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Cover: In this iconic painting by Emanuel Leutze, General George Washington leads his small but determined Continental Army across the Delaware River to attack Hessian troops in Trenton, December 25, 1776.

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Hood's Spiteful Intentions at Franklin

ALONG WITH FIVE OTHER CONFEDERATE GENERALS of the Army of Tennessee, Maj. Gen. Patrick R. Cleburne lost his life in the futile Confederate frontal assault at the Battle of Franklin fought November 30, 1864, in central Tennessee. The attack has been referred to as the "last grand charge of the war," wrote James L. McDonough. To understand the reasons that General John Bell Hood hurled most of his 23,000 Confederates against the entrenched Union army of Maj. Gen. John Schofield, it's necessary not only to look at the tactics of the time, but also at Hood's peculiar personality.

The generals in the American Civil War who had attended military institutions had been taught the importance of using tactical flanking attacks and strategic turning movements to dislodge an enemy and inflict heavy losses on him. The frontal assault was called for if the enemy was disorganized, possessed greatly inferior numbers, and was not entrenched. The Union army had launched effective frontal attacks at Spotsylvania on May 12, 1864, and at Missionary Ridge on November 25, 1864. In those cases, the frontal attacks succeeded. But the armies at Franklin were equal in strength. What is more, the Yankees were well entrenched.

But something far more sinister than tactical ineptness was evident at Franklin. Hood was furious when his subordinates failed to cut off Schofield's retreating army at Spring Hill on November 29. Although the miscommunications that resulted in poorly executed, piecemeal attacks had enabled the Yankees to continue their strategic retreat north to rejoin Maj. Gen. George H. Thomas's Army of the Cumberland at Nashville. Hood seemed to blame everyone but himself. As the commander of the army, it ultimately was his responsibility to ensure that the attacks were launched in a timely and effective manner, which was something he failed to do.

During the march to Franklin in pursuit of the Federals, Hood resolved that to restore discipline in his officers and to instill a sense of esprit-de-corps in the rank and file it would be a good idea to launch a frontal attack against the Union position. In Hood's mind, not only would this accomplish the goal of shattering Schofield's force but also prove to his own soldiers that they were better fighters than their blue-uniformed opponents.

It was a foolhardy decision. He had shown in the fighting at Atlanta that he would gladly spend the blood of his men in a gamble to dislodge a Union army from its position. That nearly always meant that the Army of Tennessee would be bled heavily for an objective. Historians have noted that the Union position at Franklin was as strong as the Union center on Cemetery Ridge at Gettysburg. Indeed, Hood's fatal charge at Franklin is akin to other futile headlong attacks, such as the Union attacks at Fredericksburg, Virginia, on December 13, 1862, and Cold Harbor, Virginia, on June 3, 1864.

What the Battle of Franklin revealed was that Hood did have the skills necessary to properly position his troops for a successful frontal assault. He wanted to smash the Union center but failed to properly mass his troops. Of the 18 brigades at hand as dusk approached, Hood positioned only seven to strike Schofield's center.

To his credit, Maj. Gen. Patrick R. Cleburne had advised Hood not to make the attack. Based on that incident, it's easy to see who the better general was.

William E. Welsh

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Unclaimed silver bars are being handed out to those that respond by the 72 hour deadline

Unclaimed Silver Program gives the middle class a way to easily get into the silver market

■ Unclaimed Silver Program handing out silver to those that make the 72 hour deadline

Those that call the Unclaimed Silver Program claim line are entitled to claim bars of unclaimed silver bars sitting in secure vaults. The lucky few are already overwhelming phone lines and clogging the mail room with requests for unclaimed silver.

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT

The Unclaimed Silver Program is handing out .999 FINE silver bars to the public for the next 72 hours.

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There is a 72 hour deadline being enforced to ensure everyone gets their fair share of unclaimed silver.

Those claiming their share of silver bars must respond by the 72 hour deadline or forfeiture of silver may occur.

Being part of the Unclaimed Silver Program is a dream come true for those lucky enough to make the deadline and take possession of these unclaimed silver bars.

You see, silver prices are low right now and if silver goes back up in price those that claimed large quantities of silver will be very happy they did.

The Vault Operations Manager, George C. Radford stated, "*We can barely keep up with demand. People are calling in from all across the nation wanting their silver. At this rate vault inventory could run out any day now.*"

Those wanting to get unclaimed silver are encouraged to respond immediately to claim their fair share of the silver

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being handed out.

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Don't let this opportunity pass you by. While the Gallery cannot predict the future, if silver goes up dramatically and you didn't claim your fair share of silver bars imagine the regret you would feel.

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To claim your silver the Unclaimed Silver Program is asking people to call the toll free hotline at 1-800-363-1105 to stake their claim on the limited number of unclaimed silver bars. Remember, there is a 72 hour deadline so people are being encouraged to call immediately so they don't miss out on these unclaimed silver bars. □

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Must respond before the 72 hour deadline

By Phil Zimmer

The German 88mm gun, originally designed as an antiaircraft artillery weapon, was equally effective as an antitank gun.

THE NOVEMBER 21, 1944, DAYLIGHT FLIGHT OF *TEDDY'S ROUGH Riders* was anything but routine for American pilot Werner G. Göring, nephew of Nazi Reichsminister of Aviation Hermann Göring, and the other nine men on the ill-fated B-17 Flying Fortress. Before the day was over, the plane had flown some four hours eastward in an armada of 1,291 bombers to strike Leuna, a large chemical complex lying deep inside Germany. The plane suffered nearly fatal damage from fierce air defense fire from the 88mm Fliegerabwehrkanone (FlaK) and other anti-aircraft guns. As they worked their way back toward safety in England, the two port engines began smoking and had to be shut down and the two remaining engines cranked up as much as possible to keep the Fortress in the air.

Fuel was running desperately low as Göring ordered his crew to sit tight as they flew low over the icy English Channel. As they approached the base at Molesworth, the heavy Fortress was grossly underpowered and intermittently stalling. The plane had been vibrating wildly in the air, but it eventually skid to a stop after spinning in circles across a grass strip adjacent to the main runway. The crew had managed to return safely from another trip over Germany despite having suffered tremendous damage, including more than 245 holes, mostly caused by the fierce ground fire over Leuna.

Others were not so fortunate. Twenty-five of the 1,291 bombers sent out that morning never returned and another 567 were damaged, largely from antiaircraft fire. The Luftwaffe was a shadow of its former self at that point in the war, but German defense—bolstered by the 88s and larger guns—was credited with destroying 6,400 Anglo-American planes and damaging 27,000 others in 1944 alone.

The 88 earned its reputation as the best overall gun of the war. It was justifiably feared by Allied airmen, tankers, and foot soldiers because of its accuracy, lethality, and versatility. The weapon was deployed on German tanks, as an antitank gun, an assault gun, and for antiaircraft purposes.

The gun was aptly described as "anti-everything" by one infantryman. The weapon even grudgingly made it into American comics during the war with cartoonist Bill Maudlin showing character G.I. Willie angrily telling an officer, "I'll let you know when we capture the inventor of the 88."

The 88's lineage can be traced back to late 1916 when the German Army first adapted the established German naval weapon for ground warfare in World War I. Machinery for producing both the barrels and the ammunition was readily available at the production facilities of both Krupp AG and Rheinmetall. The German Kriegsmarine had adopted the gun largely because a round of 88mm ammunition was considered the largest and heaviest (about 34 pounds) that a single man could handle.

German 88mm gun in a camouflaged position on the Eastern Front. The 88mm's lineage can be traced back to late 1916 when the German Army first adapted the established German naval weapon for ground warfare in World War I.

Bundesarchiv Bild 101I-724-0135-16; Photo: Briecke

National Archives

A B-17 formation flies through a field of FlaK on a raid over southern Germany. The ubiquitous 88mm FlaK gun was deployed not only for antiaircraft purposes, but also as a tank gun, antitank gun, and assault gun.

The World War I model could fire a 9.6 kilogram high-explosive to a height of 6,850 meters, with a maximum range of 10,800 meters. Even then the Germans relied on rudimentary trailers, stabilized by folding outrigger arms on each side, pulled by tractors to give the guns a great degree of mobility. By late 1918 the Germans had even implemented rudimentary forms of centralized fire control for the weapon.

At the end of World War I, the Versailles Treaty brought stringent sanctions on the German military and industrial complex, especially on Krupp and Rheinmetall. Both firms established relationships with foreign companies, enabling research and development to continue away from the vigilant Versailles inspectors. By 1933 the first few examples of the updated 88 were in the hands of the Wehrmacht. The full-scale production of the officially designated 88mm FlaK 18 was underway by early 1936. The 18 was used in the name designation in an effort to mislead the treaty observers into believing that the design was a mere copy of the 1918 model.

In reality, the updated weapon was a dramatic step forward. Initially designed to strike down bombers, it was semi-automatic with the gun's recoil used to eject the spent cartridge case and cock the firing mechanism. The next round could be inserted by hand or with a power-assisted rammer. The highly mobile axle bogies could lower the cruciform firing platform for more stabilized firing. The barrel could be swung a full 360 degrees, and a trained gun crew could fire upward of 20 rounds per minute.

That FlaK 18 had a one-piece barrel with an expected service life of 900 rounds using cordite-type propellant and projectiles employing copper driving bands. This short barrel life would necessitate the replacement of barrels under field conditions. Rheinmetall came up with a three-piece barrel solution, enabling field technicians to simply replace the center section, which endured the most firing punishment. The use of the small sections of the inner tube eliminated what would have been severe maintenance, servicing, and field supply problems.

The introduction of the three-piece barrel, called the RA 9, did present other unforeseen difficulties. For one thing, high-priced and scarce steel needed to be used because the new barrel lacked the rigidity of the earlier one-piece construction. Closer machining tolerances also were required, which necessitated additional man hours in construction, and the heavier barrel resulted in carriage component changes in the recoil and equilibrator mechanisms. Eventually a two-section inner barrel was introduced to lessen wear and tear and decrease incidents of shell jamming.

The use of the RA 9 and the modified carriage resulted in the 88mm FlaK 36. As the war progressed, the use of such propellants as Diglycol and Gudol lessened barrel wear. The eventual replacement of copper driving bands by sintered iron bands also lessened wear compared to the more expensive and hard to find copper. These developments increased barrel life to 6,000—and in some cases to 10,000— rounds, eliminating the initial reason for the multi-barrels. But the German production lines could not be easily changed, so the Nazis continued to produce the expensive and time-consuming multi-barrels until the last year of the war when a plant in Pilsen was able to produce a monobloc barrel using a novel vertical centrifuge casting process.

The updated 88mm FlaK 37 guns added a rather sophisticated (for the time) fire-control data display unit. This antiaircraft gun initially was to be used in the defense of the homeland, although 90 FlaK 37s were sold to Finland for defense against Soviet air raids. And nearly 200 of the guns fell into Norwegian hands when the Germans departed that country.

All three models of the early 88s were 56 calibers long, meaning the barrel length was 56 times that of the 88mm caliber. The standard gun fired a 17-pound shrapnel grenade that could climb thousands of feet into the air and then burst into 1,500 or more shards that could damage or destroy any plane within 200 yards.

The antiaircraft shells had two types of fuses: those with barometric fuses set to specific altitudes and those with time-delayed fuses. No matter what triggered them, the jagged steel fragments could easily decapitate or dismember one or more members of a flight crew. The results of such an attack could be devastating even for those who survived the battering. Many became afflicted with "the clanks," a paralyzing sense of dread, and became known as "dead men flying."

In the first half of 1944 casualty rates for every 1,000 bomber crewmen serving six months in combat included 712 killed or missing and 175 wounded, for 89 percent. Barely one in four U.S. airmen completed 25 missions over Germany, and that minimum quota was raised to 30 missions then 35 after the liberation of France and Belgium.

For antiaircraft work, the FlaK 18 and 36 had a fuse-setting device on the left side with a slightly different device on the 37. The nose of the projectile was inserted into a cup at the top of the machine that would automatically set the fuse based on information from the target data transmission. Once set, the projectile was forced out of the device for loading. Later in the war, some FlaK 37 guns had the fuse setter located on the loading tray, speeding up the process; and, if necessary, time fuses could be set by hand with a special key by a member of the gun's 11-man crew.

The figures for the 88 vary a bit for the first three models, considering the specific model and the training of the crew. It could fire 15 to 20 rounds per minute, and even with a diminished six-man crew, the gun could be put into action within 2½ minutes. The same small crew could prepare the gun for movement within 3½ min-

Bundesarchiv Bild 101I-413-1693-27A; Photo: Meyer

An 88mm gun on the Eastern Front in 1941. A 1944 German ordnance listing included 19 different types of rounds: eight high explosive (HE), seven armor piercing (AP), and four kinetic energy.

utes. The maximum range was 14,860 meters and the maximum vertical range was given at 10,600 meters.

As the gun's use expanded to other roles so did the different types of rounds employed by the Nazis. A 1944 German ordnance listing includes 19 different rounds. That includes eight types of high-explosive (HE) rounds and seven armor-piercing (AP), with the rest being kinetic-energy solid projectiles. The HE rounds employed two types of fuses. When used in an antiaircraft capacity, clockwork time fuses were employed. By the end of the war, a percussion element was added to the clockwork fuse mechanism. For use against ground targets, either type of fuse was used, with the clockwork mechanism able to produce deadly airbursts over Allied positions.

The AP rounds also proved deadly effective. Once the projectile penetrated the target, a small bursting charge was ignited by a delayed percussion fuse that had a tracer element in its base. The tracer aided the gunner and the delayed fused helped create mayhem inside the target. Not fully satisfied with that, the Germans went on to produce the AP40 rounds for use with antitank and tank guns. These used tungsten carbide penetrator slugs minus a bursting charge that carried more energy for their weight and size. Fortunately for the Allies, use of the AP40 rounds was restricted by the limited supply of tungsten carbide.

The basic AP round used chemical energy rather than kinetic energy. The round used the hollow-charge principle to penetrate armor with an exceptionally high temperature jet formation that burned its way into the target. Most of these rounds were largely used by the feared Tiger I tank.

The Germans developed the Sd Kfz 7, a semi-tracked vehicle, to haul the 88s on their Sonderanhanger 201 trailers. This specially designed vehicle was basically an artillery tractor, with tracks on the back and traditional tires on the front steering axel. The tracks provided cross-country mobility, contributing greatly to the usefulness of the 88, especially on the poor roads of the Eastern Front that were often no more than muddy paths.

The Germans were so impressed with the 88 that as early as 1936 plans were afoot to mount the weapon on a tank that eventually became the Tiger I.

While the ballistics of the 88 KwK 36 tank gun and antiaircraft guns were identical, the tank gun had a one-piece barrel and a thin jacket. Like other German tank guns, the breech block used a vertical sliding action in place of the horizontal sliding block used on the antiaircraft guns. The recoil mechanism was different and there was a double-baffle muzzle brake to lessen stress on the vehicle.

The trigger on the tank was repositioned from the breech block to the gunner's elevated hand wheel. The heavy and well-armored turret was slow moving, adding to the tank's ponderous reputation. The rounds were the same as used on the FlaK 18-37 series of antiaircraft guns, except for the use of the electrical primers that relied on a 12-volt vehicle battery. Some 92 rounds could be carried around and under the turret, although crews often did manage to store additional rounds.

The accuracy and distance of the Tiger I's 88 gun often resulted in a "one shot, one kill" ratio for the Germans against Allied tanks and their crews.

The size and the weight of the 63-ton Tiger, coupled with its somewhat underpowered V-12, 700 horsepower Mayback engine hindered mobility and usefulness on the battlefield, despite its fearsome gun.

The Germans also used the 88 as a self-propelled gun. That further improved its mobility and increased its usefulness for close-in support for ground troops. This resulted in the Selbstfahrlafette with armor protecting the engine and driver. Six of these tank hunters were used successfully in the battle for France. However, the vehicle proved top heavy and provided very little space for the crew to operate the gun. There was limited movement in the gun, little space for carrying ammunition, and no provision for outriggers to stabilize the gun when firing. These were succeeded by the Zugkraftwagen 18t, a larger, more powerful and more heavily armored vehicle that could travel at 40 kilometers per hour. The gun on that vehicle could be elevated and swung 360 degrees for anti-aircraft use. It came with outrigger legs and a more accommodating firing platform for the crew.

Initial plans called for 112 units, but only 14 were produced by June 1943 when production ceased when other programs were given greater priority.

As Germany's military prospects continued to diminish, additional prototypes appeared, included one mounted on a converted bus chassis. The few that were actually produced were rushed to the Eastern Front in an effort to slow the advancing Red Army.

The 88 also was mounted on railway cars and used there in antiaircraft roles. In some cases, full railway batteries were positioned in the railroad yards. The Germans also mounted the guns on the Siebel Ferry, a shallow draught, twin-hulled craft. These floating gun platform-ferry combinations proved quite effective and were used in the successful evacuation of two German divisions and all their equipment from Sicily.

Developments continued on the basic FlaK gun, resulting in the emergence of the 88 FlaK 41 that first saw real action in late 1943 in Tunisia. The barrel had been lengthened to the point that it had five main components. The multi-segment barrel initially presented difficulties similar to early multi-barrels. The gun proved to be a significant improvement on earlier models, despite its complexity and high cost of production. The number of barrel segments was first reduced to four and then to three in an effort to reduce jamming. The gun's maximum ceiling was 19,800 meters from 10,600 meters.

The 88 FlaK 41used an 858mm long cartridge, significantly longer than the cartridge used by its predecessors. The FlaK 41 was used primarily for air defense in the West, so its anti-

Bundesarchiv Bild 146-1975-102-14A; Photo: Hamann

The German Tiger II tank with a deadly 88 PaK 43 cannon could carry on board 40 HE and 40 AP rounds.

armor use was limited. The Germans found that it could outperform the older but larger caliber 10.5cm FlaK 38 and 39 heavy antiaircraft guns.

The Germans also designed an 88 PaK 43 as a dedicated antitank weapon, with the first ones coming off the production lines by the end of 1943. It soon became widely recognized as perhaps the best all around antitank gun of the war. It could easily provide firepower in a full 360-degree traverse and it could penetrate the frontal armor of any Allied tank on the field. The gun's distinctive, heavily sloping front armor could deflect most oncoming rounds. The barrel was produced in two segments and the breech was semi-automatic. The gun's maximum possible range was 15,150 meters, enabling it to be used as a supporting field gun in addition to its antitank role.

The 88 PaK 43 was modified and placed on the Tiger II tank. This feared tank was designed to hold 40 HE and 40 AP rounds, and it first saw action in early 1944 on the Eastern Front. The Tiger II weighed in at nearly 69 tons—substantially heavier than its predecessor—yet it was still powered by the same Maybach engine, causing concern among the German military because of the Tiger II's lack of speed, mobility, and exceptionally high fuel consumption. Because of those limitations, toward the end of the war it was used more in a defensive role.

The PaK 43 also was employed as a self-propelled gun in a number of forms, including the Nashorn (Rhinoceros) and the Ferdinand. The latter was rushed into service for the Battle of Kursk in 1943 where 89 were reportedly used. The Ferdinands destroyed some 200 Soviet tanks, according to some reports, despite initial design flaws. The survivors of the fierce Kursk fighting were extensively rebuilt and were rebranded as the Elefant.

The PaK 43 was also placed on the Panzerjager Panther—or Jagdpanther—a fast-moving tank killer. It weighed in at 46 tons, could store up to 60 rounds, and could travel at speeds of 48 kilometers per hour. Fewer than the 425 units produced were actually delivered, but the Jagdpanther was pressed into action on all fronts where it earned the grudging respect of the Allies.

Interestingly, both Britain and the United States had guns with somewhat similar antiaircraft capabilities as the 88 FlaK. Both the British 94mm and the American 90mm could fire higher and loft larger projectiles. On paper they could outperform the German gun, many contend. Both weapons, though, were bulkier and heavier. The Allies restricted those guns to their initial antiaircraft roles, while the Germans expanded the 88's role to antitank and against fortified ground positions. This, in turn, led to other advances in terms of power rammers, fuse-setting devices, and improved ammunition-handling systems—-all of which made the weapon far more versatile and effective.

The German's flexible and innovative approach to the initial 88 FlaK permitted them to learn and adapt as the war progressed, improving the antiaircraft fire capabilities of the weapon and they successfully modified it for tank, antitank, and related ground roles. This contributed greatly to the 88's lasting reputation as the legendary large gun of World War II. □

By Peter L. Boorn

Narses the Eunuch restored Byzantine control of central Italy and in the process proved to be one of the greatest generals of Late Antiquity.

Byzantine forces led by Narses (above) won a decisive victory over the Ostrogoths at the Battle of Vesuvius in 553. The resourceful septuagenarian proved an able statesman and general.

ON JANUARY 18, AD 532, A 54-YEAR-OLD EUNUCH BY THE NAME of Narses, described by Agathias, a contemporary chronicler, as "small in stature and of abnormal thinness," entered alone into the Hippodrome of Constantinople carrying a bag of gold. The seating capacity of the Hippodrome was 60,000, and on this occasion there was standing room only, so there were probably 100,000 agitated spectators. For these were the fans of the Green and the Blue chariot racing factions who, united in a display of sports hooliganism that dwarfs any of modern times, had in the previous five days and five nights rioted throughout the city, entrapping the Emperor Justinian and his court in a tiny and vulnerable enclave.

His mission approved by the emperor, Narses approached the leaders of the Blues and with honeyed words backed by the gold re-ignited their hatred of the Greens. The Blues streamed out of the arena leaving the astonished Greens to be slaughtered by the guards of the Imperial generals, Belisarius and Mundas. The historian Procopius estimates that 30,000 people fell, and the insurrection was crushed. Thus Narses burst onto the stage of Roman history as the one who broke the back of the Nika riots and saved his master's throne.

Six months after the quelling of the riots, Justinian began the first phase of his grand plan to restore the fallen Western Roman Empire by sending Belisarius to conquer the Vandal kingdom of North Africa. The campaign was a complete success and Africa was restored. In June of 536, Belisarius led an invasion of Italy that proved to be a long, hard slog, so much so that in June 538, Justinian sent reinforcements to Belisarius in the form of 7,000, mostly barbarian troops motivated largely by the prospect of loot. The reinforcing army was commanded by a most unlikely general: Narses the eunuch.

AKG Images

Narses was by then 60 years of age and had demonstrated his ability to navigate the intrigues of the court and his loyalty to his monarch. As a eunuch, he was not a candidate to wear the purple, whereas Belisarius at 33, a great general with a conquering army more beholden to its leader than to its emperor, would have been regarded with suspicion from within the distant walls of the city of Constantine.

The probable year of the birth of Narses is 478; the Byzantine sources state only that he was of Persarmenian origin and are mute regarding his background. Agathias further sketches Narses as a man of sound mind and ready wit, also offering a psychological insight, stating that he was "stronger and more high-spirited than would have been believed."

Belisarius and Narses together raised the siege of Arminium (Rimini), although soon afterward the conqueror of Africa recognized that he might advise but could not command the middle-aged eunuch. During the fall and winter of 538/539, the Imperial army was, in effect, two separate armies, cooperating but not unified and this led directly to the fall

of Mediolanum (Milan). Belisarius reported the disaster back to Justinian as the inevitable result of a divided command. As a result, Narses was recalled.

Belisarius, who had been shunted from Italy to the Persian front in 541, was again given the Italian command in 544. He spent the next five years struggling against a new Gothic king, Totila. Justinian did not give sufficient support to Belisarius. Although Belisarius captured Rome, he could not complete the Italian conquest. Recalled in 549, he retired two years later.

Meanwhile, within the civilian ranks of Byzantium, Narses had reached the pinnacle of his profession, eventually becoming the Grand Chamberlain of the Court. That position gave Narses exclusive access to the emperor. Nor had he been completely idle in the military sphere. In 545, while on a diplomatic mission to the East Germanic tribe known as the Heruli, he had led that tribe in routing a large barbarian raiding party crossing into Thrace. After Justinian recalled Belisarius in 549, he tried four other generals, one after the other, to war against Totila. In 551, he appointed 73-year-old Narses supreme commander in Italy.

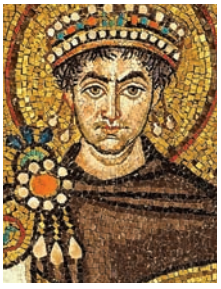
Narses had witnessed the fate of generals sent from their emperor's city with a paucity of men that were paid erratically or not at all, and he refused the supreme command unless he was granted a force adequate to the undertaking and paid in a timely manner. His reputation for generosity attracted thousands to his banner.

Together with a backbone of regular Imperial troops, Narses recruited 3,000 Heruli cavalry, 2,000 Huns, 4,000 Persian deserters, and 2,500 Lombards. Altogether, his army probably numbered 30,000.

This great army set out from Constantinople in June 551, reached the seaport of Salona in the autumn of that year. Thereafter it hugged the Adriatic and rounding it to arrive at Ravenna in late May or early June 552, having traversed more than 1,100 miles. Teias, Totila's principal lieutenant, had been dispatched to employ delaying tactics such as destroying bridges and breaching dykes against the polyglot host during the last phase of the march.

Nine brief days after entering Ravenna, Narses moved with unexpected speed over the still serviceable roads of Italy to close with his adversary. He took one of three possible routes to outmaneuver Totila, whose forces held the almost impregnable Petra Pertusa, "the tunnel of rock," on the Via Flaminia. In late June or early July 552 he met the the Ostrogothic army on the field of Taginae.

Both: Wikimedia Commons



Byzantine Emperor Justinian I (left) and Ostrogoth King Totila.

Totila commanded about 15,000 to Narses' 25,000. The Gothic total included the 2,000 troops Teias had led on a forced march to reinforce Totila just before the battle's beginning.

Even though he had the superior numbers, Narses drew up his soldiers in a strong defensive position in the open valley above Gualdo Tadino. Beginning about five miles north of the town there is a roughly left-leaning flat rectangular area about 3½ miles wide and about 10 miles deep, with hills rising steeply at its eastern boundary and a lesser range of hills to the west.

Narses placed dismounted cavalry, amounting to 8,000 men, at the center of the plain, and on each flank he positioned 4,000 foot archers covering a roughly two-mile front. On either wing of this phalanx, Narses placed his heavily armored cavalry, amounting to a total of about 7,000 men, equally distributed on left and right.

Totila initially mirrored his opponent's order of battle, placing infantry at his center and his archers and cavalry on his wings. The facing fronts of the two armies, with their respective jumping-off points, would have been dictated in part by the effective 250-yard range of the composite bow, in use by both sides.

Procopius tells of a small steep hill on the extreme left of the Byzantine position rising out of the valley and separated from the range of hills beyond. The night before the battle, Narses had the foresight to seize the natural redoubt and place 50 infantrymen atop its tiny crest. In addition, he placed two detachments of cavalry behind the hill. One of the attachments numbered 1,000 horsemen and the other 500 horsemen.

When Totila became aware of Narses' occupying the hill, he sent several squadrons of cavalry, one after the other, to dislodge the Byzantines. They were all beaten off. By mid-afternoon, the Goths had abandoned their cavalry attacks.

At this, Totila rode along his battle line exhorting his troops to be bold. Narses made the same ride, but he did so silently, indicating the enemy and holding up golden necklaces and bracelets to excite the looting instinct of his soldiers, according to Procopius.

At that point, Totila tried a ruse. Surmising that Narses' unmounted cavalry could not advance quickly, Totila withdrew his army from the field, ostensibly to seek refreshments. Seeing this, the prudent eunuch would have reckoned that either the Goths were declining battle for the day or were trying to lure the Byzantines into retiring so that a surprise attack could be launched against them. It was midsummer, with several hours of daylight left, so Narses had his troops take their repast in the ranks, fully armed.

When the Gothic army returned to its ranks, Totila had placed his entire cavalry, more than 50 percent of his total force, in a single line in the center. The cavalry was backed by infantry and archers in a second line. Totila had therefore taken the bait offered by Narses, targeting the unnatural infantry at the Byzantine center.

Viewing the new tactics, Narses made a slight adjustment to his own position, moving his flanking archers slightly forward and then wheeling them to face inward so that his final position resembled the shallow arc of a circle.

The Goths gambled all on one tactic. Their cavalry charged with "reckless impetuosity," according to Procopius, but the charge was checked by the supposedly unreliable troops at Narses' center and galled by arrows from its wings. They reformed and charged again. Throughout the afternoon they charged the Byzantine phalanx. Each time they did so with less effect on the enemy and with mounting casualties of their own.

In an astonishing lapse of generalship, Totila failed to advance his own infantry to neutralize the archers of Narses. The Gothic king was seriously wounded on the first great charge and lost control of the battle, according to Procopius. The demoralized cavalry were pressed back upon their own disheartened infantry, which in turn joined the general retreat.

In the encroaching darkness, the retreat degenerated into a rout when Narses ordered his own cavalry to charge. Of the 15,000 Goths engaged, 6,000 perished and an unknown number were taken prisoner. Their mortally wounded king, Totila, was carried by retainers about nine miles to the village of Caprea, just west of the Via Flaminia, where he expired and was hastily buried.

Narses' innovative tactics of combining dismounted cavalry armed with pikes supported by infantry equipped with bows, culminating in a decisive charge of cavalry led to Gothic annihilation. And true to his modest nature, the victorious eunuch attributed the stunning

victory to God.

The remnants of the Goths escaped the field under their newly anointed king, Teias, while Narses marched swiftly to Rome, which after a brief siege, he captured.

The main treasure of the Goths, which was the equivalent of a modern state's gold reserves, was situated in the fortified town of Cumae (Cuma) on the northwestern tip of the Bay of Naples. The strategy of both Narses and Teias was for one to attempt to seize and the other to defend that treasure. To this end, Narses sent one detachment of his army to besiege the town while several other detachments watched the Teias' movements.

By taking different routes, Teias eluded Narses' subordinates and marched to Cumae, where, owing to good intelligence, Narses was able to concentrate his entire army to block the Goths before Teias reached that still besieged town, and confronted the barbarian across the river Draco. At that place the two unequal armies skirmished for two months, the smaller army being supplied by a Gothic fleet in the bay. The fleet was overcome by innumerable Imperial ships, and Teias was obliged to retreat to the shelter of Mons Lactarius, which provided no forage opportunities to the Goths. Starvation threatening, the Goths, about 7,000 in number, fought a desperate two-day battle with an Imperial force more than twice its size and were destroyed, their king slain in a glorious death.

It took the eunuch a year to reduce the fortress of Cumae and, before its capitulation, Narses had to delegate his command and hurry northward toward the Po to meet an enormous new threat.

The vast Kingdom of the Franks abutted Italy. In 553 it was ruled by a sickly 21-year-old, Theobald, who had come under the influence of two Alalamanni tribal chieftans from the German parts of his domain. These two, Buccelin and Leutharis, persuaded the feeble king to let them lead an army composed of Franks and Alamanni into Italy, ostensibly to revive the waning fortunes of the Goths, but in reality to lay hold of that country for themselves. They were supremely contemptuous of Narses, whom they regarded as "a delicate and womanish thing ... a mere shadow of a man," according to Agathias.

