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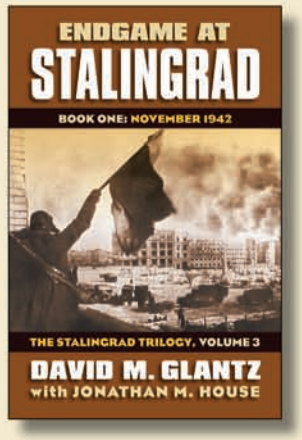

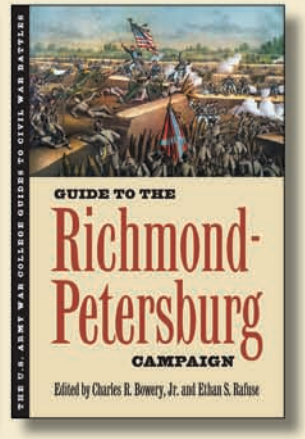

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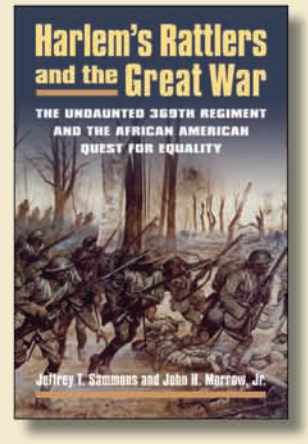

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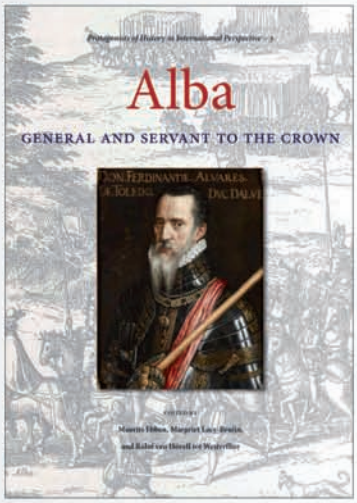

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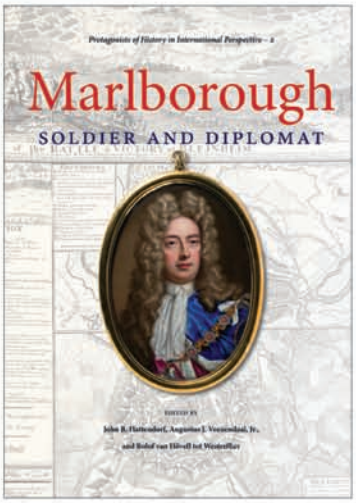

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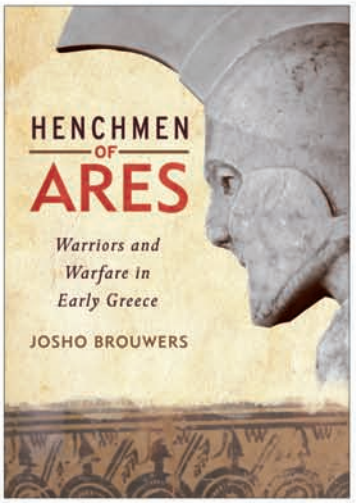

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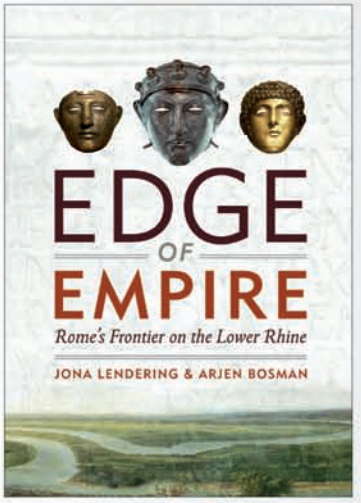

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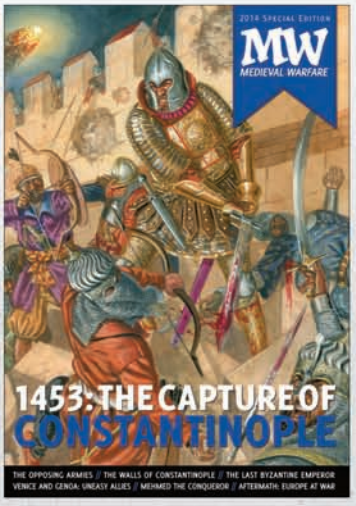

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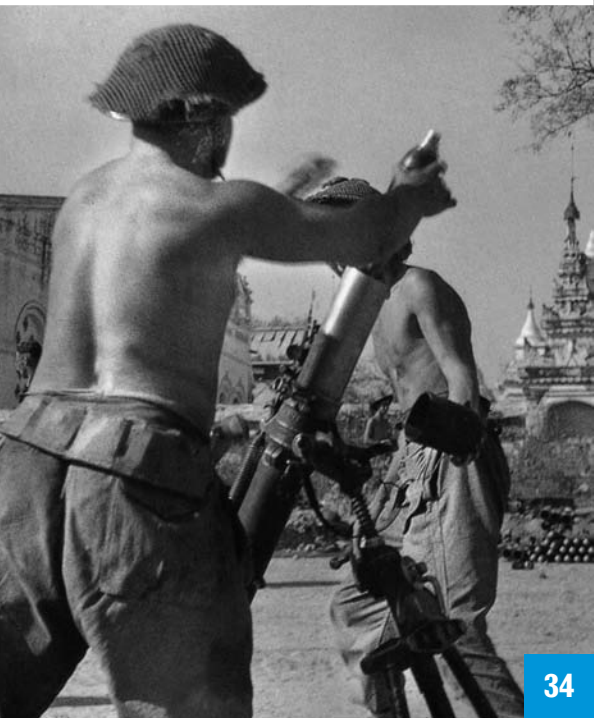

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COVER: A soldier of the 155th Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry, in Virginia in 1864. See story page 50. Image © Don Troiani, www.historicalimagebank.com.

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Dreams of Empire

THE STORY OF CHARLES OF ANJOU IS ONE OF THE lesser known episodes of Mediterranean history but a significant one. The youngest of several sons of Louis VIII, Charles received a unique opportunity available to few princes so far removed from succession. Pope Urban IV, eager to rid Italy of the Hohenstaufen rulers of the Kingdom of Sicily, recruited the French prince in 1262 to oust Manfred, the eldest son of Frederick II.

A veteran of the Seventh Crusade, Charles agreed before invading the Regno di Sicilia to rule it under papal suzerainty. The Regno, which was one of the richest kingdoms in western Europe, included the island of Sicily and southern Italy. But after he conquered the Regno by defeating in battle—first Manfred at Benevento in 1266, and then Conradin, Frederick's younger son, at Tagliacozzo in 1268—Charles honored the agreement only when it suited him. A senator of Rome, Charles also became through conquest the Imperial Vicar of Tuscany. Through his possession of the arsenal at Messina, he had a fleet capable of supporting military campaigns abroad.

Like Manfred before him, Charles was eager to conquer Constantinople. The Fourth Crusade had resulted in the destruction of the already weakened Byzantine Empire in 1204. For more than a half century afterward, the Latin Empire of Constantinople had been in the hands of weak rulers. In 1261, Michael VIII Palaiologos, co-emperor of Nicaea, ousted Latin Emperor Baldwin II and re-established the Byzantine Empire in Constantinople.

Following his conquest of the Regno, Charles took possession of the island of Corfu and the towns opposite it on the mainland that belonged to Manfred. From this bridgehead in the Balkans, Charles waged war against Michael VIII. Pope Gregory X, who succeeded Pope Clement, tried unsuccessfully to redirect Charles's crusading efforts away from Constantinople and toward the Holy Land.

Charles let his quarrels with the Republic of Genoa distract him from his goal of capturing Constantinople. In 1272, Charles became mired in a four-year war with the republic. The result was a two-front war that sapped resources that could have been used against the Byzantines. The same year he went to war with Genoa, Charles declared himself King of Albania.

Charles's gluttonous appetite for royal titles continued well into the 1270s. Through a deal arranged by Gregory X and completed shortly after his death, Charles purchased the Kingdom

of Jerusalem in 1277 from Maria of Antioch in exchange for a large sum of gold.

Although Charles was a competent commander, those he entrusted to lead his army in the Balkans were not. On April 3, 1281, Angevin general Hugh of Sully, who had laid siege to the Byzantine-held fortress of Berat in Albania, was routed by Byzantine general Michael Tarchaneiotes. The result was that the Angevins lost control of the interior of Albania and wound up where they had started with possession of only the coastline.

Charles's royal world came crashing down in 1282 when the Sicilians revolted against his rule. The War of the Sicilian Vespers went badly from the start for the Angevins. Charles spent the last years of his life trying unsuccessfully to recover the island of Sicily from the Aragonese, who had intervened on behalf of the Sicilians.

In his quest for an empire, Charles neglected to look after the well-being of his subjects. It was a mistake that not only put an end to his quest for an empire, but cost him his most important kingdom.

-William Welsh

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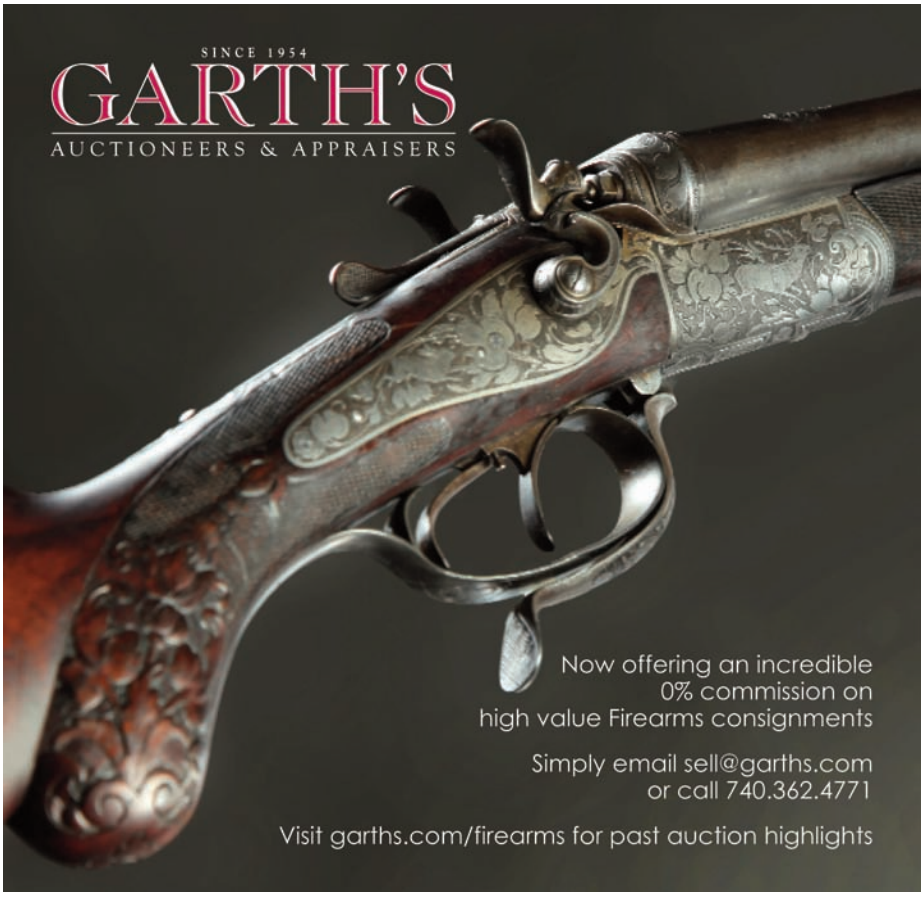

By Don Holloway

Guerrilla leader Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck was the sole German general of World War I to conquer British soil.

JUST A FEW DAYS AFTER BRITAIN AND GERMANY DECLARED WAR IN August 1914, their territories in East Africa declared peace. Colonial relations had always been civil; no less than Queen Victoria herself had agreed to a zigzag in the border, putting Mount Kilimanjaro on the German side because her nephew, Kaiser Wilhelm II, had no snow-capped peaks in his domains. Heinrich Schnee, governor of German East Africa (modern Burundi, Rwanda, and Tanzania, together larger than Germany and France combined) accepted a cordial offer from British East Africa (modern Kenya) to abstain from what was sure to be a brief, distant, European spat. However, his military commander, Lt. Col. Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck, disagreed: "I knew that the fate of the colonies, as of all German possessions, would be decided on the battlefields of Europe [but] could we, with our small forces prevent considerable numbers of the enemy from intervening?"

Baroness Karen von Blixen, Danish author of *Out of Africa*, had met Lettow-Vorbeck before the war and preferred him to the stodgy British. "He belonged to the olden days," she remembered. "I have never met another German who has given me so strong an impression of what Imperial Germany was and stood for." But he also was ahead of his colonial era times. In China, as part of the international coalition putting down the Boxer Rebellion in 1900, he had recognized both the effectiveness of native guerrilla tactics and "the clumsiness with which English troops were moved and led in battle." Being wounded in German West Africa (Namibia) and serving in Cameroon taught him the best soldiers to fight a European war on the Dark Continent were askaris—native Africans under European command. But his Schutztruppe ("protective troops," native infantry) numbered only 2,500, with a like number of native police and a handful of German officers, including Captain Karl-Ernst Göring, elder brother of future Nazi Field Marshal Hermann Göring.

Armed mostly with obsolete single-shot, black-powder rifles, with little hope of reinforcement or resupply from home and against orders,

BELOW: Lettow-Vorbeck understood that the best way to fight a European war in Africa was to recruit askaris who were born and raised on the continent. Askaris fought under German command using obsolete single-shot, black-powder rifles. RIGHT: Paul Von Lettow-Vorbeck.

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as Schnee feared a native uprising more than British invasion, Lettow-Vorbeck set about picking a fight he could not win. He sent a detachment to capture Taveta, a small village on the British side of Kilimanjaro and telegraphed Schnee in Dar-es-Salaam: "The German flag flies on British territory."

It was an unbearable affront to English pride. The Royal Navy sent the cruiser HMS *Fox* to politely inform the commissioner of Tanga, the coastal terminus of the Germans' northern railway, that the truce was off. With more than 50 hours advance notice, Lettow-Vorbeck's askaris enjoyed a novel train ride from Kilimanjaro to Tanga. At 3 AM on November 3, he and two officers bicycled by moonlight through the deserted streets to personally observe British amphibious operations. Some 8,000 Indian sepoys—Baluchis, Gurkhas, and Punjabis—were massing in the rubber, coconut, and sisal plantations on the Tanga peninsula (including a sentry who hailed, but neglected to shoot, Lettow-Vorbeck). The Germans were outnumbered eight to one, just as their commander planned.

The Allies attacked at dawn. On first receiving fire, the askaris fell back. "But when we Europeans got in front of them and laughed at them," wrote Lettow-Vorbeck, "they quickly recovered themselves." His machine guns tore away the sepoys' left flank, and the Schutztruppe turned it, cutting off their advance. The drone of bullets soon was replaced by a more ominous hum. The heavy fire had stirred up beehives hung in the plantation trees—African killer bees, which drove the invaders back into the sea. Tanga is often called "The Battle of the Bees." The British always insisted the Germans planned it that way, but "at the decisive moment all of the machine guns of one of our companies were put out of action by these same 'trained bees,'" wrote Lettow-Vorbeck.

The British left behind three companies' worth of new Enfield multiple-shot rifles, 16 machine guns, and 600,000 rounds of smokeless powder ammunition. Tanga was not only a British disaster; it set a precendent. From then on, most of the Schutztruppe's gear would be supplied by the enemy.

In January 1915, the Germans crossed the border again, taking the British coastal base at Yasini, but at a cost of 200,000 rounds and six officers dead, a sizable portion of their staff. The lesson was not lost on Lettow-Vorbeck. "The need to strike great blows only exceptionally, and to restrain myself to guerrilla warfare was evidently imperative," he said.

Throughout 1915, Lettow-Vorbeck targeted the Uganda railway. In one two-month period his raiders derailed 30 trains and blew up 10 bridges. The British put up with him while they subdued German Southwest Africa and the raider SMS *Königsberg,* trapped in the Rufiji river delta. Lettow-Vorbeck simply commandeered the cruiser's crew as extra infantry and had its 105mm guns, of which there were 10, mounted on wheeled carriages as field artillery. One of the guns, which the troops manhandled over some of the world's roughest terrain, would last the entire campaign.

But Lettow-Vorbeck could not match enemy manpower. By early 1916, the Allies assembled more than 27,000 men from Nigeria, the Gold Coast, South Africa, and Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), and Belgians from the Congo under a new commander. Afrikaner Lt. Gen. Jan Smuts's commandos had fought the British to a standstill in the Boer War. Having switched sides politically and tactically, he knew, "Merely to follow the enemy in his very mobile retreat might prove an endless game." In March Smuts launched a two-pronged attack past Taveta and Kilimanjaro, aiming to corner Lettow-Vorbeck in a kind of drive, a grand safari, a hunt for the biggest, most elusive, most dangerous game of all.

Instead of being driven, Lettow-Vorbeck led his hunters into one ambush after another over

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ground of his choosing and already stripped bare by his men, destroying bridges and rail lines behind him. Biding his time, he let the enemy battle mostly against his one real ally: Africa itself.

In the first year and a half of war, some 30 British fell to lions, rhinoceros, and crocodiles; one colonel said it was like fighting in a zoo. Communication wires were cut not only by enemy action, but also by giraffe and elephants blundering into them. A battle was disrupted when an enraged rhinoceros scattered first the British, then the Germans, and then the Masai tribesmen who had gathered to watch the fun. Any askari too badly wounded to go on had to be left behind. The wounded were captured if lucky; if not, they were killed that night by lions or hyenas.

Worse were the mosquitos, ticks, fleas, chiggers, and flies bearing vicious African diseases and parasites: malaria, typhoid, dysentery, sleeping sickness, and blackwater fever (named for the victim's blood-filled urine). The Germans, with mostly ersatz quinine referred to as "Lettow schnapps" to fight against malaria, were not immune. "I am apparently very sensitive to malaria from which I suffered a great deal," wrote Lettow-Vorbeck. He would come down with the fever no less than 10 times during the campaign.

Imperial War Museum

Ultimately, Lettow-Vorbeck could not match the superior manpower of the British Army in Africa. One of his most formidable opponents was Afrikaner Lt. Gen. Jan Smuts, a former Boer leader who was a brilliant tactician himself.

Twice a year came torrential, equatorial African rain. It lasted for weeks and was a phenomenon the likes of which even the South Africans had never seen. "All the hollows became rivers, all the low lying areas became lakes, the bridges disappeared, and all the roads dissolved in mud," wrote Smuts. Trucks, cars, motorcycles, and supply wagons sank up to their axles. Wireless sets shorted out. Communication fell to foot sloggers.

In March 1916, Smuts sent General Louis Jacob "Jaap" van Deventer's 1,200-man South African Mounted Brigade overland, through the rain, toward the road junction at Kondoa Irangi, a German food depot and wireless station. As soon as they left the airy plains and entered the jungle, tsetse flies swarmed them. Trypanosomiasis, eventually fatal to humans if untreated, is quickly fatal to equines. Mounts dying under them, van Deventer's cavalry became infantry; only 600, drenched and sick, staggered into Kondoa Irangi. The actual infantry, following a path marked by dead horses and mules rotting in the tropical heat, did not catch up until more than a week later, when of 600 men in the 2nd Rhodesian Regiment only 50 could still fight. They found the village abandoned, partially burned, and lying under the guns of some 4,000 Germans and askaris in the surrounding hills. Even when outnumbering the enemy, Lettow-Vorbeck had no intention of defending towns, much less becoming trapped in them; it was a policy that

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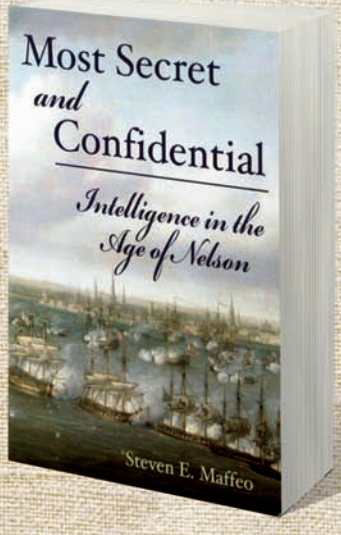

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Askaris constituted the majority of troops in Lettow-Vorbeck's German army operating in Africa. Like any good guerrilla army, Lettow-Vorbeck and his troops relied heavily on captured arms and supplies. BELOW: Lettow-Vorbeck's colonial troops in East Africa man a position on high ground. Rough terrain was the norm for operations in that region of Africa.

Bundesarchiv Bild 105-DOA3109, Photo: Walther Dobbertin

extended even to the colony's cities.

The British took Tanga that July and at the beginning of September captured Dar-es-Salaam. Schnee fled to join his commander in the field (and become a thorn in his side throughout the war). Lettow-Vorbeck was barely in any condition to lead. "He has lost 12 kilos in the past two weeks and is yellow with fever, but will not stop," wrote an adjutant. "He seems to live on coffee…. I watched him coming back to camp today after twelve hours in the bush … dragging his horse behind him, both of them footsore, and I am not sure which one more resembled a skeleton. One thing is certain. The horse will not last the next 24 hours, but the Colonel will."

On the Western Front, the Allies were dying by the thousands to take yards of French soil; in East Africa they had gained territory approximately the size of France itself, stretching their enormous manpower thin. Forced to halt, they sent the Germans a formal demand for surrender, which only encouraged Lettow-Vorbeck: "General Smuts realized that his blow had failed … he had reached the end of his resources."

Instead, at the beginning of 1917, Smuts declared victory and went off to join the Imperial War Cabinet in London. Catching Lettow-Vorbeck (whom the Kaiser promoted to general) ultimately fell to van Deventer, who had served under Smuts in the Boer War, taken a British bullet through the throat, and spoke little English. Sharing Lettow-Vorbeck's high opinion of askaris, he vastly increased his own native forces.

The Royal Navy captured the last of the German southern seaports, from which the Allies launched their fall offensive. Cut off from home, Lettow-Vorbeck dug in on high ground at Mahiwa, stood off their flanking attacks, and encouraged them to come straight at him. The British may have learned to use askaris, but only as they used men on the Western Front, vainly charging entrenched machine guns. "Wave after wave of fresh troops were thrown against our front," wrote Lettow-Vorbeck, adding, "The enemy by the increasing fierceness of his frontal attack was bleeding himself to death."

He hurled them back with 2,700 casualties, more than half the Allied troops employed, but lost 95 killed and 422 wounded. "Considering the smallness of our forces, these losses were for us very considerable, and were felt all the more seriously because they could not be replaced," wrote Lettow-Vorbeck. He regarded Mahiwa as a "splendid victory" but knew he could not afford many more of them.

By the last half of 1917, squeezed into the sparsely populated, primitive southeastern corner of German East Africa, Lettow-Vorbeck had only six weeks of food left. Germany even attempted but failed to resupply him with Zeppelin *L59*. With his back to the Rovuma River, the border with Portuguese East Africa (Mozambique)—Portugal had entered the war in March 1916—he determined to take back the offensive. "The war could and must be carried on," he wrote. "This could only be done by evacuating German East Africa and invading Portuguese East Africa."

Leaving their sick and wounded behind, on November 25 Lettow-Vorbeck and his fittest 300 Germans, 1,700 askaris, and 3,000 bearers waded the Rovuma. About 1,000 Portuguese troops contested the crossing. In what Lettow-Vorbeck called both a "fearful melee" and "a perfect miracle," the Schutztruppe killed all but 200, resupplying on their food and gear.

That was only the start. Beyond the river lay a land of plenty, lush plantations untouched by war, flush with supplies, poorly defended. That Christmas Lettow-Vorbeck slept in a real bed with clean sheets and mosquito netting; he and his officers enjoyed a dinner of roast pork with Portuguese wine, coffee, and cigars. One of them wrote, "Never have we fared so well during the past four years."

No less than King George V congratulated van Deventer on rendering the former German East Africa a British protectorate. But the Boer looked sourly to Portuguese East Africa as "an

equally arduous campaign … for the country is vast and communications are difficult."

By now the Schutztruppe was used to it. Marching two hours on and a half hour off, six hours a day, they covered 100 to 150 miles per week, trailed by a procession of camp followers, prisoners, women, children, old men, ex-governor Schnee and his staff, refugees, and other hangers-on, even chickens whose crowing threatened to give them away. An order "that the crowing of cocks before 9 AM was forbidden brought no relief," wrote Lettow-Vorbeck. The askaris' wives carried their loads on their heads and their children on their backs, bearing babies along the way. "They all liked gay colors, and after an important capture, the convoy, stretching for miles, would look like a carnival procession," wrote their leader. The Schutztruppe had become a nomadic tribe whose home was wherever the Bwana General, Lettow-Vorbeck, laid down for the night. "It was very jolly when the whole force bivouacked in this way in the forest, in the best of spirits, and refreshed themselves for fresh exertions, fresh marching and fresh fighting," he wrote.

But never far behind them came an even larger number of Allied askaris, all of them scouring Portuguese East Africa like a horde of driver ants. "This is a queer war," wrote one of Lettow-Vorbeck's scouts. "We chase the Portuguese, and the English chase us."

In July, at Nhamacurra, two-thirds of the way down to South Africa, Lettow-Vorbeck ran off the Allied garrison, captured a supply ship at the riverbank, and took the biggest cache of booty in the entire campaign. The haul included an English doctor, medical stores, 10 machine guns, 350 rifles, more than 300 tons of food, more wine and liquor than they could swill, and so much clothing that the askaris, Lettow-Vorbeck noted, "stopped stealing, as if by command. "Everyone was allowed to let himself go, for once, after his long abstinence [but] with the best will in the world it was impossible to drink it all," wrote Lettow-Vorbeck. They poured the rest in the river.

The Allies, fearing a German invasion of South Africa, landed on the coast to head them off. With the enemy ahead and behind, Lettow-Vorbeck simply dug in his heels, let them pass him by, and doubled back to the north. That autumn the Allies could not catch up to him, but the Spanish Flu pandemic did. Half his men began coughing blood. The sick and wounded were abandoned (among them Göring, shot in the chest and captured on September 6). British aircraft dropped propaganda leaflets encouraging the survivors to desert; as they neared home, increasing numbers of natives did. The Schutztruppe was down to less than 200 Europeans and 1,500 askaris when, at the end of September, they recrossed the Rovuma, shooting eight hippos for a celebratory feast.

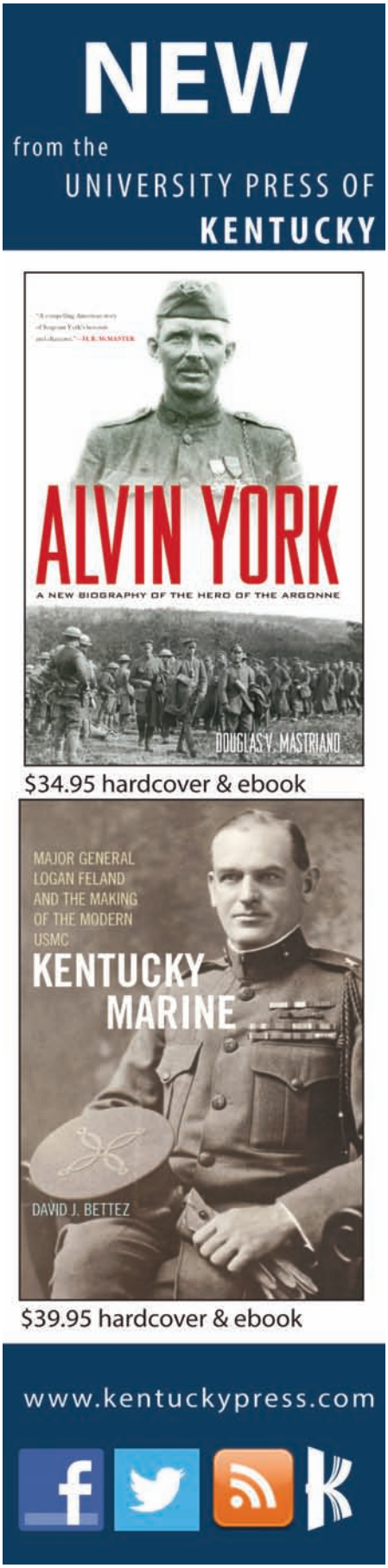
By this time, however, neither Germany nor its former colony was faring well. "Day after day we moved through country formerly fertile and well settled," Lettow-Vorbeck wrote. "The time for the change of direction was now approaching and there was not a day to lose." In mid-October he turned west, over Lake Nyasa, and crossed the border again—this time into Rhodesia. The war might be all but lost, but Germany's commander-in-chief Africa was still on the attack. As he put it, "There is always a way out, even of an apparently hopeless position, if the leader makes up his mind to face the risks."

With a whole new colony to invade, the Schutztruppe might have carried on the war for years, but time was running out. On November 13, having won a skirmish with the British and probing ahead on his bicycle for a campsite 100 miles inside the enemy border, Lettow-Vorbeck received a telegram from van Deventer advising him hostilities had ended two days earlier. The Imperial German flag would never again fly over Africa.

A British officer who met Lettow-Vorbeck on his surrender wrote, "Instead of the haughty Prussian one expected to meet, he turned out to be a most courteous and perfectly mannered man, his behavior throughout his captivity was a model to anyone in such a position." To corral him required the Allies to keep some 300,000 troops from the Western Front, of which they lost 20,000 Indians and Europeans and about 60,000 natives, plus an estimated 140,000 horses and mules.

For his part, Lettow-Vorbeck never commanded more than 3,000 Europeans and 11,000 Africans; at the end he was down to 150 Europeans, fewer than 1,200 askaris, and 3,000 bearers. They had fought a war they could not win, far from home, for a Fatherland most of them had never seen, battling not so much for Germany as for their general. In March 1919, he arrived in Berlin to a hero's welcome. "Everyone seemed to think that we had preserved some part of Germany's soldierly traditions, had come back home unsullied, and that the Teutonic sense of loyalty peculiar to us Germans had kept its head high," he wrote.

It might even be said that his strategy proved ultimately victorious. Over the ensuing century Britain, Belgium, Portugal, and France lost most of their African colonies to rebel movements—guerrilla fighters who learned from men like Lettow-Vorbeck how to lose battles but win wars. □



By John Perry

Nazi Germany's reliance on horses on the Eastern Front is downplayed in modern accounts, but the animals played an essential role during World War II.

ADVANCES IN MILITARY TECHNOLOGY, INCLUDING TANKS, JETS, and rockets, are among the popular images of Nazi Germany during World War II. But the reality is that horses pulled two-thirds of the vehicles and supplied 80 percent of the German Army's motive power. Many memoirs played up panzer attacks, and therefore can be misleading regarding the nature of the army's mobility.

The research and writing has been mostly about oil and seldom about oats. Yet, Germany's failure to mobilize led to a reliance on horses, with more than one million still active near the war's end. One German soldier wrote in his combat memoirs: "Whatever the relative merits of horse-drawn versus motorized transportation, our division was again relying almost exclusively on horses to haul our guns and other equipment by the time I returned to the front in mid-1944."

How did the mechanized myth spread? It spread because of war propaganda. For example, Nazi propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels censored all newsreel images of Hitler, putting him in a positive light. The same happened with combat footage. Tanks and planes looked more efficient and threatening than horses. Works such as Field Marshal Erich von Manstein's *Lost Victories* and Field Marshal Heinz Guderian's *Panzer Leader* begrudgingly gave a few lines to horses, the backbone of the German Army. Guderian did concede that companies "working with foot soldiers would do better to remain horse-drawn."

The United States helped perpetuate this tactical error. Frank Capra's series *Why We Fight*, produced during the war, used Nazi footage and showed horses briefly or during ceremonial parades. And where did all the horses go in Darryl F. Zanuck's *The Longest Day*? George C. Scott in the film *Patton* remarks that the Germans had been reduced to using horses instead of motorized vehicles. Many popular films about World War II such as Humphrey Bogart's *Sahara* and *The Desert Fox* with James Mason were set in North Africa where horses could not be used because of sand. Even current television documentaries stress tanks instead of horses.

The use of horses in the German Army tripled by 1939. One veterinarian admitted, "The German Army never considered completely replacing horses with motor vehicles. This was especially true when fuel and rubber shortages grew critical." Where did Germany find so many horses? Purchases from countries such as Hungary helped. Other sources included occupied countries in Central and Western Europe. Poland supplied up to 4,000 a week. Farmers, along with horses and wagons, were sometimes hired. On the Eastern Front, soldiers looted farms.

Bundesarchiv Bild 101I-458-0076-31; Photo: Stöpfgeshoff

A German panzer crew works on its Tiger I during the long Russian winter as German infantry marches past with a horse-drawn vehicle. By the war's end more than one million horses were still hauling German personnel, artillery, and ammunition.

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Many horses, of course, came from German farmers and breeding places, as much as half their stock. Because many peasants disliked losing horses, they sometimes sold weakened ones. Horses too large, under or over age, and even valuable studs served on the front.

The German Army used both warm and cold bloods. Arabian and American thoroughbreds are examples of warm bloods, while Clydesdales and other descendants of the medieval period are cold bloods. Cross-breeding was not that successful. As the war progressed, lighter ones replaced heavier draft horses, causing increased exhaustion. It required 10 to 16 horses to pull heavy field guns. Replacement horses were also marched to the front because only a handful filled needed railroad cars. Wider Russian railroad track gauges hampered supplies for both men and horses and had to be converted to narrower European gauges.

Adolf Hitler hated horses, and so cavalry played a minor role in World War II. The Führer wanted a fully mechanized army, which never happened. German cavalry units were forced to give way to the introduction and refinement of blitzkrieg doctrine and Hitler's passion for tanks. But cavalry patrols crossed certain types of terrain faster than vehicles. So, by mid-1942, operational cavalry units had been formed by some Army commanders for patrols and missions. Both Poland and the Soviet Union used cavalry. As Field Marshal Manstein grumbled, "A Soviet cavalry division can move in its entirety a hundred kilometers in a night."

Signal magazine

German SS troops rode into Russia in summer 1941 on horseback. Most of the troops and horses never made it back.

The German Army relied more on horse-drawn wagons to haul supplies, artillery, and for reconnaissance patrols during World War II more than in World War I. Up to 750,000 horses and mules served in Operation Barbarossa, the German invasion of the Soviet Union. The plan to invade England, Operation Sea Lion, involved more horses than vehicles: 57,000 to 34,000. Even Field Marshal Gerd von Rundstedt, commander of German Army Group South at the beginning of the campaign, admitted that the Germany Army in 1941 relied on divisions that moved by foot or horse-drawn vehicles. On the other hand, around 80 percent of Soviet transportation was on wheels. The so-called German blitzkrieg soon slowed because horses trailed behind panzers and often clogged roads.

Horses died on the battlefields at the rate of 1,000 each day. They died from wounds, exhaustion, exposure to the elements, and starvation. Fatal wounds were caused by shell explosions, fires, bullets, and hand grenades.

One gunner remarked, "Our route is lined by dead horses that have broken their legs or collapsed through sheer exhaustion." A German general echoed that the battlefield "was a fantastic sight … full of dead horses … some horses were only half dead, standing on three frozen legs, shaking the remaining broken one."

The Soviet Union, of course, depended on horses for agriculture. But their number of horses also dropped from 21,000,000 in 1940 to 7,800,000 in 1943. Such losses foreshadowed later economic shortages.

Ironically, the same Nazi regime that abused horses had called animals their comrades and passed the Law on Animal Protection in 1933. Hitler professed compassion for all dumb creatures and promised a prison sentence for "rough mistreatment" of animals. Luftwaffe chief Hermann Göring threatened to "commit to concentration camps those who still think they can continue to treat animals as inanimate property." Old and sick domestic animals had to be painlessly put to death. Even SS chief Heinrich Himmler got in the act, saying, "Nature is so marvelously beautiful and every animal has a right to live."

Although war horses offered many advantages over motorized vehicles in forests and in low-lying, marshy regions, they also could be killed, moved slowly, and needed feed and water whether active or not. They slept at night—and liked to stand. Most could not march more than 15 or 20 miles per day. Heavy draft horses made good targets for plane attacks. Horses were also sensitive to cold climates, particularly below zero temperatures, and suffered from frostbite and mange, a disease in which mites burrowed under their skin. This forced veterinarians to isolate them because it could spread. Dampness after sweating caused colds and pneumonia. Whenever one harnessed horse died, the entire team became immobilized.

Feeding horses created enormous logistic problems. According to the World War I plan, they could not operate more than 25 miles from a railhead before fodder supplies started to require more space than Army equipment such as rifles and ammunition. Yet, in World War II some infantry drifted 90 miles from the nearest railhead.

It was estimated that horses needed 53 tons of food each day in a normal division. Those in German Army Group A during World War I ate nearly 1,500,000 pounds of fodder a day that filled 97 railroad cars. Large individual horses could consume nearly 20 pounds a day. During one summer month alone in 1941, Germans took 112 tons of oats and 768 tons of hay from Russian farms. Starved soldiers were even tried for eating oats. Hungry horses gnawed at everything from walls to wooden beams and tree trunks. Their cotton feed bags also rotted, and roughage often arrived moldy.

Hitler planned to defeat the Soviet Union in the winter of 1941, but he mismanaged and mistimed the offensive, opposed by most generals who feared a war on two fronts. Hitler ignored terrain and weather, meddling in the military, arguing, and losing precious time. Seventy percent of German forces moved on foot. Colonel General Franz Halder predicted that each infantry division needed 4,500 horses and 2,000 horse-drawn wheeled vehicles. But the obstinate Hitler ignored advice.

The German battle of annihilation against the Soviet Union succeeded at first. German units advanced nearly 500 miles into Soviet territory along a front of nearly 1,000 miles, but soldiers ignored horses that coughed from dust, bolted from shell explosions, and died from exertion and heart attacks. One soldier wrote about the endless wasteland: "There is no rest. Always the same advance through treeless plains, in thick clouds of dust along endless roads, column after column, horses, rider and

artillery like ghosts."

Rains fell during the summer. "Yesterday it began to rain and it hasn't stopped yet," wrote one soldier late in July. "It's enough to make you desperate." By late September he added, "The rain is depressingly regular." Autumn rains, of course, caused flooding. The winter was worse. One soldier who praised "our dearly beloved Führer," called it "terrible hard," and said that snow was so deep that "animals sink up to their rumps in the drifts."

Winter ravaged the Eastern Front. Guderian noted, "During the night of October 6-7 [1941], the first snow of the winter fell. It did not lie for long and, as usual, the roads rapidly became nothing but canals of bottomless mud, along which our vehicles could only advance at snail's pace and with great wear to the engines." The few navigable roads, mostly dirt and sand, became mush that rose to the knees. Trucks with low ground clearance and tanks with narrow tracks got bogged down. It took teams of up to 36 horses to pull tanks and heavy guns from the mud. Field Marshall Fedor von Bock wrote in his diary, "The situation is enough to drive one to despair [and] it is hard to recognize the men, horses, and vehicles as a military column under their crust of dirt."

