is *Commands and Colors: Ancients*, which lets players fight 13 different battle from 3000 BC to 400 AD using a basic map with terrain overlays to change it from battle to battle, labeled wooden blocks for units, 60 "command" cards, two player aid cards, and 7 "battle" dice.



The scale of *C&C:A* varies with each battle. In the oldest battles a unit can represent a few men, while in later battles a counter might stand for a whole legion. Fog and fortunes of war are handled by the command cards, while the actual resolution of clashes turns on the dice. The game mechanics are simple, but they reward the same things that more complex systems do: knowing the capabilities of the troops, using terrain to advantage, and being able to adapt to the battle as it happens. □





a forgotten corner of a wilderness lake by Benedict Arnold's navy."

The Bonus Army: An American Epic by Paul Dickson and Thomas B. Allen, Walker and Co., New York, 2005, 370 pp.., illustrations, notes, index.

John Henry Bartlett, former governor of New Hampshire and postmaster general of the United States, saw "a force of Cavalry with sabers glistening, making the ominous click of iron feet on the pavement, which sounded so much like war." This was not the memory of a veteran of any foreign conflict, but rather the firsthand observation of an individual witnessing American troops preparing themselves to attack other Americans—World War I veterans who had arrived in Washington, D.C., to demand the bonus promised to them by the government.

Authors Paul Dickson and Thomas B. Allen have done a marvelous job in researching and telling one of the most embarrassing and forgotten moments in American history. Veterans who had fought in the Great War had been guaranteed a bonus for their service. The stipend, however, was not payable until 1945. With the country wallowing in the Great Depression, many of these men were unemployed and wanted their cash then and there.

By the summer of 1932, thousands had descended on the nation's capital and established makeshift camps, pejoratively dubbed "Hoovervilles" after President Herbert Hoover, to peacefully petition Congress for their money. On July 28, 1932, frightened by erroneous reports that the crowd of veterans was composed mainly of Communist sympathizers, Hoover unleashed the Army to drive the veterans out of their encampments. Donning their old uniforms, Chief of Staff General Douglas MacArthur, and future Generals Dwight D. Eisenhower and George S. Patton, led the troops into the streets.

The forced eviction soon turned into a melee. Several protestors were killed, along with a few policemen. Soldiers indiscriminately tossed tear gas canisters and, as a result, several children died. The government would later claim these unwarranted and unnecessary deaths were the result of "intestinal disorders."

In the end, the Bonus Army's march of 1932 paved the way for future marches on Washington by Americans wanting to question their government's actions on various issues. On June 12, 1944, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the GI Bill of Rights into law. Returning veterans from World War II now had the opportunity to procure low-cost loans, attend college, and purchase homes. Almost eight million veterans took advantage of this landmark legislation. They owe an extreme debt of gratitude to their predecessors, the veterans of the Bonus Army, without whose actions there would have been no GI Bill.

B-17 at War by Bill Yenne, Zenith Press, St. Paul, MN, 2006, 128 pp., photos.

The B-17, or Flying Fortress, is arguably one of the greatest bombers ever to fly during wartime. The aircraft could take extensive flak damage, arrive on target to deliver its bomb load, and still have enough spunk to return to base. Nearly 13,000 B-17s were manufactured during World War II. The aircraft was so popular that the British Royal Air Force used them as well. Even the Germans admired the well-built bomber. In fact, some 40 downed Flying Fortresses were repaired by the Nazis, repainted with German unit insignia, and flown again.

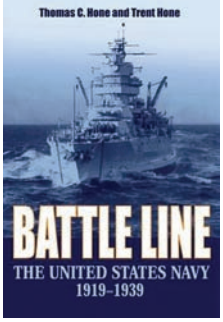
Accompanying the text are over 100 photographs depicting the B-17 in action, together with the crews and pilots who flew them in combat. By war's end, an incredible 640,000 tons of explosives were dropped over occupied Europe and German industrial centers, railroads, and supply depots. According to the author, this was "roughly half of the overall total dropped by American bombers of all types." The B-17 was indeed an outstanding workhorse for the United States and helped achieve victory in World War II.