To back up their opinion of the diminutive eunuch, they came at the head of an army numbering 75,000 warriors. Narses' strategic situation became at once extremely precarious. Despite their two great battlefield defeats, the Goths were still in control of fortified towns in large swaths of territory scattered throughout Italy. In its contest with the Goths, the army of Byzantium had been reduced in number by the iron law of attrition through death, illness, and desertion. In addition, Narses had seen fit to dismiss his most dangerous and unruly associates, his 2,500 Lombards. If his total forces at the time of Taginae numbered 30,000, then his army was surely under 20,000.

Narses bent to the storm, adopted a Fabian strategy, restrained his own troops within fortified places, and took the largest part to Rome. He patiently endured the horror of the barbarians waiting for the right opportunity to attack.

In the spring of the second year of the invasion, as the barbarian army plundered its way southward into central Italy, its two leaders committed a blunder born of overconfidence: they divided their great host. The larger part, the right wing under Buccelin, bypassed Rome and marched down the west coast to the very toe of Italy, while the smaller left wing under Leutharis moved down the Adriatic to its heel. Leutharis then turned homeward with his considerable booty, avoiding risking a fight with Narses. A 3,000-strong contingent of the Imperial army ambushed him at Fano. He suffered substantial losses among his warriors and lost the greater part of his stolen treasure. He succeeded in scampering beyond the Po, where a plague broke out that further decimated his ranks and dispatched Leutharis himself.

Meanwhile, in southern Italy, Buccelin's army was also suffering. Narses had adopted a policy of wasting the countryside and burning crops, and Buccelin's troops were forced to feed themselves on raw grapes or raisins. The result was an outbreak of dysentery. Buccelin took his diminishing army northward to meet Narses before it became fatally weakened.

The redoubtable eunuch did not refuse the challenge. Leading an army of perhaps 18,000, he marched from Rome to the field of Casilinum (Capua), where his adversary had set up a fortified camp.

As at Mons Lactarius, Narses cut off Buccelin's foraging parties, harried his stragglers, and drove in his foe with the result that Buccelin, like Totila and Teias before him, was frustrated into attacking first.

Narses had drawn up his battle line with his heavy infantrymen in the center. These were picked troops, the Antesignani, helmeted, bodies covered in chain mail, and armed with stout spears. In their rear were archers and slingers. On each of the wings he placed the larger portion of his forces, armored cavalry replete with bows, javelins, and lances.

Against this balanced force the barbarians were almost all infantrymen, armored with only their shields and using axes and spears. The barbarians began the battle with a ferocious charge.

Ostrogoths trek to a new homeland in a 19th-century woodcut. After defeating the Ostrogoths in 553, the following year Narses won a great victory over a Frankish-Alemannic army at Volturnus in southern Italy.

Narses' infantry was pushed back, but the line held and the Byzantine cavalry wheeled in on its enemy's flanks, shooting its arrows while remaining beyond the range of axe and spear. This rain of arrows apparently went on for several hours until at last the barbarians began to lose heart and slip away to the rear.

At this, Narses ordered a general charge. The result was a massacre of staggering proportions. Agathias claims that only five barbarians survived the battle and Narses' losses were only 80.

The Imperial army returned to Rome, and Narses resurrected that ancient city's ritual of victory: the Triumph. It was the first held in 150 years and the last the city ever saw.

For a further 12 years, the incredible Narses administered the Italian peninsula, establishing laws, rebuilding the cities, renewing the cultivation of the fields. Although civil considerations were paramount during these dozen years, Narses still had to reduce several Gothic towns and fortresses while the Franks still menaced, and sometimes cooperated, with the Goths. It was not until 562 that he took the last two Gothic strongholds, Brixia and Verona and completely wiped out the Gothic nation.

In 565, the old warrior took to the saddle again and, at age 87, crushed the Heruli who had rebelled against him. In November of that same year, Justinian, his emperor and mentor, died at the age of 83.

Almost at once, a deputation of disaffected Roman nobles, belching ingratitude, complained to the new emperor, Justin II, about his extorting governor. Narses subsequently was recalled to Constantinople in 567, but he never actually reached that city.

Although the date of his death is disputed, Narses probably died in April 568, for in that month the entire Lombard nation, which was composed of similar individuals who had been so ferocious and unruly when allied with him at Taginae, invaded Italy. They numbered 200,000 and proved fatal to the Italy restored by Justinian.

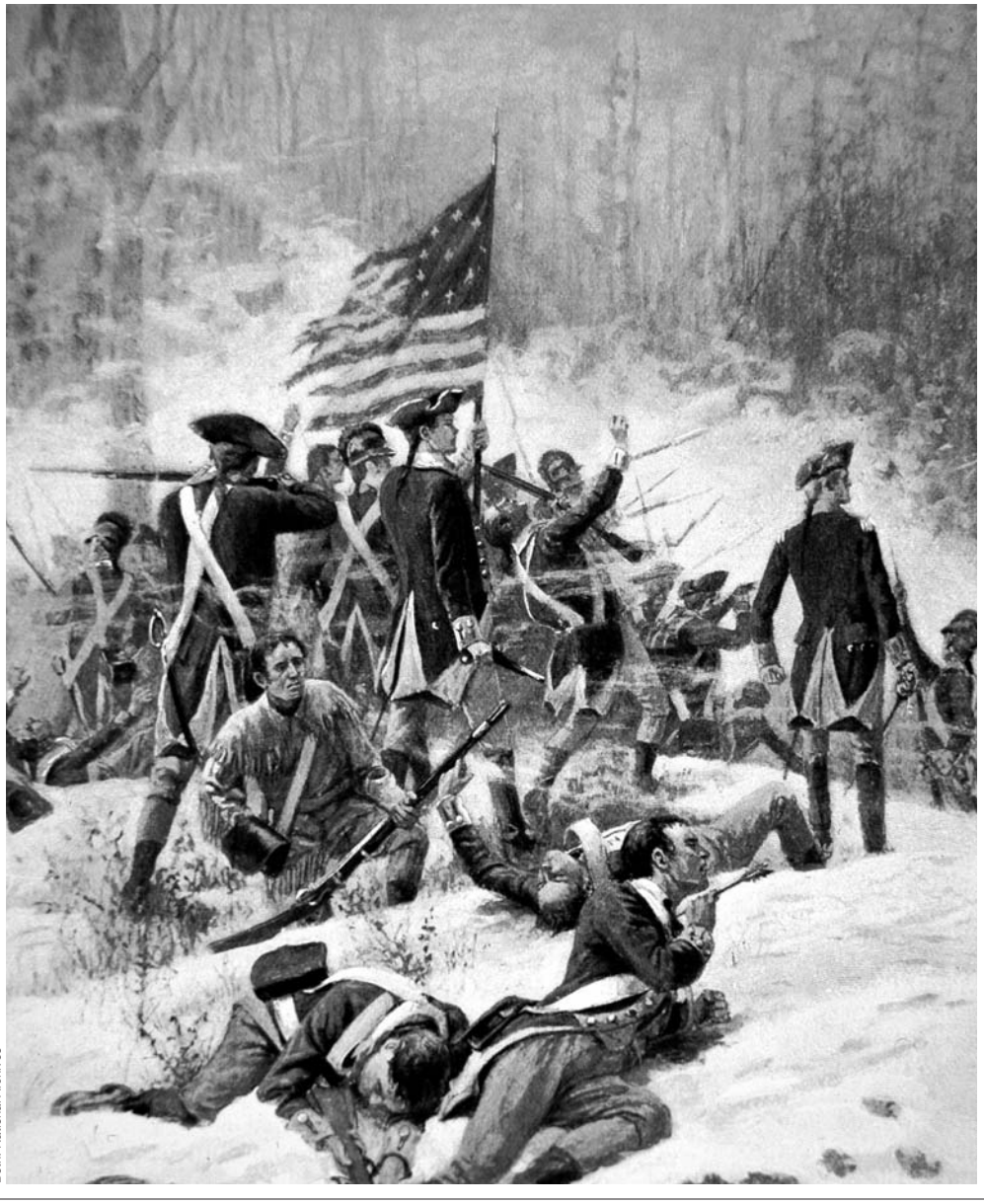
They would have heard of the recall of the great eunuch general in late 567 and might have even planned their invasion. But knowing the reputation of Narses, they would have waited to have received the news of his passing before risking a crossing into Italy, such was the respect they had for the castrated man who had attained the age of 90 years. □

By Joshua Shepherd

William Wells had a knack for gathering intelligence that made him indispensable to the U.S. military during the early years of the republic.

American soldiers fight Miami Indians, some of whom were led by Indian scout William Wells (right), in the Battle of Kekionga fought October 22, 1790.

LONG BEFORE HE ATTAINED FAME AS THE CO-COMMANDER OF THE Lewis and Clark expedition, William Clark was a discontented young lieutenant assigned to the U.S. Army's 4th Sub-Legion. In the summer of 1794 Clark was engaged in his first campaign, a punitive expedition deep in the Northwest Territory, but was less than sanguine over the Army's prospects. Indian forces had beaten



Both: National Archives

the U.S. Army in the mystifying wilderness of the Ohio country twice before in 1790 and 1791. Clark, unsettled by what he considered the high command's lethargic leadership, feared a reprise of such catastrophic defeat.

But on August 12, his spirits rallied. Clark's journal entry for that day was full of effusive praise for the Army's chief scout, an enigmatic frontiersman who was proving adept at wreaking havoc on the Indians. "Wells the Spie," wrote Clark, returned to camp exhausted, bloodied, and leading a party of scouts that had ventured 50 miles behind enemy lines. More importantly, William Wells had brought back invaluable intelligence that would help shape American strategic planning. "This enterprising young man," wrote Clark, had brazenly entered the enemy's camp and suc-

cessfully brought off two prisoners "from whome we learn the Situation and intention of the Enemey."

On the perilously shifting borderlands of the early frontier, Wells was destined to become a living legend. Born in Pennsylvania and raised in Kentucky, young Wells' frontier childhood was less than idyllic. By the age of 11 his mother had succumbed to sickness and his father was killed during a 1781 Indian ambush. Wells was cared for by family friends, but his tumultuous adolescence was far from over. In March 1784, Wells and three companions were abruptly surrounded by a party of Indians and taken captive. Although his friends eventually escaped, Wells was spirited into the heart of the Northwest Territory and taken to the Miami villages situated on the Eel River.

Wells readily acclimated to life with the tribes and was known as Apekonit, or Wild Carrot, a wry moniker given on account of his red hair. Eventually adopted by Gaviahatte, a prominent Miami chieftain, Wells was immersed in the warrior ethos of tribal culture and by his late teens was a willing participant in raiding parties that struck along the Ohio River. According to tradition, his exploits as a fighter garnered him a more fearsome name: Blacksnake.

His reputation as a warrior, paired with a fluency in English, ensured that Wells would become nearly invaluable on a violent frontier. He quickly earned the esteem of Little Turtle, war chief of the Miami and standard bearer of the hostile tribes of the Northwest Territory. The pair forged a lifelong bond; Wells served as a translator to the chief, married his daughter, and became a trusted counselor. By the late 1780s, his services as an interpreter brought him to the attention of American authorities, and his white family was informed of his whereabouts. His older brothers Carty and Samuel met with William but failed to convince him to return to Kentucky.

Such painful choices would prove to be Wells' unfortunate lot. In fall 1790, an American expedition under the command of Brig. Gen. Josiah Harmar targeted the principal Miami town of Kekionga, and on October 19 a strong detachment menaced Little Turtle's village. Ambushed by warriors led by the war chief, the Americans fled in confusion. Three days later, a larger American column blundered badly at Kekionga and was nearly wrecked in a sharp fight that left Little Turtle master of the ground.

The following year would find a vengeful William Wells fully committed to the fight against the Americans. On August 8, 1791, a diversionary raid mounted by Kentucky militia made a sweep along the Eel River, striking Wells' home of Snake Fish Town. The bulk of the village's warriors, including Wells, were absent, and the militia easily overran the settlement. The Kentuckians rounded up women and children who could be used as bargaining chips during negotiations with the tribes, and among the captives were one of Wells' Indian wives and small child. Though a minor tactical success, the raid strategically backfired, further strengthening the position of the hostile faction among the natives.

Library of Congress

At Fallen Timbers American troops shattered the Northwest Indian Confederacy on August 20, 1794. Following the conclusion of the Northwest Indian War, Wells was appointed to serve in the prosperous capacity of Indian agent in Fort Wayne.

Shaken by the embarrassing Harmar debacle of the previous year, Congress authorized another expedition to be led by Maj. Gen. Arthur St. Clair. His grand plans would degenerate to utter disaster. Severe manpower shortages, unusually harsh weather, and frustrating supply shortfalls all served to demoralize an untrained rabble of volunteers. A complete lack of an effective intelligence network also crippled the American army as it groped its way north. By the evening of November 3, 1791, a befuddled St. Clair was certain that he was within 15 miles of his objective. But he actually was 60 miles from Kekionga. Worse yet, the woeful lack of intelligence deprived the general of a most crucial bit of information: Several miles to the north, more than 1,000 warriors were closing on the American position.

The Indians attacked St. Clair's unprepared army at dawn the following day. To counter American superiority in firepower, Little Turtle placed a contingent of warriors under the command of William Wells, who was assigned the vital task of silencing the enemy artillery. The American gun crews suffered especially heavy casualties in the ensuing fight, and all but one artillery officer was killed. After three hours of savage fighting, St. Clair pulled out the battered remnants of his army. The battle constituted America's most devastating defeat during the Indian wars. Approximately 630 men were killed and 280 wounded in the encounter. Wells later admitted that "he killed and scalped that day until he could not raise his arms to his head."

In the spring of 1792, Wells was involved in negotiations to secure the release of Indian captives taken the previous summer, and he again met with his older brother Samuel, who had ironically been a company commander at St. Clair's defeat. The elder brother persuaded William to visit his family in Louisville and, while there, Wells made the abrupt decision to return to civilization. Although he had spent the bulk of his formative years with the Miami, Wells later confessed that he had never been able

Library of Congress

Governor William Henry Harrison won a narrow victory over Tecumseh's Confederacy at the Battle of Tippecanoe in November 7, 1811. Wells went to great lengths to inform the U.S. War Department of the serious threat that Shawnee leader Tecumseh and his brother the Prophet posed to the nation's security.

to forget the pleasures of his childhood. He also hoped to secure a stable future for his family living in white society. Wells believed that he not only could earn a decent living but also make enough to tide him over during old age.

For a man destined to play the deadly game of frontier intelligence, old age was a remote likelihood. Wells, who was intimately acquainted with Indian culture and conversant in several languages, abruptly found himself in high demand to the American war machine. For the sum of $300, Federal authorities secured the services of Wells, who was tasked with transmitting messages and gathering intelligence in the Indian camps. Although Wells did not openly espouse the American cause, his increased contact with the Americans brought him under mounting suspicion. "He was suspected by many of the chiefs to be a spy, and frequently in danger of losing his life," wrote Major John Hamtramck.

Exasperated by the bloody stalemate in the Northwest, President George Washington selected a new army commander, Maj. Gen. "Mad" Anthony Wayne, to subdue the Indians once and for all. Though an impetuous field commander, Wayne was a methodical planner who possessed a keen eye for detail. He undertook the complete reorganization of the army, which he christened the Legion of the United States, and organized a functioning intelligence network, the lack of which had gravely crippled his predecessors. The general incorporated three scouting companies to gather intelligence on enemy dispositions and seize prisoners for interrogation.

Seeing in Wells a latent talent for such clandestine work, Wayne gave him command of one of the scout companies. The general, who relied heavily on Wells as his chief intelligence gatherer, routinely assigned the most difficult missions to Wells' company, and for good reason. To fill out the ranks of his detachment, Wells chose only the best, selecting an experienced set of frontiersmen who could beat the Indians at their own game. The dangerous service they would perform had its rewards. Wells' men were authorized to requisition any dragoon mount of their choice and were likewise allowed more than their share of whiskey. All in all, noted fellow scout John McDonald, they "were confidential and privileged gentlemen in camp."

Wayne was intent on regularly capturing prisoners for intelligence purposes, a task for which Wells proved particularly adept. His men, who dressed and painted themselves as Indian warriors, operated with near impunity behind enemy lines. "His knowledge of the Country & of the Indian Habits & Mode of Warfare," wrote Captain William Henry Harrison, "were indispensable to the Success of our operations." Wells' prowess at such irregular operations drew the ire of the tribes, who came to regard him as the worst sort of traitor. By 1794, frustrated native leaders requested assistance from British authorities in dealing with the scout, lamenting that Wells had repeatedly created havoc for them.

When Wayne prepared for a final push down the Maumee Valley that summer, the general was desperate for fresh intelligence and, as usual, assigned Wells the difficult mission of seizing a prisoner. On August 11, Wells and five of his men captured a Shawnee warrior and his wife. While returning with their captives, Wells spotted an Indian campsite and remarkably decided to press his luck. Brazenly riding into the Delaware camp, he struck up small talk with the Indians, who were initially oblivious to the identity of the newcomers. When the scouts were finally recognized as American spies, bedlam erupted. Both sides opened fire and dashed for cover; in the confusion, the Americans escaped. As the scouts sped away, Wells was struck by a ball that shattered his wrist. Although attended by an army surgeon, it was clear that Wayne's most trusted spy was unfit for further field operations.

Despite his incapacitating wound, Wells made a vital contribution to American strategic planning. By August 17, 1794, Wayne had his legion on the north bank of the Maumee River within striking distance of the Indians, who had formed up at Fallen Timbers, a tangled swath of forest that had been felled by a storm. While subordinate officers pled for an immediate attack, Wayne uncharacteristically demurred; intelligence from his most trusted scout seems

to have played a part in his reasoning. The Indians traditionally fasted before battle, Wells explained, and an unexpected delay to the fighting would weaken the enemy. British observer John Norton later reported the debilitating effects of the extended fast. Many of the warriors, "to alleviate the sufferings [of hunger], did not hasten to take their stations, but remained in the encampment," he wrote.

Wayne's decision paid off. On the morning of August 20, the legion crashed into the Indian lines at Fallen Timbers. As their position collapsed, dozens of warriors were shot or bayoneted as they frantically scrambled to escape the killing ground. Unopposed, Wayne marched the legion up the Maumee Valley, laying waste to Indian settlements and crops in his path. The destruction finally halted at Kekionga, where Wayne forever prostrated the Miami by erecting Fort Wayne on the site of their former capital.

Shattered in the devastating fight at Fallen Timbers, the Indian confederacy sued for peace the following summer and opened negotiations with Wayne at Fort Greenville. Largely recovered from the wound to his wrist, Wells served as translator at the negotiations, which concluded with the signing of the Treaty of Greenville on August 3, 1795. By the stroke of a pen, the tribes ceded 25,000 square miles. Not until August 12 did a reluctant Little Turtle affix his signature to the document. "I am the last of the chiefs to sign this peace with the Americans, so also will I be the last to break the agreement," he wrote.

Appointed Indian agent in Fort Wayne, Wells succeeded in securing a good measure of financial stability. For his invaluable intelligence services before the Treaty of Greenville, he had been paid well, receiving some $2,000. His salary netted him about $600, and Wells likewise gained title to 320 acres of prime bottom ground near Fort Wayne. Such wealth contributed to William Wells' fall from favor with government authorities. His chief antagonist was John Johnston, the manager of the Federal trading post at Fort Wayne. Johnston was convinced, perhaps for good reason, that Wells' management of the Fort Wayne Agency was tainted by malfeasance and rampant graft. Johnston forwarded an avalanche of regular accusations to Wells' superiors in the War Department.

Matters were further complicated by Wells' opposition to official policy. Beginning in 1803, the Indiana territorial governor, William Henry Harrison, who exercised nominal supervision of Wells' duties, instituted an aggressive program of territorial expansion. During the following six years, Harrison concluded eight treaties with the tribes and purchased 50 million acres of land at the astounding rate of less than two cents per acre. Harrison expected Wells' influence with the Indians to bolster the government's bargaining position, but the agent found it difficult to support treaties that he felt were little more than heavy-handed and inequitable land grabs.

His close ties to Little Turtle likewise raised eyebrows. Although the Miami chief remained a staunch advocate of peace, he was a vocal opponent of Harrison's expansionist policies. The tremendous influence that Wells and Little Turtle wielded in the tribes was nothing short of alarming, and Harrison requested that the War Department order greater "unanimity of purpose" from the Fort Wayne Agency. Harrison had known Wells since his days as a spy for Wayne and felt that the habits of subterfuge which he had learned in the intelligence business were a grave threat to stable Indian relations. "My knowledge of his character, induces me to believe that ... much mischief may ensue from his knowledge of the Indians, his cunning and his perseverance," wrote Harrison

While American officials frittered away valuable time with such infighting, Wells found that he was a lone voice concerning the mounting threat posed by the rise of the Shawnee leader Tecumseh and his brother the Prophet. Although the duo publicly avowed peace, Wells' Indian informants indicated that the brothers were privately preparing for a renewal of hostilities by promoting an unprecedented pan-Indian confederacy. Wells informed the War Department that the tribes were growing "religiously mad" in their devotion to the Prophet and that "it is to be feared that his intentions are not friendly." For his part, John Johnston inexplicably characterized the Prophet as not only harmless but a likely American ally.

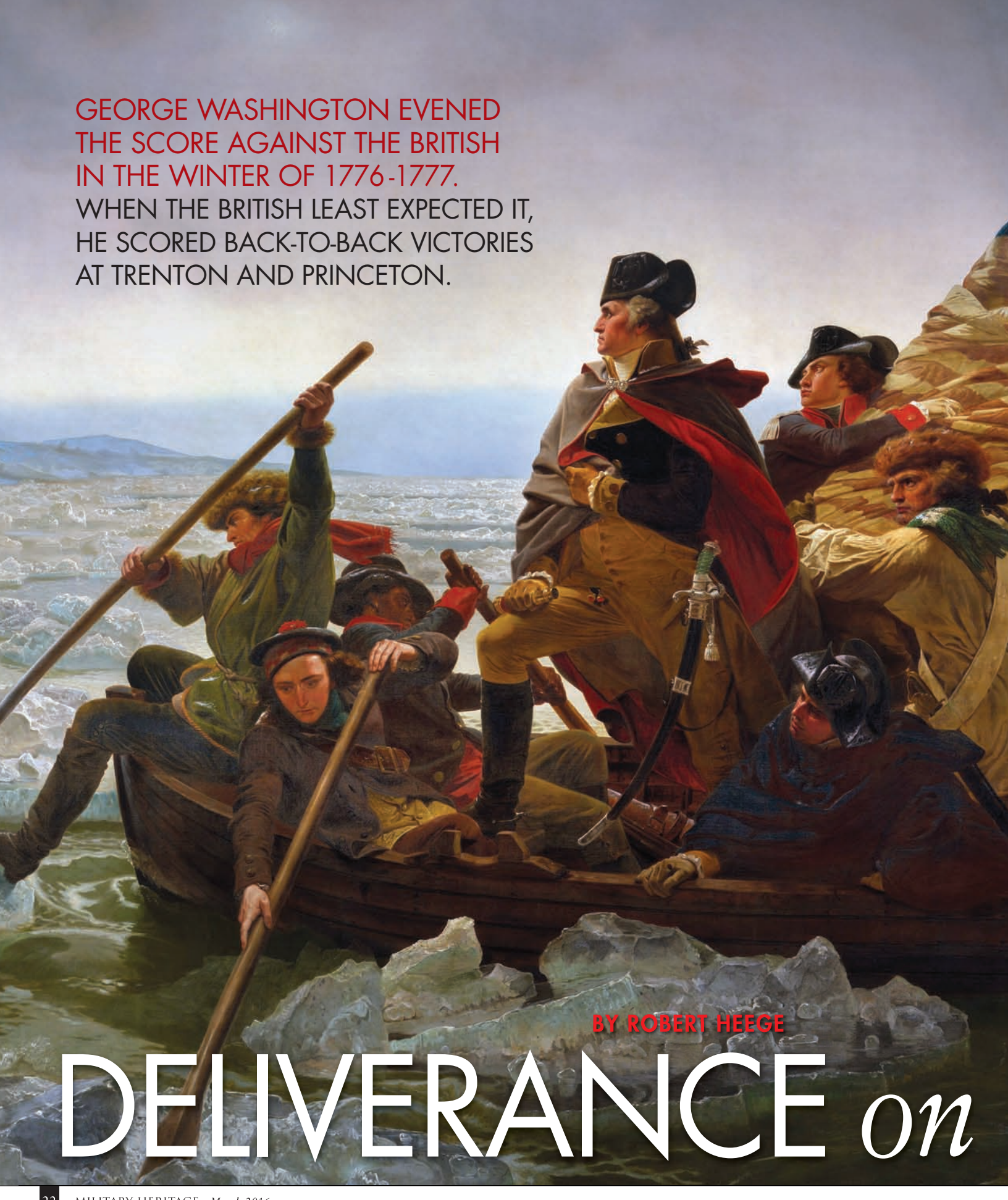
Such feuding resulted in Wells' removal from office in 1809. A pleased Johnston replaced him as head of the Fort Wayne Agency, but it became increasingly apparent that Johnston's utopian descriptions of a peaceful frontier were preposterous. By 1811, Governor Harrison, who by that point was preparing for a military strike against the Prophet's followers, was given authorization to reinstate Wells. In September he did just that, albeit appointing Wells as subagent to the Miami tribe alone. Two months later, Harrison's army secured a narrow tactical victory at the Battle of Tippecanoe but was severely mauled in the process.

It was an inauspicious beginning to renewed hostilities. War was officially declared between the United States and Great Britain on June 18, 1812, and the young republic found itself woefully unprepared for such a contest. Fort Mackinac fell to the British on July 17, and American forces at Detroit were soon reeling before a British counterthrust. Informed that Fort Dearborn at Chicago was ordered abandoned, Wells set out to assist in the evacuation.

He had personal reasons for doing so, one of which was that his niece Rebekah was married to the post's commander, Captain Nathan Heald. When he arrived at Fort Dearborn, the installation was already surrounded by hundreds of hostile Pottawatomie. The Americans destroyed stockpiles of powder and liquor, which further infuriated the Indians, and subsequent negotiations for a peaceful evacuation of the garrison went badly. On the morning of August 15, 1812, Heald, determined to obey orders, led the garrison out of the stockade. William Wells, sternly resigned to the inevitable, dressed as a Miami warrior and blackened his face—a tribal tradition reserved for condemned men.

Not a half hour after the column left the fort, the Indians unleashed the attack that Wells expected. Heald's regulars gave a good accounting of themselves but were ultimately overwhelmed. Wells, agreed eyewitnesses, went down fighting. Pinned beneath his horse, the wounded Indian agent defiantly exchanged angry words with the enemy until contemptuously telling them to "shoot away." Little mercy was shown the man whom the Pottawatomie regarded as a traitor: Wells was shot to death, mutilated, and beheaded. In grim testament to his prowess as a great warrior, the Indians cut out Wells' heart to be devoured in ritual cannibalism. It was a grisly frontier rite in which participants hoped to absorb the bravery of the fallen. "Each Indian coming along, took a bite of it," said the Pottawatomie warrior Benac.

His death left a vacancy in the Indian Agency that was impossible to fill. But on a rapidly changing frontier, Wells' conflicted loyalties to the United States and the Miami tribe rendered him a tragically doomed figure. Unable to entirely assimilate in either white or native culture, Wells was valued by both but not entirely trusted by either. Ironically, the greatest compliment paid to Wells was that offered by his old nemesis John Johnston. Reflecting on the legacy of the frontier scout that he had come to despise, Johnston could not help but offer grudging admiration for the defining nature of Wells' character. "He was a brave and reckless man," said Johnston, "and had the greatest contempt of death." □



GEORGE WASHINGTON EVENED THE SCORE AGAINST THE BRITISH IN THE WINTER OF 1776-1777.

WHEN THE BRITISH LEAST EXPECTED IT, HE SCORED BACK-TO-BACK VICTORIES AT TRENTON AND PRINCETON.

BY ROBERT HEEGE

DELIVERANCE *on*

the DELAWARE

THE GRIM-FACED MEN waiting to take their places in the boats were already chilled to the bone, the winter winds whipping mercilessly through their makeshift, threadbare uniforms as they silently formed up along the icy Pennsylvania riverbank. Many of them used old cloth to plug up the holes in their careworn shoes. Many a man had no shoes at all and had tied filthy strips of tattered rags around their feet to ward off the frigid elements; others stood barefoot in the snow. But not a single one of them uttered a word of complaint.

It was late in the evening of December 25, 1776. Nearly six months had passed since that sweltering July day in Philadelphia when the gentlemen of the self-styled Continental Congress took it upon themselves to speak for everyone in all of the 13 colonies and proclaimed their separatist intentions to a cynical world in their unilateral Declaration of Independence. Now those lofty words were being answered by the standard British response to rebellion in its far-flung provinces: Brown Bess muskets and cannon balls.

General George Washington and his Continentals braved the elements to launch a brilliant surprise attack on the Hessian garrison on December 26, 1775. A highly romantic painting by Emanuel Leutze reflects the boldness of the enterprise.

It was amid an atmosphere of high hopes that General George Washington, the wealthy 43-year-old gentleman planter from Virginia and veteran of the French and Indian War, had accepted the appointment as commander-in-chief, and in those heady early days, the ranks of volunteers flocking to the banner of what became known as the Continental Army had swelled to some 20,000 citizen-soldiers. But by that December, all that must have seemed like ancient history.

As the year dwindled down to its last few depressing days, the Patriots were down in the dumps. Since then, Washington had failed to carry the day in a single, solitary engagement against his Imperial adversary. To the British forces arrayed against him, for whom the very notion of American liberty sounded like a ridiculous joke, both he and his army of malcontents and country bumpkins were nothing less than a laughingstock. It was easy to see why.

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Seasoned New England mariners from the Continental ranks were called on for their expertise readying the 60-foot boats that were used to ferry 2,400 men across the ice-choked river. Once across, they began a 10-mile march to Trenton in the early morning hours.

In the months that had followed the proclamation of July 4, the Redcoats had made great sport out of beating the Continentals at every turn, chasing them completely out of Manhattan and Brooklyn, clear across the length of Long Island and the whole of lower New York, only relenting as the winter set in. By that time the British had succeeded in harrying them all the way to the banks of the Delaware River in the frigid precincts of southern Pennsylvania.

Defeat after defeat had taken many of them out of the fight and the fight out of many. Disease, desertion, and death, coupled with limited terms of enlistment, had winnowed their ranks down dramatically by early December. Worse yet, come January 1, when still more enlistments would be up, that dwindling number was poised to drop to fewer than 3,000 weary souls. To keep the infant cause of liberty from dying in its crib, Washington needed to inspire more of his fellow countrymen to answer his call to arms. To achieve that, he needed a fresh approach.

What must have lit up Washington's brain that freezing December night was the tantalizing fact that on the other side of the river in New Jersey the sleepy little town of Trenton, much to the dismay of nearly all of the townsfolk there, was being forced to provide for the winter quartering of a garrison of paid mercenaries newly arrived from Hesse, a German duchy with family ties to Great Britain's royal family. Like hired guns, they had been imported to the American colonies for the express purpose of helping to bring the recalcitrant colonials to heel. But there were fewer than 1,500 of them. Moreover, as far as the defenses went, by all accounts their commander, a colonel by the name of Johann Rall, had apparently neglected to erect any.