Conditions worsened as troops advanced deeper into Russia because frost and winter came earlier than expected. Mud froze. Temperatures dropped to 40 to 50 degrees below zero. Vehicles skidded over brittle ice-covered roads that caused horses, many of which lacked winter shoeing, to stumble, fall, and break legs. Snowdrifts hid trails, villages, and trenches. Guns jammed. Radiators froze. Many locomotives became useless because of gauge differences and fuel mixture. Spare parts for about 2,000 different kinds of vehicles could not reach the front. Fog and blizzards prevented air support.

Freezing weather numbed and killed thousands of tormented men. As von Bock put it, "We are as good as cut off from the outside world [because of the] blowing snow and heavy drifting [and] inadequately-fed horses." One soldier remembered, "Our trucks and vehicles would not start, and our horses started to die from the cold in large numbers for the first time; they would just die in the bitter cold darkness of the night, and we would find them dead the next morning."

Besides food, horses needed harnesses, watering gear, and horseshoes. They also required about 5,000 veterinarians during the war. Special trains transported horses, six per rail wagon and up to about 350 on each 55 wagon train. In the field, veterinarian companies followed combat units and tried to maintain cov-

Bundesarchiv Bild 183-B15084; Photo: Hans Lachmann

ABOVE: The hardship that horses bore in the service of the German invaders in the Soviet Union was cruel and heartless. The horses died by the thousands of heart attacks, starvation, and exposure to the elements. BELOW: The number of horses in this scene of German forces retreating west through the Soviet Union in 1944 gives an idea of the number of horses that units on the Eastern Front required to advance and retreat during four years of brutal warfare.

Bundesarchiv Bild 101I-241-2174-39A; Photo: Grupp

ered stations. Signs marked these areas. If horses were not treated immediately, they died, got stolen, or were even slaughtered.

Severely injured horses were evacuated by rail or truck to field hospitals that became swamped with several thousand at a time. Their anticipated capacity was 50. This caused chaos. One diarist wrote about an exhausted veterinarian: "He not only had to ride all day, but had to care for the horses who needed his attention at night. He was getting so little sleep at night that I often saw him sleeping on his horse as we marched during the day.

Some vets tried to replace larger horses with small mongrel ones called panjes (peasant) with hard hoofs that pulled sleds with wide runners. These were immune to many diseases, endured cold temperatures, and survived on everything from birch twigs to the thatched roofs of farm huts. These animals hauled farm vehicles called troika. However, their slower gait tired riders, and they could not pull heavy artillery on steel wagons.

Although many horses were evacuated on trains, others were slaughtered by troops and civilians who reported them lost during enemy fire. One soldier asked, "Can you imagine people flinging themselves at an old horse corpse, tearing open the head and swallowing its brain

Continued on page 74

By Peter Kross

German Intelligence Chief Admiral Wilhelm Canaris may have been a secret agent for the Allies.

ADMIRAL WILHELM CANARIS WAS AN ENIGMA. DURING WORLD War II, he headed the Abwehr, the German intelligence service. He was a brilliant man who was not an ardent Nazi like his superiors. He did all in his power to outwit the Nazis while at the same time working as their chief spy. How Canaris managed to pull off such a feat was an accomplishment in itself. One of the persistent rumors during and after the war was that Canaris was secretly working for the Allies and was one of the participants in an attempted coup to oust Hitler.

Canaris was born on January 1, 1887, in Aplerbeck, Germany, in the Ruhr Valley. He was the youngest of three children. His father was a prosperous engineer who managed an iron works. The family, which was Lutheran, took its religion seriously. As a young boy, he was called Willy by his parents, an affectionate name that he loved. Canaris met a woman, Erika Waag, in 1917, who would later become his wife. They were married on November 22, 1919.

Canaris entered the Imperial Naval Academy in Kiel on April 1, 1905. While serving in the German military in World War I, he dabbled in espionage. Canaris served in the German submarine and surface fleets and set up a spy network in French-occupied Morocco.

The British trapped and sank Canaris's ship, the cruiser *Dresden,* in April 1915 while it was anchored at Cumberland Bay, Robinson Crusoe Island, in the Juan Fernández Islands off the Chilean coast. The ship's entire crew was captured and interned in Chile. Canaris managed to escape and hiked over the snow-capped Andes Mountains to Argentina with forged papers.

Canaris boarded a ship bound for Holland via Falmouth, England, and arrived in Berlin in October 1916. He immediately reported to the German military on his adventures. Higher commanders saw great potential in Canaris and sent him off to Spain on his first intelligence assignment. Using the code name "Reed-Rosas," Canaris made contact with anti-Spanish North African tribesmen, whom he tried to entice into revolt.

In February 1916, he left Spain bound for Germany to be trained to command U-boats. The Italians arrested him at Domodossola near the Swiss border. Canaris was imprisoned in Genoa, where he made a daring escape by killing a prison padre, putting on his uniform, and walking out of jail before the priest's body could be found. Upon his return to Madrid, Canaris was put in command of a U-boat and served in the Imperial Navy until the war ended in 1918.

In 1920, Canaris took part in a plot organized by Prussian nationalist Wolfgang Kapp to overthrow the German government. Kapp's goal was to overthrow the Weimar Repub-

Admiral Wilhelm Canaris pictured with Colonel Franz Eccard von Bentivegni, an Abwehr counterespionage expert, in Smolensk in October 1941. Canaris alienated his superiors when visiting the Eastern Front, warning them not to expose German troops needlessly to the hardships of the Russian winter.

bundesarchiv bild 146-1976-138-02A, Photo: Unknown

lic and return Germany to her pre-World War I status as a monarchy. Canaris served a brief prison sentence after the unsuccessful coup.

As Hitler expanded his power in Germany, Canaris was leery of where Hitler was taking the country. But as a German officer, Canaris could not make his feelings known to his fellow officers. In September 1939, Canaris witnessed a mass killing in Bedzin, Poland as SS troops locked 200 Jewish civilians in a synagogue and set it on fire. Canaris was shocked by what he saw.

In addition, German intelligence officers informed him of mass murders being committed by certain military units during the initial phase of Germany's invasion of Poland. Canaris, who was outraged by what he saw and heard, went to Hitler's headquarters train where it was parked in Upper Silesia, to protest the massacre he had witnessed. There Canaris met with General Wilhelm Keitel, chief of the Oberkommando der Wehrmacht (German Military High Command or OKW), and sharply protested the matter. In so doing, Canaris was taking a huge risk to his personal safety and career. "I have information that mass executions are being planned in Poland and that members of the Polish nobility and the clergy have been singled out for extermination," Canaris said, adding, "The world will one day hold the Wehrmacht responsible for these methods since these things are taking place under its nose."

Keitel told Canaris not to mention any details of what he had seen to anyone else and to mind his own business. Little did Canaris know at that moment just how prophetic his words were.

British intelligence agents in Spain were watching Canaris while he was playing his sub rosa game. It has been reported that British Army Captain and MI6 chief Stewart Menzies vetoed plans to assassinate Canaris, proposed in 1943 by none other than British double agent Kim Philby. In later years, when speaking about this incident, Menzies said of Canaris: "He did give me assistance. I liked and admired him. He was dammed brave."

The British were not the only ones that kept a close watch on Canaris's military progress. Rear Admiral Max Bastian, commander-in-chief of the ships of the line, wrote a glowing report on Canaris on September 24, 1934. At that time, Canaris was leaving his posting on the battleship SMS *Schlesien* for another assignment. Under "General Opinion," Bastian wrote that Canaris "handled his command with admirable firmness and consummate professional skill." In answer to what new posts Canaris might be useful for he listed a half dozen high-level positions that included inspector general of the Reichsmarine, commanding admiral of the ships of the line for the Reichsmarine, and, last but not least, chief of the Abwehr Department in the Reichswehr Ministry.

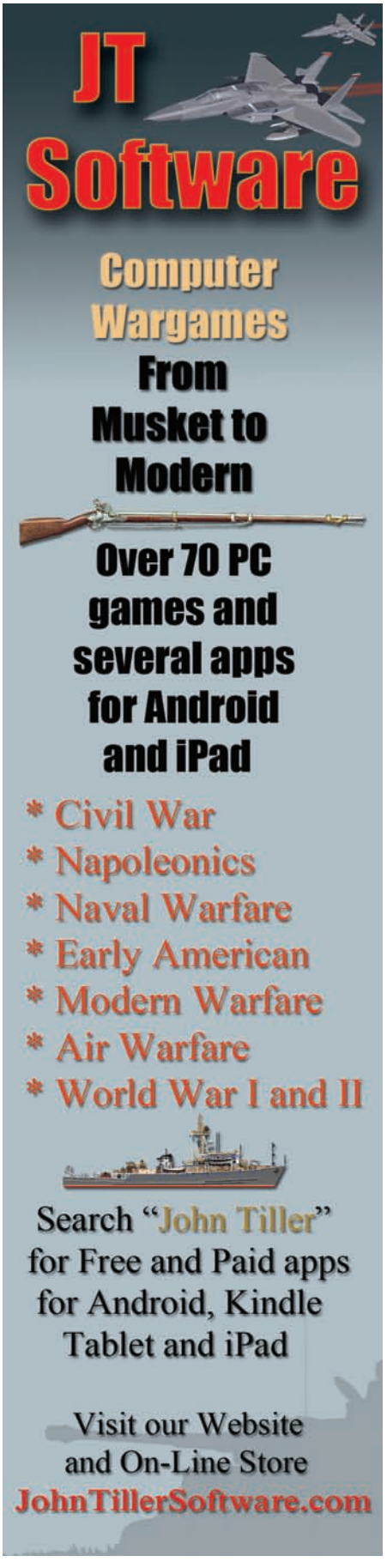
After serving a short while at a post in the Baltic, Canaris was appointed as the new head of the German spy service, the Abwehr, by Admiral Erich Raeder, the commander-in-chief of the Navy. He replaced Captain Konrad Patig. Canaris was surprised by the appointment. He had no previous intelligence experience (except for his time in Spain) and was not an administrator. However, orders were orders and he took up shop on January 1, 1935. As he took the job that cold January day, Canaris had no idea just how much his life would change.

When Canaris took control of the Abwehr, he had to deal with the head of the Sicherheitsdienst (SD), Reinhard Heydrich, one of the most powerful men in Germany. The SD was a component of the SS. Heydrich was dubbed the "Hangman" for his brutal actions against the enemies of the state. One of his first major acts was to give the order for Kristallnacht, or the Night of the Broken Glass, in which gangs of Nazi thugs physically assaulted Germany's Jewish population.

On Heydrich's orders, Jewish stores were destroyed and their owners arrested. The rampage laid the groundwork for the Holocaust. Heydrich got rid of a number of anti-Hitler generals. In 1939, Heydrich fabricated an incident along the Polish-German border in which Polish soldiers "invaded" a German military post. The "soldiers" were actually SS men. This incident incited World War II.

Canaris and Heydrich already knew one another. In order not to interfere with each other's operations, a pact was made in 1936 called the 10 Commandments, in which each side's duties were put in writing. The Abwehr took responsibilities for military intelligence operations and would give the SD any important information it came up with. The SD also agreed to pass along any intelligence that was important to Canaris's team. Canaris and the Abwehr now had the major role in German military intelligence, and after a while Heydrich did all he could to circumvent Canaris's power. Canaris had a secret file on Heydrich consisting of rumors that Heydrich had Jewish bloodlines.

Canaris began to alienate his bosses when he visited the Eastern Front in 1941. He warned his superiors not to pour German troops into a



major offensive against Moscow as winter approached. He told one of his friends, "Our resources in transport are wholly inadequate to maintain such large formations so far forward. If the situation of Russia is bad, it can hardly be worse than ours."

On his way back to Berlin, Canaris met in Switzerland with a woman named Halina Szymanska, who had connections to British intelligence. When the Russians invaded Poland they captured Madame Szymanska and her husband, Colonel Antoni Szymanski, who served on the Polish General Staff. Using his powerful connections, Canaris had been able to get Madame Szymanska and her children safely to Switzerland.

Claude Dansey, one of the top members of British intelligence, had made arrangements for Madame Szymanska to be introduced to British intelligence at the beginning of the war. She was given false identity papers naming her as a French citizen. For all intents and purposes, she was an agent of British intelligence, someone who could pass along vital information to Canaris in Berlin.

In reality, she served as the conduit between Canaris and MI6 under Menzies. In a daring move, Canaris sent his friend and ally Hans Bernd Gisevis to Switzerland, under cover as a vice consul, to aid Madame Szymanski in her anti-Hitler efforts. Gisevis had been a member of the German resistance and had been in constant contact with Dansey since 1939. Canaris met secretly with her in various places in Europe such as France, Italy, and Switzerland.

In later years, she wrote about her relationship with Canaris, saying, "I don't suppose you could call Admiral Canaris an indiscrete man, but he could be very outspoken. All his conversations were in the sphere of high politics. He would not have told me of petty military matters—small treason such as agents' dealings."

Nearly 40 years later, when intelligence historian Nigel West wrote a book called *MI6, The Sunday Times of London* found a retired spy named Andrew King, who told the *Times*, "Canaris had tipped off Szymanska in the late autumn of 1940 about Hitler's plans to invade Russia in the following year." He added, "Canaris and Szymanska had an understanding that this information would be relayed to London."

In describing the relationship between Canaris and Madame Szymanska, author John Waller, in his book *The Unseen War in Europe*, writes, "The significance of this indirect, closely held link between Canaris and the British is that the Abwehr chief established and ran it personally, a departure from his usual practice of staying in the background of the Resistance. Their relationship was a commentary on his trust in Halina Szymanska. Abwehr officer Hans Gisevius, her German contact in Switzerland, was to figure prominently in German Resistance affairs, including the July 20, 1944, bomb plot against Hitler, and to become a secret contact of OSS officer Allan Dulles in Switzerland."

National Archives

Canaris as a naval officer before the outbreak of World War II. His appointment in 1935 to head the Abwehr came as a huge surprise to him given that he had extremely limited experience in that area of operations.

When Canaris took over the Abwehr, he put in position men of high talent, many of whom were anti-Nazi in their politics. For example, Hans Piekenbrock was chosen to manage secret intelligence, and Helmuth Groscurth was put in charge of sabotage missions. Canaris even arranged for some men working in Germany's foreign diplomatic posts to act as informants, not real spies, who would provide whatever information they believed would be of interest to him. He placed agents in such countries as Austria, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Switzerland, along with other Balkan countries, even sending men to such places as Japan and Ethiopia. Abwehr agents did not fare too well in France, though. At one point, French intelligence operatives captured 21 of his men in such cities as Lyon and Metz.

Canaris was playing a dangerous game of double dealing against his own superior officers. On one occasion, SS Reichsführer Heinrich Himmler sent him to Spain to persuade Spanish Dictator Francisco Franco to cooperate in taking over the British Rock of Gibraltar. Canaris got the Spanish dictator to refuse to allow German troops on Spanish soil and to bar Spanish participation in any attack on Gibraltar. Canaris also tipped off Franco to the impeding German attack on the Soviet Union.

After the war, Ramon Serrano Sunner, Spain's foreign minister and Franco's brother-in-law, revealed "how amazed he was that, despite the dramatic Nazi march to victory, Canaris kept insisting that Germany would lose the war in the end."

Canaris was adept in keeping his anti-Hitler views from coming to the front, as is seen in his overture to the Dutch military attaché in Berlin, Colonel Gijsbertus J. Sas, on February 28, 1940. Canaris's assistant, Colonel Hans Oster, informed Sas of the impending German invasion of Norway and Denmark. Sas reported the vital information to the Danish naval attaché, Captain Frits Kjolsen, who passed that news to his superiors in Copenhagen. To Canaris's disappointment, the news was not taken seriously by top Norwegian officials and nothing was done to prevent the upcoming invasion.

In October 1939, Canaris sent another representative of the Abwehr, Joseph Muller, to the Vatican to contact various British and Belgian diplomats. Muller was a brilliant lawyer by trade and was nicknamed "Joe the Ox" by his friends. He told the Dutch and Belgian ambassadors that Germany was planning to attack their nations around November 12. Once again the diplomats did not take Muller's warnings seriously. However, they were saved when Hitler, for some reason, decided not to mount the invasion at that time.

Muller once again showed up in the Vatican on May 1, 1940, and told a Belgian representative that the Germans were going to invade on May 10. The message was sent to Brussels but it was not believed. This cable was intercepted by the Gestapo, and Hitler was informed. He ordered Canaris to find out who sent the message, and he ordered Muller to investigate. Needless to say, there was no investigation of the leak, and Canaris had once again covered his tracks.

Muller was a busy man, and in June 1940 he was back in the Vatican carrying important news. He contacted a British officer and told him that Hitler was planning an invasion of England, code named Operation Sea Lion. There was no date, and despite widespread preparations by Hitler, no invasion of England ever took place. When British Prime Minister Winston Churchill penned his wartime memoirs, he said that he knew of Sea Lion even before most of the German general staff did. Muller later told Churchill of the German plans to invade Russia.

Although there is no concrete proof that Canaris was working secretly with British intelligence during the war, the boys at MI6 knew quite well who their opponent was and what his personal views on Hitler really were. To this effect, the British mounted a propaganda campaign to discredit Canaris at all costs. They called him an assassin, "a rat with a human face," and "an evil genius." By degrading Canaris, they were helping the Abwehr chief to remain credible with the German leaders.

Menzies had a growing respect for Canaris, and he wanted to know as much information about him as possible. During the war, the British recruited a Yugoslavian named Dusko Popov as a double agent. He was originally recruited by the Abwehr to spy on the British. Instead, Popov became a double agent, working secretly for the British, who gave him the code name Tricycle. Once Popov was safely encased inside British intelligence, Menzies asked him to provide as much information as he could on the leading Abwehr officials, including Canaris, Hans Oster, and Hans von Dohnanyi.

After the successful U.S. landings in North Africa on November 8, 1942, Canaris secretly sought an audience with Menzies using Portugal as a possible meeting place. If the two men could come to some sort of an agreement, then maybe the war could come to an end sooner. Menzies asked British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden for permission to meet with Canaris, but his proposal was nixed. In his book *The Philby Affair,* author Hugh Trevor-Roper wrote that Canaris made several secret trips to Spain during the war and had "indicated a willingness to treat with us: he would even welcome a meeting with his opposite number 'C' [Menzies]."

Under the nose of the Gestapo, Canaris had his most trusted agents make arrangements for a number of Jews to be sent out of Germany under cover as Abwehr agents. Colonel Erwin von Lahousen, an Abwehr section head and a trusted aide of Canaris's, said of his boss, "I know Canaris played a double game. What the limits of that game were, I could not say. Yet, in all that Canaris did, or omitted to do, it is difficult to recognize a clear and undeviating line. He hated violence, was repelled by the war. He hated Hitler and the Nazi system. His weapons were intellect, influence, cunning, and above all—the double game."

By the end of July 1941, resistance against Hitler was growing among many of the top military officers. Among those who were secretly plotting against him was Maj. Gen. Henning von Tresckow, chief of staff of German Army

National Archives

Canaris (right) confers with top Nazi party officials Reichsfuhrer-SS Heinrich Himmler (left) and Chancellor Joseph Goebbels. Canaris played a dangerous game of double dealing with his superiors by hiring agents who were anti-Nazi in their politics.

Group Center at Smolensk; Fabian von Schlabrendorff, a resistance leader; and Field Marshal Gunther von Kluge, commander of Army Group Center. They all agreed that Hitler was leading the country toward destruction and that something had to be done to stop him.

Tresckow devised a plan whereby Hitler would be killed when he came to visit Kluge's headquarters at Smolensk on March 13, 1943. Canaris arrived at Kluge's headquarters one day before Hitler's arrival. He met with the other conspirators and told one of them, "Our generals have cold feet." The assassination attempt was not carried out when, at the last minute, von Kluge cancelled the plan.

In April 1943, the treacherous actions of Oster and Canaris were finally unmasked by Gestapo agents who found documents linking Oster to the smuggling of Jews out of Germany. In what turned out to be a lucky break for Oster, he was spared harsh punishment and given only a slap on the wrist in the form of a conviction for inefficiency. Oster was removed from his Abwehr post, which came as a terrible blow to the resistance.

Canaris's star had been fading rapidly as the war progressed. His pessimistic views on the progress of the war on the Eastern Front made not only Himmler but also Hitler more distrustful of the way Canaris was handling the Abwehr. Although they did not need an excuse to fire him, one event pushed them to oust Canaris. On January 26, 1944, Argentina broke diplomatic relations with Germany as a result of enormous pressure from the United States. In the fallout of the diplomatic break, a number of Abwehr spies were arrested in Buenos Aires.

Hitler blamed Canaris personally for the diplomatic rupture and called him to the Eagle's Nest in the Bavarian Alps to explain his actions. According to Popov, Hitler grabbed Canaris by the lapels and shouted, "Are you trying to tell me I've lost the war?" It was Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop, not Hitler, who officially fired Canaris in February 1944. The Abwehr became part of the SD, which was taken over by Himmler. Canaris was neither arrested nor charged in the matter.

One final attempt on Hitler's life took place on July 20, 1944, in what was known as Operation Valkyrie. While Hitler was at his headquarters at Rastenburg, East Prussia, the plotters, led by Reich Reserve Army Chief of Staff Colonel Claus von Staffenberg, placed a bomb in the room where Hitler was conducting a meeting. The bomb went off, but Hitler survived. In the immediate purges that followed, many of the conspirators, one of whom was Oster, were arrested. The Gestapo arrested as many as 7,000 people, nearly 5,000 of whom were executed.

Although they were not killed in the immediate purge following Operation Valkyrie, Hitler ordered both Oster and Canaris executed alongside other leading members of the German resistance at Flossenbürg concentration camp on April 9, 1945.

Erwin von Lahousen said that during the war Canaris kept a diary of what he saw and did while Abwehr chief. Although no physical copy of the diary has ever been found, a diary by Canaris would prove a boon to historians of the war. Von Lahousen said that Canaris hand wrote the entries until summer 1939, and after that dictated them to his secretary, Vera Schwarte. Both Oster and von Lahousen copied Canaris's notes in their own files to have a second record. When Canaris was removed in 1944, there were six binders and six notebooks filled with his recordings, according to the two men.

Right up to the end, Canaris worked diligently behind the scenes to right the wrongs of Hitler's Germany as he saw them. While there is no smoking gun directly linking him to British intelligence, his many efforts to pass secret messages to the British, his actions in sending numerous Jews abroad under Abwehr cover, and his participation in various plots to kill Hitler made him one of the unsung heroes of the war. □

By Michael Cobb

Painting military miniatures requires attention to detail, patience, and basic art skills. The payoff can be tremendous.

MILITARY MINIATURES ARE AN EXTENSION OF THE TOY soldiers many of us had when we were children. But they are distinguished from the ones we grew up with in that they are painted and detailed to an incredibly high degree. Collectors, painters, and modelers of military miniatures are found all over Europe, but there are not as many of these hobbyists in the United States and Canada.

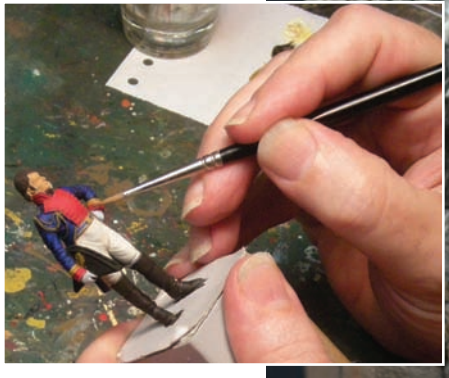
I grew up as a modeler of cars, planes, tanks, and any other plastic kits I could get my hands on. My first job, which I got when I was 14 years old, was in a local hobby shop, and to this day my passion for modeling is as strong as ever.

My first experience with military miniatures came after I got out of the service and wanted to start building again. The house we lived in at the time did not have sufficient room to build or display models. I discussed this with a hobby shop owner I knew, and he showed me the miniatures that were on display in his shop.

The little figures were small enough to fit in the tight space I had. He recommended a local shop that specialized in miniature figures. After my first visit to that shop I was hooked. The staff assisted me in obtaining my first figures from England. I began visiting the shop every time a new shipment arrived to help the staff unpack. This way, I was assured first pick of what arrived.

The miniatures arrived unpainted and came with little or no information on what the uniforms were or how to paint them. I have always been interested in history, and I eventually earned a history degree. Using my historical research skills, I have purchased and gathered books and other material that constitute my personal reference library on uniforms and the soldiers who wore them.

Since most of the figures came from English sculptors and manufacturers, I found that most of the early subject matter available was limited to British soldiers. I spent most of my Saturdays at the local hobby shop seeking not only the new figures, but also specialty books that describe how to paint them. From those weekly visits I soon developed a set of friends that



RIGHT: An elite foot gendarme of the Guard. BELOW: The author prefers artist oil paints over acrylic paints, and uses the finest quality red sable brushes because they are ideal for painting the fine details that transform the figures into works of art. He is shown painting Dominique Jean Larrey, surgeon of Napoleon's Imperial Guard.

All: Author's Photos

share my interest in the hobby.

Sadly, most of the traditional brick-and-mortar hobby shops are gone now, which leaves the Internet and model shows as the best ways to find new project ideas. Most of the current figures come from European manufacturers and are found on websites located around the world.

Soon after I began visiting that local hobby shop, I joined a local miniatures club and I have now been a member for more than 40 years. We still have one the most active figure clubs, the Military Miniature Society of Illinois (www.MMSIChicago.com), in the United States.

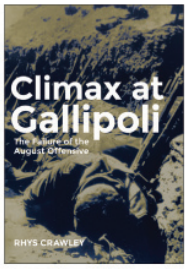
The club schedules speakers at monthly meetings, holds weekend modeling workshops, and sponsors an annual show that attracts collectors and modelers from all over the United States. The MMSI Chicago Show is in its 39th year. This October it will display the work of more than 100 modelers.

I view the collected displays annually and marvel at the quality and variety of the work, which seems to improve every year. The many friends and mentors I have in the club and others I have met at miniature shows give me constant encouragement and teach me new ways to paint and detail my miniatures. Since I am now an accomplished miniature painter, I also try to encourage and mentor others in the hobby. One wonderful aspect of this hobby is the willingness of the best painters and modelers to share their techniques. It is this open interchange that makes it so enjoyable.

I prefer to buy commercially cast figure kits and then paint and detail them to a high standard rather than sculpt figures of my own, as do many of my friends. These kits are available from many small manufacturers, mostly in Europe, and they cover every subject imaginable. They are cast in white metal or resin, and they are available in several sizes.

The most common size available is 54 mm, which means that the figure is about two and one-half inches tall from his feet to his eyes, but there are other sizes available with figures that might be as tall as 120mm or 180mm. There are Roman, Napoleonic, Victorian, World War I, World War II, and modern armies. In addition, there now are many fantasy armies to choose from, too.

I am a traditionalist of sorts, as I prefer the 54 mm figures. These figures were the most common size and are roughly equal to 1/32 scale, but larger figures and busts have recently become more popular. The rise in popularity is likely due to the improved casting techniques and materials now available.



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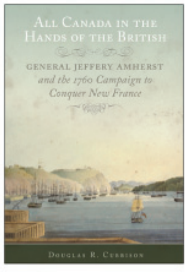

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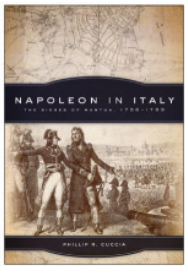

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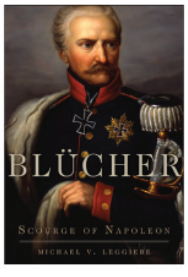

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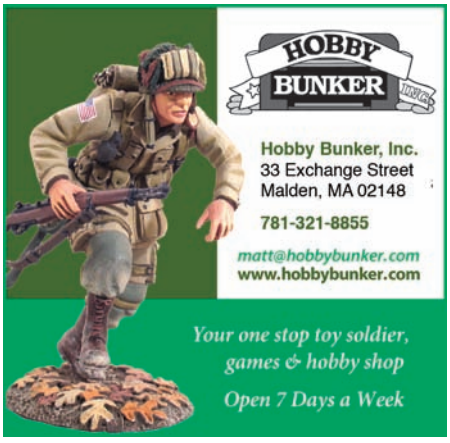


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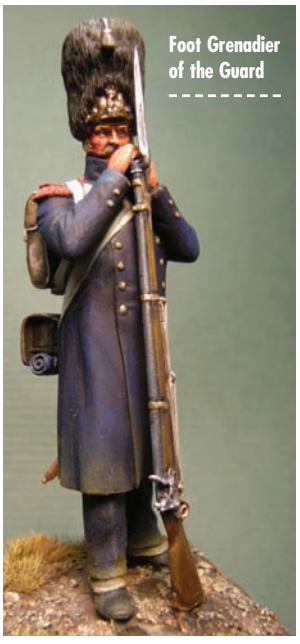

Foot Grenadier of the Guard


Prussian Guard

The figures I started with were cast in soft white metal with a high lead content. Some wags used to say that the early British figures were cast from lead water pipes reclaimed from the London Blitz. These figures were soft and malleable and could be easily modified into slightly different poses by bending an arm or leg. Today's figures are cast from better metal or resin and offer much finer detail and so many variations that I don't often find the need to modify them, preferring to research and paint each new subject to the highest standard I can. I most often paint individual figures and occasionally small groups or vignettes.

My first interest was in the British Indian armies of the Victorian era, as I was drawn to their colorful uniforms and striped turbans. I do not specialize in any period anymore, but instead try to choose subjects that interest me or provide some particular painting challenge. For example, I wanted to see what it was like to paint pink and thus chose an officer of Frederick the Great's army with pink trousers and vest. I had to experiment and work to develop an effective pallet, but it was a learning experience that turned out a quite colorful figure.

Fantasy figures often offer color challenges since there is no set uniform or color scheme, and I will add one of these to my collection when I need new color inspiration. I have begun to experiment with new colors and have added metallic powders to the paint for new effects. I often seek out these new challenges in color or technique in the figure subjects I choose.

I enjoy the painting process and have tried to keep it my focus. I am somewhat of an old-school painter, preferring to paint with artist oils rather than the newer acrylic paints that have come into fashion. My introduction to oil paint was when one of our local modelers, Sheperd Paine, who eventually became a successful professional modeler, began to offer painting classes. Shep began his classes with five tubes of paint: red, blue, yellow, black, and white. His idea was that learning about colors and how to mix them was a necessary foundation in teaching people how to paint.

This constituted my introduction to color mixing and fostered a continuing interest in color and paint characteristics. This interest in color has been something that has grown over the years; it is one of the reasons I enjoy painting so much. Color theory and the ability to mix color has been a big help for me because oil paints do not really offer any premixed paint in the colors required for most projects.

I have a small drawer of paint tubes that has expanded from Shep's first five colors and now form my pallet. Many of these new tubes are really crutches or shortcuts that I use to speed the painting process since I do not have to mix all colors from the five basics. Nevertheless, the range of colors that I use is still relatively small. I use the finest quality artist's red sable brushes because these brushes have the finest, longest lasting points and are ideal for painting the fine detail these models need to be successful. Contrary to popular belief, these brushes are bigger than a few hairs but have very fine points.

I prefer using oil paints as the drying time is slow and allows for "wet blending," which is the use of a good brush dampened with a little painting medium. Carefully dragging the brush over the edge of two tones of paint blends them into a smooth and seamless color transition.

This blending takes some practice but is what separates the best figures from the average ones. Some acrylic painters feel the long drying time required for oil paint is a disadvantage as it may take a couple of days drying before you can move on, but I usually have another figure standing by that is already dry and ready for more work.

Acrylic paints dry quickly. Acrylic painters achieve blending by layering slightly different tones over each other until they achieve a smooth, blended tone. For me, the slower drying time required by oil paint is not a problem since I normally am not working to a deadline. I also feel that oil paints offer more color vibrancy than acrylic paint, but this is a topic of much debate between devotees of the two mediums. I always find interesting discussions on the relative merits of each medium when viewing figures painted in them at the various shows. It offers a never ending series of conversations on the subject.

Before I start to paint, I like to research the details of the uniform I am going to paint and the history of its wearer. Most of today's commercially produced figure kits come with some basic reference on the figure's uniform, although it never seems to be enough information for me and is frequently in another language. The language difficulty is now easily satisfied through one of the many online translation programs, although most never seem to give the little details that I want to make the figure as accurate as possible. Details specifying the color of the belt or the badges on the cap never seem to be included, and those missing details often compel me to go to the library so that I can be sure every detail is correct.

Over the years I have amassed a large library of material describing soldiers, their uniforms and equipment and the campaigns of various historical periods. I also do an Internet search when I do not have printed reference material. I try to make each figure as accurate as possible, changing small details when necessary, such as adding a better sword or firearm from another kit or company. I also make my own straps and belts from lead foil wine bottle wraps. Furthermore, I always take time to learn a little about the campaign or history of each figure.

After the research is done, I clean the casting of any flaws or mold lines. It takes a lot of time and patience to do a good job, as any seam lines you miss now will detract from a good paint job. I then proceed to the assembly, as most figure kits are made in several parts, perhaps with separate arms, heads, weapons, and equipment. A little epoxy or super glue puts each part securely in place. Once assembled, I fasten the figure to a temporary painting base that gives me something to hold while I am working. I spray a coat of

primer and then add some base colors to the various parts of the uniform and figure.

Once that is done, I can begin painting. The basic process for painting suggests that one starts with a base color and then add darker tones to the shadows and lighter tones to the highlights of the folds and creases in the uniform, while also adding appropriate shadows and highlights to emphasize the figure's anatomy. While painting the uniform, more attention is paid to emphasizing the shape of pockets, belts, pouches, epaulettes, cuffs, and special uniform details.

The real secret is to blend the three basic tones seamlessly. This takes a smooth, light touch, a soft brush, and a little painting medium. Small miniatures need to have the highlights and shadows exaggerated to bring them to life. Looking at a 54mm figure is rather like viewing a real person at a distance of 6 to 10 feet. Adding and blending just enough highlights and shadows and smooth color blending add the artist's touch.

I usually try to paint each figure as the person would dress. I start with the pants and then move on to the uniform jacket and various accouterments. I will then add the flesh of the face and hands. Painting the face and hands takes patience, as first you need to add the eyes with the whites, pupils and iris. Be sure that both eyes are looking the same way and are not cross-eyed. Well done eyes can make or break a good figure, and remember that the face of a 54mm figure is about the size of the fingernail on your small finger.

Once the eyes are in, I move on to shaping the face by adding shadow to the sides of the nose, temples, and around the eyes, chin, and mouth. Adding highlights to the nose, cheeks, eyebrows, lips, and ears then brings it all together. The hands come next with shaping of the fingers with shadow and highlights, special attention being paid to the knuckles and fingertips. Any additional detail of belts and buttons are usually added last.

Some painters say that they prefer to do the face first as they feel that they need to see the little person inside first. Whatever works best for you. Each of these steps requires some drying time with oil paint. If painting a new color is started before the last color has dried, you can wind of blending two colors into something unwanted. This generally means that completing a figure is accomplished in several small painting sessions over several days or weeks. After the figure's flesh and uniform are complete and have dried, I give it an overall spray of dulling agent to dull any sheen left in the oil paint. This also helps unify the color tones on the figure. After applying the matte spray I finish by adding the appropriate amount of gloss or sheen to leatherwork along with any metallic colors necessary for buttons, badges, and metal work. These last little details help to add life to the figure, and attention here helps make everything come together.

After finishing the uniform and adding these last little details, I mount the figure to a finished wooden display base. Now, one last is step needed. I add some groundwork to complete the scene for the figure. I might add a bit of grass or stone, or perhaps a bit of trench work for a World War I figure. Each base is different and should help create an appropriate scene. A good friend once described this as the frame for your picture. I have always tried to pay special attention to the bases and groundwork. Setting the correct scene is very important to me. I have become known for this in our group, and I frequently chide others who do not pay as much attention to this part of their modeling.

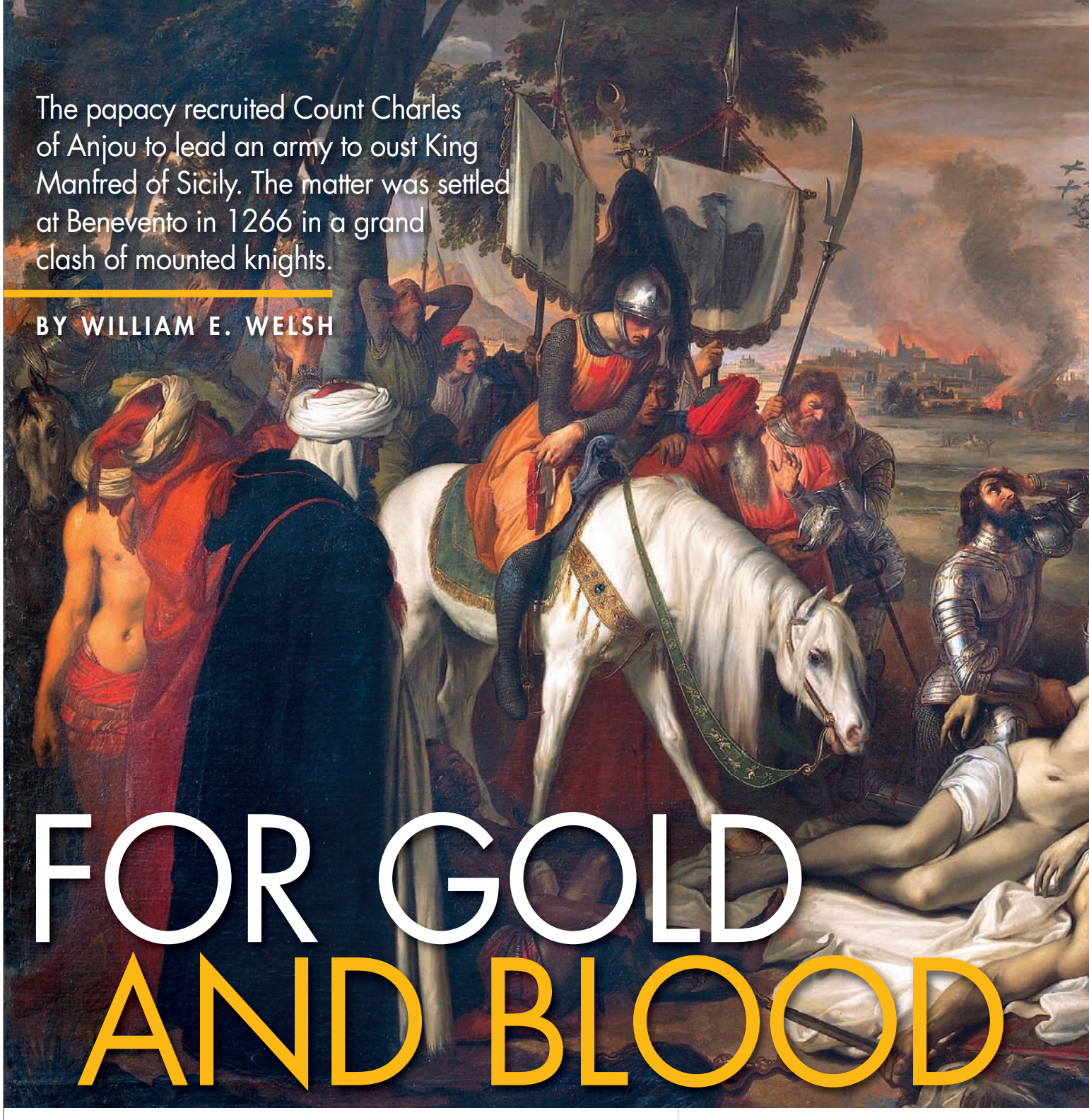
Once I have completed my figures, I take them to a club meeting or model show so I can share the effort. This is an important step for me before I put them in display cases that I have built into my basement walls. Over the years I have accumulated many painted figures. I keep most of my favorites, but I also tend to give them to my friends as gifts when I find a special subject that means something to them.