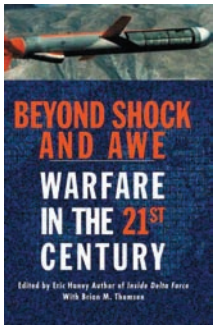
Battle Line: The United States Navy, 1919-1939 by Thomas C. Hone and Trent Hone, Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, Md., 2006, 244 pp., illustrations, notes, index.

The period between the world wars was a difficult time for the U.S. Navy. Despite this tumultuous period, however, the seagoing branch of the American military developed faster and more powerful battleships, destroyers, and cruisers. The Navy also pioneered aviation and enlarged its carrier force. In addition, it foresaw the advantages of the submarine and began to build that arm of the fleet as well.

All of this new technology was accomplished with limited funds, a small force of officers and sailors, and a shrinking fleet that had been mandated by treaties. Also, the public had the mistaken idea that a smaller navy was all that was needed to protect American interests at home and abroad. Authors Thomas and Trent Hone, a father and son writing team, have done an in-depth study of that changing period in the Navy's history. They have also uncovered never-before-published photographs of the ships of the line during those years.

The transformation from a peacetime navy to a wartime one came none too soon with America's entry into World War II. "They and their 'treaty fleet' did just what was expected of it in 1941 and 1942 and then," write the authors, "augmented by a tidal wave of weapons created and produced by the world's most



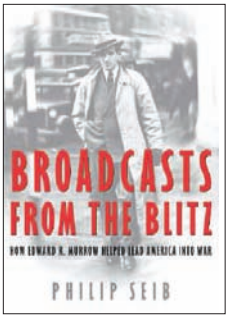


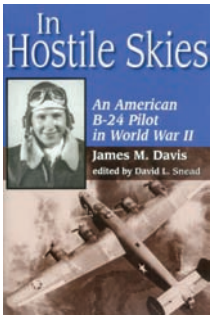
powerful economy, fought to victory in the greatest naval war in human history."

Beyond Shock and Awe: Warfare in the 21st Century, edited by Eric L. Haney with Brian M. Thomsen, Berkley Publishing Group, New York, 2006, 258 pp.

Beyond Shock and Awe is a compilation of articles written by retired military men, historians, and experts in their fields. Each chapter touches on weapons, strategy, and scenarios for future warfare in this century.

The authors contend that the "World War II method" of warfare has become outdated. The reasons are cultural, they say, a combination of "political reality"





and "technical capability" that renders that style of fighting obsolete. "America is now in a position analogous to that of the British Empire in the last quarter of the nineteenth century," they write. "We will find ourselves fighting the brush wars of the world, engaging relatively primitive opponents with a combination of superior tools and a superior warrior force."

The book offers a fascinating glimpse of what the future may hold for America's military, and the types of conflicts we could become embroiled in around the globe.

Broadcasts from the Blitz: How Edward R. Murrow Helped Lead America into War by Philip Seib, Potomac Books, Dulles, VA, 2006, 209 pp., photos.

"This is London …"

That is how Edward R. Murrow would open his broadcasts for CBS radio during his tenure in England from 1939 until 1941. Murrow was there when England declared war on Germany, and he also covered the infamous blitz by Adolf Hitler's relentless Luftwaffe. Every night, the American people listened intently as Murrow painted a "haunting image" of bombed-out buildings, jam-packed underground subways serving as bomb shelters, and the hundreds of civilian casualties Great Britain incurred at the hands of the Nazi war machine.

Murrow formed an unofficial alliance with Prime Minister Winston Churchill and President Franklin D. Roosevelt to cover the war using his graphic descriptions of the London bombings to persuade the American people to pay attention and take notice. He realized the evil intentions of the Nazis early on, and used his journalistic talents to wake up the United States and warn the American people that they might be next in Hitler's vision of world conquest.