Rall was a rather obnoxious officer who had sneeringly referred to the Patriot army as a bunch of provincial clowns. He had declared, with typical Teutonic arrogance, that if any of the country rabble dared to show up, the bayonets of his grenadiers would soon send them scurrying away like frightened mice.

Washington was a proud man, and they had laughed at him, hounded him out of New York all the way out into the snowbound Pennsylvanian wilderness. There, beckoning across the water lay Trenton, less than 10 miles away on the other side of the river.

He had let the men have their Christmas, cold comfort though it must have been, and then, late in the evening on Christmas night, taking the bit into his now celebrated teeth, Washington doubled down, risking it all on one brazen roll of the dice upon the Delaware. Under cover of darkness, he gave the order to assemble, tasking Colonel John Glover, a redoubtable old salt from Marblehead, Massachusetts, and the seasoned New England mariners of his 14th Continental Regiment to ready the Durham boats.

Flat-bottomed and double-ended, these sturdy, 60-foot craft with their large sweeps of steering oars at the back, propelled by three to four pole men on outboard walking planks, were a common sight along the Delaware, hauling heavy commercial loads up and down the river. But on this bone-chilling Christmas night, they would be commandeered to ferry a different breed of cargo altogether.

Cannons were dragged painfully up onto larger ferryboats, as were the officer's horses. The horses, being sensible animals, resisted being loaded onto the creaking wooden planks of the ferries. Then, the sky opened up and it began to rain, even as the temperature continued to plummet. Before long, the rain became sleet and then it started to snow. The wind turned into a gale as a full-fledged Nor'easter blew in. The river was beginning to freeze over.

With numb fingers and frozen feet, Washington's weather-beaten men, each equipped with 60 rounds of ammunition and three days of meager rations, shouldered arms, filed in, and took their places in the boats. Glover's pole men, three to a boat, sank the great wooden shafts of their iron-tipped, 18-foot-long setting poles down deep into the muddy bottom beneath the frigid waters of the river and pushed off from the bank. The password for the operation, chosen by their commander himself, swept through the tightly packed ranks like lightning, revealing much about Washington's somewhat fatalistic state of mind that night: victory or death.

Washington had miscalculated his logistics badly. Expecting to be in New Jersey by 12 AM, he was now at the mercy of a freezing North American river in the dead of winter, trying to navigate his way around numerous chunks of jagged ice bobbing all around the wooden plank boards of his open boats.

All these delays wreaked havoc on Washington's original order of battle. Half of his men, entrusted to Brig. Gen. James Ewing and the Trenton-born Pennsylvanian, Brig. Gen. John Cadwalader, never managed to make the crossing at all. It was almost 3 AM by the time the remaining 2,400 of Washington's army were finally across and standing on the Jersey side of the river, but their physical trials were far from over. Trenton was still nine freezing, snowdrift-ridden miles away from their landing zone over next to nonexistent country roads, and they would have to manage a near silent march every miserable step of the way there.

Nearing their objective, Washington broke with the standard military doctrine of the day, effectively splitting his command. Maj. Gen. Nathanael Greene, a Rhode Islander of Quaker stock, would lead one column into Trenton from the north, neutralizing any Hessian assets deployed along the route into town. Another Washington favorite, the Irish Brig. Gen. John Sullivan, a first generation Yankee from New Hampshire, would enter Trenton from the south and west.

Up and down the length of the column, under the first rays of dawn, rode Washington, accompanying Greene's division, exhorting his troops on. As for his Hessian counterpart, after spending Christmas night warm and dry in his commandeered quarters, playing cards by the fire and draining a couple of bottles of wine by some accounts, a blissfully unconcerned Oberst Rall had bid his officers a Merry Christmas and padded off to bed.

In those days, Trenton had two main thoroughfares, christened, in less contentious times, King Street and Queen Street. It was at a small copper shop about a mile outside of town on Pennington Road, where the Hessians had set up a small command post that history was made at about 8 AM on December 26. Hessian Lieutenant Andreas von Wiederholt stepped out of the front door of the shop just as George Washington came galloping into view at the head of his troops. The young lieutenant shouted a warning to his men, who came pouring out of the shop, bayonets bristling.

In the blink of an eye, the battle was on, with the Hessians somehow managing to prime their muskets and fire off a volley, only to find themselves subjected in return to three withering fusillades from Washington's infantrymen, who proceeded to cut them down like cordwood. As the musket balls whistled through the air, other Hessian detachments converged on the area, including some elements of the Alt von Lossberg Regiment. and, Regrouping on the high ground on the northern outskirts of Trenton, the Hessians returned fire as von Wiederholt led an organized retreat.

As they fell back on the town, several Hessian Guard Companies quickly entered the fray, providing their retreating kinsmen with covering fire against the deadly accuracy of the Colonial crack shots, who were now picking them off one by one.

The Hessian retreat toward the center of town actually served to effectuate a major component of Washington's original battle plan, as it left the nearby River Road completely in the hands of the Continentals. Quickly exploiting the situation, Washington, taking up a commanding position atop a small hillside, dispatched an infantry formation to block any attempt the enemy might make to escape toward Princeton. He directed his artillerymen to move with all possible speed and bring their guns into action before the still sleepy Hessians had a chance to check them.

U.S. Army Art Collection

Slain Hessian jaegers lie near one of their bronze guns following Washington's dawn attack on December 26. The Continental Army secured badly needed supplies by capturing the Hessians' winter quarters in the New Jersey town.

Moments later, Colonel Henry Knox, a portly but daring diehard from Boston, Massachusetts, had his artillerymen wheeling some of their highly prized cannons into position at the end of King and Queen Streets. Among them was a young captain named Alexander Hamilton.

Meanwhile, Sullivan and his column rushed forward from the South, seizing the sole crossing over the Assunpink, the creek that could have provided a way out for the Hessians. In an example of strategic battlefield coordination remarkable for its day, the Irishman paced his march into Trenton, taking pains to make certain that Greene and his column had been given sufficient time to dislodge any Hessians deployed at the northern approaches to the town.

Coming up the River Road, the vanguard of Sullivan's division stormed its way into Trenton. Almost immediately they ran into a detachment of about a dozen Hessians, part of a company of about 50 Jaegers quartered in and around a private residence. Lieutenant Wilhelm von Grothausen ordered his men into action, but seeing the rest of Sullivan's column now swarming into Trenton, gave the lieutenant pause. After a somewhat desultory exchange of a single volley of lead, he

Library of Congress

Hessian commander Colonel Johann Rall is shown surrendering his sword to George Washington. He tried in vain to rally his troops and died the same day from wounds suffered in the street fighting.

ordered his men to pull back, whereupon the entire complement turned tail. Several of them joined 18 Redcoats of the Queen's 16th Light Dragoons stationed nearby on the small bridge over the Assunpink, who upon Sullivan's arrival had proceeded to dive headlong into this tributary of the Delaware in a frantic effort to escape from the battle zone.

By this time, Greene and his forces, including Brig. Gen. Hugh Mercer's brigade, were advancing from the north end of town. As the two infantry divisions now pushed forward toward each other, American cannon fire began raining down on the Hessians. This cannonade came from the Pennsylvania side of the river, courtesy of the emboldened Rebels stuck observing the action from the opposite bank.

The Hessians, however, were not ready to pack it in quite yet. By now, Colonel Rall was out of his bed. Having been roused from his sleep by the sudden crackle of all that musket fire, he was appalled when informed that the crossroads at the upper ends of King and Queen Streets, the center of the town, was already in Rebel hands. His instinctive reaction was to immediately counterattack. Answering the call to arms, no less than three regiments of renowned European infantry shook off the morning doldrums and snapped into action, assuming battle formation with clockwork Germanic efficiency.

Lining up at the lower end of Queen Street, the venerable Alt von Lossberg regiment steeled itself for a fight. Simultaneously, the grenadiers of the Rall regiment, so named for its commander, made ready at the lower end of King Street and awaited orders. The Fusiliers of the von Knyphausen Regiment were held in reserve to reinforce the Rall regiment on King Street, if needed.

Rall's strategy was simple, straightforward, and bloody-minded. With a regiment of prized Hessian infantry now poised on each of the two high streets, and in accordance with the accepted military doctrine of the period, the colonel ordered the cream of his command to march in lock-step up the length of Queen and King Streets.

Rall's single-minded goal was to drive the Rebels off and take back the center of the town. The problem was that Washington had foreseen this obvious response from his Hessian counterpart and made sure Knox was in position to thwart it.

Advancing doggedly up King and Queen Streets, the Hessians marched straight into the teeth of the American guns as Knox and his artillerymen opened up on them. At last, after a hellish half year, it was the Continentals who were dishing it out, and the forces of empire were on the receiving end.

Ordered to capture the American cannons, Rall's grenadiers pressed grimly on, shoulder to shoulder through the acrid, blue-gray haze of gunpowder, trooping forward up King Street through shot and shell. Their uniforms were spattered with the blood and gore of their fallen comrades as bits of brain and splintered bone rent the chill morning air.

As if that were not enough, scores of Mercer's riflemen had gotten into the houses and shops along the route, taken up concealed positions, and begun firing at will into the tightly packed Hessian formations, turning King Street into a gauntlet of death. Rall tried to get some of his own artillery into the fight, sending a brace of three pounders up the street, but after somehow managing to fire off a dozen jittery salvos, they were blasted out of commission by Knox and his boys at the upper end of the street and Mercer's men sniping at them from the houses.

On Queen Street, the Hessians fared no better, blasted by Rebel cannons and picked off by an enemy raised on shooting turkeys and not too proud to take cover. There, too, the Rebels fired away with impunity at their hapless opponents.

Military discipline, even the German kind, will eventually give way in the face of such an onslaught and the Hessians began to waver. The sight of the Rebels clambering over their fallen comrades in the Hessian gun crews to capture their cannons and prepare to bombard them with their own artillery was simply too much for the stunned soldiers. All along King and Queen Streets, the Hessians broke ranks and fled, pursued toward the fields on the outskirts of town.

In the fog of war, the Knyphausen Regiment, having been held back in reserve, became separated from the rest of their kinsmen. Still caught in Trenton, many found that their muskets were misfiring because they had let their powder get too damp. Seeing this, Sullivan, unwilling to simply continue blasting away at his helpless foe, sent his men rushing down the street in a howling bayonet charge. He led several of his men in hot pursuit down toward the creek to scotch any hope of a Hessian retreat. There, along the Assunpink, the woefully unlucky Knyphausens dithered for several tense minutes before finally throwing down their useless muskets and raising their hands in surrender.

But Colonel Rall was not through yet. Incapable of accepting defeat, he re-grouped what was left of his command in a field just outside of Trenton, ordered his regimental fifes and drums to play a tune, and ordered his grenadiers forward in a futile attempt to retake Trenton. Despite being shot at from three sides, Ralls' infantrymen stubbornly advanced back into town and up the length of King Street, through artillery bombardment and a merciless fusillade, and succeeded in retaking some of their cannons. But Knox would have none of it and after a brief but tenacious struggle soon drove them off again, once more training the cannons back onto the advancing Hessian columns.

At that point, some of the townsfolk rushed from their homes and joined the Rebel army in fending off their uninvited guests' attempted counterthrust. Hessian unit cohesion again began to falter. Rall was many things, but he was no coward. He was there, in the midst of the melee, shouting himself hoarse, still desperately attempting to rally his men forward and press the attack when a clutch of Rebel musket balls suddenly slammed into his medal-bedecked chest. He fell to the ground and died later that day. An unheeded Loyalist message, possibly unread, warning ominously of a dangerous num-

ber of Rebels being spotted recently in the vicinity was later found on his lifeless body.

Deprived of their commander, the Hessians suddenly seemed to be at a complete loss as to what to do. Seeing this, Washington spurred his mount and galloped down from his hilltop position, rallying his men, leading them forward in a final charge that drove the broken Hessians back out of town into an orchard. Surrounded by the very men they had once derided as clownish buffoons and stung by the humiliating taunts of several of the jeering citizens of Trenton, what remained of the proud Hessian regiments, more than 900 souls in all, gave up at last, lowered their colors, and meekly surrendered.

The battle for Trenton had lasted scarcely half an hour. When the fighting was over, 22 Hessians were dead. Another 92 of their wounded comrades lay writhing in agony up and down the streets of the quaint little Colonial town. Washington had not lost a single man during the attack. He had scored his victory at a cost of a mere five wounded.

The Continentals had taken Trenton but they could not hold it. The forces of the British Crown would certainly seek to return this insult with a vengeance, and Washington knew that if British reinforcements should suddenly appear in strength, the Continentals would fare no better than the Hessians. Because of the threat of enemy reinforcements, Washington decided return to the relative safety of the Pennsylvania pines. But news travels fast, and on December 30, buoyed by his success, Washington returned to New Jersey with a rejuvenated army. This time, Ewing and Cadwalader managed to make the trip.

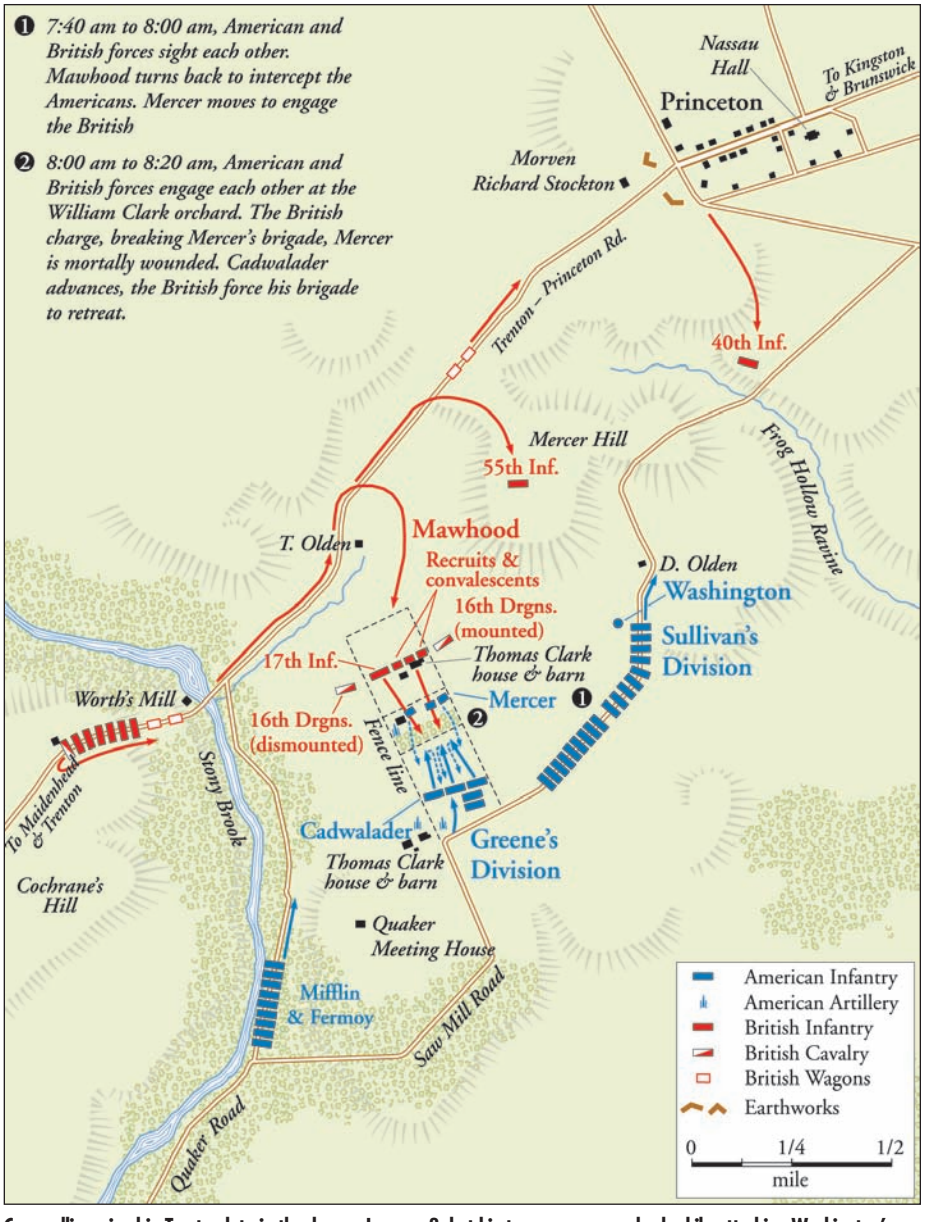
At this moment, in the British bastion of New York City, General Lord Charles Cornwallis was appalled when he was informed that his leave was summarily cancelled. Washington's little triumph had just cost him his passage home to England to see the wife. On New Year's Day 1777, a furious Cornwallis was galloping the 50 miles to Princeton, New Jersey. Barely a day later, he was at the head of an army speeding south to punish Washington for his audacity.

Meanwhile, Washington had been working feverishly to capitalize on the propaganda value of his victory at Trenton to gather more fresh recruits and strive to retain the veterans whose one-year enlistments were up, exhorting them to keep faith with him for a further six weeks, and throwing in a ten dollar bounty to sweeten the bargain. His efforts bore fruit, and by January 2 Washington could boast more than 5,000 men in the ranks, though most of them were barely trained. Ready or not, they were about to receive their baptism of fire. That very evening, Cornwallis and his army arrived.

With night falling, British advance units probing the woods in the vicinity of the Assunpink traded shots with Rebel pickets along the creek, culminating in a textbook British move to seize the little bridge. But the Rebels, emboldened by their Lilliputian victory over the Hessians, defiantly stood their ground, successfully fending off attempts to push them off the bridge as darkness descended.

Cornwallis remained calm and collected. Owing to the lateness of the hour, his apparently fatigued Lordship halted the bulk of his columns about a half mile outside of Trenton and made camp. With the frozen Delaware still seemingly impassable, Cornwallis considered his foe to be neatly bottled up there on the banks. Indeed, his scouts reported that Washington and his Rebel army were camped beside the ice bound river.

Pointing a languid finger toward the lights of the Rebels' campfires, clearly visible in the dark wintry night, Cornwallis cheerily reassured his officers that after a six-month chase across three of the 13 colonies, the wily Washington was truly trapped at last. Washington would be just as dead come morning when, by the light of day, they would march over and wipe out his paltry command



Cornwallis arrived in Trenton late in the day on January 2, but his troops were repulsed while attacking Washington's position across Assunpink Creek. That night Washington quietly pulled his troops out of Trenton and marched 12 miles north, surprising the British garrison at Princeton the following morning.

after a good night's sleep.

By dawn, Cornwallis must have wanted to kick himself in the pants. At about 1 AM, even as the Rebel campfires continued to flicker and beckon, stoked, it turned out, by 500 conspicuously merrymaking men tasked with this purpose to complete the deception, a canny Washington had his men wrapping rags around their cannon and wagon wheels, and even around the hooves of their officers' horses as they made a stealthy getaway under Cornwallis' nose.

Arriving at Trenton early that morning, January 3, at the head of his mighty host, Cornwallis was dumbfounded to discover that his nemesis was nowhere to be found. While the British slept, Washington and his men had circled around their entire army in the dead of night and escaped the deadly trap. Marching north in silence through the frozen dark, come sun up they were a scant two miles from Cornwallis' original starting point at Princeton.

Princeton, which had previously been chock full of British Regulars, was now only lightly defended, garrisoned by about 1,200 Redcoats under the command of Lt. Col. Charles Mawhood, whom Cornwallis had left behind before setting off to confront Washington at Trenton.

Urging his men northward through the wooded pathways, Washington reached Stony Brook, a small stream, which the Continentals followed for a full mile to the point where it abutted the Post Road, the vital commercial artery running north and south between Princeton and Trenton.

Princeton University Art Museum

Washington is shown in the foreground and Brig. Gen. Hugh Mercer is seen lying mortally wounded in the background in a painting of the Battle of Princeton by James Peale, who served as an officer during the battle. The crack British regulars put up stiff resistance against the Continentals' attack.

Loath to be caught out in the open in broad daylight, Washington quickly sent his men scurrying over and across the nearby fields of William Clark's farm, which lay just to the right of the road. To Washington's great good luck, there was another unmarked pathway of sorts running through Farmer Clark's fields that not only led straight into town but could not be seen from the nearby Post Road. It was also completely undefended.

Undetected, Washington was now only about a mile and a half away from Princeton, his command all but invisible as his men quietly formed up on the dirt track that the farmers used to bring their vegetables to market. But by this time, it was already 7:30. He knew that back in Trenton, Cornwallis was surely standing beside the Delaware by now, seeing red and shaking his fist.

Washington knew he had to act fast. He turned to his old friend and comrade from the French and Indian War, the Scotsman Mercer, whose martial talents had proved so invaluable at Trenton. Once the regimental surgeon to Bonnie Prince Charlie during Scotland's own abortive rebellion, Mercer had fled to the colonies and made a new life for himself in Fredericksburg, Virginia. The 51-year-old clergyman's son received orders to take 350 men back to the wooden bridge over Stony Brook, deny the enemy its potential use, and buy Washington some badly needed time.

Still unaware that he was about to be attacked, Mawhood was dutifully following Cornwallis' previously issued orders to tip the scales, dispatching two additional regiments, the 17th and the 55th Regiments of Foot, to reinforce his lordship at Trenton that morning, leaving a single regiment, the men of the 40th to safeguard Princeton in their absence.

By 8 AM Mawhood and his men were on the move. They had only just left Princeton, making for the bridge at Stony Brook. But as the Redcoats marching through the Jersey pines crested the top of a small hill just to the south, they spotted the Continentals below. Mawhood immediately wheeled his infantrymen around and made a mad scramble back toward the garrison.

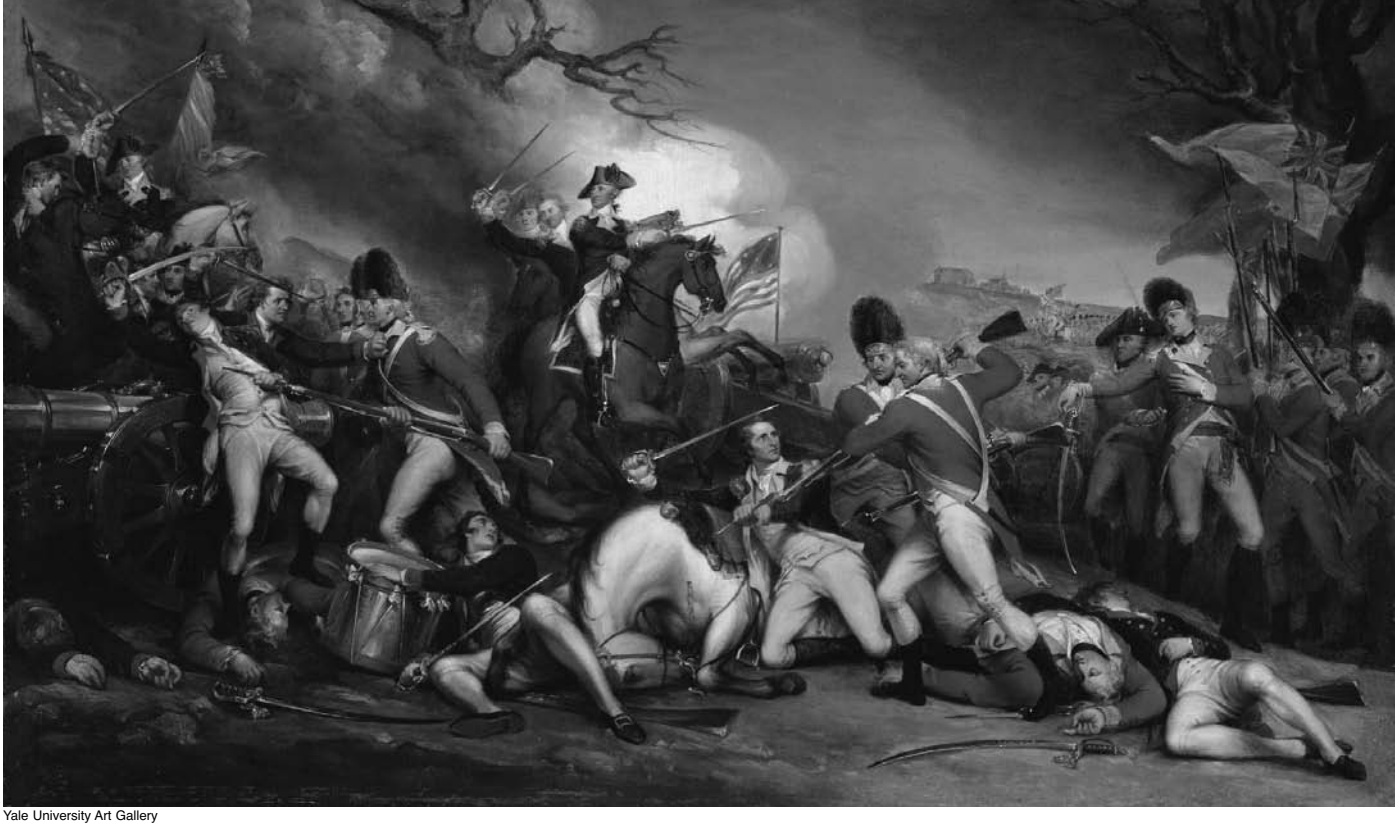
Mercer's reaction was equally swift. Seeing Mawhood on the move, he hastened to cut him off and protect Washington's main force by attacking Mawhood's columns from the rear. By now, the attack on Princeton was already on, with Sullivan and his entire division, two brigades of hardy diehards in the van, charging down the dirt track from Clark's Farm, followed close behind by two more brigades, the first of these under the command of Cadwalader, absent at Trenton, now getting in on the action at last. The other was a brigade of Rhode Islanders led by an attorney from Massachusetts named Colonel Daniel Hitchcock.

As for Mawhood, Mercer, and their deadly chase, exactly which one was the fox and which, the hound, was in doubt. Mercer, despairing of catching and cutting off Mawhood's Redcoats short of Princeton, peeled off to join Sullivan's forces in the main attack. Mawhood had become aware that a Rebel column had been coming up behind him in close pursuit, but seeing them suddenly breaking off the chase and making a beeline toward Clark Farm must have struck him like lightning. Everybody in Princeton knew about the path through the farmer's fields.

Sending the main body of his infantry forward to reinforce the Princeton garrison, Mawhood now turned the tables, siphoning off the 17th of Foot and elements of the 55th, a brace of artillery pieces, and about 50 cavalrymen, and sent them chasing after Mercer.

They caught up with him in Farmer Clark's orchard and unleashed a volley, but the notoriously inaccurate Brown Bess muskets missed their marks, sending their leaden payloads flying high over the Rebels' heads. Mercer shouted to his men to get into proper battle formation and advance on the Redcoats before they could reload, but as the Rebels looked on in horror, still more scarlet-clad infantrymen arrived, backed up by the gleaming bronze cannons of the Royal Artillery.

Taking cover behind a nearby fence, Mercer ordered his riflemen to open fire. The British responded with another volley of their own, and back and forth it went. For eight murderous minutes the two sides traded lead with each other. But Mercer's rifles, though more accurate, took longer to reload than the British muskets, and there were so many more of them.



Yale University Art Gallery

When Brig. Gen. Hugh Mercer's troops were routed by a bayonet charge at Princeton, the general stood his ground and was slain without quarter. The British regulars mistakenly thought they had just killed George Washington.

The Redcoats, trained to withstand the brutal psychology of such encounters, soon had the upper hand. Some of the Rebels did not even have a bayonet at the end of their muskets. Barely trained farm boys fumbling their weapons with trembling hands, they seemed close to panic. Seeing this, Mawhood contemptuously ordered a bayonet charge.

The Rebels broke and fled, all except Mercer and his loyal second, Colonel John Haslet of the 1st Delaware Continentals. There in the orchard, the stubborn Scot stood his ground. Haslet, at his general's side, implored the fleeing men to stand fast. He received a musket ball in the head for his trouble and was dead before he hit the ground.

Calling mercer a damned Rebel, the British shouted at him to surrender. Mercer spat at the idea and, asking for no quarter, none was given. The Redcoats who ran him through with their bayonets were ecstatic. They thought they had just killed Washington.

Out for blood, the Redcoats were close on the heels of the fleeing survivors when Rebel and Redcoat alike literally ran straight into Cadwalader's Pennsylvania militiamen as they came blundering out of the nearby woods.

For several moments, chaos reigned on the battlefield. Mawhood quickly regrouped and got his infantrymen into a proper battle line. Cadwalader attempted to do the same, but his men were so completely unnerved by the sight of British steel and the spectacle of so many of their comrades running past them down the hill that they started to turn tail and follow them.

The battle for Princeton was quickly devolving into a pandemonium. At this moment, Sullivan's assault force which was directly attacking the Princeton garrison was also starting to lose momentum, bogged down by a determined effort by elements of the 55th of Foot, now rushing to the aid of the town's defenders, the 40th.

Just then Washington came galloping up over the hill, into the very midst of Cadwalader's unraveling, stampeding command. Following in his wake were the veteran Virginia Continentals and the deadly riflemen of Colonel Edward Hand, a 32-year-old, Irish-born physician turned revolutionary.

Washington immediately directed Hands' riflemen and his fellow Virginians onto the high ground to their right. Then, gripping the reins, he galloped out in front between the enemy and his own tentatively advancing troops, heading off the human wave of demoralized yeomen farmers like a cattleman corralling his flock.

Waving his hat like a field marshal's baton, Washington got them in line. There were so many musket balls whizzing past him, his own horse hesitated to take another step. With less than 90 feet between the two sides, Washington gave the order to fire.

It was as if both armies jumped to his stern command as a deadly blizzard of cannon fire and musket balls erupted from both sides. Lead flew in every direction. The entire battlefield was engulfed in a thick cloud of sulfurous smoke.

One of Washington's officers buried his head in his hat, convinced he had just seen his fearless commander blown to bits. But as the billows of spent gunpowder wafted away in the wintry New Jersey breeze, there was Washington, miraculously unharmed, urging his troops onward with a majestic sweep of his arm.

Answering the call, a battle line of Hitchcock's flint-hard New England militiamen went forward, moving to outflank the British right, while Edward Hand used his sharp-shooting riflemen to deadly effect, creating great, gory gaps in their formations until the thin red line of British infantrymen was up to their knees in the blood of their fallen comrades. Then the Continental cannons unleashed salvos of grapeshot, bombarding the British with a deadly hail of hot metal. The British line began to buckle. The New Englanders surged forward.