In addition, I frequently offer my figures to our club for sale at auctions that help raise funds. There are often bidders at the auctions who are collectors rather than modelers. I know that there is a small group of collectors who prefer to collect rather than paint. Some of these collectors seek out the best painters and commission new work or purchase their latest work at shows.

Some of the best modelers also have had their work added to famous collections and museums. I sometimes trade my work to other painters in exchange for theirs and have built a small collection from painterswho are friends. I value my collection by the hours of enjoyment it has brought and the lifelong friends I have made. I could not have made a better investment.

Would you like to know more about military miniatures? If you are ever in the Chicago area, we would be happy to welcome you to our small group of painters, modelers, and collectors. We have members who are collectors, history buffs, painters, and modelers, and some who are just interested bystanders.

Our website has details of our meetings and annual show in October, modeling and painting tips and contact information. Check us out and see what military miniatures are all about. □



The papacy recruited Count Charles of Anjou to lead an army to oust King Manfred of Sicily. The matter was settled at Benevento in 1266 in a grand clash of mounted knights.

BY WILLIAM E. WELSH

FOR GOLD AND BLOOD

THE RAIN POURED in sheets as the long column of French troops snaked its way through the Apennine Mountains of southern Italy along roads washed out by heavy rains. The soldiers shouted to be heard over the driving rain. Sickness and hunger had thinned the ranks. Wagons laden with supplies had been abandoned along the route by soldiers who barely had the strength to walk or ride their horses, much less steer a wheeled vehicle over the unforgiving hills.

The commander of the army, Count Charles of Anjou, admonished his officers to keep the men moving. Pope Clement IV had called for a crusade to liberate the Kingdom of Sicily from its Hohenstaufen ruler, Manfred, who was in the pope's words, one of "a poisonous brood of a dragon of a poisonous race." The dragon was a reference to Manfred's father, Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II, who had conquered all of Italy against papal wishes and established his primary residence in southern Italy.

Charles was determined not to give up without bringing the enemy to battle. The youngest brother of French King Louis IX had waited his entire life for just such an opportunity, and the elements were not going to stop him. By sheer force of will he kept his army together. If he could bring that will to bear in battle, his army would conquer one of the wealthiest kingdoms in Western Europe.

The stripped body of King Manfred of Sicily, who fell during the final phase of the Battle of Benevento, was not discovered until three days after the fight. Knights weep in the foreground as the city, which was sacked by the French, burns in the background of Giuseppe Bezzuoli's Neoclassic painting.

While Charles led his troops through the mountains, Manfred's scouts informed him of the French army's location. The Hohenstaufen ruler shifted his army from Capua to Benevento on the Calore River. There Manfred waited for the French in a strong position. Manfred had 3,200 heavy cavalry and 3,000 Saracen foot archers to fight Charles's 3,000 heavy cavalry and 500 dismounted crossbowmen. What was at stake was far more than papal politics. The outcome of the Battle of Benevento would reverberate across the Christian world and alter the course of Mediterranean history.

To understand why the Kingdom of Sicily was such a prosperous realm by the mid-13th century, it is necessary to go back to a time when it was not unified. By the end of the 10th century, southern Italy was divided among several peoples. The Saracens held Sicily, the Byzantines controlled Apulia and Calabria, and the Lombards ruled the duchies of Benevento, Capua, and Salerno. The Byzantines and the Lombards lacked good troops to protect their realms, and so they hired large numbers of Norman mercenaries. Eventually the opportunistic Normans seized power for themselves.

In 1130, Norman noble Roger II was crowned King of Sicily. The Kingdom of Sicily, known as

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the Regno di Sicilia, or simply the Regno, encompassed all of southern Italy as well as the island of Sicily. During Roger II's rule, the Normans established a stable theocratic government similar to the Byzantine Empire. Like the Byzantine model, one of the hallmarks of the Regno was that it boasted an efficient bureaucracy in which taxes were collected regularly. Because of the efficient administration of the Regno, it became one of the richest kingdoms in Europe.

Constance of Sicily, the wife of Holy Roman Emperor Henry VI of the House of Hohenstaufen of Swabia, inherited Sicily in 1194. Through his marriage, Henry VI became ruler of the Regno, and when he died in 1197, his young son Frederick II inherited the kingdom with his mother serving as the regent.

Roger II had ruled the Regno as a vassal of the pope, but Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II had no interest in serving the pope. During his reign as emperor, Frederick controlled Germany and most of Italy. A highly educated statesman and crusader, Frederick found Italy more to his liking than Germany. When Frederick was not campaigning abroad, he resided in the Regno. Despite the efforts of Pope Gregory IX, who openly waged war against him in Italy, Frederick made lasting changes to the Regno, such as establishing an absolutist monarchy and codifying a set of laws that would last for nearly 500 years.

Frederick's son Conrad IV succeeded his father as ruler of the Regno in 1250. A new pope, Innocent IV, initiated efforts to find a prince in western Europe with sufficient resources to crush the Hohenstaufens and rule the Regno under papal guidance. One of the primary candidates to emerge for that cause was Count Charles of Anjou. But when approached by papal envoys in 1252, Charles politely declined the offer because of the objections of his eldest brother, French King Louis IX, who considered Conrad the rightful heir. Louis advised Charles not to get involved in the heated feud between the papacy and the Hohenstaufens.

But Conrad's rule was short lived. Conrad, who had moved from Germany to Italy in 1252, was unable to acclimate himself to the subtropical climate of southern Italy. He died of malaria on May 21, 1254.

Conradin, Conrad IV's son, was only two years old when his father died. Because he was so young, Conradin needed a regent to rule on his behalf. Manfred, who was Conradin's half brother and an illegitimate son of Frederick II, actively sought the post. Manfred's mother was Bianca Lancia, Frederick's Italian mistress.

Manfred, who possessed great physical beauty and charm, had been raised in the Regno. Frederick's will stipulated that Manfred should inherit the Regno should all other legitimate heirs die before him. Both Pope Innocent IV and Duke Louis II of Bavaria, Conradin's uncle and guardian, agreed to let Manfred rule the Regno until Conradin came of age.

Manfred and Pope Innocent IV met shortly after Conrad died. The meeting was amicable, but after they parted Innocent tried to have Manfred assassinated. The attempt failed, and Manfred immediately set about expanding his power beyond the borders of the Regno.

At the time, Italy was divided into two political camps. The Ghibellines were loyal to the Hohenstaufens, while the Guelfs were loyal to the pope. Manfred mobilized a wide array of military forces that had served under his father. These forces included German knights living in Italy, Saracen troops residing in a colony at Lucera in Apulia, and various Ghibelline troops throughout Italy.

Pope Innocent died on December 7, 1254. His successor, Pope Alexander IV, continued the quest to find a prince powerful enough to unseat Manfred, but he also failed. Alexander, who died in 1261, was succeeded by Pope Urban IV, who continued the search begun by his predecessors.

Manfred eventually grew tired of being Conradin's regent. He wanted to be the king of Sicily. He spread a rumor in the summer of 1258 that Conradin had died and, on August 10, 1258, Manfred had himself crowned king of Sicily. When the truth was learned that Conradin was alive and well, Manfred refused to step down. Manfred also arranged in 1258 for the engagement of his daughter Constance to Prince Peter of Aragon, which would ensure that Manfred had a powerful ally outside Italy. Four years after their engagement, Constance and Peter were wed.

Returning to the mainland after his coronation in Palermo, Manfred began a slow but steady conquest of central and northern Italy. By the time Pope Alexander died on May 25, 1261, Manfred and his allies controlled most of Italy except for the Venetian Republic and Rome. Pope Alexander's successor, Pope Urban IV, was not intimidated by Manfred. Urban immediately resumed the continuing quest for a prince to dethrone Manfred. While Manfred was spending his days hunting in the forests of Apulia, Urban offered the Sicilian crown to Charles in 1262 provided he agreed to certain conditions.

Charles once again asked his older brother, French King Louis IX, if he could accept the offer. This time King Louis approved the agreement because he regarded Manfred as a usurper. When Charles accepted the offer, Pope Urban had it declared a crusade.

The principal terms of the agreement between the papacy and Charles were that Charles should pay an annual tribute to the Holy See, rule the Regno under papal suzerainty, and refrain from conquering any parts of Italy that lay outside of the Regno.

Charles was the youngest son of French King Louis VIII and Queen Blanche of Castile. In 1246, at the age of 20, Charles married Beatrice of Provençe, inheriting the County of Provençe, which was part of the Holy Roman Empire. To further enhance his prestige, King Louis IX gave Charles the counties of Anjou and Maine shortly afterward.

Charles was a large and imposing person, and he also was an experienced military commander. His personality was the exact opposite of Manfred's. Whereas Manfred was warm and congenial, Charles was cold and aloof and almost never smiled.

The Count of Anjou was well qualified for the job the Papacy had in mind for him. He had been taught the ways of war from a young age, first at the court of his older brother Robert I of Artois, and afterward at the court of another brother, Alphonse of Poitou. Charles and his three older brothers participated in the Seventh Crusade to Egypt, where the Christians hoped to establish a base from which to eventually liberate Jerusalem. In heavy fighting against the Ayyubid Muslims in February 1250, Charles proved himself capable of successfully leading

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ABOVE: Charles of Anjou sails to Rome in 1265 and is crowned the new king of Sicily in a 14th-century manuscript illumination. OPPOSITE: A statue of Charles I of Anjou in Naples.

units in battle.

When the Saracens attempted to outflank the Crusader position opposite Mansurah, Charles personally led a successful counterattack. One of the four brothers, Robert, died in the Battle of Mansurah. When the Saracens switched to the offensive, Charles was able to hold his position on the Crusader left flank while the right flank was driven back. The crusade ended disastrously in April 1250 when the crusaders were forced to surrender. Louis, Alphonse, and Charles eventually were ransomed and returned to France.

Pope Urban, who died on October 2, 1264, did not live to see Charles invade the Regno. His successor, Pope Clement IV, who hailed from Languedoc, had worked closely as a cardinal with the French royal family. Clement unequivocally supported Charles's quest to oust Manfred from the Regno.

To help fund the crusade, Pope Clement ordered the churches in France to give one-tenth of their tithes to Charles over a three-year period. The tithes enabled Charles to offer decent wages to knights and crossbowmen recruited in France and Flanders for the crusade. Financing the crusade ultimately would prove more expensive than either Pope Clement or Charles anticipated, and both had to borrow heavily to generate additional funds.

Charles moved to Marseilles in 1264 to prepare to lead the crusade in Italy. While Charles prepared for the crusade throughout winter 1264-1265, Pope Clement ordered monks to spread word of the crusade throughout France, Flanders, and Italy.

Charles planned to sail to Rome in the spring of 1265 with his household troops. The main army, which was assembling at Lyons, would follow by marching overland. Since Tuscany was firmly held by Ghibelline troops loyal to Manfred, the army planned to march to Rome via Lombardy and the Papal States. Even if the army had to fight its way through some parts of Lombardy, Charles believed it would suffer fewer losses by that route than if it was forced to fight a major battle in Tuscany.

Charles embarked from Marseilles on May 10, 1265, with 300 household troops and arrived 10 days later in Rome. Pope Clement, who felt at risk in Rome from attack by Ghibelline forces, resided in the Umbrian town of Perugia. When Manfred learned that Charles had arrived in Rome with nothing more than his personal retainers, he quipped, "The bird is in the cage."

To Manfred's shock, Charles was greeted with open arms by the people of Rome. The defection of a number of Ghibelline leaders in Lazio and Campagna was a bad omen for Manfred. On June 28, group of cardinals crowned the 39-year-old French count as the new king of Sicily.

The coronation stirred Manfred to action. He led a hastily assembled Sicilian army from Abruzzo and marched on Rome. Charles marched out to meet him. Charles established a strong position at Tivoli. The location, 20 kilometers east of Rome, was close enough for Charles to receive Guelf reinforcements from in Rome if necessary. When Manfred reached Arsoli, he sent some troops to assess Charles's position at Tivoli. Minor skirmishing ensued, but Manfred withdrew rather than attack Charles in a strong defensive position. His withdrawal resulted in the further erosion of Ghibelline support throughout Italy.

The main French army left Lyons in the first week of October 1265. The army comprised 6,000 mounted knights and sergeants, 600 mounted crossbowmen, and 5,000 foot soldiers, some of whom were professional crossbowmen. About one quarter were from Provençe, and the rest from Anjou, Maine, Champagne, Picardy, and Flanders. Guy of Mello, Bishop of Auxerre, was the overall commander of the army, and his chief lieutenants were Giles le Brun, Constable of France, and Hugh Mirepoix, Marshal of France. The principal divisional commanders were Count John II of Soissons, Count Bouchard V of Vendôme, Philip of Montfort, Guy of Montfort, and Robert of Flanders.

The French army marched through Nice and crossed into Piedmont via the Tenda Pass on a road laid out in ancient times by the Phoenicians. Once in the Piedmont, the army traversed friendly territory ruled by the Marquis of Monteferrat. When the French reached the town of Asti, they learned that Ghibelline troops loyal to Manfred, who were under the command of Marquis Oberto Pallavicini, occupied a string of towns blocking their passage through the Po Valley.

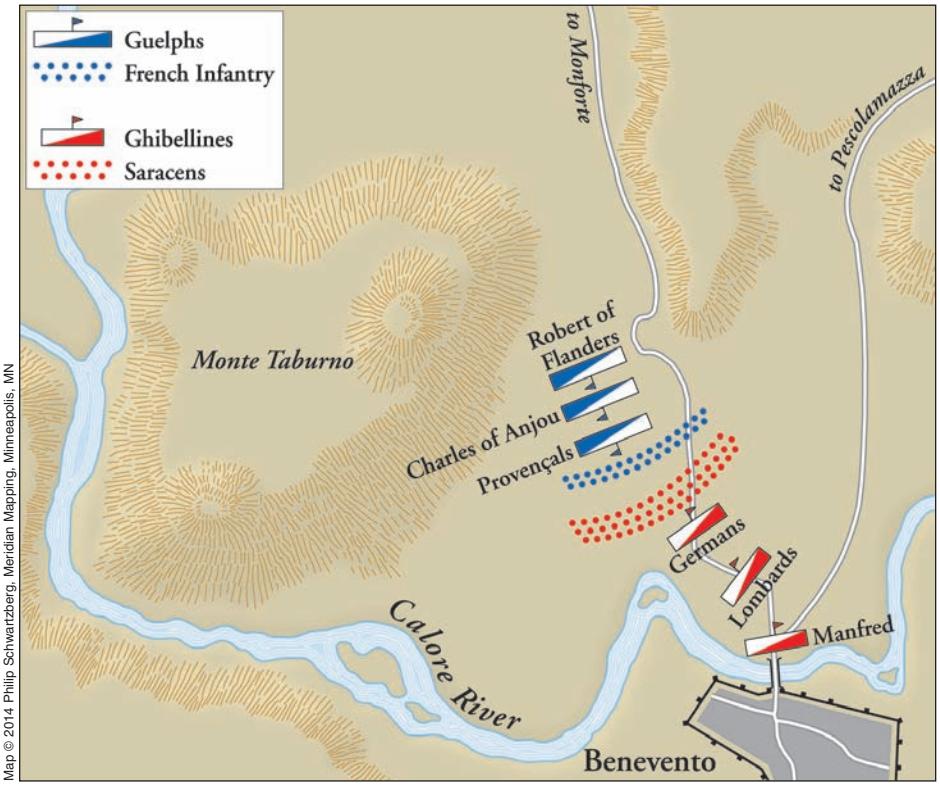
The weakest link in the cordon of enemy-held towns was Vercelli, which lay north of Asti. When the townspeople of Vercelli learned that the French were approaching, they revolted against the Ghibellines. This enabled the French to pass through the town without incident. The French

also were able to pass unhindered through Milan.

As the French continued marching east through the Po Valley, they learned that the Ghibelline governor of Cremona had deployed his troops at Soncino, blocking the easiest crossing of the Oglio River. The Bishop of Auxerre offered the governor a bribe, which he promptly took, and the French continued east.

More difficulties were encountered when the French attempted to cross into Mantua. When the French approached the Chiese River, they found another small Ghibelline army blocking their path. But the French contacted friendly Guelf troops in Mantua for assistance. The Mantuan Guelfs subsequently attacked the Ghibellines from the rear, forcing them to retire. The French continued from Mantua to Bologna, whose townspeople were friendly to the French since their town was located within the Papal States.

From Bologna, the French marched south to Ancona on the Adriatic Sea, where they received much needed supplies that Pope Clement had stockpiled for them. From Ancona, the Bishop of Auxerre led his troops west across the Apennine Mountains to Rome. After 3½ months of hard



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ABOVE: The French and Sicilian armies were both organized into three ranks. Charles fought with the second rank and exercised better control of his forces than Manfred, who fought with the third rank. OPPOSITE: King Manfred of Sicily is depicted in a 19th-century lithograph. Support for Manfred began to erode when he took a purely defensive stance against the French invaders.

marching on a circuitous trek of nearly 1,500 kilometers, the army marched into the city on January 12, 1266.

Pope Clement was very pleased when informed that the French army had reached Rome safely without having to fight any major battles. The cost of keeping the army supplied on its march was exorbitant. Charles's wife Beatrice had pawned her jewels at the outset of the expedition. French King Louis was considering a new crusade to Africa, and for that reason declined to loan Charles money, but Charles's brother Alphonse offered a sizable short-term loan.

Charles applied to various Florentine and Sienese banking houses for additional funds but was only able to raise enough to pay the expenses of his army for one month. For his part, Pope Clement pledged the treasure and plate of the papal chapel to secure an additional loan. Both Charles and Clement were heavily in debt, which forced Charles to order his troops to prepare to leave Rome after just eight days of rest. The army would be marching in winter, which is the wettest time of year in southern Italy. The French army faced a difficult march through unfamiliar territory with very little forage available for the army's horses and pack animals.

The French army departed Rome on January 20, 1266, marching south on the Via Latina to the border of the Kingdom of Sicily. Manfred had ordered the Ghibelline garrison at Ceprano on the Regno's border to delay the French as long as possible while he assembled a large army to meet Charles in battle. When the French reached Ceprano, they encountered no resistance and were astonished to find the bridge over the Garigliano River intact.

The most significant resistance the French army encountered from a Sicilian garrison occurred at San Germano, which was situated on Monte Cassino near the monastery where the Benedictine order was founded in the early 6th century. A large garrison of Saracens devoutly loyal to Manfred occupied the double-walled fortress replete with projecting circular towers and 11-foot-wide curtain walls. Charles did not want any sizable Sicilian forces in his rear, so the French camped outside the stronghold's walls and deployed their siege engines.

On February 10, a group of Saracen sentries made a small sortie from a gate in the outer wall to try to capture several French valets drawing water from a spring. The sortie, which was made to capture prisoners for interrogation, went badly awry when the cries of the valets brought a quick response from French troops under Bouchard of Vendôme, who were encamped in that sector. The clash escalated rapidly, and during the confusion some of the French soldiers were able to fight their way through the gate and secure it for reinforcements who poured through the gate behind them. The error proved to be the garrison's undoing, and it had no choice but to surrender.

While the French were steadily reducing the garrisons in their path, Manfred was assembling an army at Capua just south of San Germano. In an effort to assemble a host that would heavily outnumber the advancing French army, Manfred also sent word to his cousin, Prince Conrad of Antioch, who had been left in charge of Sicilian forces in Abruzzo, to immediately come to his aid. While he awaited Conrad's arrival, Manfred deployed his army at Capua in a strong position behind the Volturno River.

While the French were mopping up at San Germano, Charles sent scouts south to ascertain the whereabouts of Manfred's army. After several days on the road, they returned and informed Charles that the fortified bridge across the Volturno River at Capua was strongly held but that there were several fords upstream left unguarded. Charles decided to march into the Samnite Apennines, cross an unguarded ford of the Volturno, and fall on

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Manfred's right flank.

The French army departed San Germano on February 15, marching southeast into the mountains. A march that in summer might have taken only two or three days became an arduous 10-day trek. Charles underestimated the difficulty of marching through mountain passes where the army had to cross numerous hillside streams overflowing their banks from heavy seasonal rains. The French army managed to cross the Volturno despite the high water and make its way to Telese in the Calore Valley.

The French had been forced by that point to abandon most of their wagons and carts and to continue with just their horses and pack animals. By the time the French reached Telese they had exhausted food staples such as flour and were reduced to eating some of their pack animals. The situation worsened even further when some of the French horses died in the mountains from lack of forage.

Charles had been informed by his scouts before he reached Telese that Manfred had anticipated his flank march and shifted east to take up a more secure position. Having a good road and a shorter distance to cover, Manfred had with little difficulty switched his base of operations to Benevento.

On the afternoon of February 25, the French troops marched past the steep limestone folds of 4,500-foot Monte Taburno on the west side of the Calore Valley. At last, from the top of a ridge, the French spied Benevento in the distance. To their immediate front, the ridge sloped down to the Plain of Grandella, which lay on the north bank of the Calore River. A single bridge, which was very wide, led from Benevento on the south bank to the plain on the north bank. The Sicilian army, well fed and well rested, was camped on the south bank of the Calore awaiting the arrival of the starving French.

A few days before the arrival of the French, Manfred had addressed the local nobility and ecclesiastical authorities. In a rousing speech, the Hohenstaufen bastard implored them to resist their would-be conquerors.

"A fire which has long been burning in the distance has approached with the rapidity of lightning," said Manfred. "A danger which seemed only to arouse futile talk now threatens to overwhelm us unless we unite together to resist it. A hard heart, a gloomy disposition, an unbending will leads these troops, and they are not inferior to their commander in cruelty and greed for gold and blood. The sole object is to make you forget all you owe to my father and his house, and to force you, a free people, to accept a foreign ruler unworthy of you. [Let us] teach this foreign, ambitious, and greedy people that they cannot treat the kings, realms, and people of our beautiful Italy according to their wicked will."

Although he made a major effort to enlist the support of the local people in resisting the French, Manfred had a great sense of uneasiness when the French arrived on the opposite bank of the Calore. The lack of resistance shown by the Ghibelline garrisons posted along the French line of march, with the exception of the Saracens at San Germano, led Manfred to believe that the Ghibelline captains in his ranks would give only a half-hearted effort during the approaching battle.

Although an additional 800 German heavy cavalry had arrived just a few days earlier to boost the size of his army, Manfred still had no word of the approach of Conrad of Antioch. Manfred decided to act without waiting for his cousin for two important reasons. First, he believed that the Ghibelline allies with him at Benevento might abandon him or even switch sides the longer he waited. Second, his scouts had informed him of the weakened condition of the French army as a result of its forced march through hostile country. Some of Manfred's captains urged him to wait for Conrad of Antioch to arrive before offering battle, but Manfred did not heed their advice.

Even Charles was concerned about the condition of his army. In a dispatch to Pope Clement sent the night before the battle, Charles told the pontiff that the French knights' war horses might perform poorly in the coming battle because of fatigue and hunger. But the French army was on the verge of starvation; the only way it would survive was to win a pitched battle against Manfred's well-rested troops.

At dawn on February 26, Charles gave a rousing speech to his captains and knights. "The long wished for day of battle has at last dawned, and we must now conquer or die," Charles said. "Better to die in battle, honorably and together, than miserably, singly, in disgraceful flight. Fear not your foes! We fight, as good Christians, in a hallowed cause, and blessed by the church; they are of other creeds, bowed down to the earth by the weight of their guilt, and doomed to eternal perdition."

After the speech, Charles ordered trumpets sounded to assemble his troops for battle. The French benefitted from an initial advantage in terrain as the Sicilian army would be attacking uphill from the river, which occupied the lowest point in the valley, across the Plain of Grandella.

While the French were assembling on the slope of a ridge at the north end of the Plain of Grandella, a long column of Saracen foot archers began crossing the Calore. Once the 3,000 Saracen foot soldiers were across the bridge, they deployed into a line of battle and began to advance toward the French. Charles was greatly relieved to see the Sicilian vanguard advancing to meet him. This meant Manfred had decided to attack first. The upshot was that the French would not have to undertake the difficult task of forcing a crossing of the Calore.

The Saracens were armed with composite bows that could fire light arrows up to 400 yards. These arrows posed no real danger to the heavily armored French knights because they could not penetrate their mail, but the arrows were capable of killing the French crossbowmen and also

maiming the French cavalry's horses. Advancing as skirmishers, the Saracen archers' task was to win a missile contest with the French crossbowmen and then shower the French cavalry with arrows, killing their horses and, if they were lucky, also killing some of the men. Once the Sicilian cavalry advanced, the Saracens were to pass through their ranks and redeploy behind them to kill with their daggers any enemy cavalry that were unhorsed.

While the Saracens were engaged with the French crossbowmen, Prince Galvano Lancia of Salerno, who was Manfred's uncle, led 1,200 German heavy cavalry across the bridge. While the French cavalry were clad in mail armor, the Germans were wearing coats-of-plate armor designed to offer superior protection over their torsos.

Waiting to follow behind the Germans was a second division of cavalry consisting of 1,000 knights and sergeants from Lombardy led by Count Giordano of Anglona, who was marshal of the Sicilian army. At the rear of the army, serving as its reserve, was the third division composed of 1,000 Sicilian cavalry led by Manfred.

Manfred did not trust the Sicilian knights and sergeants, and so he stationed himself with them to ensure that they followed his orders and did not switch sides or desert him once the battle was under way. In particular, Manfred distrusted his cousins Count Richard of Caserta and Count Thomas of Acerra. Manfred's closest friend, Tebaldo Annibaldi, also was deployed in the third division to help monitor the Sicilian nobles' actions.

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The French army that arrived before Benevento had been reduced in manpower by about 50 percent from its original strength. This was due to hunger, losses in small actions, and the detachment of large numbers of foot soldiers to guard captured towns and castles. Charles ordered the 500 dismounted crossbowmen who remained with the army to deploy in front of the cavalry to counter the Saracen archers.

Hugh of Mirepoix led the French first division, which was composed of 900 Provençal cavalry. Assisting Mirepoix by leading a portion of the first division was veteran commander Philip of Montfort. Charles commanded the second division, which was made up of 1,000 French cavalry. Other key captains leading parts of the second division were Guy of Mello, Count Bouchard of Vendôme, and Simon of Montfort.

Giles le Brun led the third division, which consisted of 700 French and Flemish cavalry. A fourth division, composed of 400 Italian cavalry, was under the command of Florentine Guelf Guy Guerra. Behind the fourth division was a small number of lightly armed infantry who did not possess crossbows. Their job was to follow the cavalry and assist friendly cavalry who had been unhorsed to remount, as well as capture or kill any enemy cavalry that had been unhorsed.

For some unknown reason, the Saracens did not wait for Manfred's order to advance but did so on their own initiative. They yelled loudly as was their custom when they marched into battle to strike terror in their opponents. But the French crossbowmen were professionals. It would take more than yelling to force them to retire from the front.

The archers from both sides soon were engaged in a duel to the death. The French crossbowmen were overpowered not only because of their fewer numbers, but also because of their slow rate of fire. In a short time the casualties among the French archers were so great that the survivors broke off the action and fell back toward the safety of the cavalry.

Seeing the rout of his crossbowmen, Charles sent an order to Mirepoix to lead his Provençal horsemen in a charge meant to rout the Saracen infantry. Just the sight of the Provençals riding swiftly downhill compelled the Saracens to fall back. Those who were too far forward to escape were trampled by the Provençal cavalry.

Lancia, who hoped to stabilize the situation and buy time for the rest of the Sicilian army to deploy on the north bank, also attacked without orders. The double rank of German cavalry advanced at a trot with their boots nearly touching so that the French could not penetrate their formation. When the German and Provençal cavalry collided, the clangor of steel swords echoed in the hills and was heard clearly by the townspeople of Benevento, who were feverishly praying for salvation from the invaders.

The coats-of-plate armor worn by the Germans stood up well against French weapons. One of the advantages of the new armor was that it withstood anything but the most well-directed thrust of a lance or sword. Dismayed at the seeming invincibility of the Germans, the Provençals were steadily driven back up the slope toward the French camp.

The Provençals neither panicked nor tried to flee the German juggernaut. The Provençals had complete faith in their commanders. Both Mirepoix and Philip of Montfort, who were fighting on different parts of the front line, shouted encouragement to their knights and sergeants who continued to try to crack the German battle line even as they were driven steadily back.

While the Provençal cavalry was fighting desperately against the Germans, Charles ordered the 400 Guelf horsemen in the fourth line to join his division, which he was preparing to lead into battle. Once the Guelf horsemen had joined his line, Charles led his division into the fight. When the second French division joined the melee, the din was terrific as hundreds of horsemen fought in a grand melee in which both sides sought to infiltrate the ranks of the other. Lances shattered, swords bit into flesh, and maces clanged when they landed on helmets.

The veteran German knights and sergeants, who had fought in all kinds of actions from the icy shores of the Baltic to the turquoise waters of the Mediterranean, initially managed to hold their ground despite being outnumbered nearly two to one. At some point in the fighting, one or more French knights observed that when the German cavalry raised their heavy swords to strike a gap in their armor was visible underneath their arms. As French horsemen regrouped to attack, they shared the discovery with others. When Charles learned of it, he shouted to those around him: "Thrust with the point; stick them with it!"

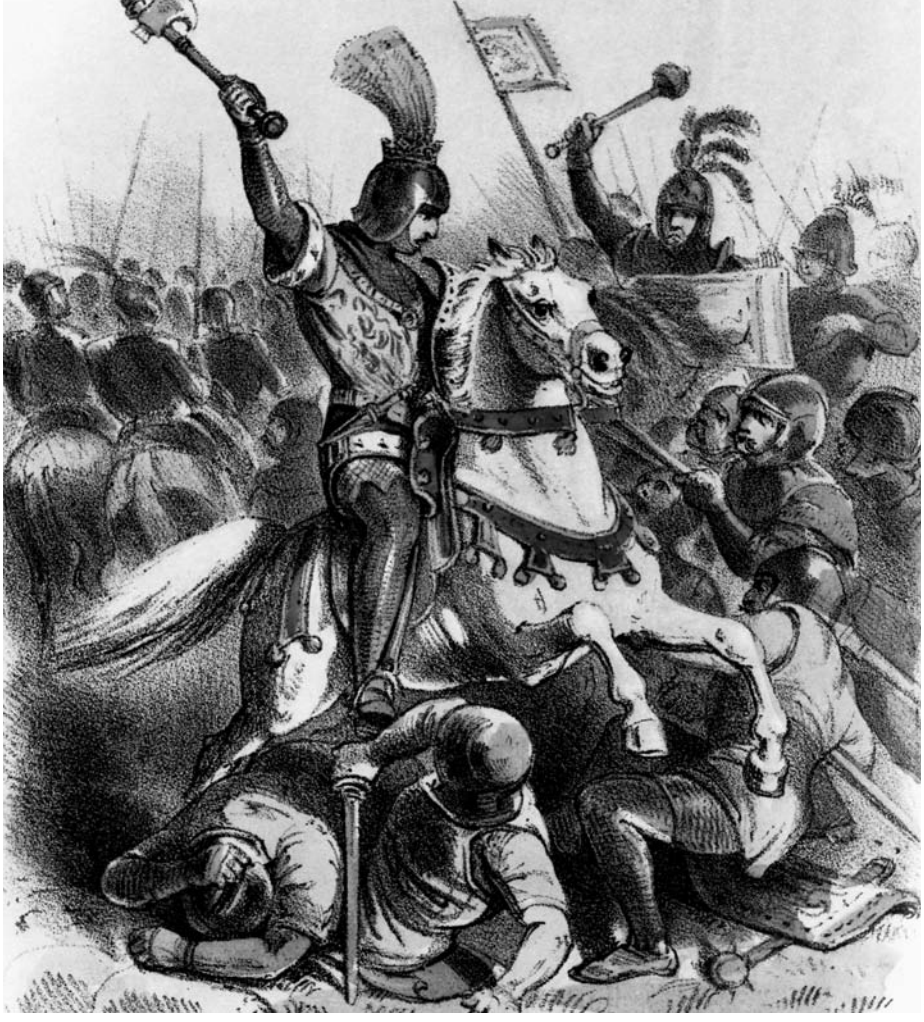
The French knights used the points of their swords and their daggers to stab the Germans in their armpits whenever the Germans raised their arms to wield their heavy swords. The French also began to plunge their swords into the flesh of the German horses, an act that violated the code of chivalry.

Soon casualties among the Germans began to mount, which resulted in gaps in their tightly packed ranks. Once this occurred, the French horsemen began crowding the German cavalry so that the latter could not make effective use of their heavy swords. At some point in the crush of cavalry, Salerno was killed.

By that time the remainder of the Sicilian army was across the Calore. Manfred had been holding back the rest of his cavalry, whose allegiance he questioned, on the possibility that the crack German cavalry might actually be able to drive the French cavalry from the field. But when Manfred observed the German cavalry waver as a result of being heavily outnumbered, he sent a messenger to Anglona with instructions to go to the aid of the Germans.

By the time Anglona's troops joined the fight, the Germans had been routed. What the Lombards encountered were two divisions of French cavalry waiting for them. The Lombards charged into the French line but could not break it. At just the right moment, Charles ordered Le Brun to lead the third division into battle. The fresh division swept around the flanks of the Lombards and attacked them from behind. Assailed from front and rear, the Lombards fled toward the Calore. Anglona tried in vain to rally them but soon gave up to save himself.

After his second division had gone forward, Manfred exchanged surcoats with Annibaldi so that when Manfred joined the battle the French would be deceived as to his exact location. This ruse concealed the commander from the enemy, reducing the likelihood that he would be slain and his troops become demoralized as a result. The deception was an approach adopted by a small minority of medieval commanders.



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ABOVE: Hohenstaufen King Manfred of Sicily fights alongside his household troops in the climax of the battle. As they closed with the French, the Sicilians shouted "Hurrah for Swabia!" OPPOSITE: Heavily armored knights are accurately shown fighting with swords and lances in a medieval manuscript depicting the Battle of Benevento.

When the Lombard cavalry was routed, Manfred prepared to lead his division into battle. But the Sicilian nobles in the third division had no intention of participating in a battle they felt already had been lost. They led their troops toward the Calore Bridge in the hope that they could reach the relative safety of Benevento.

But Manfred had no intention of quitting the fight. Knowing that he was riding to his death, Manfred ordered his household troops to follow him forward. They had taken an oath to guard their king no matter what the odds. Annibaldi, still wearing Manfred's surcoat, also joined the doomed attack.

From their vantage point on higher ground, the French troops watched as several dozen heavily armored Sicilian knights, one of whom wore a surcoat with a black eagle on a yellow background indicating he was the king of Sicily, charged toward them. As they closed with the French, the attacking troops shouted, "Hurrah for Swabia!" The French cavalry braced for the shock of the charge. The final clash did not last long. Both Manfred and Annibaldi were slain, as were all of Manfred's household troops.

After Manfred and his bodyguard had been cut to pieces, Charles ordered his troops to pursue the remnants of the Sicilian army. The panicked Sicilian troops swarmed onto the bridge in an effort to escape the French. Many plunged into the Calore, preferring to drown rather than be butchered by the French. Only about 600 of the 3,200 Sicilian cavalry managed to elude death. Those who escaped the French did not seek haven in Benevento but fled into the hills to the south of the city. With no one to stop them, the French sacked the city.

For two days the French searched the battlefield but could not find Manfred's body. On the third day after the battle, a soldier found a naked body believed to be Manfred. The man brought the body to Charles, who ordered Anglona, who had been taken prisoner by the French, to identify

Continued on page 74

British soldiers advance through the rubble of a captured town on the road to Mandalay in 1945. Maj. Gen. T.W. Rees's 19th Division captured the old royal capital on March 21 after protracted street fighting and stubborn Japanese resistance from inside the city's ancient citadel known as Fort Dufferin.

OUTFOXED IN BURMA

BY MIKE PHIFER

WHILE THE SOLDIERS and officers of the Japanese 15th Army fought fiercely to defend Mandalay in central Burma, they were alarmed to discover that British and Indian troops were dangerously close to capturing their supply depot at Meiktila, 90 miles to their rear. If this occurred, they faced certain destruction.

"Isn't there some mistake?" asked a Japanese officer. "How can the enemy be so close in these back areas?" The officer along with three others had been ordered to remain in Meiktila after being told of two reports putting a small enemy force at Taungtha, about 40 miles to the northwest. The second report indicated Allied troops were approaching Mahlaing, not far from the airstrip at Thabutkon and only about 20 miles from Meiktila.

Just two days before, on February 23, 1945, an important meeting was held at Meiktila between the chief of staff of the Japanese Southern Army and chiefs of staff of various armies in Burma about the situation in central Burma, where the British were threatening Mandalay. Plans were made to mount an offensive against them.

The Japanese high command was not overly alarmed at the reports, choosing to believe it was a small-scale raid on Meiktila and that local defenses were substantial enough to deal with the raiders. Another report read that 200 enemy vehicles were spotted, but it should have read 2,000. For some reason the last zero was dropped from the message.

This was no raid, as the Japanese were to learn. The motorized 17th Indian Infantry Division and the 255th Indian Tank Brigade were racing toward Meiktila in a bold move that would jeopardize the Japanese hold on Burma.

During the previous year the Japanese 15th Army had suffered staggering losses in its failed attempt to capture Imphal and Kohima in northeast India. The purpose of the Japanese offensive had been to forestall a British invasion of Burma and cut the movement of supplies between India and China. Elsewhere, the Japanese 28th Army also suffered defeat at the so-called Admin Box in the Arakan region when it tried to overrun the Indian 7th Division's administrative area. With the Japanese limping back to Burma in early July 1944, the British quickly struck before the Japanese Burma Area Army—which comprised the 15th, 28th, and 33rd Armies—could regroup.

Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten, Supreme Allied Commander in South East Asia, under the operational name of Capital, ordered the British 14th Army under Lt. Gen. Sir William Slim to advance into central Burma to capture Mandalay, the link between the Japanese 15th and 33rd Armies. With this town in Allied hands, any chance the Japanese had of smashing communication between India and China had vanished like dry ground during a Burmese monsoon. While the 14th Army advanced on Mandalay, the Chinese Northern Combat Area Command (NCAC) was to push south and link up with Slim at Maymo, east of Mandalay.

Slim continued his pursuit of the retreating Japanese through the mountainous jungle toward the Chindwin River. Slim predicted that the new commander of the Burma Area Army, Lt. Gen. Kimura Hyotaro, would deploy his forces on the Shwebo Plain, which was located north of Mandalay between the Chindwin and Irrawaddy Rivers, to defend the country's ancient capital. The hard-charging British general meant to destroy the enemy in the open ground with his superiority in tanks and aircraft.

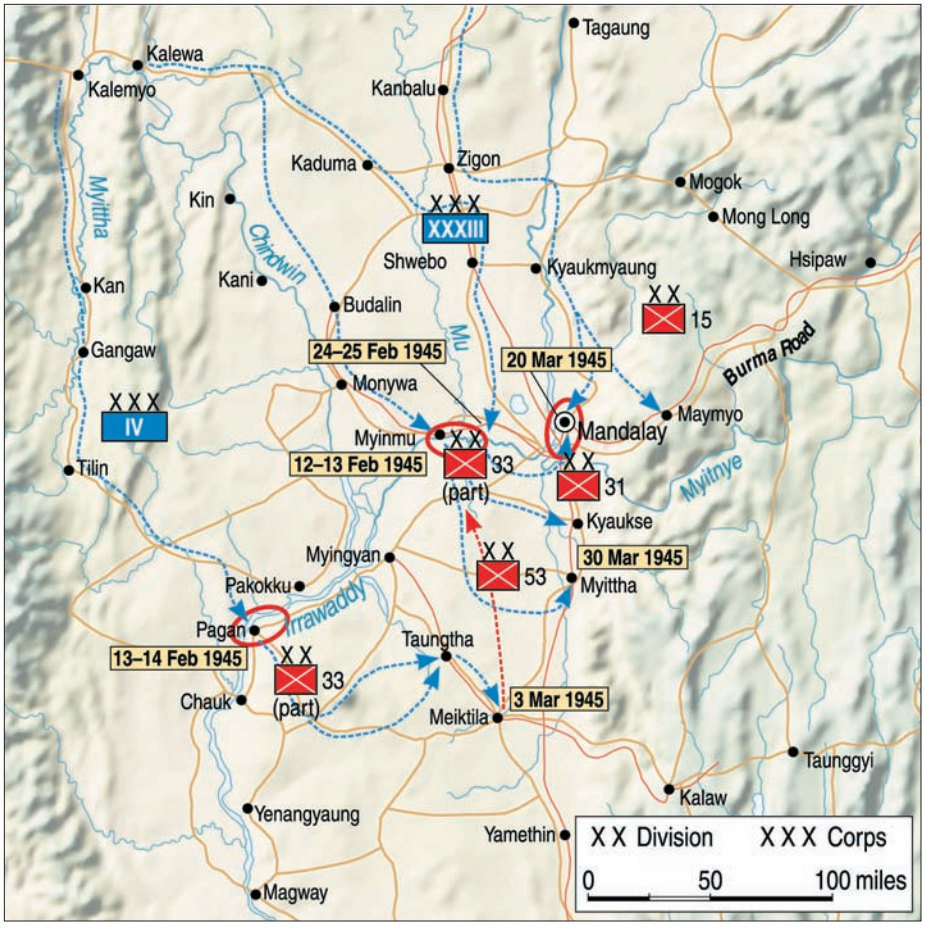
The 14th Army crossed the Chindwin and pushed southward in December. Japanese resistance was light, and it was becoming clear to Slim that Kimura had no intention of deploying his army on Shwebo Plain. Kimura had ordered his men back across the Irrawaddy, which forced Slim to come up with a new plan. Slim unveiled the revised plan on December 17 to his superior, Lt. Gen. Sir Oliver Leese, commander of Allied Land Forces South East Asia.

Lieutenant General William Slim sent a fast-moving column across the Irrawaddy River in January 1945 to capture the supply depot at Meiktila. The surprise attack hastened the collapse of the Japanese position in central Burma.

The success of Slim's bold plan, named Extended Capital, depended on deception, speed, and surprise. Slim intended to deceive Kimura into believing the entire 14th Army was attempting to capture Mandalay, while in reality only one of its corps—the XXXIII Corps—was tasked with the direct assault.

While that attack was under way, the 14th Army's other corps, Lt. Gen. Sir Frank Messervy's IV Corps, would make a rugged journey through the Myittha (or Gangaw) Val-

All Photos: Imperial War Museum



ABOVE: Forcing a crossing of the Irrawaddy River in the face of strong enemy resistance was a daunting proposition for the British command. William Slim's skilled deception of the Japanese during the campaign places him in the top rank of British generals. OPPOSITE: Sherman tanks of the 5th Horse, an Indian armored cavalry regiment, rumble toward Meiktila. The tank crews were particularly adept at blasting bunkers that served as enemy strongpoints.

ley to the Irrawaddy River, where it would cross the wide river at Pakokku. Once across, the IV Corps would advance behind Japanese lines and capture Meiktila. This town, which was located between two lakes, was the enemy's key supply depot through which the majority of supplies moving inland from Rangoon had to pass before being transported north.

Kimura would have no choice but to attempt to recapture Meiktila, while at the same time battling XXXIII Corps at Mandalay. Slim figured the Japanese commander would have to commit all the forces he had in central Burma, allowing the 14th Army to smash them, with IV Corps at Meiktila being the anvil while XXXIII Corps pushing south from Mandalay was the hammer. Slim was confident of victory.

The British and Indian troops that made up the 14th Army had come a long way since the dark days of 1942, when they were driven out of Burma by the Japanese. Low morale, rampant disease, lack of supplies, and a belief that the Japanese could not be beaten in the jungle plagued the troops. British high command began to change all that with better training and tactics in jungle warfare, a major reorganization, and better equipment for the army's divisions. As for shortages of material, they were able to mitigate that weakness by relying more on air supply. Slim worked hard to restore the army's morale and gave it a mission to destroy the Japanese Army, which was preparing to meet them under its new commander on the east side of the Irrawaddy.

The 1,350-mile-long Irrawaddy originates in the Himalayas and flows through the center of the country, cutting a swath through an open plain before fanning out in a delta that empties into the Bay of Bengal and Andaman Sea. Kimura intended to defend southern Burma and the valuable oilfields near Yenangyaung and the much needed rice-growing areas of the Irrawaddy Delta.

To do this, Kimura positioned the 33rd Army, which was composed of the 18th and 56th Divisions and a regiment from the 49th Division from Lashio, west to the mountains to the northeast of Mandalay. Along the Irrawaddy from Mandalay to Pakokku was the 15th Army under Lt. Gen. Shihachi Katamura, which was made up of the 15th, 31st, 33rd, and 53rd Divisions, the latter of which was held in reserve. The 28th Army, consisting of the 54th and 55th Divisions, 72 Independent Mixed Brigade, and a regiment from the 49th, held the area around the Yenangyaung oilfields to the Arakan and the Irrawaddy Delta.

In reserve Kimura placed the 2nd Division, the rest of the 49th Division, and the 24th Independent Mixed Brigade. Kimura also had under his command two divisions of the Indian National Army (INA). To protect the key supply depot at Meiktila with its surrounding airfields, the Japanese had two airfield defense battalions and an antiaircraft battalion.

Kimura believed Slim would attempt to take Mandalay by crossing the Irrawaddy both north and southwest of the key town in an attempt to envelop it. By counterattacking with the 15th Army, Kimura intended to hold the east bank of the Irrawaddy and keep Slim out of Mandalay. Once the monsoons came in early May, Kimura believed the 14th Army's supply lines would be badly stretched, causing its troops to be unable to continue their attack and possibly forcing them to fall back to the Chindwin.

The British commander would have to use deception to make the Japanese think Mandalay was their key objective and commit their forces there, while at the same time keeping the Japanese unaware of IV Corps' drive south from Tamu and down the Myittha River Valley. Their 328-mile journey was made more difficult as there was nothing but a dirt track to travel on, forcing IV Corps to build their own roads. If Slim was to be successful and keep his two corps fighting separate battles supplied with 750 tons a day, which was scheduled to rise to 1,200 tons in March when the fighting for Meiktila would be in full swing, he needed to depend heavily on air transport.

This became increasingly more difficult when Slim learned on December 10 that three U.S. Army Air Forces (USAAF) squadrons, totaling 75 aircraft, roared off to China to help Chinese forces there. "The noise of their engines was the first intimation that anyone in 14th Army had of the administrative crisis now bursting upon us," said Slim.

To make up for the loss, the airlift operation had to be recalculated and replanned. This meant that XV Corps, which was to launch an attack in the Arakan to keep Japanese forces occupied there and capture the key islands of Akyab and Ramree with their valuable airfields, would suffer reduced airlift.

More aircraft became available when two Royal Air Force (RAF) squadrons that had been

resting and retraining were quickly brought back into service. Two Royal Canadian Air Force squadrons also arrived in late December. In January and February 1945, two more squadrons arrived, and two of the USAAF squadrons returned.

Although Slim was heavily relying on airlift, some supplies would be moved by road and others by water. In January, Slim ordered his chief engineer, Maj. Gen. W.F. Hasted, to construct vessels and move supplies down the Chindwin to the Irrawaddy. By the end of the campaign, the engineers had built 541 craft.

On December 18, Slim met with his two corps commanders, Lt. Gen. Sir Montague Stopford of the XXXIII Corps and Messervy of the IV Corps, to explain his plan and stress the need for speed. The corps commanders wasted no time in getting their men moving. The XXXIII Corps, consisting for the campaign of the 2nd British Division, 19th and 20th Indian Divisions, 254th Indian Tank Brigade, and 268th Indian Infantry Brigade, continued its advance toward Mandalay with the 20th Indian Division on the right, the 2nd British in the center, and the 19th Indian Division on their left flank.

Originally, the 19th Division was part of IV Corps, but it was now ordered to serve with the XXXIII Corps, which Slim hoped would deceive the Japanese into believing that IV Corps was advancing on Mandalay as well. To further deceive the enemy, a dummy IV Corps headquarters was set up at Tamu, where all radio communication between XXXIII Corps and 19th Division had to pass.

Meanwhile, IV Corps was to keep radio silence. Elements of this corps, now consisting of the 7th and 17th Indian Divisions, 255th Indian Tank Brigade, 28th East African Brigade, and the Lushai Brigade, headed south from Tamu for Pakokku. Its journey was to be a tough one as Hasted and his engineers had to construct a new road for IV Corps to move on.

Hasted figured he could build a new road in 42 days. To do this he was going to use "bithess," which was Hessian cloth treated with bitumen, making it water resistant. The overlapped bithess strips were used to surface the newly leveled and tightly packed road. Besides building a road, the engineers would have to build rough airstrips along the way for supplies to be delivered to IV Corps.

The Lushai Brigade, made up of Lushai and Chin levies, along with Indian Army battalions, led the way of the stretched-out IV Corps, which had some of its units still in India. The Lushai Brigade was given the task of capturing the town of Gangaw held by a dug-in rear guard of the Japanese 33rd Division. Heavy rains in the first week of the month delayed the assault until January 10. To aid the attack, four squadrons from the USAAF 12th Bombardment Group blasted the Japanese positions, followed by Hawker Hurricane and Republic Thunderbolt fighter bombers conducting strafing and bombing runs. Then the Lushai Brigade attacked. The Japanese troops put up a brief, determined resistance before retreating. Gangaw was cleared the following day.

The 28th East African Brigade now took over the advance. It was impossible to prevent the Japanese from detecting troop movement down the Myittha Valley, but the 28th, operating under the pretext that it was the 11th East African Division, intended to deceive the Japanese that its objective was the Yenangyaung oilfields.

In the meantime, the XXXIII Corps continued its advance on a broad front. The 19th Indian Division advanced on the town of Shwebo, located about 50 miles northwest of Mandalay, from the north and east. Concurrently, the 2nd British Division advanced on Shwebo from the northwest. The town was finally cleared on January 10. From there, Maj. Gen. T.W. Rees ordered his 19th Indian Division to cross the Irrawaddy north of Mandalay at Thabeikkyin and Kyaukmyaung.

By nightfall on January 17, the last brigade of the 19th Division had crossed the Irrawaddy to reinforce the bridgeheads established a week before. While this was under way, the Burma Area Army was planning a counterattack into the Shwebo Plain. But with the troops of Rees's division on the east bank of the Irrawaddy, Katamura meant to wipe them out before they became more established.

Sending part of its force to hold the bridgehead at Thabeikkyin located about 55 miles from Mandalay, the 15th Division, along with the 53rd Division of the 15th Army, concentrated on the bridgehead at Kyaukmyaung, 40 miles from Mandalay. During the last week of January, the Japanese troops bloodied themselves there by launching fierce night attacks against the entrenched British and Indian troops. Even with heavy artillery support, the night attacks could not budge them.

With the 19th Division firmly planted on the east side of the Irrawaddy, Rees consolidated his two bridgeheads and prepared to push south to Mandalay. Meanwhile, the 20th Division was preparing to cross the Irrawaddy near Myinmu and advance on Mandalay from the south and west. Before the 2nd Division crossed, it first had to clear out remaining Japanese troops on the west bank of the Irrawaddy where the mighty river bent at Sagaing. Then when boats became available, the division was to cross the Irrawaddy and join the 20th Division.

The spread out IV Corps continued its push for Pakokku with the 28th East African Brigade leading the way and the 7th Division following it. After leaving Gangaw, IV Corps soon encountered hundreds of downed trees across the track left by the retreating Japanese to slow their advance. The engineers quickly removed them. On January 28, the 89th Indian Brigade of the 7th Division took Pauk about 40 miles west of Pakokku.

As they continued their advance toward the Irrawaddy, Messervy and the 7th Division commander, Maj. Gen. G.C. Evans, had to decide where to cross the river. Shifting sandbars had cre-

ated a number of channels, making a direct crossing difficult. Patrols were sent out to check possible crossing places, and aerial reconnaissance photos were studied.

Pakokku was closest to Meiktila, but it was also the most obvious crossing point. Evans wanted to cross near the village of Nyaunga where the river was at its narrowest. A crossing at Nyaunga would have to be made diagonally from about two miles upriver instead of directly across to avoid the open sandy beaches on the western bank, which would be visible to the Japanese on the east side of the Irrawaddy.

Facing Messervy on the east bank of the river was the 72nd Independent Mixed Brigade of the 28th Army and the 214th Regiment of the 15th Army along with some INA troops. As this area was the boundary between the two Japanese armies, coordinating a response from the defending units would be slower because they were under different chains of command.

To deceive the Japanese, Messervy and Evans developed a plan named Operation Cloak in which Pakokku would be captured, giving the impression this was where the main crossing would take place while a diversionary crossing was made farther downriver at Pagan. To add to the enemy's confusion, the 28th East African Brigade was to conduct a feint at Chauk farther to the south.

Once the 7th Division was across the river, the 255th Indian Tank Brigade was to capture Meiktila and the surrounding airfields. Messervy did not believe a tank brigade was enough to hold Meiktila for any length of time and sought Slim's permission to have the 17th Indian Division mechanized. Slim agreed, and the division, which was still in India, was given the vehicles of the 11th East Africa Brigade and the 5th Indian Division. This was enough to allow two brigades of the 17th Division to be mechanized. It was decided the remaining brigade would be flown in once an airfield near Meiktila was captured.

By February 10, the 7th Division had fought its way to the Irrawaddy after the 114th Brigade had dislodged stiff Japanese resistance at the Kanhla crossroads about eight miles from Pakokku. In the meantime, the 89th Brigade had reached the river opposite Pagan and sent across a Sikh patrol after dark. The 33rd Brigade cleared the area around Myitche and prepared to cross at nearby Nyaungu. The 28th East African Brigade secured Seikpyu on February 12 after encountering stiff resistance and prepared to cross the river to Chauk.

Farther to the north on the XXXIII Corps' front, the 20th Division prepared to cross the Irrawaddy near Myinmu on the night of February 12. Before it did, 50 Consolidated B-24 Liberator bombers pounded the concentration of Japanese artillery that afternoon, followed by a squadron of Lockheed P-38 Lightning fighter bombers. With the coming of darkness, the 100th Indian Brigade began crossing near Myinmu, while the 32nd Indian Brigade crossed seven miles downriver at Cheyadaw.

A lieutenant with the 1st Battalion, Northamptonshire Regiment of the 32nd Indian Brigade (often an Indian brigade had one British battalion in it) recalled the crossing: "We set forth like a crocodile of rubber dinghies with an outboard motor on the front one, which kept on conking out. We were met by machine-gun and mortar fire which was not very effective."

Overhead a noisy RAF aircraft patrolled up and down the river attempting to drown out the sound of outboard motors as the boats struggled across the fast-flowing river. Despite some motor problems and boats drifting downstream, the two brigades had established bridgeheads by daylight on the February 13.

That same day, IV Corps' 7th Division was getting into position to cross the Irrawaddy in the early morning of February 14. At the Nyaungu crossing, a detachment from the Special Boat Section and Sea Reconnaissance Unit did a final check of the far side of the river before the lead company of the 2nd Battalion, South Lancashire Regiment, 33rd Brigade rowed out at 3:45 AM on February 14. An hour and a half later the Lancashire men reached the east bank undetected and seized the high ground there.

The rest of the battalion's crossing did not go so well. To maintain silence, the boats' outboard motors had not been warmed up prior to the battalion setting out. This caused problems as the motors began to stall midstream. Some of the assault boats also began to leak.

The crossing fell behind schedule. Because of the strong current and motor trouble, the assault boats drifted downstream past their landing beaches. At daylight INA troops fired on them with machine guns. Within minutes two company commanders were dead, and a few boats were sunk. To aid the troops, air support was called in while the artillery and some tanks provided covering fire to the boats as they made their way back to the west bank.

The 4th Battalion of the 15th Punjab Regiment was now sent in. With no concern now for silence, the outboard motors were allowed to warm up before the boats headed across the river at 9:45 AM. The assault went well, and within two hours the whole battalion was across the river. By nightfall most of the 33rd Brigade had crossed the Irrawaddy.

Farther downriver at Pagan, the 1/11th Sikh Regiment had an easier crossing when, after being initially driven back by machine-gun fire, a small boat with two INA soldiers carrying a white flag appeared, revealing that the Japan-

ese had left Pagan. The Sikhs quickly crossed, and after some light resistance 280 INA troops surrendered while others retreated south.

But at Seikpyu things did not go well. The Japanese 153rd Regiment of the 72nd Mixed Independent Brigade launched a fierce attack on the 28th East African Brigade, driving it back about 12 miles to Letse. Despite falling back, the East Africans had drawn off enemy troops from Nyaunga.

The bridgehead near Nyaunga was made more secure on February 15 when part of the 89th Brigade crossed the Irrawaddy. With not enough troops to counterattack, the Japanese could do little. The following day Nyaunga was captured, and on February 17 the newly motorized 17th Division began to cross the river. Two days later, the 255th Indian Tank Brigade began crossing as well. The race to Meiktila was on.

Kimura did not take the reports of the crossing at Nyaunga too seriously, believing it was the East African troops. Instead, Kimura believed he faced the entire 14th Army crossing near Mandalay. He intended to attack Slim while half his forces were on either side of the Irrawaddy and defeat each component in turn. The Japanese launched fierce counterattacks against the bridgeheads established by the 20th and 19th Divisions.

Although Kimura was playing into Slim's plan, the British commander had a problem. Slim had requested help from the 36th British Division serving with the NCAC. The request was rejected. Instead, Slim was forced to bring up his reserves, the 5th Indian Division, which caused considerable concern and risk as to whether the overstretched supply line could deal with the extra burden of another division. The matter was resolved "by juggling between formations with the limited transport available and by cruelly overworking the men who drove, flew, sailed, and maintained our transports of all kinds," wrote Slim.

On February 21, the 17th Division and 255th Tank Brigade began their advances by two routes to Meiktila, which lay about 80 miles away. The columns met light resistance the first day. Tougher resistance was met the next day at the village of Oyin. Two companies of Japanese soldiers from the 16th Infantry Regiment of the 2nd Division held 20 bunkers dug underneath houses and screened by snipers along the village approaches. The 6/7th Rajputs supporting the tanks of the 5th Horse quickly came under machine-gun fire, which pinned them down as they advanced into the village.

Allied tanks quickly rumbled into Oyin, blasting at any spotted bunkers. Without warning a

ABOVE: Infantry search foxholes on the outskirts of Meiktila for enemy soldiers. Some Japanese infantrymen strapped bombs to their chests and hurled themselves at tanks belonging to the 255th Indian Tank Brigade spearheading the drive on the key Japanese supply depot. OPPOSITE: A British 3-inch mortar crew in action during the fight for Meiktila. The fighting at Meiktila see-sawed back and forth with the two sides vying for control of the airfield, but eventually the Japanese withdrew.

Japanese soldier with a bomb strapped to him raced toward the lead tank and threw himself underneath it, detonating the bomb. The explosion knocked out the tank and killed some of its crew. Another enemy soldier climbed aboard a second tank, but the machine gunner in another tank stitched him with bullets before he could pull the string and set off the bomb strapped to his chest. More Japanese tank killers attempted to take out tanks but were unsuccessful. Heavy fighting ensued before Oyin was captured.

On February 23, Slim got terrible news. NCAC had been ordered from northeast Burma to China. With only the 36th British Division left to protect Slim's left flank, this would free up troops for Kimura to face the XXXIII Corps at Mandalay.

However, Slim was far more concerned with the loss of USAAF air transport needed to transfer the NCAC. Failing to change Chinese Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek's mind, Mountbatten turned to the British Chiefs of Staff, who pressed the importance of continued USAAF air transport to the U.S. Joint Chiefs. In the end, the United States would not remove any air transport from Slim until June 1 or the 14th Army captured Rangoon, whichever came first. Slim had been ordered in January to take Rangoon after Meiktila had been secured.

Japanese resistance proved weak as the two mechanized brigades of 17th Division pushed on with the 255th Tank Brigade, capturing Kaing and Taungtha. On the afternoon of February 26, the vital airfield at Thabutkon 15 miles north of Meittila was captured. The following day the 17th Division's 99th Brigade began arriving by air, which would continue until March 2. Armored cars began to probe toward Meiktila.

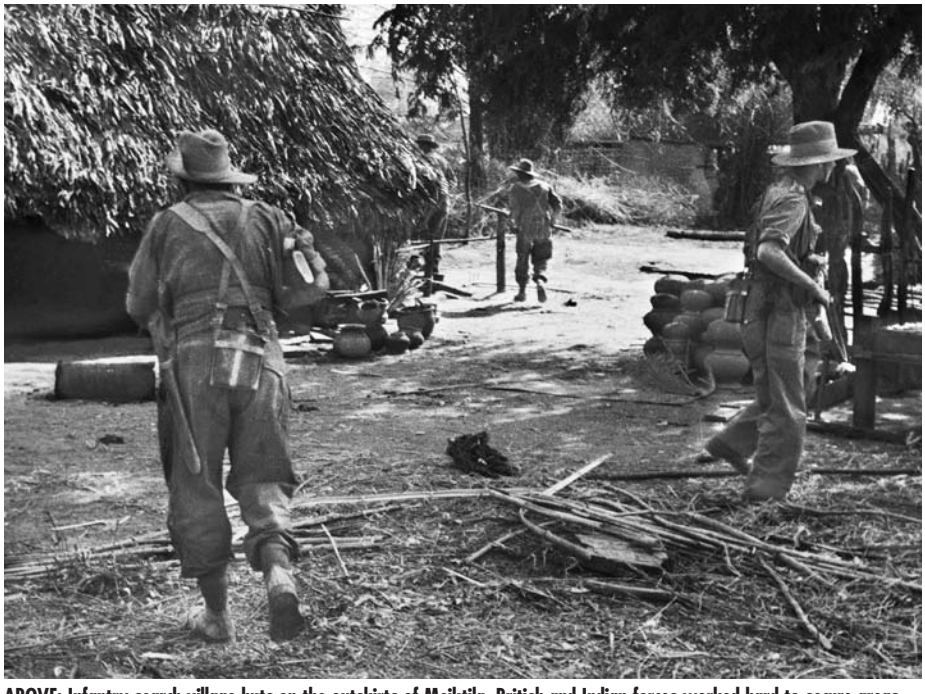
With news of the capture of the Thabutkon airfield, it became clear to the Japanese high command that this was no raid on Meiktila. Plans for counterattacking across the Irrawaddy were scrapped, and top priority was given to holding Meiktila. Defending Meiktila were three infantry companies made up from communication troops, four airfield defense units, some administration units, and about 500 walking wounded under the command of Maj. Gen. Tomekichi Kasuya. In total, Kasuya had about 4,500 troops to hold the key town. The men wasted no time in building bunkers and planting mines and booby traps. Kimura ordered the 49th Division, which was being held in reserve, to Meiktila. That division's 1/168th Infantry Regiment arrived in time to help to defend the town, as did an advance party from the rest of the regiment.

The first goal of Maj. Gen. D.T. Cowan, commander of the 17th Indian Division, was to pre-

vent reinforcements from reaching Meiktila by isolating it. On February 28, while the division's artillery was positioned at Antu to provide supporting fire for the attacking brigades, most of the 63rd Brigade set out on foot for the western edge of Meiktila. By nightfall, the brigade stopped at Kyaukpyugon and set up a roadblock southwest of Meiktila. Meanwhile, the 48th Brigade, which was being led by the 1/7th Gurkha Rifles, reached the Mahlaing/Meiktila Road and headed south on it. At a partly demolished bridge over a watercourse, the column was held up by machine-gun fire. A patrol set out after dark to probe the heavy defenses on the edge of town.

The 255th Tank Brigade swept wide around Meiktila to be in position to attack the town from the east. Leading the way were two reconnaissance columns consisting of a squadron of tanks from the 9th Horse, a troop of armored cars, two platoons of infantry, and a detachment of Royal Engineers. One column reached its objective, the village of Kyigan a couple miles east of Meiktila, while the other column pushed across the main airfield east of town. The latter came under intense fire when it reached the railway line at Khanda, where the enemy had good cover among the trees, shrubs, and buildings. The Japanese position was made more difficult to reach by a canal that ran parallel to the railway line.

The 5th Horse and 6/7th Rajputs attempted to attack on a two-squadron, two-company front. The infantry on the left flank began to take heavy casualties, and a squadron of supporting tanks



ABOVE: Infantry search village huts on the outskirts of Meiktila. British and Indian forces worked hard to secure areas because the Japanese frequently infiltrated back into the position from which they had been driven out the day before. OPPOSITE: Neither infantry attacks nor artillery bombardments could budge the Japanese defenders at Fort Dufferin in Mandalay, so the British resorted to using 2,000-pound skipping bombs to open a breach in the thick walls. The Japanese eventually evacuated, thus making an all-out attack unnecessary.

soon discovered the Japanese had set fire to surrounding fuel drums. As the squadron commander opened his tank hatch to get a better look, he was killed by a sniper. The tanks of the 9th Horse were ordered to a nearby ridgeline near Point 860 to add supporting fire, but with casualties mounting the attack was called off.

On March 1, Cowan's brigades and the 255th Tank Brigade prepared to fight their way into Meiktila. The terrain did not favor the British tanks. The two lakes north and south of town turned some of the roads into narrow causeways, limiting the Shermans' maneuverability. Irrigation ditches in the surrounding countryside also hindered tanks. Slim and Messervy flew in to observe the attack.

To the west of Meiktila, the 1/10th Gurkha Rifles of the 63rd Brigade along with a troop of the 5th Horse captured the village of Khanna. They then pushed on toward Meiktila, where they met fierce resistance coming from the hospital where the Japanese had built bunkers. Air strikes were called in, destroying the bunkers and setting the hospital on fire.

To the north, the 1/7th Gurkha Rifles of the 48th Brigade, supported by a couple of squadrons of tanks from the 9th Horse, headed south on the Mandalay Road. In the northern suburbs of Meiktila, it met fierce resistance coming from a monastery that was eventually cleared after hard fighting. As the Gurhkas pushed farther into town they encountered aerial bombs dug into the road and dummy minefields, which consisted of bricks with dirt thrown over them.

The advancing troops also were met with enemy machine-gun fire blazing from the houses and creating deadly crossfires. The houses had to be cleared one at a time in brutal fighting. The troops managed to fight their way to within 100 yards of the railway line that ran through town before the attack was called off and they withdrew for the night at 6 PM.

To the east, the 255th Tank Brigade took Point 860. At that point, the remaining tanks of the 9th Horse, along with 4/4th Bombay Grenadiers and a detachment of the Royal Engineers, pushed east along the railway line into Meiktila. They got within 200 yards of the railway station before being ordered to retire so as not to have any friendly fire incidents with the 48th Brigade.

During the night, the Japanese infiltrated back into the position from which they had been driven the day before. They had to be rooted out again as the 48th Brigade continued its advance into town from the north on March 2. The 4/12th Frontier Force Regiment led the advance supported by two squadrons of the 9th Horse. Overcoming stiff opposition, the troops and tanks got to within 50 yards of the railway line when a well-concealed 75mm gun knocked out three tanks before it was discovered and its crew killed by the infantry.

To the west, 63rd Brigade, which was supported by ground attack aircraft, pushed into Meiktila. Advancing down a causeway, two tanks from the 5th Horse were hit by a 75mm gun sited at the eastern end of the causeway. The attack was redirected south to clear the area along the southern lake. After an artillery barrage crashed down, the 5th Horse pushed through dense thorn thickets and stone buildings.

As the tanks rolled through a belt of thick scrub, they were soon attacked by enemy teams of tank killers throwing gasoline bombs and placing explosive charges under the tracks. Although one tank was disabled, the tank killers were put out of service, and the tanks continued blasting bunkers. Rumbling out of the scrub, the tanks gunned down many of the enemy soldiers withdrawing in front of them.

In the heavy fighting that raged through the afternoon, Naik Fazal Din of the 7/10th Baluch Regiment knocked out a bunker with

grenades and then led his section against others. Despite having a ghastly sword wound, Fazal Din ripped the sword from the hands of the Japanese officer who had stabbed him and killed him with it. Then the sword-wielding, mortally wounded Fazal Din killed two other Japanese soldiers and urged his men on before collapsing. He was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross.

Fighting continued the following day as the 1st Battalion, West Yorkshire Regiment, 48th Brigade and two squadrons of tanks from the 9th Horse pushed into the southeast part of town following an artillery and aerial bombardment. The last Japanese defenders fought fanatically as each bunker, building, and machine-gun nest had to be cleared. Three tanks were knocked out by a 75mm gun in the brutal street fighting.

A badly wounded Lieutenant W.B. Weston was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross for setting off a grenade, killing himself and the enemy soldiers in a bunker, thereby saving his platoon from taking casualties. By the end of the day, the last of the Japanese defenders had been killed and Meiktila was in British and Indian hands. While fighting raged in Meiktila, patrols from the 63rd Brigade and 255th Tank Brigade mopped up pockets of resistance on the outskirts of town. The Allies killed approximately 2,000 Japanese soldiers at Meiktila; the rest slipped out during the night.

With a strong enemy force occupying his supply base and blocking his lines of communication, Kimura shifted the 18th Division from the 15th Army (where it had been sent from the 33rd Army to help in the fight around Mandalay) and ordered it to recapture Meiktila. The 18th Division was further strengthened from the 15th Army with two battalions from the 214th Regiment, 33rd Division under its control.

Also heading south was much of the 15th Army's artillery, consisting of two 150mm howitzers, 21 75mm guns, and 13 antitank guns. The 14th Tank Regiment, which had only nine tanks, was sent along as well. The 119th Regiment of the 53rd Division at Pindale was to cover the 18th Division as it assembled its forces. The 49th Division also was ordered to advance north from Toungoo and assist the 18th Division in retaking Meiktila.

Besides the loss of Meiktila, the situation along the Irrawaddy was deteriorating for Kimura. Rees's 19th Indian Division was pushing south and by March 8 had taken the large town of Madaya and reached Mandalay Hill. This steep hill, covered with concrete temples and pagodas, was on the outskirts of Mandalay. It was heavily fortified with deep bunkers and honeycombed with machine-gun nests. The 4/4th Gurkhas of the 98th Brigade were given the tough job of taking it. They Gurkhas were reinforced the following day by two companies from the 2nd Battalion Royal Berkshire Regiment.

Fighting was fierce as the British and Gurkha soldiers fought their way to the summit of the hill. To get at the Japanese in the deep bunkers, barrels of oil, tar, and gasoline were poured into the access points and ignited with tracer bullets and grenades. On March 11, the hill was taken.

Next lay Fort Dufferin in Mandalay. Surrounded by a wide moat, this impressive fort had brick walls 30 feet wide, tapering to 12 feet at the top and enclosing about 1¼ miles of barracks, offices, and the Royal Palace of Thebaw. Pushing through Mandalay and hammering away at snipers, Rees's force reached Fort Dufferin by March 15. Probing attacks quickly brought a fierce response from the Japanese defenders. Artillery fire hammered the fort for a couple of days but to little effect. A stealth attack conducted by the 1/15th Punjab and 8/12th Frontier Force of the 64th Brigade also ended in failure in the early morning of March 18.

The RAF hammered the fort, even using a 2,000-pound skipping bomb, which blasted a 15-foot hole in the fort's wall. Slim, who observed the bombing, thought a direct attack through the breach would be too costly and wanted the fort bypassed. But Rees wanted to try an attack through the sewers into the fort. Neither approach was tried; a white flag and Union Jack appeared in the early afternoon of March 20. A small group of Anglo-Burmese civilian prisoners appeared with news that the Japanese had evacuated the fort through drains the night before. Mandalay was in Allied hands.

Meanwhile, the 2nd British Division, which had crossed the Irrawaddy on February 24 at Ngazun, had broken out from its bridgehead and advanced from the south to meet the 19th Indian Division. The 20th Indian Division pushed south to the Mandalay-Meiktila Road,

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IN HIS FATHER'S TIME, leopards had freely padded across the reception areas of the royal palace at Fez, inspiring awe and trepidation among visitors. But Sultan Moulai Hafid preferred guinea pigs in the drawing room instead. Better for health and safety, but lacking a certain regal gravitas and, for many, reflective of Morocco's decline.

By the early 1900s, the kingdom was firmly within France's sphere of influence. It was a prize of which French imperialists were eager to take full control. Morocco had abundant natural resources, was strategically located next to France's immense North African empire, and had both Atlantic and Mediterranean coastlines. Importantly, it was also viewed as open to possible German encroachment, a threat that both Britain and France were keen to neutralize.

The hawkish outlook gained greater traction during 1907 and 1908 when a bloody campaign was fought to quell an insurgency in the Chaouia region that surrounds Casablanca. Foreshadowing what was to come, French intervention was provoked by a massacre of European railwaymen and builders involved in the construction of Casablanca's new port and quayside.

French tactics involved large mobile squares of infantry supported by North African colonial cavalry, the Spahis. Rugged and perhaps a little rough around the edges, the French infantryman and his colonial counterpart were known for their marching prowess, being able to trek across miles of unforgiving terrain and still fight with tenacity on arrival. The French also used a comparatively new gun, the 75mm, that employed

THE FRENCH RESPONDED TO A REQUEST IN 1911 FROM SULTAN MOULAI HAFID TO HELP HIM PUT DOWN A MAJOR REBELLION. THEY CRUSHED THE REBELS IN BLOODY FIGHTING AND ESTABLISHED A PROTECTORATE. BY SIMON REES

MASSACRE IN MOROCCO

Bridgeman Art Library

an advanced hydropneumatic recoil mechanism. This ensured the gun remained in place after firing and did not require resighting. The 75mm would go on to prove its value time and again during World War I.

The Chaouia conflict was a bloody affair, with quarter rarely offered or given. The Moroccans put up a determined fight, but French firepower, repeated troop surges, and scorched-earth tactics simply overwhelmed them. For example, the French surprised an enemy army at camp near the shrine of Zaouia Sidi el Ourimi and attacked with such speed and effect that *London Times* correspondent Sir Reginald Rankin overheard one French officer say, "Ce n'est pas une bataille, c'est une course." This is not a battle, it is a race.

Far to the east, in the marshlands next to Algeria, the brilliant but mercurial General Hubert Lyautey was busy extending French power across vast swaths of Moroccan territory. He established a policy known as *tache d'huile*, oil stain, whereby a town is taken and garrisoned to facilitate trade. It was thought that commerce

General Hubert Lyautey, the French Resident-General of Morocco, arrives in Marrakesh. Lyautey faced the daunting task of pacifying the country and winning over the hearts and minds of the population, and he succeeded at both.

would then act as a catalyst for wider pacification. In the meantime, the main task force advances to the next target, repeating the earlier process and steadily spreading an area of control across the map. It was a policy that influences counterinsurgency theories to this day.

Although flush with victory, France now had to tread with great care as any overt moves to seize full control of the kingdom could provoke a hostile German response. In a game of high-stakes realpolitik, the Kaiser's government frequently used Morocco and Germany's trading interests there as diplomatic leverage. France was also wary of Moulai Hafid, who had only just ascended the throne. He had deposed the previous sultan, his half-brother Abd el-Aziz, after a strange nonbattle in the southern Haouz region in August 1908. Abd el-Aziz's army disintegrated after its cavalry made a halfhearted charge against Moulai Hafid's forces and then fell back in disarray. Such was the speed of the collapse that there was talk of betrayal in the ranks.

Abd el-Aziz fled into French protection and announced his intention to abdicate. His disap-

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ABOVE: French guns are loaded onto boats in Rabat for ferrying across the Bou Regreg River in western Morocco in 1911. RIGHT: The perennially cash-strapped Sultan of Morocco Moulai Hafid. Without the means to raise punitive expeditions into the heartlands of his kingdom, the sultan quickly became reliant on French loans and high taxes to maintain his tenuous position.

pointing reign had been mired in corruption and prolificacy, where luxury items that served no purpose had been purchased at maximum expense. For example, Abd el-Aziz admitted to Walter Harris, another *London Times* correspondent, that he had spent £2,000 on a gold camera and between £6,000 and £7,000 on photographic materials in one year alone. To put the purchases in context, this represents a relative value of more than $1 million at today's prices. Incidentally, the sultan was never seen engaging in this hobby. After his defeat, the deposed sultan was quickly packed off to Tangiers for a life of luxury retirement.

