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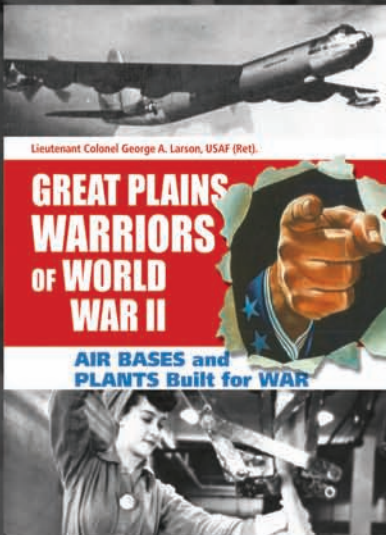
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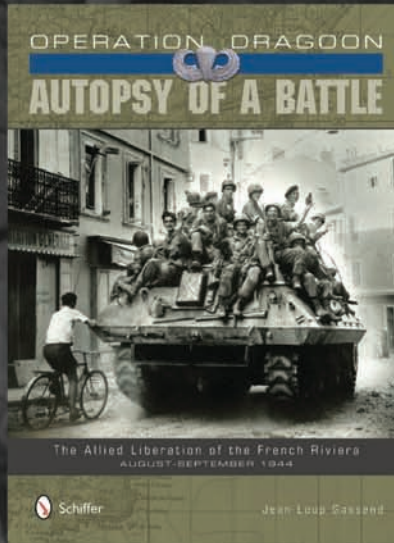


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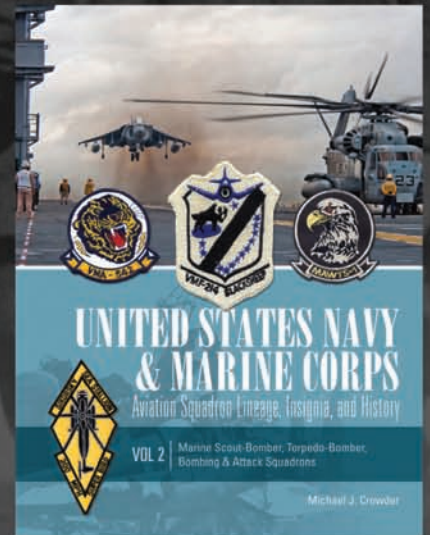
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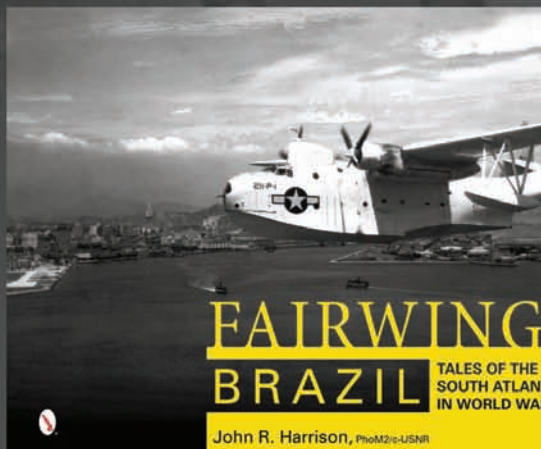
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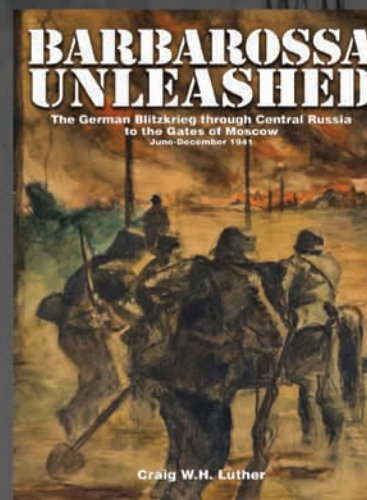
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A German SS soldier, photographed during the opening hours of the Battle of the Bulge. This is one of a series of photographs from a German camera recovered by Americans during the battle. See story page 24. Photo: National Archives

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## Vikings had the tools and traits to succeed.

“THE WOEFUL INROADS OF HEATHEN MEN MADE LAMENTABLE havoc in the Church of God in Holy-island, by rapine and slaughter,” reads the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, referring to the savage sacking of the island monastery off the coast of Northumbria in ad 793.

Like a fast-moving storm, the Vikings began raiding northern Britain, Scotland, and Ireland in the last decade of the 8th century. Medieval writers put the raid on

Lindisfarne in the same category as natural disasters and believed, as they did with all disasters, that it was a punishment for transgressions against God. It was the first of many such disasters for the Anglo-Saxons, as the Vikings eventually swept through all of Britain, leaving only Wessex unconquered.

The passage of nearly 10,000 years since the end of the Viking Age makes it difficult for us to say with a high degree of accuracy much of anything about the Vikings. Some aspects of their style and means of warfare are known well enough to get a reasonable idea of that aspect. What cloaks their deeds is not only the limited amount of primary source documentation available to us, but also the shortage of archaeological evidence.

How they fought is understood well enough, but why the western Vikings, those from modern-day Denmark and Norway, expanded so rapidly remains a continuing realm of study and debate. For almost three centuries, from the Lindisfarne raid to the Battle of Stamford Bridge in 1066, the western Vikings plundered the British Isles, Frisia, Frankish lands, and other realms.

Medieval writers believed that the Vikings were bigger and stronger than other peoples. They also believed that climactic changes made it difficult for the Vikings to sustain themselves, which compelled them to plunder abroad. These theories have been proven wrong.

Like a river has many tributaries, so does the rise of the western Vikings and their invasions have many factors. One is that a long tradition of piracy existed in Scandinavia. Another is that inheritance laws favoring eldest sons forced younger sons to seek fortune abroad. Yet another is the technological advance of the Viking ship, or longboat, which facilitated fast-moving seaborne raids.

The Vikings were unequalled at the time as seafaring men, and their longships were a key factor in their success. With their ornately

carved prows, their oars and square-rigged sails, their long keels and shallow drafts, the longships were the perfect vessel to swoop down on unsuspecting and vulnerable coastal and river settlements.

Generally less than 100 feet long, with about 16 oars on each side, and bearing crews of 60 to 90 men, the oak-plank longships could land on beaches and could carry their crews far inland. A small raid might involve as few as a half dozen ships. A large expedition in the latter days of the Viking Age required several hundred ships. Of particular note was the epic raid that began in AD 859 in which the Vikings sailed through the Straits of Gibraltar and fought their way 200 kilometers up the Rhone River to Valence.

Besides their supremacy at sea, the Vikings also were successful in land warfare. The western Vikings benefited from strong leadership, and they exhibited great courage and resourcefulness. The element of surprise, which was enabled through the stealth-like characteristics of their long ships, also contributed substantially to their success. They fought on land primarily hand to hand with double-edged swords for slashing and battleaxes. They used round shields, helmets, and leather jackets or mail for protection. Although they engaged mostly in raids and skirmishes, a few large battles occurred, such as Brunanburh (937), Maldon (991), and Clontarf (1014).

The western Vikings were polytheistic; Norse religion was a subset of Germanic paganism. The gradual conversion of the Vikings to Christianity in the 10th century heralded an end to their previously separate and unique political and religious identity. But their influence was by no means marginalized by this, for by that time they had settled in many areas, such as northern France and Sicily, where they would become assimilated with other peoples and have a profound effect on the course of European history in the centuries that followed. □

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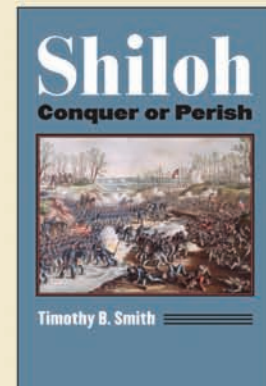
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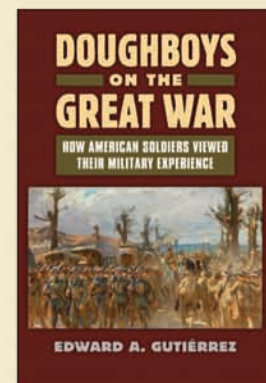
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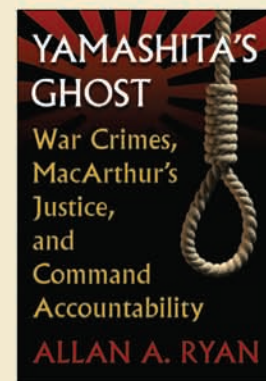
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By Simon Rees

## Frontiersman and American Revolutionary War hero Daniel Morgan repeatedly bloodied British noses.

**T**HE LIEUTENANT HAD REACHED THE END OF HIS TETHER. IT WAS TIME to cut this impudent American wagoner down to size with the flat of his sword. But as a lesson in British Army discipline it proved an abject failure; the frontiersman responded by smashing a well-aimed fist into the officer's face, leaving him sprawled in the dirt. Welcome to the world of Daniel Morgan.

BELOW: Daniel Morgan is visible on horseback, in the center behind blue-coated Continentals, at the Battle of Cowpens fought January 17, 1781. Cowpens essentially marked the end of Morgan's fighting career.

RIGHT: Charles Wilson

Peale's portrait of Morgan.

Born in New Jersey, in 1736, into the lower rungs of society, Morgan left home in 1753 after a domestic dispute with his father. He eventually ended up working as a wagoner in the frontier regions of Virginia. He was strong, muscular, and just over six feet tall. By 1755, he was under contract to transport supplies in Maj. Gen. Edward Braddock's expedition against the French-held Fort Duquesne that culminated in the disaster of Monongahela. It was during this period that the altercation with the British lieutenant occurred, with Morgan sentenced to 500 lashes. He later claimed to have remained conscious throughout and even noted a miscount, with 499

and not 500 blows received. This is probably an embellishment, for striking an officer was a serious offense and the punishment would have been carried out with precision. White lie or not, the story would help cement closer ties with his men in the years to come.

Morgan quickly recovered and volunteered to serve with a company of Virginia rangers. On one occasion when delivering dispatches, he was ambushed by Native Americans. An enemy musket ball struck him below the jaw and exited through his left cheek, smashing both bone and teeth. Somehow Morgan remained in his saddle, spun his horse around, and

bolted for safety before his enemies could follow up their surprise. His traveling companion was less fortunate, having been killed instantly.



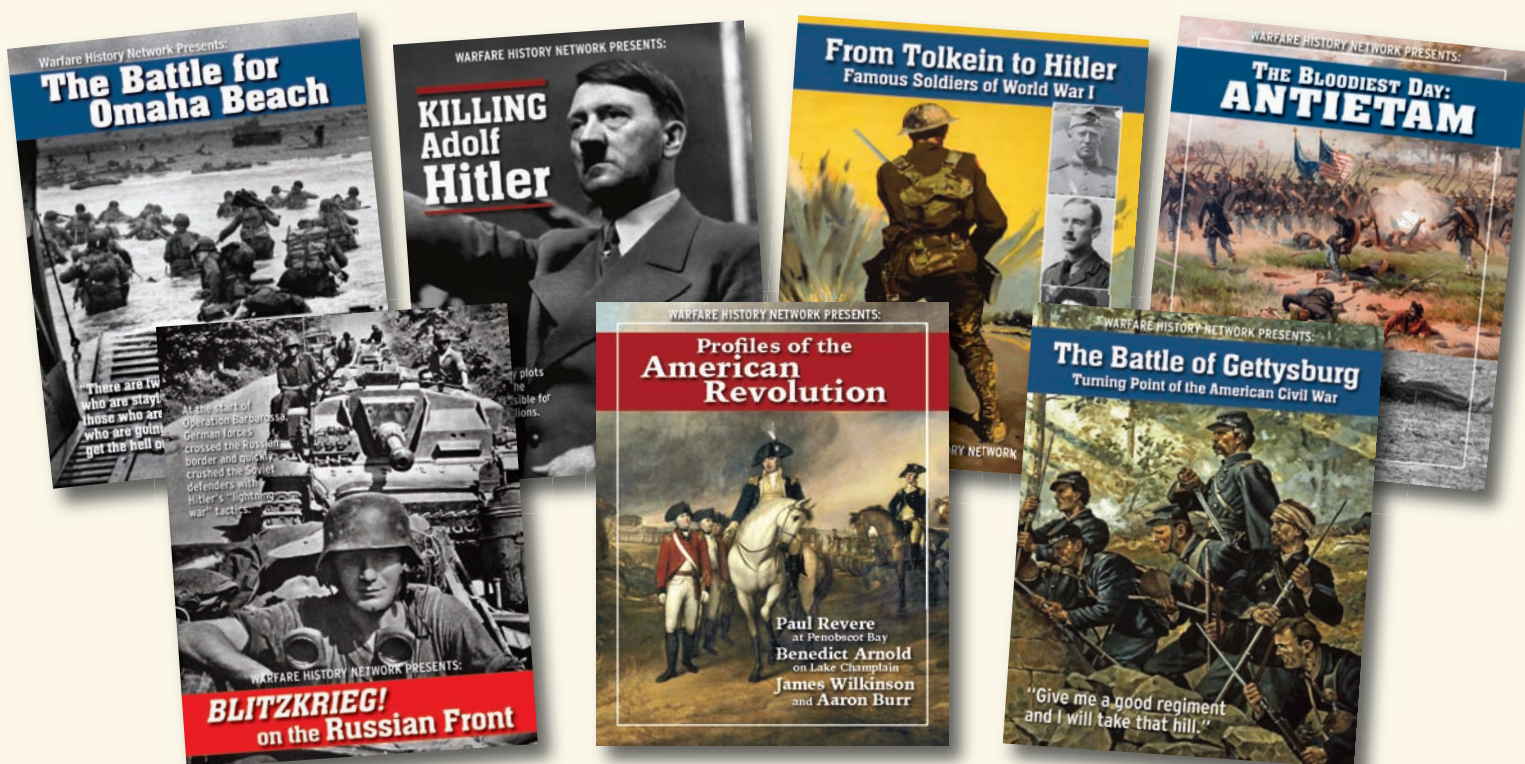
Independence National Park



By 1758, Morgan was working as a wagoner once more but often using his spare time to ill effect at a tavern near Winchester, Virginia, engaging in brawls and fist fights. He was also becoming a familiar face with the magistrates. However, by 1763, Abigail Curry was living with him and had helped calm his wilder side. The couple soon had two children, which prompted Morgan to focus on business and self-education. He thrived as a result and, by 1774, he had married Abigail, owned 225 acres of farmland, held 10 slaves, and had sub-leased his wagon. He was also captain of a local militia unit and involved in the colony of Virginia's campaign against the Shawnee and

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Following a Herculean march through the wilds of northern Maine with Colonel Benedict Arnold, Morgan's riflemen clamber over the walls of Quebec under fire from Canadian militia on December 31, 1775. Morgan ultimately was captured in the disastrous Battle of Quebec.

Mingo in 1774, which was known as Lord Dunmore's War.

A year later, the colonies finally took up arms against the British Crown. In building up the Continental Army, the Second Continental Congress requested that Virginia raise two rifle companies, one eventually selected to come from Frederick County, Virginia, which was Morgan's home. With his status and military experience, the "Old Wagoner," as he was sometimes called, was the obvious choice to lead the unit, and on July 15, 1775, he departed Winchester for Cambridge, Massachusetts, with 96 chosen men. From there they were sent to assist the rebel siege of nearby Boston.

Dressed in buckskins and armed with American long rifles, Morgan's men were phenomenal shots for the age, frequently able to hit a seven-inch target at 250 yards. The long rifle achieved much of its effectiveness through the use of grooved barreling that added spin to a bullet. But it came with two important caveats: it took longer to reload than the smoothbore musket, and it needed a pair of skilled hands to achieve the best results.

Not long after joining the siege of Boston, Morgan's unit was selected for another mission. The unit would join two Pennsylvania-raised rifle companies under the command of Colonel Benedict Arnold, who had planned an audacious attack on Quebec City via the Maine wilderness. Arnold's expedition eventually totalled 1,050 men and was undertaken in tandem with Brig. Gen. Richard Montgomery's advance on Montreal.

The expedition departed Fort Western, Maine, on September 25. Morgan was in charge of the vanguard, whose main job was to clear the way ahead, a task that became a fearsome endurance test as the men struggled each day to portage their boats across unforgiving terrain. By mid-October the weather had turned foul, while supplies were running dangerously low and dysentery was becoming increasingly rife. Worse news came when Lt. Col. Roger Enos's unit elected to withdraw. Arnold's army then entered an icy, waterlogged hell between the Kennebec and Chaudière Rivers, with several men dying from exposure and many others, now starving, reduced to making broths with belt or shoe leather. Mercifully, the expedition left the wilderness and reached Quebec's Sartigan region by November 3. Only about 650 men were left, while Quebec City's garrison would soon reach 1,200 men.

The bulk of Arnold's forces had successfully crossed the St Lawrence River and arrived within Quebec City's environs by mid-November. Morgan now argued for an immediate coup de main but was voted down at a council of war. Instead, the Americans withdrew just upstream from Quebec City, where they continued to recuperate and waited for Montgomery, who was wrapping up his slow but successful Montreal campaign. He arrived on December 2, bringing an extra 300 men and some artillery pieces. Montgomery and Arnold now decided to wait for a snowstorm that they could use as cover to make a surprise assault on the city using two attack columns.

The storm finally arrived on December 30, raging in full fury by the early hours of December 31. Operations started at 4 AM, with Arnold heading his column's vanguard. With him came gunners hauling a cannon fixed to a sledge, although the piece was lost to a snowdrift early in the movement. Morgan came next with an additional contingent of riflemen. The Americans were spotted advancing through the dock area and, soon afterward, came across an unpleasant surprise. Their way into the lower town was blocked by a palisade manned by about 30 defenders. Arnold launched a frontal assault but was hit in the foot by a ricochet and knocked out of action. Morgan immediately took over and rushed up a scaling ladder only to tumble back down in the face of a ragged volley. He was unscathed, save for powder burns to his face. Undaunted, he clambered back up, vaulted over the parapet, and managed to avoid the incoming bayonets. The defenders soon lost heart and promptly surrendered.

The Old Wagoner now reconnoitered ahead and found a second barrier, albeit unguarded. He raced back and urged an immediate assault. Instead of heeding the advice, his brother officers debated the situation and concluded it best to wait for the rest of the column to catch up. Concern was also voiced that the prisoners just taken might decide to overpower them. One can only imagine Morgan's bitter frustration at this point, for his fears proved well-grounded. British and Quebecois units were indeed being rushed to this vital position.

Finally heading a renewed advance, Morgan was called upon to surrender by a Royal Navy officer, who had rashly led a contingent of sailors outside the second palisade. Morgan shot him down and, as the British sailors scattered, shouted: "Quebec is ours!" The Americans dashed into heavy fire, but they were unable to overcome the barrier ahead. Some of the Americans tried outflanking the position via a neighboring house until they were promptly counterattacked and pushed back. Morgan now ordered the men to occupy other nearby properties, hunker down, and fight it out.

Morgan was unaware that Montgomery's column had already disintegrated after its commander was killed in front of a blockhouse. He was also unaware that the last chance to escape was fast evaporating as the British had successfully cleared the dock area and had been quick to retake the first palisade. They now squeezed the Americans between the two palisades, crushing their opposition by 10 AM. Morgan was one of the last to cease fighting, only surrendering after being backed into a cor-

ner by leveled British bayonets. Handing his sword to an enemy officer was an anathema, so he passed it to a Quebecois priest instead. The attack had been a disaster: Arnold later reported 30 dead and 42 wounded, while the British would find another 20 American bodies during the spring thaw of 1776. They had also taken 426 prisoners, including Morgan.

Forced to sit on the sidelines for 1776, the Old Wagoner was paroled and fully exchanged by early 1777. He was also promoted to colonel and given command of a regiment, the 11th Virginia. In June, he was also selected to command of the Provisional Rifle Corps, more commonly known as Morgan's Rifles, of about 500 men including many of his Virginians. Morgan and his men's main *raison d'être* was to scout, flank, and push the enemy's rear guards, which they did to good effect.

By late summer 1777, Morgan and his men were ordered north to make their services available to Maj. Gen. Horatio Gates, commander of the Northern Department. Gates was trying to tackle General John Burgoyne's army of about 7,500 men that had struck deep into New York, bagging Fort Ticonderoga on the way and now threatening Albany. On September 19, the first major battle between the opposing sides occurred in clearings just

beyond Freeman's Farm. The opening shots were fired as British units attempted to deploy full use of a treeline for cover. The British wavered and fell back. The Americans chased after them until almost colliding with the enemy's main advance. The riflemen promptly turned on their heels and raced back for the safety of the treeline with Morgan using the frontiersman's turkey call, "Gobble, gobble," to rally them.

For the British soldiers, the morale-raising effect of this incident was quickly dispelled when the unerring and deadly rifle fire resumed. Gunners, officers, and NCOs were especially targeted by Morgan's men, who were increasingly supported by other units, particularly those under Brig. Gen. Enoch Poor's command. The tussle for control of the clearings now became a prize fight, with the British decidedly having the worst of it. Burgoyne was eventually saved by three factors. His German units were pushing in from the east; Gates was wary of committing to a full battle; and it was getting late. The Americans broke off, leaving the British in command of the field and the winners of a Pyrrhic victory with 160 dead, 364 wounded, and 42 missing.

Burgoyne returned to his main defensive

positions and pondered his next move. On September 22, a message arrived from General Henry Clinton that helped seal his army's fate. Clinton informed Burgoyne that, if possible, he would push up the Hudson River with 2,000 men in support. In response, Burgoyne ordered his army to dig in and hold out. It took a couple of weeks for Burgoyne to realize that there would be no substantial assistance; even if the relief came, it would be too little too late.

Gambling man that he was, Burgoyne decided to roll the dice and give battle again. On October 7, his troops advanced into Barber's wheatfield not far from Freeman's Farm. Morgan was on the American left, helping to contain British efforts to push west. Burgoyne and Brig. Gen. Simon Fraser were instrumental in steadying British nerves and trying to maintain some form of momentum. Riding a gray mount, Fraser ended up directly across from Morgan's position, and the Old Wagoner responded by ordering a veteran, or possibly a number of veterans, to take down his opposing number. Shortly afterward, Fraser keeled over in his saddle, mortally wounded with an agonizing shot to the stomach.

Fraser's fall shook British resolve, and it was not long before an inevitable withdrawal became a rapid retreat. Adding to Burgoyne's

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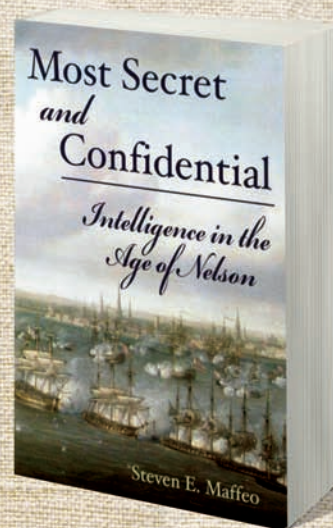
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woes, Benedict Arnold then went on to capture the vital defensive position of Breymann's Redoubt, assaulting it from the side just as Morgan's riflemen were also moving in for an attack. British losses that afternoon were grim: 278 men dead, 331 wounded, and 285 captured. Soon cut off, Burgoyne surrendered his army on October 17.

From 1777 to 1778, Morgan's Rifles continued to perform well and were involved in harrying the British after the Battle of Monmouth. Later on, Morgan learned that a new light infantry brigade was being formed and, with some justification, believed he was the right man for its command. Thus, he was bitterly disappointed on hearing that Anthony Wayne had been given the position. Morgan responded by taking a furlough and departing for home; however, he might have been grateful for the rest, as campaigning had left Morgan's frame plagued by chronic sciatica and crippling joint pain.

In 1780, Horatio Gates asked for Morgan's assistance in the southern colonies. Still smarting from the snub of 1779, the Old Wagoner voiced concern about seniority and requested a promotion first. This was not just pride clouding judgment, for it would be unwise to forget Quebec and Morgan's inability to assert control at the critical moment. Gates agreed and wrote to Congress asking for a reassessment. Morgan then remained at home until news filtered through of Gates's crushing defeat at the Battle of Camden, South Carolina. This was the jolt Morgan needed to put aside his grievances and head south. He reached Gates at Hillsborough, North Carolina, in early October and took over the light infantry. Meanwhile, Congress had also done the right thing. Morgan's promotion to brigadier general became effective on October 13.

The Old Wagoner arrived at the main American camp at Charlotte, North Carolina, in early December. He found an army at low ebb, although its new commander, Maj. Gen. Nathanael Greene, was astute and had decided on a more asymmetric style of warfare. Greene divided his forces to implement this strategy, well aware of the risks in doing so. Morgan entered South Carolina on a mission to disrupt and destroy. His core army numbered 600 men, comprising 320 Maryland and Delaware Continentals, 200 Virginia militiamen, who were actually discharged Continental veterans, and 80 Continental dragoons. Morgan's infantry was commanded by John Eager Howard, while William Washington, a distant cousin of George Washington, headed his cavalry.

By January 1781, Morgan's men had caused several major headaches for the British and

Wikipedia



**Morgan directs his riflemen to fire on the British during the Battle of Saratoga. One of Morgan's men concealed in the treetops has just fired the shot that mortally wounded British Brig. Gen. Simon Fraser in the action at Bemis Heights on October 7.**

their loyalist supporters. Commanding an army of roughly 1,150 men, Colonel Banastre Tarleton was ordered to neutralize this menace, and by January 16 Morgan received news that his new opponent was closing in fast. He decided to head for Thicketty Mountain to make use of its defensive terrain but stopped on reaching Cowpens. First, it was fair ground on which to fight, a gently sloping clearing for 800 yards north to south and about 300 yards from east to west. Second, Morgan's men would be rested while Tarleton's would be fatigued. Third, it allowed militia units to converge on Morgan's position, with the arrival of Brig. Gen. Andrew Pickens and his men a particularly welcome addition.

American numbers have created great debate, with historians giving figures that range between 800 and 1,900 men. Morgan himself reported 800 men in a post-battle letter to Greene. Whatever the numbers, the Old Wagoner was particularly worried about his unproven militia units and so formulated a most irregular plan. A screen of riflemen would be deployed about 300 yards ahead of the main line under Lt. Col. John Eager Howard and would ensure an early start to the bloodletting. The riflemen then would fall back to a second position under Pickens's command that was 150 yards ahead of the main line. At that spot they would find militiamen tasked to deliver just two volleys before they also fell back

behind Howard's men as support.

Morgan spent the night of January 16-17 circulating among the campfires of his men, outlining his objectives, and offering words of encouragement. It also is said he would lift his shirt to show the men the scars on his back and quip that King George still owed him the last lash. Early on the morning of January 17, he roused his army and rode among his troops to reiterate what was required of them. At 6:45 AM, the British appeared, with the riflemen starting their harassing fire not long afterward. Tarleton responded by ordering about 50 British Legion horsemen to push forward and scout ahead. Within minutes, 15 of their number were dead from rifle fire.

Ignoring this poor start, Tarleton rushed his lead units into advancing. Just as Morgan had hoped, the British were going to make a frontal assault and, as ordered, the riflemen pulled back to Pickens's line. The militiamen delivered their two rough volleys and caused a fair degree of damage, although the redcoats were quick to reform and replied with a far more impressive volley. Although some in the militia were left rattled, the withdrawal was nonetheless conducted in comparatively good order. Washington's troopers also rushed in to cover them when threatened by an enemy cavalry contingent.

Tarleton now inadvertently upset Morgan's plans by targeting his next advance on the American right. Howard responded by order-

ing a Virginia company under Captain Andrew Wallace to pull back slightly and prepare itself to meet the threat. However, the command was misinterpreted and instead initiated a calm withdraw down the line. Morgan galloped over and helped fix a new position just beyond a rise and, at 7:45 AM, he thundered along shouting: "Face about, boys! Give them one good fire, and the victory is ours!"

The British believed the American withdrawal was the start of a retreat and rapidly advanced over the crest in the expectation of a glorious victory. Instead, they found Howard's men waiting in good order, muskets raised, and poised to fire. The resulting volley was delivered at 20 to 30 yards, shredding the British front ranks. Howard then cried out for a bayonet charge, with the subsequent melee causing the enemy to collapse. "They fled with the utmost precipitation, leaving [their] field pieces in our possession," Morgan wrote to Greene. Tarleton watched in disbelief as the remnants of his army streamed past. In desperation, he tried to order his reserve British Legion dragoons into the fray. They refused. So Tarleton also joined the flight, although not before fending off an attack by Washington himself, escaping only by shooting the other's horse. He left behind a field littered with more than 100

U.S. Army



Artist John Trumbull put Morgan in the foreground among the American officers depicted in his famous painting of the British surrender on October 17, 1777, at the Battle of Saratoga.

British dead and approximately 800 taken prisoner, including 200 wounded.

For Morgan, the Battle of Cowpens in 1781 was the apogee of his career, a superb result that inspired great confidence as the war neared its dramatic climax. As a reward, Morgan would be given the abandoned estate of a Tory, while a medal was especially struck for him in 1790 to commemorate the event. In many ways, Cowpens marks the end of Morgan's fighting career as his body was once again wracked with agonizing pain, forcing him to retire. He would briefly join the Marquis de Lafayette that summer but returned home shortly afterward, no doubt then hearing of Cornwallis's crushing defeat at Yorktown with great satisfaction.

Morgan remained a shrewd businessman after the American Revolution, and there was even one last military hurrah when he commanded a wing of the army sent to crush the Whiskey Rebellion in 1794. Thankfully, this was resolved without violence. Morgan also dabbled in politics and won a term in the U.S. House of Representatives in 1797 on the Federalist platform. Not too long afterward, on July 6, 1802, the Old Wagoner breathed his last. His passing was mourned by friends, family, veterans, state, and nation. □

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By William F. Floyd Jr.

## The Spitfire was Britain's first line of defense in the Battle of Britain in 1940. Afterward it helped the Allies turn the tide of war on multiple fronts.

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 A Spitfire formation in North Africa in 1943. After the Battle of Britain, the single-seat Spitfire became the workhorse of the RAF Fighter Command, proving itself versatile in a variety of roles, including interceptor, reconnaissance, and ground attack.

**O**N APRIL 21, 1942, IN ACTION OVER MALTA, FLIGHT LIEUTENANT Denis Barnham of No. 601 Squadron was given credit for downing a German Junkers Ju-88 bomber and a Messerschmitt Bf-109 fighter. The Supermarine Spitfire Vc fighter he was flying had been seriously damaged in the fight, but he managed a wheels up landing at Malta's Hal Far Airfield. "Easing gently out

of my dive, watching my target flying backwards towards me," he wrote afterward. "Target's wings overlapping my windscreen. I fire. A flash and a burst of flame from his port engine. He rears up in front of me, steep turning left. Dash the man! Deflection inside his turn. Can only just do it. Fire again. He's swerving to the right. Try for his starboard engine. Fire and fire again."

Barnham recalled his brush with death as the air battle continued.

"More 109s from the right. Turn—My Spitfire vibrates violently and the sea changes places with the sky. I'm spinning. Opposite rudder and stick forwards—I'm level again. Two more from the right ... Explosion from my engine. Upside down, spinning again ... controls don't answer. All gone slack. Can't stop spinning. Spitfire burning ... out of control! Too low to bail out? Might just make it."

Barnham was without a wingman to protect his tail and warn him of

enemy fighters. He had learned from his training and experience that the best course of action to defeat enemy fighter attacks was to turn directly into them. This way, deflection was increased rapidly, which would increase the aiming problems of the enemy fighter. On the one hand, turning into an attacking aircraft was an aggressive action that might just deter an opponent with less nerve. On the other hand, turning away would look like an attempt to escape without a fight and thus encourage an enemy to be more aggressive. Barnham was to survive the war with a final score of five enemy aircraft confirmed destroyed, one shared, one probable, and one damaged.

On March 5, 1936, the new Supermarine Type 300 took off from Southampton, England. The plane would soon be called the Spitfire, and along with the Hawker Hurricane it would become Great Britain's first line of defense. For those witnessing this historic event, it would have been hard to imagine that roughly 20 years earlier the Royal Air Force (RAF) was close to extinction. After World War I, the Allies began dismantling their victorious war machine with hardly any thought for the future. In the Admiralty and the War Office there were powerful lobbies that wanted to see the end of the RAF as an independent organization, making it part of



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the Army and Navy. This did not occur largely due to the work of Chief of the Air Staff Air Marshal Sir Hugh Trenchard.

Reginald Joseph Mitchell is the man most closely associated with the development of the Spitfire. In 1920, he was appointed chief engineer and designer on projects mainly concerning flying boats. The Spitfire was developed in response to a 1934 Air Ministry request calling for a high-performance fighter with eight wing-mounted .303-inch machine guns. The plane was to be designed around a 1,000-horsepower, 12-cylinder, liquid-cooled, Rolls-Royce PV 12 engine (later called the Merlin). The design was much more radical than that of the Hurricane.

The Spitfire had a stressed-skin aluminum structure with elliptical wings and a thin airfoil that along with the Merlin's two-stage supercharger gave the plane exceptional performance at high altitudes.

After a March 5, 1936, test flight and some minor modifications, the Type 300 was flown to Martlesham Heath in Suffolk to be evaluated by the Aeroplane Experimental Establishment. On June 10, the Air Ministry approved the name Spitfire. After spinning trials and further flight testing, the plane went back to Martlesham for full handling trials. The testing results far exceeded those specified by the ministry. During this period the plane underwent several modifications. These included the replacement of the original Rolls-Royce Merlin engine with a Merlin F, which developed 1,045 horsepower, and the addition of a reflector sight and tail wheel.

The primary architect of the Supermarine Spitfire died of cancer on July 1, 1937, at the age of 42. He had labored under a great deal of pain while still working on a bomber project at the time of his death. Mitchell had shunned fame and any form of publicity for himself. Despite his exceptional ability, he was not widely known outside aviation circles. His position at Vickers-Marine was taken by Joseph Smith, who had been his assistant. Smith would now be responsible for all future Spitfire design and development.

On June 3, 1936, an order was given to Supermarine for 310 Spitfires. The order was part of the Air Force's Expansion Scheme F, which called for 1,736 planes to be in service by 1939. The first Spitfire to be accepted for RAF charge was K9792, which went to the Central Flying Establishment at RAF Cranwell for evaluation by instructors. The plane was approved, and deliveries continued at the rate of about one a week. Other squadrons would slowly begin to receive the new fighter plane. During

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**ABOVE:** Spitfire pilots are shown with their aircraft in Burma. Although commonly associated with the Battle of Britain, the Spitfire also saw service in British theaters of war around the globe in World War II. **BELOW:** Spitfire Mk I, No. 66 Squadron, Royal Air Force.



the spring and summer of 1939, as war with Germany began to look more inevitable, the newly equipped Spitfire squadrons trained intensively in air gunnery, dogfighting, and formations to simulate actual conditions.