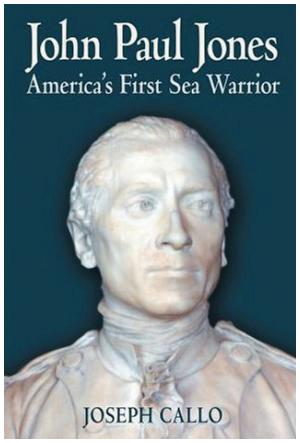
Was this proper journalism? Author Philip Seib thinks it was. He is convinced that Murrow committed no "ethical transgression." Rather, the young journalist was correct to illustrate the evils of the totalitarian regime in Germany. He "served his country well," according to Seib.

In Hostile Skies: An American B-24 Pilot in World War II by James M. Davis and edited by David L. Snead, University of North Texas Press, 2006, 226 pp., illustrations, index.

Whenever a rare memoir is uncovered, especially one that is insightful and poignant, historians are ecstatic. Such was the case with James Davis, a B-24 bomber pilot in World War II, who took the time to gather his thoughts and put them to paper. The manuscript found its way to David Snead, an assistant professor of history at Texas Tech University. The result is a wonderful book that has captured the essence of flying the B-24 Liberator in World War II on numerous bombing missions over Germany.

Thanks to Davis, the reader can fully understand the grueling training program that he and others had to successfully complete before being awarded their aviator wings. Davis subsequently flew in some of the most dangerous assignments in support of Operations Cobra and Market Garden. He flew raids over some 20 enemy cities and destroyed numerous supply depots, factories, and oil refineries. Davis gives his account a personal touch when he describes the wife he left behind to enter the service and fight for his country.

He summed up his wartime service when he wrote, "From the time I saw my first airplane I had a burning desire to fly but did not have enough hope that it would ever happen. However, while the war brought many unspeakable horrors, it provided me with new adventures, challenges, and opportunities."



John Paul Jones: America's First Sea Warrior by Joseph Callo, Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, MD, 2006, 250 pp., maps, illustrations.

John Paul Jones has been called "the father of the

American navy." Although this term may oversimplify the man, there can be no doubt of Jones's bravery and coolness under fire.

Born in Scotland, which undoubtedly had something to do with his rebellious nature, Jones took to the sea at a young age. His early years aboard British vessels forged his ability to command ships and men. When the American Revolution broke out, Jones immersed himself in the conflict. To him, liberty was essential.

In February 1779, Jones took command of the *Duc de Duras* and promptly renamed her the *Bonhomme Richard*. By the summer, along with two small frigates, a corvette, and a cutter, he sailed off the western coast of Ireland, the northern coast of Scotland, and down to the eastern shore of Scotland, seizing British merchant ships at will.

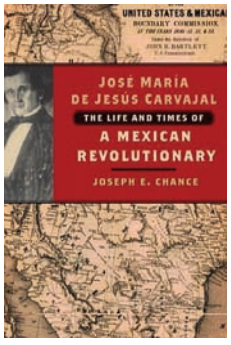
Vilified in the English press, Jones did not see these acts as those of a common pirate. To him it was revenge, pure and simple, for British atrocities perpetrated on the colonists. Also, the author points out that Jones never profited from these raids. Jones noted that he easily could have become a privateer rather than serving in the Continental Navy, where the pay was substantially less.

Although difficult to get along with, Jones's ability as a naval officer was without question. His extraordinary accomplishments against a superior force gave the American people, starving for any news of victories on land or sea, a glimmer of hope that victory was possible.

Jones's remains were returned to the United States in April 1906. It was then, 114 years after his death, that Jones received perhaps his most fitting accolade when he was called "that man who gave our Navy its earliest traditions of heroism and victory."

Jose Maria De Jesus Carvajal: The Life and Times of a Mexican Revolutionary by Joseph E. Chance, Trinity University Press, San Antonio, 283 pp., notes, index.

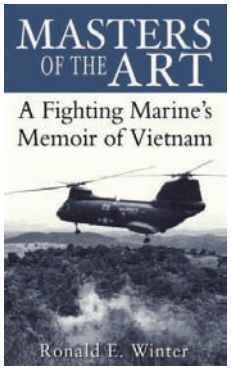
Many once-noted figures in history are forgotten, and little is known of their exploits and accomplishments. The fiery Mexican revolutionary Jose Maria De Jesus Carvajal was one such man. He wanted to go down in history and be remembered as "the George Washington of northern Mexico."