In contrast, Moulai Hafid was intelligent and a recognized Islamic scholar, although astute commentators noted his self-indulgent nature and a barely concealed hunger for power. Harris also repeated the rumor that he was a drug addict. The new sultan was initially backed by the religious leadership of Morocco's principal city, Fez. He also was supported by other influential Islamic groups, including Muhammad al-Kattani and his artisan followers. In Morocco, the sultan was and is the religious figurehead, directly descended from the Prophet Mohammed's line. He is the "Commander of the Faithful" and "His Imperial Sharifian Majesty."

Moulai Hafid initially bolstered his popularity by trumpeting an anti-French message entwined with the rhetoric of jihad and reform. But in private, even before securing the throne, he had sent out peace feelers. The sultan believed negotiations and Moroccan reparations for the Chaouia campaign would lead to a French military exit. "When France considers her just claims have been satisfied, no doubt she will withdraw her troops," he told a *London Daily Express* reporter in the early days of his reign.

Unfortunately, Moulai Hafid's diplomatic skills left a lot to be desired. He brought advanced talks with the French Minister Eugéne Regnault to a juddering halt by demanding the French Army not only quit the Chaouia but also Casablanca. The French refused point blank and announced that future loans would be withheld unless Moulai Hafid backed down. The sultan beat a hasty retreat while asking to borrow more money in the process. Writing in 1936, former British Vice Admiral Cecil V. Usborne wryly noted that Moulai Hafid "was already beginning to place around his neck the very noose which had strangled his brother [Abd el-Aziz]."

Many of Moulai Hafid's financial troubles stemmed from the fact that being the sultan was such a costly business: palaces, patronage, menageries, and harems all add up. In the past, sultans in need of instant cash could always raise an army and plunder the lands of a rebellious clan. The soldiers, the askars, would take a portion of the loot, but the lion's share went to the sultan. This wild Sharifian anabasis was called a harka. But annoyingly for Moulai Hafid, it was no longer a viable option; a harka would have brought instant censure from France, his primary paymaster and creditor, and possibly afford the French a new excuse to seize yet more of the sultan's power and territory.

Other longer term revenue streams were being eroded as domestic merchants and artisans were easily outcompeted by Western goods flooding into the country. Morocco was unable to alleviate the vast trade deficit created by increasing its export levels; the preindustrial country had little to offer the wider world other than Moorish luxury items, such as carpets or fine leatherwork. Worse still, the tariffs and customs fees made on the foreign goods entering Morocco were not as great as they should have been. Abd el-Aziz had sold around 60 percent of these rights to French banks and businesses in return for loans that had created much of the unserviceable debt in the first place. In desperation, Moulai Hafid resorted to imposing additional taxes, an action that made him increasingly unpopular.

In August 1909, the sultan finally appeared to have a stroke of good fortune. His army and its accompanying French instructors had captured Bou Hamara, a pretender to the throne and a major thorn in Morocco's side since the early 1900s. Bou Hamara had carved out his own fiefdom near the Spanish port of Melilla, in the Rif coastal region, a place where blackmail, ransom, and cutthroat deals were the order of the day. The people of Fez celebrated this latest news with wild abandon, perhaps believing that the nation's

luck was slowly turning.

Moulai Hafid decided to have the pretender executed in mid-September after his inquisitors failed to extract the details of where Bou Hamara had hidden his ill-gotten gains. The traitor was duly placed in a lions' den, but the well-fed beasts decided to only maul their unwelcome guest. Palace attendants were ordered to drag the pretender out and finish the job. Bou Hamara frequently treated his prisoners with equally sickening brutality and, perhaps, was deserving of little pity. However, Moulai Hafid then had the pretender's corpse burned, an act that shocked many Moroccans as cremation breaks strict Islamic taboos.

Later that month, and possibly emboldened by the recent success, the sultan declared that he would only deal with the Western powers through their representatives in Tangiers. In response, France ceased offering Moulai Hafid military assistance. This was potentially disastrous for the sultan as he relied on French instructors to ensure his Sharifian army maintained at least a basic level of fighting efficiency. For good measure, France also threatened to seize Moulai Hafid's remaining Moroccan customs and excise duties. The sultan backed down and, as before, asked to borrow more money.

By 1910, he was drowning in debt and took to extorting some of the kingdom's most notable families. The nadir was reached when he ordered the arrest of Ibn-Aissa, the caid of Meknes, and members of his family on trumped-up treason charges. Moulai Hafid wanted payment in return for freedom, believing that Ibn-Aissa was wealthy enough to cover the cost. Again the sultan's inquisitors went to work and, once again, failed in their in task. The money was simply not there. Moulai Hafid refused to believe this and changed tact, having one of Ibn-Aissa's wives horrifically tortured until European correspondents reported the story to an outraged international audience. The French quickly pressured the sultan into recanting his actions and releasing his captives.

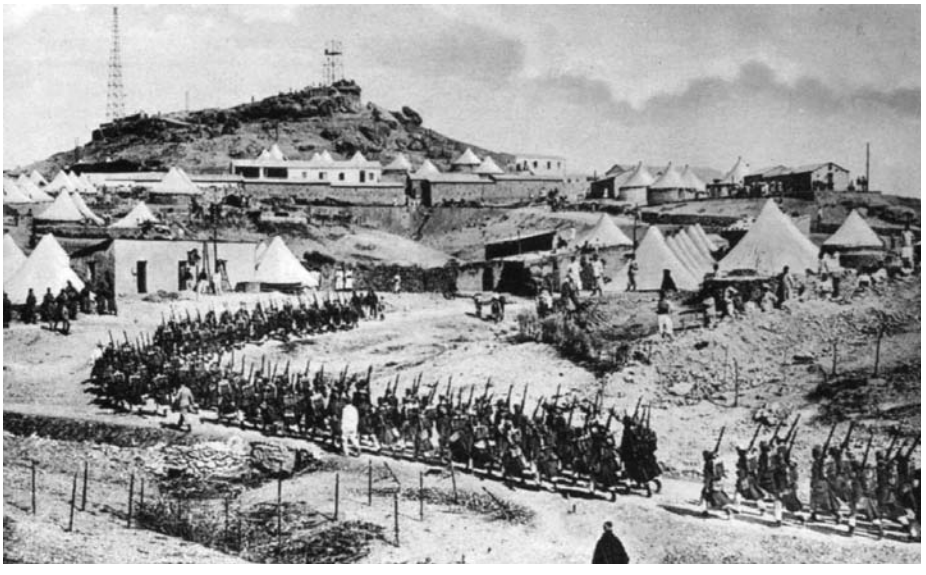
Moulai Hafid had also decided to sell the final 40 percent stake in customs duties and other local taxes for 90 million francs, most of which was promptly frittered away. He subsequently scrambled to cover his costs by raising the tax rates to near exorbitant levels. In the hinterlands of Fez, the important Cherarda clan started to run out of patience, and many of the other clans were not far behind. In January 1911, at Kasba Tadla, roughly equidistant between Marrakesh and Fez, major disturbances erupted. A French column sent to restore order was ambushed, with one officer and six men killed. It was a small taste of things to come. In response, the sultan decided to make an example of the Cherarda and bring them to order. No doubt he also hoped to plunder some loot in the process.

The French raised no objections. In fact, they seemed markedly keen for the harka to begin. It is believed a conspiracy had been cooked up between the French Consul Henri-François Gaillard and Charles Mangin, the head of the French military mission in Fez. They wanted the sultan's forces outside the city to make it a more attractive target for other rebellious clans. Once Fez was threatened, the sultan would undoubtedly seek French military assistance and, in order to secure this, would be willing to give up yet more sovereignty.

Whether a conspiracy truly existed is open to conjecture; nevertheless, the French were extremely swift to benefit once the inevitable occurred.

Minus the sultan, who remained entrenched in his palace, the Sharifian army marched out of Fez on February 28, 1911. The askars managed to keep formation, which the French instructors considered a notable achievement as the sultan's soldiers could hardly be called professionals. Their pay was terrible, their terms and conditions foul. Many were forcibly conscripted. In contrast, the rebel clans were well equipped and highly motivated. Almost all were excellent horsemen, and their weapons included Winchester and Martini rifles, along with knobkerries, swords, and daggers. Movement was hampered by the early March rains that turned the countryside into a quagmire. The Sharifian army's advance soon ground to a halt, with the soaked men facing constant harassment and dependent on their artillery to help hold the line.

Back in Fez, news quickly filtered through that several other clans had joined the revolt. On March 12, the Beni M'tir clan raided south of Fez; on March 22, the Ait Youssi joined in, plundering and looting their way almost up to the walls of Fez. By early April the clans had sounded out Abd el-Aziz as to whether he would be willing to return to power. He rebuffed their offer. Undaunted, they decided to support Moulai Zayn, the half-brother of Moulai Hafid, who was already backed by the city of Meknes' religious leadership. By April 12, the Ouled Djama clan had occupied hills immediately north of Fez, and Gaillard began pressing Moulai Hafid to request French assistance and intervention. In the meantime, the sultan had ordered his forces to return and reinforce the capital, which they succeeded in doing by April 26. The askars' morale was now at rock bottom, and their faith in the sultan shaky at best.



A column of French troops moves to a tented encampment in Morocco. The French made a heavy investment in men and materials to put down well-organized Moroccan rebels.

Back in Paris, the government fretted about the best course of action, fearing that overwhelming military response might rattle Germany's cage. After a flurry of paperwork, the politicians agreed on April 23 to increase French numbers in the Chaouia to 22,000 men. Already in the field, General Charles Moinier was ordered to assemble his forces for an advance on Kenitra, about 30 miles north of Rabat, and prepare himself for a relief march to Fez. Moulai Hafid was again told to formally request military assistance. This was needed to deflect protestations from the anti-colonial lobby and any potential complaints from the Germans. Knowing full well that the French would use the situation to assert yet more control over him, Moulai Hafid slowly pondered his

Both: Author's Collection

ABOVE: Members of the rebellious M'Dakra clan shown during the Chaouia campaign. The rebels were able to obtain high-quality rifles from the sultan's corrupt quartermaster or from the black market. BELOW: French troops haul 75mm artillery through the rugged Moroccan terrain. The gun's hydropneumatic recoil mechanism meant the gun remained in place after firing, without the need for resighting.

options until finally assenting on May 4.

Because of Moinier's preparedness, it was deemed prudent to backdate the sultan's request to April 27. It was a botched effort to make the proceedings seem less like a fait accompli. But despite this measure and several more besides, French intentions to increase their control over the sultanate were patently obvious. An editorial in the *New York Times* on May 1 hit the nail on the head, declaring: "[The] first object will be to rescue the few foreigners in Fez, but when that is done the Sultan of Morocco will be helplessly dependent on French arms for his safety and his life."

With clearance granted from Paris, Moinier's forces marched northeast from the Chaouia in three columns. The lead column comprised slightly more than 3,500 men and was commanded by Colonel Jean-Marie Brulard, a veteran of the Chaouia campaign. The middle column, which included the baggage train, was under Colonel Henri Gourand's control and numbered 1,500 men. The rear guard also stood at 1,500 men and was led by Colonel Dalbiez.

French forces in Morocco were a polyglot mix. Soldiers from France marched or rode alongside colonial troops from West Africa, Tunisia. and Algeria. The French were equipped with machine guns, Lebel rifles, and 75mm guns. The troops were tough and disciplined, and many were veterans of fighting in Morocco.

French forces marched as planned through Rabat and reached Kenitra, where Moinier called a halt. Aside from his strike force of slightly more than 6,500 men, Moinier determined that an additional 3,000 men were needed to hold his lines of communication open. He also was forced to wait for a large volume of supplies to be slowly pushed up from Casablanca. The delay emboldened the Moroccans into making harassing strikes, targeting the supply columns at their most vulnerable point when traversing the large cork forest of Mamora. However, they met with little success as the latest French troop surge ensured there were enough soldiers to provide an unyielding protective screen.

Still, Paris was starting to become increasingly nervous at the slow pace, and orders were sent to speed up the relief force, orders that Moinier promptly set aside. Even Mangin's messages warning of impending doom in Fez failed to hasten him. The army finally began its march on Fez on May 11, the day that around 3,000 rebels attempted to attack the capital's western walls. The insurgents were forced back at the first lines of defense, although it was only a matter of time before a more concerted and audacious attack was made.

For the final approach, Moinier's force was again divided into three columns. The columns had been reinforced slightly during the interim. Brulard's vanguard now was composed of 3,700 men, Gourand's middle column of 1,700 men, and Dalbiez's rear guard of 1,850 men. Brulard reached Mercha Remla and waited for Gourand. Following their linkup, both columns marched to Lalla Ito, easily brushing aside rebel forces. The French bedded down until alert pickets spotted large numbers of Moroccans taking up positions in high grass to the south. Gourand later estimated that the enemy force numbered about 1,500 men. In response, the French made a preemptive strike at dawn the next day, forcing the enemy to beat a hasty retreat and leave behind 10 killed and three wounded.

Brulard led another successful surprise attack on the morning of May 15, this time scattering the opposition for good and enabling the French to leave Lalla Ito behind, although not before a garrison was detached to further secure the supply route. Moinier now decided to create two attack columns, one led by Brulard and the other by Dalbiez. Gourand would take control of the supply corridor and protect a major convoy that was scheduled to pass through Kenitra and eventually on to Fez. The vanguard under Brulard resumed its march, bumping into the sultan's messengers over the

coming days. Each dispatch painted a bleaker picture, with Moulai Hafid almost begging Moinier to make haste.

French forces finally picked up speed and, by mid-morning on May 21, were close enough to note enemy positions around Fez and observe the rebels withdrawing. The sultan could unbolt the palace gates and sleep a little easier once more. The bulk of French forces were directed to a camp on the outskirts of the city at Dar Debibagh, which was quickly transformed into a major defensive bastion.

While Moinier, Dalbiez, and Brulard were still approaching Fez, Gourand's supply train of 1,700 fully laden camels was fending off attacks. For the clans, a target of this size and composition was akin to a miner unearthing the mother lode. On May 19, the Beni Ahsen clan attacked but was repelled for the loss of one French officer. Another assault was repulsed on May 22. On reaching Sidi Gueddar, Gourand received information that the troublesome Cherarda clan was also planning to strike. Information like this would have caused deep concern during the days of the Chaouia campaign; by 1911, the French had every reason to remain confident and press on regardless. Gourand's column was carefully screened by its cavalry and was able to use its trusty 75mm guns to maximum effect, blazing away at the Cherarda's attacks from both the front and rear. Reinforcements commanded by Dalbiez then arrived in support, having raced over from Fez. They alleviated the pressure and assisted Gourand's vital cargo into the city.

The French had now reached a crossroads. They had accomplished their mission to relieve Fez, but the advantage had yet to be pressed either militarily against the insurgents or politically against the sultan. On the night of June 4-5 a force of around 1,500 rebels, primarily from the Beni M'tir clan, assaulted the French at Dar Debibagh. Their efforts were easily contained, and Moinier used the attack to initiate a series of counterstrikes that proved relatively straightforward, with the Beni M'tir preferring to skirmish and harass Moinier's advance, albeit unsuccessfully. Advancing on Meknes, the rebellion's hub, the French blew open the city's Aguedal gate with high explosives, an act that prompted Moulai Zayn to surrender and submit. The clans immediately followed suit. By Moroccan standards, the would-be usurper got off lightly after being placed under house arrest in one of the many royal palaces.

The reaction in France to these latest developments was mixed, with many left pondering what the German response would be. The answer came in July 1911 with the arrival of the German gunboat *Panther* in the southern Moroccan port of Agadir. The kaiser's government claimed the ship had been sent to protect German trading interests from "tribal disorder." Britain was deeply concerned by this development, worried that the Germans might secure their own slice of Morocco along a vital stretch of the North African Atlantic coast. Thankfully, cool heads prevailed and the "Agadir Crisis" was resolved through negotiation. Signed on November 4, 1911, the Treaty of Fez ceded Germany a vast chunk of territory in the French Congo that was then annexed to German Cameroon. In return, Germany recognized French rights and interests that allowed France to formally push ahead with making Morocco its protectorate.

On November 9, Moulai Hafid accepted that his kingdom would have a status comparable to Egypt's within the British Empire. The sultan already knew that his decrepit army was to be taken over and run by the French, who had decided to turn it into a trained force of 13,000 troops and an imperial guard of 2,000. The necessary officers and noncommissioned officer instructors started arriving in Fez during the final weeks of 1911. Moinier and the bulk of his men had remained in the region of Meknes, although a strong garrison was stationed in Fez to ensure French interests were maintained and the will of France imposed.

From their perspective, the French had every reason to congratulate themselves for a job well done. However, there had been a key oversight. They failed to appreciate or counter the growing anger within Fez, particularly among the city's elite. Moulai Hafid was a key cause of this; he had been unable to resist his old habits of corruption, graft, and selling government posts to the highest bidders. The latter issue was not unusual, except that the sultan kept demanding repeat payments, gifts, or donations for privileges and positions thought sold. Such as it was, the government of Morocco had become a Sharifian swindle, and France was seen as the backstop behind it.

HAD THE SULTAN'S OPPONENTS USED HIS NAME TO INSTIGATE AN UPRISING? IF SO, IT WAS A CLEVER PLAN. IF ALL WENT WELL, THE MUTINEERS AND RIOTERS WOULD WIPE OUT THE FRENCH AND DEPOSE MOULAI HAFID FOR THEM. IF IT FAILED, THE FINGER OF SUSPICION WOULD BE POINTED FIRST AT THE SULTAN, ALLOWING THE ELITES TO FEIGN SURPRISED INNOCENCE AT THE WHOLE AFFAIR.

In March 1912, Regnault and a diplomatic mission arrived in Fez with a preliminary draft of the treaty to be agreed between France and the sultan. Moulai Hafid now learned that all state administration, finance, justice, and defense, as well as all foreign policy matters, were to be removed from his control. The sultan would become a puppet without any real political power. Moulai Hafid protested, made some noises about abdication, and then sulked. Faced with no alternatives, he signed on March 30.

The sultan was well aware how explosive the treaty would be among his people and so decided it was prudent to leave for the safety of Rabat, asking the French to release the details after he had departed. Moulai Hafid was unaware that the French newspaper *Le Matin* had already secured insider information on the treaty and had published the facts before its formal announcement. Within days of Parisians mulling the news over their breakfast, *Le Matin*'s scoop was met with disbelief and indignation across Morocco. As Moulai Hafid had predicted, the situation was set to explode.

The touchpaper that lit the Moroccan powder keg came soon afterward and from within the ranks of the sultan's army. Already feeling sour about being ordered to wear knapsacks, which they thought fit only for lowly porters, the askars were angry that the French were about to stop their practice of selling rations for extra cash, goods, or the services of prostitutes. In the future, the men would be served improved rations while under the watchful eyes of their French officers and NCOs. However, this added expenditure on food would not come from the French or Sharifian treasuries but from the askars' own pay, a penny-pinching decision that was guaranteed to upset, if not enrage. In addition, the new system came into effect on April 17, a day that was to also witness a partial solar eclipse, something that also troubled the superstitious askars.

On the morning of April 17, Lieutenant-Instructor Metzinger discovered that his unit had mutinied, with around 50 of his men racing into the streets to spread rebellion to other parts of the Sharifian army and other quarters of the city. Metzinger was bundled to safety by his troops

and then later helped back to the main French camp at Dar Debibagh. This was to be a familiar pattern; the mutineers often ensured their own officers were smuggled out or detained unharmed. Artillery Adjutant Pisani was held in protective custody but managed to escape to Dar Debibagh in the early hours of April 18. Before his flight, Pisani also had the presence of mind to remove firing mechanisms from the sultan's cannons.

Some believe the leading citizens of Fez, those who had reached the end of their tether with Moulai Hafid, may have been behind the mutiny. Certainly, some of the askars believed that the mutiny had been ordered from above, with some saying that the command had come from the sultan himself. For example, Captain Fabry arrived at his unit only to be warned off by his men, with one exclaiming, "Run, Captain! By order of the sultan we are killing officers."

Had the sultan's opponents used his name to instigate an uprising? If so, it was a clever plan. If all went well, the mutineers and rioters would wipe out the French and depose Moulai Hafid

ullstein bild / The Granger Collection, NY

French forces in Morocco included foreign legionnaires pictured and colonial troops from West Africa, Tunisia, and Algeria. The troops, who were tough and disciplined, were equipped with bolt-action rifles, machine guns, and field artillery.

for them. If it failed, the fingers of suspicion would be pointed first at the sultan, allowing the elites to feign surprised innocence at the whole affair. But others have wondered if the orders had indeed come from Moulai Hafid. With hindsight, this argument seems a little far fetched; if the sultan was addicted to anything, it was to French loans and the lifestyle these afforded him. Why would he bite a hand that so willingly fed?

French officers and NCOs without the loyalty of their men, or simply caught in the open, faced being hunted down and butchered. Five soldiers at the French military telegraph office put up a spirited fight that lasted two hours before they were overwhelmed. Only one escaped. At the Hôtel de France, the lady proprietor and a Spanish Franciscan tried to reason with the rioters through the doors. They were met with a hail of bullets, killing them instantly. The European guests were no doubt glad to have their sidearms that day; they retreated to the upper floors and kept the besiegers at bay until the cover of night allowed them to escape across the rooftops.

By the end of April 17, 11 officers, eight NCOs, and nine European civilians were dead. Further slaughter had taken place in the Jewish district, the mellah, which had tried to shut itself off from the mayhem unfolding outside its gates. However, the rioters and looters eventually broke through and immediately started a killing spree. Most Jews fled to the sultan's palace, the traditional source of protection, but many were too slow and 43 murders were reported. Felix Weisgerber, a correspondent for the newspaper *Le Temps,* recorded the ghastly aftermath: "Shattered furniture, broken kitchen utensils among which lie the bloated and hideously mutilated bodies of men, women and children, surrounded by bands of rats … a scroll of the law, torn and soiled, remains in a pool of coagulated blood, which emits an appalling smell."

In charge of the French garrison in Fez, the recently promoted General Brulard had been swift to respond. Dar Debibagh was secured, while a protective cordon was put in place around the diplomatic quarter, which included the Glaoui Palace, the French and British consulates, the Auvert Hospital, and the wireless station. Convalescent and wounded soldiers were initially used hold this perimeter. Access was via the southern Bab al Hadid gateway, and Brulard decided that Major Philipot should take his men from their northwesterly positions immediately outside the city and head south around the walls. They would then enter Fez and bolster the stronghold's defenses. However, one of Philipot's companies became pinned down by lethal enemy fire from the walls of Fez Djedid. It took several hours to extricate this unit, which later reported 35 dead and 70 wounded.

Philipot's two other companies avoided contact and then used the steeply banked Wadi Zitoun to move waist deep in water toward Bab al Hadid. Although slow going, the wadi offered relatively good protection from the bullets speeding overhead. Philipot's men reached the hospital and then fanned out around the perimeter, hoping to impose order in the vicinity. The dangers were still great, and one French Senegalese patrol was ambushed for the loss of nine dead and four wounded. In the meantime, as Brulard telegraphed Moinier to send urgent reinforcements from Meknes, his artillery busied itself shelling targets of opportunity, particularly in Fez Djedid.

Clearance operations continued on April 18, with rioters and mutineers slowly dispersed or captured. Those Europeans who had successfully remained in hiding now made their way to the safety of French lines. A flying column sent from Meknes then arrived at around 3 PM, having covered 65 kilometers through unfriendly

UIG / Getty Images

Colonel Henri Gourand's French troops attack rebel clans camped on the plain of Sebou in June 1912. Although greatly outnumbered, Gourand used his machine guns and field guns to even the odds.

territory and without stopping. Moinier reached the city on April 23, bringing with him 23 infantry companies, three squadrons of cavalry, and several artillery batteries. The uprising was now comprehensively crushed, with around 100 mutineers sentenced to death and then summarily shot in public over the following days; it created a bad impression, for many Moroccans believed these men had been forced to rebel and thought clemency should have been shown.

It was a viewpoint shared by Lyautey, who had just arrived in Morocco as France's new resident-general. His daunting task was to pacify the country and unify French policy between the military and diplomatic wings. The resident-general reached Fez on May 24, just as the rebellious clans decided to attack the city once more. Rather awkwardly, the skirmishing began just as Lyautey attended a garden party to officially welcome him to the city. Several guests voiced concern about the sound of gunfire, and he sought to calm their fears, announcing supreme confidence in Moinier's men.

The rebel forces were probing for soft spots in the city's defenses, which proved a hard task as French artillery and machine guns were able to hold off these forays. Changing tactics, the rebels decided to assail the wall between Bab Ghissa in the north and Bab F'touah in the south, and an estimated 1,500 insurgents attacked en masse. Several rebel units also occupied the tombs of Merinides overlooking French positions, while others managed to infiltrate the Mosque of Bab Ghissa, firing at a French Algerian unit from behind. The sniping caused some serious casualties: 17 dead and 25 wounded. French Legionnaires rushed up in support, cleared the mosque, and then used its minaret as a machine-gun post, firing across at targets in the Merinides tombs. The attackers were finally repelled after Moinier rushed in two battalions of reinforcements from Dar Debibagh. However, fighting continued throughout the night as localized pockets of resistance were destroyed.

The French knew that Fez was still far from secure and that another rebel attack was likely. But rather than rely on the force of arms alone, Lyautey decided to launch a charm offensive. He needed to convince the Moroccans that their interests could be aligned with his and so started holding audiences with the city's leading citizens, including many of those from the merchant community. He listened carefully to their complaints against France and the sultan. "Every day, I interview important Moors.… I restore their confidence, listen to their complaints, which I generally rectify, for they are mostly justified," wrote Lyautey.

Lyautey also released those rebels still held in captivity. "The repressive courts martial have included, as accomplices, on the slightest pretext, honorable people who had nothing to with it," he wrote. Finally, he organized financial payments to Fez's religious leaders on the condition they reduce their rhetoric against France and restrain their congregations from thinking about joining the insurgency.

The rebel attack came several days later, and the fighting proved so fierce that the French were forced to push up 29 companies against the enemy, leaving only seven in reserve at Dar Debibagh. Despite the strong defense, several Moroccan units managed to enter the city, even reaching the Mosque of Moulai Idris. But the citizens of Fez remained behind locked doors and, to the attackers' great astonishment, refused to rise up. Lyautey's efforts to win hearts and minds had worked; there would be no citywide rebellion. French firepower now started to tell, and the larger rebel units were simply scythed down by machine-gun or artillery fire. The bruised and bloodied survivors quickly retreated out of range.

The French counterattacked on June 1, mustering a strike force comprising five battalions, several squadrons of cavalry, and numerous artillery pieces. Commanded by Gourand, the French marched toward the nearby plain of Sebou and, as they crossed the final hillcrest, were presented

Continued on page 71

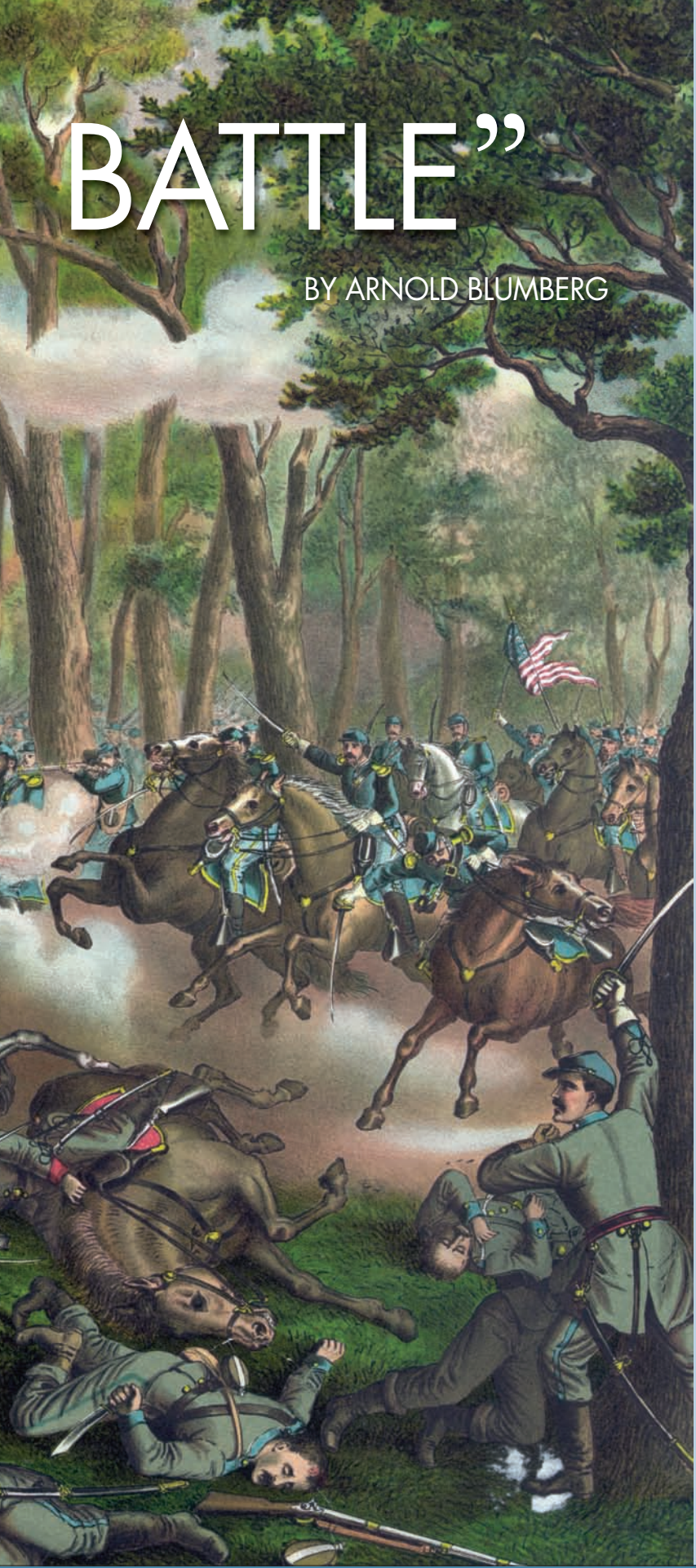
"ALWAYS GRAND IN

AT THE BATTLE OF THE WILDERNESS IN MAY 1864, JAMES LONGSTREET DELIVERED A DRAMATIC BLOW DESIGNED TO SECURE A DECISIVE CONFEDERATE VICTORY. BUT HIS WOUNDING HALTED THE ATTACK SHORT OF COMPLETE SUCCESS.

A 19th-century print offers a fanciful depiction of the desperate fighting along the Orange Plank on the second day of the Battle of the Wilderness. Although the battle ended in a draw with both sides suffering heavy casualties, the Army of the Potomac under the watchful eye of Commander-in-Chief Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant chose not to retreat, but continue south.

BATTLE"

BY ARNOLD BLUMBERG



All: Library of Congress

THE COLUMN OF CONFEDERATES MARCHED EAST AS quietly as possible along the bed of an unfinished railroad that knifed through the Wilderness south of the Rapidan River shortly before midday on May 6, 1864. When the head of the column reached a point perpendicular to the left flank of the Union Army, the staff officer leading the four Confederate brigades halted the column. That was a signal to the officers in the brigades to have their troops face north and prepare to advance swiftly through an emerald ravine toward the unsuspecting enemy.

Echoing in the head of Chief of Staff Lt. Col. G. Moxley Sorrel were the last words First Corps Commander Lt. Gen. James Longstreet had said to him before Sorrel departed with the flanking column. "Hit hard when you start, but don't start until you have everything ready. I shall be waiting for your gunfire, and be on hand with fresh troops for further advance."

Rebel officers up and down the line waved their men forward with their swords. The troops stepped off with the determination of soldiers who knew they had a decisive advantage over their foe. A short time later, screaming at the top of their lungs the blood-curdling rebel yell, the graybacks fell on soldiers of Maj. Gen Winfield Scott Hancock's II Corps resting during a lull in the action.

The result was predictable. The startled bluecoats began a general stampede in search of safety. Some were shot trying to raise their rifles, while others were struck in the back by bullets as they ran for their lives. Resistance was useless. In some places, clusters of Yankees tried to make a stand, but they were quickly encircled and slain or captured as the flood of Rebels swept through the woods south of the Orange Plank Road. In less than an hour's time, the Confederates had routed more than twice their number.

When Sorrel reached the Plank Road, he saw Longstreet and his staff riding toward him from the west. All were exuberant about the success of the attack. But soon the discussion turned to how the First Corps might build on its initial success. After it was decided to launch a similar attack on the new Federal position being established farther east, something catastrophic happened to upset those plans.

As the 1864 campaigning season in Northern Virginia neared, General Robert E. Lee, commander of the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia, finalized his plan to confront the inevitable advance of his perennial opponent, the Union Army of the Potomac. The "Old Gray Fox" fervently desired that the Union Army, when it crossed the Rapidan River and moved to his east in a bid to reach the Southern capital of Richmond, would traverse what was called the Wilderness. The 70 square miles of densely tangled second growth, stunted pine trees, and thick undergrowth of bushes and vines greatly constricted the movement of armies and made it impossible to deploy troops for battle in neatly aligned ranks.

One Confederate who fought there described it as "a jungle of switch, 20- or 30-feet high, more impenetrable, if possible, than pine." While many a Rebel and Yankee soldier complained about the difficulty of maneuvering in such vegetation, Lee realized that a battle in such flora was to his immense favor.

The Wilderness gave Lee the advantage of neutralizing the strengths of the Federal army. The size of his force was 52,000 infantry, 8,000 cavalry, and 224 pieces of artillery. In contrast, the Union host initially participating in the Wilderness Campaign numbered 105,000 foot soldiers, 12,000 mounted troopers, and 274 cannons.

A fight in open terrain gave the Union the potential to mass more infantrymen than the Southerners could bring to bear. In the Wilder-

ness, however, where movement and visibility were very limited, the opportunity to bring a larger force in position to fire or assault a smaller one was rare. The Army of the Potomac possessed more and better artillery than its Southern counterpart. Yet, the long arm needed an extended and clear field of fire to be effective; such conditions existed in very few areas in the Wilderness. The Union cavalry arm had, since June 1863, shown that it was now a force to be reckoned with. But in the Wilderness its numerical and weapons superiority would be negated by the wooded terrain, narrow roads, and limited open ground ideal for mounted action.

Keeping in mind all the advantages the Wilderness afforded him, Lee determined that his strategy for the coming fight would engage his enemy in the Wilderness. Lee would seek in the coming battle to avoid a general engagement until all his forces were at hand. Once all three of his corps had arrived, he would switch to the offensive and deliver a decisive blow. Confederate Second Corps chief of artillery, Brig. Gen. Armistead Long, noted that Lee felt confident that "there was reason to believe that his antagonist would be at his mercy while entangled in these pathless and entangled thickets, in whose thickets disparity in numbers lost much of its importance."

Lee was not the only one who preferred to fight in the foreboding terrain of the Wilderness. Coincidentally, Maj. Gen. George G. Meade, chief of the Army of the Potomac, also hoped the Wilderness would be the location of the impending battle. Although this miserable landscape was not Meade's ideal place for a fight, he felt things could be worse. He feared that after his army crossed south of the Rapidan River Lee would move back to the strong defensive works at Mine Run, which the Confederates had occupied between November 26 and December 1, 1863. Meade fortunately did not assault that formidable position then, and doing so during the new campaign was something he wanted to avoid.

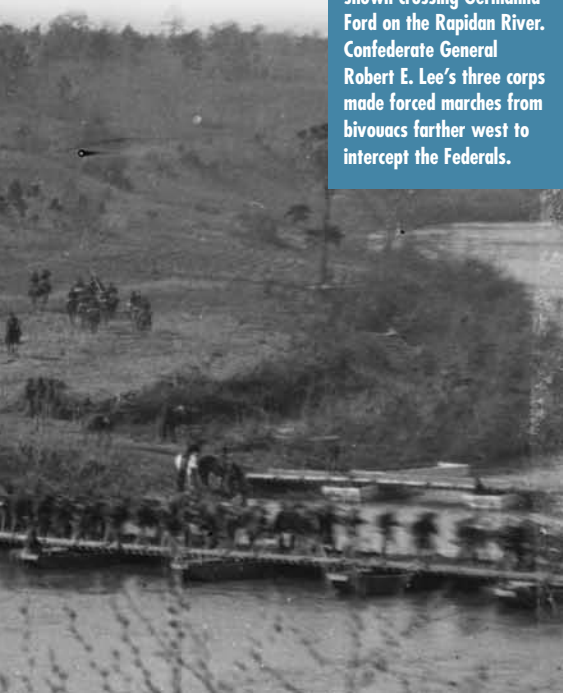
Lieutenant General Ulysses S. Grant, commander-in-chief of the Armies of the United States, accompanying the Army of the Potomac and its de facto battlefield commander during the previous year, wanted to come to grips with Lee's force as soon as possible, and he was not particularly concerned about where that occurred. To make his desire clear, the aggressive Westerner, after taking up his new post, notified Meade on April 9, 1864, that "Lee's army will be your objective point. Wherever Lee goes, there you will go also."

On the night of May 3-4, 1864, the Army of the Potomac moved eastward from its winter camp in Culpepper County, Virginia, and crossed the Rapidan River. Maj. Gen. Gouverneur K. Warren's V Corps, with Maj. Gen John Sedgwick's VI Corps following, passed over the river at Germanna Ford; five miles downstream Maj. Gen Winfield Scott Hancock's II Corps waded across at Ely's Ford.

Lee's troops were at the time bivouacked west of the Wilderness. After learning on May 4 of the Federal move, the Confederate commander set his men in motion eastward on three parallel routes leading toward the enemy. Lt. Gen. Richard S. Ewell's Second Corps set out on the northernmost road, which was the Orange Turnpike; Third Corps (less Maj. Gen. Richard H. Anderson's division) under Lt. Gen. Ambrose P. Hill, hurried along the Orange Plank Road (2¾ miles south of the turnpike); and four miles south of the Orange Plank Road Longstreet's First Corps marched on the Catharpin Road.

On the morning of May 5, as the Army of the Potomac trudged through the Wilderness, Meade was informed of the approach of elements of the Army of Northern Virginia racing toward him from the west. Hoping to fight his gray antagonist at a place other than the Mine Run defenses, Meade cancelled his army's marching orders for the day and ordered Warren to "halt his column and attack the enemy with his whole force." When Grant heard of Meade's decision to initiate combat he wholeheartedly endorsed the change in plans his subordinate had made. In a message to Meade at 8:24 AM, Grant said, "If any opportunity presents itself for pitching in to a part of Lee's army, do so without giving time for disposition."