A huge part of the RAF's defense of Britain depended on the use of radio direction finding stations (RDF). This system, which would soon be known as radar, could locate all but the lowest flying aircraft. If enemy aircraft were coming in at 20,000 feet, they could be spotted by RDF at a distance of about 100 miles, which would allow for approximately a 20-minute warning. For lower flying aircraft, the warning time was much shorter. In order not to mistake British planes for the enemy, they were fitted with an "Identification Friend or Foe" device, which would signal in a distinctive manner on the RDF screen. The initial RDF warnings were transmitted by phone to the filter room at Fighter Command Headquarters in Stanmore, just north of London. Stanmore would verify that the signal was hostile and pass it on to the proper fighter group. As the information went on the group's board, a Women's Auxiliary Air Force "teller" would phone the plots to the sec-

tor stations. At the point when a German raid crossed the coast, tracking would go to the Observer Corps. The corps would confirm the location of enemy aircraft and phone through the information to group and sector headquarters. Group headquarters then decided which sectors were affected and relayed orders as to how many aircraft should take off. Once the fighters were airborne, the sector controller was then responsible for guiding them to their target and for bringing them home.

By May 1940, Germany had conquered Norway and Holland, Belgium was on the verge of surrendering, and the French Army was collapsing. The British Expeditionary Force (BEF) was in danger of being trapped in France. As the situation in France became increasingly desperate, the War Office ordered the BEF to evacuate France through the northern port of Dunkirk. The BEF was able to fight its way to Dunkirk, where approximately 338,000 Allied troops were rescued between May 27 and June 4, 1940. The vast majority were British with about 100,000 French and Belgian troops. The rescue, known as Operation Dynamo, became one of the most celebrated events in British mil-

itary history in spite of the fact that it was one of the worst defeats ever suffered by the British Army.

One of the more controversial aspects of the evacuation involved the RAF. The major problem facing the RAF was one of balance. A great many fighter squadrons had been nearly destroyed in France, and enough squadrons had to be kept in Britain to defend against German air raids. When the Spitfire squadrons were put into the fight at Dunkirk, the evacuations were vastly improved. The RAF flew 4,822 sorties over Dunkirk between May 26 and June 4. But most of the fighting took place away from the beaches. The RAF believed it was better to attack the Luftwaffe before it reached the beaches and began dropping its bombs. The air battle at Dunkirk turned out to be the Luftwaffe's first real setback.

The war in the skies above Great Britain began in earnest in July 1940. The Battle of Britain took its name from a speech given by Prime Minister Winston Churchill before the House of Commons. The battle was confined primarily to southeast and southern Great Britain. The Luftwaffe initiated the battle in preparation for Operation Seal Lion, the German invasion of Britain. The RAF did have certain advantages over the Luftwaffe. First, the British were fighting to protect their homeland. Second, the British had a distinct advantage on the defensive as a result of a superb advanced warning system composed of Chain Home Radar Warning Stations and the Ground Observer Corps. Third, German pilots were hampered by their 410-mile operational limit.

The main aircraft used against the Luftwaffe were the Hurricane MKI and the Spitfire. Reichsmarschal Herman Göring, commander-in-chief of the Luftwaffe, laid out the aims for the planned air war with Britain. The Luftwaffe's objectives included the destruction of British fighter aircraft, airfields, and factories. The first German attacks in July 1940 were aimed at destroying airfields, but this tactic was soon switched to bombing more strategic targets in an effort to lower British morale. The strategy backfired as British morale remained high, and the reprieve given to the airfields gave the RAF the break it needed. The RAF initiated a massive repair program under the direction of Lord Beaverbrook that returned battle-damaged Spitfires and Hurricanes to service as soon as possible.

The RAF sent accident officers to crash sites to determine if the planes could be repaired. The repairs were performed by motor car companies that were referred to as Civilian Repair Units. On the other side of Lord Beaverbrook's

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A Spitfire patrols the southern coast of England in April 1941.

industrial empire was the manufacture of new planes. In August 1940, the British produced Spitfires and Hurricanes in record numbers.

The Germans had approximately 10,000 trained pilots in 1939, while British Fighter Command had 1,450 trained pilots. The fighting over London during this time was particularly savage. Hurricanes attacked bombers, and Spitfires went after enemy fighters. During the battle, Fighter Command lost more than 500 pilots over southern England. On August 20, 1940, in an overcrowded House of Commons, Winston Churchill summed up his feelings about the RAF's defense of the country by saying, "Never in the history of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few."

Superiority in the air was the task of the fighters, and they played a huge role in the eventual outcome of the war. In Western Europe, North Africa, the Mediterranean, the Far East, and the Pacific, the fighter plane seemed to hold things together when the outcome of World War II was still uncertain. The Spitfire played a major part in this effort. In early 1941, RAF Fighter Command decided to begin offensive operations against the Luftwaffe. The operations, which involved both Spitfire and Hurricane squadrons, became known as "Rodeos." From May 1941, RAF pilots flying into France began to see a new model of Messerschmitt that was more than a match for the Hurricanes and Spitfires. The RAF squadrons began reequipping the Spitfire MK V with a strengthened airframe and Merlin 45 engine, which was more than able to fight the Bf-109F on equal terms.

However, in September 1941, events took a turn for the worse. RAF pilots began to report that they were being attacked by an enemy fighter that they were not familiar with. This advanced German fighter was the Focke-Wulf Fw-190, a highly agile radial engine fighter, soon to be known as the "Butcher Bird" because of its combat prowess.

Another major role played by Fighter Command was escorting bombers over the Continent. They also escorted bombers in attacks on enemy shipping, an assignment the Spitfire pilots did not care for. One of the more important aspects of the RAF during the war was in the field of photo reconnaissance. Clandestine flights were being carried out over Germany as early as 1939. From September 1939, the Secret Intelligence Service became an official organization using Bristol Beinhems and Spitfires. The Spitfire without its guns and other equipment could carry extra fuel, oil, and oxygen in addition to cameras. Even with this, what was needed was a greater combat radius. Additional fuel tanks were installed with an increased capacity of 114 gallons. The modified aircraft became known as the Spitfire IB. One of the greatest dangers of flying these types of missions was the Spitfire's condensation trail, which would reveal its presence to the enemy.

In 1943, Germany began using the V-1 buzz bomb against civilian and military targets. The weapon carried a one-ton warhead and was powered by a pulse-jet timed to cut off after a set distance, causing it to drop out of the sky. Late in 1943, the V-1 sites became targets of a

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major bombing campaign. On April 12, 1944, two Spitfire squadrons armed with 500-pound bombs attacked V-1 launching sites. Despite the bombing of the sites, the first V-1 attacks against England occurred on the night of June 12-13, 1944.

Fighter Command designated 11 squadrons to counter these attacks. During this time a great deal of effort was put into increasing the speed of the Spitfire. Even with a number of modifications, it still proved to be a difficult task for the Spitfire to catch the V-1. However, when the Griffon engine was installed in the Spitfire, its performance increased dramatically. Of course, the real answer was to eliminate the launching sites, which did not occur until they were overrun by Allied ground forces. This did not completely end the V-1 threat, but the number of missiles being launched was greatly reduced.

Early in 1944, the squadrons of the 2nd Tactical Air Force were preparing for the invasion of France. It also was during this time that Spitfires joined with other British and American aircraft to attack German power plants, communications, and transportation systems in occupied France and the Low Countries. On May 28, in preparation for the D-Day landing, 62 Spitfires took part in an attack on northern France against railroads and other supporting facilities. On D-Day (June 6), Spitfires were a key part of the air assets assigned to fight the Luftwaffe over the beaches of Normandy. As the Allies continued to move inland, airstrips were being constructed on French soil, allowing a buildup of Spitfire squadrons to support the invasion.

One of the most important uses of the Spitfire during the war was when Great Britain began supplying them to Russia for use on the Eastern Front. The Spitfire became operational in this theater of the war in September 1942, when it was used for reconnaissance against German shipping. On October 4, the Soviet ambassador in London requested additional Spitfires. The request was approved by Churchill, and another 187 Spitfire Mk VBs were sent to Russia. The planes took part in the Russian counterattack that led to the destruction of the German Sixth Army at Stalingrad.

In 1942, the Japanese in Burma were opposed by a combination of American, Chinese, and British Commonwealth forces. The arrival of the Spitfire aided in preventing Japanese advances into China and India. By January 1944, six Spitfire squadrons played a part in achieving air superiority over western Burma.

Seafire was the name given to the naval version of the Spitfire. It saw most of its service in

Written about in books, magazines and featured in the Hist. Ch. show "Snipers: Dangerous Missions". Ed tells his story: from Pvt., Plt. Sgt. to Sniper. Including the one that garnered him a MOH recommendation.

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The Spitfire's elliptical wings contained eight .303-inch machine guns.

the Pacific and Far East. It formed part of a group hunting Japanese and German submarines. One problem with the Seafire was its short combat radius, which restricted its use to combat air patrols. In June 1945, auxiliary fuel tanks were added to the Seafire, increasing its combat range by 50 percent and allowing it to take part in offensive operations.

The British Spitfire was probably the best known fighter plane during this period of history. As Churchill stated, it was the primary reason for Great Britain's survival during the blitz of Great Britain by the Luftwaffe. At times, it had to be modified as new German planes came on line, but it continued to hold its own throughout the war. The pilots who flew the Spitfire in defense of Great Britain were some of the bravest of the brave, particularly early in the war when they were greatly outnumbered. Even the Germans agreed that the Spitfire was a worthy opponent.

Gunther Rall, a German ace who test flew captured Allied fighter planes, said that he preferred the Spitfire over all other fighter aircraft that he had flown. The Spitfire was in continuous production throughout the war with 22,800 produced. For many years after World War II, the Spitfire continued in service. It saw action in the Greek Civil War, the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, and in a later conflict was flown by both the Israelis and Egyptians. It also saw action in Korea in the early 1950s, and its popularity continued to remain high into the 1960s. □

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By Don Hollway

## In December 1944, Otto Skorzeny led hundreds of German commandos on an audacious mission behind enemy lines known as Operation Greif.

**W**ITH A QUARTER OF A MILLION GERMAN TROOPS POURING through the Ardennes Forest, three Americans fleeing in a jeep should have raised no alarm. But when they were flagged down a few miles to the west at Aywaille, Belgium, Privates Charles W. Lawrence, Clarence van der Wert, and George Sensenbach spoke poor English and did not know the password. A

A German assault gun with a captured American half-track in the background. Otto Skorzeny's commandos required American equipment to successfully infiltrate ahead of the main attack force during the Battle of the Bulge.

preliminary search revealed that, along with two Sten machine pistols, which were British weapons, they were carrying \$900 and £1,000 in cash, not to mention Wehrmacht pay books. And under their olive drab fatigues they wore German field gray.

They turned out to be Sergeant Gunter Billing, Corporal Manfred Pernass, and Private Wilhelm Schmidt of the German 150th Panzer Brigade. It was Billing who, perhaps

intentionally, dropped the real bombshell. He told interrogators that their mission was part of a massive secret commando raid, sent across the lines to infiltrate the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force and kidnap or kill no less than General Dwight D. Eisenhower, under orders from Hitler's top commando, SS Lt. Col. Otto "Scarface" Skorzeny.

Among the Allies, few names were more infamous. In September 1943, Skorzeny had led a glider-

borne commando assault on an Italian plateau to rescue former Italian dictator Benito Mussolini, spiriting Il Duce away in a light plane. When the regent of Germany's last European ally, Hungary, had wavered on the brink of surrender, Skorzeny had kidnapped his son and led a German-backed coup, keeping Hungary in the war. If anyone could slip into Paris unnoticed and attack Ike in his own headquarters, it was Skorzeny.

He had learned tactics and won his dueling scars as a student in Vienna's dueling societies, where the object was not necessarily victory with the saber, but remaining stalwart when receiving Schmissen, marks of honor. "Just as in dueling you must fix your mind on striking at the enemy's head, so, too, in war," he said.

It was just such a blow Hitler had in mind when he summoned Skorzeny, fresh off his Hungarian success, to the Wolf's Lair headquarters in October 1944. The German leader gave him hearty congratulations, a promotion, and the German Cross in gold. He also gave Skorzeny barely five weeks to assemble a full panzer brigade, more than 3,000 men, equipped and trained as Americans. The German commandos were, their orders instructed, "to go ahead [of the German December offensive] and seize one or more of the bridges over the Meuse between



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Liège and Namur... Small detachments in enemy uniforms can cause the greatest confusion among the Allies by giving false orders and upsetting their communications.”

The task would be made all the more difficult by Hitler's explicit orders that Skorzeny, too valuable to risk, was not to cross the lines with his men. “I know you will do your best,” Hitler told him. “Of course, the most important thing of all is the strictest secrecy!”

Secrecy, however, went out the window almost immediately. An order to all Wehrmacht units, headed “Secret Commando Operations” and signed by no less than Field Marshal Wilhelm Keitel, called for English-speaking volunteers to report to Skorzeny. Knowing the enemy would hear of it, Skorzeny sought permission to cancel the entire operation but was denied. The Allies got wind of the order on November 30 but discounted it as a ruse.

With no idea of their mission, volunteers came from all branches of the German military. Fritz Christ, then a 21-year-old Luftwaffe private trained as an English translator, thought, “Wonderful! I am going to interrogate American prisoners of war and be well away from the fighting.”

They were isolated behind wire in an “American School,” with security so tight that one man was shot when his letter home was too descriptive. Skorzeny's deputy, SS Lt. Col. Willi Hardieck, drilled them in Americanisms—how to swear, slouch, chew gum, loiter, and march instead of goose step.

“We had to watch American films which showed us how the GIs saluted, and even how they smoked cigarettes, never right down to the butt, and put them out,” Christ remembered. “We were even given daily lessons in American slang.”

Sergeant Heinz Rohde, whose father lived in Woodstock, New York, spoke “Shakespearean English which was a devilish thing,” but enjoyed smoking Camels and Lucky Strikes. “We got the impression that we were perfect Yankees.”

Quite the contrary, Skorzeny thought: “After a couple of weeks the result was terrifying.” Of 2,500 men, only about 400 could speak school-boy English, and just 10 were fluent. “The rest could just about say ‘Yes,’” he wrote, and advised them to “mingle with the fleeing Americans and pretend to be too flurried and overcome to speak,” admitting they “could certainly never dupe an American—not even a deaf one!”

“Those with no English were instructed to exclaim, ‘Sorry,’ if they were approached by Americans,” remembered Christ, “and then to open their trousers and hurry off feigning an



SS Lt. Col. Otto “Scarface” Skorzeny

attack of diarrhea.”

More promising candidates were slipped into POW camps to polish their skills. The best formed commando teams under SS Captain Ernst Stielau. They were to infiltrate ahead of the offensive, spreading confusion and destruction and reconnoitering the all-important Meuse bridges. Meanwhile, Skorzeny's main force, in American tanks, would mingle with the enemy retreat and push through to capture the bridges, perhaps as early as six hours into the offensive.

The masquerade required costumes and props, but by mid-November Panzerbrigade 150 was still short 1,500 American helmets and half the requested American guns and ammo. Many of the uniforms supplied were British, Polish, or Russian, or summer issue, or had bloodstains or POW markings. Instead of 20 Sherman tanks, 30 American armored cars, nearly 200 trucks, and 150 jeeps, Skorzeny got just two Shermans (one of which soon broke down), four armored cars, and about 30 jeeps. The rest of his equipment was German: five Panther tanks, six armored cars, six armored personnel carriers, and five Sturmgeschütz III assault guns. They were disguised with sheet metal cladding, olive drab paint, and white star insignia, but would fool, as Skorzeny himself admitted, only “very young American troops, seeing them from very far away at night.”

The code name for the operation, Greif, translated as “griffin,” the lion-bird of mythology, but also (and perhaps not coincidentally) as “grab.” In light of their commander's reputation, his men's imaginations ran wild. One young lieutenant offered his intimate knowl-

edge of Paris “because we are going to dash across France through the American Army and capture Eisenhower's headquarters.”

Skorzeny let the rumor work for him: “Don't mention it to anyone. When the time comes I'll call on you.”

Its ranks filled out with Luftwaffe paratroopers and Wehrmacht panzergrenadiers, on the night of December 14 Panzerbrigade 150 moved up to the front. Twenty-four hours later the Unit Stielau commandos slipped across the lines, mainly by pretending to be lost patrols. Since then stories of their exploits have become legend. These included preventing the demolition of the bridge over the Amblève River at Stavelot, allowing the panzer spearhead to cross; armored columns and dug-in defenders sent running by panic-stricken ersatz Americans fleeing the German juggernaut; road signs changed, roads falsely marked as mined, communications cut.

Actual successes were more modest. Rohde, who took the name Sergeant Morris Woodahl, and his team ran off the crew of an American M8 Greyhound armored car near Recht, toured Malmedy with it and returned with souvenir leather jackets. One unit posing as military police spent December 17 misdirecting Allied traffic at the Mont Rigi crossroads, fleeing when real MPs arrived. A team reached Huy, on the banks of the Meuse, on the evening of December 16, and kept a watchful eye on the bridge through the night and all the next day. Yet another unit reached Liege and took the opportunity, as confirmed by American accounts, to steer an American regiment in the wrong direction. Theirs were the high water marks of the German offensive.

The greatest damage, however, was done at Aywaille. As soon as Private Schmidt mentioned Eisenhower, the story took off: Otto Skorzeny and 300 disguised German paratroopers were to rendezvous at Paris' century-old Café de la Paix (nothing less would do) to launch a suicide attack on the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force. For several days Eisenhower was practically imprisoned while a look-alike was driven about the city in plain sight as a decoy. Brig. Gen. Bruce Clarke and even Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery were detained, Monty threatening courts-martial for everyone involved and infuriated that nobody recognized him. When he heard the news, Ike gave Skorzeny credit for at least “one worthwhile service.”

Lieutenant General Omar Bradley, famously disgusted by “half a million G.I.s playing cat and mouse with each other every time they met,” endured a life-or-death quiz game at



**Eighteen Germans caught in American uniforms were shot as spies during the Battle of the Bulge. German military lawyers incorrectly counseled that wearing enemy uniforms was legal as long they were removed before actual combat.**

every roadblock: What's the capital of Massachusetts? His interrogator insisted on Chicago. Where's the guard on an offensive line of scrimmage? Who is married to Betty Grable? Who is Prune-face? Where does Li'l Abner live? Who works with Jiggs? At least two American soldiers were shot by mistake.

Confusion wasn't limited to the Allies. One

of Stielau's commandos surrendered to an American MP, who revealed himself to be German as well. Private Christ, now "Lieutenant Charles Smith" from Detroit, barely escaped when his truck, with its U.S. Army stars, was strafed by Luftwaffe fighters. "I jumped off the lorry and hid in a ditch before the vehicle exploded in a ball of fire," reported the ex-air-

man. "Nobody had told the Luftwaffe what was going on."

Some of Skorzeny's men might have been better used to direct traffic on the German side. "Parts of this offensive could hardly be described as well-planned and well-organized," grouched SS Captain Walter Scherf, commanding one of Skorzeny's armor groups, which sat parked on a road for two hours. Hardieck was killed when his vehicle rolled over a mine. Skorzeny himself found the traffic so blocked that he abandoned his jeep and walked five miles, at one point organizing a hundred or so sidelined troops to roll a 30-foot Luftwaffe transporter carrying useless V-1 buzz bomb parts off the road into a lake. Operation Greif was going nowhere. On the night of the December 17, though, Skorzeny decided to put Panzerbrigade 150 to good use.

"Nearly all of the north flank of the offensive was uncovered," he saw. "The enemy could easily thrust southward through the road junction at Malmédy." The opposite, however, was also true. Charged with taking three bridges over the Meuse, if Skorzeny's disguised Americans managed to capture just one—over the Warche, at Malmédy—the entire German offensive might roll on.

*Continued on page 70*

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# BASTOGNE MUST FALL



**ABOVE:** Soldiers of SS Oberst-Gruppenführer Sepp Dietrich's Sixth Army on the German northern flank enter Belgium on December 17, 1944. **LEFT:** General der Panzertruppen Hasso von Manteuffel. **RIGHT:** A German half-track advances past a disabled American tank destroyer on December 20, 1944, during Operation Wacht am Rhein.

**I**n the early morning of December 16, 1944, 80-man German shock companies from the 5th Panzer Army slipped toward the American lines in the Ardennes region under the cover of heavy fog. They intended to slip past the sleepy American outposts and get behind the Allied line in the mountainous region that straddled Belgium and Luxembourg. The shock troops cut any communication wires they found. When the main attack came, it was hoped these shock troops would be poised and ready to pounce on the American defenders before they had time to react. Behind them the rest of the 5th Panzer Army anxiously awaited the signal to attack.

German gunners readied their artillery pieces and looked at their watches. They were waiting for the order to unleash a heavy barrage on the American forces. Besides the 5th Panzer Army, two other

German armies, the 6th Panzer Army to the north and the 7th Army to the south, were poised to attack the mostly unsuspecting American GIs. At 5:30 AM, the order was issued for the artillery to fire. The German guns roared to life, spitting orange flames from their muzzles in the darkness. German leader Adolf Hitler's desperate offensive gamble in the West to drive the Allies from Germany's doorstep and possibly

BY MIKE PHIFER

In his offensive gamble in the Ardennes in late 1944, Hitler gave the German 5th Panzer Army just 72 hours to reach the Meuse River. But he failed to factor in American grit.



change the course of the war had begun.

The 5th Panzer Army was commanded by General der Panzertruppen Hasso von Manteuffel. A veteran of World War I, Manteuffel became an adherent of the concept of armored warfare in the 1930s while serving under then Colonel Heinz Guderian. Anxious to get into the war, Manteuffel saw action on the Eastern Front commanding a battalion,

then a regiment, and next a brigade. Transferred to North Africa, Manteuffel proved himself a capable divisional commander in Tunisia. Evacuated in May 1943 just before the Axis forces there surrendered, a month later Manteuffel took command of the 7th Panzer Division in Russia and later the Grossdeutschland Panzergrenadier Division.

Hitler took a liking to Manteuffel, who had earned the Knight's Cross with Oak Leaves and Swords, and he promoted him to full general, placing him in command of the 5th Panzer Army on September 1, 1944. Thus, Manteuffel found himself battling Lt. Gen. George Patton's U.S. Third Army in the Lorraine region of northeastern France.

On November 2, Manteuffel was informed of the plan deceptively code-named *Wacht am Rhein*

(Watch on the Rhine), which called for the 5th and 6th Panzer Armies, supported by the 7th Army, to smash through the weakly held American position in the Ardennes, cross the Meuse River, and drive for Antwerp. The goal was to isolate and trap the British and Canadian armies, as well as the American 1st and 9th Armies. Manteuffel was shocked by the plan. As a realistic frontline commander, he believed the plan had little chance of success.

In late November, Manteuffel donned a colonel's uniform to disguise himself and headed to the Eifel front to reconnoiter the sector he was to attack. In the rolling country of the Ardennes, heavily wooded and dotted with farmland, Manteuffel planned to make every effort to reach the Meuse River. In the northern part of Manteuffel's sector lay the heavily wooded ridge of the Schnee Eifel where open ground existed on the northern end in the Losheim Gap. The Ardennes possessed an extensive network of roads, most of which were gravel. The twisting roads generally followed stream valleys, quite often running in a north-south direction.

Speaking with officers and soldiers manning the front line, Manteuffel was informed that in this quiet sector the Americans kept watch until about an hour after dark. Afterward, they headed to their huts to get some sleep. An hour before dawn, they returned to their positions. During the night German patrols had little problem slipping miles behind the American lines. Manteuffel believed a preliminary artillery barrage would only serve to alert the enemy of an attack. He wanted the shock companies to infiltrate enemy lines before the barrage. In a December 2 meeting with Hitler, Manteuffel obtained permission to infiltrate the American lines in his sector. Manteuffel also recommended bouncing searchlight beams off the clouds to give his troops artificial moonlight to help them move into position in the woods east of the Our River. Hitler agreed to the plan.

Using the dark forest of the Eifel for cover, the bulk of the assault divisions assembled about 12 miles behind the front on the night of December 12. Two nights later the troops moved closer to the front line. During the build up, Manteuffel issued instructions that vehicles should only move at night to avoid detection.

The 5th Panzer Army comprised the 66th Army Corps under General der Artillerie Walther Lucht, 58th Panzer Corps under General der Panzertruppen Walter Krüger, and 47th Corps under General der Panzertruppen Heinrich von Lüttwitz. Once the fighting began, Manteuffel planned to obtain Hitler's Begleit Brigade, a division-size unit under Hitler's direct control.

Manteuffel had some concern about the new Volksgrenadier divisions made up largely of Kriegsmarine and Luftwaffe personnel who had seen little combat and had not been properly trained, although they were supposedly led by experienced officers. The 5th Panzer Army had about 396 tanks and self-propelled guns, 963 artillery pieces, four divisions of infantry, and three panzer divisions, totaling about 90,000 men.



The 5th Panzer Army was deployed north to south as follows: 66th Corps, 58th Panzer Corps, and 47th Panzer Corps. Krüger's 58th Panzer Corps was to push west over the Our River and capture crossing points over the Meuse River between Namur and Andenne. Lüttwitz's 47th Panzer Corps was to cross the Our River, drive hard for Clerf, and then take Bastogne, an important road center, before finally pushing west to capture crossings over the Meuse south of Namur.

To the north of Manteuffel's two panzer corps was the Schnee Eifel, which was held by the green 106th Infantry Division of the U.S. First Army. The division had recently moved up to the front line to get much needed experience, although in a quiet sector. As the area it held protruded through the Siegfried Line and posed a possible threat to the 5th Panzer Army, Manteuffel ordered Lucht's 66th Corps to envelope and destroy the 106th Division and capture the key road hub of St. Vith. The other American units facing Manteuffel were two regiments from the veteran 28th Division, resting and refitting after suffering heavy losses in the Hürtgen Forest in November.

The Germans attacked on December 16. A report from an observation post of the U.S. 110th Infantry Regiment of the VIII Corps in Hosingen noted at 5:30 AM that the entire German line was a series of pinpoints of lights. A few seconds later, shells began slamming down in the town and along the whole American line; they would continue to do so for 45 minutes, smashing buildings, splintering trees, and cutting telephone lines. A short time afterward, German armor and infantry units swept forward.

The 18th Volksgrenadier Division of Lucht's corps, which had been posted on the Eifel salient since October and knew the terrain, was given the task of encircling two regiments of the exposed U.S. 106th Division east of the Our River. Two regiments of the German division and a detachment of self-propelled guns moved through the southern end of the Losheim Gap, while the third regiment attempted to encircle the American position from the south at the village of Bleialf.

Thirty minutes after the artillery barrage lifted, the village was attacked by the 293rd Regiment of the 18th Volksgrenadier Division. With a makeshift force of troops from the supply, headquarters, cannon, and engineer companies, Colonel Charles Cavender, commander of the 423rd Infantry, 106th Division counter-attacked with support from artillery and two guns from the 820th Tank Destroyer Battalion posted nearby. Moving from house to house, the GIs drove the Germans out of the village

except for a few buildings near the railroad. The Americans held the village for the rest of the day.

Things went better for the rest of the 18th Volksgrenadier farther north in the Losheim Gap. German shock troops had easily slipped past outposts of the U.S. 14th Cavalry Group posted on the border between the attacking 5th and 6th Panzer Armies and by daylight were pushing for the crossroads village of Auw to the rear of the 422nd Infantry Regiment, 106th Division. Cavalry outposts at the villages of Roth and Kobscheid north and east of Auw soon were under attack by dawn. Initially American shell-fire stopped a company of Volksgrenadiers at Roth. By 8:30 AM, though, an urgent message reported the Germans were in the village and enemy armor was firing on the command post. It was the last message from Roth.

By 9 AM, the Germans had infiltrated Kobscheid. The nearby village of Weckerath was under attack, too. The situation was becoming serious as the day progressed, and those outposts that were not already overrun were evacuated. This was part of the 14th Cavalry's withdrawal first to the Manderfield Ridge and then two miles farther east to a ridgeline that stretched from Andler to Holzhiem. By nightfall, the 5th Panzer Army had achieved a breakthrough in the northern part of its sector.

Attacking south of the 18th Volksgrenadier was the 62nd Volksgrenadier Division, a green unit of the 66th Corps. Its objective was to breach the American line held by the U.S. 424th Infantry Regiment, 106th Division and reach Winterspelt and access to the macadam road leading to St. Vith before pushing farther west to the Meuse.

Out of the early morning mist shock companies attacked the 3rd Battalion, 424th Infantry at Heckhuscheid. In fierce fighting, the Germans were driven back as the American battalion threw in its reserve company, bagging 200 prisoners. At Eigelscheid, machine-gun and small-arms fire from a small band of GIs from the 424th cut down the inexperienced Volksgrenadiers, who were attacking in bunches and firing their weapons wildly. American artillery fire added to the Germans' misery. Despite the determined American resistance, the Germans had numbers on their side and managed to capture some of the buildings in the village. As the fighting raged the Americans were forced to give up the village and withdraw toward Winterspelt.

South of the 66th Corps, Krüger's 58th Panzer Corps attacked on a front from Heckhuscheid to Leidenborn intending to capture bridges over the Our River. Blocking its way were two battalions of the U.S. 112th Infantry Regiment, 28th Division posted on the east



**ABOVE:** Volksgrenadiers of General der Artillerie Walter Lucht's LXVI Corps were tasked with eliminating the U.S. 106th Division deployed in the snow-covered hills east of St. Vith. **LEFT:** American soldiers huddle amid the rubble of destroyed buildings 20 kilometers east of Bastogne in Wiltz, Luxembourg. **OPPOSITE:** SS panzergrenadiers advance past burning American vehicles in German film footage that may have been staged for propaganda purposes.

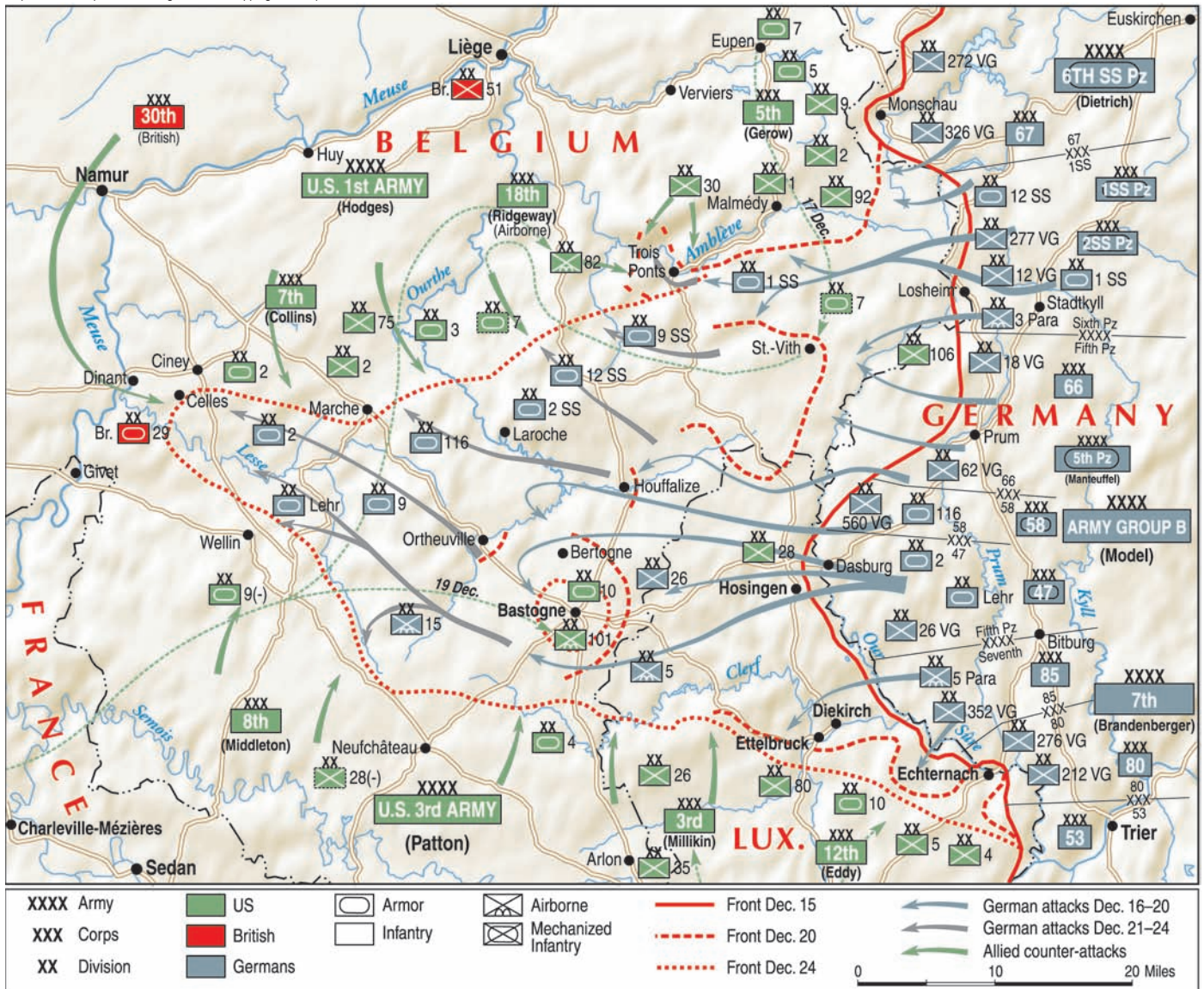
side of the river. They were partially dug into foxholes and manning the captured pillboxes of the Siegfried Line. Another battalion of the regiment, which acted as the reserve, was on the west side of the river.

There was no artillery barrage in this area in the first moments of the attack. This was done to achieve complete surprise so that the Germans might capture the bridges intact. About 6:20 AM, German artillery and nebelwerfers did open up attempting to knock out the Americans' artillery and reserve positions. Despite the initial surprise and penetration by the 560th Volksgrenadier Division, which saw elements reach one of the bridges at Ouren, the GIs from the 112th Infantry forced the Germans back after bringing in their reserves and calling in artillery and mortar support.

