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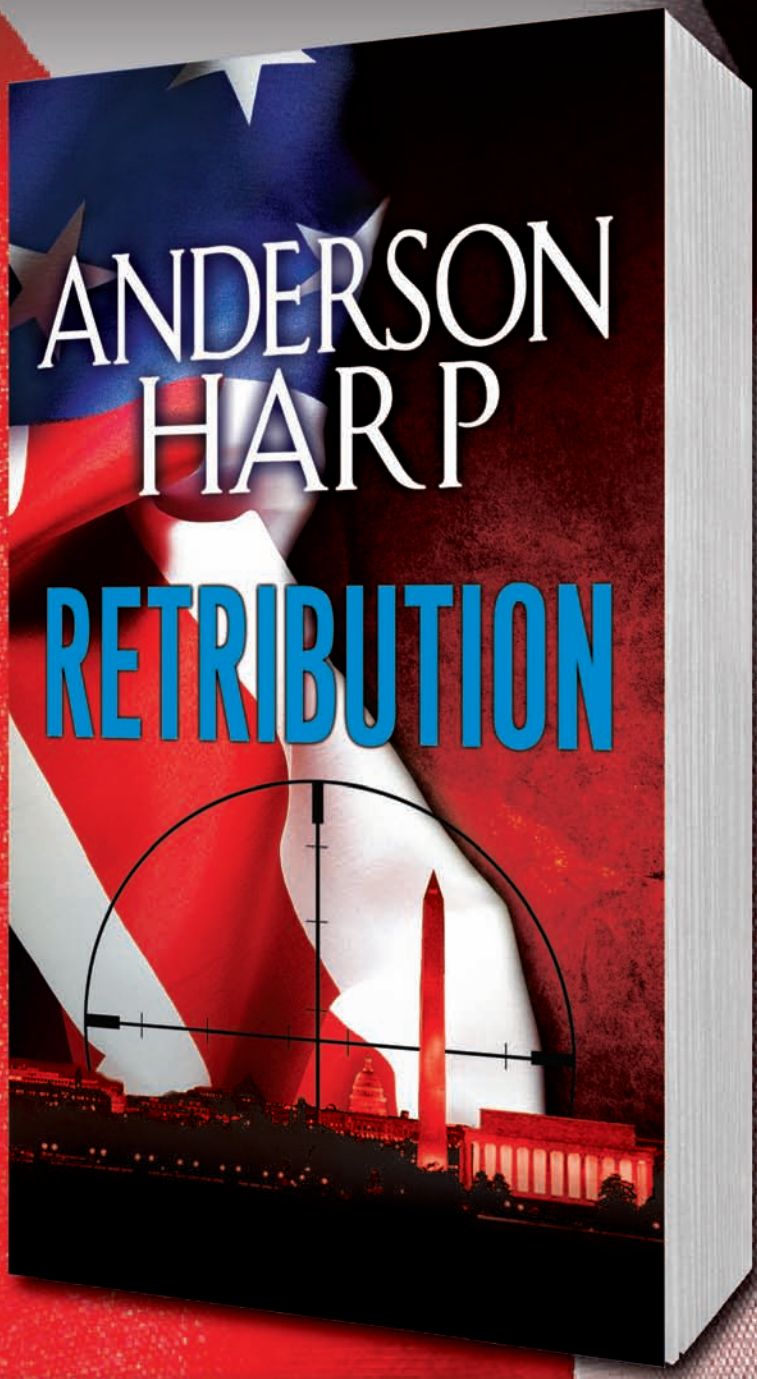

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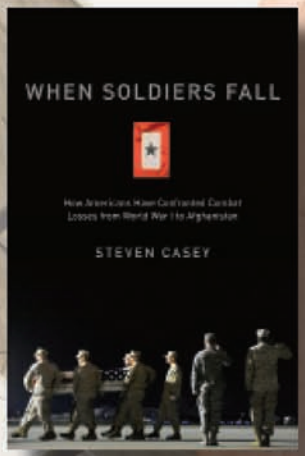

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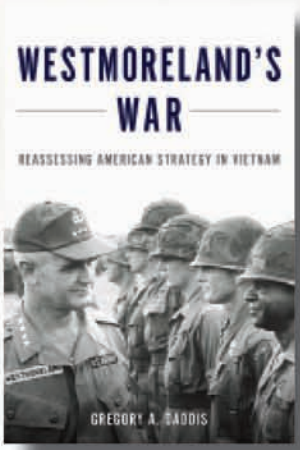

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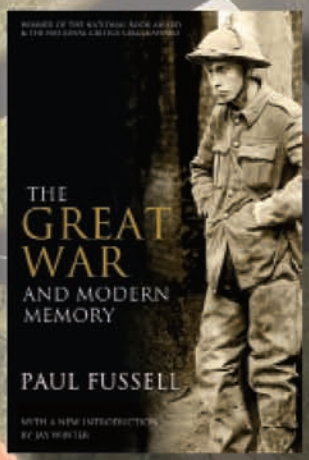

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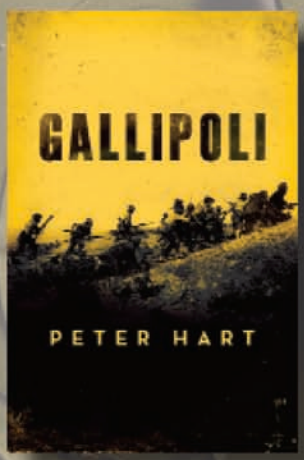

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COVER: A British soldier fires a Vickers machine gun during combat in late 1944. British and Canadian forces struggled to capture Caen after the Normandy landings. See story page 32. Photo courtesy Imperial War Museum, London.

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Monty's Dilemma

FEW OFFICERS IN THE ALLIED ARMY WHO WENT ASHORE at Normandy on July 6, 1944, would probably have disagreed with the assessment that British Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery had his share of negative traits. He could be arrogant, conceited, and deceitful. Yet at the same time he was diligent, hard-working, and energetic.

As commander of the 21st Army Group, Montgomery's job was to get the Allied forces ashore, establish a strong beachhead, and start the difficult process of driving the German forces out of France. He answered to two individuals while carrying out that mission. From a military standpoint, he served under Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Forces General Dwight Eisenhower. From a political standpoint, he answered to British Prime Minister Winston Churchill.

Montgomery was chief strategist behind Operation Overlord. His plan was for the British Second Army on the Allied left flank to conduct a holding action that would enable the U.S. First Army on the right flank to punch through German lines.

The holding action was no easy task and entailed major combat. It meant that British General Miles Dempsey's Second British Army would serve as a magnet to attract German armor. By so doing it, would lessen the force with which the Germans could counterattack Lt. Gen. Omar Bradley's U.S. First Army. In this Montgomery kept his word. By the end of June there was 10 times as much German armor arrayed against the British as there was against the Americans.

Montgomery underestimated the task at hand. In hindsight, the notion that the British officers might hold a press conference in Caen on D-Day is absurd. Caen was nine miles from Sword Beach and the British 3rd Infantry Division was only able to push to within three miles of the objective on D-Day. German counterattacks began the day the British landed. The British would not take Caen until July 9. Even then, they still had to clear the Germans from the southern side of the city.

The dilemma facing Montgomery, who oversaw Dempsey's effort, was to ensure that the British forces fought admirably and did their share of fighting. At the same time, Montgomery was keenly aware that Britain would not be able to replace the units it lost during Operation Overload because it already had committed all of its remaining ground forces to the battle.

Churchill wanted, and it is safe to assume that Montgomery concurred, to see British forces participate in subsequent campaigns on the Western Front. During the Battle for Normandy, Dempsey committed only two or three divisions to short offensives that lasted three to five days at the most. After each operation, Dempsey broke off the fighting to ensure that the British Second Army did not suffer catastrophic losses. Eisenhower browbeat Montgomery often because he wanted the army group commander to throw everything he had at the Germans.

At times Montgomery's worst traits had the best of him. Believing that the Americans did not have the combat experience to execute a breakthrough of the German lines, Montgomery at the end of June instructed his headquarters to develop an alternate strategy in which the British would perform a breakthrough to the east if it became necessary.

Perhaps Montgomery's greatest sin during the Battle for Normandy occurred when British forces were repulsed during Operation Goodwood in mid-July. After Dempsey lost 400 tanks in a failed effort to punch through a 10-mile long belt of German defenses, Montgomery falsely reported that the operation was a success. He did himself a disservice.

Still, the British Second Army succeeded in making the Germans bleed at Caen; for example, the 12th SS Panzer Division lost 70 percent of its combat strength.

Bradley, who had a good degree of pent up animosity toward Montgomery, was among those who had seen firsthand the price the British paid to liberate Caen and sympathized. Bradley said: "With the Allied world crying for a blitzkrieg that first week after we landed, the British endured their passive role with patience and forbearance."

—William Welsh

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CARL A. GNAM, JR.
Editorial Director, Founder

WILLIAM E. WELSH
Editor
editor@militaryheritagemagazine.com

LAURA CLEVELAND
Managing Editor

SAMANTHA DETULLEO
Art Director

Contributors:
Erich B. Anderson, Kelly Bell, Louis Ciotola, Peter Kross, Joseph Luster, Christopher Miskimon, Eric Niderost, Peter Suciu, Blaine Taylor, Lawrence Weber

ADVERTISING OFFICE:

BEN BOYLES
Advertising Manager
benjaminb@sovhomestead.com
(570) 322-7848, ext. 130