It was the Redcoats' turn to give ground as more and more of the now emboldened Continentals came charging across the field. In danger of being overwhelmed, Mawhood reluctantly ordered a fighting retreat toward the Post Road. Washington had been right to worry about the little bridge over Stony Brook. After fixing bayonets, Mawhood led a wild charge that broke past startled Rebel

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BY LUDWIG HEINRICH DYCK

TEUTONIC FURY

AS part of tribal obligations to appease Rome, Segimer, the powerful Cherusci chief, surrendered his sons Arminius and Flavus to the Roman emperor Augustus. The young boys left the village and tribal lands of their birth in central Germania Magna to be taken to Rome. We can only imagine their culture shock. Ripped from a rural life surrounded by wilderness, they found themselves in the greatest metropolis of their age where the streets thronged with people. Such is assumed to be the background of Arminius and Flavus not only because Rome commonly took noble child hostages, but also because of the prominent positions the brothers were to achieve among the Romans. One of them was destined to change the course of history, but not in the way Rome would have foreseen.

The two Cherusci brothers were treated as members of the Roman upper class. They were granted the coveted Roman citizenship, tutored in Latin and in Roman methods of warfare. Many years later, in AD 4, the Cherusci gained federated status in the empire. As part of treaty

A Roman centurion, who has been attacked by Bructeri warriors, has cut down two of his opponents as he leads his men through the thick forest. The sanguinary clash pitted skilled Roman soldiers against fanatical German tribesmen in one of the most famous battles of Antiquity.

The massacre of three Roman legions by German tribes in the Teutoburg Forest in AD 9 ensured that the Romans would not control the lands east of the Rhine.

obligations, Rome demanded recruits for auxiliary units. Who better to lead them than the Romanized sons of Segimer?

Earning equestrian "knightly" rank, Arminius and his brother served Rome bravely in battle. As part of imperial prince Tiberius' massive army, the brothers suppressed huge insurrections in Pannonia and Illyricum. Tiberius was finishing off the rebels in AD 8 when Arminius was moved to the headquarters of the Roman governor Publius Quinctilius Varus at Vetera (Xanten) on the west bank of the lower Rhine River. Just under 26 years old, lean and fit, Arminius was in the prime of his life. A contemporary Roman bust shows Arminius with stubble beard and thick, wavy hair that covered his ears and fell to just above his shoulders. From his new posting, Arminius would get a chance to see his family and his homeland again.

Vetera was in Germania Inferior, one of the two subdistricts of the Roman province of Gallia Belgica. At the time, Roman presence east of the Rhine, in Germania Magna, was limited to forts and towns concentrated around tributaries giving access into the interior. It was the mission of Varus to turn this semi-pacified area into a full-fledged province. Arminius would not only command Varus' auxiliaries, but also act as a valuable liaison between Rome and the tribes. Respected by both his countrymen and the Romans, Arminius' career in the "Roman" Germania was on the rise.

It would be hard to imagine two men of more different temperaments than Arminius and Varus. Whereas the first was a natural leader of men, used to hardships of war, life under the sun and stars, the other was a pen- and scroll-pushing bureaucrat without an inkling of the harsh conditions of the northern frontier.

Varus received his appointment as governor in AD 7, about a year before Arminius' arrival. Varus held overall command of no less than five legions and auxiliaries, perhaps a fifth of Rome's entire frontline strength. Before obtaining such an important position, the middle-aged Varus, who had marriage ties with the emperor's extended family, served as consul, as proconsul of Africa, and as governor of Syria.

With his command on the Rhine front, Varus was continuing a long legacy of relations between Rome and the Germanic tribes. Although there had been times of peace and trade, there had also been much war. The Romans never forgot the devastating Germanic-Celtic Cimbri, Teutones, and Ambrones invasion of Gaul and Italy at the close of the second century BC, or Caesar's harrowing mid-century battles with Germanic tribes along Rhine. In 17 BC the Fifth Legion suffered a devastating defeat at the hands of the Sugambri tribe. After that there was continuous strife along the border. "Different peoples at different times would cause a breach, first growing powerful and then being put down, and then revolting again, betraying both the hostages they had given and their pledges of good faith," wrote Greek historian Strabo.

In 12 BC, Drusus, Tiberius' younger brother, set off to conquer the troublesome Germanic tribes. Roman victory would strengthen the security of Gaul and Italy, provide slaves, and open vast timber reservoirs. Four years of bloody campaigns took Drusus to the Elbe. There a giant woman is said to have appeared,

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telling Drusus to turn back and warning him of his eminent doom. Drusus died shortly after, either from disease or from falling off his horse. A mournful Tiberius took over, leading the war effort against the German tribes into the early years of the first millennium AD. Nine times Augustus sent Tiberius into Germania, but in the end more was achieved by diplomacy than by the strength of arms.

At the time of Varus' arrival, relations between the tribesmen and the Romans proceeded amiably. The natives bartered milk and cheese, game meat, fowl, cattle, sheep, goats, and hides. In return they received the luxuries of Roman civilization: glassware, silver cups, bronze trays, and more than anything, wine. A Roman town was discovered near modern Waldgermis on the River Lahn. Here a gilded bronze statue of the divine Augustus mounted on a horse served as a reminder of the empire's omnipotence. Farther west, on the Rhine, at the settlement of the Roman-friendly Ubii tribe, Oppidum Ubiorum (Cologne), a Germanic priest worshipped at Augustus' altar. The altar looked out toward Germania, where its chieftains likewise honored the emperor. The Germans were being conquered and assimilated into the empire without even realizing it. But, so far, the tribesmen paid no tribute to speak of and retained their uninhibited lifestyle, laws, customs, and weapons.

ABOVE: Roman Governor Publius Quinctilius Varus, who is shown on a Roman coin, dismissed rumors that Arminius was plotting a revolt. When he learned of the disaster, Emperor Augustus cried, "Varus, give me back my legions!" TOP: A Roman bust might be Cherusci Chief Arminius, who commanded German auxiliaries attached to Varus' army.

The continued independence of the Germans did not sit well with Varus. If Germania were to be a Roman province, the Germans would have to pay tribute in silver and gold. After all, how could Varus line his own pockets if there were no taxes to be collected? Varus decided to govern Germania as he had done Syria, draining the land of its wealth and maintaining order through brutality. To Varus the Germans were little better than animals, humans in appearance only, to be ordered around like slaves and kept in line with Roman law. Varus held an assembly, boasting that he would control the "savagery of the barbarians with the lashings of the lictor and the voice of the herald," wrote modern historian Hans Delbrick.

Gold and silver were rare in Germania. The common goods and livestock seized as tribute, in lieu of precious metals, further impoverished the already poor tribesmen. Villagers cursed and spat at Roman rule. Chiefs met and reminisced about the freedom too easily given away. The barbarians "sadly watched their swords rusting and their horses unexercised, when they realized that the toga and court were worse than weapons," wrote Delbrick. Ridding themselves of the Roman presence, however, would be no easy task. Although the Roman outposts were few, they were strongly held. The Germans decided to bide their time and outwardly yield to the demands of Varus.

As was common practice, after overwintering on the Rhine, Varus planned to spend the summer of AD 9 at an advance post deep inside the barbarian wilderness. Varus would take with him the Seventeenth, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Legions from Germania Inferior. The First and the Fifth Legions, under the command of Varus' nephew, Lucius Nonius Asprenas, remained in Germania Superior. From the plateau of Moguntiacum (Mainz), Asprenas kept watch across the river. Asprenas was ready to defend not just the middle Rhine but also the lower Rhine of Germania Inferior, which after Varus' departure would only be held by a few legionary detachments and auxiliaries.

The first shoots of green foliage and a warm wind heralded the end of winter's cold grasp and the approach of spring. Early in March, at the beginning of the Roman campaigning season, Varus and his army crossed the Rhine over a narrow pontoon bridge. He followed the traditional route into Greater Germania along the Lippe River valley through Sugambri territory. The Roman column stretched mile after mile, shadowed by a small fleet of boats carrying the heavy supplies. After a night in a marching camp, Varus reached Rome's main base on the Lippe at Aliso. Varus conferred with the Nineteenth Legion's camp prefect Lucius Caeonius, whose detachment held the fort, reorganizing the forty tones of daily grain and fodder consumed by Varus' army.

From Aliso, Varus struck farther east along the Lippe, pressing onward for two days to the fort at Anreppen. The legions had now marched more than 100 miles since they left Vetera. At Anreppen, Varus left the Lippe and made his way north through the Teutoburg Forest and the western reaches of the Weser Hills. Upon reaching the upper Weser, Varus built his summer camp on the western bank in the middle of Cherusci territory.

Varus' summer camp dwarfed any of the local settlements, the larger of which consisted of some two score houses. The camp housed around 12,000 legionaries as well as three auxiliary alae (cavalry squadrons), and six cohorts of auxiliary light troops. Alongside Arminius' Cherusci, the auxiliaries likely included strong elements of Rome's staunch allies, the Ubii and Frisii, and numbered 4,000 men. Attending the soldiers were several thousand servants, not to mention the illegal wives and children of the legionaries. A few hundred of the more adventurous merchants from the Rhine bases also had followed Varus' army.

Varus' legions were well trained, among the best units in the Roman army. Historian and veteran of the Pannonian and German wars, Roman historian Marcus Velleius Paterculus praised the legions' "outstanding discipline, courage and combat experience." First raised in 49 BC, by Julius Caesar during the beginning of the civil war, the Seventeenth, Eighteenth, and Nineteenth Legions consisted of Italians, Gauls, and a few Syrians and North Africans.

The Germans had little chance of breaching the ditch and the rampart of the well-defended summer camp, not that Varus ever imagined they would try. After all, Arminius' family was thoroughly integrated into the Roman military and government. His brother Flavus continued to serve Rome abroad. Their father, Segimer, and his brother, the renowned warlord

Inguiomerus, as well as another Cherusci noble, the huge and physically powerful Segestes, were respected allies of Rome. Segestes' son, Segimundus, even served as a priest at the altar of Augustus in the Ubii capital of Oppidum Ubiorum. Varus' entourage included nobles from other tribes as well, such as a young Boiocalus from the Ampsivarii.

Arminius and Segimer feasted at Varus' table and assured him that all was well. Cherusci tribesmen came to Varus' court, asking him to dispense Roman justice on complicated trials and replace might with right. Varus felt as if "he were the city praetor meting out justice in the Forum rather than commanding an army in the middle of Germany," wrote Paterculus. Believing the land to be at peace, Varus risked splitting the troops, sending them out to deal with petty robbers and to protect and improve the supply route back to Anreppen.

Although outwardly Arminius assured Varus of his goodwill, Arminius had come to hate everything Roman. To Rome the German tribes were not equals, as he once thought. Germania's sons fought and died for Rome while her daughters served the conquerors and her wealth fattened the pockets of men like Varus, who knew nothing of honor and battle.

Arminius was not alone. He met with other tribal chiefs to forge plans on how to rid themselves of the Roman despots. When Arminius saw the Romans triumph in Pannonia, he learned of their strengths and their weaknesses. Arminius knew that an assault on Varus' camp was out of the question. Likewise, when drawn up in battle formation, the legions were near unbreakable.

Although, since the days of Caesar, the tribes had become wiser in the ways of war and fielded more and better swords and spears; both in equipment and discipline, the German warrior remained markedly inferior to his Roman counterpart. The bulk of the tribal army consisted of farmers, and many of them could afford little more than wattle shields, woodman's axes, clubs, and bone-tipped spears. Furthermore, Arminius knew that his warriors remained difficult to control on the battlefield since they were not enlisted soldiers. The Germanic warrior fought purely out of personal choice, for martial glory, for vengeance, to gain loot, or due to social pressure. The only real power that Arminius possessed to make them obey was his personal charisma.

Arminius told the assembly that to negate the legions' superior equipment and training the tribes had to attack under favorable conditions. When strung out on the march, in difficult terrain that favored the quick and nimble, lightly armed Germanic warrior, the legions could go down in defeat. The leaves rustled in a cool wind, heralding the coming of fall. Soon Varus and his legions would return to Vetera on the Rhine for the winter. The time for the Cherusci to strike was drawing near. Arminius' fiery eyes blazed with passion as the chiefs rattled their weapons in approval.

Rheinisches Landesmuseum

The cenotaph of First Centurion Marcus Caelius of the Eighteenth Legion, who was slain in the Teutoburg Forest. The numbers of the three Roman legions destroyed in the battle were never reallocated.

Word about his impending treachery leaked out and reached Varus' ears. Not all the Cherusci chiefs were ready to abandon their flourishing careers in the Roman Empire, most notably Segestes. Segestes divulged the news about a brewing conspiracy to Varus after a banquet. Segestes urged Varus "to arrest Arminius and the other chiefs, and also himself, on the grounds that their removal would immobilize their accomplices and Varus could then take his time in sorting out the guilty from the innocent, wrote Roman historian Tacitus. Varus had heard it all before. Even though Segestes seemed more anxious than usual, Varus would not listen. Arminius had his eye on Thusnelda, the daughter of Segestes, who, as fate would have it, was betrothed to another. Varus accused Segestes of slander. He likely thought that Segestes was only being a protective father and acting out of his personal dislike of Arminius.

Almost immediately after Segestes' latest accusations against Arminius, Varus received the news that a few distant tribesmen, perhaps the Angrivarii to the northwest, had rebelled. For Varus the timing was less than ideal, for his army was ready to begin its late summer march back to Vetera on the Rhine. Arminius advised Varus that to deal with the rebels, Varus should lead his army back to Vetera on a different route from the usual military road. The detour would take Varus along the northern edge of the Weser Hills and the Teutoburg Forest, where the highlands descended into the swamps and forests of the North European Plain. Varus agreed; his legions would set out at once to crush the insurrection before it could grow any larger. Word was sent to the Roman detachments that were strung out along the supply route back to Anreppen, or were chasing robbers in local villages. The detachments were ordered to catch up with Varus' slower main column.

Arminius and his Cherusci contingent joined the legions marching out of the camp gates. Above each legion bobbed its eagle standard, proudly carried by the first cohort. Wings spread, talons gripping thunderbolts, it was an icon of near religious nature, representing the invincibility of

Rome. No doubt the soldiers who marched beneath those proud standards thought that the rebels would easily be dealt with. The legionaries were in good spirits. If things worked out, the legionaries would be back in their secure winter base at Vetera in no time. Their pockets were full too, having just received the third installment of their stipendium, their annual salary, which they could top off with loot and slaves from the rebels.

The clatter of armor and iron-nailed sandals resounded through the woods. Arminius and his entourage galloped along the long Roman column. Reigning in his steed at Varus' position, Arminius exclaimed that he and his men must dally behind. More tribal reinforcements were on the way. Arminius would gather them and then return to Varus.

Arminius and his attendants rode off to muster the other Cherusci chiefs. Segestes, however, at first refused to join the rebellion. Hoping to avert disaster at the last minute, Segestes' men seized Arminius and threw him into chains. The debacle only delayed the inevitable, for Segestes had no support from the other chiefs, who soon freed Arminius.

Arminius led an army of between 10,000 and 17,000 warriors back to Varus, and several times as many were still on the way. Word of the impending attack on the Romans continued to spread from one farmstead to the next. Not just among the Cherusci did warriors gather but also from their allies the Marsi and the Bructeri and possibly from the Angrivarii, Chauci, Chatti, and Sugambri as well. Roman patrols and work parties along the route to Anreppen and in the countryside were caught off guard and slaughtered by Cherusci whom they at first thought to be allies. The Ampsivarii noble Boiocalus likewise was taken unawares and imprisoned when he refused to break his Roman allegiance.

Peter Janssen, artist

Arminius leads his tribesmen in a furious assault on the Romans in a romantic painting. The Germans conducted hit-and-run attacks on the long column until it was destroyed.

Out on the farmsteads, the tribal families gathered provisions of millet, barley, and livestock. Priests took sacred emblems from their holy groves and carried them into battle. The Germanic warriors would fight side by side with their family members. Fathers, sons, and brothers were comrades in arms, families were their squadrons and clans were their divisions.

Varus' army made good progress over relatively open country, covering 15 miles before setting up its first marching camp. In the middle of the camp, torches flickered off the silver and golden eagles planted in sacred ground. Early in the morning, trumpets called for the soldiers to wake. By the time they sounded twice more, the packing and loading was completed and the legions stood ready to march.

The path to the rebels led through heavy woods. Dark clouds of the northern fall hovered over the horizon. Soon Varus had his hands full just moving his army ahead. Oak and birch, beech and alder, boulders and rocks hemmed in the legions as if the very woods and mountains were turning against the Romans. There were no real roads by Roman standards. Legionary pioneers wiped beads of sweat from their foreheads as they lifted axes to chop trees blown onto the trail, which hindered the passage of the convoy wagons. Above them, tree limbs of giant oaks groaned and leaves rustled in the wind. Rain belted down and somewhere in the distance thunder burst and flashes of lightning cut the sky.

Tired feet stumbled over slippery roots. The armor and camp gear carried by each legionary got heavier and heavier. The officers were luckier; many rode horses and most of their gear was in the baggage train. Wooden wagons slid into swampy pools. Men groaned and whips lashed at sweat-coated mules as both strained to free wheels embedded in mud. Treetops broke and fell upon the Romans. Streams, swollen by the rain, had to be forded. The convoy became more and more stretched out. The legionaries hopelessly intermingled with the accompanying camp followers and with pack animals and the herds of livestock. Everything slowed to a snail's pace.

Whistles cut through the air. Here and there, all along the convoy, javelins and slingshot showered upon the Romans. The wind carried guttural bellows: the barbarians calling upon their spirits and their gods. Ghostly figures, pale-skinned, near-naked bearded giants, appeared and disappeared among the trees.

The barbarians, lightly armed, carrying nothingt but large oval shields were at home in the woods. They struck at will wherever the Romans were at their weakest. Overwhelming numbers of Germans would mow down half a dozen legionaries. Before the Romans could gather sufficient reinforcements, the barbarians would flee back into the impenetrable thickets. In their heavy mail or the newer segmented armor, the legionaries were too slow.

Slowly, painfully, the Roman convoy dragged itself onward. The barbarian attacks never let up, striking at man, woman and beast alike. The enemy was everywhere, and to the Romans, their numbers seemed without end. Arminius, the other chiefs, and their personal guards, distinguished by mail shirts and iron helmets as befitted their ranks, were likely in the thick of it. Probably Arminius galloped back and forth along the Roman column, directing and partaking in prepared ambushes

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German tribesmen assault Romans amid the ancient trees of the trackless, rugged terrain. A range of low, forested hills in the German Central Uplands was the scene of the disaster.

led by the chiefs. The Romans suffered mounting losses without being able to seriously harm the enemy. The only blessing was that at least the rain stopped for a while.

At last, Varus' battered convoy reached a place to set up camp. Despite the physical strain of the march and fighting, the legionaries' iron endurance enabled them to dig a deep ditch and pile the excavated soil into a rampart. Many remembered their training days when they cursed at having to carry equipment that was twice as heavy as their regular 70 pounds of armor and gear. Now that training paid off.

The two servants that attended to each contubernium of eight legionaries brought up their pack mule to unload the tent and the heavier baggage. Fires sprang up between the ordered rows of thousands of gable-roofed tents. Unfortunately, a lot of oxen, pigs, and sheep had been lost during the harrying attacks of the day. For many legionaries, the only meat to supplement their bread was perhaps a strip of dried bacon. The legionaries huddled around the fires, wrapped in their red military cloaks, the sagum, enjoying a last few swigs of cheap wine. The woolen sagum probably doubled as their blanket.

The groans of the heavily wounded broke the still night air. Ordinarily, the skill of Roman medics was such that despite their dangerous profession, Roman soldiers enjoyed a longer life span than their civilian counterparts. In the Teutoburg, though, it was difficult to keep wounds clean and to administer the required aid. Many of the wounded, victims of shock and blood loss, would never awake.

Somewhere deep in the forest, the Germanic warriors too took their rest. Their woolen trousers, tunics, and cloaks dried quickly beside smokeless fires. The Germanic women bandaged open wounds and applied healing herbs. They also provided moral support, praising their men who risked their lives for their families and who fought with courage. Alongside their usual porridge of barley and millet, the warriors ate pork and beef, some of the latter having no doubt come from the Roman column. As they wrapped themselves in blankets and furs and drifted into slumber, the Germans too thought of sons, fathers, and friends lost in battle.

The next morning, the Romans burned any surplus equipment and most of the wagons. They left behind their heavily wounded, doubtlessly killing many to spare them capture and torture. It would not have taken long for the Romans to identify their attackers of the previous day as Cherusci and Arminius were likely spotted in the fighting. Clearly, the initial news of a rebellion had been a sham meant to lure Varus and his army into the wilderness and disaster. The question for the Romans was how to proceed. The untried routes ahead, to the Ems and to friendly Frisii territory or to the lower Rhine, were far shorter than backtracking to the Lippe road. Their load lightened, the Romans pushed on northwest the next morning.

The barbarian attacks continued and their numbers grew. At times the road improved and led through cleared areas of pasture meadows, barley, and wheat fields. Yet even in these open areas the Romans faced ambushes by barbarians hidden in the long grasses. And thereafter the track always led back into the foreboding woods. Roman attempts to lash back at the barbarians in close infantry and cavalry ranks faltered as the trees jumbled up their formations. On the third day the overcast sky erupted anew, drenching the legions.

Fortunately for the legionaries they came upon good defensive ground for the next marching camp. They were now skirting the northeasterly to northern side of the 350-foot-high Kalkrieser Berg. The hill protruded from the Wiehengebirge on the northern extremity of the Weser Hills into the Great Moor. Behind the mauled convoy, back along its 20-mile passage to the southeast, lay 13,000 dead that were left as food for flocks of ravens and packs of wolves. The heaviest casualties were among the thousands of servants, slaves, and civilians who would have made the eas-

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Romans under Prefect Lucius Eggius storm a German rampart consisting of a waist-high palisade of stakes interlaced with twigs and branches that ran along the top of an embankment.

iest targets. The fatigued legionaries must have been ready to drop, but training and discipline paid off, enabling them to set up a defensive barrier.

In his command tent, Varus held council with his remaining senior officers. With two of his legion commanders having fallen in battle, Varus relied on his remaining legate Vala Numonius and his two camp prefects, the third in command of a legion, Ceonius and Lucius Eggius. In the end there remained only one choice. There was no going back and with no supplies they could not hold out. Plunging north or south into the even harsher terrain of the swamp or hills was tantamount to suicide.

Perhaps sitting by a fire, Arminius conferred with his chiefs as well. The battle had gone well, the Romans were beaten, and many called for an assault on the camp. Likely against the wishes of Arminius, who characteristically would have seen no point of risking his warriors on a premature attack, the loot-hungry council overruled him.

It was likely just before dawn that trumpets blared and Varus' banner, a large square identifying the commander and his army, was raised to signal the call for battle. From all directions, barbarians charged at the camp, plunging through the shallow ditch and storming the ramparts. Volleys of Roman arrows swooshed into the howling masses but the barbarians came on with a fury. The legionaries were able to fight in formation and defend from above, behind earthen ramparts and walls of sharp stakes. Released of their pent-up frustration, of not being able to come to grips with their foes, the legionaries fought with renewed vigor. The barbarian waves pounded against the Roman shield wall, only to be gutted and stabbed from above by Roman swords. Though swaths of tribesmen lay at their feet, with each assault the Roman lines became thinner until they gave way. The Roman breastwork half torn to pieces, the tribesmen burst into the camp.

Wounded in battle, Varus knew the end was near. Shamed by the disaster he had brought upon his legions, Varus chose the honorable death of suicide. In the footsteps of his father who met defeat at Philippi when Varus was but a child, Varus and his highest ranking officers fell on their swords. Word of Varus' death caused the troops to lose their last hope. A few imitated Varus and took their own lives. Others threw away their arms.

The last legionary line protecting Varus' body collapsed while his men tried to burn his body. Camp prefect Ceonius decided to surrender; he was killed. Legate Vala Numonius, the last legion commander, took command of the Roman cavalry. Vala, otherwise a brave man, decided that his only chance was to abandon the infantry and he vanished with his cavalry into the forests. They were never heard of again. The only one who retained his composure was the remaining camp prefect, Lucius Eggius. Retaining order among his own cohorts, he rallied fleeing legionaries to him. Gathering what provisions they could on mules and taking with them their wives and closest servants, the legionaries of Eggius' ad-hoc battle group fought their way out. Probably they faced only sporadic opposition as the bulk of the barbarians were busy ransacking the Roman camp.

When the spoiling attacks on Eggius' retreating column abated, his men proceeded in silence. Hoping to elude their pursuers, Eggius' men even muffled the bells attached to the mule harnesses with tufts of grass and earth. Their hopes were dashed when the way ahead narrowed into a choke point between deep swamp to their right and an earth embankment to their left. A waist-high palisade of stakes, interlaced twigs, and branches ran along the top of the embankment, and behind it lurked more tribesmen. The legionaries locked their shields above their heads in tortoise formation. Under a deluge of missiles, they tried to force the barrier. The wooden mesh bent but did not break easily under the blows of Roman axes and entrenching tools. When the Romans faltered the barbarians sallied forth. Groups of Romans died fighting to the end, including brave Eggius. Others finally panicked, risking all for a mad dash into the swamp. Only a very few lucky legionaries managed to make a desperate escape to the Rhine.

A red haze clouded the barbarians' eyes as they "struck down man and beast," wrote Roman historian Cassius Dio. Somewhere on the battlefield, out of the hands of the Roman standard bearers slipped the gilded silver or golden eagle standards. Two eagle standards, the physical embodiments of the legions, fell into barbarian hands. One was claimed by the Cherusci, another was taken into the land of the Marsi. The third legionary eagle was broken off its shaft by its bearer, who hid the eagle under his clothing and disappeared into the swamp.

The Germans dug up the half-burned body of Varus. One of them walked up to the ghastly blood- and mud-soaked corpse. He lifted his blade and lopped off the head. No doubt a wild cry went up from the bystanders; this was the fate of the Roman "conquerors." From a platform, Arminius addressed his exuberant warriors, who cheered his mocking of the eagles and the Roman standards. The grim trophy of Varus was eventually sent to Maroboduus, Arminius' rival and king of the Marcomanni, a sign of the power of Arminius and the Cherusci.

The barbarians took cruel vengeance, especially on the leaders, the stripling, thin-stripe tribunes, and the hardened first centurions. "They pierced out the eyes of some and cut off the hands of others. In one case, they cut out the man's tongue ... and the barbarian who held it in his hand shouted at him: 'Now, snake, your hissing is finished,'" wrote Roman historian Publius Annius Florus.

The merciless Germanic gods also demanded their due. Several hundred Roman prisoners were sacrificed, dragged to altars in forest

groves. The Romans had their throats slit or they were hanged from trees. Weapons, armor, and ornaments were thrown into sacred ponds.

Others were dragged into slavery, a fate the Romans had meted out to so many other people. "Men who might have hoped to enter the Senate someday spent the rest of their lives as shepherds or doorkeepers," wrote Roman historian Seneca. Amazingly, 40 years after the battle, a few Roman survivors were recovered by allied German tribal levies who intercepted a party of Chatti raiders into Upper Germania.

Since ambushes and javelin barrages killed the majority of Romans in the Teutoburg, German casualties probably numbered less than 4,000 killed and wounded. Of the wounded, a few hundred more died days or weeks later from the common battle ailments of tetanus, gangrene bacterium infections and blood poisoning. The bodies of the German dead were placed on funeral pyres alongside their weapons. As flames engulfed the fallen, women wailed in anguish and sorrow while the men held back their tears.

The barbarians pressed onward to Aliso on the Lippe. Arminius displayed the heads of slain legionaries in front of the besieged Roman garrison. Camp prefect Lucius Caedicius replied with volleys of Roman arrows that mowed down the assaulting barbarians. Caedicius held the walls until his provisions were used up and most of the tribesmen had moved off. During a stormy night his garrison made its way west, reaching the Rhine but abandoning a large number of civilians. Farther south, on the Lahn, the Romans burned down their town at Waldgermis and fled to the Rhine.

On the Rhine, Asprenas' two legions had their hands full as tribesmen on the river's west side were causing trouble. At Oppidum Ubiorum, Segestes' son Segimundus removed his insignia of the Roman priesthood and ran off to join his father, who sided with the rebels. Allegedly, Segimundus even desecrated the corpse of Varus. Everything that had been gained in nearly 30 years of campaigning had been lost in a single battle.

The news of the disaster reached Augustus at Rome along with the head of Varus, courtesy of Maroboduus, which the emperor honorably laid to rest in Varus family vault. Augustus disbanded his German bodyguard and sent patrols into the streets to prevent an uprising. He promised the people games in honor of Jupiter, the father of the Roman gods. Tiberius, who had just brought the Illyrian revolt to an end, respectfully postponed his triumph in light of the Varian disaster.

To maintain stability abroad, Augustus prolonged the terms of the provincial governors. As in the crisis of the Illyrian insurrection, Augustus requisitioned slaves for freedmen cohorts to shore up the Rhine defenses. The freedmen would have to suffice until six additional legions and large numbers of auxiliaries were transferred from the barely ended fighting in Dalmatia.

Lippisches Landesmuseum

German tribesmen overrun a Roman unit. Unlike in Gaul, the lack of large urban centers and good roads in Germany made it difficult for the Romans to subjugate the scattered militaristic population.

The numbers of the lost legions, the Seventeenth, the Eighteenth, and the Nineteenth, were never reallocated. The defeat in the Teutoburg was unquestionably a major setback for the Roman conquest of Germania, one that became the turning point in the Germanic wars.

For months after news of the defeat, the 72-year-old Augustus let his beard and hair go untrimmed. He beat his head on a door and shouted, "Quinctilius Varus, give me back my legions." The anniversary of the Varian disaster remained a day of mourning. More important, it convinced Augustus to abandon his plan for extending the Roman frontier to the Elbe.

Why the change in Augustus' policy? After all, the Roman Republic had absorbed greater losses against the Cimbri and Teutones and against Hannibal—even though, theoretically, the Republic had a much smaller recruiting base than Augustus' huge empire. Augustus even retained the state's right to recruit by compulsion and extended it to the provinces. In reality, however, political considerations likely limited the ability of Augustus to conscript citizen troops.

Two new legions were raised, the Twenty-first and the Twenty-second. The Twenty-second was probably made up of Galatian troops, recently granted citizenship. The Twenty-first was made up

Continued on page 65

Major General Patrick Cleburne leads his division against Union breastworks at Franklin, Tennessee, in a modern painting by Don Troiani. Cleburne was one of six Confederate generals who died in the disastrous frontal assault.

"LET US DIE LIKE MEN"

In his last battle at Franklin, Tennessee, Patrick Cleburne led his troops in a heroic effort to pierce the Union defenses. His sense of duty outweighed his doubts about John Bell Hood's leadership.

BY MIKE PHIFER

MAJOR GENERAL PATRICK Ronayne Cleburne rose to his feet in the early afternoon of November 30, 1864, when he saw the courier galloping toward him. Cleburne had been playing a makeshift game of checkers with a staff officer at the bottom of Winstead Hill a couple of miles south of Franklin, Tennessee, killing time until his division caught up with him. He was also trying to keep his mind off the anger and hurt that was burning inside of him.

After being informed by the courier that Lt. Gen. John Bell Hood, the commander of the Confederate Army of Tennessee, wanted to see him at his headquarters, Cleburne mounted his horse. He rode toward the Harrison House, located about a half mile south of Winstead Hill, where Hood had set up his headquarters.