Meanwhile, the 116th Panzer Division, attacking about 200 hundred yards south of the 62nd Volksgrenadier against the forward battalion of the 424th, was hit hard with small-arms fire. Five Panzer Mark IVs rolled into action. One was knocked out by a 57mm antitank gun, and a second one was hit with a bazooka round. The other three turned back.

Elsewhere other attacking elements of the 116th did little better, although one assault company did get behind the command post of the 1st Battalion, U.S. 112th Infantry. Daylight found the advance party of the assault company in the open. Interlocking machine-gun and small-arms fire quickly isolated them. By noon, the GIs facing them were rounding up so many prisoners they could not handle all of them. Some attacking Germans did manage to reach an American battery at Welchenhausen but were stopped cold by heavy machine-gun fire. By the end of the day the bridges were in still American hands. However, the GIs of the 112th Infantry Regiment in their exposed position east of the Our River knew the Germans would be back. One U.S. soldier scrawled in his diary: "This place is not healthy anymore."

Attacking south of the 58th Panzer Corps was Lüttwitz's 47th Panzer Corps. Assault companies from the 26th Volksgrenadier Division slipped across the Our River in rubber boats with orders to head west past a highway overlooking the river. Manteuffel wanted the 26th Volksgrenadier to reach the Clerf River by nightfall. Standing in his way was the U.S. 110th Infantry Regiment posted mostly in little villages which the Germans had orders simply to bypass, leaving



Counterattacking American forces, fuel shortages, and traffic jams all served to unravel the German Army's ambitious plan to capture the bridges over the Meuse and continue toward Antwerp.

them to be mopped up by following units. The Germans planned to capture the villages of Marnach and Hosingen, both of which controlled key roads.

South of Hosingen an American platoon was quickly overrun, while behind the village a battery came under attack. German shock companies were spotted near other villages and fired upon, and in some places pinned down by artillery fire. Bitter fighting soon raged throughout the day as the lightly armed 28th Volksgrenadier and panzergrenadiers from the 2nd Panzer Division fought for control of various villages. The GIs hung on, hammering the attacking Germans with machine-gun and small-arms fire. Mortar rounds and artillery shells came crashing down on the Germans, but they continued to fight desperately. Two companies of the 707th Tank Battalion arrived to buttress American positions in the sector.

At the Our River, German engineers struggled to construct bridges near Dasburg and Gemünd to allow the tanks and self-propelled guns of the 2nd Panzer Divisions and the Panzer Lehr Division, now bogged down in a traffic jam, to get across the river and help break through the American lines. By 1 PM, a bridge was completed near Dasburg. Ten tanks rumbled across before a following tank turned too short, hit the bridge, and plunged into the river. The Germans did not get the bridge repaired until 4 PM. By that time, the engineers had also completed a bridge at Gemünd.

With armor support and more firepower, the Germans were able to capture Marnach by midnight. The GIs still hung on in Hosingen. The 110th, heavily outnumbered, had done well, throwing the German timetable back. The 5th Panzer Army was off schedule, although it had managed

a breakthrough in the Losheim Gap where it threatened to encircle the two regiments of the 106th Division. Although Manteuffel's use of infiltrating troops had paid off in certain areas, it had not been a good day for the Germans.

On the morning of December 17, a counter-attack by the 2nd Battalion, 110th Infantry Regiment at Marnach quickly bumped into advancing German infantry. Meanwhile, 18 light tanks from the 707th Tank Battalion came under fire from German self-propelled guns and panzerfausts. Eleven were knocked out. A small American force did manage to make it to Marnach, but it drew heavy German fire, and it became obvious it could not retake the town.

The Americans then shifted their focus toward halting the German advance west on the winding road toward the village of Clerf, which the 2nd Panzer Division needed to capture to

reach Bastogne. About mid-morning two platoons of Mark IVs and 30 half-tracks loaded with panzergrenadiers from the 2nd Panzer Division approaching the town were met by a platoon of Shermans from the 707th Tank Battalion. Three Shermans were knocked out, while four German tanks were destroyed. The Germans diverted their column to another road.

Another platoon of Shermans moved into Clerf and knocked out the leading Mark IV, temporarily blocking the road. Nineteen more American tanks from Company B, 2nd Tank Battalion, 9th Armored Division rolled into town and were dispersed where needed.

Despite the reinforcements, the 2nd Panzer Division soon captured Clerf. Tank shells smashed into the command post of Colonel Hurley Fuller, commander of the 110th Regiment. Fuller attempted to escape with his staff but was soon captured. Clerf was in German hands, but American resistance was not done yet. At the south end of town in a chateau by the south bridge, a group of GIs held on before finally surrendering the following day.

Meanwhile, the 116th Panzer Division continued its assault on Ouren. After hammering the Americans at Ouren with artillery and nebelwerfer fire, the tanks and panzergrenadiers attacked. While the GIs staggered the infantry, the tanks pushed on, hammering the American foxholes with cannon and machine-gun fire. A platoon of self-propelled guns from 811th Tank Destroyer Battalion,



Combat Command Reserve (CCR), 9th Armored Division, which had reached Harpelt, knocked out four German tanks. The return fire left only one self-propelled gun still intact. The German tanks continued to rumble toward Ouren only to come under howitzer fire from the cannon company of the 112th Infantry, which knocked out four of them.

Artillery fire from Battery C, 229th Field Artillery also helped slow the attacking German tanks, while anti-aircraft half-tracks sporting quadruple mounted .50-caliber machine guns cut down the panzergrenadiers.

As the day wore on the Americans continued

to hold Ouren, but their position was becoming tenuous with German infantry attempting to infiltrate and firing on their command post. The Americans received orders to evacuate the town but were unable to blow the bridges due to the Germans being too close. It did not matter because the Germans later discovered that the bridges would not support the weight of their tanks. Manteuffel and Krüger had to divert the tanks south to cross at Dasburg in the 47th Corps sector. While the clock continued ticking for the Germans, more time was wasted.

The 112th Infantry ended up at St. Vith, where it joined other American troops preparing to defend the vital crossroads town. Bleialf finally fell to the southern battle group of the 18th Volksgrenadier at dawn on December 17. At about 9 AM, the two German battle groups made contact, encircling two regiments of the 106th Division. The lead German battalions were then ordered to push west toward St. Vith, getting within a couple miles of the town by nightfall.

With no help available, the two trapped regiments of the 106th Division were ordered to break out toward St. Vith on December 18. In their retreat, they were advised to avoid the German buildup at Schönberg. It was on the road to this town, located about six miles east of St. Vith, that the German armor was bogged down in a huge traffic jam due to bad roads and mud.

At the same time, the 18th Volksgrenadier probed the American line a mile east of St. Vith on high ground called Prumerberg, where the 168th Engineer Combat Battalion was entrenching and waiting for the arrival of CCB, 7th Armored Division to bolster the line. Manteuffel needed the road network in St. Vith and the east-west rail line to keep German forces supplied once they reached the Meuse River. The Führer Begleit Brigade was to be brought in to help the 66th Corps take the village, but massive traffic jams to the rear of the 5th Panzer Army slowed the brigade's advance.

To the southeast of St. Vith, Winterspelt finally fell to the 62nd Volksgrenadier. The advancing Volksgrenadiers were bloodied at Steinebruck on the Our River by Combat Command B (CCB), 9th Armored Division. By late afternoon on December 17, the Americans were ordered back over the Our River. The next day they blew up the bridge at Steinebruck.

As St. Vith straddled the border of the 5th and 6th Panzer Armies, elements from the latter army threatened the village from the north. The Americans established a 15-mile horseshoe-shaped defensive position at St. Vith. On December 19, the Germans continued to probe the American defenses. Manteuffel wanted to attack, but traffic jams in the rear continued to bog down the Führer Begleit Brigade, allowing only advance detachments to arrive north of St. Vith. Concurrently, two of the 18th Volksgrenadier regiments were still focused on the two trapped 106th regiments. The commander of the 5th Panzer Army could do nothing but plan to attack early on December 20.

On that day the beleaguered 422nd and 423rd Regiments, 106th Division surrendered after a breakout attempt the previous day was stopped by German machine-gun and artillery fire. Meanwhile, Manteuffel's main attack against St. Vith had to be delayed yet another day, for the rest of the Führer Begleit Brigade had not arrived yet. About midday a battalion of both tanks and

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**BELOW: A patrol from the crack U.S. 101st Airborne Division moves out from Bastogne. LEFT: Artillery of the U.S. 9th Armored Division fires on an enemy target. Maj. Gen. Troy Middleton divided the Combat Command Reserve of the 9th Armored into task forces to slow the German advance.**



infantry from the Führer Begleit Brigade attempted to capture Rodt northeast of St. Vith, but the U.S. 814th Tank Destroyer Battalion knocked out four of its tanks. Maj. Gen. Otto Remer, commander of the Führer Begleit Brigade, withdrew his men to wait for the rest of the brigade before attacking again.

The main attack finally rolled forward on December 21. The Germans had managed to get their artillery through the traffic jam, and at 11 AM they began pounding the 7th Armored Division, parts of the 9th Armored Division, and other units holding the defenses around St. Vith.

Along the Schönberg road east of the town, the Germans advanced at 5 PM. Other assaults came down Malmédy road to the north at 6:30 PM and southeast of town at 8 PM along the Prüm road. An artillery barrage preceded each attack. Fighting was fierce as Lucht had told his division and brigade commanders to take the town no matter the cost. Multiple waves of *volks*grenadiers supported by armor advanced against the American positions.

In the eastern sector, U.S. machine guns cut down many of the *volks*grenadiers, but more followed. When the American machine-gun crews were killed, other GIs scrambled out of their foxholes to man them. By 7 PM, German rockets fell on the American positions and more *panzer*grenadiers advanced. In the intense fighting, American machine-gun crews and bazooka teams lasted only about 10 minutes before being wiped out and replaced by fresh troops.

At Prumerberg, six *Panzer* VI Tiger tanks rolled forward in the dark toward American tankers waiting for them to come over a rise. As they did, suddenly the night came alive with a blinding light as the Germans fired high-velocity flares. The German Tiger crews quickly knocked out the five silhouetted *Shermans*. The massive steel monsters then turned their attention to knocking out machine-gun crews. *Volks*grenadiers soon overran the position.

By 9:30 PM, German tanks were in St. Vith, where scattered fighting continued for several more hours. With U.S. defenses breached at St. Vith, Brig. Gen. Bruce Clarke, commander of CCB, 7th Armored Division, ordered a withdrawal west of town, where new defenses were set up. But many of the American troops did not escape. Clarke estimated he had lost about half his command.

Lucht's 66th Corps could not immediately pursue the Americans as St. Vith became a traffic bottleneck, and it took time to

get the mess sorted out. Taking St. Vith had cost Manteuffel valuable time. "The delay imposed there put the entire German offensive plan three days behind schedule," he said. "I didn't count on such stubbornness."

The Americans had set up a 10-mile-wide defensive position west of the town that they called the "fortified goose egg" due to its oval shape. A change of command had taken place in this sector as the U.S. XVIII Airborne Corps under Maj. Gen. Matthew Ridgway now took command of the 7th Armored Division. Allied Supreme Commander General Dwight Eisenhower was quickly sending reinforcements into the Ardennes to contain the bulge in the American lines. A change of command also took place as Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery took charge of the northern sector of the Ardennes on December 20.

Despite Ridgway's determination to hold the goose egg until help arrived, Brig. Gen. Robert Hasbrouck, commander of the 7th Armored Division, and Clarke thought otherwise. *Volks*grenadiers were already penetrating the goose-egg perimeter, and the commanders did not think it was possible to hold on. Not wanting to risk losing the 7th Armored and other defenders, Montgomery ordered them to withdraw, which they did on December 23.

Meanwhile to the south, by the evening of the December 17, Manteuffel had broken open a 10-mile gap in the American lines, and the 47th and 58th *Panzer* Corps poured through it toward Bastogne and the Meuse River. Manteuffel gave the task of quickly seizing Bastogne, which lay 30 miles east of the Our River by road, to Lüttwitz and his 47th Corps. Manteuffel's orders stated, "In the case of strong enemy resistance, Bastogne is to be outflanked." Capturing the town would then be left to the 26th *Volks*grenadier and the *Panzer Lehr* Divisions.

The Germans were not the only ones racing to Bastogne. The paratroopers of the U.S. 101st Airborne Division, led by Brig. Gen. Anthony McAuliffe, were making a 100-mile journey by truck to Bastogne from the southwest. Through an intercepted radio message the Germans learned of the paratroopers' pending arrival at the front. "We shall be there before them," said Lüttwitz.

Not only was the 101st Airborne headed to Bastogne, but also the 10th Armored Division from Patton's Third Army. General Troy Middleton, who was headquartered in Bastogne, divided the CCR, 9th Armored Division into task forces to slow the German advance.

The reconnaissance battalion of the 2nd *Panzer* Division encountered the first task force at a road intersection near Lullange, where it had set up a roadblock. A couple of probing attempts on the American position were beaten back. By about 11 AM, *Mark IV*s began to arrive. Using the cover of smoke, they advanced to within about 800 yards of the *Shermans* of Company A, 2nd Tank Battalion.

By early afternoon more German tanks arrived and began pushing back the American infantry. The *Shermans* soon found themselves surrounded on three sides. By 2:30 PM, the roadblock had been overrun and Company A had been pushed back from the road junction with the loss of seven tanks. The remnants of the company escaped cross country during the night.

The bulk of the 2nd *Panzer* Division encountered the second task force at Allerborn, about halfway between Clerf and Bastogne, around 8 PM. Sweeping the area with machine-gun fire to drive off any infantry support, the German tanks quickly overran two platoons of Company C, 2nd Tank Battalion. The shattered survivors retreated to Longvilly, about five miles northeast of Bastogne.

A third U.S. task force positioned on high ground north of the Allerborn-Longvilly road found itself cut off. To avoid being encircled, the task force pushed northwest. On December 19, the task force reached Hardigny only to stumble into a German ambush that destroyed its vehicles and inflicted 600 casualties. About 225 GIs managed to escape the carnage.

Colonel Meinrad von Lauchert, commander of the 2nd *Panzer* Division, swung northwest on a poor secondary road toward Noville, bypassing Bastogne and following his orders to drive for the Meuse River. By this time CCB, 10th Armored Division had arrived in Bastogne and was quickly divided into three teams named after its commanders to defend the major roads leading into town. Team Cherry (commanded by Lt. Col. Henry Cherry) was sent to Longvilly, Team O'Hara (Lt. Col. James O'Hara) was to defend Wardin southeast of Bastogne, and Team Desobry (Major William Desobry) was sent to Noville.

The lead elements of *Panzer Lehr*, under Lt. Gen. Fritz Bayerlein, reached Mageret about three miles east of Bastogne around midnight. There Bayerlein was duped by a Belgian civilian into believing that earlier in the evening



about 50 American tanks, 25 self-propelled guns, and numerous vehicles led by a general had passed through the village. No such thing had happened, but Bayerlein believed that Bastogne was held by a division and took up a defensive position northeast of Mageret, cutting the Longvilly-Bastogne road, and waited for morning before attacking toward the key town. That night the lead elements of the 101st Airborne, the 501st Parachute Infantry Regiment (PIR), reached Bastogne. The Germans had barely lost the race.

In the heavy morning fog of the 19th, Bayerlein sent a reconnaissance force toward Bastogne. The force soon reached Neffe, the location of Team Cherry's command post. While the Americans put up stubborn defense from a stone chateau, the Germans soon discovered they had a more serious problem on their hands when columns of American infantry were spotted coming toward them from Bastogne. It was the 501st PIR probing east of Bastogne.

The aggressive paratrooper attack against Hill 510 overlooking Neffe and Mageret caused Bayerlein to believe he was facing a major American counterattack. Leaving a strong force to defend the Mageret-Neffe road and Hill 510, Bayerlein pushed southwest over terrible secondary roads to probe American defenses there.

Concurrently, Team Cherry at Longvilly was surrounded. Elements of the Panzer Lehr that had been delayed clearing a village east of the Clerf River on the 18th began to catch up with the rest of the division. Lead elements of the division, along with the 26th Volksgrenadier

**BELOW: An American soldier reloads his M1 near Houffalize, Belgium. In the fight for Bastogne, American troops showed great resilience fighting in harsh winter conditions. RIGHT: A Sherman tank of the U.S. 4th Armored Division of Lt. Gen. George Patton's Third Army covers a stretch of highway near Bastogne. Patton's forces raced north to check the advance of the German 5th Panzer Army. OPPOSITE: American vehicles are shown in the streets of Bastogne. By January 25, the Allies had completely erased the bulge in their lines.**



and six tank destroyers from the 2nd Panzer, advanced on Team Cherry, which was caught in a traffic jam consisting of vehicles from CCB of the 10th Armored, 9th Armored, and other units. Team Cherry was hit hard. About 100 of its tanks, half-tracks, and trucks were either abandoned or destroyed. Elsewhere, elements of Panzer Lehr drove Team O'Hara out of Wardin.

To the north, lead elements of 2nd Panzer struggling along bad roads reached Noville, held by Team Desobry. Receiving permission from Lüttwitz to bypass the town, a column of the division's armor moved along a ridge to the southeast in the fog. The fog lifted, and American and German tanks began trading shots. The Americans were soon reinforced by a battalion of the 506th PIR and a platoon of the 705th Tank Destroyer Battalion. Fierce fighting broke out, but German tanks were reluctant to push into Noville due to paratroopers armed with bazookas. The German tanks that did move toward Noville were knocked out by the American tank destroyers. Noville remained in American hands.

The next morning, the Germans hammered the village with artillery fire followed by an attack by panzergrenadiers, which was hurled back. The situation was critical for Team Desobry. The road south of its position was cut. During the night, the Germans had captured the hills overlooking Foy, located south of Noville. McAuliffe and Colonel William Roberts of CCB, 10th Armored, who shared command in Bastogne, gave Team Desobry permission to withdraw. While paratroopers attacked Foy, Team Desobry fought its way out of Noville, reaching the safety of American lines around 5 PM. Meanwhile, German attacks to east of Bastogne were pushed back by the Americans.

While Lüttwitz began to shift his forces to the south and encircle Bastogne, the German high command persuaded Hitler to authorize reinforcing the 5th Panzer Army, which was showing the most progress of the three armies. Thus, 5th Panzer Army received the 9th Panzer, 15th Panzergrenadier, and 2nd SS Panzer Divisions. However, fuel shortages slowed their arrival. Lauchert pushed his 2nd Panzer Division west and captured a bridge over the Our River at Ortheuville. At that point, his tanks and vehicles sputtered to a stop when they ran out of fuel.

Lüttwitz reinforced the 28th Volksgrenadier with a contingent of the Panzer Lehr and ordered the rest of the division to head west for the Meuse. The 26th Volksgrenadier kept up the pressure on Bastogne, and by the night of December 20 the town was effectively surrounded, although the western sector was not strongly held by the Germans. Two days later Lüttwitz attempted to bluff the Americans in Bastogne by offering them the chance to surrender. McAuliffe simply replied, "Nuts."

"If you don't understand what 'Nuts' means," said Colonel Joseph Harper, commander of the 327th Glider Infantry Regiment, to the two German officers who brought the surrender offer, "In plain English it is the same as 'Go to hell.'" When Manteuffel learned of the surrender offer, he was furious at Lüttwitz for his unauthorized action.

Krüger's 58th Corps, after breaking through the 112th Infantry, pushed west between St. Vith and Bastogne, encircling a battalion of the 3rd Armored Division at Marcouray. At Hotton in an attempt to capture the bridge over the Our River, the Germans met with a galling fire. The 116th

*Continued from page 69*

Major General John Brown Gordon guided his horse past fields where stalks of waist-high corn glistened in the sun. About 15 minutes earlier he had watched as the foot soldiers at the head of his 3,500-strong division strode fully clothed into a shallow ford in the Monocacy River. Having told his three brigadiers to get their troops across the river as quickly as possible, Gordon rode at mid-afternoon on July 9, 1864, through the ford and spurred his horse up a steep grade on the east bank. He wanted to survey the Yankee position and determine how best to drive the bluecoats from the field.

Gordon rode across John Worthington's farm toward an adjacent farm to the north where the Federals were waiting. On the way, the Georgia-born general passed dismounted Virginia cavalry that had found the ford that morning but failed to drive the Yankees from the Thomas Farm. Rifles cracked and minie balls whistled through the air as the two sides exchanged fire.

A hill not far from the Worthington house afforded Gordon a wide view of the battlefield across which he would send his infantry against the enemy. The Yankee line was situated on a low ridge about a half mile from where Gordon was making his reconnaissance. The Georgian noted that the bluecoats were posted behind fences for protection and that their line of battle ran from high ground on his right to the river on his left. A Yankee battery next to the river was posted to sweep the farmland. Farther back, the Yankees had a second line of troops in support. Both lines were south of Georgetown Pike, which led east from Frederick, Maryland, to Washington.

It took only minutes for Gordon to form his plan. His brigades would form up in a protected area behind a wooded hill on the south-



# “A Murderous Fire

Lew Wallace scraped together a Union army to contest Jubal Early's crossing of the Monocacy River on July 9, 1864. The day-long battle bought precious time to prepare the capital against the Confederate raid.

ern end of the Worthington Farm. The Butter-nuts would cross the hill and debouch from the woods onto open fields. Gordon's line would overlap the enemy's left flank. If everything went well, his soldiers would roll that flank up, forcing the enemy to retreat.

Gordon's brigades would attack by echelon, beginning with Brig. Gen. Clement Evans's Georgia Brigade on the right, followed by Brig. Gen. Zebulon York's Louisiana Brigade in the center, and Brig. Gen. William Terry's Virginia Brigade on the left. Confident of success, Gordon turned his horse back to give final orders to his brigadiers and, as was his custom, to help guide the troops into battle.

Gordon knew that the Yankees had to be pried from Monocacy Junction before dusk so that Lt. Gen. Jubal Early's 12,000-man army could continue its raid on the Federal capital

at Washington. The longer that Maj. Gen. Lew Wallace's scratch army delayed Early's army, the more likely that the fortifications at Washington would be manned by Union veterans transferred by boat from the Richmond-Petersburg sector when the Confederates reached the city. Time was critical, and Gordon intended to make quick work of Wallace's Yankees.

At the beginning of June 1864, the Army of the Potomac, led by Maj. Gen. George Meade and accompanied by General of the Army Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant, had slowly advanced after a month of hard fighting to the outskirts of Richmond. Lee had miraculously managed through the skillful use of maneuver and field fortifications to keep Grant from fighting his way into Richmond. But a new threat had developed in the form of Maj. Gen. David Hunter's Army of the Shenandoah, which was marching on Lynchburg, bent on destroying the railroads of central Virginia that supplied Lee's army.



# OF MUSKETRY”

Veteran Union troops take up a strong position in a ditch as Confederates stream down a hillside on the Thomas Farm in an effort to uncover river crossings for the rest of Lt. Gen. Jubal Early's Confederate army at the Battle of Monocacy.

BY WILLIAM E. WELSH

Art © Keith Rocco, www.keithrocco.com

Lee dispatched Maj. Gen. John Breckinridge with his 2,100-man division from Richmond on June 7 to resist Hunter's advance on Lynchburg, but when word reached Lee that Hunter's 9,000-man Army of the Shenandoah was scheduled to double in size when reinforced by Brig. Gen. George Crook's Kanawha Division, he sent 47-year-old Lt. Gen. Jubal Early with an entire Confederate corps to join Breckinridge.

On June 12, Early left Richmond at the head of the Army of Northern Virginia's Second Corps, comprising 12,000 men in three divisions and two battalions of artillery. Early reached Lynchburg before Hunter. When Old Jubilee attempted to bring him to battle, Hunter shamefully withdrew into the Allegheny Mountains.

At that point, Lee ordered Early to launch a raid on Washington to siphon troops from the Army of the Potomac operating against the Confederate capital. It was Lee's hope that Grant would be forced to send a sizable portion of his army by water from the James River to Washington to defend the Federal capital. Early knew it was a risky operation. His small army might be attacked before it reached Washington, and even if it did make it to the outskirts of the strongly fortified capital, it was likely that it could do little damage. Nevertheless, the Army of Northern Virginia was hard pressed, and Lee was willing to take a major gamble in an effort to disrupt Grant's strategy.

For the campaign, Early reorganized his forces into two corps of two divisions each while encamped at Staunton, Virginia. One of the corps was led by Breckinridge, and the other corps

by Maj. Gen. Robert Rodes. Rendezvousing with Early to support his march north were four brigades of cavalry under Maj. Gen. Robert Ransom.

Early's army marched north from Staunton on June 28. Lee had also instructed Early to disrupt the Federal communications and transport infrastructure wherever possible on his march. To get a head start on these objectives, Ransom's cavalry had ridden north to destroy sections of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad.

Early's vanguard made contact on July 3 with the Federal garrison under Maj. Gen. Franz Sigel at Harpers Ferry. After some protracted skirmishing, Sigel on July 5 withdrew his four regiments to a strong defensive position on Maryland Heights. Because Sigel's guns on Maryland Heights dominated the surrounding terrain, including the town, Old Jubilee deemed it impractical for his troops to occupy the abandoned town. Instead, the Confederates made preparations to cross into Maryland west of Harpers Ferry. On July 6, Early's troops splashed through Boteler's Ford and entered Maryland.

Word had quickly arrived in Baltimore and Washington that a rebel force of unknown size was moving through the Shenandoah Valley. The initial

warning was sounded by B&O Railroad President John W. Garrett, who had received reports on June 29 from railroad agents that the Confederates were destroying B&O property between Harpers Ferry and Cumberland.

On July 2, Garrett sought out Maj. Gen. Lew Wallace, who commanded the Middle Department, which was responsible for the upper Mid-Atlantic States. Garrett, who stopped by unexpectedly at Wallace's headquarters in Baltimore, requested that Wallace dispatch troops to protect the railroad between Harpers Ferry and the Monocacy Junction. The junction, situated on the west bank of the Monocacy River, was the point at which a spur of the B&O Railroad ran north to Frederick. Wallace told Garrett flatly that he had no authority west of the Monocacy River.

Garrett insisted that at the very least Wallace should take immediate steps to protect the railroad bridge over the Monocacy River, which was a vital piece of infrastructure. Two blockhouses, one on each bank, were occupied by guards, but Wallace decided to strengthen the junction immediately by sending Colonel Charles Gilpin's Third Maryland Potomac Home Guard Brigade (a regiment-sized unit) to bolster the defenses at the junction. Gilpin's unit, which was one of five regiments in Brig. Gen. Erastus Tyler's First Brigade of Wallace's VIII Corps, was the first unit to reach the junction.

Union Chief of Staff General Henry Halleck in Washington briefed Grant by telegraph on July 3 about the unfolding crisis. Grant insisted that Early's corps was still at Richmond. But Grant was dead wrong. To put Halleck's mind at ease, Grant told Halleck to order Sigel to intercept the mysterious Confederate force. Halleck complained that most of the troops available to defend Washington were militia. To appease Halleck, Grant said that if necessary he would send Brig. Gen. James Ricketts's 5,000-man Third Division of the VI Corps north by water to Baltimore.

Wallace, who had led a Union division at Shiloh in April 1862, had performed poorly on the first day of the battle and been made a scapegoat in its aftermath. But he was a staunch Republican, and in March 1864 Lincoln appointed him to command the Middle Department.

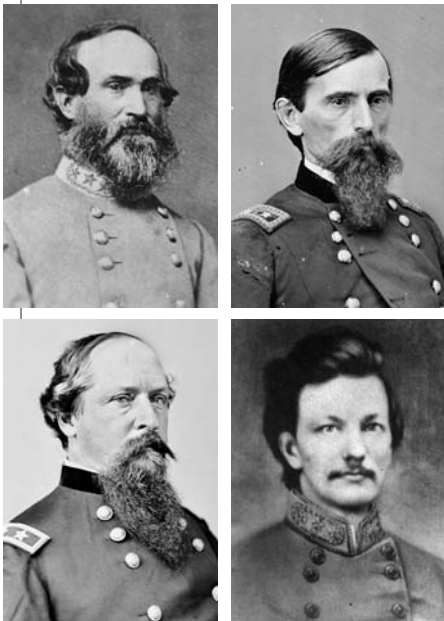
Wallace immediately began shifting forces west to protect the junction and made plans to be there himself to oversee its defense. Unfortunately for Wallace, Halleck could not get help from either Sigel or Hunter, both of whom avoided communications with Washington. Both would eventually be replaced.

On July 6, Wallace accompanied the balance of Tyler's First Brigade of the VIII Corps to Monocacy Junction. This included Captain Frederick Alexander's Baltimore Artillery composed of six 3-inch rifled cannons. A boon to Wallace was the unexpected arrival at the junction of five companies of Lt. Col. David Clendenin's 8th Illinois Cavalry totaling 230 men armed with Sharps carbines. Halleck had sent Clendenin's horse soldiers from Washington to protect the telegraph lines and gather information on the Confederates. By the end of the day, Wallace had about 2,300 men at Monocacy Junction, but most of them were green troops.

On July 8, the main body of Early's army marched through the gaps in South Mountain. Wallace had received a dispatch from Garrett the day before that a large force of Union veteran infantry had arrived by ship in Baltimore and would begin arriving the next morning to reinforce Wallace.

Wallace issued orders for Gilpin's brigade and also for Colonel Allison Brown's 144th and 149th Ohio Regiments to cover the Stone Bridge (2½ miles north of the railroad junction), which carried the National Pike from Frederick to Baltimore. This was necessary to protect the right flank of the troops at the junction and maintain communications with Baltimore.

At Monocacy Junction itself, Wallace prepared to defend a covered wooden bridge that carried Georgetown Pike from Frederick to Washington, as well as the iron railroad bridge



**TOP** Lt. Gen. Jubal Early (left) and Maj. Gen. Lew Wallace. **BOTTOM** Brig. Gen. James Ricketts (left) and Brig. Gen. Clement Evans.

All: Library of Congress



**Confederate cavalry ford the Monocacy River downstream of the railroad junction in a flanking move meant to unhinge the Union position behind the river. Veteran Union infantry easily repulsed the cavalry, which attacked dismounted.**

that Garrett was so concerned about. Earlier in the war, the Union had erected two blockhouses, one at the railroad junction on the west bank and one on the east bank. The two-story blockhouses were made of massive logs and had narrow slits through which the troops inside could fire on any attacking force. Near the blockhouse on the east bank, which was situated on the north side of the railroad, a 24-pounder howitzer posted on the bluffs provided some artillery protection. Unfortunately, the gun would jam halfway through the battle.

William Truex's 1st Brigade of Ricketts's division began arriving by rail at Monocacy Junction on the morning of July 8. After some heavy skirmishing by a portion of Wallace's command and Confederate cavalry in Frederick that day, Wallace made assignments that evening for the battle he expected to occur the following day. The future author of *Ben-Hur* instructed Clendenin to deploy his command at river crossings downstream from the junction, including the Worthington-McKinney Ford. Wallace gave Tyler command of the right wing. As for the two bridges directly east of the junction, Wallace planned to rely on Ricketts's sturdy veterans to oversee their defense. At 8 PM, Wallace sent the following message to Halleck: "I shall ... put myself in a position on the road to cover Washington, if necessary."

Another train arrived with additional reinforcements at 1 AM on July 9. The train carried Colonel Matthew McClellan's 2nd Brigade of Ricketts's division, and it also bore the divisional commander. Wallace suggested the forces assembled march west in an effort to join forces with Sigel's command at Harpers Ferry, but Ricketts dissuaded him of the idea. "What! And give Early a clear road to Washington," Rick-

etts said. "Never! We'll stay here. Give me your orders." Wallace explained that he intended to put a token force on the west bank to delay the Confederates as long as possible. He ordered Ricketts to deploy his men in two lines on the east bank to receive the attack that was expected the following morning.

A storm swept through the area that night, drenching gray and blue alike. After it was over, the temperature dropped noticeably, and the soldiers of both armies were awakened by roosters crowing in the barnyards of the farms located in the lush river valley. "The sun was bright and hot, a nice breeze was blowing which kept us from being too warm," wrote First Sergeant John Worsham of the 21st Virginia Infantry of Terry's Consolidated Virginia Brigade. Union soldiers also noted the spectacular weather. "The clouds dispersed early this morning and the sun came out warm and beautiful," wrote Sergeant William James of the 11th Maryland Volunteer Infantry of Tyler's brigade.

Rodes's corps marched unopposed through Frederick shortly after daybreak on July 9 with Maj. Gen. Stephen Ramseur's division forming the vanguard. Ramseur advanced cautiously on Georgetown Pike toward Monocacy Junction, while Rodes led his own division east on the National Pike toward the Stone Bridge. Leading the advance toward Monocacy Junction was Brig. Gen. Robert Johnston's Brigade, which comprised four North Carolina regiments. As a line of Tarheel skirmishers fanned out on both sides of the road at about 8:30 AM, Captain Thomas Kirkpatrick's Amherst Artillery unlimbered two 3-inch ordnance rifles on a small hillock behind them. The Rebel guns immediately began shelling the Federals to the east.

Alexander's Baltimore battery had been divided into two parts with three guns sent to support Ricketts's left on the 260-acre Thomas Farm to the south and the other three positioned on Ricketts's right opposite the junction. The Federals responded quickly, and the Confederates soon moved other batteries up to support Kirkpatrick, namely Captain John Massie's Fluvanna Artillery and Captain John Carpenter's Allegheny Artillery, which went into action north and south of the pike, respectively. By late morning, the Confederates had 12 guns in action against the Federal force at the junction. Before the day was over, they would have three dozen guns engaged.

"We could not see their guns, as they were masked behind some bushes, and for every shot fired, we received two in return; we were having it hot and heavy ... while the other guns were waiting for further developments," wrote Union artilleryman Frederick Wild, who was detailed to Alexander's guns on the bluffs protecting Ricketts's right. "Fortunately for us the enemy were not good marksmen, and their shells went screeching far over our heads, doing more damage to troops that were maneuvering in our rear, than to us right in front."

Wallace had sent a small force to the junction on the west bank at 7 AM to guard the approaches to the wooden bridge and the iron bridge. The force was composed of 200 men in five companies of Captain Charles Brown's 1st Maryland Potomac Home Brigade and 75 men led by Lieutenant George Davis, drawn from the 10th Vermont of Truex's brigade. The troops fanned out



“IT WAS CERTAINLY A GRAND SIGHT AS THEY ADVANCED, IN GOOD ORDER, WITH THEIR NUMEROUS BATTLE-FLAGS WAVING IN THE BREEZE. WE BEGAN FIRING AT ONCE, BUT IT MADE NO DIFFERENCE.”

about 350 yards from the railroad bridge, taking cover behind the railroad embankment, which served as a ready made breastwork. Some of the men took up positions inside the west blockhouse.