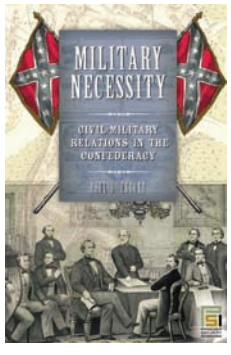


Born in San Antonio in 1809, Carvajal became interested in politics and supported the liberal cause. In 1835 he was a member of the legislature that vehemently opposed the totalitarian rule of Santa Anna. When Santa Anna's troops stopped the legislative body from meeting "at the point of a bayonet," Carvajal fled to Texas. There, he was chosen as a delegate to help write the Texas Declaration of Independence, but was notably absent when the convention was in session. Oddly enough, he chose to remain neutral throughout the fighting in 1836 and was branded a traitor and once again forced to leave his home. He eventually found his way to Louisiana.

For the remainder of his life, Carvajal fought tyranny in Mexico. He raised several armies under Benito Juarez and suffered numerous setbacks. He even traveled to the United States to raise funds for the Juarez government, receiving weapons that would aid in the defeat of the French occupation forces in Mexico.

On August 19, 1874, Carvajal passed away. Author Joseph E. Chance praises Carvajal as "a distinguished Texan and a 'true Mexican,' who spent his life in the defense of the Liberal ideals that moved Mexico from a Spanish monarchy toward an independent state ruled by the principles of representative government."





Masters of the Art: A Fighting Marine's Memoir of Vietnam by Ronald E. Winter, Presidio Press, New York, 2005, 308 pp., illustrations.

No sweeter sound could be heard by an infantryman in Vietnam than the unmistakable whomp of helicopter blades as they arrived to drop off supplies or ferry troops to and from the battlefield.

Former Marine Ron Winter gives an inspiring and gripping account of his time with one helicopter squadron in Vietnam, Helicopter Marine Medium (HMM)-161 known as the "Pineapples." Winter was a door gunner aboard the CH-46 Sea Knight chopper, one of the workhorses for the Marine Corps during that long and bitter war. He takes us from his enlistment, through boot camp, and, finally, to his unit preparing to deploy to Vietnam in 1968.

While in Vietnam, HMM-161 participated in some of the bloodiest and toughest operations of the conflict in support of the infantry. The missions resulted in the loss of Winter's fellow crew members, men he would never forget. He himself amassed an impressive record flying 300 combat missions with the Pineapples.

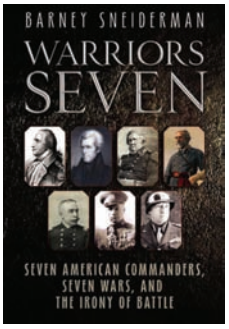
This book is a tribute not only to the casualties of HMM-161, but also to all those crewmen of other squadrons who paid the supreme price during the Vietnam War. Winter summarizes his service: "I tell my children that for a brief time in my life I walked with heroes and giants, was privileged to be included in their company, and to be called 'Marine,' using the highest definition of that word. I saw humanity in its most noble form in the most inhumane of circumstances, and I will always remember the strength, the courage, and the sacrifices I witnessed."

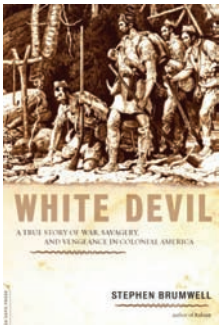
Military Necessity: Civil-Military Relations in the Confederacy by Paul D. Escott, Praeger, Westport, CT, 2006, 215 pp., photos.

The United States has always tried to maintain a balance between military and civilian leaders throughout its 230-year history. People's civil liberties are always paramount, as our forefathers demonstrated when they wrote the Constitution ensuring that these rights could not be forcibly seized by any branch of the government.

There have been times, however, when extreme measures have been put into practice that have endangered this delicate balance. One such period was the Civil War. Both North and South exercised drastic methods to maintain order, often at the expense of an individual's rights.