MARK HINTZ
Chief Executive Officer

JANINE MILLER
Subscription Customer Services
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KEN FORNWALT
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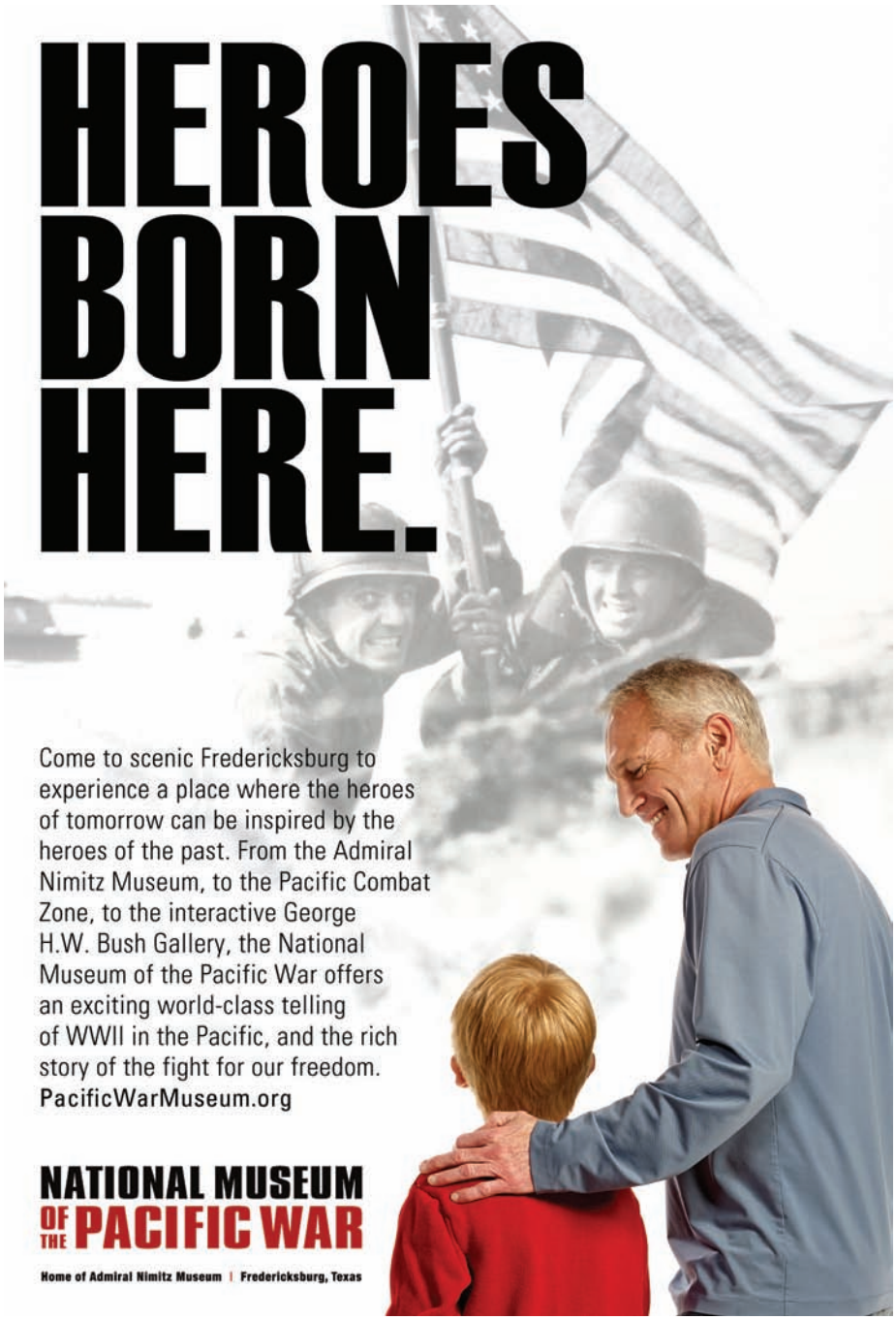

By Erich B. Anderson

Although the Varangian Guard was called on to carry out many brutal missions, its members maintained a strict code of ethics within their ranks.

BYZANTINE EMPEROR BASIL II SUFFERED A MASSIVE DEFEAT AGAINST the Bulgarians on August 17, 986, at a strategic mountain pass known as Trajan's Gate in Bulgaria. In response, aristocratic rebels Bardas Sclerus and Bardas Phocas renewed their attempts to supplant Basil and seize the Byzantine throne for themselves. Surrounded by enemies both within and without the empire, Basil desperately needed help and turned to Prince Vladimir of Kiev. Vladimir not only sent 6,000 Varangian mercenaries to aid Basil, but also agreed to convert to Orthodox Christianity and accept baptism. His only price was the hand in marriage of Anna, the emperor's sister. Because his need was so great, Basil reluctantly accepted the marriage of one of his own family members to a barbarian.

The Byzantine Greeks and the East Slavs referred to the Vikings who raided the eastern shores of the Baltic as Varangians. The Varangian mercenaries who entered the service of Basil in the winter of 987-988 were not the first to serve in the Byzantine army. For more than a century, Varangians had been traveling south from Scandinavia, mainly down major rivers in Eastern Europe like the Volga and the Dnieper, to reach the empire and serve in the army. Their leader, Rurik, had established himself in 862 at Novgorod, which lay the foundation for Kievan Russia, a loose federation of East Slavic tribes.

Even as far back as the middle of the 9th century, during the reign of Michael III, there were numerous Norsemen among the forces protecting the frontiers of the empire. The Byzantine military gladly accepted these recruits. However, the 6,000 warriors given to Basil by Vladimir were by far the largest contingent of Varangians to join the Byzantine army up to that point, and the first to directly enter the service of the emperor.

Basil immediately realized their worth as they helped him to not only end the rebellions of Bardas Sclerus and Bardas Phocas, but also played a vital role in the emperor's successful campaigns against the Fatimids over the next 10 years. The Varangians then continued to fight under the leadership of Basil for the rest of his reign. Their martial prowess impressed the emperor so much that he even replaced a regiment of imperial guardsmen known as the Excubitores with the Varangian contingent. When Basil died on December 15, 1025, the Varangians were the highest paid imperial guardsmen, and their unit had already become the main regiment of the imperial guard.

It was not long before word of the ferocity of the Varangians serving the

Byzantine Emperor Theophilos is flanked by soldiers from the Varangian Guard. Norsemen who raided the eastern shores of the Baltic Sea were called Varangians. They fought and died for the Byzantine emperor over the course of 400 years.

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Byzantine Empire spread from the Latin kingdoms of Western Europe to the Muslim lands of the Middle East. Since the Varangians had replaced the Excubitores, they most likely carried the bronze dragonhead sculpture of their predecessors as their standard; however, the dragon emblem was not how their enemies recognized them. Even though the Byzantines supplied the Varangians with the best arms, armor, and equipment available, most of them continued to use some of their own gear as well.

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Varangian leader Rurik and his sons arrive in the trading post of Staraya Ladoga in 862. About that same time Varangians began serving with forces protecting the frontiers of the Byzantine Empire.

Chief among the weaponry the Varangians continued to use were their axes. The Varangians carried their axes with them so often that they were frequently referred to as the axe-bearers or axe-bearing barbarians; the Byzantines often called them pelekyphoroi, due to the Greek word *pelekys,* which means axe. The main axe used by the Varangians was the two-handed, single-edged Danish long axe. The blades of these axes were wide and slightly angled so that they could inflict horrendous wounds, which was the biggest reason that their enemies had come to know the Varangians for the weapon they carried more than anything else.

The Varangians fought with several other types of weapons, too, and they even used different kinds of axes, including smaller, one-handed ones similar to what other Byzantine soldiers carried. But axes were not the only weapons used by the Varangians. They also carried swords, spears, and javelins, while some used an old Roman pole arm weapon with a curved, scythe-like blade known as the rhomphaiai. The spears, javelin, and rhomphaiai were usually provided by the Byzantines; however, the swords of the Varangians, like their axes, came from their homelands. These Scandinavian swords were long, one-handed, double-edged weapons with pommels and hilts decorated with Viking or Germanic motifs. There were times that Varangians carried curved, single-edged, highly decorated Byzantine swords as well, but this practice was mostly limited to the officers of the unit.

The Byzantines almost always provided armor and shields for all of the Varangians. The Varangians were usually heavily armored, wearing some of the best lamellar, scale, and ringmail armor the Byzantines had to offer. The shields the Byzantines gave to the Varangians also were high quality. Initially these shields were round like their own Scandinavian ones; however, by the 11th century many Varangians used longer kite shields like the rest of the Byzantine army. Whenever the Varangians used large, two-handed weapons like their Danish long axes or rhomphaia, they would simply strap their shields on their backs.

In 1034, the same year that the Byzantine Emperor Romanos III died, the half-brother of the Norwegian King Olaf II, Harald Sigurdson (Hardrada), entered the Varangian Guard, along with the company of warriors who traveled with him. After his brother had been dethroned and died, Harald left Norway in exile and traveled through Sweden down to Kiev to reach the empire using the same path as many of his Viking predecessors.

Harald became one of the most famous Varangians to ever serve in the guard, fighting for several different emperors against many of the Byzatines' enemies, including the Arabs, Normans, Bulgarians, and possibly even the Pechenegs. In 1041, for his military accomplishments in Sicily and Bulgaria, the Emperor Michael IV the Paphlagonian awarded him with the prestigious court dignity rank of Spatharokandidatos and in Norse sagas he also earned the title of Bolgara Brennir, meaning "Devastator of the Bulgarians."

Even after all Harald had done for the Byzantine Empire, his service in the Varangian Guard ended in much controversy. On December 10, 1041, Michael IV died and Michael V Calaphates succeeded him. One of the first acts of the new emperor was to release the unpopular Byzantine General Georgios Maniaces from prison and restore him to power. Harald had served under Maniaces a few years before during the Sicilian campaign, and the two men were at odds with each other nearly the entire time. Luckily for Harald, Maniaces had fallen out of favor and been imprisoned by Michael IV for his arrogance, especially after the general had struck the highly respected Admiral Stephen in the head with a whip for letting an Arab commander escape after the Battle of Traina. Harald and his Varangians had sided with Stephen, and Maniaces never forgave them for it.

After Maniaces was released, the situation continued to worsen for Harald and his men. First, Michael V replaced the Varangians with a new unit of Scythians as his main personal guard. Then shortly afterward, Michael V imprisoned Harald for supposedly taking plunder that belonged to the emperor while on campaign. But after Michael V turned on his stepmother, the Empress Zoe, and the Patriarch Alexius, the common people and the majority of the army had had enough of the new emperor. The people declared Zoe and her sister, Theodora, as the new co-empresses, and the imperial palace was assaulted. The forces that remained loyal to Michael V were greatly outnumbered. In the chaos that ensued, the Varangians managed to release Harald from prison. When Michael V was eventually captured, the new rulers ordered Harald and his Varangians to carry out the terrible sentence of blinding the dethroned emperor.

Zoe and Theodora reigned for a short period until Constantine IX Monomachus succeeded them in 1042. Harald was restored to his former position, and all of the charges against him were withdrawn. Regardless, he still wished to leave the empire when news reached him that his nephew Magnus had returned to Norway and ascended the throne. Constantine refused to allow Harald to leave, so the Varangian was forced to escape in secret. Harald later became king of Norway, and even though he had left without permission he had good relations with the Byzantines throughout his reign.

The blinding of Michael V was not the first time the Varangians were ordered to commit severe punishments nor was it the last. The Byzantines relied on the Varangians for these tasks due to their extreme loyalty and ferocious nature. Also, because of their status as foreigners the Varangians did not share the same aversion to orders such as arresting aristocrats or individuals with positions in the church. Yet, because they were so loyal and held honor to such a high esteem, the Varangians were also rewarded with special rights and privileges. Chief among these was their right to judge and punish offenders from within their ranks.

In contrast to stories of their ferocity, an exam-

Library of Congress

Beginning in the 11th century, fierce warriors from Western Europe began serving in the Varangian Guard along with Scandinavians and Russians. Among those who joined the elite unit were Anglo-Saxons, Franks, and Germans.

ple of the morality of the Varangians when forced to punish one of their own can be found in the Scylitzès Manuscript of the late 12th century, where during a Western Anatolian campaign in 1034 "a man of the Varangians, who were scattered in winter quarters in the Thrakêsion Thema, met a woman of the region in a private place and tempted her virtue; and when he could not get her to agree willingly he tried to rape her, but she got hold of a spear and struck him through the heart, killing him on the spot. When this deed became known through the neighborhood, the Varangians gathered together and honored the woman by giving her all the possessions of the man who had attempted to rape her, and they threw his body away without burial, according to the law regarding suicides." Stories such as this one show that the Varangians were not just the bloodthirsty barbarians that many made them out to be, and although they would loyally carry out atrocious orders, they still lived by a code of ethics.