In the event that the Confederates were able to force a crossing at the junction, McClennan's brigade was deployed in two lines of battle directly behind the bridges. His three Ohio regiments formed the first line, and the 9th New York Heavy Artillery (Heavies) and the 138th Pennsylvania formed the second line.

The Heavies were one of a number of artillery units from the forts surrounding Washington that had been converted to infantry to compensate for a shortage of riflemen in Meade's Army of the Potomac. Truex's brigade was assembled at Gambrell's Mill north of the railroad awaiting further orders.

About 9 AM, Johnston's Tarheels attacked the Union bridgehead protecting the junction. Mistaking the Confederates for Union troops falling back, Brown ordered his men to hold their fire. As a result, the North Carolinians killed some of the Marylanders. Brown then decided to turn over command to the more experienced Davis.

Fearing that the force on the opposite bank might be quickly overwhelmed, Ricketts ordered Colonel William Seward Jr., commanding the Heavies, to send two companies across the river to reinforce Davis. A short time later, a company from the 106th New York also went across the river. Davis ordered these three companies, which totaled about 225 soldiers, to extend his left so that it was anchored on the river and would be difficult to outflank.

Confederate Maj. Gen. Stephen Ramseur believed that a full-scale attack against the fortified Federal bridgehead at the junction would result in heavy casualties. For this reason, the North Carolina-born general and division commander instructed Johnston not to launch a major assault, but simply to maintain pressure on Davis's force. Johnston sent sharpshooters to the Best Farm, located south of Georgetown Pike, and they clambered up into the loft of the large barn on the property and proceeded to pick off a few Federals on the left of Davis's line.

When Union infantry detected puffs of smoke coming from the top of the barn on the Best Farm to the east, they requested that Alexander's gunners shell the barn to drive away the sharpshooters. It did not take long for the Yankee gunners to produce positive results. "The second shot burst inside of the barn, and did the third, and the fourth, and the barn was soon on fire, and we had the satisfaction of seeing some of them being carried away on a litter, and put into an ambulance," wrote artilleryman Wild.

At 10 AM, Brig. Gen. John McCausland led his four regiments of Virginia cavalry from the Buckeystown Pike along a farm path on the west side of the Monocacy River to the Worthington-McKinney Ford located about a half mile downstream from the wooden bridge. Early had ordered McCausland to find a way to cross the river and drive off the Federal forces on the east

bank defending the two bridges near the junction. Only Company B of the 8th Illinois Cavalry, which had about 40 men, guarded the Worthington-McKinney Ford. Clendenin's other four companies had ridden farther downstream to burn any bridges they found to deny their use to Early's troops. Heavily outnumbered, the horsemen of Company B had no other choice than to fall back and relinquish control of the ford to the Virginia cavalry.

Once across the river, McCausland ordered his 1,000 cavalymen to dismount and prepare to advance on foot toward the Federal position. Early, who observed with his binoculars the advance of McCausland's brigade, was elated. "McCausland's movement, which was brilliantly executed, solved the problem [of how to cross the river] for me," wrote Early.

Both Wallace and Ricketts observed McCausland's advance, and Ricketts ordered Truex to shift four of the five regiments of his 1st Brigade to the Thomas Farm, which was situated north of the Worthington Farm, to oppose the attack. The Federals moved at the double-quick onto the Thomas Farm and established a line of battle facing west behind a fence facing a cornfield. Truex's left flank rested on the Thomas farmhouse, known as Araby, and his right rested on the river. From right (closest to the river) to left the regiments in the front line were the 151st New York, 106th New York, 14th New Jersey, and 87th Pennsylvania. The 10th Vermont remained in reserve.

Ricketts also established a second line behind them that consisted of two companies from the 122nd Ohio and four companies from the 138th Pennsylvania, which belonged to McClennan's 2nd Brigade. Wallace would eventually redeploy the remaining guns of the Baltimore Artillery to support Truex as the fighting grew in intensity on the Federal left.

While McCausland was making preparations for his attack, a Tarheel regiment attempted to get around Davis's right flank at the Federal bridgehead at the junction. Colonel Charles Blacknall's 23rd North Carolina attempted to sneak along the river bank and make a dash to capture the west end of the railroad bridge. But Davis had posted pickets near the river bank who warned him that a flank attack was imminent. Davis reinforced his right, and the attack was repulsed.

McCausland's Virginians advanced in two lines at noon. They marched east from the Worthington House across cornfields heading in the general direction of Gambrell's Mill. After advancing about 400 yards, the first line of dismounted cavalymen charged in a ragged line toward the Thomas Farm. The Rebels "raised

their battle cry, which, sounding across the field and the intervening distance, rose to me on the heights, sharper, shriller, and more like the composite yelping of wolves than I had ever heard," wrote Wallace.

When the Confederates came to within 125 yards of the fence, the Federals who had been crouching down rose up and skillfully delivered a volley that shattered McCausland's front line. McCausland had failed to send skirmishers forward, and this allowed Truex's veterans to ambush the dismounted cavalymen. McCausland's men had expected to chase off green troops, but instead they encountered savvy veterans. Truex's troops rested their barrels on the fence and fired at will. But McCausland's men were demoralized. Many of the Confederate cavalry officers on horseback had been killed or wounded in the first few volleys. The Confederates who survived the wall of fire crawled back toward the Worthington House to regroup.

Wallace knew that the Confederates would attack again. What is more, he was facing an attack from two directions. Fearing that the strong Confederate force might scatter Davis's troops and capture the wooden covered bridge intact, Wallace sent orders to Seward to burn the bridge. A three-man detail drawn from the Heavies inside the bridgehead gathered sheaves of dry wheat and at 12:30 PM placed them on the southeast corner of the structure. The fire "wrapped the roof in flames like magic," wrote Private Alfred Roe of the Heavies, who observed the fire from the east bank. Seward's orders included instructions for the three companies of New York troops to withdraw to the east bank, but Davis received no similar orders from Wallace, and so he remained at the junction.

Early had observed the repulse, and he ordered Breckinridge, whose two divisions were just south of Frederick on the Buckeystown Road, to order Gordon to reinforce McCausland. Gordon's troops began moving toward the Worthington-McKinney Ford about 2 PM. To support the attack, three Confederate batteries moved closer to the river on the Best Farm. Breckinridge ordered Major William McLaughlin's Monroe Artillery and Captain William Lowry's Wise Legion Artillery to follow Gordon across the river to support his attack. But due to the difficulty of getting McLaughlin's battery across the rocky ford, Breckinridge's staff decided that Lowry's Battery should join the other batteries on the Best Farm, all of which were in a superb position to bombard the right side of Truex's line.

McCausland wanted to mount a second attack, but it took considerable time to rally his brigade and also to carefully reconnoiter the

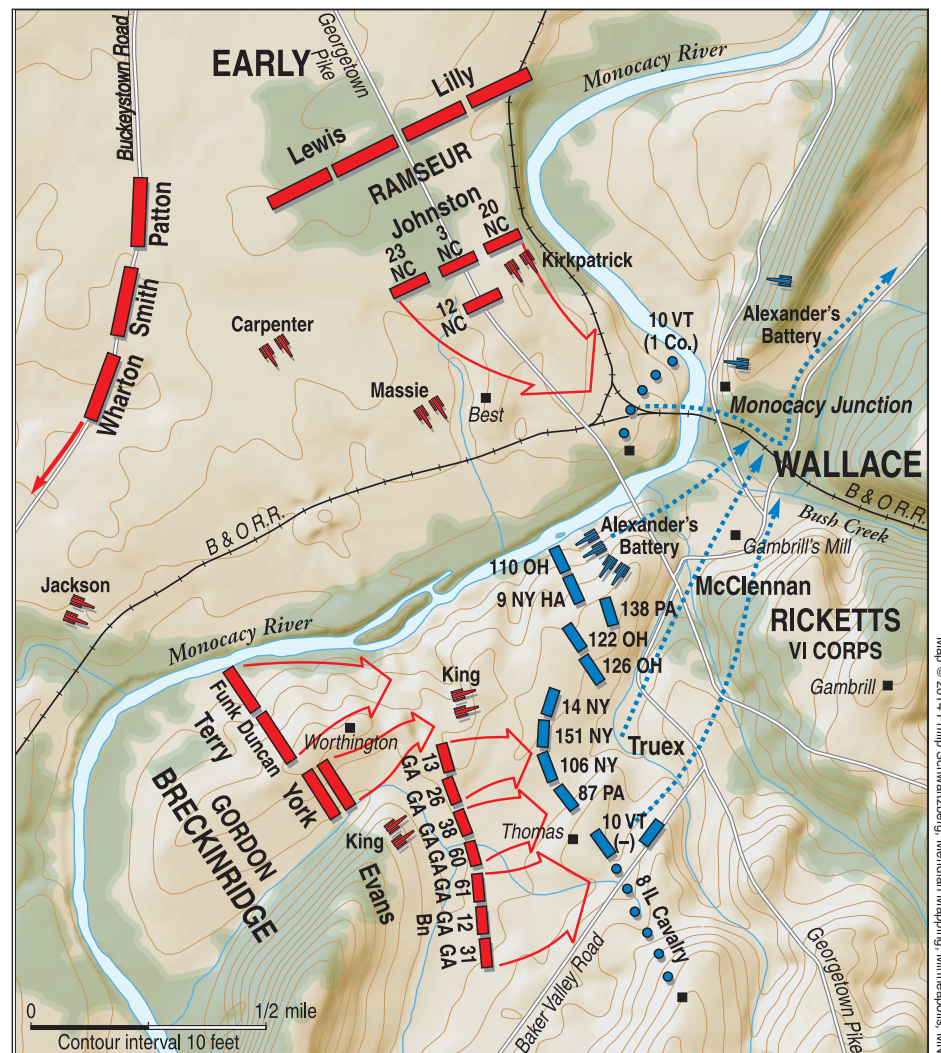
enemy position to obtain better results. The Missouri-born cavalry general decided to shift his attack south so that he would strike the left flank of Truex's line. While he was reorganizing his troops for the fresh attack, Gordon was making his own reconnaissance of the terrain and enemy positions.

McCausland's dismounted cavalymen attacked again at 2 PM. The Virginians "advanced on us in two lines of battle, mostly on our left flank, at least a half mile away, without a tree or obstruction of any kind to hide them," wrote Corporal Roderick Clark of the 14th New Jersey. "It was certainly a grand sight as they advanced, in good order, with their numerous battle-flags waving in the breeze. We began firing at once, but it made no difference. On they came with quick step until they got within 300 yards of us."

Wallace was watching the Confederates closely and quickly discerned McCausland's intent. He sent orders to Truex's regiments to move at the double quick to their left to check the Confederate charge. As the musketry grew to a roar, Wallace ordered McClennan to move the remainder of his brigade to fill the gap between Truex's line, which had shifted several hundred yards south, and the river. McClennan's regiments were from right (closest to the river) to left the 110th Ohio, New York Heavies, 138th Pennsylvania, 122nd Ohio, and 126th Ohio.

The fighting between the Virginians and Truex's 1st Brigade raged on both sides of Araby and around the house itself. At one point McCausland's boys captured Araby, but Wallace ordered Ricketts to counterattack. Wallace sent Colonel William Henry's 10th Vermont at the double quick to take up a position on the extreme left of Truex's line. McCausland rallied his men for

**BELOW:** A demonstration by troops belonging to Maj. Gen. Stephen Ramseur's division against Monocacy Junction sought to pin down Federal forces while Maj. Gen. John Gordon's division attacked in echelon against the Union left flank on the Thomas Farm. **OPPOSITE:** Company M of the 9th New York Heavy Artillery is shown in the Washington defenses. Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant converted many of the artillery units defending the U.S. capital to infantry to compensate for losses in his Overland Campaign against General Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia.



Map © 2014 Phillip Schwarzberg, Meridian Mapping, Minneapolis, MN

another attack at 3 PM, but by then nearly all of Ricketts's troops were engaged. The time had come for McCausland to allow Gordon's better-led infantry to go forward.

It took about an hour for Gordon's three brigades to cross the river at the Worthington-McKinney Ford and form up for the attack. At 3:15 PM, Gordon's infantry advanced. Because some of his regiments did not reach the battlefield in time to participate in the battle, Ricketts's division was similar in size to Gordon's division. The three Rebel brigades formed up in an area that was for the most part shielded from Federal observations by Brooks Hill directly south of the Worthington farmhouse. Evans's brigade advanced first on the right. It marched over Brooks Hill and emerged from the woods about 700 yards from Truex's division on the Thomas Farm.

Gordon had noted that Evans's troops would encounter a number of challenges in their advance. They would have to cross a small stream at the base of Brooks Hill. Then they would have to get over several fences and maintain their cohesion as they advanced through a 40-acre wheatfield with numerous shocks of wheat waiting to be collected by the farmhands. The Southern regiments would have to maintain their alignment throughout the advance despite the obstacles.

As they advanced, McLaughlin's battery near the Worthington farmhouse opened up on the Federals. In response, Alexander's guns hurled shells at Evans's exposed Georgians. Truex's Yankees had taken up an excellent position in a sunken road on the Thomas Farm that served as a natural trench perpendicular to the river. The Yankees had a clear field of fire 400 yards in front of them.

Truex's men hoped to give Gordon's men the same hot reception that they had given the Virginia cavalrymen. "They moved with great precision down the slope [of Brooks Hill] while the boys of

the 87th and the other veterans under Truex eagerly watched their movements," wrote Lt. Col Alonzo Stahle, who led the 87th Pennsylvania.

Regimental commanders on Truex's left told their boys to hold their fire until the Rebels reached a large oak about 100 yards from the sunken road. "On came the rebels in two lines of battle, their field officers riding in the front of their lines," wrote Captain Peter Robertson of the 106th New York. The Georgians charged, screaming their banshee-like Rebel yell. The Yankee line erupted in a blaze of fire that ripped into the front line of Evans's Georgia brigade and felled many valiant Rebels. Evans was seriously wounded when a round went clear through his body, but he would eventually recover from the wound. Colonel Edmund Atkinson of the 26th Georgia assumed command of the brigade as Evans was taken to the rear.

"Wallace's men were well posted in a road that was washed out and graded till it was as fine a breast works as I ever saw," wrote Private G.W.

Nichols of the 61st Georgia, whose regiment was in the middle of the battle line. The Federal fire was delivered with such precision and force that Georgians could not get any closer than 30 yards to the sunken road. And that was not the worst of what Evans's boys experienced. Rather than outflanking Truex, Evans was outflanked instead. The 10th Vermont, together with the 8th Illinois Cavalry, suddenly appeared on Evans's right flank and poured a destructive enfilading fire into the Georgians. Evans's attack faltered momentarily as York's Louisianans crashed into Truex's right.

York's Louisianans struck the 151st and 106th New York Regiments, as well as the left regiments of McClellan's brigade. Because of the rolling nature of the landscape across which York was advancing, his men were not exposed to Federal fire until they were right on top of Truex's Empire Staters. The New Yorkers tried to make a stand halfway down the slope that ran east from Araby to Georgetown Pike, but the pressure from York's veteran troops was too much, and they were not able to rally until they reached Georgetown Pike.

The pike was a strong position, though, because it also was sunken from heavy traffic over the years. With the two New York regiments in retreat, the 10th Vermont, 14th New Jersey, and 87th Pennsylvania all fell back, too. Regiments of both Evans and York attacked Truex's new position at 4 PM with great difficulty and were repulsed. "We could not see a Yankees on our part of the line during the whole advance," wrote Private Nichols. "All that we could shoot at was the

smoke of their guns, they were so well posted."

The left regiments of York's brigade took heavy casualties from McClellan's men, who stood their ground and enfiladed their ranks as they rushed north toward Georgetown Pike. McClellan's regimental and line officers had some of the men change front and pour a withering fire into the left flank of the Louisianans. The situation would not be remedied until Terry's Consolidated Virginia Brigade struck McClellan's line.

Terry's veterans were anxious to get their licks in on the Yankees. The Virginians moved at the double quick through a cornfield near the river toward McClellan's line. "On going into the fight, we went on a run, left wheel by regiment," wrote George Pile of the 37th Virginia. In the blistering heat of the late afternoon, Terry rode alongside his men. The Virginia Military Institute graduate told them to slow down and conserve their energy.

Yankee skirmishers were waiting for the Confederates behind a fence, and they delivered a powerful volley that felled a number of Virginians. Unlike the dismounted cavalry, the veteran Rebels stood their ground and returned fire. The Yankee skirmishers fell back to join the main line. At that point, Terry's men saw a column of Yankees moving west at the double quick toward the river. One of the Virginians shouted, "At 'em boys!" wrote First Sergeant John Worsham of the 21st Virginia Infantry. Gordon, who was nearby, said, "Keep quiet. We will have our time presently." Gordon ordered several Butternuts to dismantle a section of the abandoned fence so that those behind them could pass through it without having to expose themselves to fire by climbing over it. The Virginians did as told, and Terry's troops surged into the pasture north of Araby.

Waiting for Terry's Virginians were the 110th Ohio and the Heavies. The two sides traded volleys. After a short time, McClellan ordered the two regiments to fall back. As they did so, the Buckeyes inadvertently left a gap of about 100 yards between themselves and the river.

Terry ordered Colonel John Funk to take his regiment, which comprised the remnants of the famous Stonewall Brigade, and move along the river bank to strike McClellan's right flank. The crack troops fell on McClellan's flank with zeal, delivering rapid volleys that stung the Yankees. Coupled with the Confederate batteries firing into their ranks from the other side of the river, McClellan's brigade was on the verge of being routed.

The 110th Ohio, which was posted on the right of McClellan's brigade, suffered the most from the flank attack. The Buckeyes came



Library of Congress



**ABOVE:** Union Lieutenant George Davis of the 10th Vermont Infantry Regiment, who would receive the Medal of Honor for holding the two bridges at the railroad junction against vastly superior numbers for the greater part of the day, ordered his small force to withdraw across the railroad bridge in the late afternoon. **OPPOSITE:** Private Luther Hart Clapp of the 37th Virginia Infantry Regiment fought in Brig. Gen. William Terry's Brigade, which turned the right flank of Ricketts's division in the last stage of the battle.

“under a murderous fire of musketry and artillery, the latter coming obliquely from the front and rear and directly from the right,” wrote Lt. Col. Otto Brinkely, the commander of the 110th Ohio. With both of his flanks receiving enfilading fire, McClennan had no choice but to order a retreat to Georgetown Pike.

About the time that Gordon's division was forming up for its attack mid-afternoon, Ramseur ordered Johnston to launch another attack on Davis's bridgehead. The Tarheels struck at 3 PM, and heavy firing lasted for nearly an hour. Tyler, who was concerned about similar Rebel demonstrations against the Stone Bridge to the north, sent orders to Brown to withdraw his troops across the railroad bridge and then march immediately to the Stone Bridge. Davis's men covered their withdrawal. The retreat was difficult because the railroad bridge had been constructed without a floor; it consisted of nothing more than ties and rails laid across an iron trestle. Nevertheless, Brown's men made it across and marched north to the Stone Bridge.

About 4:30 PM, Davis's men began their own retreat across the railroad bridge. Davis was one of the last to step onto the railroad bridge

just as Confederates swarmed the west end of it. The victorious Rebels grabbed several Yankees before they could get away and took them prisoner. Davis narrowly escaped capture. For his superb leadership that day, Davis would receive the Medal of Honor. Following on Davis's heels, the Tarheels of Colonel Thomas Toon's 20th North Carolina were the first Confederates to cross the railroad bridge. They immediately occupied empty rifle pits that offered a point of attack against Ricketts's right flank.

At that point, Wallace ordered a general retreat because of a lack of ammunition. The troops were instructed to retreat to Monrovia. The following day, Wallace's army entrained for Baltimore. The garrison and whatever reinforcements had arrived in Washington by steamer or rail would be sufficient to cover the federal capital, reasoned Wallace.

Ricketts' two brigades had great difficulty disengaging, and McClennan's brigade became disorganized. But Early was not interested in pursuing Wallace; he just wanted an open road to Washington. By 5 PM, the fighting sputtered out on the southern end of the battlefield.

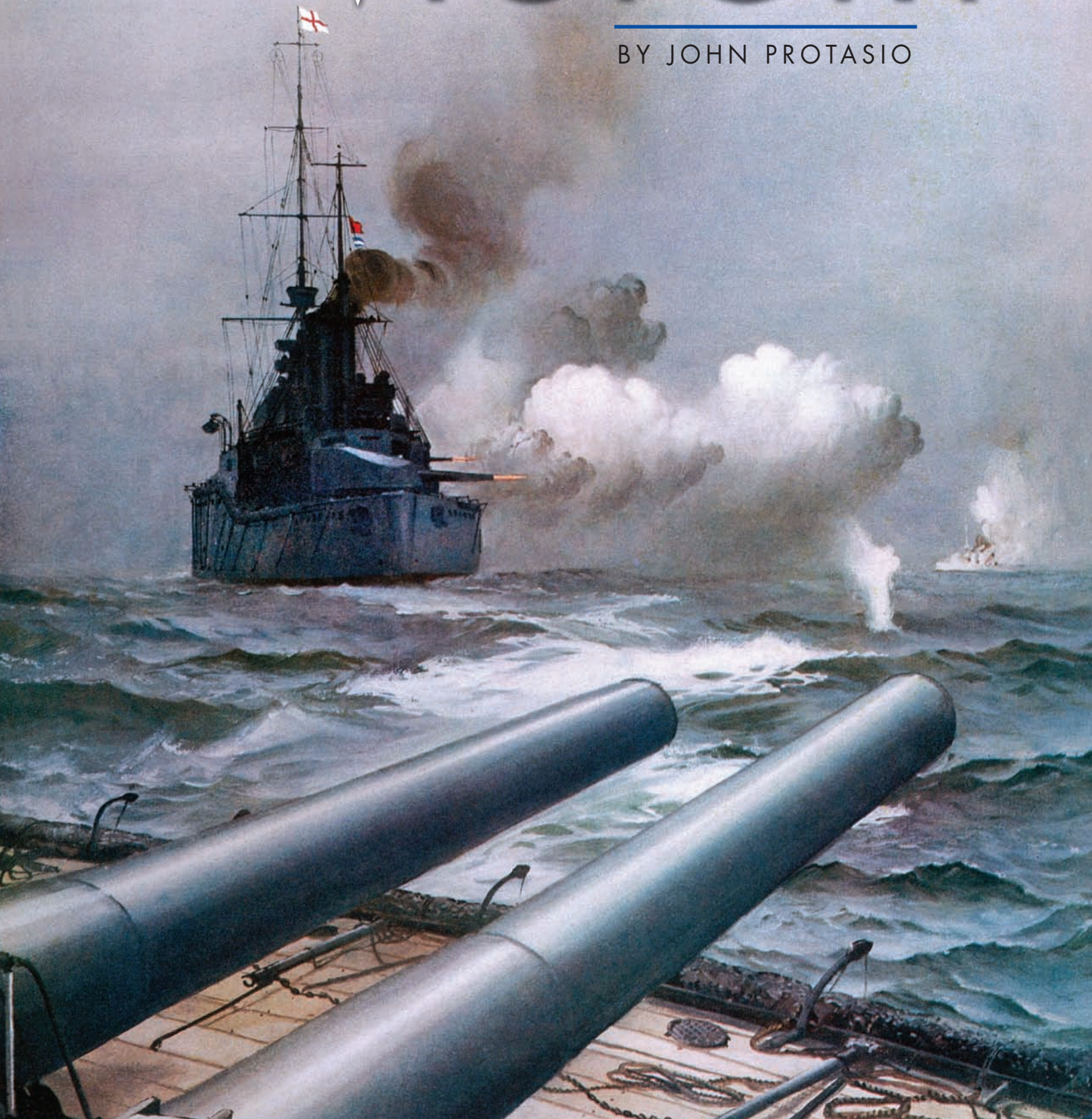
Colonel Allison Brown had established a bridgehead manned by about 660 men on the west end of the Stone Bridge that morning. Throughout the day he had resisted half-hearted attacks by Rodes's division. Fearing that the Confederates might seize the bridge and cut off his retreat, Wallace sent orders to Brown at 4 PM that he was to hold the bridge “to the last extremity.” At 6 PM, Rodes launched a strong attack that forced Brown to withdraw to the east bank. Many of Brown's militia threw down their rifles and fled through the countryside. To his credit, Brown managed to lead 300 of the bravest Ohioans in an orderly retreat east along the National Pike.

Wallace's hastily assembled Union army lost 700 killed and wounded and 600 captured. Early's Confederates suffered 900 casualties, of which nearly 700 were from Gordon's division.

Wanting to avoid excessive casualties, Early was reluctant to commit his forces in frontal attacks against the two bridgeheads. Thus, a battle that might have been over by noon lasted a full day. Wallace had bought precious time for Halleck to strengthen the defenses at Washington, and he had done it without having to sacrifice his entire army. Wallace lost tactically, but won strategically. As a result, his reputation was restored. □

# RACE TO VICTORY

BY JOHN PROTASIO



Commodore Reginald Tyrwhitt of the Royal Navy was in a grave predicament on August 28, 1914. His force was near the German base at Heligoland Bight. His flagship, the light cruiser *Arethusa*, had suffered considerable damage while engaged with the German light cruiser *Stettin*. The commodore received assistance from the cruiser *Fearless* and several destroyers.

Suddenly, the German cruiser *Mainz* came out of the mist. The British destroyers swung around to attack her. The enemy warship turned only to come under the guns of Commodore William Goodenough's cruisers. Tyrwhitt signaled Vice Admiral David Beatty that he needed his help.

The situation took a turn for the worse when the German cruiser *Stralsund* came within sight. The commodore ordered his destroyers to fire torpedoes at her, all of which missed their target. The *Stralsund* retreated in the mist.

Then the *Mainz* reappeared out of the fog. Tyrwhitt ordered his destroyers to attack. During the battle the British destroyer *Laurel* was hit, putting her after gun out of action; *Liberty* was hit, killing her captain; and *Laertes* also took a hit that killed two of her crew.

"Come on Beatty," Tyrwhitt thought, "Please come." He needed Beatty's battle cruisers to remedy the situation. Miles away, Beatty was steaming as fast as he could to help Tyrwhitt. A British victory depended on it.

The British Admiralty had developed a plan to attack German warships operating in the waters off Heligoland Bight earlier that month.

Great Britain had just entered World War I, and the first few weeks went badly for the British. The Russians were taking a long time to mobilize their military. In contrast, the Germans had mobilized and invaded Belgium and France. The German plan seemed a brilliant success.

The Allies also suffered a setback at sea during the first few days of the war. The German dreadnought *Goeben* and cruiser *Breslau* were at large in the Mediterranean. Despite the Royal Navy's efforts to locate and destroy them, both enemy warships managed to escape. Britain clearly needed a naval victory.

Thus, on August 23, 1914, Commodore Roger Keyes, the head of the Royal Navy's submarine service, paid a visit to First Lord of the Admiralty Winston Churchill. Keyes's submarines had monitored the German warships near Heligoland. It was a risky business. Some of Keyes's submarines were nearly sunk by vigilant enemy destroyers. In contrast, the Germans had many close calls. A German cruiser of the Roon class came close to being sunk by a British submarine. Keyes's ships were able to obtain valuable information on enemy ship movement near Heligoland. Keyes proposed a plan for "a well-organized drive commencing before dawn from inshore close to enemy's coast."

**BELOW: British vessels sail toward Heligoland Bight in August 1914. They steamed into action at high speed to foil mines and submarines.**

**OPPOSITE: The HMS *Lion* was the flagship of the First Battlecruiser Squadron stationed at Scapa. The squadron's role was to support British destroyers and submarines in interrupting German patrols in the North Sea.**

German cruiser of the Roon class came close to being sunk by a British submarine. Keyes's ships were able to obtain valuable information on enemy ship movement near Heligoland. Keyes proposed a plan for "a well-organized drive commencing before dawn from inshore close to enemy's coast."

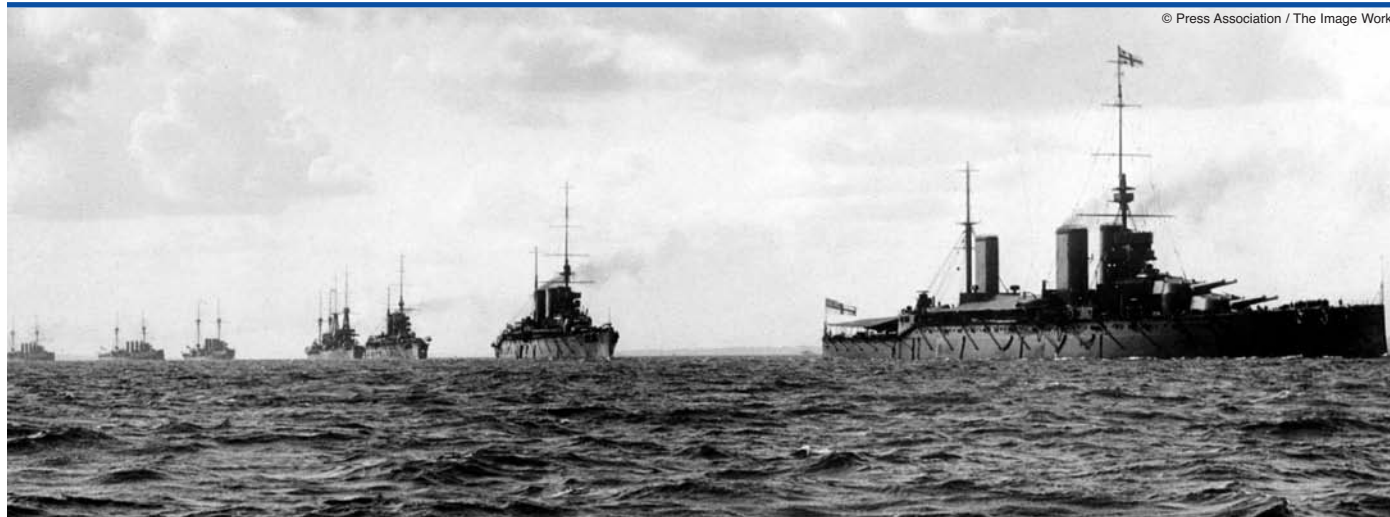
Heligoland Bight is a shallow bay located in the southeast corner of the North Sea off the coast of Lower Saxony. The Bight stretches from the mouth of the Elbe River to the Heligoland Islands. The British took control of the Heligoland Islands during the Napoleonic Wars but returned them to Germany in 1890. The Germans were delighted to have them back. As one member of the Reichstag said, "We think with gratitude of the German statesman Caprivi, who, by concluding the agreement whereby Heligoland was handed over to us by the British, transformed that island into the most effective protection for the coast of Germany."

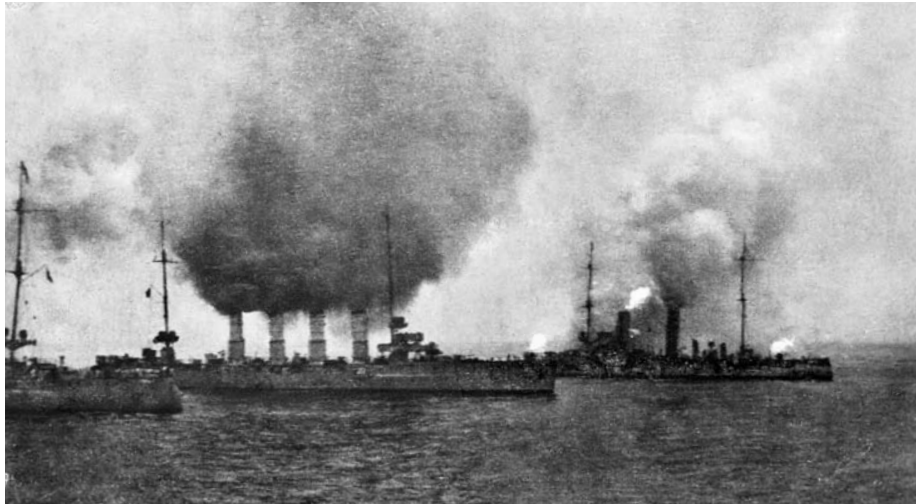
First Lord of the Admiralty Sir John Fisher regarded the transfer as a grave mistake. "The Tories gave up Heligoland, the key to the Baltic," said Fisher. At the outbreak of the war, Heligoland Bight served as a base for the German High Seas Fleet. When Great Britain entered the war, the British Admiralty feared enemy warships operating out of Heligoland Bight might attack troop transports carrying the British Expedition Force to France. Thus, Tyrwhitt and his destroyers swept the southern area of the North Sea to intercept any German vessels that might interfere with the troop transports. There was a brief action at 7 AM on August 18, when the cruiser *Fearless* fired on the German cruiser *Rostock*. Tyrwhitt attempted to cut off the fleeing *Rostock*, but the enemy warship escaped.

According to observation reports from British submarines, the Germans typically sent out a

BRITISH WARSHIPS CONVERGED ON A FLOTILLA OF GERMAN DESTROYERS AT HELIGOLAND BIGHT ON AUGUST 28, 1914. DURING THE ENCOUNTER, VICE ADMIRAL DAVID BEATTY'S BATTLE CRUISERS INFLICTED SUBSTANTIAL DAMAGE ON THE GERMANS.

© Press Association / The Image Works





flotilla of destroyers accompanied by two cruisers north of Heligoland during the night and fanned seaward. They were relieved shortly after daylight by a second flotilla of light cruisers on a much less extensive beat about 20 miles northwest of the island. The submariners also observed that German patrols went to sea before dark and returned at dawn. Little could be done during daylight, for a large number of destroyers were on patrol both north and south of Heligoland. The destroyers steamed at high speed to foil mines and submarine attacks.

Originally Keyes envisioned a plan to attack the enemy's night patrol. After consulting with Tyrwhitt, the plan was altered to conduct the actual drive at 8 AM when the night patrol was in port and the day patrol was just starting its duty. The submarines *E6*, *E7*, and *E8* were to show themselves 40 miles from Heligoland to lure out the German destroyers. Tyrwhitt's force would attack them, while the submarines *E4*, *E5*, and *E9* dealt with any German cruisers coming out of the Bight to assault the British destroyers.