Paul Escott closely examines the strained relations in the Confederacy during this tumultuous era. It is ironic that a newly formed country so insistent upon state's rights at times totally ignored the civil rights of its own citizens. As the South's predicament worsened and dreams of victory dimmed, "the plea of military necessity" appeared tempting, says Escott. "Citizen's rights were soon dispensable as military leaders began "seizing resources,





conducting dragnets over the countryside, and influencing policy in ways never before imagined. The story of civil-military relations in the Confederacy is an important and instructive tale. In many ways it is also a profoundly unsettling one."

SAS Zero Hour: The Secret Origins of the Special Air Service by Tim Jones, Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, MD, 2006, 239 pp., photos, notes, index.

It has long been the contention that Major David Stirling, while convalescing from a parachute jump in North Africa in 1941, had a brainstorm that eventually became the Special Air Service (SAS), Britain's foremost Special Forces unit. However, author Tim Jones suggests otherwise in his new offering. He believes that other individuals played an important role in forging and giving direction to the fledgling unit, people such as Dudley Clarke. Clarke had assisted in establishing the Commandos, was an expert on guerrilla wars, the Arab campaign in World War I, and the struggle in Palestine.

There is little doubt that Clarke gave Stirling valuable information and assistance. Stirling may have even enlisted Orde Wingate, who served in Palestine and led a guerrilla force called the Chindits in Burma, to gather knowledge from him. Also, General Archie Wavell, who was the "driving force" in organizing a Middle Eastern paratrooper unit, which eventually evolved into Stirling's SAS outfit.

SAS Zero Hour is compelling reading for those fascinated with this highly secretive British unit.

Warriors Seven: Seven American Commanders, Seven Wars, and the Irony of Battle by Barney Sneiderman, Savas Beatie, LLC, New York, 2006, 285 pp., maps, illustrations, photos, index.

"This is a book written for history buffs by one of their own," writes author Barney Sneiderman. He has chosen seven military leaders he feels shaped American military history by their stunning victories in battles "marked by irony or a twist of fate."

Among those leaders Seiderman selects are Benedict Arnold, who performed admirably at the Battle of Saratoga in 1777; Andrew Jackson, who defeated a superior British force at New Orleans in 1815; General Winfield Scott, who followed a brilliant strategy at Mexico City in 1847; Confederate General Robert E. Lee, the consummate strategist, at Malvern Hill in 1862; the capable Admiral George Dewey at Manila Bay in 1898; Billy Mitchell, who led the "first coordinated air-land attack in military history" at St. Mihiel in 1918; and the controversial General George S. Patton at Messina, Sicily, in 1943.

The men Sneiderman has selected to write about are certainly controversial. From treason to vanity to court martial to being relieved of command, they all had their flaws. Their bravery and heroism in combat, however, can never be denied.

White Devil: A True Story of War, Savagery, and Vengeance in Colonial America by Stephen Brumwell, DaCapo Press, Cambridge, Mass, 2006, 335 pp., maps, index.

To the Abenaki Indians he was known as Wobomagonda—or the White Devil. He was hated by the French and praised by the British and the Americans. His real name was Robert Rogers, and he had established a group of woodsmen, trackers and hunters and trained them to fight the Indians on their own terms. His paramilitary group would become known as Rogers' Rangers and they would strike fear in the heart of the inhabitants of New France, which the French called Canada at that time.

During the French and Indian War, Rogers' men performed extraordinary feats in raiding the enemy deep within his own territory. Their greatest triumph came on October 4, 1759, when approximately 140 Rangers burned the Abenaki village of St. Francis and killed most of its inhabitants.

Author Stephen Brumwell points out that atrocities were committed on both sides in a bloody and often savage conflict that claimed many lives, civilian as well as military. In the end, Rogers would be accused of being a traitor to his country and would flee America and die in London in 1795—a sad end for a man who might have remained loyal to the United States and achieved even greater fame. □

lutzen

Continued from page 53

Young Guard into their first major battle. At first, the four attack columns moved forward at a slow, hesitant pace, with no look of pride or conquest in their eyes. Sensing their fear, the man who had cultivated their loyalty, obedience, and devotion like a father would his sons proclaimed, "Know that our fate is decided. If we are destined to die, perish we must. *En Avant!*" The Young Guard's martial fire began to burn. They would continue the Imperial Guards' tradition of loyalty, obedience, and devotion to emperor—or die trying. In short order, the villages of Rahna, Kelin, and Gross Görshchen were recaptured by the Young Guard, who suffered 1,069 casualties. Napoleon was so impressed by their fighting élan that he would later write with simple approval, "The Young Guard has fulfilled our expectations."