Cleburne was incensed with Hood for accusations he had made against him that morning. The previous night the Federals had been allowed to slip away from Spring Hill and retreat toward Franklin, escaping Hood's plan to crush them. Hood blamed Maj. Gen. Benjamin Cheatham, Cleburne's corps commander, as well as Cleburne himself and Maj. Gen. John Brown, another divisional commander in the corps, for allowing the Yankees to escape. Cleburne's division had a well-earned reputation as a tough, dependable division, and Hood's accusation stung fiercely. Cleburne was determined to erase Hood's accusations against him.

Upon reaching the Harrison House, Cleburne joined Cheatham and Brown as well as Maj. Gen. William Bate, another divisional commander from Cheatham's corps; Lt. Gen. Alexander Stewart, a corps commander; and the outspoken cavalry commander, Maj. Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest. Although not all of his army was there yet, Hood was not going

Don Troiani / Corbis Images

Library of Congress

Patrick Cleburne's entrenched graybacks put up a stubborn defense at Missionary Ridge against repeated assaults by Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman's bluecoats. It was one of Cleburne's finest performances of the war.

to wait for them. He informed his generals he planned to make a frontal assault against the entrenched enemy at Franklin. Hood believed the Federals had no intention of making a stand at Franklin but instead were just covering their retreat. With a good push, he might finish them instead of fighting them at Nashville, which the Federals had been fortifying since they captured it in 1862.

Forrest thought it a bad idea and advised Hood not to make a frontal attack as the enemy was well fortified. Instead, Forrest said, "Give me one strong division of infantry with my cavalry, and within two hours' time I can flank the Federals from their works." Cheatham concurred. "I do not like the looks of this fight," he said. "The enemy has an excellent position and are well fortified."

Hood would not be dissuaded. He not only wanted to crush the Yankees but also restore his army's fighting spirit, which he thought was lacking. As the meeting adjourned Hood followed Cleburne outside and reminded him of his orders. Cleburne replied, "I will either take the enemy's works or fall in the attempt." Sadly, Cleburne had only hours left to live.

Cleburne was born on March 16, 1828, in County Cork, Ireland. His father was a physician who, after his first wife died, remarried and moved to an estate. Supporting his estate kept Dr. Joseph Cleburne's finances tight and he was unable to send Patrick to a school in England. Instead, young Cleburne was sent away to a nearby Protestant school at the age of 12.

Three years later tragedy struck when Patrick's father died and left his wife in financial difficulty. To lessen the family burden, Patrick left school and took an apprenticeship with a medical colleague of his father. Young Cleburne became quite efficient at mixing medicine and decided he wanted to make it his profession. It was not to be; his application to be a student in the Apothecaries Hall, Trinity College, in Dublin was rejected twice. Then things got worse.

Hardships in mid-1840s Ireland forced his employer to let young Cleburne go. Not willing to return home and put more financial stress on the family, Cleburne went to Dublin where he once again failed to gain admission in the Apothecaries Hall. Believing he had disgraced his family and with few options left, Cleburne joined the British Army.

Enlisting in the 41st Regiment of Foot, Cleburne remained in Ireland due to political and civil unrest for more than three years, eventually obtaining the rank of corporal. When he turned 21, he received some money from his deceased mother's dowry that allowed him to purchase a discharge. Although his military training would serve him well in the coming years in the service of the Confederacy, he was glad to leave the Army. Less than two weeks after his discharge, Cleburne and three of his siblings boarded a ship for America.

The day after Christmas 1849, Cleburne set foot in New Orleans. He set out almost immediately for Cincinnati, Ohio, where he had a relative and spent the winter working in a drug store. The following spring he moved to Helena, Arkansas, where he found employment managing a drugstore. The shy young man did well but eventually left the business to become a lawyer.

Cleburne helped organize a militia company in 1860 called the Yell Rifles. He was elected captain of the company, and he drew upon his experience in the British Army when drilling the eager volunteers. Cleburne, who saw himself as an Arkansan, was determined to support the people of the state who had given him their unflinching support.

When war broke out on April 12, 1861, the Yell Rifles were combined with nine other volunteer units and became the 1st Arkansas Volunteer Infantry with Cleburne as their colonel. A stern leader, Cleburne nevertheless looked out for the welfare of his men. Cleburne's well-drilled regiment soon found itself in a brigade under the command of Brig. Gen. William Hardee.

Cleburne led his men into their baptism of fire at Shiloh on April 6, 1862. The Irish-born officer, who had been promoted to brigadier general the month before the battle, led Hardee's old brigade, something he had been doing since the previous fall when Hardee was promoted to division commander. In the two days of bloody fighting at Shiloh Church, Cleburne's brigade lost a shocking 1,043 killed, wounded, and missing out of 2,750 troops.

In the days following the defeat at Shiloh, Cleburne set out to rebuild his brigade. The battle had given Cleburne valuable combat experience which he used to improve himself and his men on the battlefield. It was during the Confederate invasion of Kentucky that Cleburne would become an acting division commander. His brigade was temporarily detached from the Army of the Mississippi under General

Braxton Bragg and assigned to Maj. Gen. Kirby Smith's Army of East Tennessee. Smith was heading north for Kentucky from Knoxville through east Tennessee, while Bragg was setting off from Chattanooga through central Tennessee. The two loaned brigades were formed into a small division and put under the command of Cleburne.

While organizing a counterattack during the fighting at Richmond, Kentucky, on August 30, Cleburne took a bullet through his left cheek. Although he tried to remain in the battle, he was soon unable to speak and had to seek medical help. A month later Cleburne was back with his brigade in Bragg's army, and he again was wounded at the Battle of Perryville on October 8.

After retreating to Tennessee after the failure in Kentucky, the Army of the Mississippi was reorganized and renamed the Army of Tennessee. Cleburne was promoted to the rank of major general on December 12 at the recommendation of his departing division commander, Maj. Gen. Simon Buckner, his corps commander Hardee, and army commander Bragg. Cleburne took over the division despite there being two other brigade commanders with more seniority.

Cleburne led his division into action at the Battle of Stones River on December 31 where his men smashed the Union's right flank and drove it back three miles. Despite the success of the first day, the second day of battle did not go well for Bragg, and his army was soon in retreat.

In the coming months the former British army corporal continued to drill his division, making it one of the best in the Army of Tennessee. The division's fame had allowed them to keep their distinctive rectangular blue battle flag with an oval white moon in the center, while the rest of army's units were ordered to fly the Confederate battle flag with the St. Andrew 's Cross. The men of Cleburne's division loved their blue battle flag, which they had carried under the two previous division commanders. It was a high compliment to be allowed to continue to carry the flag, but as Cleburne's adjutant, Captain Irving Buck, wrote, "Like all luxuries it was costly and carried with it penalties, for the enemy had learned to whom the flag belonged, and where it appeared there was concentrated their heaviest fire."

The blue battle flag was fluttering again as Cleburne led his division forward on September 19, 1863, at the Battle of Chickamauga. For two days Cleburne's division was in the thick of the fighting. As a result, it suffered 1,743 casualties. After the Battle of Chickamauga, the Union Army withdrew to Chattanooga.

In summer 1863, Hardee had been dispatched to Mississippi, and Lt. Gen. Daniel Harvey Hill assumed command, replacing Cleburne. Hill and other officers under Bragg's command had openly expressed their displeasure with Bragg for not immediately capitalizing on the Confederate victory at Chickamauga. In response, Confederate President Jefferson Davis visited the army to address the matter. He ruled in favor of Bragg despite widespread distrust of him. Davis gave Bragg permission to remove Hill. Hill left the army in October and was replaced by Maj. Gen. John Breckinridge. Hardee returned to the army in late October and took command of Cheatham's corps, with Cheatham taking command of a division in it. Cleburne's division was then transferred to Hardee's command.

Positioned on the northern end of the Confederate position on Missionary Ridge overlooking Chattanooga, Cleburne's 4,000-strong division repulsed repeated Federal assaults on November 25. It was a significant achievement considering Cleburne's division was outnumbered by the attacking Union forces by four to one. Despite Cleburne's success, the Federals at Chattanooga broke the Confederate center on Missionary Ridge. While Bragg's army attempted to limp away, Cleburne's division held back a Federal force for four hours at Ringgold Gap, allowing the Army of Tennessee and their wagon train to escape.

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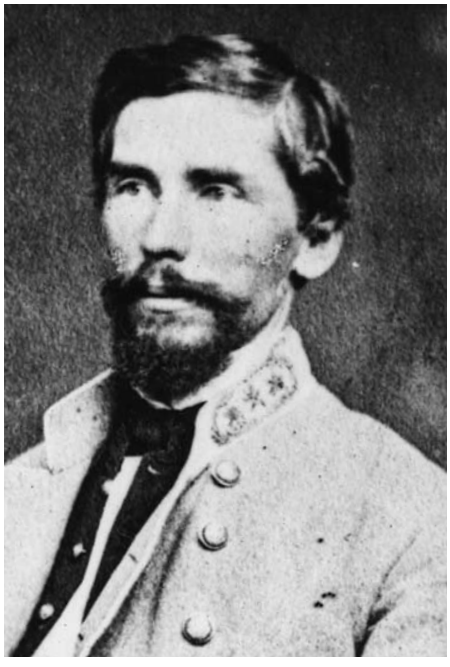

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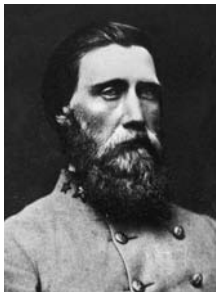
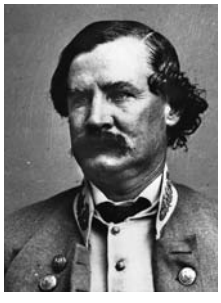




Clockwise from Top: Maj. Gen. Patrick Cleburne, Maj. Gen. Benjamin Cheatham, and General John Bell Hood.

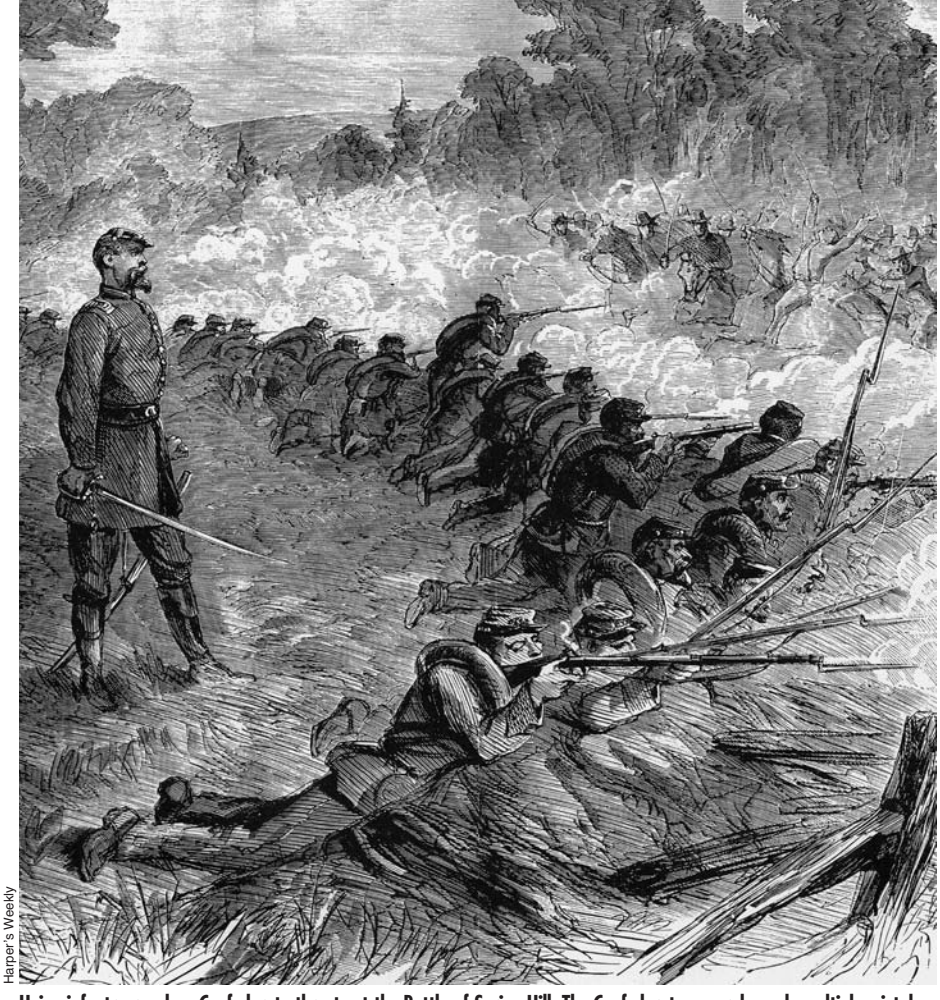
Nicknamed the "Stonewall of the West" by Confederate President Jefferson Davis, Cleburne was again proving himself a very capable commander with a division "reputed to be the best in Bragg's Army," as one Union officer stated. It was not to be Bragg's army for long, though, as he resigned much to relief of many of his senior officers, including Cleburne, who had been in the group against him. General Joseph E. Johnston soon took command of the army.

Cleburne's division would see plenty of fighting in the spring and summer of 1864 as Union General William Tecumseh Sherman advanced on Atlanta. Unhappy with Johnston's tactics, Davis sacked him on July 17 and replaced him with Hood. Davis wanted an aggressive commander. That's exactly what he got, albeit one who knew little more than how to attack in force. Hood had commanded a corps in the Army of Tennessee since late February, when he took over Breckinridge's old corps (a job Cleburne was expected to get) and his promotion now left a vacancy. Cleburne again was passed over for the promotion and the position eventually went to Stephen D. Lee, who was promoted to lieutenant general on June 23, 1864.

Nevertheless, Cleburne did temporarily command a corps under Hardee during the August 31 clash at Jonesborough south of Atlanta. Hardee's two-corps attack was repulsed. The following day, the Federals counterattacked; in the process, they nearly breached Cleburne's line when they overran Brig. Gen. Daniel Govan's brigade. Fortunately for the Confederates, Cleburne plugged the breach with another brigade. But with the Confederate's last remaining railroad line into Atlanta cut, Hood evacuated the city. Hardee's attack at Jonesborough was "a disgraceful effort," said Hood.

Hardee did not remain under Hood's command for very long. On September 27, Davis gave Hood permission to transfer Hardee out of his army. With Hardee gone, command of his corps went to Cheatham. Cleburne thought of leaving, too, but stayed out of loyalty to his division.

After consultation with Davis, Hood was to pull his army back to northern Georgia and operate against the vital Western and Atlantic Railroad that supplied Sherman's forces. It was hoped



Harper's Weekly

Union infantry repulses Confederate thrusts at the Battle of Spring Hill. The Confederate generals made multiple mistakes at the battle, thus missing a chance to destroy part of Maj. Gen. John Schofield's army.

the Federal commander would be forced to come out of Atlanta and fight on ground of Hood's choosing. Sherman followed Hood for a short time but eventually broke off his pursuit.

At that point, Hood decided to take a bold gamble. He planned to march north to Nashville in an effort to draw Sherman out of Georgia. Once he had captured Nashville, Hood then planned to continue advancing north until he reached the Ohio River. From there he would push east and link up with General Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia.

On October 30, Lt. Gen. Stephen D. Lee's corps crossed the Tennessee River at Florence, Alabama. For the first three weeks of November bad weather and the slow arrival of supplies stalled Hood at Tuscumbia on the south of Tennessee River. Forest was raiding in west Tennessee, and Lee waited for the cavalry commander to join him.

Hood embarked on his desperate venture in a winter storm on November 21. The Army of Tennessee numbered 38,000 men and was divided into three infantry corps. In addition, the army benefited from the attachment of Forrest's cavalry corps with its large complement of artillery. On the right was Stewart's corps marching on the road to Lawrenceburg, in the center was Lee's corps marching on back roads to Henryville, and on the left was Cheatham's corps moving along the road to Waynesboro. Cleburne's division led the way for Cheatham, marching through mud and pelted with sleet. Forrest's cavalry screened the advance.

The Federal commander in Nashville, Maj. Gen. George Thomas, could field 70,000 troops to face Hood. But the Federal troops were spread out, including two divisions coming from Missouri. The IV Corps under Maj. Gen. David Stanley, and the XXIII Corps under Maj. Gen. John Schofield were dispatched by Sherman to reinforce Thomas should the Confederates attack. While Thomas strengthened his position at Nashville, Schofield, who was 75 miles to the south at Pulaski, Tennessee, was ordered to delay Hood's advance. Schofield commanded two corps totalling about 25,000 men as well as a detachment of cavalry.

Upon hearing of Stewart's corps reaching Lawrenceburg, which put them about halfway to the key town of Columbia along the Duck River, Schofield became concerned he might be cut off from Nashville. On November 22, he got his troops marching north in the rain and mud for Columbia, hoping to beat Hood's men. Two days later he won the race to Columbia.

That same day, Cleburne and his division arrived at Ashwood. Nearby was the plantation home of good friend Brig. Gen. Lucius Polk, who had commanded a brigade in Cleburne's division until he was severely wounded in June. Spotting a scenic little chapel nearby, Cleburne said, "It is almost worth dying to rest in so sweet a spot." His words would turn out to be prophetic.

Cleburne's division soon deployed with the rest of Hood's infantry in front of Columbia to find the Federals had dug an arc of entrenchments south of the town. Schofield evacuated his troops to the north side of the Duck River on the night of November 27 and burned two bridges as he went. Despite this, Hood had a plan to crush the Federal force. While Forrest drove off the Federal cavalry, Cheatham and Stewart's men would cross at Davis's Ford a few miles east of Columbia. Then they would strike out for Spring Hill, 12 miles behind Schofield's position, and block his retreat route. Meanwhile, most of the artillery and two divisions from Lee's corps would remain at Columbia to keep Schofield occupied.

Cleburne's division set out early on the morning of November 29 for Davis's Ford, reaching it around 7 AM. Crossing the Duck River on a pontoon bridge, the tattered column of Cleburne's men, some of them shoeless, pushed north for Spring Hill on roads east of the main Columbia-Franklin Pike. Riding with Cleburne at the head of the lead brigade was Hood, who was strapped to the saddle due to battle injuries from Gettysburg and Chickamauga that resulted in major damage to his left arm and amputation of his right leg, respectively. Behind Cleburne's division followed the rest of the Cheatham's corps and behind them Stewart's corps with a division from Lee's corps.

Earlier Schofield received word from Union cavalry commander Maj. Gen. James Wilson that the Rebels were laying a pontoon bridge across the river and were likely heading for Franklin. He advised Schofield to retire his whole force along the Columbia-Franklin Pike. Schofield was skeptical; nevertheless, he began marching north to Spring Hill with his supply train, reserve artillery, and two divisions from Stanley's IV Corps. One of these divisions was to be deployed at Rutherford Creek, located a third of the way between Spring Hill and Columbia, to secure the crossing there on the main pike.

Meanwhile, Forrest continued to drive the Federal cavalry north and east. "The enemy gradually fell back, making resistance only at

favorable positions," wrote Forrest. After a sharp skirmish at Mount Caramel, five miles east of Spring Hill, the blue-coated horsemen continued to fall back toward Franklin, while Forrest, leaving a brigade to keep an eye on them, galloped hard for Spring Hill.

Stanley was about two miles south of town when a hard-riding courier told him that Forrest was headed toward Spring Hill. Stanley got his men moving at double time and the lead brigade under Colonel Emerson Opdycke arrived in time to reinforce the two regiments garrisoning the town to repulse an attack by Forrest's leading division. Brig. Gen. George Wagner's division soon arrived, and Stanley deployed his 5,000 men behind makeshift breastworks to cover the town and the vital Columbia-Franklin Pike. Forrest could do nothing but skirmish with the Federals and wait for the infantry as his men began to run low on ammunition.

After trudging along muddy roads for hours, Cleburne's division finally splashed across Rutherford Creek around 3 PM. Spring Hill lay only about 2½ miles to the northwest. While Cleburne was ordered to advance to the Columbia-Franklin Pike and turn south to block Schofield's retreat route, Cheatham was to remain at the ford and wait for the arrival of Maj. Gen. William Bate's division of his corps and then lead it to Cleburne's support.

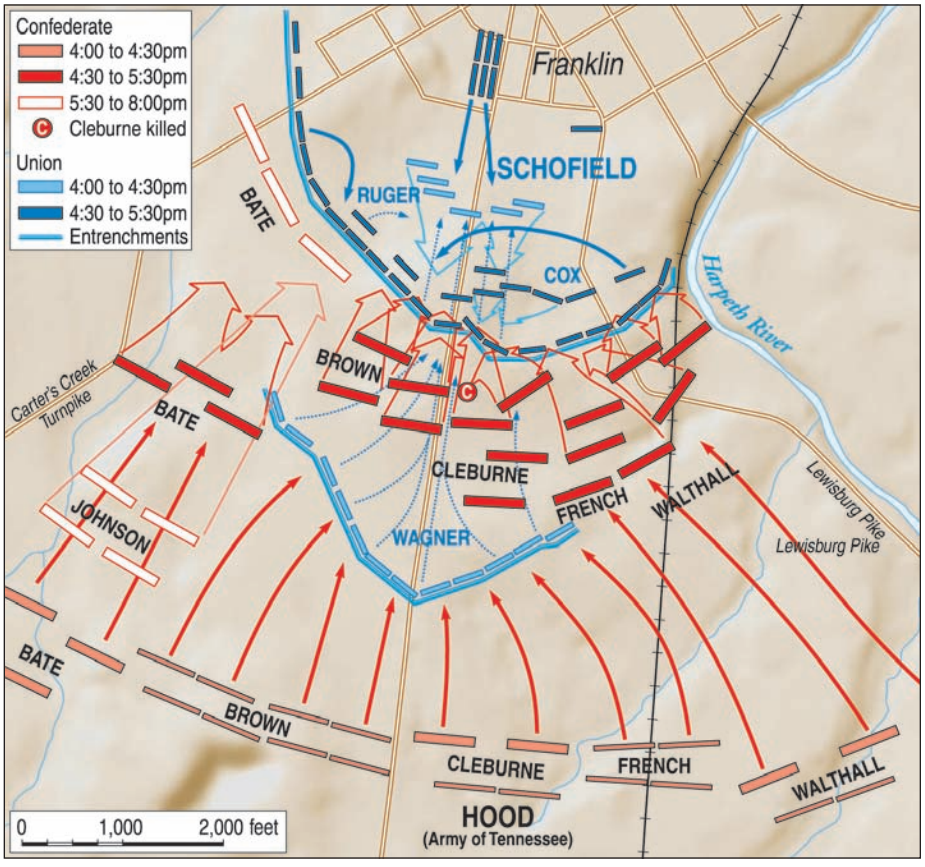
After advancing about a mile and crossing McCutcheon's Creek, Cleburne put his three brigades into battle order. Hood soon appeared and ordered Cleburne to advance in echelon formation. With Brig. Gen. Mark Lowrey's brigade on the right and somewhat advanced, Brig. Gen. Govan's brigade in the center, and Brig. Gen. Hiram Granbury's brigade on the left, the 3,000 men of Cleburne's division set off at about 3:45 PM with the sun sinking in the western sky. Cleburne's remaining brigade under the command of James Smith was with the army's supply train and would not catch up until early December. Covering Cleburne's right flank was Forrest and a brigade of his men who still had some ammunition.

With no time to reconnoiter the Federal lines, Cleburne's division set out across fields, getting part way to the Columbia-Franklin Pike, when they came upon Brig. Gen. Luther Bradley's brigade of the 2nd Division which was positioned behind makeshift breastworks of fence rails in a wooded area. Lowrey's brigade supported by Govan's brigade on its left drove the Federals off, sending them running for their lives toward Spring Hill. The Confederates chased after them through the trees but were soon brought up short when they came out in the open along a creek. They came under fire from 18 guns the Federals had lined up on some high ground south of town near the pike.

Adding to Cleburne's misery, two more guns posted on the pike fired against his men. Granbury's brigade, which did not charge with the other two brigades, drove off the two guns and supporting infantry. Cleburne recalled his men and sent word to Cheatham of what was going on. An artillery shell burst overhead, severely wounding his horse. The Federals, seeing Cleburne's blue battle flag, braced themselves for another assault.

It was not to come. Sometime around 5 PM, Maj. Gen. John Brown had arrived with his division and was forming on Cleburne's right. Cheatham, who was unaware of Hood's intention to block the pike, was planning an attack against Spring Hill. Brown was to attack to Cleburne's right, and once the Irishman heard the gunfire he was to attack as well. Bate's Division was to attack on Cleburne's left.

Hood had sent this division to march to the Columbia-Franklin Pike and then swing south. An aide of Cheatham found the division and directed it to move north and make contact with Cleburne, who was still listening for the sound of Brown's gunfire. It never came because Brown



Angered by his failure to cut off Schofield's retreat at Spring Hill, Hood rashly launched a frontal assault across two miles of open ground against an entrenched enemy. The result was 7,000 Confederate casualties, among which were 14 generals killed, wounded, or captured.

decided not to attack, telling Cheatham he did not want to expose his right flank to an attack from Federals reported to be north of him. Hood postponed the attack when Cheatham informed him of Brown's concern, although he did order Stewart's corps to advance on Brown's right and seize the pike north of Spring Hill. Stewart got lost in the dark and soon reported to Hood that his men were tired and hungry and needed rest. Hood told him to bivouac for the night. Hood then asked Forrest to block the pike with his cavalry. The cavalry commander promised to do the best he could, but with his men low on ammunition and worn out, there was little he could do. The Columbia-Franklin pike remained open.

While campfires flickered in the darkness as the worn-out Confederate troops prepared to make their meals and get some rest, Schofield's bluecoats retreated up the open Columbia-Franklin Pike. Realizing the danger he was in, Schofield ordered a withdrawal mid-afternoon. At 7 PM, the

lead Federal brigades reached Spring Hill, slipping past the Rebels who at some points were a few hundred yards from the pike. On through the night Federals retreated north to Franklin, reaching it at about 4:30 AM on November 30.

When he awoke in the morning and learned that the Yankees had escaped, Hood was "wrathy as a rattlesnake," said Maj. Gen. John Brown. At a breakfast meeting with some of his senior officers he blamed Cheatham and by extension Brown and Cleburne, who he had personally ordered to take the pike.

As the Confederates set out after the Federals, Stewart's corps led the way followed by Cheatham's corps. Forrest continued to ride ahead and hurry along the Federal rear guard. Cleburne, meanwhile, was hurt and angered when he found out that Hood thought him partially responsible for the Federal escape. In discussing the matter with Brown, Cleburne told him he thought the responsibility rested with Hood, who "was upon the field during the afternoon and was fully advised during the night." Cleburne told Brown they would speak more on this, but they never did.

After leaving the meeting with Hood in the early afternoon, a despondent Cleburne headed over to tell his brigadier generals of the order to attack Franklin. "Well, General, there will not be many of us that will get back to Arkansas," said Govan. Cleburne replied, "Well Govan, if we are to die, let us die like men."

While his brigadier generals got their men moving, Cleburne rode ahead stopping north of Breezy Hill, which was located east of Winstead Hill. Between these hills ran the Columbia-Franklin Pike. These hills had earlier in the day been held by Wagner's division until they evacuated them when the Rebels threatened to flank them. Cleburne joined a detachment of sharpshooters on a rocky hill and commented that he had left his field glasses behind and asked if he could borrow a telescope. Lieutenant John Ozanne quickly detached the long telescope from his Whitworth rifle, focused it, and handed it to Cleburne.

The sharpshooters had a good position from which to view the Yankees at Franklin, and Cleburne soon got an eyeful as he rested the telescope on a stump and peered through it. The Federals had been busy in Franklin. The Tennessee town was snuggled on the south side of a bend in the Harpeth River. There were two bridges in town, but they were both damaged. Schofield had been expecting pontoons, but they had not yet arrived from Thomas, so he took charge of the repair of the bridges, and he ordered his 3rd Division commander, Brig. Gen. Jacob Cox, to take command of the defenses of Franklin with orders to "hold Hood back at all hazards till we can get our trains over, and fight with the river in front of us." At this point the river was at their back.

Setting up his headquarters in the brick Carter House, Cox quickly put the bluecoats to work digging trenches or improving existing ones and constructing breastworks. With the Carter House as the central point near where the pike ran through, the Federal line was anchored by the river on either side of the town. The ground in front of the Federal position was to Cox's liking as it was mostly open for about two miles. To hold the line, Cox had the three brigades of his division positioned on the left, stretching from the river and railroad line to the Columbia-Franklin Pike, where the road was left open through the Federal entrenchment. A second line was constructed about 250 yards to the north near the Carter House.

Brigadier General Thomas Ruger's division, minus one brigade, was positioned on the west side of the Columbia Pike. To their right was positioned Brig. Gen. Nathan Kimball's division from the IV Corps, which stretched to the river on the right. Brig. Gen Thomas Wood's division of the same corps was posted across the river to protect the bridges under repair and guard the supply wagons once they rolled across the repaired bridges. Brig. Gen. George Wagner's division, which was acting as the Federal rear guard, took up a position about 800 yards in front of main entrenchment with Colonel Joseph Conrad's brigade on the east side of the main pike and Col. John Lane's brigade on the west side. Wagner's 1st Brigade commander, Colonel Opdycke, bluntly refused to deploy his men in such an exposed position and promptly marched his men behind the Union line. Schofield had strengthened his front line with artillery pieces and also positioned artillery at Fort Granger deep behind the Union left flank. Maj. Gen. Wilson's cavalry brigades were posted east of town on both sides of the river.

After he finished surveying the impressive Union lines, Cleburne said, "They have three lines of works, and they are all completed." He then returned to his division where he oversaw its preparations for the attack.

Hood's plan of attack was to have Maj. Gen. William Loring, Maj. Gen. Edward Walthall, and Maj. Gen. Samuel French's divisions of Stewart's corps advance on the eastern side of the open ground and attack the Federal left. Covering Stewart's right flank would be dismounted troopers from Forrest's cavalry advancing along the river. Bate's and Brown's divisions of Cheatham's corps would attack across the open ground west of the Columbia-Franklin Pike, while Cleburne's division would attack on the east side of the pike. To his right would be French's division. Dismounted troopers would cover the far left of Cheatham's corps. Lee's corps with most of the artillery had not arrived yet, but by 3:30 PM with only an hour of daylight left Hood decided not to wait any longer to attack. Lee's corps would act as the army's reserve when it arrived from Columbia.

It was nearing 4 PM when 20,000 tattered Confederates in gray and butternut moved forward, their battle flags fluttering. Rabbits scurried and coveys of quail fluttered to get out of way of the six divisions and their skirmishers. Federal artillery quickly began to open up on the advancing Rebels.

As they moved closer to the enemy, Cleburne called in his skirmishers and deployed his three brigades, which had been advancing in column formations into line. With Brig. Gen. Hiram Granbury's brigade of mostly Texans on the left, Govan's brigade of Arkansans in the center, and Brig. Gen. Mark Lowrey's brigade of Alabamians and Mississippians on the right, they closed within 50 yards of the 2,000 men of Conrad's brigade. The enemy fired a strong volley. Cleburne's men briefly halted, and then they charged the Federals at the double quick, screaming the blood-curdling Rebel yell.