After the reign of Basil II, the Byzantine Empire began to gradually decline, especially the quality of the army. Yet, it was the native Byzantine soldiers that continually decreased in number, which meant that the empire increasingly relied upon foreign mercenaries such as the Varangians. In 1071, the Byzantine Empire faced a catastrophe from which it never recovered, which caused the deaths of thousands within the army, including many Varangians. The Seljuk Turks were a growing threat on the eastern border of the empire, gradually conquering Byzantine territory in Anatolia.

Therefore, the Byzantine Emperor Romanos IV decided to raise a large army and strike a decisive blow against them in 1068. The campaign was initially successful as the emperor managed to reclaim land around Pontus. The Varangians helped greatly in the campaign as a vital part of the force that managed to take Hierapolis. However, on August 19, 1071, Romanos led his forces against the Seljuks at Manzikert, and the Turkish commander Alp Arslan managed to annihilate almost the entire Byzantine army. Romanos was killed, along with nearly every Varangian guardsman who fought to protect him.

Regardless of the disaster at Manzikert, the Byzantine emperors that followed continued to use the Varangians as the main imperial guard regiment. Many Varangians had fallen in the battle, but a steady flow of warriors came to the empire in the years afterward to sufficiently replenish the unit. Although they were considered Varangian guardsmen, these new warriors came from a different land than the traditional origins of the guard. Up to that point, the vast majority of the Varangian Guard had come from Scandinavia, with a smaller number of Russian warriors who had decided to accompany the Vikings as they made their way through the Slav lands of Eastern Europe.

However, the new warriors joining the regiment added a third ethnicity to the Varangian Guard. In 1066, the Norman Duke William the Conqueror invaded England and defeated the Anglo-Saxons who lived there. With their lands taken from them, many English nobles left in exile, choosing the still luxurious Byzantine Empire as their destination. The Byzantine

emperors gladly accepted the service of these dispossessed warriors and allowed many of them to join the Varangian Guard. Although they were of a different ethnicity than the traditional Varangians, the English Varangians also wielded axes, which allowed the guard to keep its image as savage, axe-bearing barbarians, the only difference being that the English preferred double-edged battleaxes instead of the traditional Danish long axes.

Even with the influx of English mercenaries joining the Byzantine army, the steady decline of the empire continued. The Byzantines had lost nearly all of Anatolia to the Seljuks in the east, and the Normans put increasing pressure on Byzantine territory in the west. On the other hand, the new English Varangians relished the chance to face the Normans, enthusiastically seeking revenge for the terrible defeat that caused them to lose their homeland.

When the Norman commander Robert Guiscard invaded Byzantine territory in southern Italy, the Byzantine Emperor Alexios I Comnenos gathered an army of 50,000 troops to combat the invaders, including the Varangian Guard. The two armies met at Dyrrachium on October 18, 1081. In their eagerness to defeat their nemesis, the mostly English Varangians advanced on foot to attack the Norman wing. The Normans could not withstand the vigorous attacks of the Varangians, who managed to break through the enemy lines and cause the Normans to fall back. However, the Varangians had advanced so far that they were soon cut off from the rest of their forces.

Using this opportunity, the Normans quickly flanked the Varangians with their infantry and then charged into them from a different direction with their cavalry. In the ensuing slaughter, most of the Varangians were cut down. Those who managed to escape retreated to a nearby church. The Normans surrounded the building and set it on fire. A few Varangians climbed to the roof to escape the flames, but their weight eventually caved it in, causing nearly all of them to perish. Although defeated, Alexios managed to escape with a portion of his army. Those Varangians who managed to survive the Battle of Dyrrachium all died shortly after in another disaster, fighting against the Pechenegs at the Battle of Drastar in 1087.

Regardless of the failures at Dyrrachium and Drastar, Alexios and his Comneni successors were successful at restoring the Byzantine Empire to some of its former glory. Since the Varangian Guard had been decimated after Dyrrachium and Drastar, the regiment had to be completely rebuilt. Foreign mercenaries from England and Scandinavia continued to travel to the empire in search of wealth, so it was not long before the ranks of the Guard were replenished. The new Varangian Guard fought for Alexios against the Serbs and the Turks and was crucial in the effort to retake Nicaea with the help of the First Crusaders in 1097. Shortly afterward, Varangians helped Alexios reclaim much of Anatolia. In 1122, the Pechenegs invaded the empire and so the Byzantine Emperor John II Comnenos led an army to confront the invaders. At the Battle of Eski Zagra, after native Byzantine soldiers and Frankish mercenaries failed to break through the defensive lines the Pechenegs had formed with their wagons, John ordered his Varangian Guard to assault the enemy. The Varangians were incredibly outnumbered and supposedly faced 60 Pechenegs for every one Varangian, but the guard still managed to break through the enemy lines and achieve victory.

The Varangians continued to play a vital role in the military successes of the Byzantines throughout the 12th century against the Turks, Normans, and even the Latin Crusaders who had settled in the east. However, when the Byzantine Emperor Manuel I Comnenos led a campaign against the Turks in Anatolia, his army

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A Thracian woman (at left) uses a spear to kill a Varangian who tried to rape her in a scene from an illuminated manuscript based on an incident that occurred in 1034. His fellow soldiers (at right) gave her all of the man's possessions and tossed his body away without a burial.

was ambushed on September 11, 1176, at the Battle of Myriokephalon. Even though Manuel managed to escape, nearly all of his Varangian Guard perished defending him. But just as before, the guard recruited new members and even took part in Manuel's victory at Claudiopolis just three years later in 1179. Then, during the Fourth Crusade of 1203-1204, both the Varangian Guard and the Byzantine Empire were struck with another blow that neither was able to recover from. The Latin Crusaders had decided to sack Constantinople, and even though the Varangians fought until the very end, the Crusaders took the city when the last legitimate emperor fled on April 13. Without an emperor to defend, the Varangians surrendered.

Byzantine successor states were created in Nicaea and Epirus, but Latin emperors reigned in Constantinople for most of the 13th century; and each of these new states had their own Varangian Guard. However, during this period and even after the Byzantine Palaiologos dynasty came to power in 1261, the Varangian Guard were never held in the esteem they once possessed. Evidence of this was most clear when the Turks besieged the town of Ainos, which had a garrison of Varangians stationed within, in 1265.

In exchange for the captured Seljuk Sultan Azz-Ed-In, the Turks offered to end the siege, and the Varangians agreed to the terms. The Byzantine Emperor Michael VIII arrived the next day and was told what the Varangians had done. He was so furious that he not only had the Varangians flogged, but also forced them to wear women's clothing and ride donkeys throughout the city of Constantinople, an insult that would have been unheard of by the Varangians of previous generations.

At the end of the 13th century, Varangians were used to reclaim Byzantine territory in the Balkans and Anatolia, but by the 14th century they were no longer used in military operations. Instead, the Varangians only participated in court ceremonies or functioned as both bodyguards for important individuals and city guards for Constantinople. This coincides with the fact that in the 14th and 15th centuries the empire was continually losing territory to the Turks and becoming weaker and weaker. The Byzantine Empire eventually fell in 1453, and it is possible that Varangians served the empire to the very end, but the last time the mercenaries were even mentioned was during the reign of Manuel II Palaiologos in 1404. □

SIGNED BY THE HERO HIMSELF

I'll Be Seeing You

Bill Guarnere joined the new parachute training at Camp Toccoa in 1942. At the end of 1943 after 2 years of hard training they were shipped to England, where preparations for D-Day started.

Bill was very close with his brother Henry. When he learned of his death, Bill was extremely distraught, and swore that he'd kill every German soldier in Europe. That's where he got the nickname "Wild Bill" Guarnere. Later on D-Day, 12 men of Easy Company were given orders to silence the guns at Brecourt Manor. Bill was one of these 12 men, and received a Silver star.

Comissioned by the Guarnere family, this painting depicts the D-day hero as he remembers his fallen comrades in Margraten, Holland.

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By Blaine Taylor

The M79 grenade launcher bridged the gap between a hand grenade and supporting mortar fire for U.S. ground forces in Vietnam.

I FIRED THE M79 GRENADE LAUNCHER IN ADVANCED INFANTRY TRAINING at Fort Dix, New Jersey, in 1965, and had one on the back seat of my machine-gun jeep during my tour of duty in South Vietnam in 1966-1967 as a member of the U.S. Army 199th Light Infantry Brigade. The M79 was a large-bore, single-barrel, single-shot weapon that was breech loaded and fired from the shoulder. It launched a 40mm by 46mm grenade in a round that resembled a huge bullet.

The close-support infantry weapon reportedly was nicknamed Thumper, Blooper, Thump Gun, or Bloop Tube by some soldiers due to its distinctive report. But I do not recall anyone I knew calling it by any of those names. Some Australian forces fighting in Vietnam also allegedly referred to the M79 grenade launcher as the more colorful Wombat Gun.

The M79 was popular with the Vietnam-era soldiers, easy to use, highly reliable, and required little maintenance.

I recall in advanced infantry training that I got a sore shoulder if I didn't hold and fire the weapon close in with the stubby, wooden stock pressed firmly against me.

Many of the movies during the Vietnam era and afterward portray the weapon as being fired in the exact opposite manner that we were told to, namely with our right thumb aligned along the stock of the weapon so as not to be cut by the recoil.

In the movies, the shooters always seemed to have their thumbs around the rear of the weapon, as if they were firing a rifle, which is incorrect. The U.S. Army Field Manual 3-22.31 Appendix A, states: "Do not place your thumb over the small of the stock, as the safety could injure your thumb when the launcher recoils."

To understand how the U.S. Army came to develop the M79, it is worth taking a look at the evolution of the grenade itself over the centuries.

The hand grenade has been a staple of the European infantryman's inventory since Europeans learned how to make black powder.

The first written formula for black powder dates back to the Sun Dynasty in 11th-century China. By the 13th century, the Chinese were using it to make bombs and grenades. Knowledge of how to make black powder probably made its way to Western Europe either via the Silk Road or the Mongol invasions. Before that, the Byzantines had used Greek Fire in the wars they fought during the Middle Ages.

When the Spanish Conquistadors began their wars of extermination against the indigenous peoples of Latin America, their soldiers flung hand grenades in combat.

During the 18th century, European troops who wielded explosives that could be thrown were known as

A U.S. airman belonging to a security squadron trains with an M-79. Although most commonly associated with the Vietnam War, the sturdy grenade launcher also saw action in the 1982 Falklands War and is still in the inventory of many armed forces around the globe.