During the early hours of May 5, as both armies funneled troops toward the scene of impending action, the contest developed along



A portion of the Union Army of the Potomac is shown crossing Germanna Ford on the Rapidan River. Confederate General Robert E. Lee's three corps made forced marches from bivouacs farther west to intercept the Federals.

two parallel roads: the Orange Turnpike and the Orange Plank Road. The Rebels marched eastward along both thoroughfares as the Yankees travelled westward. Lee's units, in keeping with their commander's goal of trying to delay the fight until the entire Army of Northern Virginia was concentrated, limited themselves to defensive operations. For the Army of the Potomac's part, Meade ordered it to assail the enemy as quickly as possible, ignoring the need to form proper troop dispositions and alignment, both of which would have required much time to achieve due to the disagreeable Wilderness vegetation. Many of Meade's subordinates, fearing the consequences of piecemeal attacks, delayed their assaults to form up proper attack formations, while others carried out their instructions to the letter.

In numerous instances, reluctant Federal officers sent their men stumbling though the woods toward an enemy whose position was unknown. On that first day of the battle in the Orange Turnpike sector, one substantial assault and two piecemeal efforts launched by Warren's V Corps and Sedgwick's VI Corps proved only limited successes. However, along the Brock Road-Orange Plank Road vicinity elements of Sedgwick's VI Corps and Hancock's II Corps drove back the Confederates of Hill's Third Corps. Grant took this as a sign that the battle was on the right track and that when Maj. Gen. Ambrose E. Burnside's IX Corps arrived the next day, the Federal Army would make an all-out attack along its entire front.

Lee also had designs for an offensive on the second day of the battle. By dawn on May 6, Lee expected the arrival of Longstreet's First Corps via the Catharpin Road, which paralleled the Orange Plank Road to the south. Lee's plan was for Ewell's Second Corps and Longstreet's First Corps to do the fighting. While the former continued to engage the enemy along the Orange Turnpike, the latter would shift north to the Orange Plank Road, relieving Hill's men. Hill's Third Corps, which had suffered greatly on May 5, was not expected to participate in any of the early morning fighting on May 6. Instead, it would serve as a second line across the Plank Road and be available for service later in the day.

Before sunrise on May 6, the Battle of the Wilderness was renewed with a push by Hancock's Yankees forcing Hill's beleaguered Confederates back farther westward from the intersection of the Brock and Orange Plank Roads. North of the road, connecting Hancock's right with Warren's V Corps, was Brig. Gen. James S. Wadsworth's 4th Division of Warren's V Corps. Soon after daylight, Longstreet's troops, in the form of Maj. Gen. Charles W. Field's and Brig. Gen. Joseph B. Kershaw's divisions, entered the Orange Plank Road and approached the savage fighting that had commenced earlier between Hill's and Hancock's men. Upon its arrival along the Orange Plank Road at about 8 AM, Anderson's division was placed north of the road in reserve by Longstreet.

Around 6 AM, after forming Field's brigades to the north and Kershaw's men to the south of the roadway, Longstreet sent his command forward. Longstreet and his staff followed on its heels to observe the attack. Major John Haskell, who commanded a Confederate artillery battalion in the Wilderness, noted that the 43-year-old corps commander was "always grand in battle [and] never shone as he did here." Longstreet's six-brigade attack force, which was tightly packed in columns preceded by heavy skirmish lines, struck Hancock's disordered and weakened divisions along a narrow front, soon driving back the Union II Corps soldiers. Wadsworth's men were battered into a horde of flying fugitives by three brigades of Field's command.

By 8 AM, after two hours of vicious fighting and having forced his opponent to withdraw over 200 yards, Longstreet's thrust stalled. Thereafter, neither contestant could make headway against the other, and neither was willing to retreat. Unabated murderous exchanges of musketry ensued. The opponents were separated by mere feet, but invisible to one another due to the thick foliage of the Wilderness.

Meanwhile, to the north along the Orange Turnpike, Ewell's graybacks hit the Union V Corps and VI Corps, preempting Grant's planned operation in that area of the battlefield. By 10 AM

"Colonel, there is a fine chance of a great attack by our right. If you will quickly get into those woods, some brigades will be found much scattered from the right. Collect them and take charge. Form a good line and then move, your right pushed forward and turning as much as possible to the left."

Grant's planned grand offensive for May 6 was a dead letter, never to be resurrected.

Lee, however, was just getting started. Now with Longstreet and Anderson on the field and the situation along the Orange Plank Road stabilized, Lee was ready to launch his own major attack, and it did not take long before he learned of an excellent location to strike.

The graded right of way of an unfinished railroad ran west from Fredericksburg, passing two miles below Chancellorsville, then near Catherine Furnace, and crossing the Brock Road at Trigg's Farm bending northwest and parallel to Brock Road for a short distance. As it neared the Orange Plank Road the unfinished railroad curved to the left and ran to the west continuing even with the Orange Plank Road a quarter of a mile below it.

The roadbed offered an excellent route for the movement of troops through the tortuous Wilderness terrain; it was a perfect path by which either side could gain its opponent's southern flank and rear. Its existence was known to both armies before the battle started, but the savage fighting of the first day and that of the early morning of the second day prevented both sides from availing themselves of the opportunity to use it to envelope their enemy's position. That would dramatically change as the noon hour of May 6 approached.

After Longstreet's counterattack had come to a close, Brig. Gen. William T. Wofford, at the helm of a brigade in Kershaw's division, First Corps, and occupying the extreme right of the Army of Northern Virginia's front just above the railroad cut, sent out skirmishers to feel for the Federal's left. The Rebel scouting parties discovered that the Confederate right was squarely opposite the enemy line's southern end. Wofford sent back word to Longstreet describing how the unfinished rail line could be used to outflank the Yankees and requested permission to make such an attack.

The same information regarding the feasibility of a flank march around the Union left via the railroad cut was confirmed by the chief engineer of the Army of Northern Virginia, Maj. Gen. Martin L. Smith. While fighting raged on the Orange Plank Road, Smith, who had been assigned to Longstreet's headquarters to aid in negotiating the Wilderness ground, had been ordered, whether by Lee or Longstreet is not clear, to search for a way around Hancock's left. Cautiously moving to the railroad cut and then east along it, Smith realized that he had discovered the Union II Corps' southern margin and that it was up in the air with not a bluecoated defender to be seen. Smith also noticed that a series of ridges extended northward from the rail bed to the Orange Plank Road. Between the ridges were natural depressions that were handy avenues leading directly to Hancock's unprotected flank and rear.

At 10 AM Smith returned from his reconnaissance and reported to Longstreet that the Federal line extended but a short distance beyond the Orange Plank Road. The enemy position was exposed and invited an attack from the railroad cut, he said. Here was the route Lee was seeking.

At Lee's command post there was a consensus as to what was needed. The idea of a flank attack particularly suited Longstreet. Although he had gained great successes with devastating frontal assaults at Second Manassas, Gettysburg, and Chickamauga, and a few hours earlier in the Wilderness, that tactic was costly in manpower, and the idea of a flank attack appealed to him.

Of course, no one in the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia had forgotten the incredible results such a ploy had brought when the late Lt. Gen. Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson circled around Hooker's army in the same area they were now fighting during the Battle of Chancellorsville the year before. That stunning strike had assured Lee his greatest victory of the war. But it also had resulted in the costly death of Jackson from a friendly fire incident.

Instead of a costly frontal advance, the decisive blow would be delivered by a compact force slipping into place and then descending on the unsuspecting enemy. In the meantime, the main Rebel host positioned on the Orange Plank Road would keep up the pressure on the Federal front. Once the Rebel turning column began rolling up the Yankee line, the contingent along the Plank Road would plow into its disorganized opponent's ranks, sending the enemy reeling backward or destroying it outright.

Armed with a strategy that promised the total destruction of a sizable portion of the Army of the Potomac and possibly victory in the current campaign, Longstreet energetically threw himself into making it work. Lee's "Old War Horse" turned to his aide, Colonel G. Moxley Sorrel, the 26-year-old former bank clerk employed before the war by the Georgia Central Railroad, to coordinate the proposed sortie. The young Sorrel, a native of Savannah, had accompanied Smith on his exploration below the Plank Road and was intimately familiar with the route the Confederate flanking force would have to traverse to hit the enemy.

Calling his valued aide aside, Longstreet offered the young officer, who up to this time had no prior experience leading troops in combat, the chance of a lifetime. "Colonel, there is a fine chance of a great attack by our right," said Longstreet. "If you will quickly get into those woods, some brigades will be found much scattered from the right. Collect them and take charge. Form a good line and then move, your right pushed forward and turning as much as possible to the left." The corps commander then told Sorrel to strike hard, but only when he was sure that everything was in order.

Sorrel immediately began to assemble the troops that would make the onslaught on the Federal flank. Participating in the assault would be four brigades from four different infantry divisions. Three of these formations were fresh. One of these fresh units was Brig. Gen. George Thomas "Tige" Anderson's brigade from Field's division, which had been held in reserve south of the Orange Plank Road during Longstreet's counterattack earlier in the morning. Another was Wofford's brigade, which was assigned to Kershaw's division and had recently arrived on the battlefield with the supply trains of First Corps. Yet another one was Brig. Gen. William Mahone's "Old Dominion" brigade of Maj. Gen. Richard Anderson's Division of the Third Corps.

The one brigade that already had been engaged in the battle was under the command of Colonel John M. Stone, who was leading Brig. Gen. Joseph R. Davis's brigade of Maj. Gen. Henry Heth's division of the Third Corps. Stone had been cut off from the rest of Heth's Division by Longstreet's advance and so was neatly positioned to join the enterprise.

ABOVE: Union Maj. Gen. David B. Birney, left, and Confederate Brig. Gen. William Mahone. BELOW: Brig. Gen. James S. Wadsworth is shown seated with a member of his staff. Wadsworth died from a Confederate bullet while trying to restore order on the Union left in the wake of Longstreet's flank attack.

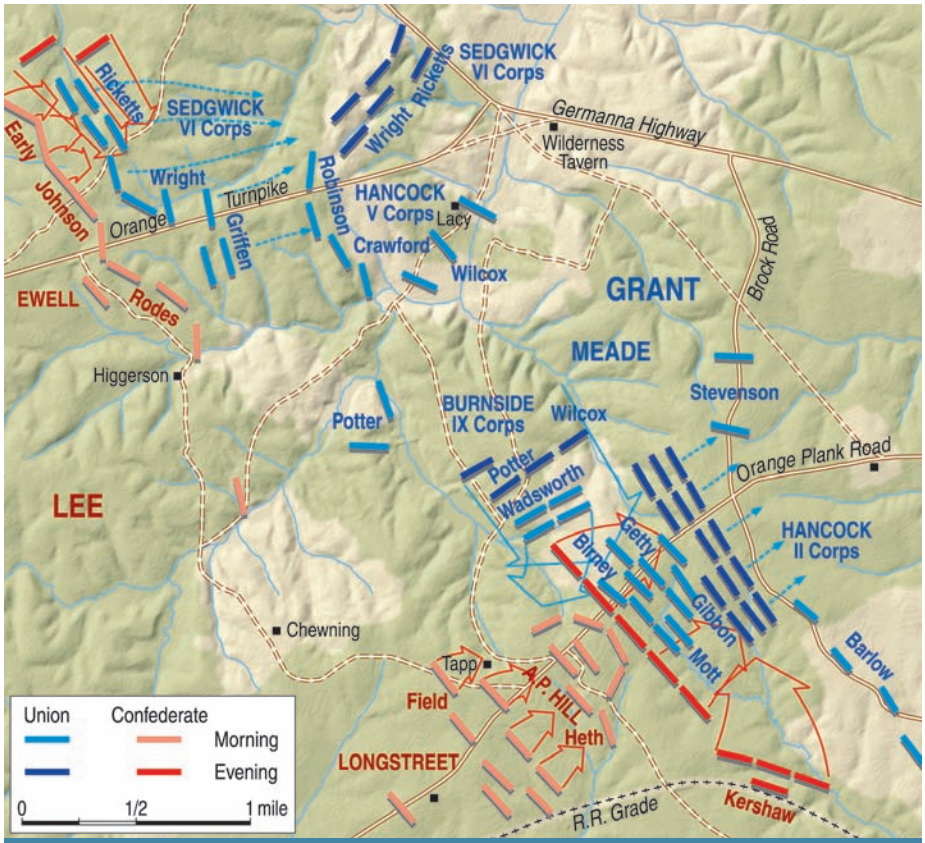
Controversy exists as to exactly who was in charge of the flank movement; that is, Mahone, the senior officer on the field, or Sorrel, Longstreet's chosen deputy. In his battle report found in the *Official Records*, Mahone recorded, "As senior brigadier, I was by Lt. Gen. Longstreet charged with the immediate direction of this movement." Fourteen years later he wrote that the movement "was made by my own [brigade] with two other brigades—Wofford's and Tige Anderson's—all under my immediate command."

Sorrel, in his wartime memoirs, insisted that Longstreet had given him "full authority to

control the movement." His claim was supported by Colonel Walter Taylor, General Lee's aide, in his writings after the war. Longstreet's battle report supports Sorrel's assertion as well. In it Longstreet states, "Special directions were given to Lt. Col. Sorrel to conduct the brigades of Generals Mahone, G.T. Anderson, and Wofford beyond the enemy's left." He added: "Much of the success of the movement on the enemy's flank is due to the very skillful manner in which the move was conducted by Lt. Col. Sorrel." Moreover, Longstreet wrote to Lee a few weeks after the Battle of the Wilderness recommending Sorrel's promotion to brigadier general. Surely this request had to be based on Sorrel's successful performance regarding the flank movement and the attack on the Federals that followed.

On reaching the unfinished railroad, the Confederate force swung east. The graybacks followed the railroad grade for a half mile to where it began to curve sharply south. The steady rattle of rifle fire could be heard to the left, indicating that the column had passed the battlefront and was positioned immediately below Hancock's left boundary. Sorrel called his party to a halt. As he did, one by one the Rebel brigades faced north. On the right—closest to the sharp bend—was Anderson's unit. Mahone's brigade took position in the center, with Wofford's brigade to its left. Stone's men formed a second line in reserve. The Confederates were arranged to move to the attack up one of the ravines that Smith had discovered on his earlier scouting mission. The troops were packed tightly together, forming a mass of bayonets several lines deep. It is important to note that this picture of the Southern attack formation is up for debate due to an assertion made by Mahone that his brigade alone struck the enemy's flank, while Wofford's and Anderson's troops traversed the woods between Hancock's advanced line and the Brock Road.

The objective of the Confederate attack, the southern fringe of the Union II Corps, was held by the divisions of Maj. Gen. David B. Birney, Brig. Gen. Gresham Mott, and VI Corps Brig. Gen. George W. Getty's division. Birney's command was just below the Plank Road, followed on its left by Mott, with Getty stationed behind Birney. However, this seemingly impressive congregation of troops was misleading. The Union concentration near the Orange Plank Road had been weakened by casualties sustained first in Hancock's attack and then Longstreet's counterblow of the morning of May 6, as well as the loss of these combat units' cohesion and alignment due to the battle and the terrain fought over that day.



Confederate First Corps commander Lt. Gen. James Longstreet's turning action on the second day of the battle was performed flawlessly and supported by a simultaneous frontal attack. The effect on Union Maj. Gen, Winfield Scott Hancock's II Corps was devastating.

Furthermore, on the evening of May 5, Hancock detailed most of Brig. Gen. John Gibbon's three-brigade division, Brig. Gen. Francis C. Barlow's division, as well as most of the corps artillery to the high ground near the Trigg Farm and the Brock Road where they could easily cover the approach of any Confederate threat from that quarter. Hancock did this not knowing the whereabouts of Longstreet's command and fearing that his wily opponent might cause untold mischief by striking II Corps' left flank. Gibbon strengthened his area even more by placing two infantry brigades behind earthworks that formed a strong continuous barrier along the west side of the Brock Road, extending north from the Trigg Farm to the Orange Plank Road. But there were more complications.

Around 10 AM on May 6, Hancock was forced to further dilute his strength on the Plank Road and immediately to its south when he was ordered to send reinforcements from his command to the north of the road to protect the Union V Corps flank, which had become dangerously exposed by the collapse of Wadsworth's division as a result of Longstreet's morning counterattack. Responding to the new orders, Birney pulled troops from his already weakened front and hurried them north. If the II Corps commander ever intended to redeploy his troops to buttress his southern front's margin, he was prevented from doing so by the sound of battle farther down the Brock Road. What he heard was a clash between Yankee and Rebel cavalry, which in itself did not amount to much strategically, but in Hancock's imagination presaged a likely attack by Longstreet on his flank from that direction. Consequently, he kept all his units in place securing the Brock Road to the detriment of his southern wing near the Plank Road. And the Confederates under Sorrel and Mahone were about to take full advantage of the situation.

At about 10 AM quiet had settled over the Wilderness; even picket firing had pretty much ceased. The Federals of Hancock's left on the Orange Plank Road were taking advantage of the temporary lull to make coffee and snatch a little sleep. Colonel Robert McAllister's mixed 4th Brigade of Mott's division, consisting of nine regiments from Massachusetts, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, held the extreme left end of the Union line. Curious as to what the Rebels were up to, the colonel and one orderly ventured beyond the Union picket line crawling from tree to tree seeking out the enemy's location. Through the heavy growth the two spied Confederates in a ravine just

ahead; a little farther on they spotted large numbers of grayback infantry gathered in the railroad cut. Working his way back to his own lines, McAllister dispatched an aide to his division leader detailing what he had discovered.

McAllister's initiative notwithstanding, his warning came too late. As the Union officer's missive to Mott sped on its way, Sorrel positioned himself in front of the 12th Virginia Volunteer Infantry Regiment of Mahone's brigade and "with hat in one hand and grasping the reins of his horse with the other" the young staff officer said, "Follow me, Virginians! Let me lead you." Striding forward in a compact body, the four Confederate brigades filed up the ravine straight for Hancock's vulnerable flank. At the same time, Kershaw launched his division in another attack on the Union II Corps front, pounding Hancock along the Orange Plank Road. The result was what Longstreet had hoped. Sorrel's blow landed squarely on the end of McAllister's unsuspecting unit. Feverishly, the Union colonel attempted to swing his men around to face the on rushing graybacks now assailing his flank, but completing this maneuver in the dense woods proved a maddeningly slow process.

Alarmed by the sudden outbreak of musket fire from an unexpected quarter, Mott rode to McAllister to investigate. As the colonel began describing the situation to the general, more Confederates exploded from the woods to the west where McAllister's front had been just minutes before. These were the lead elements of Kershaw's force. McAllister's men were caught in a crossfire between Kershaw to their front and Sorrel blasting them from behind. The bluecoats fired several defensive rounds and then broke for the rear. "At this time my line broke in confusion, and I could not rally them," said McAllister in his battle report. The colonel barely managed to escape the debacle, his wounded horse collapsing on top of him as he reached the safety of the Union position on the Brock Road.

As McAllister's command dissolved in flight, the victorious attacking Confederates moved north toward the Orange Plank Road. The 141st Pennsylvania Regiment, 1st Brigade, Birney's division, was hit by the onrushing enemy and was quickly broken and forced to retire to the Brock Road. Colonel Samuel S. Carroll's 3rd Brigade, Gibbon's division, was the next Union formation to encounter the wrath of the Southern onslaught. Discovering they had been outflanked, Carroll's men skedaddled, first by ones and twos, then by scores.

Farther north, Colonel Charles Weygant's 124th New York Infantry Regiment (the Orange Blossom Regiment) of Brig. Gen. J.H. Ward's 1st Brigade, Birney's division, attempted to save his men from Sorrel's advance. "Caught up as by a whirlwind," he later wrote, his regiment was "broken to fragments, and the terrible tempest of disaster swept on down the Union line, beating back brigade after brigade, and tearing to pieces regiment after regiment, until 20,000 veterans were fleeing ... toward the Union rear."

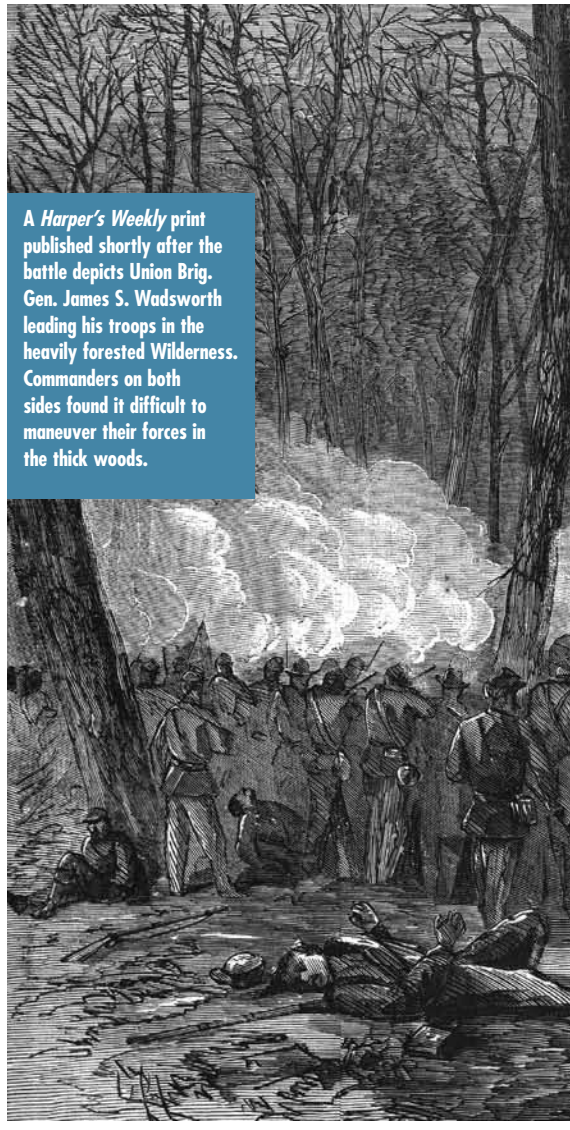
Birney now arrived on the scene to try to stem the disaster. As he approached a group of Yankee fugitives on the Plank Road a Confederate artillery shell exploded almost underneath his mount, causing the horse to bolt down the thoroughfare as the general held on for dear life.

As Birney unceremoniously bounded from one side of the Plank Road to another after the exploding shell spooked his horse, Sorrel's advance appeared unstoppable. Mahone seemed to appear everywhere, leading his Virginia Brigade, shouting orders over the din of battle, and driving his men relentlessly forward. Sorrel also exhibited fine leadership qualities by keeping his command moving even through difficult swamp-like terrain which momentarily slowed its advance. The Confederates chewed their way to the Orange Plank Road. It had taken no more than an hour. As Hancock ruefully conceded to Longstreet after the war, Sorrel's exploit had "rolled me [Hancock's command] up like a wet blanket."

As Hancock's line was crumbling, the Federal position north of it was being reorganized by General Wadsworth. But the oncoming Sorrel and his body of flankers threatened to crash into Wadsworth's southern wing north of the road if Sorrel ventured that far. At the same time Sorrel's movements appeared to menace Wadsworth from the south, Longstreet sent Field's division against the Union general's western front down the Orange Plank Road.

Responding to the dire situation, Wadsworth reoriented Brig. Gen. James C. Rice's 2nd Brigade, Wadsworth's division of the V Corps to a front parallel to the Plank Road facing Sorrel's advancing Confederates. But a combination of Rebel artillery and an attack by Field's infantry soon crumbled Rice's position and sent his men running from the field. Then the Union situation got even worse.

After ordering one of his regiments to make a suicidal charge at the enemy coming from the west, Wadsworth got Brig. Gen. Alexander Webb's 1st Brigade of Gibbon's division to form a column on the Orange Plank Road to stop Sorrel. Soon the brigades of Brig. Gen. Henry L. Eustis

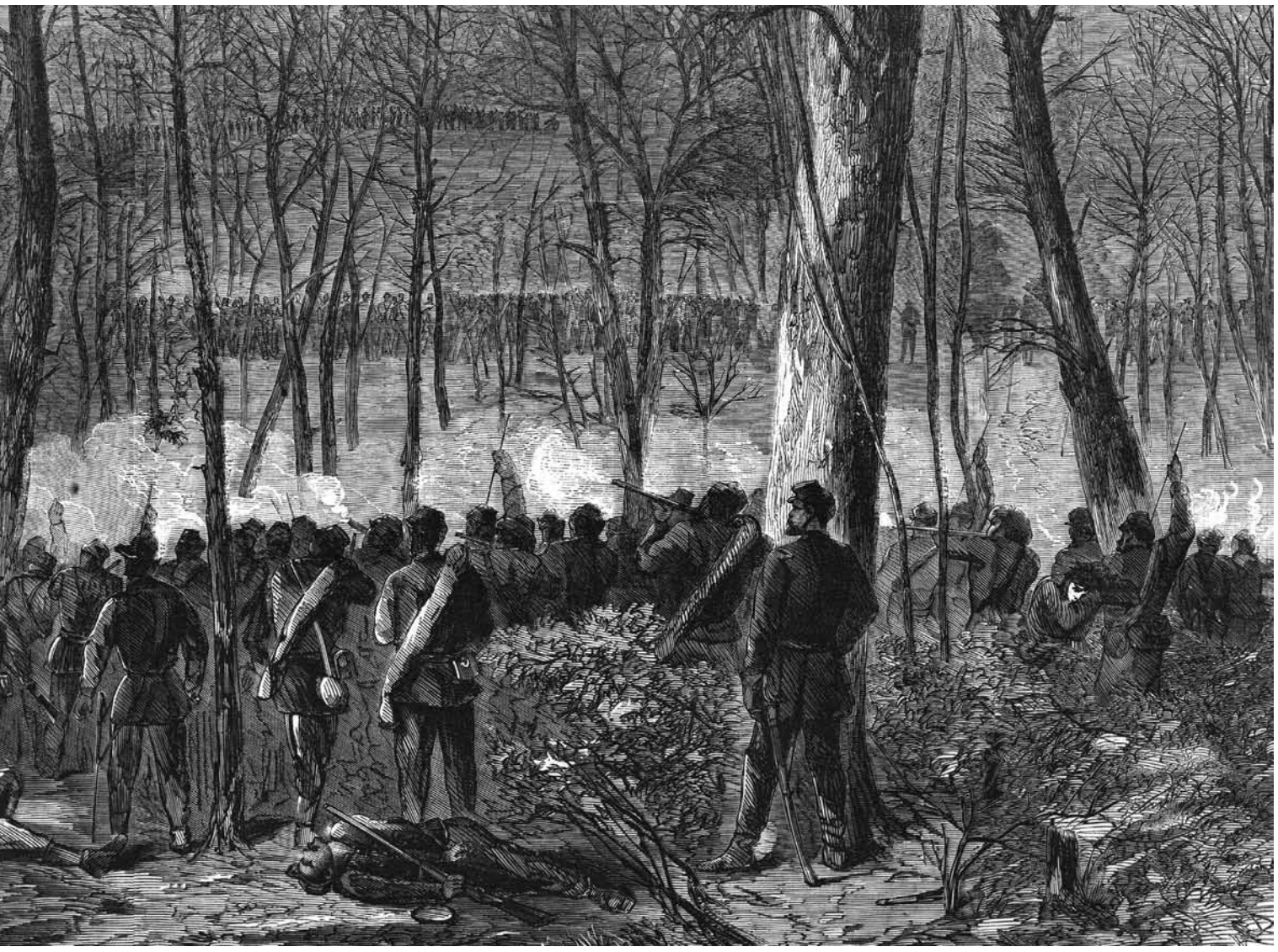


A *Harper's Weekly* print published shortly after the battle depicts Union Brig. Gen. James S. Wadsworth leading his troops in the heavily forested Wilderness. Commanders on both sides found it difficult to maneuver their forces in the thick woods.

above the road and Colonel Lewis A. Grant below it (both belonging to Getty's division of the VI Corps) dissolved in flight after being hammered by the attacking Confederates advancing on the Plank Road. Joined by a brigade from the Union IX Corps, Webb held out for a short time but was eventually forced, as he put it, "to break like partridges through the woods for the Brock Road." Shortly before Webb withdrew, Wadsworth was shot dead, a bullet tearing through the back of his head.

By noon Hancock's line had been completely demolished, first by Sorrel's flank move, then by Field's frontal assault on the Orange Plank Road. All that remained was for Longstreet to sweep eastward, herding the enemy in front of him toward the Rapidan River and victory.

After Sorrel reached the Orange Plank Road he sought out Longstreet to get fresh troops to continue his advance. Meanwhile, his chief had conferred with Martin, who had made another reconnaissance and discovered that



the uncompleted railroad cut could be used to make one more flank move, this time to envelope Hancock's new defensive position on the Brock Road. But it was not to be. Shortly thereafter, Longstreet and a party of officers were fired on by friendly troops, critically injuring Longstreet.

Longstreet's wounding stopped the proposed new attack on the Federals along the Brock Road. Lee, unaware of exactly how Longstreet planned to carry out the new turning movement and cognizant of the disorganized and exhausted condition of the troops designated to carry out the attack, set his priority to the reordering of Longstreet's now scattered corps. This took time and great effort, and in the meantime Burnside's Union IX Corps finally joined the battle when it attacked the Confederates above the Orange Plank Road in the afternoon. The result was some inconclusive sparring between the newly arrived Federals and Anderson's division. The fighting along this part of the front soon concluded for the day but had caused a delay in Lee's plans to continue his offensive against Hancock.

While Burnside was held in check north of the Orange Plank Road, Lee still intended to drive his enemy back across the Rapidan. But he was not going to launch a second flank attack as Longstreet hoped to do before he was injured. Lee instead sent his army in a ruthless full frontal assault up the Orange Plank Road into the teeth of Hancock's now consolidated and strongly manned works along the Brock Road.

Lee's attack on the Brock Road-Orange Plank Road intersection commenced about 4:15 PM. The Union position could not be carried. By 5:30 PM, the Confederate surge against the Brock Road defenses had been repulsed.

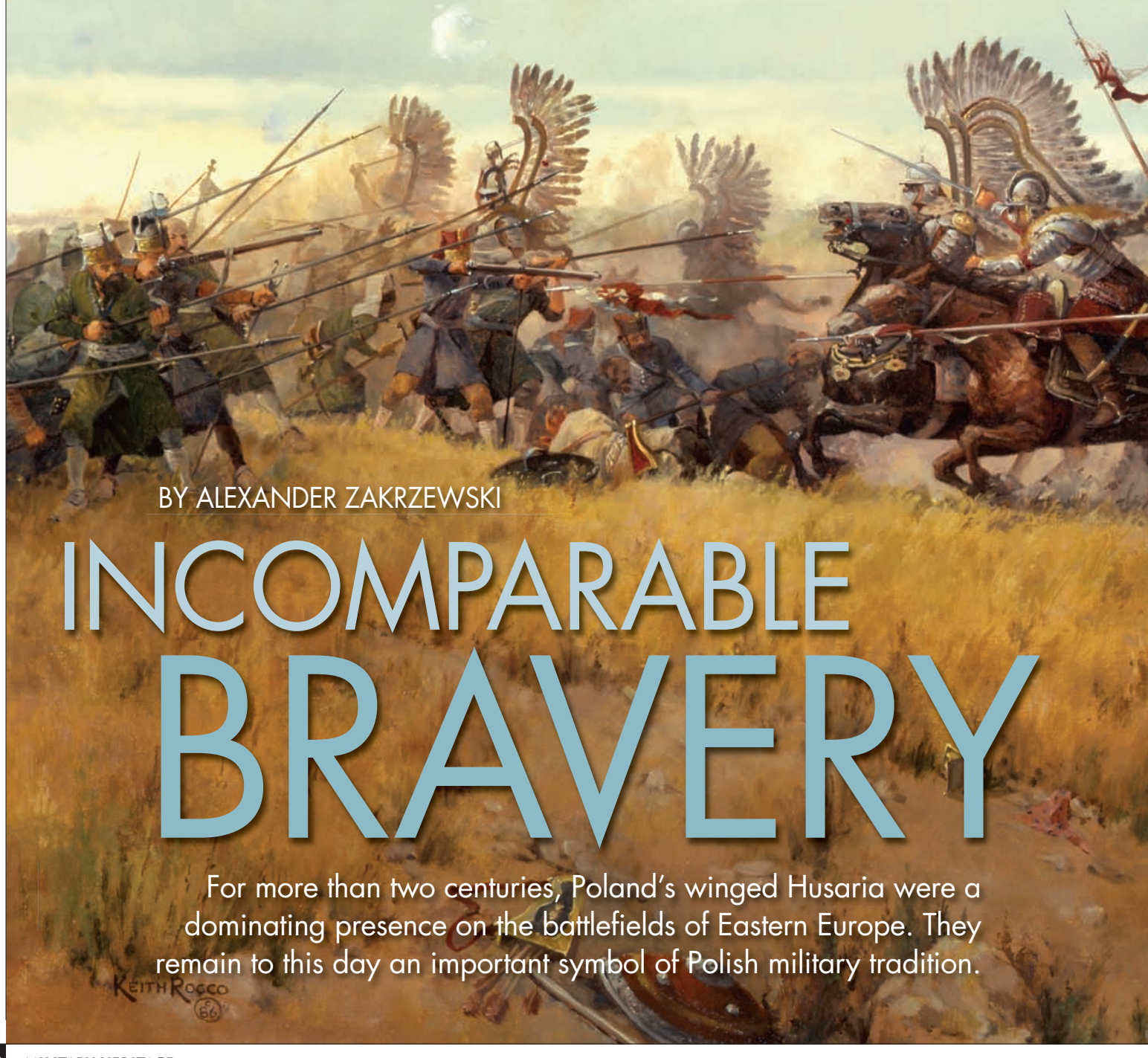
With the defeat of the Southern right along the Brock Road on the evening of May 6, combat on that sector of the Wilderness came to a close. Further fighting on the other end of the battle line occurred as night fell with moderate success achieved by the attacking Confederates, but this proved not to be decisive.

The brutal, two-day Battle of the Wilderness was essentially a frontal slugfest with the only innovative tactics being the two Confederate flanking maneuvers—one on the northern and one on the southern end of the battlefield. Of the two, the one carried out by Longstreet was the more effective. All the principal officers involved in the operation supported its implementation; the turning action was supported by a well-coordinated simultaneous frontal attack, and was executed flawlessly. It swept all before it and promised to secure a total victory for the South at the start of Grant's Overland Campaign. Had the initial successes not become lost with the wounding of Longstreet, the effects on the outcome of the Civil War might well have been significant. □

BY ALEXANDER ZAKRZEWSKI

INCOMPARABLE BRAVERY

For more than two centuries, Poland's winged Husaria were a dominating presence on the battlefields of Eastern Europe. They remain to this day an important symbol of Polish military tradition.



IN THE EARLY evening of September 12, 1683, the citizens of Vienna watched from the ramparts of their beleaguered city as 3,500 winged horsemen poured down the slopes of the Kahlenberg Heights and into the heart of the besieging Turkish army. Clad in embroidered steel armor, exotic animal skins, and with their hallmark wings arching majestically overhead, they fell on the enemy, according to one eyewitness, like "angels from heaven." For their part in the relief of one of Europe's most important cities that fateful day, the Polish Husaria won lasting fame as one of the most celebrated cavalry units ever raised.

But who were these mysterious horsemen about whom so little is widely known yet whose image has been so romanticized over the centuries? Their story begins in the late 14th century and follows the erratic course of Polish history.

In February 1386, the Lithuanian Grand Duke Jogaila, having agreed to be baptized in the Catholic faith, married the 12-year-old Polish Queen Jadwiga and was crowned King Władysław II of Poland. This pivotal moment in European history not only resulted in the Christianization of the sprawling Grand Duchy of Lithuania, but also extended Poland's political and cultural influence across a vast area that today encompasses most of the Baltic States, Belarus, and Ukraine.

Whereas medieval Polish armies had fought the bulk of their battles to the west, in the following centuries they marched primarily eastward to face a diverse array of new adversaries, including Swedes, Muscovites, Cossacks, Tatars, and Ottoman Turks. As a result, Polish military styles and doctrines became an eclectic blend of Eastern and Western influences.

Like the feudal states of Western Europe, Poland's armies in the 14th century were epitomized by the heavily armored mounted knight, but by the 15th century the advent of gunpowder and professional armies had created the need for new, more versatile forms of cavalry. In Eastern Europe this was especially true as the main area of operations was essentially one vast plain stretching from the Carpathian Mountains to the Caucasus. This was cavalry country through and through, and unlike in the West, Eastern armies remained predominantly horse based. Among the unique forms of horsemen to arise during this period was a type of Serbian mercenary cavalry that the Poles dubbed "Racowie" after the medieval Serbian region of Raška.

The Racowie were a light cavalry who fought unarmored except for a long, light lance and an asymmetrical "Balkan" shield, which they often emblazoned with a winged-claw design or, in some cases, actual feathers tacked together to form a "wing." Because of their skill at long-distance raiding, the Racowie were known in the Balkans as "gusars" (freebooters). When Serbia was overrun in the 15th century by the rapidly expanding Ottoman Empire, the gusars made their way north into Hungary, where they served as auxiliary cavalry in the armies of Matthias Corvinus, and eventually even farther north into Poland.

The Hungarians were so impressed by the wily Serbian horsemen that they soon began raising their own "huszár" regiments. Unlike their Serbian counterparts, Hungarian huszárs took the form of armored, heavy cavalrymen complete with mail shirt, helmet, shield, and lance, and trained to fight in large formations against the armored Turkish Sipahi cavalry.

Polish winged Husaria thunder toward the Turkish army besieging Vienna on September 12, 1683, in Keith Rocco's contemporary painting, *The Avenging Angels*. The gallant hussars helped seal the fate of the defeated Turks.

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The Poles quickly adopted the heavier Hungarian style for their own Racowie units and opened recruitment not only to Serbs and Hungarians, but to Poles and Lithuanians as well. By the early 16th century, units of "Husaria Cavalleria" began appearing regularly in Polish army registers.

The Husaria quickly proved to be as valuable to Poland's armies as they had been to the powerful Hungarian state to the south. Among their first notable appearances was the Battle of Orsha in 1514, where they served as part of the 30,000-strong cavalry army that Grand Hetman Konstanty Ostrogski used to smash an invading Muscovite force of 80,000. At the Battle of Obertyn in 1531, they made up almost 56 percent of the cavalry Hetman Jan Tarnowski used to sweep a much larger Moldavian force from the field. However, despite their proven worth, Husaria units during this time were motley formations of different types of horsemen largely lacking in uniformity and used in the support of heavier cavalry units. For example, in 1564 the hussar company of the powerful Lithuanian nobleman Filon Kmita Czarnobylski was made up of 140 hussars and 60 Cossacks. That all changed in 1575 with the election to the throne of one of the most influential military minds in Polish history.

Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

ABOVE: A period engraving shows a dismounted Polish hussar with battle axe, feathered headdress, and fur-trimmed coat.
RIGHT: Prince Stefan Bathory of Transylvania is depicted on a 16th-century coin.