The Allied line began to crack then crumble. The men who had fought so hard and long and who had almost tasted victory were now pushed back to the Elster. They only avoided a complete rout because of the lack of French cavalry. Hostilities ended at 9 PM with a Prussian cavalry counterattack against Marmont's chasing infantry.

Napoleon boasted after the Battle of Lutzen, "I am once more master of Europe." However, his new mastery came at a cost he could ill afford. French losses in killed and wounded totaled at least 20,000. The Allies' losses were between 11,500 and 20,000. Wittgenstein had caught the vaunted Napoleon by surprise and until late afternoon was in a position to claim victory. Even when enclosed by a slowly developing pincer movement, the Allies managed to retreat in a disciplined, professional manner. Napoleon bitterly commented, "These animals have learned something."

Conversely, the Allies were confronted with the sobering fact that the French Army was not a paper lion and that Napoleon's battlefield faculties were as keen as ever. Although short of experienced soldiers and crippled by a lack of cavalry, Napoleon had won an improbable but undeniable victory. "In my young soldiers," he said, "I found all the valor of my old companion in arms. During the twenty years I have commanded French troops I have never witnessed such bravery and devotion." Napoleon's faith in his army, combined with his military genius, would mean another full year of war in Europe. As he had demonstrated convincingly at Lutzen, the old emperor still had a few more tricks up his sleeve. □

falaise gap

Continued from page 61

position, after warning his men to take cover. The barrage crushed the German attack. Around 6, two understrength companies, one from the Lincoln and Welland Regiment and the other from the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, arrived to reinforce Currie. Even with his small force of reinforcements, Currie was forced at nightfall to pull in his men for mutual protection.

While Currie hung on to St. Lambert, the Poles and Americans met at Chambois. The Falaise gap was closed, but holding it closed would prove difficult. The Canadian 3rd Division arrived in time to block the Germans' desperate breakout attempt. August 20 was a day of fierce fighting as SS troops and paratroopers fanatically attacked the pocket. The situation at St. Lambert became desperate, and Currie's small force was forced into the western part of town. Still they held out, keeping heavy fire on the swarms of Germans. The Polish forces at Maczuga north of the Trun-Chambois line fought courageously against the SS troops attempting to rush their isolated position. With forward observation officers calling down artillery fire, the remaining tanks and machine guns blazed away on the enemy and every man who could hold a rifle rushed to the front. The Poles suffered over 1,400 casualties—about a third of their fighting force. After beating back the last attack around noon on August 21, the Canadian 4th Armoured Brigade reached the Poles in mid-afternoon. On the same day Currie, whose force had taken around 2,100 prisoners and inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy, was finally relieved. For his part in the fight at St. Lambert, Currie would be awarded the Victoria Cross.

The Falaise Gap was closed. About 50,000 German soldiers were captured in the pocket, while another 10,000 were killed. Although 20,000 Germans managed to escape, much of their armor and vehicles was destroyed or left behind. The Canadian First Army had suffered almost 5,500 casualties, including 1,470 killed and 177 captured, since the beginning of Operation Totalize. Allied commander Dwight Eisenhower, touring Falaise two days after the fighting, reported that he encountered "scenes that could be described only by Dante. It was literally possible to walk for hundreds of yards at a time, stepping on nothing but dead and decaying flesh." Still, in the overall scheme of things, it was well worth it. The Germans were on the run, and they would not stop running until they reached the Rhine. □

New 2005 Bold Portrait | 2005 Bison P & D Mint | 2005 Ocean P & D Mint | 2004 Jefferson Portrait | 2004 Keelboat P & D Mint | 2004 Peace Medal P & D Mint

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