All photos: National Archives

From the Publishers of WWII History Magazine

D-DAY
Through A Soldier's Eyes...
Limited Edition Print

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

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

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

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

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ABOVE: The M-79 was popular with U.S. soldiers serving in Vietnam who found it easy to use, highly reliable, and requiring little maintenance. BELOW: The break-open rear breech made the weapon somewhat slow to load, but that was offset by its 375-meter range and five-yard fragmentation zone.

grenadiers and wore distinct clothing to set them apart from ordinary infantrymen. A grenadier wore tall, mitred, pointed, metal headgear, while those of the later Georgian Era British redcoats and their opposite numbers, the Napoleonic French, wore equally high bearskin busbies.

British knowledge of how to make grenades was transferred to the Americans, and noted Philadelphia scientist Ben Franklin designed American grenades.

During the American Civil War, the "universal model" cylindrical grenade was made in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, for the Union Army. The Ketchum hand grenade, which was patented in 1861, no longer had to be lit before being thrown, but rather had a percussion cap that was plunger activated.

The far more sophisticated excelsior grenade was developed by Hanes in 1862, but due to faulty explosions prior to combat few were actually if ever used in battle. Louisiana Confederates simply stuck short fuses into 6- and 12-pound cannonballs, lit them, and rolled them into Union ranks.

It was the Germans who formally developed round, iron ball grenades about the size of a 6-pounder ball with timed burn, delayed fuses that activated a black powder charge inside a grenade shell of cast iron.

The French Army of World War I developed a smooth iron ball using a friction fuse in a wooden plug. As the war dragged on, the Germans during ammunition shortages simply employed concrete hand grenades instead.

As trench warfare dominated the Western Front during most of November 1914 until almost exactly four years later, more and better grenades came online as both sides hurled them at each other across no man's land between opposing trench systems.

Defensive grenades were designed to spew fragments at 100 yards, while their offensive counterparts only carried up to 10 yards. The American grenade even had a kite-like tail to aid it in flight, but this proved impractical in the long run. In July 1918, a million of these grenades were discarded unused and abandoned as the war of movement resumed.

The French Army developed the famous F-1 "pineapple grenade" that featured a hollow, cast iron body. By 1917, the Billant grenade fuse system was also in place. This featured an automatic cast metal fuse screwed into the casing and secured with a safety pin and lever.

The soldier pulled the pin with his hands—not with his teeth, as shown in war films—which made a lever release a plunger that caused a pair of hammers to fall, exploding the primer and grenade. The resulting explosion shattered the grenade into many deadly, antipersonnel fragments.

The U.S. Army's subsequent modification of the French F1 grenade was used during World War II, Korea, and Vietnam in variations.

Rifle grenade launchers were introduced in World War I. The Tsarist Russian Army developed the Mosin-Nagant 91 rifle grenade launcher mounted on its bayonet as a cup. The 42mm grenade delay fuse was positioned on the grenade's bottom, and a blank round fired via the barrel thus launched the grenade itself.

The M-79 had a large flip-up sight midway down the barrel, as well as a leaf foresight at the end of the barrel.

The succeeding Red Army introduced the Diakanov rifle grenade launcher after World War I for use with the standard Russian 1891-30 rifle of the same name.

According to one Red Army soldier, "We received rifles and grenades that could be fastened onto the rifle barrels. Well, we tried them but they proved totally worthless. When you pressed the trigger, the grenade flew only about five meters, and failed to explode. We then turned all that junk in."

From 1936 to 1957, the U.S. Army brought online the USM7 and M7A1 grenade launchers, wherein a hinged clamp fitted the launcher to the weapon's bayonet lug and gas cylinder valve screw.

Firing a specialized rifle cartridge, gas propelled the thrust necessary to send the grenade itself down range. In time, a propellant was added that ignited the fired rifle cartridge's own flame for greater range. The same ignition system could ignite time delay fuses for both signal and illumination rifle grenades as well.

In 1966, the Yugoslavian Army introduced the SKS M59/66 rifle with its launcher also on the barrel, with a gas cutoff valve on the gas block. It featured a folding front sight that boasted six different ranges.

Like the design of many other Korean War and Vietnam War weapons, that of the M79 evolved out of the Army's World War II experiences.

During World War II, the light M1 Carbine employed the M8 grenade launcher that was clamped to the business end of its barrel via a wing nut. Its rounds were the M9/M9A1 antitank grenades with a shrapnel charge inside that could penetrate between three to four inches of armor plating at a maximum effective range of 250 yards.

When first issued in 1961, the M79 grenade launcher was a complete departure from all these predecessor weapons, being solely dedicated to the firing of the 40mm grenade.

The M79 was developed to give the ordinary

infantryman increased firepower with an explosive projectile that was also more accurate at a greater range than had been the case with its World War II predecessor, the rifle grenade. At the same time, it was designed to be far lighter to carry than an indirect fire weapon such as the 81mm mortar.

The M79 was designed by the Springfield Armory over a seven-year period beginning in 1953. The armory's initial S-3 morphed into the successor S-5 model that the Army adopted, even though it couldn't be refined into a multi-shot weapon as originally desired. The S-5, which featured a new sight, was delivered to the Army in 1961.

More than 350,000 units of the weapon were subsequently manufactured by companies such as Action Manufacturing Company, Exotic Metal Products, Daewoo, the Kanarr Corporation, and Thompson-Ramo-Woolridge.

Dubbed, the "the platoon leader's artillery," the M79 was used extensively by American and allied forces in Southeast Asia against Viet Cong forces and NVA regular units.

The M79 weighed 5.95 pounds when empty and 6.45 pounds when loaded. It was 28.78 inches long with a stock and barrel of about even length. Some soldiers cut down the short stock and barrel to render the light weapon even more portable.

Broken down into its parts, the M79 consists of the fore-end assembly, receiver group, barrel, sight assembly, stock, and sling. Attached to the end of the stubby butt is a rubber recoil pad that absorbs some of the weapon's recoil action.

The high-low propulsion system firearm was designed to keep its recoil forces low. The M79 was meant to bridge the gap between the maximum possible throwing distance of the more traditional hand grenade and the shortest range of supporting mortar fire, which was estimated to be between 50 meters and 300 meters.

The M79 has a large flip-up sight located midway down the top of its short barrel, as well as a basic leaf foresight at the end of the barrel. Its rear sight can be calibrated up to 375 meters in 25-meter intervals.

While somewhat slow to load with its break-open rear breech, the M79 was nonetheless a handy weapon to have, with a five-yard fragmentation range. The M79 has an effective range of from 350 meters to 400 meters with a muzzle velocity of 75 meters per second.

The M79 used by Army troops in Vietnam fired a variety of 40mm rounds: high explosive, smoke, antipersonnel, flechette, illumination, and even buckshot, the latter hearkening back to my initial impression of it as a shotgun.

The high explosive rounds included several in

A U.S. marine carries an M-79 during the escalation of the Vietnam War in 1965. The M-79 gave U.S. ground troops in Vietnam increased firepower with an explosive projectile that was also more accurate at a greater range than the rifle grenade of World War II.

its nomenclature: M397, M386, M406, M441, and M576. Included in the M79's star cluster cartridges were the XM58 and the XM664.

M79 rounds were stabilized in flight by the spin given to the cartridge from the rifle barrel. The M406 high explosive grenade contained enough explosive to produce 300 fragments on impact.

The Army developed two standard types of M79 rounds. The first was the flechette. This round, known as the bee hive for the sound it made in flight, housed up to 45 small, 10-grain steel darts in a plastic casing. These were at first seen to be impractical, though, as they frequently failed to hit their targets point first and penetrate. Conversely, sometimes they would strike sideways and simply bounce off.

The flechette was succeeded in 1966 by the M576 round that contained 20 (M576E1) or 27 (M576E2) 24-grain buckshot pellets propelled down the barrel within a 40mm plastic sabot.

That modification decreased speed in flight so that the pellets would travel in a forward direction unaided. At close range, the round had a devastating effect on its target.

As the range of the rounds increased, they became more ineffective as the shot spread out farther and farther in flight. Thus, the M576E2—in spite of its greater number of shot—was less effective at longer distances than the M576E1 round, as its shot spread out quicker and sometimes even missed its target altogether.

Gas and flares also were eventually added to the overall M79 ammunition inventory.

The M79 had several down sides. First, it had to be reloaded after each shot. Therefore, a soldier using the weapon in Vietnam was not able to maintain a steady and constant rate of fire against the enemy in a firefight.

Second, it was not designed for close fighting. The minimum arming range in flight for an M79 round was 30 meters. To address this shortcoming, close-in specialty grenades were produced as compensation, assuming that the soldier had time to load one.

Third, a soldier who ran out of rounds for his M79 was highly vulnerable as the only other weapon he carried was his M1911 pistol.

Toward the end of the Vietnam War, the M79 was replaced by the M203 40mm launcher that was placed directly beneath the M16 rifle's foregrip, thus returning somewhat to the old rifle grenade concept of World War II.

The next iteration was the modified M203PI version with its Enhanced Grenade Launcher Module (EGLM) System. In side profile, this weapon strongly resembled what most Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army regulars carried, the Russian-built AK-47 rifle.

Its stubby construction allowed the launcher to be attached underneath the barrels of several different rifle models, giving it greater flexibility than before.

This was further enhanced in 1996 with the introduction of the M203PI EGLM Tactical Mount, a reputed stand-alone system that combined the more positive M79 properties while simultaneously getting rid of its bulky down side.

Thus, today's tactical mount provides the modern grenadier a compacted M203 grenade launcher and a telescoping folding stock assembly with greater tactical flexibility via Picatinny Rails/MIL-STD-1913, a common mounting platform. In addition, the weapon can be converted to a pistol mount, providing a trio of shooting platforms, all without the use of any tools for conversion, and for both right- and lefthand firing.

The M203 was in turn succeeded in 2009 by the Heckler & Koch M320. Because the M320's breech opens to the side, as opposed to the pump-style of the M203, the M320 can fire a new generation of longer rounds.

The M79 not only was used in the Vietnam War, but also during the Cambodian Civil War, the Falklands War, border clashes between Cambodia and Thailand, and internal conflicts in Burma. The M-79 can still be found in the inventory of many armed forces in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, the Mideast, and the Caribbean. During the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, U.S. Navy SEALs and other specialist forces reportedly were still using the venerable M79. □

By Peter Kross

The details of Operation Foxley, a British attempt to assassinate Adolf Hitler, were a closely guarded secret for decades.

THE SNIPER WAS PERCHED UNDER A CRAGGY BLUFF OVERLOOKING German Führer Adolf Hitler's alpine mountain retreat at Berchtesgaden in Bavaria. He made a slight adjustment to his highly crafted gun, aligned the sights, checked the wind conditions, and waited for his target to appear. The sniper had been well trained for this most dangerous of all assignments, one he had been anticipating for a long time. In what seemed like hours, but in reality was only a short time, the man he was sent to kill came into view. The sniper recognized his target immediately. He was short in stature, had dark hair, and wore the famous mustache that he had come to know so well. As Adolf Hitler emerged from his home into the crisp, mountain air, the assassin locked him in his sights, took a deep breath, and pulled the trigger.