The Federals broke as did men of the Lane's brigade as they faced not only Cleburne's division, but also elements of Brown and French's divisions. As the bluecoats ran hard for their main line, someone among the Confederates shouted, "Go into the works with them!" The cry was taken up as Cleburne and Brown's men surged after them, killing or capturing the slower ones. It was now a deadly race to the Union lines in the center.

On Cleburne's right, Stewart's corps swept toward the Federals' entrenchment and were greeted by an appalling fire. Enfilading artillery fire from across the Harpeth River added to the Confederate's misery. A grove of locust trees that the Federals had turned into an abatis slowed down some of attacking brigades, prolonging the men's exposure to the deadly fire of the Union troops, some of whom were sporting repeating rifles. Despite the storm of lead, some Rebel troops managed to reach the breastworks, only to be pinned down or killed. Brig. Gen. John Adams managed to get atop of the breastworks on his horse and grab the col-

Library of Congress

The Battle of Franklin is depicted in a chromolithograph. Hailed as the "Stonewall Jackson of the West," Cleburne is remembered as a hard fighter, strict disciplinarian, and fearless leader who was beloved by his men.

ors of one of the Federal regiments. Both Adams and his horse were shot down. The attack on the Federal left had failed with grievous casualties.

Meanwhile, Cleburne continued to urge his men on as they ran toward the Federal lines. Cleburne's borrowed horse was shot out from under him 100 yards from the Federal works. One of his staff officers, Lieutenant Jim Brandon, quickly dismounted and offered Cleburne his horse. As Cleburne was about to swing into the saddle, this horse also was killed. Drawing his sword, Cleburne charged on foot toward the Federal lines.

By this time, a wall of flame had exploded from the enemy works as the bluecoats poured a deadly fire into both Cleburne and Brown's men. Granbury, who was leading his Texans forward, was shot in the head. More men went down, but still the screaming Rebels came on. They pressed through the gap in the Union lines where the Columbia-Franklin Pike entered the town. Meanwhile, Cleburne got to within about 50 yards of the Federal line when a bullet struck his chest. He was killed instantly. No one at that the time seemed to notice, and his men surged through the gap in the enemy's line.

Brutal fighting raged around the Carter House and a cotton gin located to the east of the pike near the entrenchment, as Cleburne and Brown's men attempted to widen the 200 yard gap and split Schofield's force. The Confederates swung some captured artillery pieces on the bluecoats, only to discover there were no primers. "A mass of frightened recruits and panic-stricken men came surging back," said an officer in Opdycke's 1,500-man division as they entered the deafening meat grinder around the Carter House to plug the gap. More Federal troops arrived to help and slowly the Confederates were driven back to the breastworks were they grimly held on. The Federals were forced to construct a barricade at the garden of the Carter House as each side continued to pour a withering fire into the other. Any attempt by Cleburne's men to renew the attack was driven back. The men decided to wait for Cleburne's order to attack but it never came. "I knew Pat Cleburne was dead for if he had been living they would have been ordered to attack yet again," said one Confederate soldier.

Meanwhile, the attack made by Bate's division, which was deployed on Confederate left, had failed. Maj. Gen. Edward Johnson's division of Lee's corps was sent into the fray sometime after 7 PM in the dark. Johnson's assault failed and only added to the body count. The firing sputtered out around 10 PM. An hour later the bluecoats started to cross over the Harpeth River. By the morning of December 1, Schofield's army had again given Hood the slip as they headed north to Nashville. Hood would follow after Schofield to Nashville, and his wounded army would be shattered in the same manner of frontal attack as occurred at Franklin.

November 30 had been a bloody day for the Confederates. They lost an estimated 7,000 men of which 1,750 were killed. The Federals lost around 2,300 men. Cleburne's division suffered more than 1,700 casualties, which was about half its force. Cleburne's body was found the next day with his boots missing. He was buried in Columbia that afternoon, but not for long. When Lucius Polk found out about Cleburne's comment on the little chapel on his estate, he had the general's body moved there. Nobody was quite comfortable with having Cleburne in the cemetery at Columbia where Yankees had been buried. Cleburne's body would be moved again in 1870 to a cemetery overlooking Helena, Arkansas. It would be his final resting place.

A few years after the Battle of Franklin, Cleburne's old friend and commander Hardee would write of the native Irishman and his men this accolade: "Where this division defended, no odds broke its lines; where it attacked, no numbers resisted its onslaught, save only once." It was a fitting tribute to one of the South's greatest generals. □

KILLING GROUND

ON THE MORNING of December 15, 1899, the serene, windswept wilderness of northern Natal was punctuated by the sound of 18,000 British soldiers trudging north to relieve the besieged town of Ladysmith. Despite the heat, flies, and swirling clouds of red dust, the men were in good spirits as they approached the Tugela River, once the southern frontier of the mighty Zulu Kingdom.

Their high morale was in large part inspired by the reputation of their vaunted commander, General Sir Redvers Buller, a decorated hero of the British Empire. Buller had decided to make his crossing at Colenso, a tiny village on the southern bank of the Tugela, less than 24 kilometers south of Ladysmith. Looking down on Colenso from the northern bank was a series of koppies. These dome-shaped hills rise out of the South African plain like giant mushroom clumps. Buller knew that somewhere in the hills there waited a Boer force that was determined to keep him from crossing. But while he expected a stiff fight, he did not foresee the bloody disaster that was about to unfold.

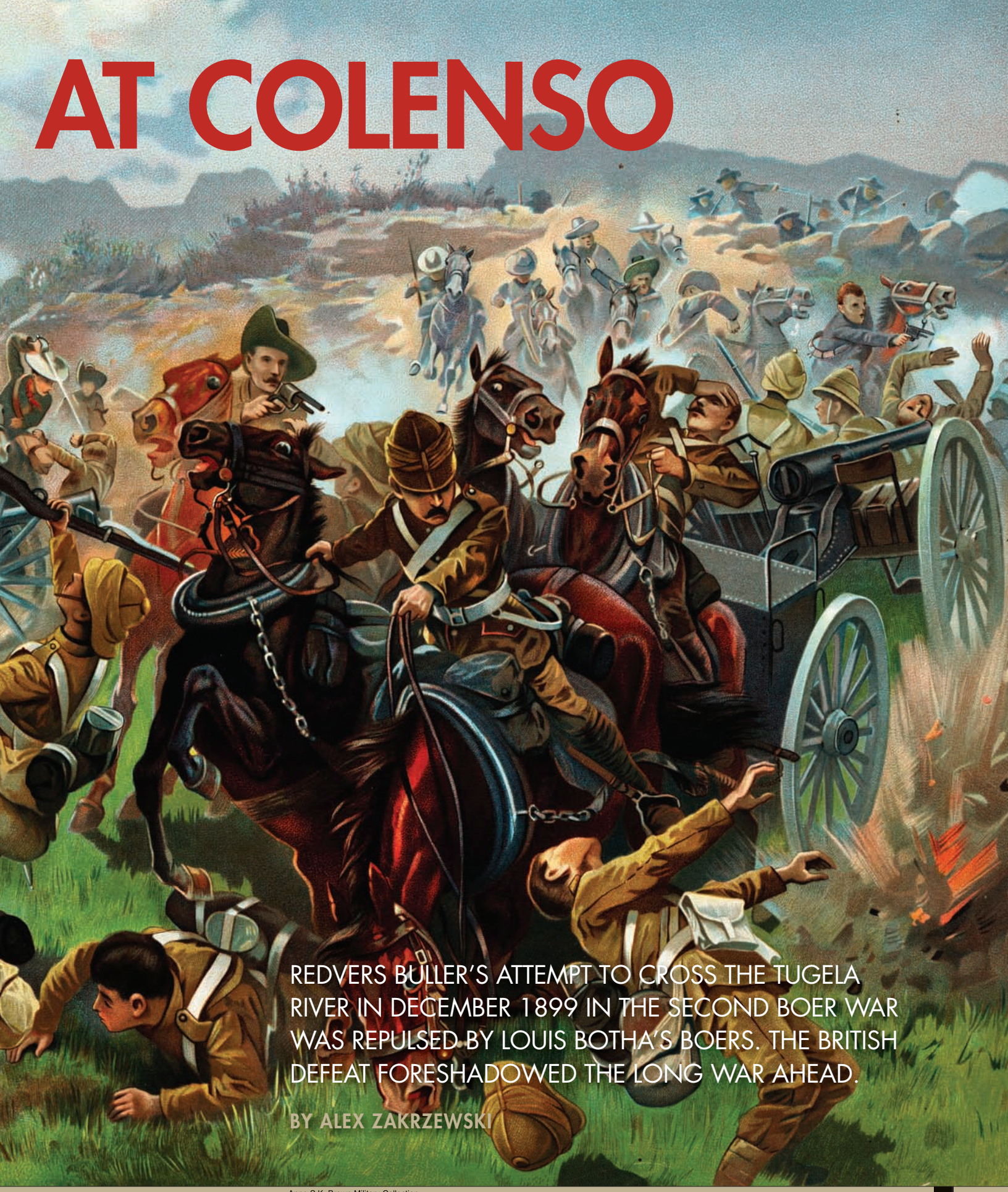
Buller had arrived in South Africa on October 31, 1899, to a rapturous welcome from the Cape Colony's British inhabitants. A large, barrel-chested man with a stern, bewhiskered face and narrow, humorless eyes, he looked to be the very epitome of the Victorian officer and gentleman. Over the course of his 40-year career he had seen extensive service throughout the empire and was no stranger to Africa. But beneath his stolid façade and illustrious reputation, Buller was a man suffering from anxiety and self-doubt. He was a competent and brave officer, but he lacked the skill and ingenuity required to carry out large, complex operations on a modern battlefield. Specifically, he clung to outdated tactics, doctrines, and traditions. If he had one saving grace it was that unlike his colleagues, he was clever enough to realize his own shortcomings and initially turned down the commander-in-chief role. It was only after a buoying conversation with friend and mentor Sir Garnet Wolseley that he agreed with deep misgivings to command the campaign that would ruin his career and reputation.

The Second Boer War had its roots in the growing tension in the second half of the 19th century between Great Britain and the Boer republics of the Transvaal and Orange Free State. Following its acquisition of the Cape of Good Hope via the Anglo-Dutch Treaty of 1814, the British had steadily expanded their presence in the region. The discovery of gold in the Transvaal in 1886 sparked a flood of immigration into the republic. The British-owned mines stripped resources from the Transvaal to sustain the vast British Empire, and the Boers resented that fact.

In response to Boer hostility, the British expanded their military presence in Cape Colony and Natal. In 1896, Transvaal President Paul Kruger gave the British an ultimatum to stop building up their forces or face war. On October 12, 1899, the Boer republics declared war.

British artillery in an exposed position is unable to dislodge well-concealed Boer forces at Colenso. The battle was the third British defeat in six days, which was dubbed "Black Week."

AT COLENSO



REDVERS BULLER'S ATTEMPT TO CROSS THE TUGELA RIVER IN DECEMBER 1899 IN THE SECOND BOER WAR WAS REPULSED BY LOUIS BOTHA'S BOERS. THE BRITISH DEFEAT FORESHADOWED THE LONG WAR AHEAD.

BY ALEX ZAKRZEWSKI

Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

The agrarian, underdeveloped Boer republics had a scattered white population of barely 250,000. Against them stood the limitless resources of an empire that encompassed a quarter of the world's land area and a fifth of its people. The British public had welcomed the outbreak of hostilities with a wave of unrestrained patriotic fervor, and everyone expected a quick and resounding British victory. The London newspapers even went so far as to dub the conflict a "tea-time war" and boldly predicted that it would all be over by Christmas.

Buller's plan for the campaign was a straightforward march across the Boer republics from Bloemfontein to Pretoria using the main railway as a supply line. With their capitals captured, he reasoned that the Boers would quickly lose heart and sue for peace. It was a blunt and unimaginative strategy, but one that had worked well for the British Army in recent colonial campaigns. While en route from Europe Buller was encouraged by the news that the Boers had been defeated in three of the war's opening engagements and had every reason to expect the war to be over in a matter of months. But within hours of arriving in Cape Town, he learned that the military and political situation was considerably more complicated than he envisioned. His plans would have to be hastily scrapped and a whole new strategy conceived.

In northern Natal, Lt. Gen. George White had ignored orders to redeploy on a much more tenable line south of the Tugela. As a result, on October 30, 1899, a date remembered in the British Army annals as "Mournful Monday," he suffered a disastrous defeat at the Battle of Nicholson's Nek and was forced to retreat to Ladysmith where his large force of 13,000 men was besieged. In the eastern and northern capes, British garrisons had similarly been surrounded at the mining towns of Kimberley and Mafeking. Much to everyone's surprise, the highly mobile commandos had seized the initiative and succeeded in trapping half the British troops in South Africa in a series of remote outposts at distant ends of the country. They appeared poised to strike into the very heart of the Cape Colony and Natal.

When news broke of the Boer successes, the British public was shocked and called for an immediate relief of the beleaguered garrisons. Complicating the situation was the presence in Kimberley of internationally renowned mining tycoon Cecil Rhodes, one of the great champions of colonial expansion in southern Africa and arguably the British figure most hated by the Boers. The commandos had barely completed their encirclement of the town before Rhodes began haranguing Buller, his political friends and the press with frantic calls for relief, further inflaming public opinion in the process. Equally panicked by the disastrous turn of events was Sir Alfred Milner, the Cape Colony's scheming governor and one of the main instigators of the conflict. Milner did not trust the Dutch-speaking inhabitants of British South Africa any more than he did their cousins in the republics. With the Boer commandos seemingly at the gates, he began to see signs of rebellion everywhere and urged Buller to pacify Cape Colony before doing anything else.

Buller was quite right to complain that his task had suddenly changed from an invasion of the Boer republics to a conquest of the whole of South Africa, a job for which his army corps of 47,000 was both inadequate and unprepared. Nearly half of his total strength was composed of raw reservists with no combat experience and unready for the harsh conditions of the veldt. He was also desperately in need of trained staff officers and an effective intelligence apparatus through which reliable information on the strength and composition of the Boer forces could be ascertained. Even basic maps of the region were in short supply and those that were available would prove cripplingly inaccurate. Though no one knew it at the time, the British Army had fallen embarrassingly behind in the all-important field of intelligence gathering. It was a fatal flaw that the British Army would pay for in blood in the months to come.

Getty

The British greatly underestimated the ability of Boer militia and their leader Louis Botha.

British General Sir Redvers Henry Buller, left; Boer General Louis Botha, right.

To fulfill all the objectives he was under tremendous pressure to achieve, Buller decided to divide his corps into three unequal columns and give each a different assignment. He would lead the largest north through Natal to relieve White and free the sizable force trapped at Ladysmith. At the same time, Lt. Gen. Lord Methuen was to advance north along the Western Railway with his division of about 12,000 men and free Kimberly. In addition, Lieutenant William Gatacre in Cape Coloney was given a brigade with which to seize the railway junction of Stormberg, a move that was hoped would both pacify the region and preclude the commandos from striking farther south. In hindsight, it seems absurd for Buller to have divided his untested corps and sent it piecemeal in opposite directions across a hostile wilderness to confront an enemy about which little was known. At the time, though, the British generals' estimation of the Boers' fighting qualities was so brazenly low that even Buller expected a walkover. All three generals would soon get more fighting than they bargained for.

On November 22, Buller left the Cape for northern Natal to join the troops being assembled at Frere, a sleepy railway stop roughly 20 kilometers south of Colenso. Most of his corps was still en route from Europe and had to be hastily diverted from Cape Town to Durban, where the seasick soldiers were immediately packed in open carriage trains and sent north. By the time the men arrived at their destination, they were half starved, rain soaked, and covered in soot from the train chimneys, but in surprisingly good spirits. Day and night the troop trains poured into Frere, transforming the hamlet into a sprawling city of white tents that was soon home to the largest British field force since the Crimean War. Within just a few weeks, Buller had at his disposal four infantry brigades, a cavalry brigade, and 44 pieces of artillery, including 12 12-pounder naval guns.

Buller arrived in Frere on December 6 and immediately began wrestling with the all-important question of where to cross the Tugela. The river, which was 91 meters wide with steep banks and fast-flowing water, was an intimidating obstacle in even the most peaceful of conditions. What is more, the river could only be

Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

A Boer column advances to the front. Boer soldiers were armed with the model 95 German Mauser rifle that was substantially superior to the British Lee-Metford rifle.

forded at certain points. The most obvious place to cross was at Colenso, which lay less than 20 kilometers north of Frere along a main road through open country. It also offered two bridges across the river, one of which the Boers had blown. But while the south side of the river was an undulating plain with few natural obstructions, the koppies on the northern bank were a natural fortress that would certainly be heavily defended by the Boers. Initially, Buller recognized the perils of crossing at Colenso, and on December 8 he announced that he instead planned to cross 24 kilometers upstream at a place called Potgeiter's Drift. The latter route, while longer, also offered a road that led straight to Ladysmith, and Buller hoped that a crossing there might further flank any Boers entrenching themselves at Colenso. He even ordered one of his infantry brigades to begin marching on Colenso in order to keep any Boers there in place. Just as he was setting out on his flanking march, events beyond his control once again forced him to scrap his plans.

On December 10, 1899, Gatacre stumbled into a Boer ambush during an ill-planned night attack on the commando at Stormberg and lost 600 men in the process. The following day, Methuen was badly mauled during a predawn attack on the Magersfontein heights, during which the vaunted Highland Brigade in particular suffered terrible casualties in the face of concerted and concealed Boer rifle fire. To make matters worse, while the pride of Scotland was being decimated in front of the Boer trenches, those British troops that actually managed to scale the heights were inadvertently pelted with shrapnel fire from their own guns. By day's end, almost 1,000 men had been lost, and the advance to relieve Kimberley had been humiliatingly stopped in its tracks.

These defeats exponentially increased the pressure on Buller to relieve Ladysmith as soon as possible. The empire's honor was more at stake than ever as all eyes were firmly fixed on events in Natal. Whereas a stronger, more decisive commander would have stuck to his original plan, Buller characteristically bowed to the popular pressure, and on December 12 he gave orders to abandon the flanking maneuver and cross the Tugela at Colenso. He even sent a signal to White indicating that he planned to attack on December 17 and ordered him to mount a simultaneous attack to the south. Then, without bothering to notify White, on December 14 he inexplicably changed his mind again and issued orders for a predawn attack the following day. These were the actions of a commander utterly out of his element, and the fact that none of his staff raised any concerns over this series of contradictory orders indicates that most of his officers were as well. Unfortunately for them, and particularly so for the rank and file, they were about to face a brilliant opponent whose troops could not have been more in their element.

The armies of the Transvaal and Orange Free State were composed almost exclusively of citizens' militias that at the outbreak of hostilities combined to number around 47,000 men. In times of war, every able-bodied male between the ages of 16 and 60 was required to report to his local commando, bringing with him only a sturdy horse and enough rations to see him through the next few days. Because no uniforms were issued, the men fought in their civilian clothes with some even sporting their Sunday's finest, including top hats and tails. All officers including the commandant were elected and all major decisions were made during war councils in which all of the men voted on the next course of action.

The democratic nature of the commando system lent itself to indiscipline, and it was not unusual for men to simply pack up and leave for home when they disagreed with their officers. But when properly motivated, a Boer in the field was an extremely dangerous adversary. Most Boers were frontier farmers, raised in the harsh conditions of the veldt and taught from an early age how to ride and shoot. Through centuries of warfare with much larger native tribes, they had also learned the importance of mobility and concealment, two skills made all the more deadly by the introduction of smokeless powder ammunition.

Before the war, the Boer republics had purchased large quantities of German-made Mauser rifles,

A British Royal Navy 12-pounder battery goes into action in the foreground at Colenso as Boer artillery returns fire from the distant hills. British soldiers can be seen taking cover behind large rocks as others advance toward the Tugela River.

which took a five-round magazine that allowed for a greater rate of fire than the Lee-Enfields and Lee-Metfords carried by the British troops. The Mauser also boasted a higher velocity and better accuracy. Stormberg and Magersfontein showed how a determined, well-concealed group of Boers, armed only with Mausers, could stave off a much larger attacking force. It was a lesson the British would be taught many more times by war's end.

The Boers at Colenso numbered 4,500 men, but were extremely fortunate to have a tactical genius as their commander. General Louis Botha was a successful farmer and a well-respected member of the Transvaal parliament. He had curiously abstained from voting on the question of war with Great Britain but dutifully joined his commando when hostilities arose. Despite his reservations, he quickly distinguished himself as a natural soldier and a brilliant tactician with a remarkable ability to inspire the men he led. When elderly Commandant-General Piet Joubert fell from his horse, the 37-year-old Botha was handpicked to become the youngest commandant in the Boer army.

Botha took one look at the field around Colenso and immediately recognized that it was ideal ground for defense. The northern bank of the Tugela is dominated by a chain of high koppies, and the river itself follows a meandering, serpentine course that creates a series of great loops. The actual village of Colenso lay in the middle of one of these loops, which meant that a force moving through the village would be subject to fire from three sides. Northeast of the village there was also a fortified hill called Fort Wylie that completely commanded the ground below. There was another crossing point farther west, but its location was the subject of much confusion among the British, partly because of the lack of adequate maps and partly because of the river's erratic route. Four kilometers west of Colenso, the river suddenly reverses course before once again assuming its original path. The result is a large, narrow, westward-facing salient that resembles a thumb or horse's nose, at the apex of which there was an old ferry crossing that was no longer in service but could still be reached by a worn path. Farther west of the loop there was a fordable point called the Bridle Drift. In the days to come, this confusion over just where the westerly drift lay would have disastrous consequences.

Botha's plan was to funnel the attackers toward the crossings then trap them between the river and his own positions. He placed the bulk of his men below the Colenso koppies that overlooked the village and in well-camouflaged trenches along the northern bank of the Tugela all the way to the Bridle Drift. It was also in the Colenso koppies and in the Tugela Heights north of the salient that he positioned his 12 artillery pieces, which included 10 Creusot and 75mm antipersonnel guns, one 5-inch Krupp Howitzer, and a 1-pound quick-firing Maxim-Nordenfeldt "pom-pom" auto cannon. The crews of these gun were excellently trained and among the only military units in both republics to receive uniforms. Also dispersed throughout the Boer lines was a battalion of Irish and Irish-American volunteers called the Transvaal Irish Brigade.

Botha's plan presupposed in many respects the killing fields of the western front 15 years later during World War I. Positioning his men below the high ground meant that his Mausers would fire on a flat trajectory, a factor that drastically increased their range and lethality. Occupying the lower ground also had the added benefit of misdirecting the British artillery fire, which would instinctively assume that the Boers would occupy the highest ground available. Perhaps his most innovative and forward-thinking measure, though, was his use of weighted coils of barbed wire that he placed along the river bed just below the water.

The only problem Botha faced was what to do about Hlangwane Hill, a low mountain one kilometer east of Colenso. East of the village the Tugela suddenly turns north and the mountain lies on the river's eastern bank, which made it an unappealing spot to garrison because its defenders would be pinned up against the river should they have to retreat. But it was also a crucial

position because it offered a complete view of Botha's lines and a perfect spot to enfilade his positions. It was only after much cajoling and a telegram straight from Kruger that Botha was able to convince a few hundred Boers to occupy this vulnerable position. Beyond that, the Boer commandant could do little more than hope and pray that Buller would fail to realize the unique opportunity Hlangwane provided and instead walk straight into the trap being set along the river crossings.

Buller could not have been more obliging. Since December 12, his artillery had been shelling the koppies in anticipation of the coming crossing. But while the British knew that the Boers were waiting for them in Colenso, no one bothered to properly reconnoitre their positions. Had someone done so, they would have learned

British Battles

that the lyddite shells were exploding harmlessly over empty ground. Nor did anyone seem to recognize the importance of Hlangwane, which lay unoccupied by the Boers until the eve of battle on December 14. Had Buller abided by the most basic of all military maxims and taken the high ground, he would have gained the tactical advantage. Botha, in danger of having his left flank rolled up, would most certainly have had to change his strategy if not withdraw altogether. Alas, Buller had none of the skills or insight necessary to make such a sweeping assessment.

On the evening of December 14, Buller's brigade commanders received their orders for the coming day. His plan called for a three-pronged assault over a wide front of roughly 11 to 12 kilometers. In the center, Maj. Gen. Henry J.T. Hildyard's 2nd "English" Brigade was tasked with seizing the village of Colenso and its bridges. At the same time upstream, Maj. Gen. Fitzroy Hart and the 5th "Irish" Brigade were to cross at the Bridle Drift and then advance downstream to back up Hildyard. The 2nd and 5th Brigades would be joined by the 4th "Light" Brigade under Maj. Gen. Neville Lyttleton, which was ordered to advance toward the Tugela between the Irish and English Brigades,

British Battles

Major General Fitzroy Hart's 5th Irish Brigade advances against the Boers. Although these troops are shown in open order, Hart ineptly deployed most of his men in quarter column, a close-order formation in which the companies of a battalion marched one behind the other. LEFT: British medics assist the wounded on the battlefield.

ready to support either if need be. All the while, on the extreme right, Lord Dundonald was to take his Cavalry Brigade and engage the Boers on Hlangwane, but was not expressly ordered to take the mountain. Maj. Gen. Geoffrey Barton's 6th "Fusilier" Brigade was kept in reserve behind Dundonald, and all attacks were to be supported by Buller's considerable artillery complement.

The next morning, December 15, 1899, the attack began at roughly 4:45 AM when the British guns resumed their shelling of the Colenso koppies. Buller's camp lay only six kilometers south of Colenso, and from his command post on the Tugela heights, Botha soon beheld a great khaki mass of soldiers. By the time the signal to advance was given, Hart had already been drilling his Irish regiments for half an hour. Hart was known to his men as "No-Bobs" because of his stalwart refusal to duck when under fire. But what he had in courage he lacked in tactical sophistication, and on this day he inexplicably chose to deploy his men on the open plain in quarter column, a close formation in which the companies of a battalion marched one behind the other as if on parade with only a space of six paces in between. Hart led his densely packed troops from atop his horse, accompanied by his staff and an African guide that was supposed to lead them to the Bridle Drift.

As the Irish Brigade approached the Tugela it began to veer ominously eastward toward the salient rather than the Bridle Drift to the west. The African guide warned Hart that they were heading in the wrong direction, but the general had spotted the worn path leading to the old ferry crossing and was convinced that he was in the right spot. The Irish pressed on further into the salient, much to the amazement of the watching Boer defenders, whose trigger fingers surely itched at the sight. As the brigade marched farther into the trap, a detachment of Royal Dragoons protecting Hart's left spotted the Boer trenches in the distance and rushed over to inform him. Once again the brigade commander ignored the information and instead chose to continue on across the sundrenched stillness of the open plain toward the apex of the salient. By 6:30 AM, 3,200 men were crammed into a space barely 1,000 yards wide, and the defenders could no longer restrain themselves.

From atop the Tugela heights, Botha's Creusots suddenly came to life and the first shells crashed in between the Dublin Fusiliers and the Connaught Rangers. Hundreds of Mausers fired by Boer soldiers along the river suddenly crackled to life, unleashing a storm of lead into the neat rows of startled soldiers. In the blink of an eye, the tranquil landscape became a killing ground as men everywhere fell dead or wounded while they sought cover behind the few rocks and scrubby plants that dotted the plain. Hart, true to his reputation, refused to duck and instead strode calmly up and down his lines, urging his men forward. They dutifully did as instructed, though all cohesion was quickly lost as units became mixed and officers separated from their men.

The khaki-uniformed British troops lurched on in the face of a withering fire from all directions. Behind them there soon appeared a grim trail of bloody, mangled bodies lying prostrate beneath the intensifying summer sun. A handful managed to find cover in an abandoned kraal and a courageous few even managed to make it to the river where they searched desperately for a point to cross. Some became entangled in the barbed wire coils hidden beneath the water and were either picked

off with sickening ease by the defenders or taken prisoner. Among those that made it to the water but no further was a fourteen-year-old Bugler named John Dunn. The boy had ignored his Captain's orders to stay safely behind the fighting and bravely joined his brothers in the front ranks where he sounded the advance until wounded in the chest and arm, losing his bugle as result. By 7 AM the Irish Brigade was trapped.

In the center, events unfolded just as disastrously. To cover Hildyard's advance, Colonel Charles Long was given two batteries of field pieces and six naval guns. Buller made clear that he was to remain well behind the advancing infantry with Barton's brigade, using only his long-range naval guns to fulfill orders. Long had other ideas. "The only way to smash those beggars is to rush in at 'em," he said, and raced off with his field guns without either informing Barton or waiting for his ox-drawn naval guns to catch up. When he reached a point only 914 meters from the nearest Boer trench and almost a kilometer ahead of Hildyard's infantry, his superbly trained crews unlimbered their guns and, with parade ground precision, formed a perfect firing line.

From his command post, Botha could hardly believe his eyes. Sitting in the open plain with no cover or infantry support were 12 British field guns seemingly ripe for the picking. His men in the trenches did not need to be told of the incredible opportunity that had presented itself, and they immediately trained their fire on the stranded gunners. To their immense credit, Long's gun crews acted as if impervious to the hail of Mauser bullets whistling overhead, and they serviced their guns

Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

with such patience that Fort Wylie was soon a cloud of red dust churned up by their well-aimed fire. They even counted out the intervals between shots as if they were on maneuvers.

Lumbering along behind the field guns were Long's six naval guns. As they struggled to keep up with their overzealous commander, they came under fire from the Boer pom-pom, which scared away their African drivers. Luckily, they had advanced far enough to join in on the action and they too were soon pounding the Boer positions. Unfortunately, the infantry support was still far behind and it was not long before the field guns began to run out of ammunition. The ferocious Boer fire also began to take its toll on the gun crews. Long himself was wounded by shrapnel in the arms, liver and kidneys and had to be dragged back to the shelter of a donga (dried-out river bed) about 365 meters behind his batteries. The rest of his men fired off their remaining ammunition then joined their injured commander in the donga to await the infantry. It was only 7 AM and they had already fired 930 rounds, yet the Boers remained firmly fixed in their positions. As the gunners peered cautiously over the lip of the donga, they could see their guns standing in perfect line amid a fury of whizzing bullets and bursting shells. When someone wondered aloud whether the guns would have to be abandoned, Long was aghast. "Abandon be damned! We never abandon guns!" he said before drifting off into delirium.

Buller watched the opening stages of the battle from a hill where his own naval guns continued to blaze away. As he sat snacking on some sandwiches, he could see little of what was going on but enough to determine that Hart was in the wrong place. When he learned just how much trouble the Irish were in, he jumped onto his horse and made straight for Lyttleton's camp with his staff in tow. "Hart has got himself into a devil of a mess," he told the 4th Brigade's commander. "Get him out as best you can." Lyttleton did as instructed and, unlike Hart, prudently extended his men in a loose formation across the mouth of the salient to provide covering fire for the Irish to retreat. Slowly but surely, groups of exhausted, thirsty men began to trickle back out of the jaws of death, many carrying wounded comrades. Among them was the young John Dunn. He would recover from his wounds and return home to receive a hero's welcome and new bugle personally from Queen Victoria. Regrettably, some forward units did not receive the order to withdraw until much later and remained pinned down for hours in the blistering heat. Much later they would learn that among their tormenters that hellish day were fellow Irishmen.