The plan was carefully explained to Admiral John Jellicoe, the commander in chief of the Grand Fleet. He believed the attacking force was too weak in the event the enemy's heavy ships came out. Jellicoe suggested that the entire Grand Fleet cooperate with Tyrwhitt's force. The British Admiralty rejected this idea, but instead allowed Beatty's battle cruisers at Scapa Flow, the *Lion*, *Princess Royal*, and *Queen Mary*, to furnish "support if convenient."

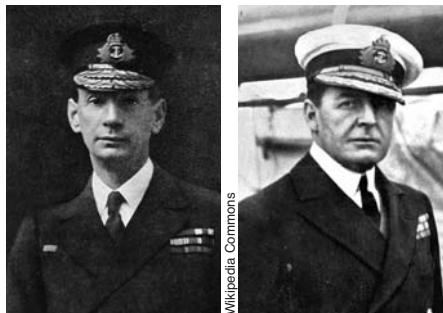
Beatty was ready on the morning of August 28. He was not able to leave harbor until 1 AM because of the tide. A squadron of cruisers under the command of Goodenough was to make for the destroyers' rendezvous. Due to the mismanagement of the British Admiralty's staff, neither Tyrwhitt nor Keyes was informed that Beatty and Goodenough were coming. As a result, Goodenough's cruisers were nearly attacked by Tyrwhitt's force at 3:30 that morning.

Beatty was ignorant of the details of the plan. At 8 AM, he signaled the First Battle Cruiser Squadron and the First Light Cruiser Squadron. In addition to informing them of the position at sea where they were to rendezvous at 5 AM with Rear Admiral Archibald Moore's Cruiser Force K, comprising *Invincible* and *New Zealand*, to support the British destroyers and submarines, Beatty informed them, "Operation consisting of a sweep of a line north-south true from Horns Reef to Heligoland to westward ... know very little, shall hope to learn more as we go along."

Tyrwhitt left harbor with his ships at midnight on August 26, 1914. The submarines also went out to sea to take up their position. His intent was to attack on August 28. So far everything was going as planned.

Tyrwhitt personally led the Third Flotilla. His flagship, *Arethusa*, was a 3,500-ton cruiser with a top speed of 28.5 knots and armed with two 6-inch guns and four 4-inch guns. Unfortunately, it was a brand new ship, leaving the builders just three days prior.

The Third Flotilla consisted of four divisions with a total of 16 destroyers. Accompanying the



Commodore Sir Roger Keyes (left) and Vice Admiral Sir David Beatty. TOP: German light cruisers SMS *Ariadne*, *Stralsund*, and *Danzig* photographed during the action at Heligoland.

commodore was the First Flotilla, which was led by the 3,400-ton cruiser *Fearless* with a speed of 25.4 knots and armed with 10 4-inch guns. This flotilla had five divisions of destroyers for a total of 19 destroyers. The Fourth Division with four destroyers was detached to accompany the battle cruisers. Keyes, who was in command of the cruiser *Lurcher*, had with him the cruiser *Fire Drake* and a destroyer in close company with the submarines. Goodenough with his six cruisers was also participating in the operation.

Both Tyrwhitt and Keyes were unaware of Goodenough's participation in the expedition. Unfortunately for the British, the Germans had picked up the wireless traffic of Tyrwhitt's ships and suspected the British were up to something. They put into effect their own counter plan, which they had devised sometime earlier in the event of a British attack. The Germans sent out a few torpedo boats to draw the British inside Heligoland Bight, intending to cut them off with their cruisers. It was an unusual situation in which both the British and Germans were attempting to trap the other. Since the British were on the offensive, the Germans were the first to score.

All of this was unknown to Tyrwhitt. The commodore was coming close to the Bight for the 8 AM rendezvous. Following him were his destroyers five cables apart. Two miles astern was the First Flotilla led by Captain W.I. Blunt. Goodenough in *Southampton* was following eight miles away. His flotilla included five more cruisers in three divisions, which were two miles apart.

A few minutes before 7 AM, one of the German decoy destroyers was sighted by the British look-outs about 3½ miles to the southeastward. Tyrwhitt dispatched the Fourth Division of destroyers to chase the enemy warship since they were the closest to her. The four destroyers, *Laurel*, *Liberty*, *Lysander*, and *Laertes*, steamed toward the enemy destroyer, which fled southeastward into the Bight. The commodore continued on course with the balance of his force.

The four British destroyers came upon several German destroyers, and immediately action began. Both sides opened fire. The range, however, was too great to be effective.

At 7:30 AM, Tyrwhitt lost visual contact with the Fourth Division. He heard gunfire and knew his ships were engaging the enemy. The commodore sighted other German destroyers to the south-southwest. Tyrwhitt faced a dilemma. He had to decide whether to attack the enemy destroyers he saw to the south or come to the assistance of the Fourth Division.

The commodore decided on the latter course

of action, altering course four points to port and increasing his speed. The sea was calm and clear to the seaward. However, visibility was greatly reduced as Tyrwhitt approached land.

At 7:40 AM, the commodore caught sight of the Fourth Division engaging the German destroyers. He altered course another two points to port and began a full-speed stern chase of the enemy ships with *Fearless* and her flotilla following. The range was too great for effective firing, and he was not gaining on the Germans.

A wireless message was flashed at German headquarters: "In square 142 and 151 enemy cruisers and destroyers are chasing the Fifth Flotilla." Immediately two light cruisers—the *Stettin*, a 3,466-ton 24-knot warship armed with 10 4.1-inch guns, and the *Franenlob*, registered at 2,656 tons with a speed of 21 knots also equipped with 10 4.1 inch guns—were dispatched to help the destroyers under attack.

However, the German battle cruisers were not sent to sea because of the tide. Other ships were able leave harbor to render assistance. The cruiser *Mainz* was ordered to "put to sea and take the reported English forces in the rear."

At 8 AM, a *Stettin*-class cruiser believed to be the *Stettin* herself was seen by Tyrwhitt's look-outs coming up from the north of Heligoland. The commodore turned four points westward to engage her. As he did so, *Franenlob* was sighted coming up from the port quarter. *Stettin* turned 16 points inward, and Tyrwhitt altered to the southeast to fight her on a parallel course.

Fighting erupted. Tyrwhitt's destroyers supported him with torpedoes. However, they all

missed their targets. *Arethusa* scored a few hits but was badly damaged herself in the engagement.

By 8:05 AM, *Fearless* and her destroyers had come on the scene. *Stettin* turned away 16 points. She appeared to be running back to Heligoland. *Fearless* and her flotilla gave chase, leaving *Arethusa* alone to engage *Franenlob*. At 8:10 AM, the German cruiser turned southward down the west side of Heligoland. Tyrwhitt gave chase and opened fire with his guns and torpedoes. At times the range was down to 4,000 yards. The British managed to get a hit under the enemy's forebridge.

The German cruiser eventually pulled out and made for Heligoland. Tyrwhitt surmised that the enemy warship was so badly damaged that she would founder before she reached port. The commodore was wrong; *Franenlob* managed to reach the port of Wilhelmshaven by noon with about 50 of her crew killed or wounded.

Tyrwhitt's flagship was badly damaged as well. All of his guns were out of action except one 6-inch gun. Also, his forces were scattered. Some of the commodore's destroyers were attending a tramp steamer flying a Norwegian flag that seemed to be laying mines ahead of *Arethusa*. A few of Tyrwhitt's destroyers attacked a torpedo boat and mistakenly believed they sank her. Instead, she remained afloat and was taken in by two German destroyers. Still, other ships of the British flotilla were coming up on the forts of Heligoland and were fired on. Tyrwhitt signaled that they should make a drive westward. *Fearless* followed the order and broke off her chase of the *Stettin*, which escaped in the mist.

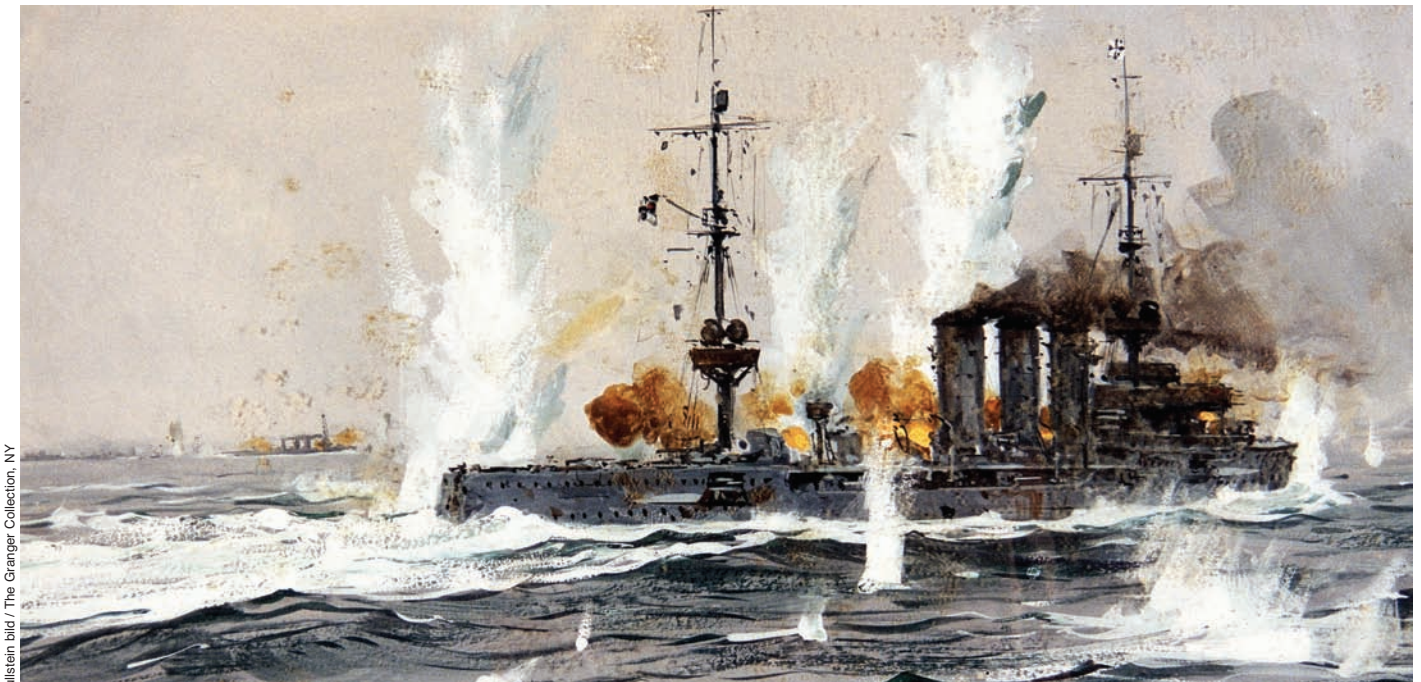
At 8:15 AM, *Fearless* sighted the German destroyer *V 187*, a destroyer flotilla leader's ship. *V 187* was on patrol that morning about 24 nautical miles northwest of Heligoland when she received a wireless from another destroyer, "Am chased by enemy armored cruiser." *V 187* set course to help when she came within sight of *Fearless*.

The German destroyer turned to run away and managed to disappear in the fog. At 8:25 AM, *V 187* was sighted again by the Fifth Division going south. The British destroyers gave chase and opened fire on the enemy warship, nearly to scoring hits. *V 187* tried to escape westward, then turned southward where the German ship encountered the *Nottingham* and *Lowestoft* of Goodenough's cruiser squadron. She turned 16 points and came under the guns of the British destroyers of the Third Division. In an effort to escape, *V 187* rushed toward the Fifth Division in hopes of getting through the opposite course. This proved futile, and the British warships opened fire on her. At 8:50 AM, nothing could be seen of her except a cloud of black smoke.

Captain Blunt left *V 187* to his Third and Fifth Divisions and took the balance of his destroy-

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**The German flagship SMS *Cöln* takes fire from Commodore William Goodenough's cruisers. Having suffered severe damage, her crew decided to scuttle her in the hope that they would be picked up by ships in close proximity. Sadly, all but one man perished at sea.**



ulstein bild / The Granger Collection, NY



ers to rejoin the commodore. He made contact with Tyrwhitt at 9 AM, and together they went westward according to plan.

*V 187*, meanwhile, was in her death throes. The British destroyers were firing on her at a range of 600 yards. The German vessel was down by her bows, and the British ceased fire and sent away boats for survivors. However, the Germans thought this was an attempt to capture their ship. They continued to fire their guns and hit the *Goshawk* in the wardroom. The British resumed firing on her, and at 9:10 AM the gallant *V 187* went down.

Rescue work was resumed. The boats had picked up several of *V 187*'s crew when *Stettin* suddenly reappeared out of the mist and began firing on the British destroyers. The boats were quickly recalled. They did manage to take the German destroyer's commodore and 26 other men prisoner.

The commander of the British submarine *E4* saw all of this. He fired a torpedo at the *Stettin* and missed. *Stettin* attempted to ram the submarine, but *E4* managed to dive in time. *Stettin* then disappeared in the mist. At 9:30 AM, the submarine resurfaced and assisted with the survivors of *V 187*. The submarine commander took one officer and two others "as a sample" and gave water, biscuits, and a compass to other survivors in the boats.

Beatty by this time was able to leave port with his battle cruisers. In the flagship *Lion* he reached his supporting position 50 miles west-northwest of Heligoland. Beatty's ships zigzagged making 8-point turns to avoid torpedo attacks from enemy submarines. By this time, Goodenough had reached his final position west-southwest of Heligoland. He had received a report that Tyrwhitt was engaging the enemy and thus sent *Nottingham* and *Lowestoft* to his assistance.

The two cruisers sighted a German destroyer and gave chase but lost it in the mist. Later they saw more enemy destroyers and bore down on them. These German warships disappeared in the thick weather as well.

Goodenough decided to join Keyes and at 6:30 AM steered westward but could not see Keyes's ships. At 8:50 AM, Goodenough went northward and sighted *Lurcher*. Through the mist Keyes mistook the British vessels for German cruisers and consequently signaled *Invincible* that he was chased by four enemy cruisers.

At 9:05 AM, Goodenough decided to turn west to join the flotilla. This brought him to the outer line of British submarines. A little before 9:30 AM Goodenough saw a submarine he took to be German. The commodore tried to ram her, but the submarine, the British *E6*, managed to dive in time. Her captain, Lt. Cmdr. C.F. Talbot, refrained from torpedoing the *Southampton* because he was not certain whether it was friend or foe.

Goodenough continued on his westerly course. The two cruisers he detached from his flotilla, *Nottingham* and *Lowestoft*, however, steamed north-northwest toward where their captains believed the battle cruisers were. Actually, Beatty was changing course and signaled this information to Goodenough, Keyes, and Tyrwhitt. Unfortunately for the British, the captains of the *Nottingham* and *Lowestoft* did not receive this vital message and were out of touch with the rest of the forces.

By this time, Beatty was becoming concerned for Tyrwhitt's force. He knew from the reports

he was receiving that action had been going on for some time. The Germans by now had time to put out their heavy ships. Although they had not done so, Beatty did not know this for certain. The admiral was in a dilemma. Should he remain where he was or risk his battle cruisers to assist Tyrwhitt?

Beatty said that he received several signals beginning at 11:25 AM that were the first real news his squadron had of the battle that had by then been underway for 3½ hours.

"The situation appeared to me to be extremely critical; the flotillas had advanced on their sweep only 10 miles since 8 AM, and thus were only 26 miles from an enemy base in their rear, with another base 25 miles on their flank ... there was the possibility of a grave disaster," Beatty wrote afterward.

At 11:30 AM, Beatty decided to go and help Tyrwhitt. Of Beatty's performance, Churchill wrote, "Admiral Beatty, in spite not only of the risk of mines and submarines, but all he could know of meeting superior forces, had with extraordinary audacity led his squadron far in the Bight."

Beatty took a calculated risk regarding the threat German U-boats posed to his cruisers. *Invincible* and *New Zealand* were attacked by three U-boats shortly after 11 AM. "[Beatty] felt himself justified in risking attack from enemy submarines, thanks to his speed, and he calculated that he was powerful enough to take on any force which might come out," said one newspaper account. "Enemy battleships need not be taken into account, as they would take time to get steam up, locate him, and bring him to action, there again he had the legs off them."

On the battle cruiser *Invincible* men sprang to life. Moore signaled Beatty that his ship might do 25 knots. "It was just after noon that action was sounded on the *Invincible*—the first time any of us had even heard the stirring call blown [on a bugle] in earnest," said Assistant Paymaster Gordon Franklin.

Meanwhile, the destroyer *Fire Drake*, attached to Keyes, passed on the signal to Tyrwhitt that she was being chased by enemy cruisers. Tyrwhitt did not know at the time they were actually British cruisers Keyes and his lookouts had seen. Tyrwhitt stopped going westward and set course to the east to help Keyes. It was then that he sighted the *Stettin* again. The commodore began to chase the German cruiser and once again lost sight of her in the fog.

By this time the Third and Fifth Divisions, which had finished off *V 187*, rejoined the flotilla. Shortly afterward, Tyrwhitt began to fear that he was coming too close to Heligoland, so he turned back 16 points to the

west. Twenty minutes later the commodore signaled the *Fearless* and the other ships under his command to stop engines. Tyrwhitt wanted to take time to repair his flagship.

While the crew of *Arethusa* tended to its ship, Tyrwhitt pondered the situation. He hoped that the enemy would not come on the scene until he had *Arethusa* repaired and ready. It would be a disaster if the Germans attacked his flagship while she was vulnerable. It was obvious by now that it was a mistake to send this cruiser into action just three days after leaving her builders.

Meanwhile, Keyes in *Lurcher* came upon those mysterious cruisers. He challenged them and learned they were British of Goodenough's squadron. This brought a sense of relief to Keyes. Although he now knew Goodenough's cruisers were taking an active part in the operations, the British submarine commanders were still ignorant of this fact. This meant there was a distinct possibility these cruisers might be attacked by their own submarines. Therefore, Goodenough signaled Beatty and requested permission to leave the danger area.

Beatty replied that Goodenough was not to go too far south and instead to keep north of the flotilla. Goodenough ceased his movement southward and headed to the north.

Beatty at this time was making his best effort to join Tyrwhitt. His ships were making good speed. The admiral later wrote to his wife, "At one time I thought we should never do it, [get to Tyrwhitt in time] but by hard steaming, thanks to old Green [engineer Percy Green], the *Lion* fairly flew 28 knots." Beatty felt that it was safe enough to come to the assistance of his comrades at arms.

Even so, Beatty felt that he was risking a great deal. The admiral confided to his flag captain Ernle Chatfield, "Am I justified in going into the hornet's nest with these great ships? If I lose one it will be a great blow to the country." Nevertheless, Beatty was determined to carry out his decision.

Tensions were high on the bridge of the battle cruiser *Lion*. Beatty was calm and collected. Chatfield and the other officers present were impressed with Beatty's leadership. He inspired confidence to everyone on the bridge.

At 10:30 AM, the crew of *Arethusa* managed to get all of its guns working except two 4-inch guns. Still the flagship was badly damaged and could make only 10 knots. Tyrwhitt signaled *Fearless* to maintain visual contact with him.

Then, a few minutes before 11 AM a Breslau-class cruiser, the *Stralsund*, was seen in the southeast coming up on a northern course. She opened fire on the British ships. Tyrwhitt ordered Blunt

to deliver a torpedo attack. Blunt's destroyers turned on the enemy, but the *Stralsund* retreated.

Tyrwhitt considered chasing the German cruiser. In the end he decided not to follow the enemy warship. The commodore sensed that there was a trap set for him. Then *Stettin* appeared once more, and *Arethusa* and *Fearless* engaged her. During the exchange of shots, Blunt signaled his destroyers to deliver a torpedo attack on the German cruiser. Commodore Arthur Dutton of the destroyer *Lookout*, who was in charge of the First Division of the Third Flotilla, turned east-southeast to assist.

Suddenly, the German cruiser *Mainz* came on the scene. The destroyer *Ariel*, leading the Second Division of the First Flotilla, swung around to attack her. The Third and Fifth Divisions joined in. Several minutes later the *Mainz* turned back 16 points, where she came in contact with Goodenough's cruisers, which opened fire on her.

The situation became critical for the British at 11:30 AM when *Stralsund* came out of the mist. She began to engage *Arethusa*. Tyrwhitt signaled Beatty that he required immediate assistance, and Beatty responded by ordering Goodenough to help.

Tyrwhitt felt uneasy about engaging *Stralsund* alone, so he ordered his destroyers to deliver a torpedo attack. The British destroyers moved in for the attack but *Stralsund* turned northwest to

Bundesarchiv VM 10 Bild-23-61-47; Photo unknown



**ABOVE:** Shells explode around the German cruiser SMS *Ariadne* in this dramatic illustration. In the aftermath of the British victory, the Germans became overly cautious. **OPPOSITE:** British sailors watch as the German cruiser *Mainz* suffers crippling fire. The German light cruisers were no match for superior British tactics and firepower at Heligoland Bight.

avoid them. Several torpedoes were fired, but they all missed their mark. This, however, saved *Arethusa*, for the enemy cruiser retreated and disappeared in the thick weather.

With this immediate danger past, Tyrwhitt decided to resume his westward course. Then, a little after noon *Mainz* was sighted going southward. She was trying to escape from Goodenough's cruisers. *Fearless* engaged her, firing a torpedo, but gyroscope trouble caused the torpedo to miss.

The commodore ordered his destroyers to assist Blunt. The First Division of the First Flotilla and the First and Second Divisions of the Third Flotilla moved northward of *Arethusa* and formed a line ahead to swing to the starboard on an opposite course of the enemy. The other destroyers were southward of the flagship and held on a westward course. *Laurel* fired two torpedoes, but both missed. *Mainz* opened fire on the British destroyer. *Laurel* was hit, and the lyddite in the after ready racks detonated, putting the after gun out of action. The destroyer limped away.

The destroyer *Liberty* was also hit. The mast tumbled down, killing the captain, Lt. Cmdr. Nigel Bartelot. *Laertes* suffered a hit that killed two members of her crew and wounded six others.

*Mainz* was also badly damaged. She was ablaze fore and aft, and her helm was jammed, causing the warship to steam in circles. The situation was so critical that the order "steer from wheelhouse" was issued.

The German cruiser received help when *Stralsund*, *Stettin*, and the flagship *Cöln*, bearing the

*Continued on page 68*

BY DAVID A. NORRIS

# FRENCH FIASCO AT DETTINGEN

IT SOUNDS LIKE IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN A SCENE FROM THE Middle Ages. A king of England with sword in hand led his forces against their longtime enemies, the French. But amid the ranks of warriors and their bright banners on this battlefield, there were no helmeted knights or sturdy archers. The knights in this king's army wore red coats and powdered hair rather than chain mail and helmets. Instead of the clanging of swords on shields, there was the sputtering of muskets as they flashed against a background of booming artillery and thick sulfurous smoke. This was a modern battle of the Age of Enlightenment. The Battle of Dettingen, fought June 27, 1743, would be remembered as the last time a British monarch personally led soldiers into battle.

In the early 1700s, Charles VI was both the elected Holy Roman Emperor and the hereditary Hapsburg ruler of Austria and Hungary. Charles faced the same problem that bedeviled Henry VIII nearly two centuries before in England. He lacked a male heir for his inherited dominions. The emperor's solution was an accord called the Pragmatic Sanction. Drafted in 1713, the document stated that Charles's eldest daughter would inherit his Hapsburg lands in the absence of a male heir. Years of diplomacy persuaded most of the major powers of Europe to accept the succession agreement. In 1717, the solution became a real possibility when Charles VI's wife, Empress Elizabeth, gave birth to a female heir, Maria Theresa.

The deaths of two rulers in 1740 toppled Europe into another war. King Frederick William I of Prussia died on May 31, bringing his ambitious son Frederick II, who eventually became known as Frederick the Great, to the throne. The old king was an efficient ruler who built what had been the second-rate army of a small power into one of the Continent's most formidable military forces.

Frederick II saw his chance for more power and territory when he learned of the October 20 death of Emperor Charles VI. Maria Theresa inherited numerous titles, including Queen of Hungary and Archduchess of Austria, along with an unwieldy empire with a run-down army. Prussia immediately demanded that Austria cede the disputed territory of Silesia. Frederick II repudiated his father's agreement to the Pragmatic Sanction, and his successful invasion of Silesia grew into a wider European conflict, the War of the Austrian Succession.

France joined the side of the rising power of Prussia. Charles Albert, ruler of Bavaria and soon to be chosen as the next Holy Roman Emperor, also repudiated the Pragmatic Sanction in hope of gaining new territories.

Opposing the Franco-Prussian forces was a new collection of allies led by Austria and Great Britain. Besides holding the British throne, George II's status as the Elector of Hanover made him the hereditary monarch of that northern German state. Hanover's role in continental politics brought

THE DUC DE NOAILLES LAID A CLEVER TRAP FOR THE ALLIED ARMY AT DETTINGEN, BUT ONE FRENCH GENERAL'S FOLLY TURNED NEAR CERTAIN DEFEAT FOR KING GEORGE II INTO A RESOUNDING ALLIED VICTORY.





King George II is shown in a period painting with his son, William, Duke of Cumberland, and Robert, Fourth Earl of Holderness, at the Battle of Dettingen. The French squandered a golden opportunity to defeat the British and capture their king.



**John Dalrymple (left), Second Earl of Stair, and Adrien Maurice, Duc de Noailles.**

George II and the British Army into the war. Amid the complex jumble of international conflict, Britain and France were technically not at war with each other, but were only fighting on the side of their respective allies.

Because they were upholding the Pragmatic Sanction, the alliance was called the Pragmatic Army. For this ad hoc alliance or confederation opposing France, contemporary accounts also refer to the Pragmatic troops as allies or confederates.

Pragmatic was hardly an apt word for the uneasy international coalition. Vienna was far from London, and central European concerns seemed far distant from English life. Not a few of George II's subjects felt that their army was sent across the English Channel to fight for the king's Hanoverian dominions rather than for their own country. King George added to English displeasure by wearing a bright yellow sash, a symbol of Hanover, rather than a comparable English sash. A Hanoverian official at the British court, Thomas Eberhard Von Ilten, wrote later that year that the English "rancour to the French holds ... but second place" to their dislike of their Hanoverian allies.

In May 1740, the Austrians, British, and their German allies marched from their base in Flanders. Their aim was to invade Bavaria, preventing that country's forces from linking with the French. John Dalrymple, Second Earl of Stair, commanded the British contingent; Leopold, Duc D'Aremberg, commanded the Austrians; and von Ilten was in charge of the Hanoverians.

Stair was 70 years old and a longtime soldier and diplomat. Born in Edinburgh in 1673, young Stair was eight when he accidentally shot and killed his elder brother. His parents sent him away to the Netherlands for schooling. Stair made a career of the army, first seeing service at the Battle of Steenkerke in 1692. He commanded regiments and brigades in many actions and spent years on diplomatic missions, but had never before commanded an army.

When the army reached Frankfurt, friction developed between Stair and D'Aremberg. Stair decided to push on deeper into Bavaria, moving to Aschaffenburg, a town on the Main River. The Main divided Bavaria from Hesse, a German state allied with Britain. D'Aremberg quarreled with Stair, believing that the army could not obtain enough supplies if it moved so far up the Main. Intending to cross to the south side of the river, Stair was overruled by the king and ordered to remain at Aschaffenburg.

George II hastened to join the army, reaching Stair's forces on June 19. It was not his first time in the field. As a young man the king served with the Hanoverian cavalry at the 1708 Battle of Oudenarde in Flanders. With the king was a young major general, his son William Augustus, Duke of Cumberland. George II's secretary of state, John Carteret, the Earl of Granville, also accompanied the king to Germany for the Dettingen campaign.

Barely noticed among the high officers and commanders with the king was a young volunteer aide to Colonel Scipio Durooure, commander of Durooure's Regiment. This was the future major general, Ensign James Wolfe, to whom great fame would come on the day he died during his vic-

tory at the Battle of Quebec in 1759. In 1743, Wolfe was already halfway through his short life at the age of 16.

Even when joined by D'Aremberg and more Austrians, there were only about 28,000 men with the Pragmatic forces. An army of 60,000 French troops in Bavaria had been moving toward them since May. This force was commanded by Adrien Maurice, Duc de Noailles. Born in 1678, Noailles first saw action in the 1693 Siege of Rosas in Spain during the War of the Grand Alliance. The duke's wife, Françoise d'Aubigne, was a niece of Madame de Maintenon, who was the mistress and later the secret wife of Louis XIV.

A good strategist and planner, Noailles deftly outmaneuvered the enemy troops. Most of the duke's army was massed opposite Aschaffenburg, where the higher southern bank gave him the advantage in artillery. Having failed to gain a foothold on the Hessian side of the Main, French guns prevented the allies from getting any supplies from that bank of the river. Noailles also blocked the enemy from obtaining supplies from upriver, and his cavalry forded the Main and raided allied foraging parties and supply wagons.

George II's orders to remain at Aschaffenburg were ensnaring his army in a trap. Matters became much worse when the French took Seligenstadt, a short distance downriver, and built two pontoon bridges. Noailles then had easy access to both sides of the river and could cut off the allies from their supply base at Hanau.

The French commander had a streak of chivalrous generosity in him. Several British soldiers, captured by the cavalry raiders, were stripped of their uniforms and possessions. Noailles ordered their clothing given back. Their possessions were already lost and scattered, so the duke gave each of the redcoats a gold coin and ordered their release. Similar kind treatment was given a captured English sutler who was taken by the French cavalry.

Only a dozen miles from their supply base at Hanau, the Pragmatic Army was running out of supplies. Horses began to starve on their scant rations of unripe wheat. The soldiers were little better off, subsisting on sour wine and a dwindling supply of unappetizing, government-purchased "ammunition bread." Despite orders against looting, the Pragmatic troops plundered the countryside and villages on their side of the river, and the French burned villages on the Hessian bank. Both armies drank from the river, and by agreement the opposing soldiers did not fire at each other when merely picking up water.

Deep in enemy territory and running out of

bread, King George ordered the army to withdraw to Hanau, where there were an additional 12,000 Hessian and Hanoverian troops as well as fresh supplies. The decision to break camp and march out immediately was made on the night of June 26. The march had only one possible route, downriver along the river road which ran through a narrow plain between the Main on the south and the wooded Spessart Hills to the north.

Noailles's intelligence services were much more efficient than those of the Pragmatic commanders, so he knew that the enemy was running out of supplies and would have to withdraw. The French commander also knew the only feasible route to Hanau would force the allies to march along the only road running along the Bavarian bank of the Main. Several French batteries were already positioned south of the river, and the retreating army would be within easy range of the guns.

Noailles learned that the allied army was in motion at 1 AM on June 27. To cut off the enemy the French commander sent Louis Antoine Armand, Duc de Gramont, with 28,000 men to block the allies. Gramont was Noailles's nephew. Born in 1689, he was only 11 years younger than his uncle, and his military experience went back to his commission as an ensign in 1705.

Gramont's men filed across the two Seligenstadt bridges. About one mile upriver of the bridges was the village of Dettingen (now Karlstein am Main). There the Forchbach, a stream rising in the Spessart Hills, emptied into the river. Gramont's men held high ground on the west side of the stream. The Forchbach's only crossing was the bridge on the river road at Dettingen. Nearly all of the French line was protected from attack by low, boggy ground. They needed only to wait for the rest of their army to close in.

The Pragmatic Army left its camp about 4 AM. In the advance were the British and Austrian cavalry. In anticipation of the French getting behind the column, the rear was held by the British Guards and top German and Austrian regiments. In the early light of day, they could see more French infantry marching south of the river, heading to cross at the Aschaffenburg Bridge. Noailles was setting in place the final piece of his mousetrap, which he was about to spring on the king of England.

At 7 AM on June 27, 1743, the Pragmatic Army reached Klein Ostheim, a village on a bend in the river about 2½ miles from its camp, where it was forced to squeeze through on a single road. The cavalry rode through first and halted to wait for the rest of the force to pass

the village. It was perhaps an hour later when cavalry patrols spotted Gramont's forces blocking the way ahead of them. Only then did the Pragmatic commanders realize that they had blundered into a trap.

The battle opened badly for the allies. When the French infantry bound for Aschaffenburg cleared the batteries south of the Main, the French 18-pounder guns opened fire. Disorganized after filing through the bottleneck of Klein Ostheim, the wagons and draft animals of the allied baggage train were massed in the open ground west of the village. As French shot crashed among the wagons and animals, drivers sought cover in nearby woods while local inhabitants plundered the wagons during the confusion.