This scenario did not take place. However, as World War II dragged on with no apparent end in sight, Allied leaders in Britain were seriously contemplating the assassination of Adolf Hitler to end the war in Europe. It has come to light in recent years via a 120-page dossier gleaned from the British Public Records Office in Kew, that a serious attempt to kill Hitler was being contemplated at the highest levels of British intelligence. The code name for this proposed assassination effort was Operation Foxley. Operation Foxley was the product of Britain's two intelligence services, the Special Operations Executive (SOE) and the Secret Intelligence Service (SIS). Another part of this most secret operation was dubbed Little Foxleys, which involved plans to kill certain top leaders of the Nazi regime.

The details of Operation Foxley were once one of the most guarded secrets still to be hidden from the public concerning World War II. Now, with a new policy of open government in Britain, historians and those interested in the secret side of the global conflict which ended almost 70 years ago have a new story to contemplate.

Imperial War Museum

By 1944, the British intelligence services had a complete dossier on Adolf Hitler's habits and living conditions. It was up to the SOE to pull all the various data on him into one coherent file and disseminate this information to all relevant parties. As the intelligence officers began plotting the best way to eliminate the Führer, a number of wild schemes came into focus. These included poisoning his food or drink, impregnating his clothes with a deadly toxin, destroying his train en route to his mountain hideaway in the Alps, and sending in a sniper to kill him as he made his way around his summit at the Berghof. The CIA used many of these same schemes in an effort to try to kill Cuban dictator Fidel Castro in 1960 and 1961.

According to documents in the newly released Foxley files, the char-

National Archives

Great Britain's two intelligence services, the SOE and the SIS, devised various plots to kill Adolf Hitler. In the end, Great Britain was reluctant to make Hitler a martyr by assassinating him. BELOW: Hitler and Eva Braun at Berchtesgaden. INSET: Brig. Gen. Colin Gubbins.

acteristics of the ingredients to be used to poison Hitler were dubbed "1." The documents in the Foxley file state: "(1) It is tasteless and odorless, (2) Neither hard nor soft water is visibly affected by the addition of one lethal dose (2 grams, to 2½ pints), (3) Black coffee treated with "1" in the same ratio indicates no perceptible change in appearance. Nor would the addition of milk make any immediate difference in the appearance of the beverage. (4) Tea with milk treated as above shows no detectable change, but without milk it immediately becomes opalescent and in the course of an hour or so becomes quite turbid and deposits a brown sediment. Hitler, according to reliable information, is a tea addict. He always drinks it with milk. Since the milk is poured into his cup, it is unlikely that the tea's opalescence would be noticed as it came from the teapot."

The documents in the Foxley file state in sharp terms the objective to be carried out. "(1) Object: The elimination of Hitler and any high-ranking Nazis or members of the Führer's entourage who may be present at the attempt, (2) means: sniper's rifle or bazooka and splinter grenades; derailment and destruction of the Führer's train by explosives; clandestine means, (3) scene of operations: the most recent information available on Hitler and his movements narrows down the field of endeavor to two locations of action, vis, the Berchtesgaden area and Hitler's train."

By the time the Foxley teams were planning Hitler's demise, the war had been going on for four harrowing years. Millions of innocent victims had died in Nazi concentration camps, as well as hundreds of thousands of combatants from the warring nations. Yet, the leaders of the nations at war were not targets of opportunity.

That is not to say that attempts were not regularly made to assassinate military and political leaders on both sides. On the morning of April 18, 1943, a squadron of U.S. airplanes stationed at Henderson Field on Guadalcanal, scrambled into the air to carry out Operation Vengeance on an intercept mission. Their target was Japanese Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto. Using intelligence gleaned from decrypted orders, the planes ambushed Yamamoto's aircraft, causing the death of Japan's most revered military planner.

On June 24, 1942, a group of Czech partisans ambushed and killed German General Reinhard "The Hangman" Heydrich. Heydrich was appointed commander of the Gestapo in 1936, and was responsible for the murder of thousands of Jews during the war. In retaliation for his murder, the Germans destroyed the Czech town of Lidice, killing all the men and boys and sending the women to concentration camps.

National Archives

Hitler and Eva Braun dining at a tea house in 1942. One assassination scheme involved poisoning Hitler's tea.

The branch of British Intelligence given the task of running Operation Foxley was the SOE, whose wartime orders given by Winston Churchill were to "set Europe ablaze." The SOE was established by order of Prime Minister Winston Churchill on July 16, 1940, as a covert paramilitary force which would take the war directly into enemy territory.

The SOE's headquarters was located at 64 Baker Street in London. Candidates for possible entry into the SOE were culled from recommendations from the SIS. After each applicant was accepted and passed a rigorous background and security check, he or she was sent for a four-week course of intensive training at a secret location in England, where they were given training in parachute jumps, small arms, hand-to-hand combat, commando tactics, and radio operations.

From August 1940 to September 1943, two men headed the SOE, Sir Frank Nelson and Sir Charles Hambro. In September 1943, Brig. Gen. Colin Gubbins was picked to be the new chief of the SOE. He was born in Japan in 1896 but had roots in Scotland. Gubbins served in the Royal Artillery in World War I. He did duty in Russia, Ireland, and India. In 1919, he fought on the White Russian side against the Bolsheviks during the Russian Revolution. By 1919, he had been appointed chief of staff of the British military mission in Poland. The next year, Gubbins was tasked with the job of training a new commando unit that would see extensive action in World War II.

When he became chief of the SOE, Gubbins actively oversaw all aspects of operations, overseeing training and initiating relations with the fledgling U.S. spy agency, the Office of Strategic Services (OSS).

SOE agents worked in all parts of Europe. They helped downed Allied airmen escape to England or France and served as liaisons with dissident factions in the region. SOE operations in Germany concerned some of the most highly guarded as well as the most dangerous missions of the war including Operation Foxley.

The other branch of British Intelligence that played a crucial role in Operation Foxley was the SIS. It was the job of SIS planners to supply operational intelligence, that is, to provide the whereabouts of Hitler at any given time. The job of the SIS in World War II, as it is today, was to collect all aspects of intelligence on any matter that is vital to Britain's security. In World War II, the British, using Ultra intercepts, were able to monitor Germany's order of battle as it was being put into operation.

As the planning for Operation Foxley unfolded, the SIS supplied one of its men to aid the SOE in planning the attack on Hitler. One of the jobs of the SIS was to place undercover agents inside Germany. There is no hard evidence that any SIS agent got close enough to Hitler to supply London with any detailed information on the Führer's exact location. The lack of intelligence on Hitler's whereabouts hindered any success that might have pointed the

Foxley planners in the right direction.

While the declassified Foxley study presents an overview of the plan to kill Hitler, not all the details are forthcoming. The most important of these are the names of the players on the British side who had a hand in planning the operation. Some of the names are well known to historians of the war, while others are still classified.

One of the leaders of the mission was code named LB/X. The Foxley report gives the name of a staff officer named Major H.B. Court, a man assigned to the SOE at that time, as this agent. After the war, all the military records on LB/X were purged, and it is impossible to actually verify his identity.

While the "foot soldiers" in Operation Foxley were mostly unfamiliar to the general public, their superiors were well known in the intelligence and military establishment. One of the leaders in the planning of the operation was General Sir Hastings Ismay, secretary of the Committee of Imperial Defense. Ismay was a confidant of Prime Minister Winston Churchill and had the dubious responsibility of revealing to the prime minister the fact that Germany had successfully invaded Norway on April 9, 1940.

In the wake of the Norwegian disaster, it was Ismay who wrote a scathing memo to the pertinent officers throughout British Intelligence asking for a more streamlined way in which pending intelligence matters were disseminated to the interested parties. Ismay kept the prime minister fully informed on all aspects of Foxley, and it was through Ismay that Churchill gave his go ahead for the mission to proceed.

Another important member of the Foxley team was the fabled man known in intelligence circles as "C," Brig. Gen. Sir Stewart Menzies. Menzies served in the Life Guards from 1910 until 1939. In 1923, he was appointed as the deputy to Sir Hugh Sinclair, the head of MI-6 until the latter's death in 1939. That year, he was appointed as "C," the head of the super-secret organization. Menzies worked closely with Churchill, who had an avid interest in anything relating to secret work.

Menzies had a solid working relationship with the OSS. He hosted OSS chief Colonel William Donovan when he came to England and the two sides made a secret agreement to share intelligence.

Working alongside Menzies was Gubbins, who actively took over all aspects of the SOE, overseeing training and beginning a secret relationship with the OSS. At the time of the Foxley mission, he had been promoted as the executive head of the SOE and was privy to all its intimate secrets.

The members of the SOE council who had operational control over the mission were a varied group indeed. Among them were Vice Air Marshall Alan Patrick Ritchie, code named AD/A. Ritchie was a veteran of the Royal Flying Corps and a former RAF pilot. He served briefly as the intelligence head of the RAF, and then became the air officer of the 93rd Group, Bomber Command.

National Archives

The most serious attempt to assassinate Hitler was made not by the Allies but by the Germans. Colonel Claus von Stauffenberg (left) is shown on July 20, 1944, the day he placed a bomb inside a room at the Wolf's Lair where Hitler was meeting with his top generals.

Major General Gerald Templer, code name AD/X, was given the nickname "The Tiger of Malaya," and was wounded in Italy. He was posted to the War Office's Military Intelligence Division and was in charge of the German Directorate Section beginning in November 1944.

Air Commander Archibald Boyle, also known as A/CD , was a veteran of World War I, held a 20-year career in British Intelligence, and served as the SOE's special representative with SIS.

Lieutenant Colonel Ronald Thornely was named AD/X and X1. He was fluent in German and served as Gerald Templer's deputy.

While the British were working on their own plot to kill Adolf Hitler, elements of the German military and political establishment were preparing a plot to end the Führer's life.

From 1921 to the fall of Berlin in 1945, numerous attempts to kill Hitler by his enemies were either talked about or acted upon. New information has come to light that tells of numerous plots by high-ranking German military men or diplomats inside Germany to topple Hitler in the months leading up to the German invasion of Poland in 1939.

Some of these assassination plans include the following attempts. On March 4, 1933, German police arrested a man named Karl Luttner, who had planned to set off a bomb at a rally in Köningsberg, where Hitler was scheduled to appear. On November 26, 1937, Josef Thomas, a man suffering from a mental condition, was arrested by the Gestapo in Berlin, where he planned to shoot Hitler and Luftwaffe chief Herman Göring. The noted English agent Alexander Foote, who was employed by Russia during World War II, looked into the possibilities of assassinating Hitler at the Osteria Bavaria restaurant. The years 1938-1939, saw the British military attaché in Berlin, Colonel Noel Mason-MacFarlane, planning as assassination attempt on Hitler, which was discussed by the top military leaders in London. The idea was rejected.