By the time he assumed the throne at age 42, Prince Stefan Bathory of Transylvania was a hardened campaigner who had studied military matters in the West and spent most of his life fighting in defense of his Carpathian homeland. Among his first acts as king of the newly formed Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was a drastic reorganization of the country's military. Under Bathory, the Husaria were transformed into an independently functioning national cavalry arm recruited from among the Polish-Lithuanian nobility. Their weapons, armor, and organization were standardized for the first time, and their tactical role was changed to that of a versatile heavy cavalry unit designed to decisively smash enemy formations. Henceforth, the Husaria assumed an unprecedented importance in Polish military doctrine as the mailed fist of the army.

The first of Bathory's remodeled Husaria companies were heavily influenced by the Hungarian cavalry styles so prevalent in the king's native Transylvania. The largest piece of armor was the "anima" iron breastplate, composed of a series of overlapping lames fixed together in a manner similar to the Roman "segmentata" armor. A breastplate made in this style offered greater flexibility than one solid piece and was further strengthened by a ridge running down the middle.

The Husaria also wore on their heads the lobster-tailed pot helmet or "zischagge" popular with both cavalry and infantry throughout Europe during this period. The zischagge offered effective protection not only for the head and face, but it also had a series of protective lames that extended down the back of the neck in a design resembling a lobster tail. Beneath the breastplate, the Husaria wore a mail coat, which provided additional protection for the wearer's arms while iron gauntlets protected the hands.

The Husaria's most unique weapon and one that would become almost synonymous with Polish cavalry in the centuries to come was the lance or "kopia." The five-meter-long weapon was made of light, elastic types of wood and was hollowed from point to handle for added maneuverability. Despite being richly painted, the kopia was a single-use weapon as it shattered on impact. Consequently, very few specimens survive to this day.

The kopia's effectiveness often depended on the adversary as the reduced weight of the weapon meant that it could fail to pierce heavier types of armor. However, the 17th century French soldier and engineer Guillaume de Beauplan described another aspect of the kopia that has been perhaps forgotten over the centuries and may further explain the Husaria's deep attachment to it despite its expense and limited use:

"The point is decorated with a pennon of white and red, or green and blue or black and white —always two colors and about four to five feet in length," wrote de Beauplan. "It is used to disorient the opponent's horses as the moment the Hussars have lowered their lances and begin charging the enemy the pennons make considerable noise cutting through the air and cause the enemy's horses to break their formation."

Regardless of whether or not Beauplan's account is accurate, there is no doubt that the long kopia with its billowing pennon added yet another frightening element to the already intimidating sight of a fully armed Husaria charge. As, it can be assumed, did the wicked sound of hundreds of lances shattering upon making contact with the enemy lines.

With his lance broken, the Polish hussar also carried with him an assortment of close combat weaponry from which to choose. On the left side of his waist belt, each man carried a Hungarian-style saber or "szabla" that was weighted at the top of the blade to increase the lethality of its slashing blows. Beneath the saddle was also a "koncercz," a 1.6-meter straight blade with a triangular tip used for thrusting through armor. Should lance or blade fail to fell an adversary, the hussar could reach for either his skull splitting "czekan" war hammer or, most reliable of all, a pair of pistols holstered on the saddle.

All Husaria units were organized into "choragiew" (literally meaning banners but commonly translated as companies) of 100 to 150 horses and commanded by a "rotmistrz" (rotamaster or captain), who was usually a nobleman of considerable means. The captain raised his company by calling together his "towarzysze" (companions) who were themselves lesser nobles from his district and responsible for their own horses, retainers, and camp servants.

Although each company received its pay from the crown, the captain alone assumed the tremendous cost of raising, training, and provisioning his men in a system designed to spare the state an enormous immediate financial burden in time of war. The captain was further aided in his duties by a lieutenant or "porucznik," who was usually a trusted veteran companion who stood

Lviv National Art Gallery

Hetman Stanisław Zółkiewski led a Polish-Lithuanian army to victory at Klushino in 1610. Despite being outnumbered five to one, Zółkiewski skillfully used his 5,000 Husaria to defeat the Russians.

ready to command if need be.

During the late 16th and early 17th centuries, the prevailing cavalry tactic in Western Europe was the Spanish "caracole," which called for the cavalry to advance toward the enemy in ranks 10 horses deep, fire their pistols, then wheel around, reload, and attack again. By comparison, Bathory's Husaria were instead deployed to deliver a single, rapid knockout blow. The main battle formation was the "huf" (from the German "haufen" or battle formation) and usually involved a few hundred men, though large "hufy" could be well more than a thousand men. Advancing in lines three to five horses deep at most with the companions in the front ranks and their retainers behind, a typical Husaria charge began with a trot toward the enemy.

Once the horsemen were about halfway, the order came down to lower lances, and the front ranks spurred their horses forward into a gallop and crashed headlong into the enemy. The supporting ranks continued advancing at a canter, ready to support the attack if need be. A well-timed Husaria charge had a devastating effect and was immediately followed by waves of light horsemen or infantry to mop up what was left of the opposing army.

Along with Bathory's standardization in weapons, armor, and tactics, the Husaria also adopted a unique and defining accoutrement whose purpose remains debated to this day, their "wings." Many modern sources continue to falsely claim that at high speeds the fluttering of the feathers created a sinister "hiss" that frightened enemy horses. However, this theory, along with the notion that they added to the horse's speed or served as protection against the lassoes of the ransom-hungry Tatars of the steppe, is pure hyperbole. In truth, the wings of the Husaria are a classic case of an old military tradition dying hard.

The early Balkan forefathers of the Husaria painted wings on their shields and even tacked on feathers in various designs. As the shield was slowly phased out of the hussar's arsenal, the wings migrated from the arm to the saddle and eventually to the rider's back. Proof of this is the fact that the wings worn by the first Polish Husaria companies were not the grand arches so often depicted in artwork. Rather, early wings constituted a single, flat, painted strip of wood lined with a single row of feathers and affixed to the back of the saddle. It was only in the latter half of the 17th century that this relatively simple ornamentation evolved into the magnificent spectacle for which the Husaria are best known.

Bathory's Husaria accounted for roughly 85 percent of his total cavalry arm, which was twice the size of his infantry contingent. One of their first actions was in 1577 at the Battle of Lubieszów, where they helped destroy a much larger Danzig mercenary army during the city's rebellion against the crown. However, aside from that notable engagement, the role of Husaria during the wars of Bathory's reign seems conspicuously unremarkable.

The king's long Livonian campaign (1579-1582) to wrest control of what is modern-day Estonia and Latvia from Ivan the Terrible was one of his deep raids, long wilderness marches, and longer sieges, with few opportunities for the cavalry to really test their mettle. During the siege of Pskov in 1581, the Russian winter was such that cavalrymen on patrol often returned frozen to death in the saddle, still clutching their reins. Therefore, ironically, only after the death of their great patron Bathory in 1586 did the Husaria really prove their worth.

Bathory was succeeded to the throne in 1587 by Sigismund III, a member of the Swedish ruling house of Vasa. His election was contested by the Habsburg candidate, Maximilian III of Austria, and a short civil war erupted in Poland between the two factions. The matter was settled in January 1588 at the Battle of Byczyna where Grand Hetman of the Crown Jan Zamoyski badly

mauled the Habsburg forces with the aid of some 1,900 Husaria. Maximilian retreated, was captured, and renounced his claims to the Polish throne.

The beginning of Sigismund's reign, especially his simultaneous coronation as king of Sweden in 1592, seemed to herald a new era of unprecedented power and prosperity for the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Peace seemed to have at last come to the Baltic. However, the predominantly Protestant Swedes quickly tired of their melancholy absentee king whose two great passions in life were his Roman Catholic faith and his fascination with alchemy. Sigismund was soon deposed by his uncle, Charles IX of Sweden, and for the next 60 years the dynastic quarrel between the two Vasa branches provided a convenient pretext for an interminable series of wars. For the Husaria, their heyday had arrived as the opening years of the 17th century brought a series of spectacular victories that made them famous throughout Europe.

The first of these great victories came in Livonia, the great area of turmoil during this time between Poland, Sweden, and Muscovy. In the summer of 1601, at the village of Kokenhausen on the banks of the Daugava River, Krzysztof "The Thunderbolt" Radziwiłł defeated a Swedish force of 4,900 with just 3,000 of his own men by overwhelming the enemy cavalry with devastating Husaria charges that drove the rest of the Swedish army from the field. These victories were followed up with a series of further Polish successes at Dorpat, Revel, Weissenstein and, most notable of all, Kircholm, where the Husaria almost singlehandedly won one of the most decisive triumphs in Polish military history.

DerHexer

The Battle of Kircholm took place on September 27, 1605, roughly 12 miles southeast of Riga. The Polish commander Jan Karol Chodkiewicz, Grand Hetman of Lithuania, led 3,900 men against a Swedish force of 10,700 under the command of the newly crowned King Charles IX of Sweden. Chodkiewicz placed the bulk of his hussars on his flanks with particular emphasis on his left. First, he drew the infantry in the Swedish center from their positions by feigning retreat, only to turn and attack them head-on once their lines had thinned out. With the Swedish center engaged, Chodkiewicz's Husaria charged and quickly overwhelmed the cavalry on the enemy's flanks, encircling the infantry in the center and putting the rest of Charles's army to flight. In less than half an hour, the Swedes lost 9,000 men, 60 banners, and 11 guns. A wounded Charles was sent reeling back to Sweden. In Poland, news of the victory was read aloud in the royal cathedral in Warsaw.

Kokenhausen and Kircholm illustrate the devastating effects a well-timed, precisely aimed Husaria charge could have against even a much larger enemy. The two engagements also illustrate the marked superiority the concerted heavy cavalry charge had during this time over Western cavalry still trained in the caracole. However, it is important to note that neither victory would have been attained were it not for the close coordination of infantry, artillery, and cavalry required to create the perfect conditions for the Husaria to strike effectively. Luckily for the Husaria, during the early 17th century the Polish army was fortunate to have been led by a series of truly brilliant battlefield tacticians. In fact, just four years after Kircholm at the Battle of Klushino in 1610, Stanisław Zółkiewski, despite being outnumbered five to one, skillfully used his Husaria to defeat a Muscovite army of 30,000 under the command of the tsar's brother.

While the Husaria's superior tactics and armament had humbled Poland's northern enemies for the time being, a new danger was growing in the south that severely put the winged horsemen to the test. The Ottoman Turks had been steadily approaching the Polish frontier since their crushing victory over the Hungarians at Mohács in 1526. The Turks also relied on a preponderance of cavalry for increased mobility and maneuverability, and their huge numbers were unmatchable. The Turks' elite horsemen were the sultan's Palace Cavalry or "Sipahis." Like the Husaria, the Sipahis were an armored shock force recruited from among the Sultan's landowning nobility and known for their superior skill with both a saber and bow. In battle they were supported by huge numbers of irregular light horse, such as the Crimean Tatars, who fought almost exclusively for slaves and booty.

In September 1620, Zółkiewski crossed the Dniester River into Moldavia with 10,000 men, including 2,500 Husaria, to meet Iskander Pasha's invading Ottoman force of over 20,000 men. At first Zółkiewski was able to keep the Turks at bay by fighting a skilled defensive battle. However, after almost three weeks of bitter fighting and numerous desertions by the Moldavian contingents, the enemy's numbers proved too great, and the entire Polish expedition was annihilated. Zółkiewski's severed head was sent as a gift to the sultan, and Tatar raiders crossed the Polish frontier and swarmed as far as Lwów.

The catastrophic defeat sent waves of shock through the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, and a 28,000-strong army under the command of Chodkiewicz, the hero of Kircholm, was sent to parry the threat. The Poles dug in at the fortress of Chocim and once again prepared for a defensive battle. Chodkiewicz's defenses were much more formidable than those of the unfortunate Zółkiewski and included a deep series of fieldworks in front of the ramparts. While the infantry repelled one attack after the other, Chodkiewicz personally led the 8,000 Husaria he had with him in fierce sorties and counterattacks. After a month of constant fighting and bad weather, the Turks' resolve was broken, and both sides agreed to an uneasy peace treaty.

For the Husaria, their crucial role in such spectacular victories as Kircholm, Klushino, and Chocim solidified their importance as the Polish army's elite arm. The latter battle in particular, which saw them man the ramparts at times alongside the infantry, earned them a reputation as universal soldiers that could fill any battlefield role when needed. Not surprisingly, the Husaria's success and prestige, coupled with their noble pedigree and the fact that they were the only purely Polish (and Lithuanian) unit in the army, soon fostered a regimental culture and tradition markedly different from any other unit in the Commonwealth or indeed in Europe.

Positions in Husaria companies were coveted

Polish King Jan Sobieski used the elite Husaria to fight the Cossacks, Tatars, and Turks who plagued the southern borders of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the 17th century. OPPOSITE: Half-armor of the winged Husaria on display at Poland's Malbork Castle.

by Poland's elite not just because of the battlefield laurels but because of the opportunities they offered for social advancement. Hussar pay was a third higher than that of all other troops, and after their service was complete they could look forward to rewards of land, titles, and important offices. However, despite the fact that prominent families often went to great expense to see that their sons made it into illustrious companies like the king's or those of famous noblemen, enrollment criteria favored those with experience. Sebastian Cefali, the Italian secretary to the powerful magnate Jerzy Lubomirski, noted, "The Hussars deserve special attention as much for their incomparable bravery as for their personal dignity. They recruit the more significant noblemen and seasoned officers who have commanded Cossacks or other significant army units and would not mind serving in the Hussar cavalry as straight soldiers."

Because the captains and their companions were cut from the same noble cloth, they addressed each other as "my lord-brother" and often ate and drank at the same table. Being a gentleman, the companion shunned menial duties such as tending the horses and foraging, which were left to the retainers and camp servants. Not surprisingly, the loyalty of the companions to their companies was deep, and regalia such as the company colors were blessed before battle and held as sacred. When falling into formation, all Husaria sang the "Bodgurodzica" (Mother of God), a 14th-century Polish hymn that was sung before the great victory over the Teutonic Knights at the Battle of Grunwald-Tannenberg in 1410.

By the early to mid-17th century, the Husaria's religious fervor was also coupled with a level of ostentation rarely seen anywhere else on the Continent. Although the general look of the Husaria remained true to the standardization in arms and armor introduced by Bathory, wealthy noblemen took to studding their helmets and breastplates with gold and precious stones and engraving them with elaborate religious designs. Basic equipment like harnesses, saddles, and horse cloths were richly caparisoned, sabers were forged of Damascene steel, and even boots were made from rich yellow Moroccan leather. On top of the armor was worn the skin of an exotic animal, usually a spotted feline such as a leopard or panther. However, as these skins were expensive and difficult to find, lynx and wolf pelts were also worn and might be painted to resemble a more expensive beast.

By far the greatest expense in raising Husaria companies was the horses. Although there was no officially Polish stock, breeders crossed Western, Turkish, and Arabian horses to make a strong, fast mount that could bear the rigors of a long campaign as well as the oppressive Polish climate. Companions frequently brought more than one mount with them on campaign, and the horses they rode in battle were never used as draft animals. Because Husaria companies were paid by the crown according to the number of horses they could field, captains frequently doctored the company rolls to make a few extra złoty for themselves. Given that the captain spent a tremendous amount of personal funds to raise the company in the first place, this common practice was just as commonly ignored by the crown.

During the early 17th century, the Husaria were the determining factor in a string of brilliant victories across Eastern Europe and helped expand the borders of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth from the Baltic to the Black Sea. However, by mid-century it was obvious that the era of the heavy lancer was coming to a close. Following the Swedish Wars of the 1620s, carbines became standard armament for the first time following the severe casualties the Husaria suffered at the hands of Gustavus Adolphus's efficient Western infantry.

Western armies also were learning to mix their cavalry units with infantry to make them less vulnerable to a sudden cavalry charge. Moreover, although the Husaria remained particularly effective against less advanced and more lightly armed Eastern adversaries such as Russians, Turks, and Tatars, the tremendous cost involved in raising and maintaining them was simply too

much for a state chronically short of funds. Whereas under Bathory they accounted for the vast majority of the Commonwealth's cavalry, by the 1630s they accounted for about half, and just 5 to 7 percent by the 1650s and 1660s.

The decline of the Husaria during this period can also be attributed to a catastrophic series of events that Polish historians call "The Deluge." Between 1648 and roughly 1660, the country suffered a Cossack rebellion in the Ukraine, a Muscovite invasion of Lithuania, and a Swedish invasion that overran Poland. Warsaw was occupied, the countryside was devastated, and rebellious magnates added to the strife by siding with whatever invaders promised to secure their interests. For the first time in their history, the Husaria suffered a string of defeats, most crushing of which was at the Battle of Batoh in 1652, where the veteran core of the Husaria was captured and slaughtered by the victorious Cossacks and Tatars.

Obviously, for those parts of the country still resisting the invaders, raising new Husaria companies proved exceedingly difficult, and those that were raised were untested, smaller in number and much more reliant on their retainers and supporting units to bolster their lines. Still, there were some moments during the battles of liberation when the Husaria managed to achieve mastery of the battlefield. At the Battle of Warka in 1656, the newly raised Husaria companies under the command of Stefan Czarniecki completely annihilated a Swedish force. During the "Fortunate Year" of 1660, the Husaria once again proved their worth in a series of victories against the Muscovites in Lithuania and the Battles of Lyubar and Slobodyszcze in the Ukraine.

A FULLY ARMED WINGED HUSSAR CLAD IN EXOTIC ANIMAL SKINS WAS SEEN AS THE EPITOME OF POLISH MARTIAL BEAUTY DURING THE 17th CENTURY AND ALL ACCOUNTS OF THE WINGS FULFILLING ANY OTHER ROLE THAN THAT OF ORNAMENT WERE EITHER FANCIFUL OR MISUNDERSTOOD.

Although the foreign invaders had been expelled, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was utterly exhausted. In 1667, Poland and Muscovy signed the Treaty of Andruszowo, which saw the division of the Ukraine at the Dnieper River. This vast, rich, and strategically important region was forever lost, and the Commonwealth never recovered as a result. Adding to the national woes, in 1669 Michał Wisniowiecki was elected king. Despite being the scion of a powerful family and son of a national hero, the new king quickly proved a dull, dumb, and ineffectual choice for monarch at a time when strong leadership was desperately needed.

In 1672, Sultan Mehmet IV, well aware of the Commonwealth's problems, crossed the Polish border with 80,000 men and took the seemingly impregnable fortress of Kamieniec Podolski. Despite the warnings of the few troops stationed along the southern frontier, the king and his ministers were caught completely by surprise and hastily signed the humiliating Treaty of Buczacz, in which Podolia and the Ukraine were ceded to the Turks along with a large annual tribute. Fortunately for the Commonwealth, it had at its disposal one of the most brilliant commanders Poland has ever produced, and it was under his leadership that the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the Husaria that served it experienced its last great hurrah.

Jan Sobieski is without doubt the most famous of Poland's great warrior kings and arguably the only one to gain lasting recognition outside Eastern Europe. "The Lion of Lechistan" received his baptism of fire at the age of 22 at the Battle of Beresteczko and henceforth spent almost his entire military career fighting the Cossacks, Tatars, and Turks who plagued the Commonwealth's southern borders. As a grandson of the great Zółkiewski, the Husaria were in his blood, and his older brother Marek was one of the unfortunates massacred at Batoh. During The Deluge he led a regiment of loyal Tatar allies against the Swedes, and in 1666 he was appointed a field hetman and given the unenviable task of guarding the southern frontier with a paltry force of just 5,000 men. It was Sobieski who had warned the crown to no avail of the growing Turkish threat, and he was determined to avenge the disaster that resulted.

In 1673, war broke out again between the Commonwealth and the Ottomans, and a large Turkish army of 70,000 once again threatened the Polish heartland. An army of 30,000 was hastily raised using state funds, contributions from the nobility, and Sobieski's own personal fortune. On the morning of November 12, 1673, near the old fortress of Chocim, site of Chodkiewicz's great victory 50 years earlier, Sobieski launched a surprise attack on the Turkish camp and utterly routed the invaders, many of whom threw themselves into the icy Dniester in an effort to escape.

News of Sobieski's victory spread rapidly across Europe and made him an instant national hero. The Commonwealth's elation was in no way marred by the fact that the evening before the battle King Michał Wisniowiecki died suddenly in Warsaw, supposedly after gorging on pickled cucumbers. Sobieski's international fame made him the perfect candidate for king, and in 1674 he was duly elected to the highest office in the land. His ascension to the throne was followed by a string of further victories against the Turks and Tatars that stabilized the southern border and restored much lost territory.

One of Sobieski's first priorities was military reform. During the Turkish War, few units had served him as ably as his Husaria, and one of his first measures was to raise more companies from scratch and by refitting existing light cavalry units. Sobieski was forthcoming in his belief that the Husaria were not just an elite fighting force but a national symbol unique to Poland. Under their new king the elite horsemen were restored to a position of prominence in the national army, and it was under Sobieski that they assumed the resplendent appearance for which they are best remembered. During the long and lean years of The Deluge, outfitting Husaria companies was extraordinarily difficult, and the companies that were raised wore hastily made and often improvised armor largely lacking in decoration. One of the traditions that was abandoned during the 1650s and 1660s and subsequently restored with renewed vigor by Sobieski was the wearing of wings.

Whereas earlier version were simple saddle-mounted frames, the new wings were large wooden arcs, covered with leather, trimmed with velvet and brass, and lined with a row of feathers that were often dyed for uniformity. These new wings were worn singly or in pairs and attached to the hussar's back plate with special brackets that held them rigidly in place. Although there does not appear to have been any standardized size for the wings, the arcs were large accoutrements that extended well over the wearer.

A fully armed winged hussar clad in exotic animal skins was seen as the epitome of Polish martial beauty during the 17th century and, as mentioned, all accounts of the wings fulfilling any other role than that of an ornament are either fanciful or misunderstood. That being said, there is no denying that like the bearskins of the Imperial Guard, the war bonnets of the

Because of his past successes fighting the Turks, Polish King Jan Sobieski was given overall command of the Holy League's forces tasked with relieving Vienna from the besieging Ottoman army in 1683. During the dimactic day-long battle on September 12, the Husaria charged into the enemy camp, routing the Turks.

Plains Indians, or the masks of Samurai, the wings of the Husaria added yet another intimidating visual element to their ferocious charge.

In the spring of 1683, a massive Turkish army of 140,000 set out from Belgrade to capture Vienna, the center of Habsburg power and the gateway to the heart of Christian Europe. Realizing the common threat, on April 1, 1683, Sobieski concluded a treaty of mutual assistance with the Austrian Emperor Leopold II and promised to launch an expeditionary force as soon as possible. It was early September before the Polish king finally arrived outside Vienna with 27,000 men, including 3,500 Husaria. Because of his past successes fighting the Turks, Sobieski was given overall command of the total Christian force of 74,000 men and set about making plans for the city's relief.

The Ottoman Grand Vizier Kara Mustafa Pasha had focused all his attention on Vienna itself and had failed to properly secure the Kahlenberg Heights, which overlooked the city and the Turkish lines from the west. Lumbering up the heights and dislodging the Turkish defenders was an arduous task, but once accomplished the besiegers would be effectively pinned against the walls of Vienna. The ensuing battle began just after dawn on the morning of September 12, 1683, and was not the quick rout that it is often described, but a brutal slog that lasted well into the evening. Though the victory was undoubtedly the result of the combined efforts of all the Christian contingents and their commanders, it was Sobieski and the Husaria who sealed the fate of the besieging Turks.

The Poles were positioned on the right of the great Christian host looking down from the Kahlenberg. At 5 PM, with both armies engaged, Sobieski drew his sword, let out a mighty cry of "Jezuz Maria ratuj" ("Jesus and Mary deliver us") and led his 3,500 Husaria, supported by many more light cavalry units, charging down the heights and into the heart of the Ottoman army. All along the battlefield, Christian and Turk alike watched in wonder as the winged horsemen, magnificent in their armor and animal skins, lowered their lances and plunged into the Turkish cavalry sent to receive their attack. The thundering of hooves was quickly followed by the sickening sound of shattering lances and clanging steel, and the Turkish horse quickly gave way. Sensing victory, Sobieski pointed toward Kara Mustafa's great white tent and ordered Prince Alexander's company, which was named for his infant son, to charge straight at it. The site of the Poles in their camp and their commander fleeing for his life broke what little resolve was left in the defenders. Their rout soon descended into a chaotic retreat.

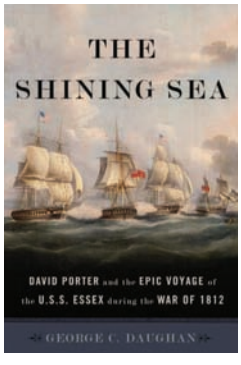
Following Vienna's relief, praise for Sobieski and his invincible winged hussars poured in from

Continued on page 71

By Christopher Miskimon

Glory-seeking USS *Essex* Captain David Porter battled Pacific islanders, his own crew, and the British during the War of 1812.

Navy Captain David Porter (inset) led his crew of the USS *Essex* on raids against British shipping during the War of 1812. Porter and his crew were eventually captured after the *Essex* was nearly destroyed by British frigate HMS *Phoebe* and the sloop *Cherub*.

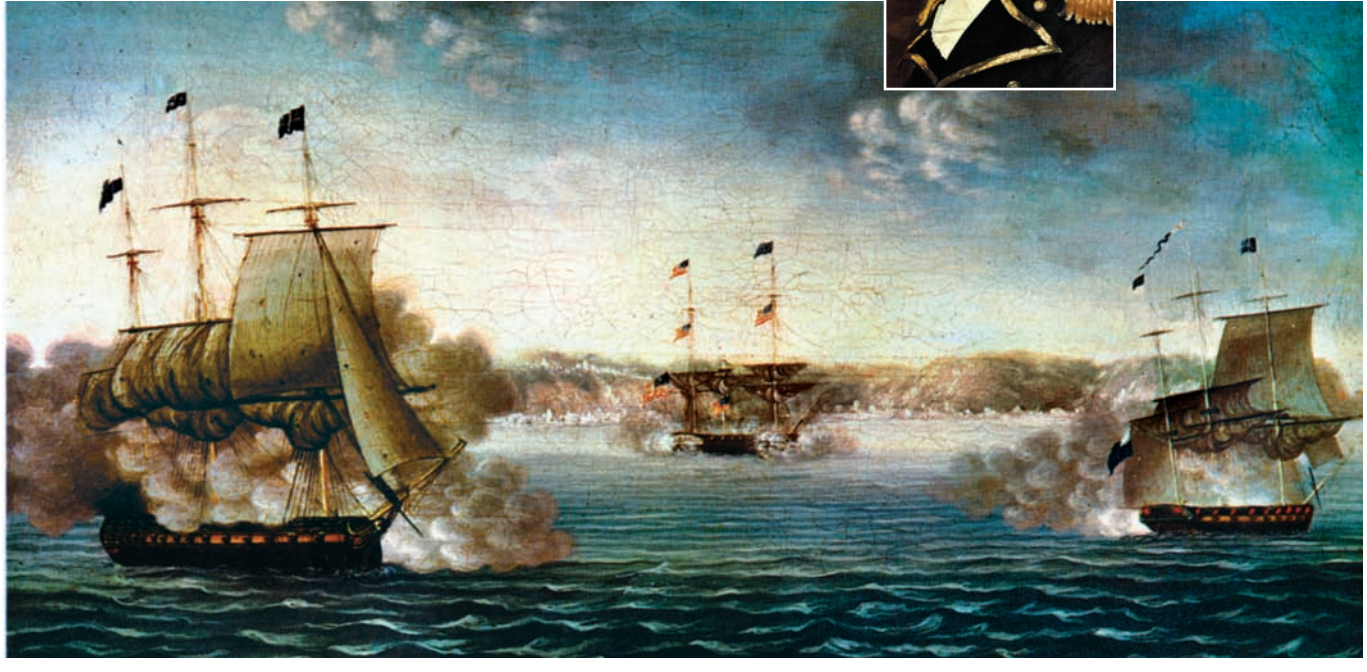


THE U.S. NAVY IN THE AGE OF FIGHTING SAIL WAS AN INSTITUTION eager to prove itself to the world. Its officers took their honor seriously and were prickly in defense of it. Although most understood the value of money, particularly the prize money from captured enemy ships, honor often mattered more. Fame and glory were their primary motivations, not uncommon among men in this era.

Stories of daring deeds and victories won were regularly carried in newspapers, providing nationwide recognition. Though tiny, the U.S. Navy was full of spirit, and the War of 1812 created the opportunity its sailors desperately wanted. Finally, they would be able to show their quality.

No officer in this fledgling service wanted to build his reputation more than David Porter. His whole life had been built around the sea and naval service. He had been at sea since the age of 16, serving on a merchantman and nearly being impressed by the Royal Navy twice. By 1798 he was a midshipman in the new U.S. Navy aboard the *Constellation*. During the quasi-war from 1798 to 1800 with France, he was present during the capture of the French frigate *L'Insurgente*. He moved up gradually and was the first officer on the *Philadelphia* when it was run aground during the war against the Barbary Pirates. After his release he continued in the navy and had a reputation as a courageous and capable leader.

After the War of 1812 began, Porter took command of the frigate USS *Essex*, a stout vessel heavily armed with carronades, powerful but short-ranged cannon. This would prove disastrous in time. Despite reservations over armament, Porter wasted little time and took *Essex* to sea, soon gaining a victory over the smaller British ship *Alert*. This was not enough to satisfy Porter's thirst for glory; he longed to battle a frigate of equal size to his own and secure his reputation for good. His chance came when he was dispatched as part of an American squadron to



Library of Congress; inset: National Archives

the South Atlantic, where they were to harass British shipping, particularly the small warships which regularly carried fortunes in specie back to the home islands for English merchants. This was the beginning of the larger-than-life tale of courage, daring, and eventual doom told in ***The Shining Sea: David Porter and the Epic Voyage of the U.S.S.* Essex *during the War of 1812*** (George C. Daughan, Basic Books, New York, 2013, 337 pp., maps, illustrations, notes, index, $29.99, hardcover).

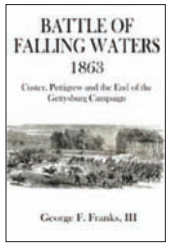
Quickly separated from the rest of the squadron, Porter acted on his own initiative in a way he felt carried out his orders. For a time he plied the waters of the Atlantic, seeking opportunities to sink or capture British ships. This proved difficult; the British were well established in the region, and the European powers controlling the local colonies were not always friendly. After capturing a valuable specie-carrying packet ship and relieving it of its $55,000 in coin, Porter decided to take the *Essex* around Cape Horn and into the Pacific Ocean. There he would target the extensive British whaling industry in place along the western side of South America and simultaneously protect American whalers in the same area. Many of the American ships in the region were unaware a war had even begun.

After a perilous voyage around Cape Horn, *Essex* sailed the southeastern Pacific Ocean hunting British ships. Before long numerous enemy whalers fell to the swift American frigate and its daring crew. At times, Porter had so many prizes he lacked crews to man them and often signed on captured sailors. Although Porter's figures are likely exaggerated, the value of his captures was easily $1 to $2 million dollars. Some of them had to be laid up in the Chilean port of Valparaiso to await later transport back to the United States. The Chileans had just had a revolution of their own, and many showed great favor to Porter and his men. With the British whaling industry in shambles, Porter realized the time had come to refit his ship and rest his crew. Also, his efforts had been noticed in Britain, and the Royal Navy was sending ships to hunt him down. It was time to leave for a while.

The destination Porter chose was the island group known as the Marquesas. It was far enough away to make discovery by the British unlikely and would be a beautiful place to prepare *Essex* for further service. The fact that the Marquesas were home to island peoples renowned for lovely and sexually free women figured largely in his decision as well. So *Essex*'s course was set and soon brought the ship to Nuku Hiva Island. Here, Porter and crew found a good harbor for their ships, a wonderful climate, and the friendly women of which they had dreamed.

At that point, the tale becomes strange. Porter decided to annex the island to the United States and fought with the local tribes resistant to the idea. He renamed Nuku Hiva as Madison Island, built a fort, and brought the tribes under his control. Later, when it was time to return to the war, Porter had to fight his own mutinous sailors, many of whom did not want to leave the island paradise. Gaining control, he took them back to Valparaiso, where *Essex* found the fight Porter was looking for. The short-ranged carronades were useless against British long guns. The 36-gun frigate HMS *Phoebe* pounded the *Essex* into wreckage on March 28, 1814. Porter and the surviving crew were captured, though later released on parole to return home.

The 200th anniversary of the War of 1812 is in full swing, and many new books are appearing. This is a good choice for understanding the naval officers of the day and the lengths they were willing to go to in search of glory.

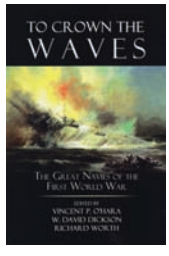


Battle of Falling Waters 1863: Custer, Pettigrew and the End of the Gettysburg Campaign (George F. Franks III, published by George F. Franks, 2013, 108 pp., maps, illustrations, bibliography, index, $17.99, softcover).

As the smoke slowly cleared from the battlefield of Gettysburg, the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia began its long retreat southward. Heavy rains, exhaustion, and a cautious command kept the Union Army from quickly following up its victory with a crushing counterattack. Still, slow maneuvering began as the Confederates withdrew toward Williamsport, Maryland. Screened by cavalry under Maj. Gen. J.E.B. Stuart, they reached the river but could not cross because the bridge had been destroyed in a raid by enemy cavalry.

On July 11, 1863, Confederate General Robert E. Lee formed a defensive line to hold the Union forces at bay until a crossing could be made. Meade's forces arrived on July 12 and fighting continued through the next day. During that time a new pontoon bridge was constructed and the Confederates began to withdraw behind a rear guard. A cavalry attack by forces under Union Brig. Gen. Judson Kilpatrick on July 14 resulted in confused fighting and the mortal wounding of Confederate Brig. Gen. J. J. Pettigrew. Finally, the rebels fought a disciplined, organized withdrawal and crossed the pontoon bridge ahead of the Union cavalry, cutting the bridge loose as they crossed it. Further skirmishing occurred as Lee's army went deeper into Virginia, but the Gettysburg Campaign was for all intents and purposes over.

This work fills in the details of Gettysburg's aftermath. So much has been written on the American Civil War that it is hard to find anything fresh these days, but Franks has managed to do just that by concentrating on a small but important battle that has been largely neglected until now. Civil War buffs looking for a detailed retelling of the events that occurred after Pickett's Charge will find this book of interest.

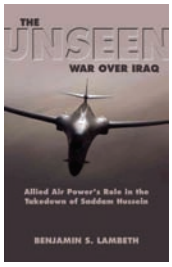


To Crown the Waves: The Great Navies of the First World War (Vincent P. O'Hara, W. David Dickson, and Richard Worth, eds., Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, MD, 2013, 349 pp., maps, photographs, tables, notes, index, $37.95, hardcover.)

Apart from Jutland, the submarine war, and a few other battles, World War I is largely thought of in terms of the trenches. In truth, there is good reason for this, but the naval operations of the conflict have their own underappreciated significance. Many of the weapons used, such as big-gun battleships, radio, torpedoes, and submarines, were all relatively new and had not been tested in large-scale warfare. A few, such as aircraft, were so new as to be effectively untested. Great Britain's control of the seas was significantly challenged for the first time since the Napoleonic Wars. Theory was meeting reality worldwide.

This book provides in-depth study of the major navies of the war. Their respective doctrine, organization, ships, and training are all covered. The authors also reveal how each navy prepared for the challenges of surface and undersea warfare, antisubmarine and mine operations, and amphibious assault. Even such details as administration, intelligence, basing, and logistics are shown. Many works on this subject will focus on a single facet, such as the relative worth of British versus German warships. This work gives readers a general overview while still providing extensive detail. This book is an excellent reference work, and students of naval warfare will find it a fasci-

nating addition to their bookshelf.



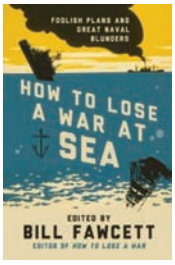
The Unseen War: Allied Air Power and the Takedown of Saddam Hussein (Benjamin S. Lambeth, Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, MD, 2013, 435 pp., maps, photographs, notes index, $59.95, softcover).

Modern airpower is an awe-inspiring thing—a force multiplier that gives ground forces vital support, freedom of maneuver, and a greatly enhanced ability to gather intelligence. Although the troops on the ground must always be well trained and prepared, an army that enjoys air supremacy has a much easier task ahead of it.

Since the end of the Cold War, U.S. dominance in the air has become a factor no opposing nation or group can afford to neglect. Nowhere is this more apparent than in Operation Iraqi Freedom, during which a coalition army many thought too small to easily accomplish its mission rolled over its foe while it fighters and helicopters ranged overhead with near impunity. These combat aircraft were mostly the same ones which had flown over the Iraqi deserts in 1991. However, these airframes had benefitted from over a decade of technological refinement; they were dropping many of the same weapons, but communications, accuracy, and the ability to coordinate had all improved drastically. Behind the combat aircraft, intelligence and reconnaissance planes, using such assests as the E8 Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System, improved targeting and surveillance; unmanned drones and satellites did the same, and all were used in a vast coordinated effort.

As wonderful as all this technology is, it was nothing without trained personnel to translate all of it into action. These people came from numerous nations, making the task of building effective teams more difficult. A new focus on joint operations and lessons from Afghanistan made this easier, however.

This is a detailed book which brings the many facets of an air campaign together into a coherent narrative. It is also necessarily technical and must use the byzantine assortment of acronyms the U.S. military relishes, so be prepared to consult the extensive list of acronyms provided. If you are willing to do so, though, you will gain a thorough understanding of the complexity of aerial warfare in the 21st Century.



How to Lose a War at Sea: Foolish Plans and Great Naval Blunders (Bill Fawcett, William Morrow, eds., New York, 2013, 349 pp., $13.99, softcover).

American intelligence expert George Friedman has written that war largely consists of a series of mistakes, and whoever makes the fewest mistakes is often the winner. Blunders and miscalculations have many causes—pride, poor intelligence, and complacency, to name a few. This new book takes aim at many of history's naval errors, showing how they played out. Some schemes ended in disaster, such as the Battle of Midway for Japan. Others succeeded despite the odds, often due to the quick action of a par-

games *By Joseph Luster*

World of Tanks continues the battle on consoles, *Major Mayhem* blows up smartphones, and *Alexander* leads epic conquests.

WORLD OF TANKS: XBOX 360 EDITION

Things have been moving along nicely for Wargaming.net's hugely successful massively-multiplayer online game *World of Tanks*. It was already doing plenty well on PC, but its recent arrival on Xbox 360 finally brought it to a hungry console audience. In addition to getting a chance to experience the same addictive tank-based action on 360, *World of Tanks* remains a free-to-play game, so there's no reason not to download it and give it a shot if you've thus far been left out of the PC fun. The only catch is you'll need an Xbox Live Gold account, but that shouldn't be a problem for anyone who's into multiplayer gaming enough to want to try *World of Tanks* in the first place. If that's still an issue, there is a seven-day timed trial for all account holders.