The baggage train had been in the middle of the column, leaving the allied artillery far in the rear. Amid the chaos, it took considerable time to get the guns moved forward to reply to the French. For more than one hour, the Pragmatic infantry was exposed to artillery fire. "Our men ... did not like the long bullets ... for indeed they swept off Ranks and Files," wrote an officer in the Welsh Fusiliers. (The game of long bullets was a blend of football and bowling; usually played in streets or roads, one team threw a cannon ball, which the other team tried to prevent from



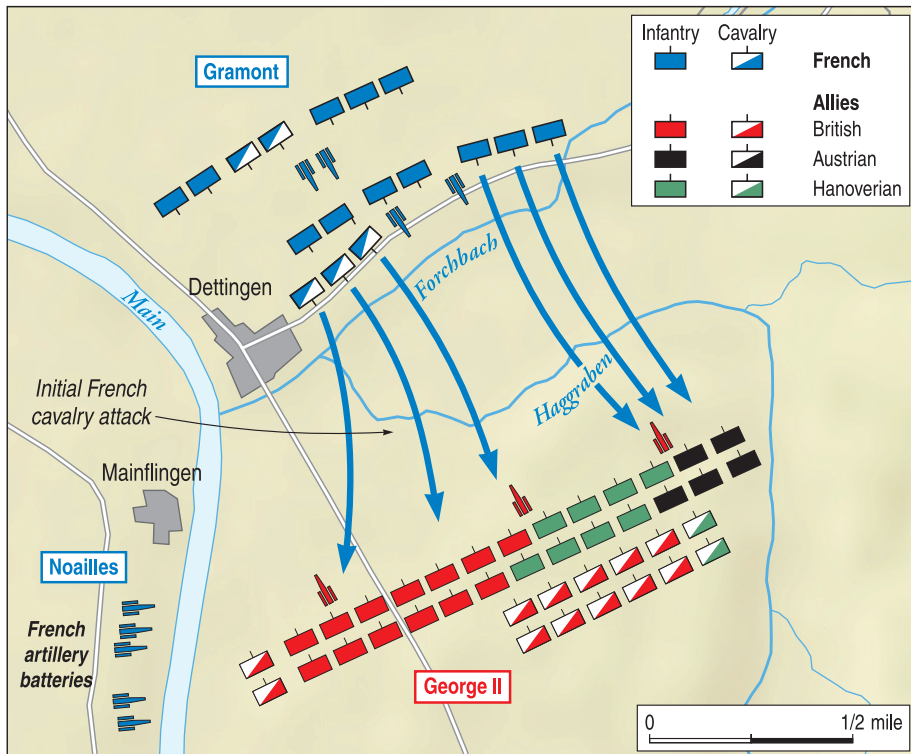
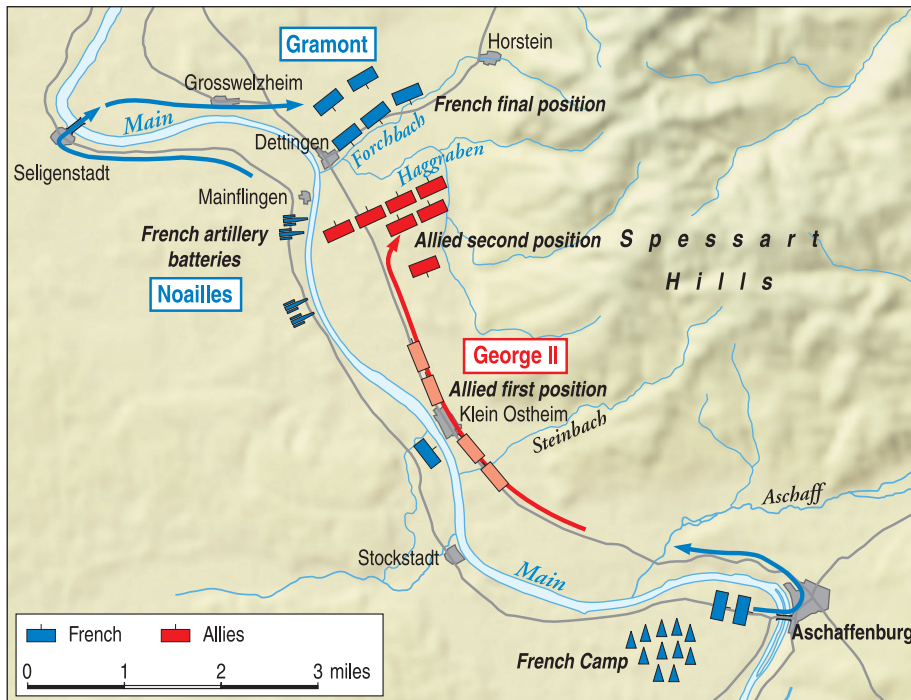
Both: Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

**A French musketeer (left) of the Maison du Roi whose elite unit fought in the traditional place of honor on the French right is shown in a period engraving. A British Highlander, also depicted in a period engraving, wears the traditional plaid kilt, red jacket, and blue bonnet.**

rolling across a goal.) To the relief of the fusiliers and other foot soldiers, the British guns at last reached the scene and went into action.

Between Klein Ostheim and Dettingen was a wood edged with swamps on each side. British and Austrian cavalry followed by foot regiments formed in front of the woods to face Gramont. Under von Ilten's orders, most of the Hanoverian cavalry and some infantry, including the three Foot Guards battalions of the British army, had been left in the rear to deflect a French move from Aschaffenburg. Damaging or destroying the bridge would have made the allied rear much safer, but the span was left untouched.

By that point, fortune was running with Noailles. He wrote later that everything portended "a happy day" for his army. Gramont needed only to sit safely behind his entrenchments. When the attack from Aschaffenburg began, the Pragmatic Army would be pressed from in front and behind, hemmed in on its flanks by the Spessart Hills and the river. But Gramont drastically changed the course of the battle by ordering his troops out of their safe positions. His reasons for this unwise course of action are unknown. He may simply have become overconfident and tried to take advantage of the disorganization of the enemy before it could regroup. "Gramont somehow thought



The British army at Dettingen is shown bottled up between the River Main and the Spessart Hills with no chance of resupply. The Duc de Gramont's entrenched blocking force is at left, and the Duc de Noailles' force is at right.

that most of the enemy had gotten past him and that he faced only the rear guard, which he could easily handle," wrote Voltaire in *The Age of Louis XV*.

Whatever his motivations, Gramont sent his troops across the ravine of the Forchbach to form line of battle on the open ground in front the stream. Across the Main, Noailles watched in dismay as his careful plans dissolved. Volunteer aide George Townshend, later to serve under Wolfe at Quebec, was happy to see Gramont marching ahead of the stream and its protective swamps, "leaving all the advantageous features of the ground in his rear." Across the river, the French artillery fell silent for fear of mowing down their comrades.

The advancing French foot and cavalry faced two lines of Pragmatic troops, with their front line anchored on the left near the river by Johnson's Regiment. British regiments at the time of Dettingen were usually referred to by their commander's names rather than the numerical designations that became standard a few years later. The left and center of the two lines were held mostly by the British with Austrian foot and horse soldiers deployed on their right.

Lieutenant Colonel Sir Andrew Agnew, commanding the Royal Scots Fusiliers, was determined that his men eat before battle. His worried officers saw French troops slowly advancing toward them. "The loons will never [have] the impudence to attack the Scots Fusiliers!" Agnew scoffed. Occasional musket shots landed among the soldiers as they ate. While Agnew picked at some meat, a bullet knocked the bone out of his hand. At that point he got up from the dinner table to issue orders.

As the French advanced in three lines, their right was led by the Maison du Roi (the king's household), which comprised the top cavalry and infantry units of the French army and was the French equivalent of the crack English Household Cavalry. The allied left, which faced them, was commanded by Lt. Gen. Jasper Clayton. An officer since 1695, Clayton had served well in Flanders, Spain, Canada, and Scotland. Seeing the French cavalry, Clayton sent for the King's Dragoons and placed them between the river and Johnson's Regiment. The dragoons were commanded by Humphrey Bland, who served as their colonel and who also was a recently appointed brigadier.

Both armies advanced. George II was seen on horseback, waving his sword and encouraging his men onward with his characteristic German accent. Although encouraged by the sight of their king sharing their dangers, the redcoats slogged through swampy ground slowly and in bad order. Their officers ordered the troops to pause and dress their ranks into tighter formations.

Some of the redcoats gave a cheer, but it sounded ragged and wavering amid the tumult. Other men, anxious because of the French cavalry, started firing their muskets without orders. As the irregular musket fire flashed up and down the line, the king's horse panicked. "With purple face and eyes starting out of his head," the king pulled at the reins but could not stop the horse. Before he was thrown out of the saddle, Ensign Cyrus Trapaud of Howard's Regiment (known as "the Buffs" for the color of their jacket facings) caught the fleeing horse. Dismounting, the king stationed himself near the right of the line. Quite calm, the monarch came up with one of the most quoted lines of



**King George II is shown giving orders to his generals in a period painting of the Battle of Dettingen. Puffs of white smoke are visible as individual companies discharge their muskets into the opposing enemy ranks. Like many period renderings of linear warfare, this painting by David Morier fails to convey the chaos of battle.**

the battle: “Now if my horse will run away my legs will not.” One of several officers promoted by the king after the battle, Trapaud became a full general before his death in 1801.

Aware of his limitations as a military tactician, the king nevertheless well understood his role as a symbol of national and military leadership. D’Aremberg pleaded with the king to remove himself from the battlefield, lest he end up a casualty or a prisoner. The monarch refused, saying, “What do you think I came here for? To be a poltroon?” George II stayed on the field for the rest of the battle. D’Aremberg himself was seriously wounded after his warning to the stubborn king.

The king’s son, the Duke of Cumberland, also found himself on a runaway horse. The horse was possibly spooked when Austrian troops fired on Cumberland’s unit by mistake. Out of control, the mount tore away into the French lines before the duke could get it under control. Costing the French a very important prisoner, the duke managed to get back to the allied lines, although in need of treatment for a severe leg wound.

The Gardes-Françaises, part of the Maison du Roi and known to their English enemies as the French Guard, pushed forward from Gramont’s right center. By the time the French Guards were within musket range, the British troops were no longer disorganized, but calm and steady. Lord Stair hushed the scattered spontaneous cheers of some of his men. “Now one and all together when I give the signal,” he ordered. Their united roar, with a series of steady volleys of musketry, was enough to send the French Guards reeling in disorder. Clayton was heard to remark to other officers that “they might ever depend on the English foot.”

As the Gardes-Françaises fell back, the Maison du Roi’s cavalry moved against the British left. Among the horse units of the Maison du Roi were two companies of musketeers. They were known as the Mousquetaires Gris and the Mousquetaires Noirs (the Gray Musketeers and the Black Musketeers), as they were mounted on either gray or black horses. Part of the king’s personal guard, the musketeers relied on cavalry weapons rather than their namesake muskets.

As Clayton ordered Johnson’s Regiment and the neighboring Scots and Welsh Fusiliers to prepare for the attack, two of Bland’s squadrons charged into the French cavalry. Giving and taking heavy losses, Bland’s troopers cut their way out and rode back to their lines.

With the English dragoons withdrawn, the French horsemen charged the three foot regiments in their front. Each rider held two pistols with sabers hanging from their wrists. They fired their pistols at the redcoats, hurled the empty weapons at their enemies, and then wielded their swords.

Agnew of the Scots Fusiliers saw that the riders about to crash into his line were protected with helmets and iron cuirasses, which were buckled to the French saddles. Bayonets would be useless against the metal armor, so Agnew ordered his men to open their formation and let the cuirassiers gallop through. He anticipated that the French horsemen would halt and turn around when they came to the main infantry line. Just as Agnew thought, the cuirassiers wheeled around to pass back through the Scots Fusiliers. With orders to aim for the horses, but not to fire until they were at close range, the fusiliers held their fire until it tore into the cavalry with maximum effect.

The Maison du Roi cavalry was thrown back with heavy losses. Riding with them, Philippe, the Comte de Noailles (the army commander’s son) had two horses shot from under him. His brother Louis de Noailles, Duc d’Ayen, was wounded and thrown from his horse.

In a calmer moment after the battle, King George teased Agnew, “So, Sir Andrew, I hear you let the French get in among us.” The fusilier commander answered, “Yes, please your Majesty, but they [did not want] back again!”

On the allied left, supporting French infantry fired into Bland’s men, but they charged twice more into the opposing horse troops. By this time, three-fourths of the dragoons and their horses were casualties and only two officers were left unwounded. Of their three flags, two were ripped and shredded to bits by enemy fire and their staffs splintered. Their third standard slipped from the grasp of a wounded cornet.

Seeing the standard of Bland’s Dragoons in danger of capture, Trooper Thomas Brown rode to retrieve it. When Brown was dismounting to pick up the standard, a French horseman swung his saber, cutting off two fingers of Brown’s bridle hand. Brown’s horse panicked and broke into a run, bearing itself and its rider straight into the French lines. Trying to get control of his horse, Brown spotted the French cavalryman holding the captured standard. With his saber, Brown killed the enemy soldier and took back his regiment’s standard. Clamping the banner between his

leg and the saddle, Brown spurred his horse for friendly lines. Galloping through a gauntlet of French horsemen, Brown took eight saber cuts on his head and neck and two musket balls in his back. Three more balls tore through his hat.

King George learned of Brown's gallant ride while the battle was still going on. For his exploit, the king dubbed Brown a knight banneret. This rank, dating back to the Middle Ages, was usually conferred by the monarch on a battlefield. King George bestowed the rank on several other high officers that day, making the last such honors ever bestowed.

Cornet Henry Richardson of Ligonier's Regiment also saved a regimental standard. Richardson hacked his way through a barrier of French cavalry, taking saber cuts and bullet wounds. In honor of his valor, when the regiment received new standards the one he saved was presented to him. "The Dettingen Standard" was an old-style horse regiment flag, square in shape and edged with fringe.

Wolfe was riding one of Durooure's mounts when a musket ball struck the horse in a hind leg. Wolfe was thrown from the saddle and watched the horse run away. The young volunteer aide performed his duties for the rest of the day in "a pair of heavy boots," which were painfully unsuitable for spending a day on foot. With the runaway mount went Wolfe's horse "furniture" and pistols, which had cost the lad 10 ducats.

Although he interfered with grand strategy, unlike many a monarch King George left his more qualified generals to direct the course of the battle. He issued some commands on a limited scale, such as directing the positioning of a Hanoverian battery. But the king well understood that he was far more important as a symbol of Great Britain than a military planner. While giving up on riding his fine but skittish white horse, King George was readily visible during the battle. It was said he wore the same red coat he had worn as a young volunteer at Oudenarde.

All day, the foreign-born king of England shouted encouragement to his men, amusing them with his German accent. Seeing a steadfast regiment holding their own in the action, the king called out to them, "Bravo, Buffs!" Because of the buff facings of their uniforms, the monarch had mistaken them for Howard's Regiment. A soldier shouted back, "Sir, we are the Thirty-first, not the Old Buffs." King George II corrected himself with his reply, "Then, bravo, Young Buffs!" The king's spontaneous reply gave the regiment a lasting nickname.

Many of the French troops made valiant charges that day. But at a higher level the attacks were poorly coordinated and were thrown back one by one without a chance to change the course of the battle.

One such attack near the end of the battle was made by the Black Musketeers. They charged to right of the allied line engaging Hawley's Regiment, also known as the Royal Dragoons, or the Royals. Austrian and British infantry poured their fire into the musketeers. A British officer estimated that barely "four score" or 400 of Black Musketeers survived the charge. Among those left behind was a cornet, a young officer entrusted with the musketeers' flag. Although he was stone dead, the cornet was upright in the saddle, having been buckled to his horse. The bloodstained banner and its broken staff were taken by the Royals.

After breaking this charge, the allied infantry moved toward the French foot, which began to break. The cavalry of the Maison du Roi held on as the infantry ran for the river. Heavily pressed in front by the British dragoons, the French cavalry collapsed when the Scots Greys tore into their flank. The Scots Greys took a banner of the Maison du Roi, a disaster that had not happened before to the elite cavalry of the royal household.

Later, amid the debris scattered among the dead on the battlefield were found many cuirasses once worn by the French cavalry. An officer of the Welsh Fusiliers considered collecting a few of the discarded breastplates and backplates as curiosities. Deciding that they were too heavy to drag with him during a campaign, he left the trophies on the ground.

With the repulse of his finest cavalry, Noailles's carefully set mousetrap was knocked to pieces. His infantry fled across the Main on the pontoon bridges while the cavalry splashed through fords. In his report to the king, the duke placed part of the blame for the catastrophe on his infantry, which contained a large proportion of militia and new recruits. One of the bridges collapsed, throwing men into the water. The Marquis de Puysegur watched his men flee, crying out, "*Sauve qui peut*" (Every man for himself). The marquis reportedly killed several of his own men trying to slow their rout.

One of the last shots fired at Dettingen fatally struck Clayton. Highest in rank of the allied soldiers killed in the battle, Clayton was much admired by his fellow officers. This respect did not save him from being among those dead and wounded whose bodies were stripped of all valuables.

Lieutenant Ned Draper of Honeywood's Cavalry fell mortally wounded by a bullet that struck him in the back and passed entirely through his body. Draper lived a little while after he was hit.

In a final bit of bravado, he joked that if he lived to get back to England he would tell everyone that instead of the bullet hitting him in the back and coming out the front he "never would own but that the ball went the reverse way."

Major Philip Honeywood of Bland's Dragoons (the major was the nephew of another Philip Honeywood, the commander of Honeywood's Regiment), was nearly among the slain. Wounded and thought to be dead, he was robbed while he lay insensible on the field for several hours. An Austrian soldier found him, but instead of rescuing the major he stabbed him twice with his bayonet. The Austrian was aiming his musket at Honeywood before the major found the strength to gasp that he was "Anglois." Honeywood survived his wounds and lived to serve in Parliament and have Sir Joshua Reynolds paint his portrait.

The French collapse meant that the Hanoverians and the Foot Guards were not needed. Stationed in the rear, they missed the battle. Some officers and men of the Foot Guards were disappointed or angry at losing their share of the victory. Lt. Col. Charles Russell told his wife in a letter, "As a soldier and a man of honour I must tell you that the brigade of Guards had the misfortune not to be in the battle." Von Ilten pointed out that he had "preserved" them. When that remark about preservation got to



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the troops, they nicknamed the Hanoverian commander "the Confectioner General."

Four hours had turned potential disaster for the Pragmatic Army into a notable victory. Although Lord Stair insisted that the cavalry be sent after the enemy, the Austrian and Hanoverian commanders objected. The winning army did not follow up its advantage and let Gramont's shattered regiments run away.

On the other hand, Marshal Noailles still had



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more than 30,000 men in hand south of the river that had not been thrown into battle. The untouched portions of his forces even then outnumbered the allies. Unable to adjust to his reversal of fortune, the French commander never rallied his troops or made any offensive moves against the enemy during the following days.

Individually, some of the redcoats did manage to follow up on the victory. Lord Carteret was on the battlefield in his carriage when a British soldier ran up to him. "Here, my lord," said the redcoat, "do hold this watch for me; I have just killed a French officer and taken it, and I will go take another."

The Duke of Cumberland, who had been wounded in the fighting, was brought back to his tent. He was tended by John Ranby, who was the sergeant-surgeon, the medical officer whose primary duty was to attend the king on the battlefield. Examining his royal patient, Ranby found that the duke had been struck in the calf by a piece of grapeshot leaving a hole "that might have very well admitted a large Hen-Egg." But when bearers also brought in other wounded officers, including a French musketeer named Girardot, the duke ordered his surgeon to tend to the wounded musketeer first.

Ranby drew 20 ounces of blood from the wounded duke, who endured an excruciating 15-mile trip by carriage with the army. Besides bleeding the patients, the sergeant-surgeon's treatment included probing shot wounds with a finger and doses of "bark" (cinchona bark, from which quinine was extracted). With, or perhaps despite, Ranby's help, the duke sur-

**ABOVE:** Seeing that the standard of Bland's Dragoons was in danger of capture, Trooper Thomas Brown fought his way through French lines to retrieve it. His feat, in which he took multiple saber cuts and was shot twice in the back, earned him everlasting fame. **OPPOSITE:** The Dettingen Standard, an old-style square horse regimental flag edged with fringe, is preserved in the Royal Dragoon Guards Museum in York, England.

vived, although the leg wound troubled him for the rest of his life.

Victorious or not, the Pragmatic Army was still running out of food. The allied force did not linger, but continued its march to Hanau. It departed so quickly that it left two cannons behind for the French. After the army pulled out, looters roamed through the battlefield robbing and murdering many of the wounded. Heavy rains fell throughout the night. The French reported that about 600 of the wounded were still alive when they took them into custody the next day. Those who survived owed their deliverance to Noailles, who ordered medical care for the wounded prisoners.

At Dettingen, the French lost about 5,000 killed, wounded, or missing. Ninety-three horse or foot officers of the Maison du Roi were killed or wounded. The Regiment de Chartres lost six officers and 60 men dead, and 17 officers and 110 men wounded. The Duc de Rochecouart, one of the four First Gentlemen of the Chamber, who were companions and confidants of Louis XV, was among the dead. Vincent-Dominique-Régis, Comte de Boufflers, was only 13 years old but followed his father on the battlefield. Voltaire wrote that the young count's leg was shattered by a cannon shot. He was conscious during the amputation of his leg and died soon after.

Combined losses for the Pragmatic Army were only about half those of the French, fewer than 2,400 men, including 755 dead. About 420 horses were reported killed with about 200 more wounded or lost. The British lost 265 dead and 561 wounded.

Heaviest hit were Bland's Dragoons. That unit lost an officer and 41 men dead, and six officers and 100 men wounded. About 140 of their horses were killed, including one shot from under Bland. Inspecting the British cavalry some days after his last battle, George II paused in front of one unit. It seemed to be such a small regiment that the king was puzzled and demanded to know where the men were. "Please your majesty," said Bland, "it is my regiment, and I believe the rest of it is at Dettingen."

Three days after the battle, Wolfe got back the horse that had thrown him and run away during the battle. Safe and recovering from its bullet wound, the horse was found without Wolfe's pistols and 10 ducats' worth of equipment. During the action, the young volunteer impressed his superiors enough that Wolfe was made regimental acting adjutant and soon after received his commission as lieutenant. Wolfe was on his way to everlasting fame as a military commander during the victory at Quebec.

*Continued on page 69*

The western Vikings were ruthlessly efficient warriors. As such, they were universally feared by those they preyed on for 300 years.

# NORTHERN

BY LOUIS CIOTOLA

# FOE

The stereotypical Viking and his method of warfare have long been etched in the popular mind. Images of hairy, axe-wielding, and horned-helmeted barbarians raiding coastlines amid a frenzy of rape and pillage have for centuries filled our collective consciousness, as well as our desire to be entertained. But, as so often occurs, history tells a different story.

Much of what we thought we knew about Vikings and Viking warfare has been passed down from idealized Norse sagas. A great deal of the information contained therein, when placed against archaeological and contemporary evidence, proves more fiction than fact. Nevertheless, the popular image of the Viking warrior is not entirely shattered, and the history of the Viking Age remains monumental in both its significance and ability to excite the imagination.

The Vikings were Norse seafaring warriors from Scandinavia who traveled to distant lands primarily for the purpose of raiding. The term “to go a-Viking” literally meant to go plundering. The Vikings that came to wreak havoc on Western Europe and the British Isles originated in Denmark and Norway, though their victims, most notably the Anglo-Saxons, tended to lump them all together as Danes. They left their homes seeking wealth, prestige, and later land on which to settle. Although their victims often considered them to be nothing more than bloodthirsty pirates, the Norse themselves believed that to go a-Viking was a practice reserved for the honorable and courageous.

The Viking Age in the West lasted roughly from the end of the 8th century to the mid-11th century, for many ending romantically with the Battle of Stamford Bridge in 1066. During the first period of Viking activity, Norsemen were almost exclusively raiders, opportunistically striking at England, Ireland, and Francia, which roughly constituted modern-day France. Around the mid-9th century, though, they began to settle in many of the lands they had ravaged, integrating themselves into the European system to which they had previously been so alien. Throughout both periods, the Viking warrior distinguished himself as one unique to his time and place. For 300 years he gave the Anglo-Saxons, Irish, and Franks little respite, forging a terrible and often distorted image that would last to the present day.

No single explanation suffices to fully reveal why the Vikings suddenly exploded on Western Europe and the British Isles during the final years of the 8th century. Many historians cite Scandinavian demographic changes as the key, chiefly a rising population in combination with a subsequent need for land. Others focus on political change in the region, which left many dispossessed. The relatively new use of the sail in the northern lands made Viking expeditions possible, while the aggravating activities of Christian missionaries may have instigated reprisals.

The most alluring explanation is economic. Thanks to a recent boom in trade throughout Western Europe, the Norse appetite for wealth was whetted. In England, for example, the minting of gold and silver coins to facilitate that trade proved an especially tempting motivation for the would-be Viking. Maldon, the scene of a famous battle in England in 991, was targeted because of its mint, while across the Channel Vikings raided Dorestad in Frisia three times between 834 and 837 to loot its royal mint. With little need for a standing army at home in remote Scandinavia, at least in the early days, the Vikings were free to sail west in pursuit of dreams of wealth and adventure.

The West was easy pickings. Neither England nor the Frankish Empire, which would collapse into civil war less than a generation after the death of Charlemagne in 814, were unified enough to decisively face the new threat. Europe lay virtually undefended, its resistance too sluggish to thwart Viking hit-and-run tactics. For decades the attackers bounced between the British Isles and Francia, demonstrating an acute sensitivity to the political and military vulnerabilities of their victims as they probed for soft targets. Only complete political unity, as later illustrated by Muslim





Viking marauders sack the Clonmacnoise monastery in central Ireland. Medieval monasteries were exorbitantly wealthy and typically overflowed with treasure, which made them tempting targets for Vikings seeking instant riches.

Spain and Alfred the Great's England, served to stem their fury. The greatest motivator for the Viking warrior soon became his own repeated success.

In 793, a small Viking fleet landed on the tiny island of Lindisfarne off the coast of Northumbria, site of one of the holiest places in England, the monastery of St. Cuthbert. What happened next became legend. The Vikings, who had seemingly come out of nowhere, proceeded to sack the monastery, slaughter its host of monks, and leave with all its treasure as well as a handful of captives. The pure scale of the blasphemous act, perpetrated by heathen barbarians, reverberated throughout Christendom. Far distant at the court of Charlemagne in Aachen the scholar Alcuin wrote of the Viking exploit, "It was not believed such a voyage was possible." For Alcuin and many like him, that God would abandon his flock to merciless pagans was unfathomable.

The Viking attack on Lindisfarne was not only fathomable, it was also predictable. Although Lindisfarne has been celebrated ever since as the first Viking raid, it was hardly the case. The Vikings had struck as early as 787, when three of their ships landed in Dorset, resulting in the murder of a tax man after a brief skirmish. What had instead made Lindisfarne stand out were the scale of the brutality and that such brutality soon became the norm.

Over the course of the next two decades, beginning in 795, the Vikings struck repeatedly, ravaging the Hebrides, Ireland, and Scotland. One of the largest raids occurred at Iona in Scotland in 806 when they butchered 68 monks along a shore that forever after became known as Martyr's Bay. By then, small fleets were already biting the Frankish coastline as well. Ironically, England, site of the most famous raid, was largely spared. According to chroniclers, a Viking force attempting to attack the monastery at Jarrow, having been stranded when its waiting fleet was destroyed by a storm, was trapped onshore and massacred by a group of vengeful defenders. Apparently traumatized, the Vikings would not return to England for another 40 years. Fate granted the rest of Western Europe no such relief.

Besides being holy sites, monasteries were exorbitantly wealthy and typically overflowed with treasure, making them obvious targets for Vikings seeking instant riches. Their lack of defense

raid on Lindisfarne was likely part of a larger expedition to the Hebrides. Each raid brought in valuable new intelligence about the surrounding area, allowing the Vikings to confidently select their targets, often deep upriver into the very heart of a country.

The most intangible element to Viking success in conducting these early raids was the same factor that made them so despised—a lack of Christian morality. The psychological shock of pagans burning and murdering in holy places spread terror that undermined resistance. In the eyes of his victim, the Viking warrior was a preordained punishment from God.

Seemingly as invincible was the Viking longship, which had no rival as a transport vessel. Powered by both sail and oar so that it need never rely entirely on wind, it could cross oceans using the stars and a simple sun compass to navigate. Drawing very little water, the longship could penetrate nearly every waterway, extending the Viking reach inland to those who would otherwise have been considered a safe distance from seaborne invaders. Constructed to facilitate speedy disembarkation, few local communities had much of a chance once their lookouts spotted longships on the horizon.

The size of a Viking raid was best calculated by the capacity of the longship, which could carry up to 35 warriors. During the first few decades of Viking activity, the number of ships reported was relatively small, meaning Viking numbers amounted to the low hundreds. A typical raid was three to six ships. Later, after 850, reports of fleets of more than 100 were common, translating into Viking armies in the thousands, though many such accounts were doubtlessly exaggerated. However, the Vikings' ability to establish winter bases in hostile lands supported such large numbers. Even when a raiding party was small, speed and surprise gave it strength disproportionate to its seemingly insignificant size.

When raiding or on campaign, Viking warriors were divided into warbands called lids. Each lid was a king's private retinue of warriors, making recruitment a personal affair. In the years before Denmark and Norway were unified into cohesive states, there were numerous kings, often engaged in direct competition, and hence many lids. They could also be led by jarls, which roughly translated into earls, although a king's lid was generally larger. In Scandinavia the lids served as local defense forces, but abroad they were the instrument of invasion. Often on campaign, lids would unite when kings and jarls held a mutual objective, the most famous example being the so-called Great Heathen Army that marched the length



THE KEY TO PULLING OFF A SUCCESSFUL VIKING RAID WAS SPEED. BECAUSE IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO PROTECT AN ENTIRE COASTLINE, THE VIKINGS COULD HIT A TARGET AND FLEE THE SCENE BEFORE SUFFICIENT DEFENSES COULD BE MUSTERED.

and frequent placement along coasts for purposes of trade made the temptation irresistible. Any community sufficiently wealthy and isolated could be targeted. The objective of the Viking warrior was simply to grab what he could and make a quick escape. Treasure, material wealth, cattle, and slaves constituted the plunder. Such things could raise a Viking's standard of living and prestige, while kings such as Olaf Trygvason and Sven Forkbeard of Norway could fund political ambitions at home.

The dividends of raiding bore enormous potential. Goods stolen in one place fetched a high price on the market in another. Captives of high status could be ransomed, like the Abbot of St. Denis and his brother in 858, who together brought in an astounding 686 pounds of gold and 3,250 pounds of silver. Meanwhile, those of low status became slaves. In one raid on Armagh in Ireland in 869, Vikings carried off more than 1,000 unfortunate individuals. The Vikings in Ireland even learned to ransom holy relics, such as the body parts of deceased saints, rather than discard the seemingly worthless items amid their scramble for more traditional loot.

The key to pulling off a successful Viking raid was speed. Because it was impossible to protect an entire coastline with anything other than weak local means, the Vikings could hit a target and flee the scene before sufficient defenses could be mustered. The Norman historian Dudo of St. Quentin lamented in 820, "If you by chance go forth to contend with them, oh! Either you will die or they, extremely swift, will return to their ships having slipped away in flight." Only poor weather, as demonstrated at Jarrow, brought guaranteed respite. For that very reason, as evidenced in their poetry, many Irish came to dread calm seas.

Viking raiders almost certainly practiced a specific set of tactics. The raiding party, after establishing a base camp on shore, likely divided into groups to protect its ships and escape route, cut off the target, and attack it. Those parties originated from larger Viking fleets; for instance, the



and breadth of England throughout the late 9th century. Once that objective had been obtained, the lids would disperse. It was not until the days of Sven Forkbeard in the early 11th century that national militaries based on a crude form of drafting would appear among the Vikings.

A Viking joined a lid based on the reputation of the king that led it, which was in turn based on several factors. One key factor was the king's potential to lead his warriors to material gain. Another key factor was the heroic exploits of his men, which would often be recorded in skaldic verse and runic inscriptions. Some, like Hakon the Great, got started as young as age 12, which was not uncommon among Vikings in general. Plunder, fame, and political gain were the typical objectives of the king. Considering the hazards of their chosen vocation, kings anticipated short lives. The successful king encouraged his warriors by always leading from the front. As Magnus Barefoot of Norway put it, "Kings are made for honor, not long life."

Because of the nature of their employment, Vikings possessed an independent streak that a king needed to bear in mind. He best maintained loyalty by allowing his men a large amount of freedom in decision making. Often targets were determined spontaneously based on the whims of the warriors, usually as a result of some unforeseen discovery or chance bit of information. A king might even take his warriors' advice in regard to tactical matters; King Olaf of Norway did so when he placed

**Danish raiders soundly defeated an Anglo-Saxon army at the Battle of Maldon in 991. The Danes were drawn to Maldon because gold and silver coins were minted at the Essex town.**

his poorer men at the front of his assaults with the reasoning they would fight the hardest.

Much of what was written of the Vikings comes from the sources of their victims, so that the picture of the typical warrior has come to be somewhat distorted. Often portrayed as giants, the average Viking was only a few centimeters taller than his Anglo-Saxon or Frankish contemporary. Furthermore, Vikings were not the hairy brutes of legend. They took proper grooming seriously, especially in regard to their commonly long beards, the braiding of which served both a cultural and practical purpose.

Only two to three percent of Norse males chose to go a-Viking. Most of them were free farmers that saw little hope for a better life in destitute Scandinavia. The skills learned from hunting provided them with a talent in weaponry easily converted to warfare. Because Vikings fought for personal reasons, be they wealth or adventure, their fighting spirit was high in comparison to those who fought for a ruler or a state toward which they had little real connection.

Once united, a band of Vikings formed a bond of loyalty known as a felag in which discipline was maintained through a system of honor. With Odin, the god of war, as their patron, the Viking ideal was to follow their leader to the death. Bravery would be richly rewarded in Valhalla. While death on the battlefield was revered, death in flight was an inerasable shame. Consequently, the Viking ideal was to always stand their ground, though retreating in battle was hardly unheard of. Only amid treachery was flight permissible. Vikings always treated each other with honor, dividing spoils as evenly as possible while ironically considering theft to be a cowardly practice.

Like most soldiers of the era, a Viking went to battle with a variety of weapons that he was responsible for procuring himself. To be considered an asset, each Viking needed at minimum a shield, sword or axe, and a spear. Anything less would have been detrimental to himself and his comrades. Metal weapons were in short supply in Scandinavia. Much that was not taken from the dead was imported, primarily from the Rhineland where well-known craftsmen like Ulberht, whose name was inscribed on many Viking swords, operated and sold their products to the Norse despite Frankish prohibitions against it. Undoubtedly, the finer blades were imported, as on average the Frankish warrior possessed a stronger sword. Once imported, the blade was often finished in a Scandinavian workshop and sold. For a Viking, a weapon was a symbol of status, and accordingly they were in the habit of awarding their arms proper names. For example, Magnus the Good wielded an axe named Hel, and Earl Sigurd dubbed his sword Bastard.

Popular images of Vikings usually depict them bearing axes, but it was the sword that the

Viking most cherished as the symbol of his power, rank, and wealth. Viking swords were primarily single-handed, double-edged swords anywhere from 70 to 90 centimeters in length and weighing between four and five pounds. Most were made of iron rather than stronger carbon steel but were pattern-welded at the core from bundles of iron rods to give them greater strength and increased pliability. A fuller down the center of the blade reduced the weight.

Most Viking swords possessed both an upper and lower pommel to protect the hand. Pommels were made from iron or copper alloy, silver, bone, or antler and were often decorated with silver or copper patterns, typically in the shapes of animals. Handles were covered by wood, leather, horn, or bone. Scabbards were made of wood and sometimes covered in leather.

The Vikings used their swords as hacking weapons. Spears and the occasional single-edged knife, known as a scramasax, were reserved for thrusting, most often during the initial phase of close combat. The Viking spear was heavy, though light enough to be used one-handed with a shield, made of iron, and pattern-welded. The shaft was up to two meters long and fitted at the end with a 10- to 20-inch, leaf-shaped head that was either angular or rounded. Rarely, the spearhead was decorated with silver, copper, or brass. The Vikings also used short, light-weight spears and the occasional heavy two-handed spear, which could penetrate mail. The heavier spear was sometimes fitted with wings to prevent it from becoming lodged into the body of an enemy.