In March 1943, a number of high ranking German military officers. including Brig. Gen. Henning von Tresckov, Lieutenant Fabian von Schlabrendorff, and others, successfully placed a bomb on Hitler's aircraft, a Focke-Wulf 200 Condor. Unfortunately for the planners, the bomb failed to go off.

On July 20, 1944, a highly detailed plot to kill Hitler was carried out by a number of the Führer's enemies, led by Colonel Claus Shenk Graf von Stauffenberg. Stauffenberg placed a bomb inside a room where Hitler and a number of his top associates were meeting. The bomb went off, but it only wounded Hitler. In the wake of the assassination attempt, a purge of those men who took part in the plot was carried out and many of the insiders were either executed or took their own lives.

The debate among the top members of SOE over how to kill Hitler and whether to proceed with Operation Foxley was heated, to say the least. Some intelligence officers wanted to go ahead, while others saw the futility in the plan and made their thoughts unambiguous. One unnamed individual, according to the declassified report, said that he was "not exactly optimistic or enthusiastic" about killing Hitler.

SOE was in agreement that the project should be carried out, while other military and government leaders preferred an all-out aerial bombardment against German civilian and military targets to bring the regime to its knees. There was also talk among the men that if Hitler were indeed killed he would become a martyr to many Germans, and his death would then be counterproductive in the long run. Some of the leading politicians in Whitehall believed that a living Hitler was better for the Allied cause than a dead one.

A letter from Ronald Thornley said that a living Hitler would be the same as "almost an unlimited number of first class SOE agents strategically placed inside Germany."

One SOE officer who participated in the Foxley planning added, "As a strategist, Hitler has been the greatest possible assistance to the British war effort."

By 1944, the war against Germany was in its final stages. After the successful Allied landings in Normandy, thousands of troops were slogging their way across France and would be on German soil in a matter of months. Even the most ardent German military leaders could see the writing on the wall, and some of them decided to go behind Hitler's back and contact the Allies to begin peace negotiations.

While the decision to go ahead with Operation Foxley was never implemented, the "what ifs" are enormous as far as historians are concerned.

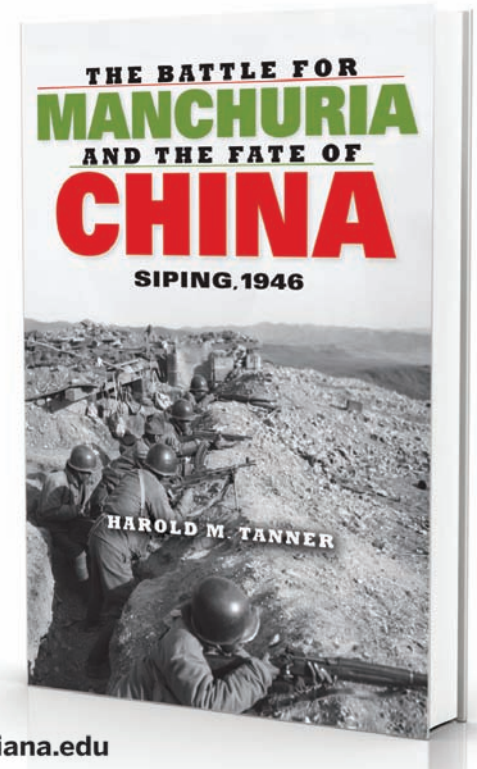
With the Allies nearing Berlin by early 1945, and Hitler dead, would the German high command, whoever was in charge at the time, have put out peace feelers to end the war? One question that has to be asked is how the German leadership would account for the millions of victims in the concentration camps and the "final solution" to the Jews of Europe. Would they have closed the gas chambers before the Allies found them, covering up their enormous crimes?

If Operation Foxley had been carried out successfully, would the German high command have gone ahead with certain military engagements that had already been planned? For example, would they have started the bloody fighting in the Ardennes Forest in December 1944, which saw massive causalities on both sides?

Another significant concern on the Allied side was their call for the unconditional surrender of Germany in order for the war to come to an end. Would Hitler's successors have agreed to an unconditional surrender, or would they have negotiated for a better deal? More to the point, would the victorious Allies, tired of war and all the suffering that came with it, have gone along? If the British and the Americans agreed to less than unconditional surrender, would Josef Stalin have concurred?

If Hitler was dead, would an Allied Germany now form an alliance with the United States and Great Britain against the Soviet Union? If that had happened, would the Cold War have begun earlier or even degenerated into a "hot" war in Europe with troops from the United States, United Kingdom, and Russia fighting each other among the rubble?

In the end, Adolf Hitler himself made Operation Foxley irrelevant when he committed suicide in his Berlin bunker in April 1945. □



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By Peter Suciu

The National World War I Museum gives visitors a sense of the terrible price paid by the United States and its allies in the Great War.

WHILE NO ONE AMERICAN CITY PLAYED A GREATER ROLE IN World War I than others, after a campaign by local residents, Kansas City, Missouri, was chosen as home to build the nation's memorial for those who gave their lives in what was hoped to be the war to end all wars. Although sadly it was not to be the final war, the effort by the Kansas City residents eventually made possible establishment of the National World War I Museum at Liberty Memorial.

Liberty Memorial, which opened in 1926, languished from neglect for many decades until a grass-roots effort resulted in a major restoration.

The guns had only just fallen silent in late November 1918 when the first initiative began for a memorial for what had been the greatest conflict to date. This led to a community-based fundraising drive in 1919 that raised more than $2.5 million in less than two weeks and drew international attention as a result. The historic site of Penn Valley Park was developed in 1904, on land over which the Santa Fe Trail had passed half a century earlier, and was chosen as the location for the Liberty Memorial. Located on what was then the outskirts of downtown Kansas City, it provided a vast open space for a large memorial tower and field of remembrance.

The site was dedicated in 1921 at an event that was attended by military leaders of the five main Allied nations—this being the first time these five were ever together in one place. These men were Lt. Gen. Baron Jacques of Belgium, Admiral Earl Beatty of Great Britain, General Armando Diaz of Italy, Marshal Ferdinand Foch of France, and General John Pershing of the United States.

A national architectural competition conducted by the American Institute of Architects was held for monument designs, and those of American architect Harold Van Buren Magonigle were chosen. Fittingly, the New Jersey-born architect is best remembered today for his memorials. In addition to the monolithic Liberty Memorial, he also designed the McKinley Memorial Mausoleum in Canton, Ohio, and collaborated on the Monument to the USS *Maine*, which stands today in New York City's Columbus Circle near the entrance to Central Park. The primary sculptor of the memorial was Robert Aitken, whose work also included the Dewey Monument in San Francisco.

After three years of construction, the Liberty Memorial opened on November 11, 1926—eight years to the day after World War I ended. It was dedicated by President Calvin Coolidge, who noted, "The magnitude of this memorial, and the broad base of popular support on which it rests, can scarcely fail to excite national wonder and admiration."

That could have been the end of the story, and while the impressive 217-foot tall structure lights the night sky, it was long felt that more

could—and dare should—be done to remember those World War I veterans. Over the years came calls for a World War I museum, and the memorial faced the ravages of time. The monument, which lacked any significant space for a large museum, was eventually closed to the public due to neglect and lack of interest outside Kansas City.

However, all this changed for the good, when in 1988 Kansas City voters overwhelming passed a sales tax to raise money for the memorial's restoration, while private funding supplemented efforts. The first major restoration in more than two decades was completed in 2002. It was two years later in 2004 when the dream of a museum actually became a reality. That year saw two major milestones, including the passage of a $20 million bond initiative to fund the construction of a new museum, and President George W. Bush's signing into law a bill that designated the Liberty Memorial as the National World War I Museum, which it was officially designated by the 108th Congress. In 2006, the same year that the museum opened to the public, the site was deemed a National Historic Landmark.

It is worth noting, too, that today the official designation is actually The National World War I Museum at Liberty Memorial, but efforts are underway to make it The National World War I Museum "and" Liberty Memorial, thus linking the two together permanently.

"From its inception, the Liberty Memorial has been a national focal point for honoring those who served in the First World War," said Doran Cart, curator of the National World War I Museum. "Additionally, the museum was regarded as the best repository very early on with the U.S. Navy donating the torpedo, the Imperial Japanese government donating materials, the French donating fragments of the Reims Cathedral damaged in the war, and many personal items from those who served, all donated before 1926."

Visitors to the museum immediately will note that it does not take away from the effect of the memorial, as the new subterranean facility greatly expands but does not change the overall effect of the original main deck exhibition hall and memory hall.

Additionally, anyone entering the National World War I Museum will cross the Paul Sunderland Bridge, an impressive yet somber reminder of the price of war. The glass ceiling provides a view of the memorial, while under the glass bridge are 9,000 poppies, each representing 1,000 combatant deaths totaling the nine million casualties from the Great War. This was, of course, inspired by the famous World War I era poem, *In Flanders Field,* written in 1915 by Canadian soldier and poet John McCrae.

Clockwise, from top-left: German assault equipment from the second half of the conflict; one of many artillery pieces displayed; a pair of early French machine guns; weapons and equipment of the American Expeditionary Forces which fought on the Western Front in 1918.

This entry leads into the main exhibit floor, which is divided into three main galleries, the first covering the years 1914-1917. This gallery, which features numerous uniforms, equipment and even objects that were used in daily life in the trenches, offers a monthly account of the time before America entered the war. There are multiple recreations of Western Front trench lines, as well as air war and war at sea galleries, which even include a U.S. Navy built scale replica of a German U-boat. From the first gallery, visitors travel to the Horizon Theater, where a 15-minute program shows America on the brink of the conflict and ponders the question, "Should America enter the war?"

This follows the Years 1917-1919 gallery, which contains numerous artifacts used by the soldiers who went "Over There." These include many uniforms, a French-built American Renault FT-17 tank, and a crater model that represents a building as if destroyed by artillery. A highlight of this gallery is also the women's role in the conflict.

While the museum may tell the story of one of the worst conflicts in the history of the 20th century, it is still very much in the 21st century with state-of-the-art interactive exhibits and features. These interactive exhibits and features allow visitors to create their own propaganda poster, which can even be e-mailed to a friend, or to take digital quizzes and get detailed facts on the weapons and equipment used in the war. Additionally, period recordings and music are provided to further set the mood and immerse the visitor into the time of

Continued on page 70

REVENGE OF THE FLEMISH LION

THE FLEMISH INFANTRY FIDGETED UNDER THE SWELTERING SUN AS they stood shoulder to shoulder in a field east of the town of Courtrai on July 11, 1302. Their line formed a grand curve that stretched from the River Lys on their left to the gray walls of the town on their right. More than 11,000 heavily armed members of the Flemish Communal Army had assembled to resist the effort of French King Philip IV to forcibly annex the county of Flanders to his vast realm. A sense of unease emanated from the unseasoned troops, but they took heart because they felt they were resisting a tyrant.