PUBLISHER
WARGAMING.NET

DEVELOPER
WARGAMING.NET

SYSTEM(S)
XBOX 360, PC

AVAILABLE
NOW

Published by Microsoft and developed by Wargaming West (formerly known as Day 1 Studios), *World of Tanks: Xbox 360 Edition* officially made its public debut in mid-February. This version

was built specifically for Xbox 360, so there was plenty of care put into how it handles in its new home, including appropriately revamped controls. There's also a new user interface and a match-making system that takes advantage of 360's specific online features. In other words, it's not too much of a pain to get online and get a game started.

As is the case with any online game like *World of Tanks*, just because it's out doesn't mean what you see is simply what you get. While the game launched with over 100 tanks from the United States, Germany, and the UK, future DLC will expand the lineup with new nations, more tanks, and other additions.

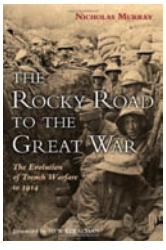
Coming to Xbox 360 could certainly be seen as an improvement by many, but the real *World of Tanks* improvements hinted at in the headline are coming to the game itself. Wargaming has big plans for 2014, with producer Mike Zhivets dubbing it "a truly transformative year for the game." More specifics will be rolled out as the months go on, but a few enhancements we can look forward to include a revamped graphics renderer that promises to add a greater level of detail to vehicle models and a more realistic gaming environment. On the technical end, there will be improvements made to the physics engine, as well as enriched gameplay such as the oft-requested Historical Battles and new Fortified Areas meta game functionality.

MAJOR MAYHEM

Here's something a little lighter than our usual fare. Okay, it's a lot lighter, but *Major Mayhem* is worth recommending to anyone looking for some casual military-themed shooting action on their mobile devices. Available from Adult Swim Games on both Android and iOS platforms, *Major Mayhem* takes a very clichéd Hol-

ticular group or ship. For example, the air raid on the Italian port of Taranto by the British Fleet in 1940 had much going against success, but a few daring aircrews pulled it off. Other disasters were averted by a single person. During the Cuban Missile Crisis, a Soviet submarine captain had decided to fire a nuclear torpedo at American ships but was talked out of it by, of all people, his political commissar.

The book is not intended as a scholarly investigation of mistakes at sea. Rather, it is a new view of many well-known battles mixed with a few engagements almost unknown today, such as the naval portion of the Iran-Iraq War. This book is excellent light fare; it has enough detail to keep the reader's interest while remaining easy to read and enjoy. It abounds with little-known facts that add to the entertainment and enjoyment of the book.



The Rocky Road to the Great War: The Evolution of Trench Warfare to 1914 (Nicholas Murray, Potomac Books, Washington, D.C., 2013, 301 pp., maps, photographs, diagrams, notes, index, $34.95, hardcover).

Many new weapons and concepts came to fruition in World War I. Some of them originated in that conflict; however, many were around for years or even decades. Much has been written on the evolution of machine guns, for example, but one of the iconic facets of the war is largely neglected: trenches and field fortifications. This new book from a professor at the U.S. Army's Command and General Staff College seeks to redress that oversight.

The use of defensive positions goes back millennia, but at the end of the 19th century they became critical. Weapons were becoming more deadly with the advent of breech loading artillery, smokeless powder, and repeating small arms. Remaining in the open became suicidal. Hastily dug field fortifications were an absolute necessity. Over time they increased in refinement and became part of the art of defensive warfare. There were significant reasons for this.

Trenches could be made easily at relatively low cost. Troops in such positions could hold territory with fewer men, freeing soldiers for other roles such as attacks. As massive conscript armies arose in the late 1800s, trenches were excellent places to put them. In a trench they were easier to control and felt more secure. Green troops can be more easily blooded and will usually perform better in a solid defensive position. Also, despite their squalor, they keep soldiers alive. This book used five wars of the four decades before World War I to illustrate how field fortifications evolved into such a standard of future conflict.

Canister! On! Fire! Australian Tank Operations in Vietnam (Bruce Cameron, Big Sky Publishing, Newport, New South Wales, 2012, 940 pp., maps, photographs, bibliography, index, $60.00, hardcover in two-volume boxed set).

This import has all the strengths of Australian military history books. It is detailed, lavishly illustrated, and tells a story little known to

lywood—or, perhaps more appropriately, the Hollywood typically appropriated for 8-bit NES and arcade games in the '80s and '90s—approach to warfare, with the president sending you into deep combat across a variety of locales. You've got strict orders, soldier, to save both the nation and … your girlfriend. Naturally.

Major Mayhem is a side-scrolling on-rails shooter that draws inspiration from a number of existing titles, from light-gun games like *Lethal Enforcers* and *Operation Wolf* to modern cover-based shooters like *Gears of War*. The catch in this war, however, is that the enemies popping out of the jungle trenches are typically quick-draw ninja, and you'll have to be a quick screen-tapper to rake in enough points to rank up and hit the high-score leaderboards.

PUBLISHER
TURNER BROADCASTING SYSTEM, INC.

DEVELOPER
ROCKET JUMP

SYSTEM(S)
iOS, ANDROID

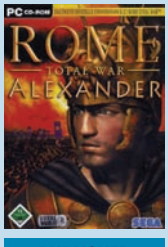
AVAILABLE
NOW

The mechanics are simple but extremely satisfying. This is the kind of experience tailor made for touchscreen time-wasting, and like any mobile game worth its salt, it can be dangerously addictive. Power-ups keep the constant shooting and dodging from getting too stale. Some pump up the power of your bullets, while others can turn you into a knock-off Robocop, send you into Hong Kong film/*Max Payne*-style bullet time mode, and more. It's all presented with slick-looking cartoony visuals and the always-encouraging sound of points and multipliers popping up at every turn.

Micro-transactions are the only true red mark on an otherwise stellar game, but it's free so they should be expected. On the plus side, they're not particularly intrusive, and are only there for folks who wish to skip all the playing and get right to a more powered-up *Major Mayhem*. In general, I don't care for the practice, but they're not done in a heinous or nefarious way here, so it's up to the user to ignore them if they'd rather just enjoy it the normal way. There's plenty of content to play through legitimately so you might as well get that trigger finger primed for tapping.

ROME: TOTAL WAR—ALEXANDER

The Creative Assembly has enjoyed plenty of acclaim over the years for its *Rome: Total War* strategy series, and the *Alexander* expansion finally made its way to Mac courtesy of developer Feral Interactive's port. For those who haven't played it, the DLC puts players in the role of one of the greatest commanders of all time, Alexander the Great, replaying his mighty conquests and battles from 336 to 323 BC, starting with his ascension to the Macedonian throne.



PUBLISHER
SEGA

DEVELOPER
FERAL INTERACTIVE

SYSTEM(S)
MAC

AVAILABLE
NOW

Alexander introduces 50 new units—including the Persian Immortal Infantry, Indian War Elephants, and Macedonian Companion Cavalry—and the playable armies of Macedon, Persia, India, and Dahae. In addition to the campaign, you can take on the AI in custom battles or try your luck against real opponents via LAN multiplayer. One of the best aspects of *Alexander* is its rapid pace—after all, you'll need to match Alexander's speed and complete your single-player conquest in 100 turns—so strategy fans who prefer to play on Mac (and own *Rome: Total War—Gold Edition*) should find their hands full.

most readers outside Australia. Written by the commanding officer of the last Australian tank unit in Vietnam, the author brings a knowledge of events only a participant can provide. The Australian Army is a small but tightly knit family; when an Aussie soldier is shown in a photograph, the caption will generally identify him by name, often with interesting details about him or his actions and experiences. This can be refreshing for readers in America, for example, where the army is simply too big to include such detail or it has been lost over time.

The armored forces Australia brought to Vietnam included Centurion tanks and M113 personnel carriers. Vietnam is not generally thought of as a tanker's war, although armor was widely used in many areas. When Australia committed to involvement in Vietnam, there was initial reluctance to send tanks, but this was overcome and company-sized tank units, called "troops" in Australian parlance did great service as part of the Aussie contingent. They supported infantry, protected bases, and patrolled roads much as American armor did. Along the way they were in the thick of the fighting against Viet Cong and NVA forces determined to destroy them; the tankers were so successful at their jobs their vehicles became priority targets.

This book will greatly please students of the Vietnam War or armor enthusiasts. The only downside is that as an import it will almost certainly have to be ordered online but is worth the effort.

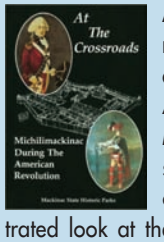
War and Technology (Jeremy Black, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 2013, 318 pp., notes, index, $35.00, hardcover).

Technology is a critical component of modern war, although going back millennia one can say the Greek hoplite's shield and spear were technological weapons of their time. In the modern view technological superiority is seen as a force multiplier which gives the army possessing it a decisive advantage. At the same time, there often has been a backlash against technology, sometimes connected to the frightening pace in a world undergoing rapid industrial changes. Furthermore, technological improvements are occasionally trivialized by those who still see a soldier's will and determination as the key to victory.

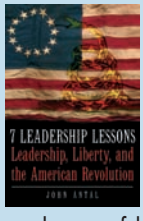
This book weaves a path through the hype on both sides of the argument. Brave soldiers can overcome a materially superior foe, but only to a degree; the bravest Zulu warrior had little chance against a Gatling gun. The author also presents the challenges technology brings, a vicious circle of invention, counter-invention, and increasing complexity requiring ever improving production capabilities. It is a complex issue, and the book does a good job of shedding understanding on the subject. □

SHORT BURSTS

The Liberty Incident Revealed: The Definitive Account of the 1967 Israeli Attack on the U.S. Navy Ship (A. Jay Cristol, Naval Institute Press, 2013, 292 pp., $36.95, hardcover). This is a second edition of the author's original work on the subject, with added analysis from newly released National Security Agency intercepts.

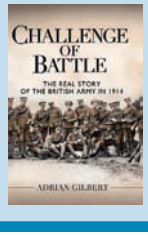


At the Crossroads: Michilimackinac During the American Revolution (David A. Armour and Keith R. Widder, Mackinac State Parks Commission, 2012, 276 pp., hardcover). A revealing, well-illustrated look at the Revolutionary War in one remote Northwest Territory community, this book contains many details and small stories of personal experiences.

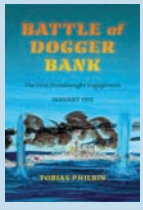


7 Leadership Lessons of the American Revolution: The Founding Fathers, Liberty and the Struggle for Independence (John Antal, Casemate, 2013, 240 pp., $29.95, hardcover). This book brings to light important lessons of the American Revolution using historical examples. Extensive appendices contain reports and writings of key leaders.

Congo: The Miserable Expeditions and Dreadful Death of Lt. Emory Taunt, USN (Andrew C. Jampoler, Naval Institute Press, 2013, 272 pp., $44.95, hardcover). This is a retelling of the 1885 explorations of a naval officer sent to see what opportunities Africa held for U.S. business interests. It reveals the small but fascinating part America played in the "Great Game" for Africa.



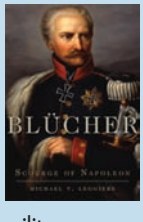
Challenge of Battle: The Real Story of the British Army in 1914 (Adrian Gilbert, Osprey Publishing, 2014, 312 pp., $25.95, hardcover.) In this in-depth look at the tactics, organization, and leadership of British Expeditionary Forces at the beginning of World War I, the author discusses successes and failures.



Battle of Dogger Bank: The First Dreadnought Engagement, January 1915 (Tobias R. Philbin, Indiana University Press, 2014, 216 pp., $32.00, softcover). A German raid on British fishing fleets turned into World War I's largest naval battle until the Battle of Jutland the following year.

Don Troiani's American Battles: The Art of the Nation at War, 1754-1865 (Art by Don Troiani, text by various contributors, Stackpole Books, 2013, 264 pp., $34.95, softcover). This book presents a selection of the famous artist's paintings. Each is accompanied by text from noted military historians.

Roman Conquests: Egypt and Judaea (John D. Grainger, Pen and Sword, 2013, 256 pp., $39.95, hardcover). This is an account of Rome's operations in these distant territories. Numerous campaigns were necessary to fully subjugate them.



Blucher: Scourge of Napoleon (Michael V. Leggiere, Oklahoma University Press, 2014, 568 pp., $34.95, softcover). This is the first English-language biography of the famous Prussian general. The author covers his life, military career, and influence on Napoleon.

Counter-Thrust: From the Peninsula to the Antietam (Benjamin Franklin Cooling, University of Nebraska Press, 2013, 384 pp., $45.00, hardcover). After the Union seaborne invasion of the Southern Neck overreached during the Peninsula Campaign, the Confederate counterattack sent the Yankees reeling. This work looks at the campaign in detail.

morocco

Continued from page 49

with a daunting site: a hornet's nest of around 15,000 Moroccans preparing to make a grand charge. Gourand ordered his guns to unlimber and pour down a murderous fire on the enemy once they came into range. Those that made it beyond the clouds of shrapnel were then blasted apart by small arms fire. His enemy having fallen into disarray, Gourand ordered a general advance. The clan leaders desperately attempted to rally their forces for a last stand, but it was a futile endeavor; for the average rebel it was time to secure one's camp possessions and make a swift exit. Perhaps the largest Moroccan army put into the field against the French had been obliterated within the space of a few hours.

While France would still face other obstacles and other battles, particularly in the south, Morocco was now firmly within her iron grip. As for Moulai Hafid, his time had run out. Lyautey and countless others felt it was impossible to deal with him, while Moulai Hafid himself, like Abd el-Aziz before him, was tired of being a puppet ruler. Every cloud has a silver lining, and for the sultan it was time to drive a hard bargain in return for his departure. Now in Rabat, he whiled away his time slowly preparing for a semi-official trip to France. Persistent in his noncommittal, it appeared nothing could be done to secure a formal decree of abdication. The situation was fast becoming a Moroccan constitutional crisis as the French had already declared Moulai Hafid's younger brother, Moulai Youssef, to be his successor.

On July 30, 1912, Lyautey arrived at Rabat to bring matters to a speedy conclusion. The sultan was offered a £15,000 per year pension. This was good, Moulai Hafid concurred, but perhaps France might care to make an additional gesture of goodwill to speed his decision along? On August 11, the day set for Moulai Hafid's departure, Lyautey decided to pay up with a one-off sum for £40,000. According to some witnesses, the final exchange of check and abdication decree took place in the rowboat taking Moulai Hafid to the ship bound for France. Such was the distrust between Lyautey and Moulai Hafid that both men held onto the ends of their respective paperwork, each refusing to let go. The impasse lasted until a wave knocked the rowboat, temporarily unbalancing the pair and delivering a welcome resolution. If true, it was a bizarre but perhaps illustrative conclusion to one of the bloodiest and, for most Moroccans, depressing periods in their kingdom's long and proud history. □

winged hussars

Continued from page 65

all over the Christian world. However, Sobieski unwisely committed Poland to the War of the Holy League, which proved an endless conflict of ruinous cost that finally concluded with the Treaty of Karlowitz in 1699. By that point, Sobieski was dead, and the avaricious and self-serving Polish nobility elected as his successors a series of ineffective absentee kings who dragged the country into a string of disastrous foreign wars. As result, the Commonwealth entered a long period of decline that ended in 1795 with its partitioning by Austria, Russia, and Prussia, and its erasure from the map of Europe altogether.

As for the Husaria, their glorious charge down the Kahlenberg proved to be the last great moment in their long and storied history. By the start of the Great Northern War in 1700, the winged horsemen were an obvious anachronism. One of their final actions was at the Battle of Kliszów in 1702, during which a Polish-Saxon army was thoroughly defeated by a much smaller Swedish force. Following this action, the Husaria became exclusively a parade ground unit that appeared only at state functions and official ceremonies. The Husaria were finally abolished in 1775, and the remaining companions were drafted into the brigades of the new national cavalry.

Though they had ceased to exist as a military arm, the Husaria continued to play an important role in Polish history as a national symbol. During Poland's long period of foreign domination, generations of artists and writers used the image of the winged hussar to remind the nation of a time when their country was free and powerful. Polish painters such as Jan Matejko, Józef Brandt, and Juliusz and Wojciech Kossak frequently based their work on great Husaria battles and even at times placed Husaria imagery anachronistically in moments where they were not present for patriotic effect.

The Husaria also appear prominently in numerous works of Polish literature, most notably Nobel Prize-winning author Henry Sienkiewicz's famous *Trilogy* of historical novels. The legacy of the Husaria can also be seen in modern Polish military history. During World War II, the insignia of the 1st Polish Armored Division, which played a crucial role in liberating Western Europe, featured a Husaria helmet and wing. The Husaria may never again grace the battlefields of Europe, but their spirit will live forever in Poland's vaunted military traditions. □

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

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

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

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

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Continued from page 41

captured Wundwin, the headquarters of the 18th Division on March 21, and then pushed on to capture Kyaukse, a supply center for the Burma Area Army. The 15th Army was beginning to crumble.

At Meiktila, Cowan ordered the 99th Brigade to defend the town and its airfield, while he sent out columns of tanks, infantry, and artillery backed by air support to disrupt the Japanese forces massing to attack his troops. For nearly a week, the columns inflicted heavy casualties on the Japanese and destroyed a number of their guns.

Unable to open a route into Meiktila, the 18th Division now concentrated on the main airfield intending to stop the flow of supplies and starve out the defenders. On the night of March 14, Japanese forces began probing the 99th Brigade defense of the airfield and were beaten back. The next day Japanese artillery began shelling the airfield as the 9th Indian Brigade of the 5th Division was being flown in to reinforce Cowan. While enemy shells were slamming into the airstrip, C-47 transport aircraft were landing. One British soldier recalled the American crew telling him, "We're not stopping, we'll land and taxi along, and as we taxi, you lot jump out. As soon as you're out, we'll take off again."

Not long after the arrival of the 9th Brigade, the Japanese shelling of the airfield caused Cowan to order it closed. He then relied on air drops to keep his men partially supplied. In hopes of reversing the situation at Meiktila, Kimura gave the 33rd Army commander, Lt. Gen. Masaki Honda, command of the 18th, 49th, and 53rd Divisions effective March 18. He also ordered the 28th Army to smash the bridgehead at Nyaungu.

Despite suffering personal loss with the death of his son in the fighting at Mandalay, Cowan kept up a steady aggressive defense of Meiktila, sending out columns to clear the nearby villages. With the 9th Brigade taking over the defense of the airfield, the 99th Brigade sent out a column to sweep the villages of Kandaingbauk and Shawbyugan north of Meiktila. The 18th Division was expecting such a move and brought up antitank guns along with three 75mm field artillery pieces and three 75 mm mountain guns to greet the British. The 119th Infantry Regiment was also sent in to reinforce the 55th Infantry Regiment in the area.

The 1st Sikh Light Infantry attacking Kandaingbauk was driven back with heavy casualties, while tanks attempting to attack Shawbyugan had one brewed up and two more knocked out as they moved into the village. A fourth tank became stuck and had to be abandoned. The column withdrew.

While the 18th Division launched heavy attacks against the main airfield, the 49th Division prepared to attack from the southeast against Meiktila. Direct radio contact between the 49th and 18th Divisions was nonexistent, which caused serious problems in coordinating attacks against the British in Meiktila.

Believing the 18th Division controlled the airfield, the 106th Infantry Regiment of the 49th Division launched a heavy attack against the 48th Brigade at Meiktila on the night of March 22. In the bloody fighting, the Japanese pushed up two 75mm guns to the southeast corner of the brigade's perimeter wire, but to no avail. The attack was broken with almost 200 Japanese killed.

Fighting continued to rage at the airfield. On March 24, the Japanese launched a heavy night attack with infantry and tanks against the 9th Brigade. The assault was beaten back with heavy casualties. The Japanese attacks against the airfield and Meiktila ended in failure. Cowan now began to clear the area and surrounding villages of the enemy.

By that time, it was clear to Honda that he could not continue to fight with the 18th Division, which had lost a third of its troops as casualties. The 49th Division had lost two-thirds of its strength. To the west, the 28th Army had failed in its attempt to smash the bridgehead at Nyaungu. By the end of March, the British 7th Division had cleared a route to Meiktila.

With the 15th Army smashed, its divisions down to less than half strength, most of their guns and trucks lost, and their supply line cut, Kimura ordered his broken forces to retreat south to Toungoo, where he hoped to reorganize and hold southern Burma until the monsoons came. On March 28, Honda and his depleted force were ordered to Pywabe, where they could cover the 15th Army retreat.

Slim wasted no time in pursuing the battered enemy. With the capture of central Burma, Slim pushed south toward Rangoon, hoping to beat the monsoons. The Japanese were unable to stop the 14th Army, but the heavy rains did. The monsoons came two weeks early, slowing the 14th Army down near Prome, about 150 miles north of Rangoon.

Rangoon was captured in early May during a combined airborne and amphibious operation. Although the Japanese retreated to eastern Burma where they would continue to resist until mid-August, their hold on the country had been smashed by Slim between the hammer and the anvil at Mandalay and Meiktila. □

You deserve a factual look at . . .

A Most Stalwart and Reliable Ally

Is Israel indeed America's unsinkable aircraft carrier?

In previous *hasbarah* (educating and clarifying) messages, we made clear what a tremendous asset for our country Israel is. We gave many examples of its contribution to American safety in that important area of the world. But there is much more.

What are the facts?

Turmoil in the Middle East. There is upheaval in the Middle East. Governments shift, and the future of this vital area is up in the air. In those dire circumstances, it is a tremendous comfort to our country that Israel, a beacon of Western values, is its stalwart and unshakable ally.

Unreliable "allies." Egypt, a long-term "ally" of our country, is the beneficiary of billions of dollars of American aid. Its dictator, Hosni Mubarak has been dethroned. As of now, it is unclear who and what will be Egypt's new government. It is widely assumed, however, that it may be the Muslim Brotherhood. Far from being a religious organization, as its name would imply, it is dominated by fanatical radicals, ardent antagonists of the West, obsessed anti-Semites, and sworn enemies of the State of Israel. If the Muslim Brotherhood would indeed come to power, a bloody war, more violent than anything that has come before, is likely to ensue.

> "What a comfort for our country to have stalwart and completely reliable Israel in its corner..."

Saudi Arabia, a tyrannical kingdom, is another important "ally" of the U.S. It is the most important source of petroleum, the lifeblood of the industrial world. It is, however, totally unreliable and hostile to all the values for which the United States stands. The precedent of Iran cannot fail to be on the minds of our government. The Shah of Iran was a staunch ally of the U.S. We lavished billions of dollars and huge quantities of our most advanced weapons on him. But, virtually from one day to the next, the mullahs and the ayatollahs – fanatical enemies of our country, of Israel, and of anything Western – came to power. Instead of friends and allies, Iran's theocratic government became the most virulent enemy of the United States. Could something like that happen in Saudi Arabia? It is not at all unlikely!

Other U.S. allies in the region – Jordan, the "new" Iraq, and the Gulf emirates – are even weaker and less reliable reeds to lean on. Libya, which once, under King Idris, hosted the Wheeler Air Base, became an enemy of the U.S. under the late, loathsome Khaddafi – and probably still is. Turkey, once a strong ally, has cast its lot with Iran.

A stalwart partner. Israel, in contrast, presents a totally different picture. Israel's reliability, capability, credibility and stability, are enormous and irreplaceable assets for our country. Many prominent military people and elected representatives have recognized this. Gen. John Keegan, a former chief of U.S. Air Force Intelligence, determined that Israel's contribution to U.S. intelligence was "equal to five CIA's." Senator Daniel Inouye, Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, said that "The intelligence received from Israel exceeds the intelligence received from all NATO countries combined. The huge quantities of Soviet military hardware that were transferred by Israel to the USA tilted the global balance of power in favor of our country."

In 1981, Israel bombed Iraq's nuclear reactor. While at first condemned by virtually the whole world – sad to say, including the United States – it saved our country a nuclear confrontation with Iraq. At the present time, US soldiers in Iraq and in Afghanistan benefit from Israel's experience in combating Improvised Explosive Devices, car bombs and suicide bombers. Israel is the most advanced battle-tested laboratory for U.S. military systems. The F-16 jet fighter, for instance, includes over 600 Israeli-designed modifications, which saved billions of dollars and years of research and development.

But there is more: Israel effectively secures NATO's southeastern flank. Its superb harbors, its outstanding military installations, the air- and sea-lift capabilities, and the trained manpower to maintain sophisticated equipment are readily at hand in Israel.

Israel does receive substantial benefits from the United States – a yearly contribution of $3 billion – all of it in military assistance, no economic assistance at all. The majority of this contribution must be spent in the US, generating thousands of jobs in our defense industries.

Israel is indeed America's unsinkable aircraft carrier. If it were not for Israel, thousands of American troops would have to be stationed in the Middle East, at a cost of billions of dollars a year. In contrast to the unreliable friendship of Muslim countries, the friendship and support of Israel are unshakable because they are based on shared values, love of peace and democracy. What a comfort for our country to have stalwart and completely reliable Israel in its corner, especially at a time when in this strategic area turmoil, upheaval and revolution are the order of the day. Yes, Israel is indeed America's most steadfast friend, a most important strategic asset and most reliable ally.

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P.O. Box 590359 ■ San Francisco, CA 94159
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125A

weapons

Continued from page 17

raw?" Another soldier reported, "This evening we cooked up some horses again. You will have to imagine how it tastes, without salt or any other seasoning, and when the animal gave up the ghost a month ago and has been lying under the snow ever since." Starvation relentlessly stalked the German Army as it began its slow but steady retreat toward the Fatherland.

A Russian remarked, "The horses have already been eaten. I would eat a cat…. The soldiers look like corpses or lunatics, looking for something to put in their mouths." Another observed, "The worn-out horses could hardly move; many fell and could not get up. These the drivers killed; then and there on the ice they cut them to pieces and sent the meat to the city." One Polish soldier remembered famished people running into the street and butchering a dead beast within minutes. He helped a girl carry home a leg. But it got so cold that it took hacksaws instead of knives to cut the frozen meat.

At times, German units moved only five miles a day. Vehicles wasted fuel, got stuck in snowdrifts, and became dependent on horse-drawn sledges. "The troops hauled and pushed, the horses sweated and strained, our legs in black mud up to the knees," wrote a soldier.

Slush stopped road movement. The Soviets, meanwhile, blew up bridges and railroad tracks, hindering needed supplies for troops and horses. "It is a huge effort to push on in these conditions," recorded a German soldier. "Our route is lined by dead horses that have broken their legs or collapsed through sheer exhaustion." As one German infantryman observed, "Our poor horses are being pushed to the very limits and are suffering horribly. We can no longer offer them straw to lie on or hay to eat. They get ice-water to drink and have to nibble on small branches we gather from the forest. At night they have little shelter from the freezing cold, often having to lie with their bellies in the icy snow."

Many horses died from starvation, wounds, and air attacks. General Eduard Wagner reported, "Situation is particularly difficult north of Moscow…. Horses—situation very serious; distressing lack of forage." He also noted that only 50 to 60 percent of load-carrying vehicles were running. The Soviets tore off chunks of frozen meat from horse corpses and roasted heads over flames. A Soviet prisoner remembered "shreds of bodies scattered along a street, water-filled grave ditches, burnt-out huts and charred and scorched animals."

Without antifreeze and lubricating oil, trucks stalled, automatic weapons jammed, steam engines froze solid. Siberian cavalry patrols on shaggy ponies and fierce Cossack troops on horses with raised, glinting sabers startled German soldiers as they galloped through the snow. Planes remained grounded because of ice and fog. Unwashed, huddled men froze to death on snow-covered fields soaked with blood and burning bodies. Some died with their horses. One lieutenant saw corpses waist deep in snow frozen to death. Other dead soldiers were slumped forward in saddles or wedged between two horses. One leaned against his horse's flank.

As World War II dragged on, the German Army became even more dependent on horses. One German staff officer admitted, "At times [horses] are the last and only thing we can rely on. Thanks to them we made it through the winter, even if they died in their thousands from exhaustion, lack of fodder and their tremendous exertions."

A veterinarian officer also remarked, "In spite of Hitler's marked opposition to horses, the number of horses serving with our forces in the East grew steadily as the war went on, an indication that the use of horses was a compelling necessity." Horse-drawn supply columns were crucial to keeping the German Army supplied in Russia, particularly in the winter.

Some German soldiers bonded with their horses. One major wrote, "The [drivers] would keep the horses behind houses at night, and strap blankets on them as well, to try to shelter them from the wind. The horses had winter coats of fur, which helped them, although a few of them died at night from the cold."

It could take several hours each evening to care for a horse. Another soldier wrote, "In all the many months [Siegfried] has been my comrade, my protector; he has carried me out of trouble many times; he has listened for me and warned me of any danger. I had always relied upon him in a thousand and one situations. I had cried on his shoulder when I was in despair, and he had even made me laugh at some of his antics. He had never complained when I had nothing to give him, not even water. To me he had not been 'just a horse,' he had been my best friend, a friend in a thousand, full of warmth and understanding."

Both men and beasts struggled to survive during World War II. "Man becomes an animal," one writer lamented. "The battle returns here to its most primeval, animal-like form." Several million Germans and around 1,500,000 horses died. But as von Manstein said, "The personal element obviously did not interest Hitler in the least. To him human beings were merely tools in the service of his political ambitions." □

benevento

Continued from page 33

the body, which he did.

Manfred's body initially was buried near the Calore Bridge, but Pope Clement ordered the body exhumed and reburied on the north bank of the Garigliano River outside the Regno. The reason for that was to show that Manfred, who Clement believed had usurped the throne, did not deserve to be buried in the Regno.

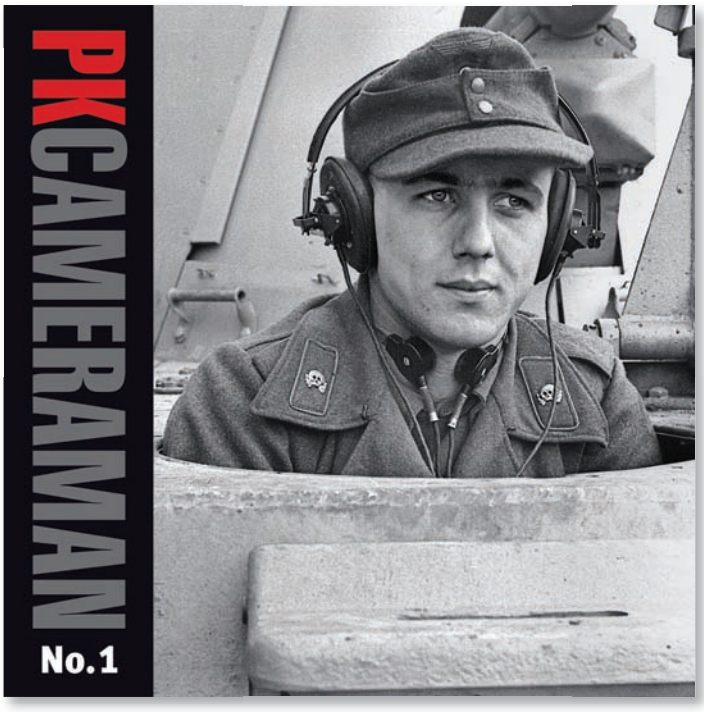
On March 7, the French marched into Naples. Although Charles imprisoned Manfred's wife and children, he granted amnesty to all the troops who had served under Manfred. Shortly after his arrival in Naples, Charles sent Philip of Montfort with a small army to secure the island of Sicily.

Charles's quest to conquer the Regno did not end with the occupation of Naples and Sicily. Two years later, Charles fought 16-year-old Hohenstaufen prince Conradin, who came south from Germany with a large army to try to take back the Regno from Charles. Although outnumbered, Charles's superior generalship enabled him to defeat Conradin at the Battle of Tagliacozzo, which was fought on August 23, 1268. Conradin, who was taken prisoner, was executed two months later.

In the years following his impressive battlefield victories in southern Italy, Charles established a small empire in the central Mediterranean. While he was busy expanding his sphere of influence into the Balkans, the Sicilians revolted in March 1282 against French rule, slaughtering several thousand French officials and residents.

The rebellion initiated the War of the Sicilian Vespers, which lasted from 1282 to 1302. The war pitted Peter III of Aragon, the protector of the Sicilians, against Charles, who was backed by his relatives in France. Charles's rule over the Regno suffered a major setback on June 5, 1284, when his Provençal navy was soundly defeated by the Aragonese navy. Charles died the following year. Through the Peace of Caltabellotta in 1302, the Regno was divided between the Aragonese, who retained control of Sicily, and Charles's son, Charles II, who retained southern Italy, which became known as the Kingdom of Naples.

Charles of Anjou's conquest of the Regno had been sanctioned by the papacy. Not content with ruling the Regno, Charles continued his war of conquest in eastern Europe. Charles of Anjou's insatiable thirst for wealth and power ultimately brought about the dissolution of the Regno and tarnished his legacy as well. □



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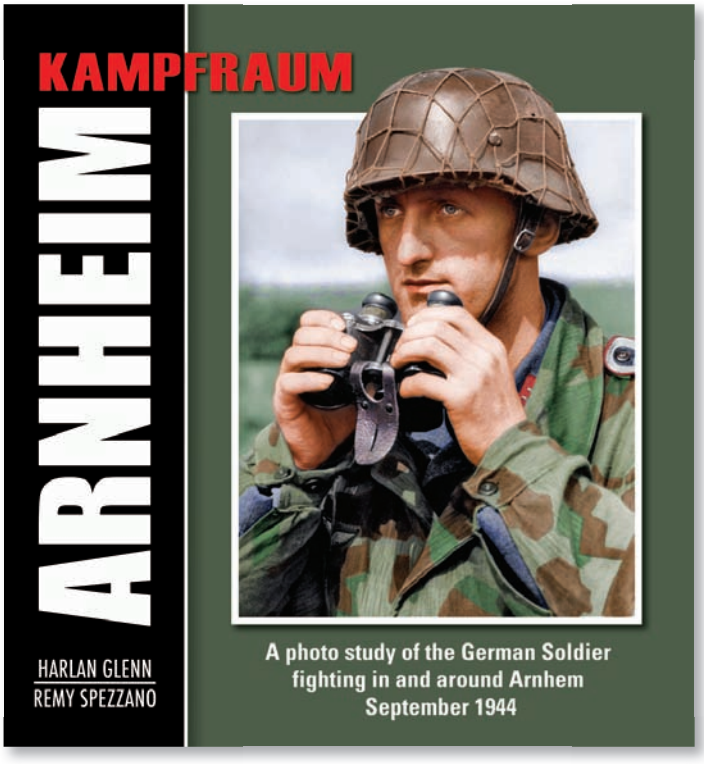

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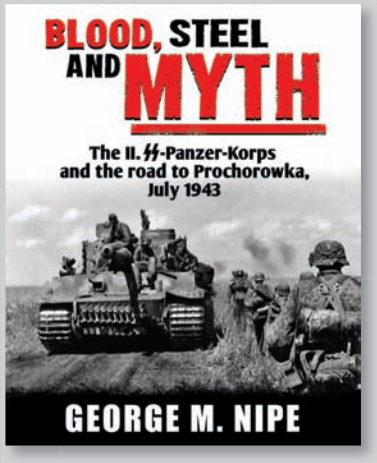

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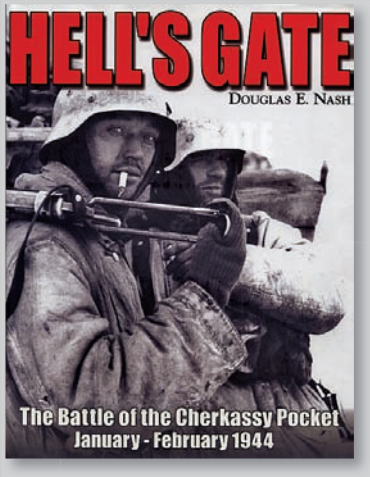

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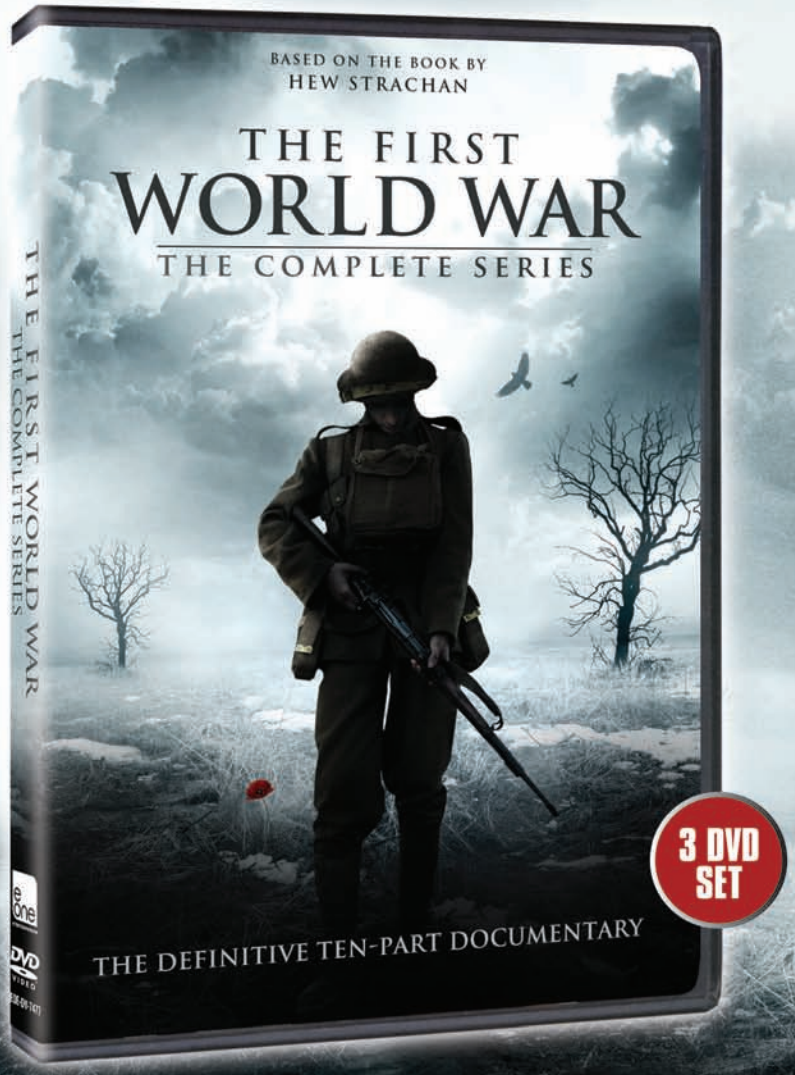





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