The famous Viking axe was a common weapon given only the scarcity of the more favored sword. The most used axe was not the often imaged two-handed broad axe, which came to frequent the battlefield only later during the Viking Age. For most of the era, a short, single-handed axe was much more common, although a much longer Danish version with a 22-inch blade made frequent appearances. Axe heads were made of iron and usually plain with only a few decorated with silver and copper. The largest came armed with projecting spurs.

Axes were heavy weapons that relied as much on gravity as strength. Nevertheless, only the strongest men wielded the heavier varieties, which could smash right through an enemy's shield in one solid blow. Because of the weight and reach of the longer, heavier axes, both of the one- and two-handed varieties, tightly packed ranks were an impossibility as the swing of the weapon could just as easily dispatch friend as foe.

Though close combat kills were considered nobler by the Viking warriors, they nevertheless used projectile weapons in battle, specifically at the start of an engagement as a way to clear a path for short-range fighting. Both javelins and arrows, for example, were used extensively at the Battle of Maldon before the two armies clashed at close quarters. The Vikings employed the longbow, which was approximately 192 centimeters in length. The bow fired birchwood arrows with iron heads at a range of 200 meters, but was most effective at close range where it could penetrate mail.

Mail shirts were rarer among the Vikings than their contemporaries, being common only among those of high status. Weighing up to 70 pounds, many warriors found them restrictive. According to legend, the army of Harald Hardrade chose not to wear any armor at all, though that was extremely unlikely. Despite some controversy, metal helmets were not uncommon, many being fitted with eye and cheek guards, as well as mail to protect the neck. There is no evidence to support the use of leather helmets, while the popularly depicted horned headgear was entirely fictitious.

Much more fundamental for defense than armor was the Viking shield. Viking shields were cir-

cular, roughly three feet in diameter, and made of wooden planks that were strengthened by iron bands along the rim. The famous medieval kite-shaped shield appeared only at the end of the era. Some shields were reinforced by a leather cover, while others were richly painted, usually in skaldic verse. Grips were normally wooden, but on occasion made of brass. Cheaply made, the Viking shield rarely survived



**ABOVE:** An iron helmet unearthed from a Viking burial mound in Norway. **LEFT:** Norwegian King Olaf Trygvason used the spoils from raids to fund political ambitions at home.

a single battle. One blow of an axe was almost certain to shatter it to pieces; however, a lighter weapon would often become lodged within the wood after which a quick jerk of the arm might successfully disarm the attacker.

Chroniclers often depicted the use of shield walls in battle, such as at the battles of Edington and Maldon, but exactly what that meant remains debated. It was unlikely that Vikings employed the Roman-style tactic of interlocking shields, as it would have prohibited them from using their slashing weapons, at least without doing serious harm to their fellow warriors. The term shield wall was nothing more than an expression for an army in line formation. Regardless, the meeting of two such lines often resulted in a bloody struggle lasting all day, ending with merciless slaughter of the side that broke first.

During the first several decades of the Viking Age, raiding was exclusive to the warmer months. A raiding party would land, sack, and return home content with its plunder. But by the end of the first quarter of the 9th century, the nature of the attacks had begun to change



dramatically with the establishment of winter bases. Suddenly, raids being led by increasingly higher nobility with larger and larger forces using river systems to penetrate ever deeper into the interior of the European continent, and shortly thereafter the British Isles, had become the norm.

Viking bases were strategically placed to control river systems. It was typical to choose an island as a base because of its defensibility. One of the earliest Viking bases in France was located on the island of Noirmoutier near the monastery of St. Philibert. Established in 819, it allowed the Vikings to dominate passage of the Loire. The Viking return to England in 850 was marked by wintering on the Isle of Thanet off the Kentish coast, while the Isle of Sheppey was used to control the Thames.

The preparation for large raiding expeditions commenced in the winter with the founding of a base. The Vikings constructed fortresses of earth and timber in which to gather supplies, keeping in mind escape routes when plotting the locations. The raiding season began each spring. Anyone living in a city or town lying on or near a navigable river was at risk of attack, which for Francia and Ireland meant virtually everyone.

Most raiding, as with all military operations of the period, occurred during the day, although on occasion Vikings risked the confusion of darkness such as at Bordeaux in 848. It was popular to take advantage of their adversary's religion and strike on Christian holidays when the enemy would be distracted and the potential loot at its greatest. Fortunately for the Vikings, the Christian calendar of the time provided no shortage of those days. They struck at Kildare in Ireland on St. Brigid's Day in 929 and Iona on Christmas in 986. One of the largest raids of all occurred during the Feast of St. John the Baptist in 843, when the Norsemen butchered a worshipping congregation inside the cathedral at Nantes.

The most famous of all such raids was on Paris in 845. The attack up the Seine to Paris was supposedly led by Ragnar Lodbrock, a legendary ruler whose existence remains in doubt, but who according to the sagas liked to strike during Christian feasts. After defeating a smaller force outside the city that had moved to intercept, Ragnar's Vikings hung 111 of their prisoners in full view of the remaining Franks on the opposite bank of the river. The act, which was likely a mixture of ritual and psychological warfare, served its purpose. The Franks stood aside as the Vikings entered Paris on Easter Sunday, March 28, and plundered the city. Twelve years later, Paris would be sacked

again, this time by Ragnar's son, Björn Ironside.

Cities were not always wide open for the Vikings to do as they pleased. As Viking operations grew larger, the Norsemen inevitably had to become more adept at siegecraft to strike more prominent targets. Only concerned about material gain, Viking armies almost always bypassed forts to instead besiege wealthy towns. In the early days of Viking raids, many cities in Francia were vulnerable to attack as they were protected only by dilapidated Roman walls. At Nantes, for example, it was only a matter of scaling those walls and smashing open the cathedral doors. But as the Vikings became a more anticipated threat, defenses improved and the besiegers had to become more innovative.

No siege was better known during the Viking Age than that of Paris in 885-886. Much of what was known about the siege came from the writings of the French monk, Abbo of Fleury. It all began when a Viking army amounting to a dubious 40,000 men aboard 700 ships under the sea king Sigfrid approached Paris by way of the Seine in late 885. Judging the target not worth the effort, Sigfrid offered to leave Paris in peace in return for free passage past the city's two fortified bridges. The city's defender, Count Odo, refused. Instead, he and his paltry 200 warriors were



Powered by both oar and sail, the longship was unrivalled as a transport vessel during the Viking Age. The Oseberg ship, which is displayed at the Oslo Viking Ship Museum, was discovered in 1904 almost completely intact in a clay bog.

determined to resist inside their citadel of Ile de la Cité until an army under the Frankish King Charles the Fat could come to their relief.

Abbo described a number of ways that the Vikings attempted to reduce the Parisian defenses over the next several months. They used siege engines against the bridges and towers, fired poison arrows over the walls, launched incendiary boats, and even filled the moat with dead men and animals. While the siege was underway, the Vikings plundered the countryside. According to Abbo, they also constructed a 16-wheel oak battering ram with its own roof for protection, but it was all to no avail. By summer they had run out of time with the arrival of King Charles.

Then a most remarkable thing occurred. Rather than crush the tired Viking besiegers, Charles granted them passage to plunder Burgundy. It was the ultimate act of betrayal, one that Odo refused to recognize. He continued to man the two fortified bridges, compelling the Vikings to portage their ships from the Seine to the Marne. The decision turned out to be most politically unwise for Charles. His enemies deposed him the following year.

Not all major Viking forays took them deep up river into the interior of a country. Some traversed great distances to acquire their fortunes, but none more famously than the chieftain Hastein, who penetrated the Mediterranean in 859. With a fleet of about 60 ships, Hastein sailed from the Loire down the French coast to Muslim Spain with the intention of raiding the coastal

towns of the Umayyad Caliphate. Far more united than their Anglo-Saxon and Frankish contemporaries, however, the Muslims easily repelled Hastein. Undaunted, Hastein continued around Spain and through the Strait of Gibraltar, hoping to surprise those who as yet knew nothing of the Viking scourge.

After establishing a base on the island of Camargue, which controlled entry into the Rhone River, the Vikings fanned out in all directions, possibly even as far as Toulouse. But Hastein's true dream was to sack Rome, the center of the Christian world. Nothing would bring him more glory. Fortunately for the Eternal City, he would never find it, but his attempt to, as recorded by Dudo of St. Quentin, would go down as Viking legend.

Hastein's fleet moved along the coast of Italy until stopping at the town of Luna. Mistakenly believing it to be Rome, he was determined to take the place. Luna was well protected, so it would take all his cunning to gain entry. Hastein resolved to play on Christian sensibilities. Feigning illness and a Christian identity, he requested entry into the town so that he could receive last rites. Feeling obligated out of Christian charity, the town accepted. Hastein entered Luna, received the rites, and departed peacefully, having earned the town's trust.

Shortly thereafter, the Viking fleet sent a messenger with news of Hastein's death and a request that Luna grant him a proper Christian burial. Feeling secure, the town again granted the request, this time allowing the entire Viking force entry. The burial called for a procession in which Hastein's body was carried on a bier to the cathedral. At the given signal, however, a very much alive Hastein leaped from the bier and with his warriors commenced the usual sacking. According to Dudo, that plundering turned to massacre when an enraged Hastein realized that the town was not Rome. Nevertheless, the windfall from the expedition was huge, and his fleet left for home laden with riches. Unfortunately, much of it was lost at Gibraltar where it was caught by a vengeful Muslim fleet armed with flamethrowers. Only 20 of the 60 ships escaped destruction.

Massively powerful fleets were not necessarily required to cope with the Vikings. There were other methods to alleviate their threat. One such method was the payment of Danegeld. Because Vikings wanted material gain at the lightest cost possible, they were highly susceptible to being bought off. For the Vikings it was considered tribute, while their victims felt more comfortable calling it a bribe. In return, the Vikings refrained from raiding a target. The sum could be quite high. Charles the Bald paid Ragnar Lodbrock 7,000 pounds of silver to quit Paris following its sack in 845, and Charles the Fat paid 700 livres and granted the right to plunder Burgundy in 886.

As the payment of Danegeld became more common, the Vikings became craftier in ensuring its extraction. While the payments may have temporarily kept the peace, they also encouraged Vikings to return in the hopes of acquiring more. Such was the case of Sven Forkbeard and Olaf Trygvason, whose repeated trips to England in the late 10th century were for the purpose of demanding ever increasing sums, usually to fund their political ambitions back home. The threats to attack unless paid were nothing more than blackmail, but they proved an effective strategy for guaranteeing long-term wealth at the cost of fewer warriors.

Vikings were also often susceptible to political manipulation as another method for averting their fury and possibly deflecting it in another direction. The sack of Nantes, for example, was at least partially the result of a deal made between the Vikings and Count Lambert, who was rebelling against Charles the Bald, while that same Charles paid a

Viking named Weland in the late 850s to besiege another group of Vikings on the island of Oisel. Those same Vikings in turn paid Weland to allow them to escape.

These sometimes confusing examples of opportunism were extensive. Pippin II of Aquitaine fought with the Loire Vikings in the sack of Poitiers in an attempt to gain the throne, an act that led to accusations of paganism and execution in 864. Charles the Fat allowed the Vikings passage to Burgundy in 886 because he feared Burgundian disloyalty, while the Irish King of Osraige, Cerb all mac Dunlainge who ruled from 842 to 888, famously played Vikings off against each

other throughout his long reign.

The most famous bargain struck between a Viking and a potential victim occurred in 911 between Rollo and Charles the Simple. Rollo was a Norwegian who had been exiled from Norway by Harald Fairhair for committing *strandhugg*, the plundering of his own lands to fund campaigns. Rollo was notorious throughout northern Francia, and Charles saw little choice but to placate him by handing over through treaty the province of Normandy, making the Viking a French duke. Significantly, it was Rollo's lineage that would later produce William the Conqueror.

When Danegeld and political machinations failed, the Vikings' victims had to rely on their defenses. As demonstrated by Spain, the most effective ingredient in a successful defense was political unity. After the deposition of Charles the Fat, Odo and Arnulf of the East Franks united and successfully drove the Vikings out of Francia and back to England. But most defenses remained localized, often through peasant bands, which sometimes proved more trouble than help. Professional soldiers rarely arrived at the scene of a raid in time. Tactically, entire coastlines and river systems were too large to completely defend, but rivers could be blockaded, as demonstrated by the fortified bridges at Paris in 885, and that was done increasingly after 859. Meanwhile, new fortifications began appearing in Francia during the last decades of the 9th century to replace the old Roman walls that had proved so ineffective at places such as Nantes. They played a large role in decreasing the number of Viking raids.

After more than half a century of raiding, the Vikings began to slowly evolve toward empire building. The conquest and settlement of Ireland was long underway, having commenced around 840. Years of successful raiding up the Loire, meanwhile, eventually tempted some toward territorial acquisition. But it was England, beginning with the occupation of York in 867, which witnessed the biggest shift from raiding to conquest, culminating a century and a half later in 1013 when Sven Forkbeard took the English throne. The shift, however, changed the nature of Viking warfare by reducing seaborne mobility, allowing men like Alfred the Great the opportunity to meet the Vikings head to head on even terms.

Viking armies could number thousands of men. The largest was the Great Heathen Army, which crossed between England and Francia throughout the latter half of the 9th century until its final dissolution in 896. Sven Forkbeard's national army a century later was about equal in size at 10,000 men. It was so large that



Library of Congress



his successor had to pay out to his warriors 72,000 pounds of silver to get all but a small retinue to return home from England following the conquests.

The land-based Viking armies that emerged during their late period of conquest still preferred to fight on foot rather than on horseback. Although horses were commandeered, typically for scouting, transportation, and raiding purposes, Viking warriors dismounted for battle. Once on foot, they formed the shield wall of legend, sometimes in unique formations such as the “svinfylking,” or boar formation, which comprised 20 to 30 warriors and was shaped like a spear to punch through an enemy line. Kings and jarls maintained control of each separate battalion, which understood its place with the help of banners. An overall leader would sometimes group warriors of similar origin together, as did the Norwegian King Olaf Haraldsson at the Battle of Stiklestad in 1030. Supplies came from ships using various river systems or, like all armies of the day, foraging.

Despite popular belief, Vikings avoided pitched battles whenever possible, though their attempts to hold land now made that difficult. Battles were risky without the element of surprise. They meant high casualties, especially deaths as the wounded frequently died of infection. Furthermore, leaders lost all tactical control of their warriors as they were compelled to lead from the front. Whenever possible, an unavoidable battle was fought during the day to minimize confusion. Despite their Nordic origins, Vikings also preferred to campaign in the summer, though Guthrum’s attack on Alfred at Chippenham in January 878 proved

**ABOVE: English King Harold Godwinson triumphed over Norwegian King Harald Hardrada in the close-fought Battle of Stamford Bridge in 1066. The battle marked the last time the Vikings tried to conquer England. OPPOSITE: Alfred the Great waged war relentlessly against Viking colonies in England.**

a notable exception.

Chippenham was a Viking victory, albeit a temporary one. Soon after, the place was lost following defeat in the Battle of Edington. The Viking legend of invincibility was only a myth. In fact, when it came down to an equal fight, the Vikings may have lost more than they won. At the Battle of Saucourt in 881, King Louis III was said to have killed some 7,000 of them. A similar number died at Clontarf in Ireland in 1014, routed by an Irish army under Brian Boru that was victorious despite a deficiency in armor. At Maldon in 991, the Vikings snatched defeat from the jaws of victory when the Anglo-Saxons were forewarned that Olaf Tryggvason was attempting a night crossing of the causeway that separated the two armies.

No single ruler, however, was more successful against the Vikings than the Anglo-Saxon King of Wessex, Alfred the Great. Thanks to political unity, he was able to create a national defense that possessed offensive capability as well. Under Alfred, the Anglo-Saxons built new fortifications and supply centers. They organized peasant armies that made provisioning difficult for the Vikings. Most astoundingly, they challenged the Vikings at sea with the construction of a coastal navy.

The Viking Age has popularly been bookended on September 25, 1066, with their defeat at the Battle of Stamford Bridge. A fittingly dramatic end, Stamford Bridge highlighted the quintessential Viking in Harald Hardrade, as well as the classic Viking engagement. A Norwegian king, Harald lived the life of a true Viking. Most of it was spent like other nobles before him, fighting to expand his power. He participated in a number of famous engagements and traveled as far as Constantinople. In 1066, while immersed in a competition for the Danish throne, a succession crisis across the North Sea sent him opportunistically racing to England.

His defeat at Stamford Bridge bore all the military hallmarks of the age. It featured the famous Viking shield wall and illustrated the Viking code of honor in that the warriors stubbornly stood their ground even when annihilation became imminent. Leading from the front like a true Viking king, Harald was killed when an arrow struck his throat.

Were the Vikings really any more violent than their contemporaries? The chroniclers of the time certainly thought so. But it would be unwise to rely solely on the accounts of undoubtedly biased victims. Generally speaking, the Vikings were no more violent than the world around them. Rather, it was their unique method of warfare that singled them out. At the same time, though, efforts to soften their image should be looked upon warily. The Vikings may not have been horn-wearing giants, but they certainly destroyed more than they built, and in doing so fully earned their reputation as merciless, opportunistic, fearless, and efficient warriors. □

By Christopher Miskimon

## A new work shines light on special operations missions that were an essential component of warfare during the American Revolution.

**W**ITHIN A FEW WEEKS OF THE “SHOT HEARD ‘ROUND THE WORLD” at Lexington and Concord, the fledgling United States, its army mostly underequipped militia, set out to defeat the British Army. By the end of April 1775 that force had dug in at the city of Boston and was soon surrounded by a Patriot force that had encircled it. Still, the rebels lacked the ability to take the city;

in particular, they lacked artillery to press the siege to a conclusion. It was early May 1775 and the rebels had to move quickly to cut off British sources of supply and communication. Not too far away in the relative wilds of New York was one of the key bastions of British control in New England, but it was vulnerable. Fort Ticonderoga was isolated and defended by only a small garrison of British troops. Patriot Ethan Allen and his local force of irregular troops, known as the Green Mountain Boys, were tasked to take the

fort and secure its guns, a mission they eagerly accepted. Thus began the first special operation of the American Revolution.

The taking of the fort and another nearby at Crown Point would net the nascent Continental Army more than 200 cannons, howitzers, mortars, and other supplies. It was a tale beset by challenges. Allen and his officers had to gather their forces, supply them, move them by both land

and water, and launch assaults on two fortresses. Along the way there were many impediments. On May 8 Benedict Arnold showed up with his own ideas on capturing the fort. This presented Allen with a dilemma; Arnold had written authority from Massachusetts and a colonel’s commission. However, the Green Mountain Boys refused to serve under Arnold, so Allen retained command with Arnold going along as a volunteer officer. The famous traitor would later claim he had shared command of the expedition.

Weather and a lack of boats threatened their success, but the actual taking of Ticonderoga on May 10 proved somewhat anticlimactic. The garrison was quickly overwhelmed in a night attack. Like most daringly executed unconventional operations, achieving surprise led to quick victory. Two days later Crown Point was taken without a shot fired. Speed, surprise, and force had won the day. Later some 57 of the captured guns would be laboriously hauled to Boston, helping to force the British out of the city and sending the war to its next phase around the city of New York.

Today special operations are considered a hallmark of military operations and receive much attention.

Ethan Allen demands the surrender of Fort Ticonderoga from the British officer in charge on May 10, 1775.



You deserve a factual look at . . .

## The Shame of Gaza

### Hundreds of innocents have died in Gaza. Who is really to blame for this tragedy?

Israel left Gaza completely in 2005, freeing the Palestinians to build an autonomous state there. Yet since then, the Hamas terror regime has instead chosen to use its resources to wage an unrelenting war against the Jewish state from military installations located in the midst of densely populated Arab residential areas.

#### What are the facts?

**When Israel evacuated its citizens and military from Gaza in 2005**, Israelis hoped this would be the beginning of a win-win, land-for-peace exchange with the Palestinians. American Jewish donors even paid \$14 million to purchase 3,000 greenhouses left by Israeli settlers and transferred them to the Palestinian Authority.

But instead of creating a thriving agricultural enterprise, the greenhouses were vandalized and destroyed. Gaza's golden Mediterranean beaches could have made it a Middle East tourist mecca. But instead of the vibrant state that both Israel and many Palestinians envisioned, today under Hamas Gaza's poverty is worse than ever, its cities are ravaged by self-inflicted warfare and its people suffer under an Islamist dictatorship. What a shame that is.

What's worse, since Hamas strong-armed the Palestinian Authority out of power in Gaza in 2007, the terror group began attacking Israel with a nearly continuous barrage of unsophisticated, but still deadly short-range rockets. Aowedly committed to destroying Israel, Hamas and other Gaza-based jihadis have since 2001 fired more than 15,000 rockets at Israeli cities and kibbutzim.

**Israel responded in 2009 with a ground offensive in Gaza** and in 2012 with intense shelling of Hamas military positions, most of them purposely located in Gaza's heavily populated urban areas. Israeli military responses did untold damage to Gaza's infrastructure, and led to short-term ceasefires by Hamas. Unfortunately, Israel's defensive responses also resulted in approximately fifteen hundred deaths, many of them Arab civilians living near Hamas military positions. What a shame that is.

Recently Hamas has acquired longer-range, Syrian-produced missiles via Iran that are capable of reaching Tel Aviv, Ben Gurion International Airport and Jerusalem. In the first seven months of 2014, Hamas militants launched more than 3,500 such high-powered rockets, threatening 80% of Israel's population—and sending many of those six million people fleeing in terror to bomb shelters.

*Contrary to some media reports, the conflict between Hamas and Israel is not a "cycle of violence," nor does it require "mutual restraint." Rather, Israel, a nation smaller than tiny El Salvador, surrounded by a sea of hostile Arab and Muslim nations, is responding logically to protect its citizens from an enemy directly on its border. What nation would not respond to such existential threats with definitive force meant to defeat this enemy?*

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# FLAME

Facts and Logic About the Middle East  
P.O. Box 590359 ■ San Francisco, CA 94159  
Gerardo Joffe, President

Thanks to Israel's Iron Dome missile defense system and the Palestinians' poor targeting capabilities, these attacks have yet to kill large numbers of Israelis. But it's not for lack of trying: Hamas aims to kill as many Jews as possible.

**What Is to Be Done?** In 1945, during World War II, the United States bombed Dresden, Germany, and, a few months later, Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan, killing 220,000 people, most of them civilians. Who was to blame for these tragic deaths? Was it the United States, which was responding defensively to two deadly enemies, or was it the

By basing its military operations in urban centers, Hamas' intention seems precisely to allow its citizens to be killed and injured for propaganda purposes.

dictatorship. What a

leaders of Germany and Japan, who had sworn themselves to the enslavement and destruction of many nations, including our own? The U.S. believed it needed to demonstrate to Germany and Japan that unless they surrendered, their military, their infrastructure and, if necessary, their people would be decimated.

**Israel's situation today is even more dire than that of the U.S. in 1945.** Israelis are being attacked daily by a Palestinian terrorist group sworn to the Jewish state's destruction and launching military offensives on Israeli civilians. This is an existential threat that no nation would or should tolerate. An implacable enemy like this must not merely be temporarily deterred, it must be defeated.

We pray that few Arab civilians are harmed in Hamas' deadly adventure, but demands by the international community that the group move its military operations out of populated areas have been ignored for more than a decade. Indeed, by basing its military operations in urban centers, Hamas' intention seems precisely to allow its citizens to be killed and injured for propaganda purposes. Such use of human shields is, of course, a war crime.

Above all, we pray that Hamas and other radical Arab groups give up their blood vendetta against Israel. One thing is clear: If tomorrow Hamas were to lay down its arms and declare peace with Israel, we would have peace immediately. But another thing is also clear: If tomorrow Israel were to lay down its arms and declare peace with Hamas, there would soon be no Israel. This is the ultimate shame.

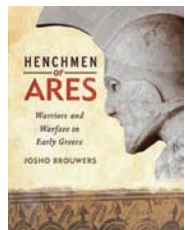
FLAME is a tax-exempt, non-profit educational 501 (c)(3) organization. Its purpose is the research and publication of the facts regarding developments in the Middle East and exposing false propaganda that might harm the interests of the United States and its allies in that area of the world. Your tax-deductible contributions are welcome. They enable us to pursue these goals and to publish these messages in national newspapers and magazines. We have virtually no overhead. Almost all of our revenue pays for our educational work, for these clarifying messages, and for related direct mail.

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Such operations have taken place throughout American history, despite the lack of attention given them until recently. From 1775 to 1783 many important operations of the war were carried out by small groups of rangers, scouts, and other specialized groups pulled together to carry out difficult tasks. *Special Operations During the American Revolution* (Robert L. Tonsetic, Casemate Publishers, Havertown PA, 2013, 272 pp., maps, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index, \$32.95, hardcover) delves into the details of these efforts, most of which remain obscure.

The taking of Ticonderoga is probably the best known of the operations described in this work. Unless reader are veritable authorities on the Revolutionary War, they are sure to read something in this book they did not know about. For example, the New Providence Raid—the first amphibious landing by the U.S. Marines against a British town in the Bahamas—was carried out to capture gunpowder for the Continental Army. Each chapter covers a different special operation. The book also covers partisan warfare between Patriots and Tories. The author's coverage of small engagements gives readers a good sense of the bitterness and hatred that tore apart the American colonies. Last, a summary of George Rogers Clark's expedition in what would become the Northwest Territory sheds light on his herculean efforts to bring the war to Britain in the then undeveloped wilderness.

This is a well-written, easy to follow work that does an excellent job telling many small stories of the American Revolution. Many of the leaders of these operations are lesser known figures most readers have likely heard of but know little about. While some biographical information is included on each, their deeds speak much more loudly, showing the sort of men who led the budding United States of America in the struggle for its independence from the contemporary superpower, Great Britain.



*Henchmen of Ares: Warrior and Warfare in Ancient Greece* (Josho Brouwers, Karwansaray Publishers, Rotterdam, Netherlands, 2014, 203 pp., maps, photographs, illustrations, bibliographic notes, index, \$40.00, hardcover)

The Greeks are generally looked on as the founders of Western Civilization, as well as its first defenders. Contemporary pop culture has particularly embraced Sparta and its warrior culture in print and film. But there was more depth to the ancient Greek warrior. They fought each

other or outside enemies as need, developing an intricate military tradition along the way. What we know of the Greek warrior has been gleaned from various archaeological records. This new Dutch import collects these various finds and uses them to paint a detailed description of Greek soldiery and how they fought.

The book takes a scholarly approach to

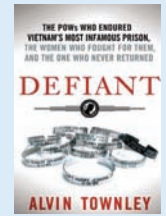
demonstrating what archaeology tells us about the era. It is well illustrated with battle scenes, period artifacts, and imagery of ships, weapons, and fortifications. There has been a recent dearth of books covering ancient warfare; this work goes far to redress that imbalance.

*Prelude to Blitzkrieg: The 1916 Austro-German*

## SHORT BURSTS

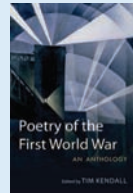
**Reporting Under Fire: 16 Daring Women War Correspondents and Photojournalists** (Kerrie Logan Hollihan, Chicago Review Press, 2014, 256 pp., \$19.95, softcover). This book tells the stories of female reporters from World War I to the present. Some are famous, while others are relatively unknown.

**Crescent Moon Over Carolina: William Moultrie and American Liberty** (C.L. Brigg, University of South Carolina Press, 2014, 336 pp., \$29.95, hardcover) Moultrie is best known for the defense of Charleston in 1776 during the American Revolution. This biography gives more depth to the man's life.



**Defiant: The POWs Who Endured Vietnam's Most Infamous Prison, The Women Who Fought for Them, and The One Who Never Returned** (Alvin Townley, Thomas Dunne Books, 432 pp., 2014, \$27.99, hardcover) During the Vietnam War, a number of American prisoners were kept in a special jail nicknamed Alcatraz. This is the story of how they endured and how their loved ones fought for them back home.

**Cultures of Commemoration: War Memorials Ancient and Modern** (Edited by Polly Low, Graham Oliver and P.J. Rhodes, Oxford University Press, 2013, 200 pp., \$85.00, hardcover) This is a collection of different authors' writings on war memorials from Ancient Greece to Vietnam. It also covers rituals, festivals, and the role of the state in honoring its soldiers.



during the world wars. The work of famous poets is included alongside the words of soldiers and sailors writing of what they saw.

**Poetry of the World Wars** (Edited by Michael Foss, Michael O'Mara Books Ltd, 2014, 192 pp., \$24.95, hardcover) A collection of war poetry showing the progression of poetry as it evolved between and during the world wars. The work of famous poets is included alongside the words of soldiers and sailors writing of what they saw.

**At the Crossroads Between Peace and War: The London Naval Conference of 1930** (Edited by John H. Maurer and Christopher M. Bell, Naval Institute Press, 2014, 288 pp., \$59.95, hardcover) The London Naval Conference was an important yet ultimately failed attempt at arms control between the wars. Critics argue it weakened American and British naval power at a critical point.



Navy reformed its system of punishment between 1850 and World War I. The prison at Portsmouth was central to this process.

**Whips to Walls: Naval Discipline from Flogging to Progressive-Era Reform at Portsmouth Prison** (Rodney K. Watterson, Naval Institute Press, 2014, 272 pp., \$59.95, softcover) A study of how the U.S.

**7 Leadership Lessons of the American Revolution: The Founding Fathers, Liberty and the Struggle for Independence** (John Antal, Casemate Publishers, 2013, 240 pp., \$29.95, hardcover) This work seeks to teach leadership lessons using defining moments of the war. It shows how they overcame tremendous odds and persevered through adversity.



**Discovering Cyrus: The Persian Conqueror Astride the Ancient World** (Reza Zarghamee, Mage Books, 2013, 784 pp., \$85.00, hardcover)

The first volume in a series devoted to the ancient emperor and his vast empire.



**Campaign in Romania** (Michael B. Barrett, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 2013, 399 pp., maps, photographs, notes, bibliography, index, \$45.00, hardcover)

Most Westerners think of World War I as a stagnant conflict fought from trenches. The fighting on the Eastern Front was much more fluid, a war of maneuver where there was far too much ground to ever fortify with continuous defenses. Armies could maneuver and even take advantage of the newfound mobility of trucks and armored cars. This is exactly what occurred in Romania.

That nation unexpectedly joined the Allies, quickly mounting an offensive to capture territory in Transylvania, part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Germany committed what it could to support its ally; many of the assembled troops were second rate. The leader of this hastily formed army, Erich Von Falkenhayn, was first rate; however, and led this force to a crushing victory over the attacking Romanians. Combining rapid movement and flanking assaults, in a year of fighting Von Falkenhayn not only pushed his opponents out of Transylvania but continued into Romania itself, effec-

tively knocking that nation out of the war.

The Eastern Front during World War I is not as well understood in the United States. This book brings well-deserved light to the subject. Studying this part of the war greatly widens the reader's understanding of the conflict as a whole.



\$35.00, hardcover)

**In the Hour of Victory: The Royal Navy at War in the Age of Nelson** (Sam Willis, W.W. Norton and Company, Inc. New York, 2014, 416 pp., maps, illustration, appendices, notes, index,

The Napoleonic era was the Golden Age of the British Royal Navy, when challenges critical to the nation arose, were met, and astounding victories won. In an age where communications moved only as fast as the wind could push a sail, naval officers possessed extensive decision-making authority. They were empowered to act and often did so. The result of this was an enormous amount of correspondence as reports, invoices, and what today would be called after-action reviews flowed back to London from far-ranging battlefields.

This new work takes all of this correspondence and collates it into a narrative that

reassesses the key battles of the era, giving fresh perspectives on them and allowing the reader to see the actual thoughts and statements of the participants, ranging from high admirals to surgeons reporting casualties and boatswains evaluating the damage done to their beloved vessels. Along the way the author includes interesting pieces of information to accompany the coverage of battle. For example, Nelson kept the lightning rod from the French ship L'Orient displayed prominently in his hallway. The ship had exploded at the Battle of the Nile in 1798 and the rod was one of the few pieces left intact. Since Trafalgar was such an important victory, pieces of the involved ships were turned into all manner of souvenirs; even Nelson's pigtail was cut from his head after his death and is now on display in the Royal Maritime Museum in Greenwich. These tiny details round out the book and give it a modern connection.



**Unknown Wars of Asia, Africa and The America's That Changed History** (Steven M. Johnson, Atlas World Publishing, New York, 2013, 421 pp., maps, photographs, bibliography, index, \$24.99, hardcover)

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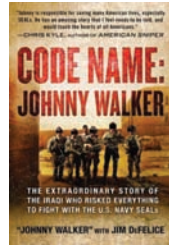


Wars often mark turning points in history, causing or enabling change. Many are well known, while others are virtually unknown but played equally important roles in shaping our world. Often this is a matter of culture; an average western reader knows nothing of the wars that rocked the Khmer Empire in the 12th century because it is too far outside their society's frame of reference to make it seem relevant. Those wars affected the development of modern Southeast Asia, a region very much in the public eye of the 21st century. This new work explores a number of those conflicts and how their effects trickle through history to our time.

For example, the Taiping Rebellion (1851-1871) claimed 30 million lives over 20 years, beginning when a Chinese schoolteacher read poorly translated Christian tracts and decided he was meant to rid China of Confucianism and government corruption. Raising an army, the movement quickly became a threat to the ruling Qing Dynasty and war broke out. The fanatical Taiping troops won many victories, arming themselves with captured weapons and, in time, growing to 500,000. Eventually, internal dissent fragmented the Taiping troops and the original leader of the rebellion died in 1864.

Nevertheless, fighting went on until the last vestiges of the Taiping army were destroyed in 1871. Little known in the West, this war featured the rise of regional warlords and their personal armies, which were to have wide effects on China through the mid-20th century when the Communist Revolution began.

This book provides general retellings of the 18 various conflicts it covers, ranging from ancient wars to the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905. Some chapters summarize a series of campaigns spread over centuries, such as England's pirate actions against Spain and the wars conducted around the African slave trade.