The Flemish watched keenly as 3,000 French knights and squires resplendent in their armor under brightly colored banners formed ranks in preparation for their advance across the floodplain. Some of the veteran horsemen had come from as far away as the lands bordering the Pyrenees to fight the unruly Flemish. Many of the knights sported golden spurs won in lavish tournaments in which they honed their martial skills. They had come to crush a rebellion that had become increasingly brutal in the previous weeks following the massacre in May of French troops billeted in the Flemish town of Bruges 25 miles east of

BY WILLIAM E. WELSH

Courtrai. Their confidence was evident in the proud boasting made by each knight of how many Flemish he would slay that day. Most expected the Flemish to scatter when they made their charge. Once that occurred, it would simply be a matter of killing the commoners and taking the leaders of the revolt back to Paris, where the king could decide their fate.

The banners that waved above the Flemish Communal Army were made by the textile guilds of the towns. Although they differed in the symbol that represented their respective guilds, they all displayed the Rampant Lion with outstretched claws and its wildly curled tongue. The soldiers beneath the banners kept their fear in check. They trusted that God would put victory in their hands. Chronicler Jean de Brusthem wrote that minutes before the battle began the Flemish soldiers were "rejoicing and excited, roaring in the manner of lions."

At noon the French sent more than 1,000 crossbowmen forward. Their purpose was to inflict substantial casualties on the Flemish ranks from a distance so that the enemy would be substantially weakened by the time the cavalry began its terrible charge. On the French right flank, 52-year-old Count Robert II of Artois, the commander-in-chief of the French forces that day, surveyed the battlefield. The count had been on many campaigns during his lifetime, which had

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REBELLIOUS GUILD WORKERS STOOD THEIR GROUND AT COURTRAI IN 1302 AGAINST KNIGHTS SENT BY FRENCH KING PHILIP IV TO CRUSH THEM. THE OUTCOME OF THE BATTLE OF THE GOLDEN SPURS SHOOK THE FEUDAL WORLD TO ITS CORE.

The climactic moment of the Battle of Courtrai occurred when Count Robert of Artois, commander of the French army, led a suicidal charge into the Flemish ranks after the battle already had been lost. He is portrayed in a 19th-century painting pinned under his horse and mortally wounded.

taken him far from his home in the county of Artois adjacent to Flanders.

The war between the French crown and the county of Flanders was by then in its fifth year. Although outnumbered, Artois was confident that his heavy cavalry would shatter the Flemish line on contact. In a council of war held before the French deployed for battle, Artois scolded 52-year-old Godfrey of Brabant, Lord of Aarschot, who warned Artois not to underestimate the Flemish. Artois reminded Brabant that lowly militia was no match for French cavalry. "A hundred horses are worth a thousand men," said Artois. "What then hast thou to fear? Turn and look; these valiant men will not abandon thee."

By the late 13th century, Flanders had become a thriving area of commerce rivaling northern Italy. Its count was a vassal of the king of France and therefore had to adhere closely to the instructions given him by one of the most powerful monarchs in Europe. The commerce in Flanders was centered on the textile industry. The Flemish imported wool from England and grew their own flax from which they made clothing for people living in England, France, Germany, and Italy.

The merchants who financed the textile industry formed a wealthy class known as burghers, while the workers organized in guilds representing specific trades formed a large and vocal group of commoners. The burghers controlled taxation, and for obvious reasons the burghers and the commoners were often at odds. The burghers applied heavy taxes to the guilds and to individual consumption, and the commoners sought a greater voice in their affairs and relief from what they perceived as exploitation.

The Count of Flanders derived his power historically from land holdings, and he often found himself at odds with the burghers, who sought to protect financial and political interests that were tied to the flourishing clothing trade. An interesting political dynamic arose in which the burghers appealed directly to the king of France for relief from the policies of the count, while the commoners appealed directly to the Count of Flanders for relief from decisions of the burghers.

Guy of Dampierre was a reactionary who adhered strictly to the conservative feudal system and failed to appreciate how the common people might help him enhance his strength politically and militarily. Before the reign of Philip IV, the Flemish counts had ruled with a considerable amount of autonomy. But when Philip IV ascended to the throne in 1285 at the age of 17, he took a personal interest in the affairs of his vassals and their territories so that he might squeeze the most political, economic, and military benefit out of them for his realm. Known as "Philip the Fair" for his good looks, the young French king was tall and handsome. But his outward beauty belied his inward sinister nature. In his dealings with others, particularly his vassals, he proved himself to be haughty, shrewd, and vengeful.

Flanders had become politically unstable even before Philip took the throne. In the 1280s, fractious disputes developed in Flanders, and there was occasional rioting as burghers and commoners clashed over various political and economic matters. Although Count Guy sought to ameliorate the injustices suffered by the commoners, his attempts to impose indemnities on them for the damage that occurred during the uprisings only served to further alienate the working class. When Philip the Fair came to power in 1285, he and his ministers actively intervened in Flemish politics in order to undermine Guy's authority.

On January 7, 1297, the Count of Flanders entered into an alliance with the King of England. Two days later, Guy sent word to Paris that he was no longer willing to serve as Philip's vassal and was declaring Flanders independent. Philip ordered Guy arrested, and the French king ordered Count Robert of Artois to mount a military expedition to Flanders to crush the Flemish rebellion. Artois was the best general in France at the time.

The first clash of the Franco-Flemish war occurred at Veurne on August 20, 1297, and resulted in a French victory. Since Count Guy was too old to lead troops into battle, he entrusted his army to an ally, Count Walram of Jülich. Count Walram, led an army comprising troops from Flanders, Brabant, and various north German principalities. The French captured and executed Count Walram as a warning to other foreign nobles not to assist the Flemish.

Having just concluded an expensive war against England, Philip the Fair had trouble financing military operations in Flanders. For this reason, he was not able to field an army to resume operations in Flanders until 1300. This time the army was not led by Robert of Artois, but by the king's brother, Count Charles of Valois. Count Guy's health was failing, and he transferred the title to his son Robert. With half of Flanders already conquered in the previous campaign, Valois had no problem overrunning the remainder of Flanders in just a few months. Both Guy and Robert were captured and sent to Paris.

Following the collapse of military resistance in Flanders in the spring of 1300, the French king instructed his ministers to abolish the title of Count of Flanders and make the county a crown land. To administer the new crown land, Philip the Fair appointed Jacques de Châtillon to oversee it. Châtillon was a narrow-minded reactionary who raised taxes in an effort to increase the king's annual revenue.

In May 1301, Philip the Fair visited Ghent and Bruges. The Flemish guild workers appealed to

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ABOVE: Count Guy of Flanders and his daughter Philippa were imprisoned in Paris by an unmerciful King Philip IV. BELOW: Guildsmen Pieter de Coninck and Jan Breydel led the Bruges Matins uprising in May 1302 and fought at Courtrai.

Wikipedia Commons

the French king to ease taxes. Philip obliged, but the burghers did not comply, and the king did not intervene on the commoners' behalf. The workers in Bruges were particularly incensed.

In the year following Philip's visit to Flanders, two prominent guildsmen in Bruges, Pieter de Coninck, a weaver, and Jan Breydel, a butcher, organized the commoners in the town. The two leaders of the commoners in Bruges arranged representation for the guild members on the town council. French bureaucrats in the town reported to de Châtillon that the firebrands were working to have taxes decreased and that their followers were agitating in the streets, and for these reasons the governor ordered Coninck and Breydel arrested. A mob subsequently freed them from prison, and the two leaders and their followers then decided they had no recourse but to seize control of the town government from the French bureaucrats.

On May 17, 1302, de Châtillon brought a force of 800 infantry and 120 mounted men-at-arms to Bruges to restore order. That night Coninck and Breydel led an uprising in which the commoners attacked the French troops in the homes where they were quartered. During the course of the slaughter that night, which became known as the Bruges Matins, the townspeople of Bruges killed about 300 soldiers and 90 men-at-arms. The survivors, one of whom was de Châtillon, fled west.

The people of Bruges armed themselves for battle with the French and called on the other major towns in Flanders to join them. Since neither Coninck nor Breydel had the stature or experience to lead an army into battle, they cast about for a leader. One individual who expressed a keen interest in leading the Flemish Communal Army against the French was 25-year-old William of Jülich. The young prince was eager to avenge the execution of his uncle, Count Walram, following the Battle of Veurne five years earlier.

The Count of Flanders had authority to call up the Flemish Communal Army, but with Count Robert in prison in Paris William of Jülich served as the de facto count and mobilized the army for battle. The Flemish Communal Army was decentralized. The town guilds maintained arsenals that stored weapons and supplies for times of war.

Although the majority of the troops were militia, a small core was professionals trained in the use of either pikes or crossbows. Most of the militia was armed with the goedendag, a five-foot wooden staff with a thick iron spike at the top. The inexpensive goedendag, which any commoner could make at home or in his workplace, could be used to knock a knight

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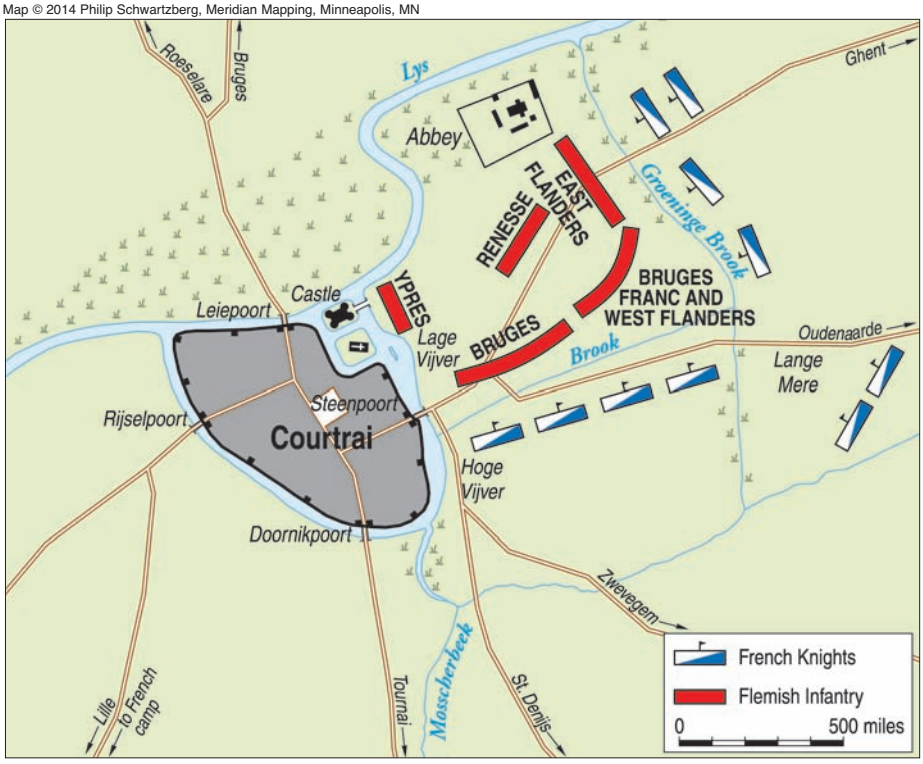

French Count Robert of Artois divided his army into two wings to attack the Flemish army at Courtrai. After the main attack failed, the French reserve marched away intact leaving the survivors of the battle, and the French garrison in the castle, to their fate.

from his horse and stab him through his plate armor. The Flemish militiamen generally could not afford chainmail tunics but did have open helmets and mail gloves.