The sight of Hart's Brigade returning beaten and bedraggled planted the germ of defeat in Buller's mind, and his thoughts immediately turned to disengagement. After ordering Lyttleton not to get too committed, he rode out to the center to see for himself the progress being made by Hildyard's Brigade, only to discover that Long's guns were out of action and sitting unattended only 914 meters from the Boer positions. At great risk to himself, Buller immediately rode over to the donga where he found Long covered in blood, raving incomprehensibly about his poor gunners. Buller realized that the situation was worse than he feared and all thoughts of doing anything other than rescuing the stranded guns instantly disappeared from his mind.

Had Buller had the emotional and mental fortitude to forget for a moment the plight of Long's field batteries and examine the bigger picture, he would have seen that the overall situation was not as bad as he feared it to be. In the center, Hildyard's Brigade made excellent progress and managed to seize Colenso and the crossings with relatively few casualties. Some of his units in the village had even begun returning fire on the Boer trenches and succeeded in forcing some defenders to abandon their positions and seek higher ground. Buller also had eight fresh battalions and a slew of other artillery pieces at his disposal.

Moreover, east of Colenso, Dundonald had launched a very effective attack on Hlangwane and, supported by the 7th Field Battery, succeeded in making some progress up the rocky slope. The outnumbered Boers fought back stubbornly, and Dundonald was forced to ask Barton for reinforcements. He was confident that with an extra battalion he could storm the mountain and begin enfilading the Colenso koppies. However, despite repeated pleas, Barton

refused to act without a direct order from Buller, which he made no effort to receive. As a result, Dundonald's attack and Buller's best chance to potentially dislodge the defenders around Colenso bogged down and petered out.

There is a good chance that had Barton asked Buller for permission to engage, he would have been denied anyway. The commander-in-chief had already made up his mind that the day was lost and his one objective before withdrawing was to retrieve Long's guns. As if to deliberately make the task more difficult, Buller inexplicably ordered the naval guns to the rear of his field batteries to stop firing and prepare to withdraw. Perhaps he feared that they too were in danger of being overrun or destroyed, even though they were just beginning to succeed, along with Hildyard's Brigade, in quieting some of the Boer trenches. Whatever the reason, the exhausted sailors, their oxen killed and African drivers scattered, were forced to laboriously turn their guns and pull them back to camp.

With no artillery to worry about, the Boer trenches once again sprayed the ground around the guns and donga with a devastating fire. Seeing no other recourse, Captain Harry Norton Schofield, Buller's aide-de-camp, bravely stepped forward and offered to launch a rescue operation. He was joined by Corporal George Nurse and seven other gunners from Long's batteries. Buller ordered his staff to assist. Captain Walter Congreve of the Rifle Brigade and Lieutenant Freddie Roberts, son of Lord Frederick Roberts, England's most famous living soldier, stepped forward to answer the call. Nurse later recalled the "perfect storm of shot and shell" the rescue team faced. Even before they mounted, a shell burst overhead and blew the eye out of one of their horses.

Regardless, the rescue team galloped courageously, with Roberts reportedly laughing and waving his riding crop as if on a fox hunt. When they were within 90 meters of the guns, Congreve was wounded in the leg, toe, elbow, and shoulder and thrown to the ground when his horse was shot out from under him. A little farther on, Roberts' mount also suddenly reeled and he too fell to the ground, mortally wounded in three places. Schofield, Nurse, and the rest of his team made it to the guns, and with bullets "pattering around us like hail," they somehow managed to limber three before beating a hasty retreat back to the donga. As they were returning, a lucky Boer shell struck one of the three guns, turning it on its back and rendering it unsalvageable. The other two were safely returned to the donga where a lucky Schofield counted six bullet holes in his uniform. Nurse had his finger shattered in two places but was otherwise unharmed. Congreve was able to limp back to the donga where he was treated by a member of the medical team. When the two noticed that the Boers' were concentrating their fire on Schofield, Nurse, and the rescue team, they gallantly rushed out onto the plain to pull the dying Roberts to the safety of the donga. Two more attempts were made by other gun crews, but they were cut to pieces with heavy loss of life before even coming close to the guns.

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ABOVE: Lieutenant Freddie Roberts, the son of Lord Frederick Roberts, England's most famous living soldier, is mortally wounded while helping save several of Colonel Charles Long's artillery pieces. British soldiers fought valiantly, but the British Army overall would have to close the gap in tactics and weaponry in order to prevail in the conflict. OPPOSITE: Maj. Gen. Henry J.T. Hildyard's 2nd Brigade forces Boers to abandon their positions and seek higher ground as part of an attack on the village of Colenso.

Buller calmly watched these events take place without any change of expression. However, his austere appearance belied the fact that he was on the verge of a breakdown. He had also suffered a badly bruised rib from a spent piece of shrapnel and his personal surgeon had been killed beside him. After the battle he would complain that he had been "sold by a damned gunner." In reality, while Long had certainly put him in a terrible spot, Buller could have waited until nightfall and then under the cover of darkness withdrawn the guns with relative ease. But at that moment in the donga, as he gazed at the chaos swirling around him, the dead and wounded men lying at his feet, none of this crossed his mind. At around 11 AM, he made the decision to leave the guns and call off the action. Some of Hildyard's men in Colenso pleaded to be allowed to hold their position and cover the abandoned guns, but Buller would hear none of it. Up and down the front the order to withdraw was given, and his disconsolate men had no choice but to begin the long march back to Frere.

Not everyone received the order. Out on the plain south of Colenso to the west of the guns, Lt. Col. George Bullock retained his position in another small donga. At around 4:30 PM, the Boers slowly crept across the river to carry away their prize, only to be fired upon by Bullock's men. The Boers offered to parlay, and while negotiating took the opportunity to surround the donga. When he realized what was happening, Bullock reached for his revolver but was promptly bashed in the face by the butt of a Boer rifle. He and 125 men were taken prisoner and the 10 remaining guns were carted away and shipped to Pretoria where they were put on display as war trophies.

Buller had suffered 1,127 casualties, including 143 killed and 240 missing, presumed captured. He had also lost 10 of his 44 guns. Botha reported only 40 casualties, including just eight men killed. It was a humiliating and lopsided defeat that was further exacerbated by the grueling march back to Frere.

When news reached home of the defeat, the British public was aghast. It was the third and worst defeat in what the press quickly dubbed "Black Week." Buller, his nerves shattered, permanently tainted his own reputation by signaling White in Ladysmith and advising him to fire off his remaining ammunition and surrender. White ignored him, but word quickly spread of Buller's shameful defeatism. Three days after the Battle of Colenso, Buller was replaced in South Africa by Lord Roberts. □

THE BRITISH DEFEATED A LARGER SPANISH FLEET IN FEBRUARY 1797 IN THE BATTLE OF CAPE ST. VINCENT. THE VICTORY CONFIRMED THE ROYAL NAVY'S SUPERIORITY.

BY DAVID A. NORRIS

A TRIUMPH OF

ON the morning of February 14, 1797, the four-decked, 136-gun *Santisima Trinidad* of Spain's Armada Real claimed the title of the world's most powerful warship. Battered by a pack of British ships in a fleet action off Cape St. Vincent, Portugal, the four decks of the *Santisima Trinidad* by 5 PM were strewn with wrecked cannons and the blood of nearly 500 casualties. After the Spanish ensign came down, the hated Union Jack flew as a symbol of surrender, and the survivors waited for a British prize crew.


National Maritime Museum

The first vessel to draw near through the smoke of battle, though, was another Spanish ship, the 74-gun *Infante don Pelayo*. Captain Cayetano Valdes of the *Pelayo* was appalled at the idea of surrendering the greatest ship in his navy. From his quarterdeck, Valdes shouted to his crew, "Muchachos! We save the Trinidad, or we all die!" His men shouted in unison, "Long live the king!" Guns leveled at the splintered hulk that loomed over his smaller vessel, Valdes warned the crew of the *Santisima Trinidad* that if they surrendered he would treat them as enemies and fire on them. Valdes was determined to prevent a disastrous day for Spain's navy from growing even gloomier.

The fleets of Great Britain and Spain clashed off of Cape St. Vincent because of the August 19, 1796, Treaty of San Ildefonso, which allied Spain with the revolutionary regime of France. In October, Spain declared war on Great Britain and Portugal. The Netherlands also threw in its lot with the French. With its new allies, France added two major European navies to its own forces and made plans to launch an invasion of Great Britain.

In the wake of the French alliances, Britain abandoned its Mediterranean holdings of Corsica and Elba. A rising star general named Napoleon Bonaparte led French forces deep into Italy. Rebellion simmered in Ireland, sparking

British soldiers and marines from Commodore Horatio Nelson's 74-gun HMS *Captain* (left foreground) board the Spanish 80-gun *San Nicolas* (center foreground). In its attempt to escort a valuable convoy to Cadiz, the Spanish navy subjected itself to attack by Admiral Sir John Jervis' well-led fleet of the British Royal Navy. BELOW: Admiral Sir John Jervis commanded the British at Cape St. Vincent.

GUNNERY

fears that French troops might land to support a successful revolt. Great Britain's economy reeled under the onslaught of bad news. The Bank of England suspended specie payments, and the price of consols (consolidated government bonds, which were the primary financial investments of the time) plunged below the floor they had reached during the American Revolution.

Spain invested considerable effort in its navy during the 18th century. In the 1790s, theirs was the third largest of the European fleets, surpassed only by those of Great Britain and France. Spanish ship design and construction equaled or surpassed that of the British. Fatally compromising its potential advantage in ships, though, Spain failed to sign on enough sailors to adequately man its vessels. Naval training and drill were neglected.

Early in 1797, Spain planned to shift its Mediterranean ships of the line to the Atlantic to join the French fleet. Preventing this move was the duty of Admiral Sir John Jervis. Born in Staffordshire in 1735, the future admiral was the son of a barrister. Although the elder Jervis intended for his son to follow him into the practice of law, young Jervis ran away to sea at the age of 13. He was sent home but soon won out on his wish for a naval career. Knighted for his 1779 capture of the *Pegase*, a French 74, he left active service several years later and was elected to Parliament. Resigning his seat after war broke out with France, Jervis was soon back in the navy, taking command of the Mediterranean fleet in 1795.

With the British forced out of the Mediterranean, Jervis relied on friendly Portugal for a base while patrolling with his fleet in the Atlantic off Cape St. Vincent. At the southwestern corner of Portugal, the cape was a good point to intercept ships bound to or from Spain's port of Cadiz. Several major naval battles had been fought off the cape; most recent was a 1780 victory by a British fleet under Sir George Rodney over a smaller Spanish force.

In January 1797, Spain assembled 27 ships of the line at the Mediterranean port of Cartagena. In command was Teniente General Don Jose de Cordoba. (Some senior naval ranks in the Spanish ser-

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vice were similar to army ranks; Cordoba's rank made him the equivalent of a British vice admiral.)

Cordoba's flagship was the impressive *Santisima Trinidad*. Built as a large three-decker at Havana in 1769, the ship went through an ambitious renovation in 1795. Her raised quarterdeck and forecastle were combined by linking them with a new deck, turning the *Santisima Trinidad* into one of naval history's few four-decked ships of the line. In her new configuration, she was rated at 136 guns, dwarfing the standard 74s or even the 100-gun ships of the Royal Navy.

On February 1, 1797, Cordoba sailed from Cartagena with 27 ships of the line and several frigates and smaller vessels. Their ultimate destination was Brest, where they would join with the French Navy for operations against Great Britain.

Slowing the Spanish fleet were five armed merchant vessels laden with mercury that had to be escorted past British-held Gibraltar to Cadiz on the Atlantic coast. Mercury was vital to Spain's economy, which depended heavily on gold and silver from mines in New World colonies. Because mercury dissolved silver and gold, it was used to extract much more precious metal from lower grade ores. Mercury was unavailable in the New World at that time, but Spain's mines at Almadén were the world's largest source. Part of the shipment was packed into the ship of the line *Santo Domingo*. One gallon of mercury weighs about 113 pounds, so many of the *Santo Domingo*'s 74 guns were removed to accommodate the cargo.

Even with the presence of the *Santisima Trinidad* and four 112-gun vessels among the ships of the line, Cordoba's fleet was in poor shape to give battle. A Spanish source later lamented that the fleet needed as many as 4,000 more hands to comfortably manage the vessels and guns. About 1,000 of the crewmen were soldiers with no sea training at all. Most ships had only a small core of sev-

National Maritime Museum

The HMS *Victory* fires on the *Salvador del Mundo,* which is partially obscured by smoke from the *Victory*'s broadside. Fired on by several British ships, the 112-gun, three-decker Spanish ship surrendered.

eral dozen trained seamen among hundreds of inexperienced landsmen. A gloomy pall of pessimism loomed over the crews. Interrogation of Spanish prisoners caught after the battle revealed "it was not an uncommon thing … to hear both misfortune and disgrace predicted," British Colonel John Drinkwater Bethune wrote in his account of the battle.

For their part, the British were stalked by misfortune during the stormy winter of 1796-1797. Two ships of the line, the *Courageux* and *Bombay Castle,* were lost through accidents, and three more were out of action undergoing repair. If Cordoba had confronted Jervis early in February 1797, the British might have faced the two dozen Spanish ships with fewer than 10 of their own. On February 6, Rear Admiral Sir William Parker reported to Jervis with six ships of the line, and the next day Captain Thomas Troubridge arrived with the *Culloden,* bringing the British force to 15 sail of the line.

Another valuable reinforcement reached Jervis on February 13. It was only a single frigate, the *Minerve,* but the new arrival bore an already distinguished commander, Commodore Horatio Nelson. Busied for weeks with details of the evacuation of Corsica and Elba, he was at last able to rejoin Jervis and unfurl his pennant on the 74-gun HMS *Captain.* Commanding Nelson's flagship was Captain Ralph Miller, a longtime naval veteran who was born in 1762 to a loyalist family in New York.

With any luck, Cordoba might have reached Cadiz a day or two after passing through the Straits of Gibraltar. But luck was not with the Spanish. After they entered the Atlantic, contrary winds blew for several days. To keep the undermanned warships and the mercury-laden transports together, Cordoba had to let them run before the wind for several days. By the time the winds shifted, they were hundreds of miles west of where they wanted to be, and they had to get through the British fleet to reach Cadiz.

In the Atlantic Ocean, a passing American ship bought what seemed like good news to the Spanish. The American captain saw Jervis' force a few days before and counted only nine ships. It looked like the odds would be stacked three to one in favor of Cordoba if he met the British on the way to Cadiz.

On the night of February 13, fog again settled on the ocean. Winds were light, but they were favorable for getting Cordoba to Cadiz. His fleet's formation loosened as each ship tried to extract as much advantage as possible from the winds. In the fog, the Spanish ships fired cannon shots to prevent potential collisions. They were to the southwest of the British, who were near enough to hear the firing. The log of the *Egmont* recorded, "35 past 1, heard the report of four guns quick and 1 slow in the SW, and twice repeated." Several of Jervis' other crews heard the signal guns, alerting them that an encounter with the enemy was likely after first light.

Sunrise found the British fleet about 25 miles southwest of Cape St. Vincent. Their ships headed south-southwest, putting out all sail to catch the light winds. Soon, signal flags announced the presence of strange sails in the distance to the southwest. It was the Spanish fleet, sailing from west to east. Nowhere near as neatly arranged as the British, Cordova's fleet was sprawled in a long straggling line, with a wide gap separating the force into two groups. Mist and fog still lingered, alternately revealing and cloaking the approaching vessels.

At 8:15 AM, Jervis ordered his fleet to form in close order and soon signaled to prepare for action. As the British readied themselves, the Spanish saw glimpses of Jervis' approaching force through the fog, but they thought those vessels were part of their own fleet. Fifteen minutes earlier, Cordova had detached two 74s, the *Infante don Pelayo* and the *San Pablo,* to investigate some other strange sails in the mist to their south.

Don Cayetano Valdes commanded the *Pelayo*. One of the fleet's most capable officers,

Valdes was also a renowned explorer. In the early 1790s he took part in a Spanish expedition to what is now Vancouver Island, scattering Spanish place names along the coast of British Columbia. Valdes Island, British Columbia, was named for him.

Cordoba's last news of Jervis, relayed by the American captain, was 10 days old. The Spanish commander still assumed that he would have only nine enemy ships to deal with. When the last of the fog cleared away by 11 AM, Cordoba had the unpleasant surprise of learning that Jervis had been reinforced, and 15 British ships of the line were bearing down on him.

At 11 AM Jervis signaled his captains to form a single line of battle, and his ships fell into place ahead or astern of the *Victory,* Jervis' flagship. This single line would drive like a javelin into the gap between the two sections of the enemy fleet.

The British attack split the enemy fleet, cutting off a smaller group on their leeward (or eastern) side. At first, this handful of vessels numbered six. One of them, though, was seen to "set all sail, and soon disappeared to leeward."

Three Spanish ships of the larger windward division, the *Principe de Asturias, Conde de Regla,* and *Oriente*, were in danger of being cut off by the British line of battle. These three quickly cut across to join the smaller lee division, temporarily bringing their number up to eight. The windward portion of Cordoba's force set its course northward, roughly parallel with the British but sailing in the opposite direction.

Jervis' lead ship, Captain Thomas Troubridge's 74-gun *Culloden,* drew near the windward Spanish ships and opened fire at rather long range at 11:30 AM. Each ship behind Troubridge fired in turn as they passed within range.

By 12:08 PM, the *Culloden* passed the last of the Spanish fleet. Jervis signaled his ships to tack in order to pursue the enemy. Troubridge had already anticipated the order. He sent his answering signal flag aloft, but rolled up. Upon getting the expected order from the admiral, he released the flag to respond instantly. Tacking to follow Troubridge came the *Blenheim, Prince George,* and *Orion.*

As the British line turned, the leeward Spanish ships advanced as if they intended to cut through them. Vice Admiral Joaquin Moreno of the *Principe de Asturias* ordered his gunners to unleash a broadside at the *Colossus,* the ship behind the *Orion.*

The *Colossus,* which had not begun to tack, lost her "fore and fore topsail yards shot away in the slings." With spars and severed rigging dangling, the *Colossus* dropped out of line. Five men were wounded in the brief encounter with

National Maritime Museum

The HMS *Captain* captures the 80-gun *San Nicolas* and the 112-gun *San Josef.* Horatio Nelson realized that the British fleet might not be able to prevent the Spanish from reuniting the two sections of their fleet, so he broke formation to intercept the Spanish flagship *Santisima Trinidad,* buying time for the rest of the British fleet to engage the Spanish.

Moreno. Captain James Saumarez backed the main topsail of the *Orion* in order to linger and shield the *Colossus.*

For two hours, the *Colossus*' crew cut away the damaged spars and made repairs. The main topsail yard was taken down and put in place of the fore yard; the main topsail became the foresail, and the fore topgallant sail became the fore topsail. By mid-afternoon, the injured *Colossus* was patched up enough to make headway, but her crew could do no more than watch the battle.

Next in line behind the *Orion,* the *Irresistible* exchanged fire with the Spanish before following the path led by the *Culloden.* After the *Orion* came the *Victory*. The *Victory* hurled a broadside at a Spanish three-decker, leaving the stunned enemy vessel behind. Behind the flagship, the *Egmont* and the *Goliath* drove off attackers and continued to follow the ships ahead of them.

Aboard the *Goliath,* seaman John Nichol spent the battle in darkness deep inside the hull. He recalled that he was "stationed in the after magazine, serving powder through the screen, and could see nothing; but I could feel every shot that struck the *Goliath*; and the cries and groans of the wounded were most distressing, as there was only the thickness of the blankets of the screen between men and them."

At least a handful of women and children were also aboard the British ships. Ann Hopping (later known as Nancy Perriam, after a subsequent marriage) sailed on the *Orion*. Her husband and brother were also in the crew. She was mending a shirt for Captain James Saumarez when the guns opened fire. Putting aside her sewing, she pitched in as a powder monkey during the battle and later helped the surgeons tend the wounded.

Winds remained light during the battle. The log of the *Britannia* mentioned that she had set her studdingsails. At 1 PM, one of the lower studdingsails was ignited by a cartridge that caught fire on the main deck. The burning sail was cut away to drop overboard before the fire spread.

Their attempted attack blunted, the Spanish lee division was left behind except for the 74-gun *Oriente*. Screened by the lingering gunpowder smoke, the *Oriente* slipped away to rejoin the main Spanish contingent.

After passing the last ships of the line, the *Oriente* came within range of Jervis' frigates. Normally in major battles, frigates refrained from firing on ships of the line, and the larger ships traditionally ignored smaller enemy vessels. Aboard the 32-gun *Lively,* a veteran gunner begged the captain to let him take a shot at the *Oriente.* After continued pleading, the captain let the gunner fire his favorite 18-pounder. Soaring across the water, the ball plunged into the *Oriente* "near the fourth or fifth porthole abaft." Later, the *Lively*'s crew learned that the shot caused several casualties.

Other British frigates, and even the little 18-gun sloop of war *Bonne Citoyenne,* also shot at the passing Spanish 74. Provoked by the impertinent "small fry," the *Oriente* answered with a broadside. But a witness aboard the *Lively* noted that "so badly were the guns pointed, that not one shot

struck our ships, though many went through their sails." Despite poor gunnery, the *Oriente* did get back to the main section of the Spanish fleet.

By 1 PM the *Excellent,* the last ship in the British line, passed the rear of the windward division. At this point, Cordoba's leading ships steered to starboard, putting them on course to pass the rear of Jervis' line and reunite themselves with the lee division. If the British tacked one at a time in their current alignment, the Spanish would draw far ahead of them. In the main, the Spanish ships were faster and they would either escape or draw the British into a time-consuming and inconclusive running battle.

It was at this point that Horatio Nelson made a fateful step into naval history. Jervis had sent a signal at 12:51 PM, ordering his ships "to take suitable stations for mutual support, and engage the enemy, as coming up in succession." Nelson took considerable latitude in responding to this signal. At Nelson's order the *Captain* steered to port and continued circling around to pass between the *Diadem* and the *Excellent*. Nelson sailed across the bows of several ships toward the rear of the enemy formation and confronted the *Santisima Trinidad*. As if attacking the world's most powerful warship was not enough, Nelson also faced four more opponents: the 112-gun three-deckers *San Jose* and *Salvador del Mundo* and a pair of two-deckers, the 80-gun *San Nicolas* and the *San Isidro,* a 74. Together, these vessels mounted more than 500 guns.

Leading the procession of British ships, the *Culloden* drew near enough to the Spanish vessels to open fire. Nelson later wrote that the *Captain* and the *Culloden* alone engaged five Spanish ships

Anne S. K. Brown Military Collection

Horatio Nelson (left) leads an assault force in a bid to capture the *San Nicolas*. At Cape St. Vincent, Nelson established himself as a rising star in the British Royal Navy.

for the space of one hour; help arrived before that long an interval, although it's likely that smoke and commotion hid other British ships from view.

Troubridge and Nelson were in a perilous situation but were aided by the poor morale and low level of training among the Spanish crews. British officers later observed that several guns aboard a Spanish vessel taken that day were still plugged with tompions. They had not been fired once during the battle. "It was impossible, after the first broadside, for the captain or officers to persuade any of the crew to go aloft and repair the injured rigging," a Spanish officer is reported as having said in Bethune's account.

Officers resorted to shooting several sailors, but still the men would not comply with the orders.

Also hurting the Spanish defense was the arrangement of their ships. Instead of an orderly line of battle, they were in a loose formation with some ships sailing two or three abreast. All of the Spanish ships were in some degree exposed to British fire, but some of them could not return fire without hitting one of their own vessels.

Nelson and Collingwood first confronted the *Salvador del Mundo* and the *San Isidro,* shooting down some of their topmasts and rigging. Then the *Blenheim* and the *Prince George* stepped in with their fire as the *Captain* and the *Culloden* moved on against other vessels. Next, the *Excellent,* under Captain Cuthbert Collingwood, first engaged the *Salvador del Mundo* before moving on to attack the *San Isidro*. The latter ship struck her colors at 2:53 PM.

The *Irresistible* and the *Diadem* attacked the *Salvador del Mundo*. Under the continual pounding more than 40 men were killed, including her commander, and her topmasts were gone. When the *Victory* neared, guns ready to rake her stern, the *Salvador del Mundo* surrendered.

Collingwood hurried on to aid Nelson in such haste that he left the captured *San Isidro* behind. Nelson wrote that at this point, his ship had "lost her fore-topmast," and there was "not a sail, shroud, or rope standing, and the wheel shot away." Yet, in this perilous state, the *Captain* was hotly engaged at the range of a pistol shot with the 80-gun *San Nicolas*. With their carronade ammunition consumed, Nelson's gunners packed the big short-range guns with loads made of seven rounds of 9-pounder shot.

Up to that point, the sails and rigging of the *Excellent* were nearly untouched by Spanish fire, and the ship responded with ease to the helm. Collingwood glided in between the two ships, shielding the *Captain*. At a distance of 10 feet, the *Excellent* sent a point-blank broadside into the starboard side of the *San Nicolas*. Trying to avoid this new antagonist, the *San Nicolas* collided with the 112-gun *San Jose*.

After dealing a heavy blow to the *San Nicolas,* Collingwood pressed on to deal with other enemy vessels. Nelson realized that his flagship "was incapable of further service in the Line or in chase," so the commodore ordered Miller to take the ship alongside the enemy and called for boarders.

Miller's port bow edged alongside the starboard poop deck of the Spanish ship. As the ships loomed closer, a Spanish marine grenadier named Martin Alvarez and his comrades peppered the *Captain* with musket fire. The vessels came so close that the British ship's spritsail yard loomed over the enemy's quarterdeck and ensnared itself in the mizzen shrouds of the Spanish vessel.

On the deck of the flagship, Captain Edward Berry up until this moment had been at loose ends. His service as a lieutenant with Nelson had won him recommendation for promotion to post captain. So far no ship was available for him, so he was aboard the *Captain* as a volunteer. Berry sprang from Nelson's deck onto the mizzen chains of the *San Nicolas*.

Climbing the bowsprit and then balancing themselves on the spritsail yard, Nelson himself led a boarding party over the side and onto the

enemy decks. With the commodore came a party of marines augmented by a detachment of soldiers from the 69th Regiment of Foot, which had been assigned to sea duty. Private Stephens of the 69th shattered a window on the upper quarter gallery and leapt into the cabin, followed by Nelson and others.

Locked doors temporarily trapped Nelson's men in the cabin, but they could see from the cabin windows out onto the deck. Through the glass, they saw Spanish officers firing their pistols at them, their bullets breaking the windows.

As British sailors, soldiers, and marines poured onto his ship, Martin Alvarez threw down his musket in favor of a cutlass. Alvarez ran his blade through a marine officer (evidently Major William Norris of the *Captain*'s marine detachment) so violently that the point of the sword was stuck fast in a wooden bulkhead. Struggling in vain to loosen his sword, Alvarez was surrounded by British attackers. He was wounded in the head before jumping down onto the main deck to continue the battle.

Nelson's boarders broke open the cabin doors. Rushing out onto the deck, the commodore's men found "Captain Berry in possession of the poop." Brigadier Tomas Geraldino, the ship's commander, was fatally shot by the boarders. Quickly, the melee on the deck ended with the surrender of the *San Nicolas*. Another man of the 69th, Private John Ashcroft, took down the Spanish flag to raise the Union Jack over the prize. (Ashcroft's regiment later boasted "Cape St. Vincent" as a battle honor on its flag.) Nelson made his way to the forecastle, where the ship's officers surrendered their swords.

Alvarez was found unconscious from the loss of blood near the body of Brigadier Geraldino. Under the care of his captors, Alvarez eventually recovered from his wounds. He was released and returned to the service until his accidental death in 1801.

As Nelson took possession of the prize, the *San Jose* drifted close, lodging her starboard stern against the port bow of the *San Nicolas* and entangling their rigging. The raised poop of the 112-gun *San Jose* towered over the pair of smaller two-deckers. From the high platform of the admiral's stern gallery and the quarterdeck, Spanish sailors and marines opened fire at the decks of the captured ship.

With a shout of "Westminster Abbey, or victory!" Nelson gathered another force and rushed aboard the *San Jose*. As Berry helped Nelson onto the enemy's main chains, an unarmed Spanish officer hailed them from the rail of the quarterdeck, surrendering the ship. By that point, the *San Jose* had lost 46 men dead and 96 wounded. The ship's commander, Jefe

Spanish marine grenadier Martin Alvarez and his fellow soldiers put up a stiff, but futile, resistance on the *San Nicolas* in the face of an attack by Commodore Nelson's boarding party. To reach the *San Nicolas,* Nelson and his men climbed the bowsprit and then balanced themselves on the spritsail yard to access the enemy deck.

de Escuadra [Commodore] Don Francisco Javier Winthuysen, had been fatally wounded a few minutes into the action.

So many Spanish officers surrendered their swords that Nelson would have been overburdened with them had he not handed them over to William Fearney, the coxswain of his barge. Fearney followed Nelson, carrying the growing bundle of surrendered swords as if it were an armload of kindling. A witty quip quickly circulated around the fleet, implying the captured *San Nicolas* was "Nelson's Patent Bridge for Boarding First Rates."

During the day, several of Jervis' ships piled on to attack Cordoba's flagship. Despite her intimidating appearance and massive array of guns, the *Santisima Trinidad* was too slow and clumsy to make a practical war vessel. On this day, the famous four-decker suffered 480 men killed or wounded as Jervis' ships shot away her mizzenmast and main topmast. At about 4:30 PM, Cordoba's flagship surrendered. The *Egmont* reported seeing the flagship flying a white flag; the *Orion* and some Spanish sources saw a Union Jack hoisted aloft.

Despite the intent to surrender, no British ships were available to take formal possession. For some time, the *Santisima Trinidad* drifted alone on the water. To the great relief of Cordoba, the first ship to approach the battered flagship was Spanish. It was Captain Valdes, returned to the fleet with *Infante de Pelayo*. Accompanied by the *San Pablo,* Valdes spent the morning in pursuit of two ships seen south of the Spanish fleet. Late in the morning, Valdes heard heavy firing and turned to follow the sound of the guns. It was late in the afternoon when Valdes reached the *Santisima Trinidad* and cancelled the flagship's surrender. Soon other Spanish ships arrived on the scene. Jury rigged and under tow, the 136-gun giant was hauled away to safety.

Naval Museum of Madrid

The Spanish Infante don Pelayo rescues the flagship Santisima Trinidad as it makes for Cadiz. Although the Santisima Trinidad surrendered to the British, they were unable to take possession of the ship. The British ultimately captured the elusive prize during the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805.