**Code Name Johnny Walker:** *The Extraordinary Story of the Iraqi Who Risked Everything to Fight with the U.S. Navy SEALs* (Johnny Walker with Jim DeFelice, William Morrow, New York, 2014, 285 pp., maps, photographs, \$26.99, hardcover)

Working as a “terp,” or interpreter, for the American troops was a dangerous occupation in Iraq. These men didn't even use their real

names while working but rather code names in an effort to keep them anonymous and safe. One such terp, “Johnny Walker,” was driving through Mosul one morning in 2004 on the way to work at a U.S. base nearby. Suddenly he saw a car behind him, two men in it. Johnny knew what was going to happen. The men fired at him but missed. The terp rammed their car then jumped out with his AK-47 blazing. Both men died and a crowd quickly formed, demanding to know why Johnny had fought them. If he admitted that he had defended himself from terrorists who wanted him dead because he worked for the Americans, then the mob would kill him in turn. Johnny did what he had to do; he lied, told them he had killed the two men because they had been working for the Americans. The crowd cheered him and he quickly got away.

This book chronicles the story of Johnny Walker as he spends six years working with U.S. Special Forces troops. They quickly adopted him as one of their own and when his service to America made it too dangerous for him to remain, Navy SEALs helped get him to the United States. This book is written as an autobiography. It is a gritty look at the life of a

## simulation games *By Joseph Luster*

### WORLD WAR I REALIZED IN VIDEO GAMES LIKE NEVER BEFORE WITH UBISOFT MONTPELLIER'S GORGEOUS AND GROUNDED VALIANT HEARTS.



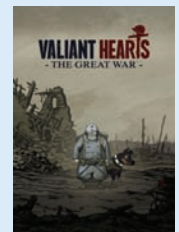
From the first time we previewed *Valiant Hearts: The Great War*, it was clear that Ubisoft and developer Ubisoft Montpellier had something special on their hands. Too often we find ourselves wading through the same few genres when it comes to war games, whether it be strategy or straight-up shooting, and that makes *Valiant Hearts'* effort to tell a real story in a novel way all the more engaging. The very first thing you'll notice about *Valiant Hearts* is its aesthetic. Beautifully illustrated 2D land-

scapes spread from foreground to background, with lively, cartoony characters interacting on the central plane. The lush visuals are all thanks to UbiArt Framework, Ubisoft's in-house engine that's also been used for games like *Rayman Origins*, *Rayman Legends*, and *Child of Light*. The main benefit of the engine is that illustrators who work outside of game development can concentrate on the art, which an animator then takes to split up and apply a skeleton to it. The technical side of things

takes over from there. Thus, any kind of image can be animated, so UbiArt Framework is able to draw from a wide variety of visual sources, from 3D renderings to India ink drawings, model clay backgrounds, and more.

*Valiant Hearts'* attractive and lovingly crafted artwork contrasts nicely against the bleak setting of World War I. The story kicks off in 1914, as France begins to deport all German citizens in anticipation of war. One of those citizens is Karl, who gets separated from his wife Marie and their child, Victor. The same goes for Marie's father, Emile, who is drafted into the French Army, trained, and quickly captured and forced to cook for the Germans.

While Karl finds himself serving under the infamous Baron Von Dorf, Emile soon meets an American named Freddie, and the two become fast friends. Their unlikely party is rounded out when a dog saves Emile and starts following them through battle, and a Belgian student named Anna—now



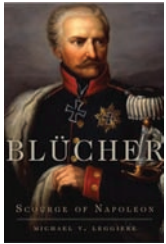
**PUBLISHER**  
UBISOFT

**DEVELOPER**  
UBISOFT  
MONTPELLIER

**SYSTEM(S)**  
PC, PS3, PS4, XBOX  
360, XBOX ONE

**AVAILABLE**  
NOW

man who risked everything because he thought it would help his nation.



**Blucher: Scourge of Napoleon** (Michael Legiere, University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 2014, 536 pp., maps, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index, \$34.95, hardcover)

This Prussian officer is best known for his late-day arrival at Waterloo, one of the actions that led to the defeat of Napoleon Bonaparte on June 18, 1815. There is more to the man however, including service in the Swedish Army against Prussia during the Seven Years War. Later he served virtually throughout the Napoleonic Wars in one capacity or another, taking part in some of that conflict's most famous battles such as Jena-Auerstedt, Lubeck, and Ligny. At this last engagement, Blucher's horse was struck by a musket ball and in its death throes fell atop the hapless field marshal, pinning him to the ground. Enemy cavalry rode all around him, but his aide covered him with his cloak to prevent anyone from recognizing him

or his rank. As rain clouds gathered the enemy broke off their attack and the aide had Blucher evacuated from the field, allowing him to make his rendezvous with destiny at Waterloo two days later.

Blucher's life was full of such drama. He was a general who led from the front; his men called him "Marshal Forward." This is the first English-language biography on the man and the 41st Volume of the University of Oklahoma Press' well-regarded Campaigns and Commanders series. It is well researched and Blucher's story is woven into the wider narrative of the Napoleonic Era, showing how his actions intertwined with those of his allies and enemies.

**The Most Dangerous Man in America: The Making of Douglas MacArthur** (Mark Perry, Basic Books, New York, 2014, 384 pp., maps, photographs, notes, bibliography, \$29.99, hardcover)



Douglas MacArthur is a controversial figure in American military history. Some proclaim him a genius, others a danger-



a battlefield nurse—crosses their path and finds she shares a common goal.

Revenge is on the menu,

and Von Dorf is the main course. It's

going to take a great deal of blood, sweat, and tragic tears to take him down, but it doesn't seem so impossible when this group bands together and takes advantage of their unique individual skill sets.

Emile runs around with a shovel and can dig through dirt, while Freddie can cut his way through barbed wire and smash obstacles. Anna uses her nursing skills frequently, and the dog is an all around crucial asset since it can squeeze through tight spaces and fetch otherwise unreachable items. With all that in mind, you can probably see how the puzzles manifest themselves in *Valiant Hearts*.

Most of the puzzles are pretty simple, calling back to classic adventure games with isolated fetch quests and the like. There's nothing terribly obtuse here, thankfully, and a lot of that is thanks to the comic-like language *Valiant Hearts* employs. Characters don't really speak to one another in anything but mutters and a few scattered words, but little word bubbles will pop out with images hinting at what they might need. You'll approach a taxi, for instance, which needs some water to run. That intuitively directs you to a fire hydrant that needs a wrench to turn it on, an empty bottle from

a nearby character, and so on.

*Valiant Hearts* would be awfully dull if that's all there was to it, but puzzles mix things up frequently. Sometimes you'll just need to toss a stick at some untriggered explosives, or command the dog to go turn a lever to raise an item up from below. As you get deeper you'll be working in tandem with one of your buddies, and some of the methods of progression reminded me of the 2000 PlayStation 2 puzzle game *The Adventures of Cookie and Cream* ... except in this case the colorful world has been blown to smithereens in a brutal war.

There are even a few moments that could qualify as "boss battles," in which you'll be tasked with acting under a bit more duress than usual. That's another place *Valiant Hearts* mixes things up. It sounds more chill than your average war game, but there are absolutely bombastic and thrilling moments. You'll be running from and dodging falling bombs, evading enemy turret fire, and even dodging cars and obstacles in a rhythmic driving game set to rousing classical music.

The story and characters in

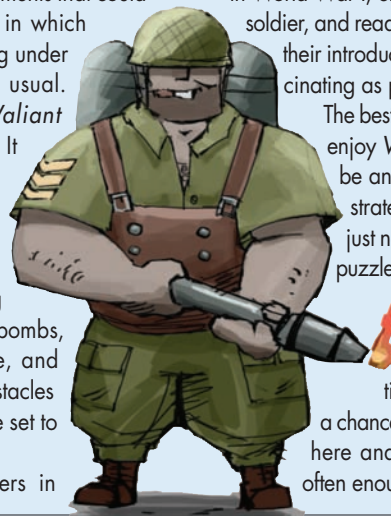
ous egomaniac. Mark Perry's new book examines how President Franklin D. Roosevelt and others used MacArthur's ability while simultaneously bending him away from his overweening ego to make him a useful asset to the nation. The author holds that the general exhibited both genius and vanity in full measure, but could still be an asset to his country nonetheless.

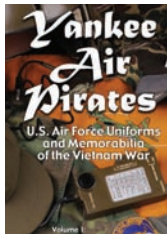
MacArthur led Allied forces from the Philippines to Australia, the numerous islands of the South Pacific, and eventually back to the Philippines and beyond. The author covers this journey with easy to follow prose and insightful judgments of the decisions of not only MacArthur, but his opponents and fellow Allies. These are interesting to read even if one does not agree with them as the arguments are well put. History has been hard on MacArthur; this book maintains the man had successes and failures, but only the failures are remembered today.

**Yankee Air Pirates: U.S. Air Force Uniforms and Memorabilia of the Vietnam War, Volume 1** (Olivier Bizet and Francois Millard, Schiffer Publishing, Atglen PA, 2013, 328 pp., maps, photographs, \$89.99, hardcover)

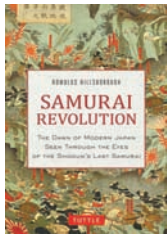
*Valiant Hearts* may be fictional, but its setting remains soaked in the true horrors of war. In addition to unlocking character diary entries, you'll frequently receive new updates in the form of historical facts behind areas and situations you encounter. Ubisoft Montpellier teamed up with the creators of the five-part documentary series *Apocalypse, World War I*—a co-production between French company CC&C and Canadian firm Ideacom International—allowing them to incorporate real photos from the database into the game's encyclopedia. Stumble into a medical area and you'll be able to read about the presence of nurses in World War I, encounter your first flamethrower soldier, and read about the psychological effects their introduction triggered; it's all just as fascinating as playing the game itself.

The best part is, pretty much anyone can enjoy *Valiant Hearts*. You don't need to be an expert in twitch action or be a strategy-minded genius to play, you just need to have a bit of patience for puzzles and occasionally dodge a few things here and there. Anyone who has been turned off to past video game representations of war should give this one a chance; there's a great story being told here and it's one that doesn't get told often enough.





Schiffer Publishing specializes in comprehensive books that appeal to history buffs, re-enactors, and veterans; this new work should appeal to all three. It is an extremely detailed photo-book concentrated on the U.S. Air Force in Vietnam. Each chapter focuses on a different role, such as forward air control, rescue, and security. While the text vividly describes the work of each role, the illustrations are what make the book. Uniforms, patches, insignia, weapons, and specialized equipment are all shown in well-designed layouts. The numerous photographs are a combination of official images and personal pictures taken on the spot. This book even goes so far as to show the labels of locally produced clothing many airmen procured. Vietnam-era USAF veterans or militaria collectors may find this book of particular interest.



**Samurai Revolution: The Dawn of Modern Japan Seen Through the Eyes of the Shogun's Last Samurai** (Romulus Hillsborough, Tuttle Publishing, North Clarendon, VT, 2014, 608 pp., map, photographs, appendix, bibliography, index, \$29.95, hardcover)

Japan transformed itself from a feudal state to an emerging industrial power with stunning speed. Within five decades it built a nation and military able to take on the likes of China and Russia and achieve victory. The work is divided into two books. In the first, the author maintains the most significant part of this change occurred between 1853 and 1878, when extreme changes occurred in Japanese society. These alterations included the Meiji Restoration, when the shogunate was brought down and the emperor was restored to the throne. The cultural and economic influence of this event resonated in the following decades.

The second book discusses the decade after the restoration of the emperor, when power had to be consolidated and steps begun to make Japan a world power. During this period the samurai, unhappy with the changing nation, put up resistance. This culminated in the Satsuma Rebellion of 1877; government victory in this war effectively ended the samurai tradition. The author heavily uses the various writings of "the shogun's last samurai," Katsu Kaishu. This combined statesman and sailor played various roles in the period, giving him vast insight into Japan's emergence into the modern world. □

## Heligoland

*Continued from page 45*

German commander, Rear Admiral Leberecht Maass, came on the scene.

*Fearless* exchanged gunfire with the last two when suddenly the 2,608-ton, 22.2 knot German cruiser *Ariadne* with her 10 4.1-inch guns came out of the mist. *Fearless* steamed on and came within range of *Mainz*. *Fearless* opened fire on the enemy cruiser, which drew the *Mainz's* attention away from the British destroyers.

During the confusion the destroyers of the Third Division of the Third Flotilla fired torpedoes at the *Mainz*. One, possibly two, of the torpedoes fired from *Lydsard* hit the enemy cruiser. *Mainz* stopped and became silent.

Tyrwhitt sighted Goodenough coming with his cruisers. He was relieved to see friendly cruisers at hand. Tyrwhitt decided to leave *Mainz* to Goodenough while he reformed his flotilla. As he did so, Goodenough came upon *Cöln* and *Stettin* and opened fire on them.

*Mainz*, meanwhile, was sinking. Her captain called out, "Abandon ship, ship's company get clear with life belts." Many of the ship's crew did not hear this, including the first gunnery officer who ordered torpedoes to be fired. One torpedo was discharged from the port side and two from the starboard tubes. However, all three missed their target.

Then at 12:30 PM, Beatty arrived with his battle cruisers. This raised the spirits of the British immensely. As an officer on one of Tyrwhitt's destroyers described the scene, "There straight ahead of us in lovely procession, like elephants walking through a pack of 'pi-dogs,' came the *Lion*, *Queen Mary*, *Invincible*, and *New Zealand*, our battle cruisers. Great and grim and uncouth as some antediluvian monsters, how solid they looked, how utterly earth-quaking!"

Beatty quickly surveyed the scene. The admiral noticed that *Mainz* was still afloat. Beatty trained his guns on the dying cruiser and finished her off.

Beatty heard the gunfire from *Fearless*, *Cöln*, and *Stettin*. He was steaming in that direction when he came upon *Cöln*. Beatty altered a little to port and opened fire. After two or three minutes of firing the German cruiser was ablaze and limped off to the northwest.

*Cöln* was so heavily damaged that her crew set scuttling charges to sink her. The survivors expected the British to pick them up, but the British had already left the area. All but one crew member, including Maass, perished in the frigid waters. The sole survivor was picked up

later by the Germans.

At 12:56 PM, Beatty's lookouts spotted the *Ariadne*. The admiral ordered his guns to open fire on her. The battle cruisers' guns roared and within minutes the German cruiser was ablaze and listing badly.

Beatty was now faced with the decision whether or not to go further. After careful thought he decided against going on. The British destroyers to the eastward reported floating mines. The Germans might also have sent out their heavy ships. At 1:10 PM, Beatty signaled for his squadron to retire.

Rescue work was undertaken for the crews of the sinking German ships. As one German officer stated, "The English ships made the greatest effort to pick up the survivors." Keyes came up and rescued the survivors from the *Mainz*. The crew of *Ariadne* was later picked up by a German battleship.

At one point during the rescue, Keyes noticed a young officer standing on the *Mainz*. The commodore wanted to leave before the German warship capsized. However, the young officer refused to abandon his ship as long as she was afloat. He saluted and said, "Thank you, no." The cruiser sank, and he was plucked out of the water along with another officer, the son of Admiral Tirpitz.

The Germans lost three cruisers and a destroyer along with more than 1,000 men killed, wounded, or captured. The British by contrast lost not a single ship and suffered 35 men killed. Only two British ships suffered severely, the cruiser *Arcturion* and the destroyer *Laurel*, which were taken in tow by *Hogue* and *Amethyst*.

The defeat the Germans suffered in August deterred them from venturing far from their bases for some time. As Churchill observed that from August to November 1914, "Except for furtive movements by individual submarines and minelayers, not a dog stirred." This gave the British time to complete the defenses of their bases and consolidate the position of the Grand Fleet. The kaiser, fearing the loss of more ships, put restrictions on the movement of German warships. Admiral Tirpitz protested against this policy and noted, "There sprang up from that day forth an estrangement between the emperor and myself, which steadily increased."

The Battle of Heligoland Bight was the first major victory for the Allies during World War I. It raised British morale considerably and installed an inferiority complex in the minds of German naval officers. As Churchill remarked, "Hence forward the weight of British naval prestige lay heavy across all German sea enterprise." □

## Dettingen

*Continued from page 53*

Just as the allies did not pursue Gramont, Noailles never rallied his forces to make an effective pursuit of the Pragmatic Army. King George and his army safely reached Hanau on June 28. Stair's plans to give battle again were overruled by the king. Frustrated, Stair resigned, requesting of the king, "Leave to return to my plough without any mark of your displeasure." Several high British officers also resigned in sympathy with Stair or due to irritation with the king's favoritism toward his Hanoverian officers. Although the allies had wasted the opportunity generated by their victory, the French army soon withdrew from Germany.

Noailles wrote King Louis XV that the defeat was due to "the enemy's discipline, and to their officers' strict obedience and subordination to commands." The duke went on ruefully that "these qualities are unknown among our own troops." Gramont was blamed for throwing away the battle but still commanded troops at the Battle of Fontenoy in 1745. At Fontenoy, Gramont was killed early in the battle, a clash that the French won over an army commanded by the Duke of Cumberland.

Stair later spoke to Voltaire about Dettingen; the two men had been friends since Stair's diplomatic service back in the 1720s. "You committed one mistake," said Stair, "and we committed two. Yours was ... not having patience to wait, and ours was, exposing ourselves to Destruction, and then not making proper use of our victory."

When news of Dettingen reached London, the English public was ecstatic. Few were strategists enough to mourn the failure to pursue the broken French army at the end of the battle. Instead, the nation was thrilled with stories of individual soldiers such as Trooper Brown and Cornet Richardson.

From the tales of George II's conduct on the field, the English were surprised by a new admiration for their normally rather unlikable king. Dettingen marked a historic occasion in the changing world of modern warfare. Never again would the ruler of Great Britain dub new knights banneret on the field of battle. The future King George IV was a midshipman aboard the ship of the line *Prince George* at the Battle of Cape St. Vincent in 1780. King George VI served as a sub-lieutenant aboard the battleship HMS *Collingwood* during the Battle of Jutland in 1916. However, in both cases their military service happened long before either king came to the throne. Dettingen marked the last time a monarch of England or Great Britain led troops in battle. □

## Bastogne

*Continued from page 31*

Panzer was facing the 51st Combat Engineer Battalion and elements of the CCR, 3rd Armored Division. Believing he was facing a strong American force and that it would take too much time to force a crossing, Krüger ordered his panzer division to head south to cross at La Roche. Valuable time was wasted sorting out traffic issues and repulsing American attacks.

The 2nd Panzer received enough fuel to allow its reconnaissance battalion to continue the race to the Meuse, skirting between the U.S. 84th Division at Marche, where a blocking force was soon deployed, and Rochefort. The latter was captured by Panzer Lehr, which was supposed to secure the German left flank on its drive to the Meuse.

On December 23 the cold spell that had improved the roads also cleared the skies, allowing Allied planes to attack the Germans and drop supplies into Bastogne. That day the reconnaissance battalion of 2nd Panzer got within a few miles of the Meuse River. The advance guard of 2nd Panzer, which had received some fuel, soon arrived nearby the next day. Three Mark V Panther medium tanks from the reconnaissance battalion were knocked out by British tanks on patrol around Dinant as the British XXX Corps had been positioned to hold the crossings over the Meuse River. The Germans had reached their high water mark in the Ardennes offensive.

The Germans soon had other concerns when the 2nd Armored Division, VII Corps attacked, intending to cut off the 2nd Panzer's spearhead on Christmas Day. Two days later the spearhead was crushed despite breakout attempts and failed efforts from the Panzer Lehr Division and the rest of the 2nd Panzer Division to break through. Six hundred troops managed to escape on foot during a snowstorm. It was now clear to Manteuffel that further attempts to reach the Meuse would be useless.

Things were no better at Bastogne, where early on Christmas morning the Germans made a large thrust under the cover of darkness to avoid Allied aircraft. The 15th Panzergrenadier Division, under Colonel Wolfgang Maucke, who had just arrived the night before, made the main attack between Champs and Hemroulle to the west of Bastogne reinforced with elements of the 26th Volksgrenadier Division. The tanks quickly overran two companies of the 1st Battalion, 327th Glider Regiment. Despite being overrun, these troops hunkered down in their foxholes until the German tanks had

passed by and opened up on the next wave of advancing panzergrenadiers.

The German tanks split up. Some headed to Hemroulle and others toward Champs. Both these groups were shot to pieces by elements of the 502nd Parachute Infantry Regiment and 705th Tank Destroyers. When the smoke finally cleared, all 18 German tanks were knocked out, and supporting panzergrenadiers were either killed, wounded, or captured. Smaller infiltrating attacks by the 77th Grenadier Regiment, 26th Volksgrenadier had initial success around Champs, but these troops were soon pinned down.

The following morning a desperate effort in the direction of Hemroulle was repulsed by American artillery and tank destroyers. Elements of Patton's Third Army pushing north through the German 7th Army made contact on December 26 with the determined defenders of Bastogne, thus breaking the siege. Heavy fighting continued in the sector throughout the following week as the Americans attempted to secure the supply corridor between the Third Army and U.S. forces in Bastogne.

Hitler was adamant that Bastogne be cleared. To do this, the Germans assembled an army group drawn from elsewhere in the Ardennes that included the battered 1st SS Panzer Division, 3rd Panzergrenadier Division, and the Führer Belegeit Brigade to help take the town. Eastern front veteran Maj. Gen. Karl Decker's 39th Panzer Corps was brought in to handle the Bastogne operation. He attacked during a snowstorm on December 28 with no success. The following day Decker's corps was put under the command of Lüttwitz, becoming Army Group Lüttwitz.

Manteuffel launched a major attack on December 30 with the 47th and 39th Panzer Corps against the supply corridor from both the northwest and southeast, which was preceded by an artillery and rocket barrage. Patton launched an attack the same day. When the smoke had cleared after a day of bloody fighting, the Germans had failed. The corridor remained open, and Bastogne remained firmly in American hands.

Although fighting would continue into January before the bulge was erased, the German offensive was over. The Germans lost about 100,000 men killed, wounded, or captured. In contrast, the Americans suffered about 81,000 casualties. The 5th Panzer Army had advanced the farthest of the three German armies participating in the winter offensive. Still, the Germans gained nothing and lost a great deal. A high-ranking German officer said that the Ardennes campaign had "broken the backbone of the Wehrmacht on the Western Front." □

Lieutenant Commander Philipp Baron von Behr of Unit Stielau had made a wrong turn into town wearing a German uniform. Finding it lightly held, he said, “We got off with nothing worse than a fright.” Since then, however, news had spread, not only of fake Americans, but of the Malmédy Massacre. Skorzeny did not believe the massacre had occurred. “We considered that such a crime was quite unthinkable in the German Army.” Vengeful U.S. troops had arrived in force. Worse, a captured German alerted them to the impending assault.

In his headquarters at Ligneuville at 4:30 AM on December 21, Skorzeny launched a two-pronged assault under cover of darkness and fog, but lacking artillery support. Scherf led one battle group from the southeast with the Sturmgeschütz assault guns. SS Captain Adrian von Fölkersam led two companies of panzergrenadiers and paratroopers, four disguised Panthers, and the captured Sherman via side roads up to the village of Falize on a ridge southwest of Malmédy.

“Just when the attack was to begin,” remembered Skorzeny, “I heard heavy gunfire from the north. The right wing of the attack had run into a barrage and been held up.”

Scherf’s disguised assault guns had not fooled men of the American 120th Infantry Regiment at the Baugez crossroad, where victims of the massacre still lay in the snow. They called for artillery and gunned down fake GIs without mercy. Scherf lost 11 vehicles. “It was clear to us that the Americans had already been alerted,” he reported. “The battle group had already lost 60-70 men, dead or wounded, by this point. I wasn’t prepared to lose any more men and vehicles in the dark without reaching Malmédy so I ordered the battle group to drop back slowly toward Ligneuville.”

West of Malmédy a raised embankment led to a rail bridge over the Warche. A road bridge lay behind a choke point between an abandoned paper mill and a house, the forward command post of the 823rd Tank Destroyer Battalion. Nineteen-year-old Sergeant First Class Frank Currey, an automatic rifleman of the 120th’s Company K, and his platoon manning the roadblock were told “armor couldn’t operate in that terrain.... Just leave a squad to guard that bridge and you’re OK.”

Meanwhile, about a mile across the Warche Valley to the southeast, von Fölkersam had set up his headquarters in a café in Falize. He sent Lieutenant Peter Mandt with two Panthers toward the rail bridge and 1st Lt. Otto Dreier

with two Panthers and the Sherman, with full infantry support, toward the road bridge. They were only partially across the valley floor when somebody snagged a trip wire.

Flares popped overhead. Green tanks with white stars milled in the foggy dark. “We had hardly any chance of attacking reasonably,” reported Mandt, “as we had very little cover and we advanced very hesitatingly.” With their turret cupolas removed the Panthers resembled M-10 tank destroyers but required their commanders to expose their heads; the second tank’s commander took a mortal hit and fell back inside. Mandt’s Panther reached the embankment but hit a mine, unraveled a tread, and brewed up; with his crew dead, Mandt bailed out, took over the second tank, and fell back to Falize. “After the panzers were knocked out I believe the foot soldiers retreated.”

Dreier, assaulting the road bridge, was also hit in the face and staggered back across the field to Falize, leaving his crew to carry on. The lead Panther barreled down the street at full speed, crossed the bridge, stopped, and wheeled to cover the German advance. Panzergrenadiers reached the American command post and began tossing grenades through the basement windows.

Master Sergeant Ralph McCarthy of the 291st Combat Engineer Battalion had wired the bridge for demolition and explained the use of detonators to the men of the 120th, “but apparently those devices were not particularly high on their list of things to remember in the event of an attack.” First Lieutenant Kenneth R. Nelson of Company M led his machine-gun platoon’s defense as Germans closed to within 20 yards. Nelson was wounded. Sergeant John van der Kamp took over and was also hit, but carried on. Both won the Distinguished Service Cross, Nelson posthumously. Currey, darting back and forth through the fire between the paper mill and command post, used a bazooka, heavy machine gun, rifle grenades, and a medium machine gun in turn to hold off the attackers, earning the Medal of Honor.

“I could only guess what was happening up front by the noise of the fighting and the vehicles returning with wounded men,” recalled Skorzeny. At daylight he looked down from Falize to see “our tanks engaged in a hopeless struggle with a superior force of the enemy.”

The German Sherman and Dreier’s Panther were both hit and abandoned. Across the river, 2nd Lt. Arnold L. Snyder, a forward artillery spotter, crept up behind the stationary lead Panther and shot it in the engine compartment with a bazooka. Its crew bailed out. All but one was shot down as they fled back across the bridge.

German radioman Karl Meinhardt hid in a hayloft for six days: “I believed that our troops would continue the advance and I could fight my way out again.... I waited in vain.” That was the closest Panzerbrigade 150 ever came to fulfilling its mission.

At midmorning the fog lifted, and American artillery plastered the little battlefield with 3,000 rounds, including new top-secret, proximity-fused airburst shells, which showered the Germans with splinters. Amid confusion in Falize, the surviving Panther backed into its own command post. Fölkersam was shot in the buttock. Skorzeny was struck in the head and nearly lost an eye.

The following day, American engineers dropped Malmédy’s bridges into the river. Horribly, through miscommunications, the Americans believed the town was lost and bombed it three times, killing more soldiers and civilians than died in the Malmédy Massacre. Meanwhile, Soldiers’ Radio Calais, the British propaganda station, announced that no less than 250 spies and saboteurs had been taken prisoner, which must have given Skorzeny a laugh; by his count he had exactly 28 men over the lines.

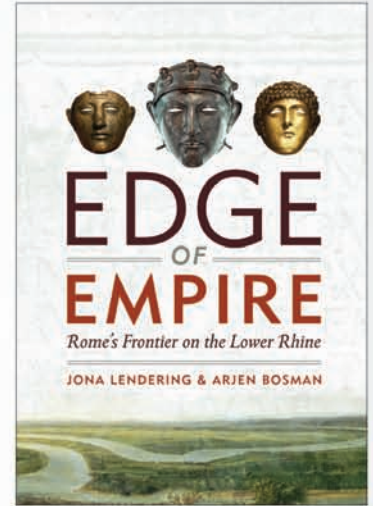
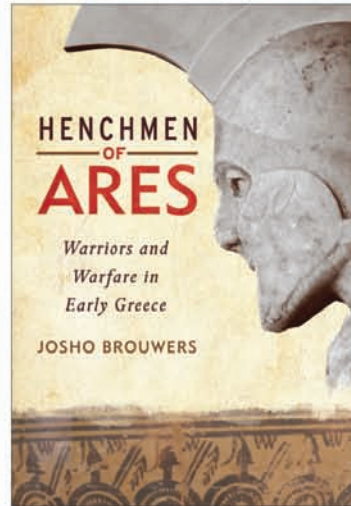
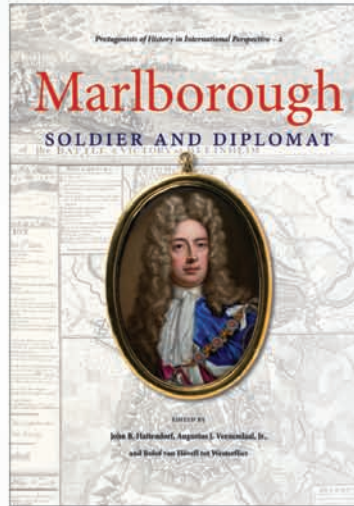
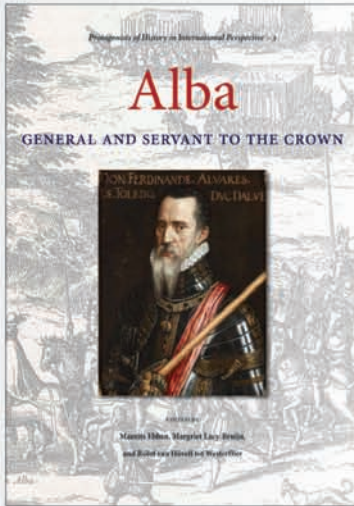
For many it was no laughing matter. Some of his three- and four-man teams found out the hard way that American jeeps rarely carried more than two riders and regulations forbade more than three. One unit requested “petrol” instead of “gas” and was captured. Another tried to pass themselves off as members of E Company, 14th Cavalry, learning too late that American cavalry was organized into troops, not companies; real Americans opened fire, killing them all. German lawyers had maintained wearing enemy uniforms was legal as long they were removed before actual combat, but American lawyers apparently disagreed. Eighteen Germans were shot as spies, including Perness, Schmidt, Billing, and almost certainly a number of ordinary Wehrmacht soldiers with the bad luck to be caught wearing captured American gear.

On December 28, Panzerbrigade 150, having taken 15 percent losses all told, went to the rear. Within a month the survivors all were back with their original units. Von Fölkersam went missing in action on the Eastern Front. Upon war’s end Skorzeny surrendered to the Americans. He, Scherf, von Behr, and others were tried and absolved of war crimes. After the war Skorzeny was implicated with the notorious Werewolf, Spinne, and Organization of Former SS Members networks. Nothing was ever proven, but for years every international plot and incident of intrigue required his official disclaimer: “I’m a retired kidnapper.” □



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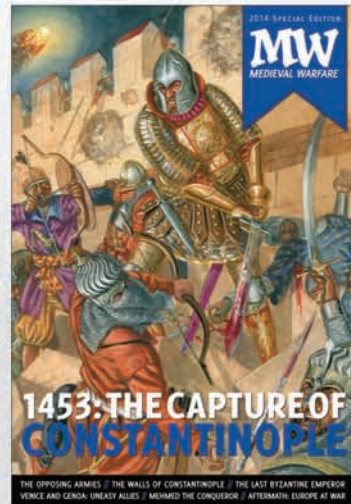
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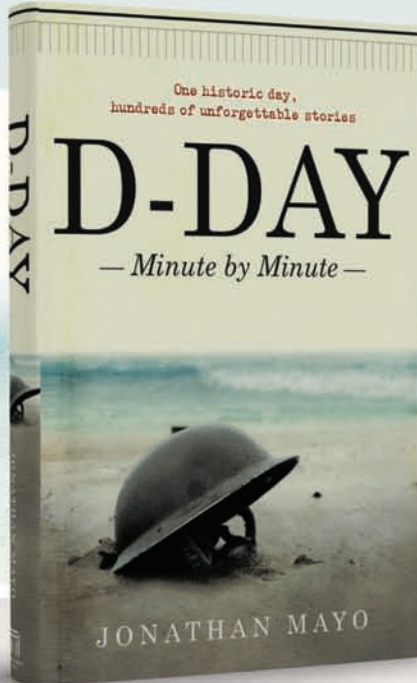
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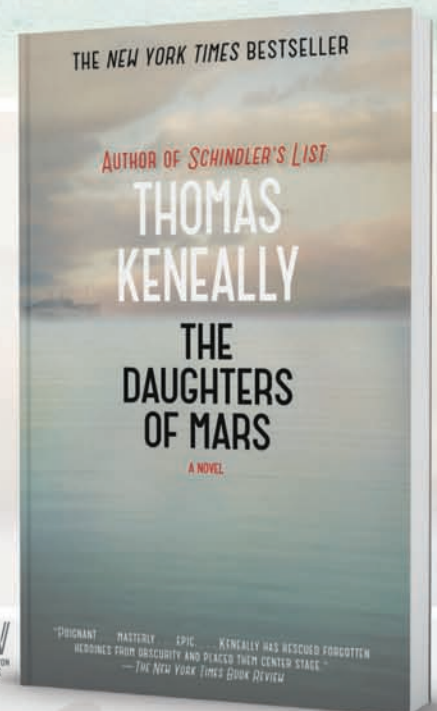


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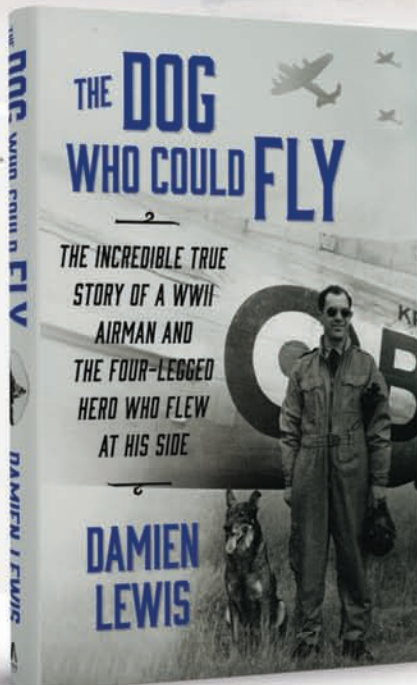
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