Nelson's *Captain* was unmanageable, but the commodore himself was still eager for action. He intended to shift his pennant to one of the less damaged ships of the line, but before he could reenter the fight the battle faded away. Jervis could have chosen to press his advantage and continue the battle. But, the small leeward division of Spanish ships was nearing the main fleet and posed a threat to the rear of the British formation. The *Captain* and the *Colossus* were unserviceable. A majority of his other vessels suffered from battle damage, and some of them already needed repairs because of collisions or storms. Indifferently crewed and commanded or not, a reunited Spanish fleet would still outnumber the British, and several of the enemy ships that took no part in the battle were completely undamaged. Jervis decided to let Cordoba go and to concentrate on securing his prizes and repairing his vessels.

Four ships of the line fell to the British: the *San Jose,* the *Salvador del Mundo,* the *San Nicolas,* and the *San Isidro*. Each was taken into the Royal Navy. Renamed the *San Josef* and dubbed by sailors as the "Holy Joe," the *San Jose* lasted until she was broken up in 1849.

Spanish casualty estimates ran to about 430 dead, 850 wounded, and 3,000 captured. In the *Gazette,* Jervis reported 261 dead and 342 wounded among the four captured ships. Numerous officers were among the dead, including four captains of ships of the line, and two commodores. So poorly stocked with medical supplies were the Spanish that some of the wounded were bandaged with cloth taken from cannon cartridges.

The butcher's bill came to exactly 300 for the British. There were 73 dead and 227 reported wounded, although the latter figure excludes a number of lightly wounded sailors.

News of the victory brought great joy to England. It was encouraging enough that Jervis' outnumbered fleet won a major battle. But now, although French success on land remained a paramount concern, the battle of February 14 showed that Spain's large navy was so poorly managed that it posed no great threat to British maritime power.

In Spain, Cordoba and a number of his senior officers were arrested and court-martialed. The commander of the fleet was stripped of his rank, forbidden to appear at court, and exiled from Madrid and its vicinity. In sharp contrast with its harsh condemnation of the aristocratic officers, the court made a very unusual statement of praise for an enlisted man of humble origins, the marine grenadier Martin Alvarez. He earned an honored place in Spain's maritime history, and two ships of the Spanish Navy have been named for him.

Lavish praise, admiration, and great rewards went to Jervis and his senior officers. In 1801, Jervis was elevated to the peerage and named the 1st Earl St. of Vincent. Two of Jervis' admirals were made baronets. Nelson turned down the same offer because a baronetcy was beyond his financial means, but he accepted a knighthood as he entered the most brilliant stage of his career.

Just barely, the gigantic *Santisima Trinidad* escaped becoming a trophy of the Royal Navy after the battle of Cape St. Vincent was over. Unsuccessfully stalked by several British frigates while hobbling to refuge at Cadiz, the flagship came under attack from the 32-gun HMS *Terpsichore*. After losing several men, the four-decker fended off the *Terpsichore* and made it to safety.

Fate would bring Nelson and the *Santisima Trinidad* together again. As a vice admiral, Horatio Nelson commanded the British forces facing a combined French-Spanish fleet at the October 21, 1805, Battle of Trafalgar. Nelson's plans led to a British victory, even though the admiral was fatally wounded by a French musket ball early in the action. Again harried and battered by enemy ships, the *Santisima Trinidad* again struck its colors later in the day. This time the legendary flagship became a prize of the Royal Navy. But the British were not able to take their coveted trophy to port. Fatally damaged during the battle, the world's largest ship of the line sank one day after her capture. □

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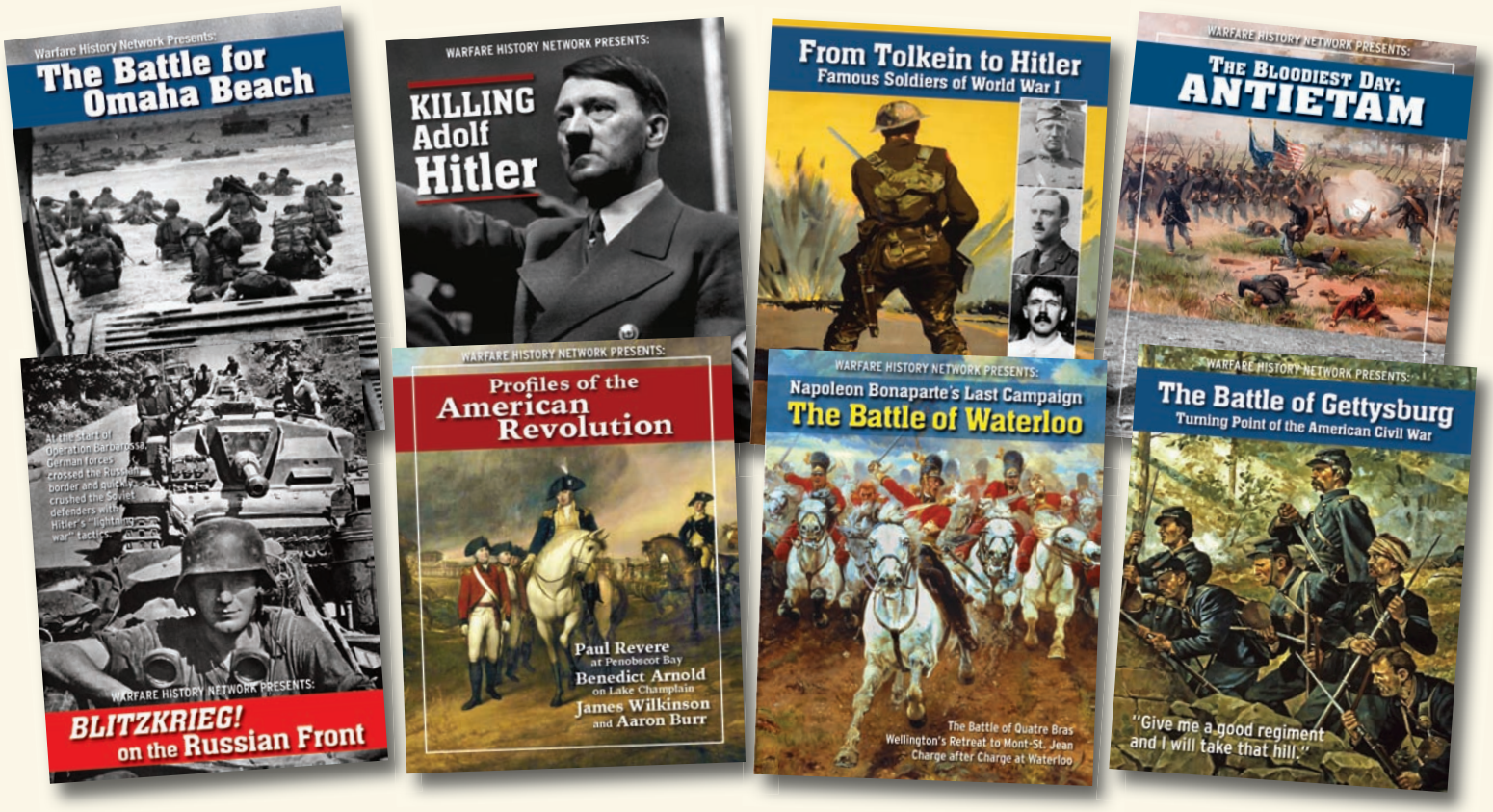

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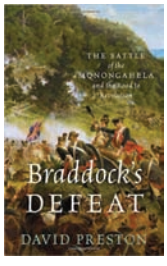
By Christopher Miskimon

The Battle of the Monongahela in 1755 marked the entry of a promising young militia officer named George Washington onto history's stage.

IN APRIL 1754 THE FRENCH SENT AN IMPRESSIVE HOST DOWN THE Allegheny and Ohio Rivers. Six hundred men with artillery and supplies set out in canoes and bateaux. It was a large military force, one of the largest yet seen on the North American continent. This group soon took control of a small British outpost, sending its occupants back to the English colonies. War loomed on the horizon. A young militia officer, Lt. Col. George Washington, volunteered to lead an expedition to warn the French to depart or be forcibly removed. It was a fateful mission for the young man, the first in what would be a long and distinguished military career.

In the event, Washington's mission did not end peaceably. France and England soon went to war, a conflict which spanned much of the world including North America. Young Washington had a difficult time on his first martial foray, but the war would prove a crucible, teaching and preparing him for the future. This incident, among others, would provide the sparks necessary to begin what was for the time a world war. The French and English fought across several continents in what would become known as the Seven Years' War. In North America the conflict was dubbed the French and Indian War.

From the start, conducting a war in America required the British to cooperate with the colonists. This was not an easy thing; regular British Army commissions took precedence over colonial ones, making the colonists always subordinate regardless of rank. For their part, the British officers saw their American counterparts as inadequately trained amateurs at best, and a reckless rabble at worst. However, the continent was vast and resources were stretched thin, so colonial troops were needed to conduct effective operations in the untamed wilderness in which the British and French were fighting. One such expedition would end in a horrid defeat for the English, but it helped set the stage for the American Revolution. Led by British General Edward Braddock, the story of this ill-fated mission is told well in ***Braddock's Defeat: The Battle of the Monongahela and the Road to Revolution*** (David Preston, Oxford University Press, UK, 2015, 480 pp., maps, illustrations, appendices, notes, bibliography, index, $29.95, hardcover).



Braddock departed Ireland in early 1755 at the head of more than 1,300 troops supported by 29 artillery pieces of varying sizes. He reached America a month later and soon after sent a letter to George Washington inviting the young Virginian to join his staff. Braddock's column, as part of a four-pronged attack against the French in North America, would march on Fort Duquesne, a stronghold in present day Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Seizing the fort would cripple French strength in the region. The British believed the fort was lightly

Library of Congress

Lt. Col. George Washington directs Virginia militia during the Battle of Monongahela on July 9, 1755, as Maj. Gen. Edward Braddock is mortally wounded. Washington could not save the British troops from a humiliating defeat at the hands of the French and their Indian allies.

held and could be taken easily. For a time this was true, but the French recognized their weakness and reinforced the fort.

Braddock's column began its trek through the wilderness toward Fort Duquesne, crossing the Monongahela River on July 9. It had been a hard journey through undeveloped land; the road was rough and needed almost constant widening to accommodate the wagons and artillery. Braddock's troops were tired after weeks of hard marching. Ahead of them awaited a force of French troops and Indian warriors sent to ambush them. The two groups ran into each other; the British advanced guard, led by then Lt. Col. Thomas Gage, was beset by their enemy and forced back after taking casualties.

The Indians pressed forward using tactics the British regulars were unaccustomed to facing. Soon the English formations began to disintegrate as Braddock tried to rally them. He had several horses shot from under him. For a while only the Virginia troops in the rearguard remained steady, but eventually order was restored and the British troops began to stand firm. Eventually Braddock was wounded, and this compelled the British to begin withdrawing to the river. Washington rallied the fleeing British force and managed to form a rearguard, something for which he was remembered for in later years. Still, it was a humiliating defeat for the English; they suffered two-thirds casualties and a great loss of prestige. Braddock died a few days after the battle.

The strength of this book is its thorough detail. The author provides background information on all the major personalities, plans, and activities which led to the battle. He also uses newly examined Native American sources to provide a more complete view of the action. Many participants in the Revolution were present at Monongahela, such as Washington, Gage, Captain Horatio Gates and teamster Daniel Morgan. Their stories are also told, providing context for their later lives. The wider political context and consequences of the battle complete the book. This is a fascinating book which provides the reader with a complete picture of the battle and challenges some long-held assumptions with insight and analysis.

The Hundred Years War, Volume 4: Cursed Kings (Jonathan Sumption, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia PA, 2015, 928 pp., maps, notes, bibliography, index, $59.95, hardcover)

At the beginning of the 15th century, France was heading for a fall. Internal struggles were tearing her apart, King Charles VI was insane and the royal family was a greedy, violent bunch unwilling to settle its differences for the good of the land. All this left France open to conquest by the aggressive King of England, Henry V. The Lancastrian king's campaign led to the Battle of Agincourt, during which his dismounted knights and longbowmen once again destroyed the flower of French Chivalry as had been done at the battles of Crecy and Poitiers in the previous century. This left France open to defeat and surrender to Henry, even though he would not live long enough to reap the benefits of his success.

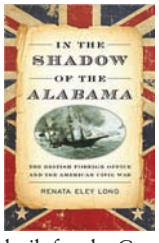
This epic series is the result of more than two decades of work and is the author's masterwork on the Hundred Years War. This volume covers the period from 1400 to 1422. Full of rich detail gained extensively through original research, this latest volume is fully the equal to the three preceding volumes. Often books with such an esteemed academic pedigree can be challenging to read, but this work flows easily; the author's clear style makes the pages fly by. Sumption's profiles of the people who lived and fought during the conflict are one of the book's greatest strengths.

The Vikings and Their Enemies: Warfare in Northern Europe, 750-1100 (Philip Line, Skyhorse Press, New York, 2015, 318 pp., maps, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index, $26.99, hardcover)

The Vikings are famous for their skill as warriors and raiders. They terrorized the littoral zones of Europe for centuries, even penetrating into the continental heartland through its rivers. Yet little thought is given to their strategic skills or methods. They usually are considered little more than savage brutes. The Vikings had their own body of knowledge for warfare, though, much like their opponents. When necessary, they built forts and they planned for campaigns including extensive logistical preparations. They could also lay siege to large cities, though only at Paris did they appear to use siege engines. Overall, their martial skills were at least the equal of their enemies, and combined with their aggressiveness, it allowed them achieve much and to strike fear into the hearts of European across the continent.

This book enlightens the reader on the nuances of warfare during this period. There were many practicalities to campaigning and many challenges to overcome. The author shows the ingenuity of the Vikings and their foes using the latest archaeological discoveries and the surviving writings of the period. He dispels many of the myths about the Vikings and sets the record straight as to their amazing achievements.

In the Shadow of the Alabama: The British Foreign Office and the American Civil War (Renata Eley Long, Naval Institute Press, Annapolis MD, 2015, 280 pp., illustrations, notes, bibliography, index, $37.95, hardcover)



The CSS *Alabama* was nearly seized by the British Government in 1862. It was built for the Confederacy by the John Laird Sons and Company shipbuilders of England. The construction was overseen in secret by a Confederate Navy officer, Captain James Bulloch. The ship narrowly escaped impoundment and went on to a two-year war against Union commerce.

Many accounts of the *Alabama*'s escape attribute the ship's fortuitous escape to Victor Buckley, a clerk in the British Foreign Office. He is suspected of leaking information to Confederate agents, enabling the ship to get away. Meanwhile, the American Minister to England, Charles F. Adams, used his own spies to prove how British companies were aiding the Confederacy.

The mysteries surrounding the *Alabama* are explored in this new book. There are a number of them and each is given a thorough look, allowing the reader an in-depth look at the political machinations of the American and British governments at a critical time in their relations. The involvement of the British in the American Civil War is full of intrigue, and this story of the vessel is a fascinating tale well presented.

Winston Churchill Reporting: Adventures of a Young War Correspondent (Simon Read, Da Capo Press, Boston, MA, 2015, 309 pp., maps, photographs, notes, bibliography, index, $26.99, hardcover)

British Prime Minister Winston Churchill is most famous for his leadership of the United Kingdom in World War II and deservedly so. Without him England's survival in the dark days of 1940-41 would have been immeasurably more difficult,

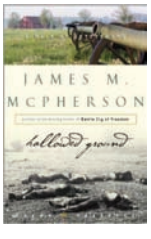
if not impossible. He not only pulled them through that dark time but onward to eventual victory by 1945.

Churchill did not rise from the earth ready for the conquest of that tumult, though. Like any other human being, he was forged in the experiences of his earlier life. Young Churchill knew if he wanted to gain a life in politics he had to make a name for himself, one people would recognize and respond to. He did this through a combination of military service and war reporting, relaying the sounds of gunfire and conflict through his words to readers eager for news of Britain's worldwide martial operations.

This was how Churchill created himself. Through entering combat zones he developed his character, gaining determination and steadfastness. He learned tenacity and bravery. The young Englishman also learned how to write, gaining a command of language which allowed him to captivate his audience whether they were reading his reports or listening to his speeches. These skills were gained at places such as Cuba, Omdurman, and South Africa, all sites from which Churchill reported.

By taking the reader back to a time before Churchill became famous and successful, the author shows a young man with all his dreams and desires before him. He shows what is perhaps the most formative time in the future prime minister's life and explains how his experiences contributed to the traits he later exhibited leading Great Britain during its greatest test of survival.

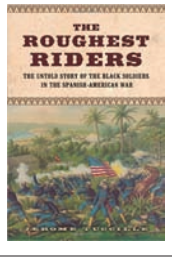
Hallowed Ground: A Walk at Gettysburg (James M. McPherson, Zenith Press, Minneapolis, MN, 2015, 224 pp., maps, illustrations, index, $35.00, hardcover)



Gettysburg is one of the great battles of American history. James McPherson is one of America's greatest historians on the Civil War. He walked this battlefield many times, leading tours of it and studying each of its many sites. McPherson had a great ability to explain the battle and its greater context, showing how it fit into the greater story of the war as a whole along with world events at the time.

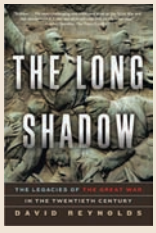
This new edition of his writings on the famous battle is enhanced with the words of participants and other well-known writers. It is a coffee-table book which is also well-illustrated with period images, maps, and photographs of the ground as it appears today. It thoroughly covers the overall conduct of the battle while including many small stories of the various participants in detail.

The Roughest Riders: The Untold Story of the Black Soldiers in the Spanish-American War (Jerome Tuccille, Chicago Review Press, 2015, 304 pp., maps, photographs, bibliography, index, $26.95, hardcover)



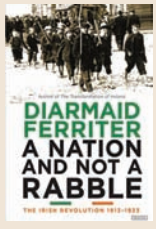
The fighting in Cuba during the Spanish-American War was the stuff of newspaper drama and patriotic fervor. In particular, the battles for San Juan and Kettle Hill stood out as examples of American bravery and determination. Much of this was credited at

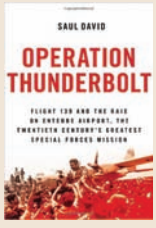
SHORT BURSTS



When the Men Go Off to War: Poems (Victoria Kelly, Naval Institute Press, 2015, $27.95, hardcover) The author is an acclaimed poet. This collection of her work examines the experience of military spouses during deployments.

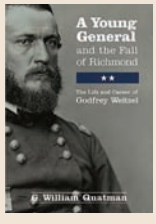
The Long Shadow: The Legacies of the Great War in the Twentieth Century (David Reynolds, W. W. Norton, 2015, $17.95, softcover) Reynolds' book assesses the influence World War I had on the rest of the 20th century. He takes a critical look at a war largely forgotten in America.

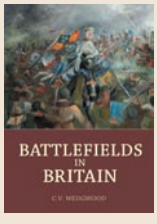




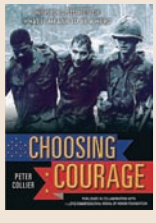
A Nation and Not a Rabble: The Irish Revolution 1913-1923 (Diarmaid Ferriter, The Overlook Press, 2015, $35.00, Hardcover) The Irish Revolution has been largely sidetracked by World War I. The author explores the actions and personalities of this long-ignored conflict.

Operation Thunderbolt: Flight 139 and the Raid on Entebbe Airport, the Most Audacious Hostage Rescue Mission in History (Saul David, Little, Brown and Company, 2015, $30.00, hardcover) A comprehensive retelling of the 1976 terrorist incident and subsequent rescue mission. It is a day-by-day, blow-by-blow account of the astounding Israeli operation.



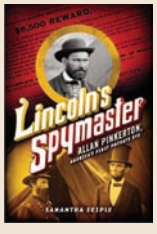


A Young General and the Fall of Richmond: The Life and Career of Godfrey Weitzel (G. William Quatman, Ohio University Press, 2015, $28.95, hardcover) The subject of this biography is almost unknown today, but he was the general who took Richmond for the Union. The author tells Weitzel's story in detail using numerous sources.



Battlefields in Britain (C. V. Wedgwood, Unicorn Press Ltd. 2015, $18.00, hardcover) A compact yet informative guide book of the famous battlefields of England by the grand dame of British history. Her book describes 15 key battles from Hastings to Culloden.

Choosing Courage: Inspiring Stories of What It Means to be a Hero (Peter Collier, Artisan Publishing, 2015, $18.95, hardcover) A series of vignettes on American military heroes. The compelling book is published in cooperation with the Congressional Medal of Honor Foundation.



Attila the Hun (Nic Fields, Osprey Publishing, 2015, $18.95, softcover) The publisher's command series title offers a detailed analysis of Attila's tactics, experiences, and successes. In the two decades before his death his armies overran the eastern and western Roman empires.

Special Forces in the War on Terror (Leigh Neville, Osprey Publishing, 2015, $32.95, hardcover) An overview of the various U.S. and Allied special forces troops. The work covers covert missions in the Middle East and Africa.

Lincoln's Spymaster: Allan Pinkerton, America's First Private Eye (Samantha Seiple, Scholastic Press, 2015, $17.99, softcover) A biography of the nation's premier spymaster during the American Civil War. The author explores his character and the legacy he left behind.

the time to future-president Theodore Roosevelt's famed Rough Riders, a volunteer cavalry unit assembled from disparate portions of American society. Since then their fame has been maintained in both print and film.

The Rough Riders were not the only American unit present at this battle or in Cuba. The 9th and 10th Cavalry and the 24th and 25th Infantry Regiments were African-American units in which black soldiers led by white officers. They fought as hard as any, bearing much of the fighting on the island. Even Roosevelt admitted they had led the charge to the top of Kettle Hill, though he later changed his story.

The story of African-American soldiers in military history has finally been getting more attention in recent years; this book does a fine job in the quest to correct that imbalance. The narrative flows smoothly, tying together the big story of the war and its origins to the smaller, but more fascinating, tale of the African-American troops who fought it. These men served a country which was eager to take the world stage but not yet ready to acknowledge the efforts of all who helped achieve that lofty goal. This new work helps broaden the depth of American military history for all who took part in it.

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365 Aircraft You Must Fly: The Most Sublime, Weird, and Outrageous Aircraft from the Past 100+ Years (Robert F. Dorr, Zenith Press, Minneapolis, MN, 2015, 320 pp., photographs, index, $22.99, softcover)

Any book listing the best aircraft in history is sure to be controversial, but this one sparks the interest of the reader with its broad selection of flying machines from across the aviation spectrum. Old favorites from the P-51 Mustang to the B-52 Stratofortress are deservedly included, but aircraft many readers have never heard of are there as well. The German FA330 was a hybrid helicopter-glider that was towed behind U-Boats to search for targets. The HUP Retriever was the first successful twin-rotor helicopter and flew in Korea. The F2Y Sea Dart was a jet-propelled seaplane fighter which never went into production, but was an imaginative concept.

The author is an acknowledged aviation expert. His list is a fascinating look at the world's greatest and strangest aircraft. The book is well-illustrated, mostly in color and each design's history is summarized neatly. While some of the planes chosen are civilian aircraft, most are military from World War I to the present. □

Trenton

Continued from page 29

pickets. Screaming like banshees, they scampered over the wooden planks to the other side, leaving a company of Dragoons behind to cover their timely escape.

As for the rest of Mawhood's command, their position deteriorated rapidly as Sullivan's Continentals began a renewed effort to capture their prize. The British 40th redeployed to a stronger defensive position on the northern crest of a small hillside just outside of the town. The 55th formed a defensive line to their immediate left. But as defensive positions go, the slope made for paltry high ground, and Sullivan's men had no difficulty in charging straight up it.

Attacking in force, they kept coming on, leaving the Redcoats with no choice but to retire and make their final stand behind the breastworks they had thrown up in front of the town. But the Continentals, undaunted by volleys of musketry, all but hurled themselves at the barricade, overrunning the breastworks as if it were so many matchsticks. Their position untenable, the British withdrew into the town and, losing any semblance of unit cohesion began to scatter.

Most of them tried to get clear of the town, hoping to rejoin the rest of Cornwallis' army and live to fight another day. Approximately 300 of them simply went to ground, hiding anywhere they could. Several locked themselves inside Nassau Hall at the College of New Jersey. They were eventually coaxed out by a group of artillerymen led by Alexander Hamilton, who had only recently applied to the college. Denied entry because he had asked to be allowed the privilege of studying at his own pace, Hamilton now found himself in the unique position of being able to lob cannon balls at the college that had rejected him. After a brief bombardment, white flags appeared at the upper windows, and the officers inside agreed to come out and surrender. In less than an hour, the Battle of Princeton was fought and won.

Having secured a second victory, Washington considered making a run on New Brunswick and the 70,000 pounds sterling in the British Army pay chest there, but wisely decided to put some distance between himself and his nemesis as the worsening weather set in. He simply was not strong enough to face off against the soon to return Cornwallis, at least at that point in the war. Washington would spend most of the next four years eluding his grasp, making a habit of vexing his aristocratic adversary and avoiding a direct showdown until he was ready, with the help of the French, at Yorktown in 1781. □

Teutoburg Forest

Continued from page 37

of the sentina, literally the dregs of the population of the city of Rome, who had never before been a source for the legions. Roman citizens who lived the good life saw no reason to risk life and limb. This was a far cry from Republican days, when serving in the legions was the right and duty of the Roman citizen, and the only recruits normally passed up were the poor.

Likely another reason for Augustus' turn about was that the conquest of Germania was the brainchild of Drusus and not of Augustus. The Varian disaster confirmed that the cost of a German conquest far outweighed the benefits; henceforth, the Rhine was to remain the eastern border.

In AD 10 Tiberius returned to the German frontier to carry out some half-hearted raids into Germania. Two years later, when he returned to Rome, Tiberius held his postponed Illyrian triumph. Notably, there was no triumph de Germania. Neither Aliso nor any other Roman presence in the German interior had been restored. In the face of his stepfather's old age, Tiberius was more worried about ensuring his accession than pressing the conquest of Germania. Others in the upper military echelons thought otherwise.

Drusus' young son, Germanicus Julius Caesar, who inherited his father's spirit and popularity, called for vengeance. Germanicus became a Roman hero but his campaigns were hard fought, costly in lives and in coin, and ultimately indecisive. After three years of campaigning against the tribes east of the Rhine, Germanicus was recalled by Tiberius, now emperor. Tiberius reasoned that "the Cherusci too and the other insurgent tribes, since the vengeance of Rome had been satisfied, might be left to their internal feuds."

Unlike in Gaul, the lack of large urban centers, poor roads, and hostile terrain nullified any Roman victories because they made it difficult to subjugate the scattered population. All the wars, all the bloodshed, of the last three decades had achieved naught but to further militarize the already dangerous Germanic tribes.

Arminius was left free to square off against Maroboduus. Although victorious, Arminius was killed in AD 19 by tribesmen who resented his perceived claim to kingship. Arminius died young but he had already profoundly changed the course of history. His victory in the Teutoburg and his resistance freed the tribes from Roman subjugation and, centuries later, made possible the emergence of Germany, France, and England. □

 By Joseph Luster

REAL-TIME GRAND SCALE STRATEGY MAKES THE RARE TRANSITION TO CONSOLE IN GRAND AGES: MEDIEVAL.

The *Grand Ages* series of city-building strategy games can be traced back to 2006's *Glory of the Roman Empire*, which was developed by Haemimont Games. Following that entry was 2008's *Imperium Romanum*, which then made way for *Grand Ages: Rome* and, ultimately, *Grand Ages: Medieval*. Now even more people can play the latest title as it recently made the leap from PC to PlayStation 4 and even added in a new content update that delivers siege enhancement and expanded ocean gameplay free of charge.

The PS4 debut of *Grand Ages: Medieval* marks the first time for the series to appear on console, but that doesn't mean the team behind it lacks experience in that department. Gaming Minds Studio (*Port Royale, Patrician IV*) is full of strategy veterans with experience that goes back 19 years, and they've been bringing strategy games to PlayStation platforms since the PlayStation 2 days. *Grand Ages: Medieval* is an ambitious title to bring to consoles, which is a place typically bereft of this type of real-time, grand scale strategy. Thankfully *Grand Ages: Medieval*'s bold step to PS4, while not without its issues, is a successful one.

Players start out as a mayor governing their small European settlement in the High Middle Ages. Beginning in AD 1050, *Grand Ages: Medieval* spans a great deal of time as you expand trade routes and your nation's influence, leading your people through the decades and, ideally, toward total conquest of Europe. Thus, as you might have guessed, the focus here is more on developing an economy, building settlements, and solving problems through agreements rather than total war. There is combat, of course, but there's much more to this one than taking on your opponents with nothing but brute force as the deciding factor.

The world map—consisting of Europe, North Africa, the Middle East, and the Caucasus—is a condensed one that features many similar looking locations across the continents. Areas that are initially obscured on the map can be uncovered by sending out scouts and settlers, and you can explore some of the various nooks and crannies to unearth commodities and earn some extra loot. While the sameness of a few areas takes away from the immersion slightly, there's enough to occupy your attention to make it a relatively minor issue.

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If attempting to rule the world becomes exhausting after a while, you can always take a dip in the eight-player multiplayer mode. One of the best features of this is the ability to set commands and protocols so you can step away from the multiplayer without actually putting an end to your game. It comes in especially handy when playing against opponents in different parts of the world that make the timing of multiplayer less convenient. Just be careful not to do it too much lest you end up losing when you're not even in front of the TV.

Content has been rolling out since *Grand Ages: Medieval*'s initial launch on PlayStation 4, too. The latest is a free "Siege & Conquest" update, which brings a handful of improvements and additions to spice up the experience. One of the key changes is the addition of two varieties of city walls, which will help protect against the loss of morale during a city siege. On the other end of the spectrum is a means of taking down opponents' city walls, the Trebuchet Master. These are powerful units designed to tear down the walls, but they're not without weaknesses of their own.

"Siege & Conquest" also adds in improvements to land-based and open seas activities. Colony ships, for instance, come at a hefty price but will let you travel unlimited distances. Just as Trebuchet Masters are designed to counter city walls, though, pirates now roam the seas as a counterbalance to the usefulness of colony ships. The update is rounded out nicely with a handful of additional changes, bug fixes, and improvements, giving strategy players plenty of reason to dig into the complimentary content.

The end result of the "Siege & Conquest" update is an impressive and engaging free addition to an already stacked game. Anyone who's been longing for more strategy options on console should definitely give the PlayStation 4 version of *Grand Ages: Medieval* a spin, because these opportunities only come around every once in a while. □

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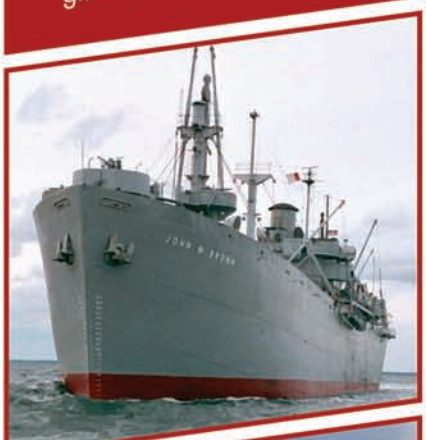

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