Philip IV was irate when he learned of the attack on the French corps sent to restore order in Bruges. Knowing that Artois had defeated the Flemish Communal Army in a major battle once before, he decided to give him command of the French army that would punish the Flemish for massacring the royal troops in Bruges.

Artois began assembling his army in Arras in late June. His first objective once the army was assembled would be to march to Courtrai, which served as a gateway to central and eastern Flanders. A small French garrison in Courtrai was dangerously exposed to Jülich's Flemish army, which was at that time being reinforced with troops from all parts of Flanders.

While he waited for troops to arrive in Arras from all parts of France, Artois dispatched a force of 1,500 led by French Constable Raoul de Clermont to reinforce the French garrison at the walled town of Cassel, which lay west of Courtrai. Clermont had orders to rendezvous with Artois near Courtrai once the commander-in-chief advanced on the main objective.

For his campaign against the French, Jülich was able to recruit 11,200 soldiers. The Flemish army, which was divided into three main corps, arrived at Courtrai on June 23 and laid siege to the town, which was held by 234 French troops. Heavily outnumbered, the French garrison abandoned the town and withdrew to the relative security of the castle to await relief.

It would be more than two weeks before relief arrived. On July 9, Artois and Clermont arrived outside Courtrai. The combined French army totaled 4,300, of which 3,000 were heavy cavalry and 1,300 infantry. The largest contingents came from the County of Artois and from allied regions adjacent to Flanders such as Brabant and Hainault, but the army did include substantial contributions from southwestern France. The infantry were mercenaries from Navarre and Guyenne and were commanded by Jean de Burlats, Seneschal of Guyenne. The majority of the infantry were crossbowmen, but there also were 300 light infantry armed with javelins. The highest quality troops in Artois' army were recruited from crown lands such as Champagne, Normandy, and Ponthieu. Each of these regions contributed about 200 knights and squires, many of whom were veteran troops, to the army that arrived outside Courtrai.

Artois ordered a mixed force of cavalry and infantry to assault the west gate of the town, but it was easily repulsed by the Flemish heavy infantry, which had a large force of skilled crossbowmen posted on the battlements. With no siege equipment in his baggage train, Artois had no

choice but to order his scouts on the following day to reconnoiter the south bank of the Lys for a suitable place to offer battle to the Flemish Communal Army. To assist the relief force, the Viscount of Lens, who commanded the French garrison, on the night of July 10 ordered several of his men to signal the relief army using torches that the most advantageous ground for a fight was the Groeninge Field that bordered the town to the east.

But the Groeninge Field, like all of the land adjacent to the town, was marshy land that was not well suited for cavalry operations. This didn't matter much to the French, though, who believed that once the Flemish militia saw a professional army arrayed against them would retreat and disband.

The marshy character of the Groeninge Field was not its only drawback. Another significant drawback was that the field was surrounded on all sides by water courses. To the north of the field was the Lys River, to the west was a large stream that flowed into the river, to the south was the Great Brook, and to the east was the Groeninge Brook. The attack plan, as envisioned by Artois and his lieutenants, was for the cavalry to attack across the two brooks. The brooks would break up the momentum of the charge and, if the cavalry did not cross the brooks and reform quickly, make it vulnerable to counterattack. Nevertheless, it was a risk Artois was willing to take to carry out the king's order to annihilate the Flemish army.

Early on the morning of July 11, the Flemish army filed out of a narrow gate in the east wall and deployed for battle. A corps composed of 3,000 men from East Flanders took up a position on the left near the Lys River. Jan Borluut, a wool merchant from Ghent led the corps. The 3,000-man Bruges Franc Corps, which was recruited from the villages around Bruges, held the center. The Bruges Franc was deployed in a curve connecting the two corps on the right and left that were deployed perpendicular to each other. The Bruges Franc men were led by 30-year-old Guy of Namur, who was a younger son of Guy of Dampierre. The largest corps, which numbered 3,500 men from Bruges led by William of Jülich, held the right.

Library of Congress

An illuminated manuscript from the period accurately portrays the Flemish army as a completely dismounted force. William of Jülich ordered the nobles under his command to fight dismounted with the commoners.

Two smaller units of infantry were stationed in the rear of the Flemish army. A 1,200-man division from Ypres was deployed around Courtrai Castle to contain the French garrison, and a 500-man division was positioned behind the Flemish center as a reserve. The reserve was led by Lord Jan van Renesse of Zeeland, who had the distinction of being the Flemish commander with the most battle experience.

Artois called a council of war to consider how the French attack should proceed. He had not ordered a complete reconnaissance of the field of battle, and therefore there was no discussion of the two types of obstacles, namely the marshland and streams, that would hinder a successful cavalry charge. If the cavalry attack was interrupted or too slow, it might allow the Flemish to counterattack the French cavalry when they were in the process of crossing the streams. But Artois and his supporters were blind to the threat. Artois approved Burlats' suggestion that the crossbowmen be allowed to shower the Flemish line with their iron-tipped bolts. The commanders left the meeting with the understanding that the cavalry would charge at the most opportune moment.

The French cavalry, which was organized by region, was divided into 10 divisions with 300 horsemen in each. The more heavily armored knights were in the front rank, while the less well equipped squires were behind them. The knights attacked with 13-foot-long lances braced under their arms. Once their lances were broken or lost in combat, they resorted to using their swords. When the cavalry attacked, it did so not at a gallop but at a trot in tightly packed ranks.

Namur knighted about 30 guild workers that morning who had shown valor in various situations during the Bruges Matins and in the weeks afterward. Jülich sent his 320 crossbowmen forward as skirmishers, and they took up positions in the tall grass behind the streams. He had word passed through the ranks that no man was to stop fighting to plunder the enemy. If any soldier saw another disobey the order, he was to slay him.

To strengthen the morale of the troops, Jülich sent his horse to the rear and ordered the small number of other nobles on horseback to do the same. Jülich then turned over command of the army to Renesse because he believed the Zeelander was the best qualified to issue orders in the heat of battle.

Seeing the French deploy for battle, the banners representing the various guilds and towns were unfurled. In the rear of the Flemish army, Renesse also ordered his banner unfurled. Renesse's banner was emblazoned with a black lion on a gold field. Some of the French nobles recognized the banner, and they realized for the first time that the Flemish army had a capable leader.

Despite the intense heat, the spirit of the Flemish troops ran high. They traded stories about the depredations that the French had inflicted on the Flemish people and, in so doing, increased their lust for revenge against the unwelcome conquerors.

Namur walked to the front of the army and said, "Beware, noble Flemings. Stand firm because the enemy will ride toward you with much force. Call upon the help of God. He will certainly stand by us."

After Renesse finished speaking he returned to his position with the reserve, and Namur and Jülich both took up goedendags and joined the ranks of the infantry. Jülich took up a position with the Bruges Corps on the Flemish right, and Namur joined the ranks of the men from East Flanders on the Flemish left. Viewed from the French line, the tightly packed ranks of Flemish with their sharp-edged weapons gleaming in the sunlight were a sobering sight.

Artois had grouped his 10 divisions into left and right wings and a reserve corps. Artois took up a position with the four divisions that constituted the right wing opposite the Groeninge

Brook. Constable Clermont led the four divisions in the left wing, which formed opposite the Great Brook. Behind the junction of the two lines was a reserve corps composed of two divisions under the co-command of Count Guy of St. Pol and Count Robert of Boulogne.

The French crossbowmen and javelin throwers advanced at noon. The Flemish crossbowmen were the first to fire when the French archers came within range. The two sides were soon firing steadily at each other. The effect of the French crossbow fire on the Flemish main line was negligible.

When the French crossbowmen approached the streams, the fire became too hot for the outnumbered Flemish crossbowmen, and they fell back. The French crossbowmen halted when they reached the streams because to cross without support would have been suicidal.

Artois had grown impatient by that time, and at 1 PM he signaled his trumpeters to sound a general advance. The French cavalry had moved up behind the crossbowmen, so they didn't have far to advance to reach the streams. Clermont's wing was closer and was the first to reach the stream and begin to cross it. The knights advanced at a steady trot. They maintained tightly packed ranks with their stirrups nearly touching. They were clad in armor from head to toe.

When Clermont's wing reached the Great Brook, the horses balked at having to ride into a water-filled stream twice the length of their bodies. Some of the horses would not jump the stream, and their riders had to force them to wade through it. The cavalrymen tried to get their mounts across the stream as quickly as possible so that they could reform and continue their attack. The vast majority of the mounted men were able to cross the stream and reform in a short span of time.

The Flemings stood shoulder to shoulder eight rows deep. In the front row of the Flemish line were pikemen alternated with men wielding goedendags. The pikemen had planted their 10-foot-long pikes in the ground at an angle and braced them with their feet to absorb the shock of the cavalry charge. The men armed with goedendags held them high to swing at any knight who should try to break through the formation.

Those knights with the greatest combat experience were able to get their mounts to plunge into the sharp hedge of pikes, but the horses of the majority of the attackers shied away at the wall of pikes. The Flemish soldiers wielding goedendags charged out after them and clubbed their horses in an effort to force the horses to dump their riders onto the ground. The mounted men who did penetrate the formation were quickly surrounded by groups of Flemish soldiers wielding goedendags. Whenever a French knight or squire was knocked to the ground, he was speared like a fish.

The knights of the two divisions on the far left of Clermont's wing, which were led by Burlats and Brabant, had scant success against the men of Bruges. Nevertheless, some limited success was achieved by Brabant himself. Spying Jülich's banner, Brabant steered his destrier toward the young prince. Brabant rode with such force toward his objective that his horse knocked Jülich down and toppled his banner as well. The Bruges men fighting with Jülich swarmed around Brabant's horse, pulled the lord from his saddle, and stabbed him repeatedly.

Jülich continued fighting after being knocked down by Brabant, but his face had been cut badly. After a short time, several men escorted him to the rear. Fearing that the Bruges Corps would panic if word was incorrectly spread that the count had been killed in battle, his servant Jan Vlaminc donned his master's coat of arms and joined the melee.

ARTOIS AND THOSE TROOPS WITH WHOM HE SHARED THE GREATEST BOND CHARGED IN A TIGHT FORMATION TOWARD THE GROENINGE BROOK. WHEN HE REACHED THE GROENINGE BROOK, ARTOIS SHOUTED, "LET THOSE WHO ARE FAITHFUL FOLLOW!"

Since the center of the Flemish line was further from the two streams than the Flemish flanks, the two divisions of Clermont's cavalry that struck the right flank of the Bruges Franc Corps were able to gain more momentum when they renewed their charge after crossing the stream. The attack by part of Clermont's wing against the Bruges Franc was led by Clermont's brother, Guy de Nesle, and Mathieu de Trie, both of whom held the rank of marshal. The marshals' charge penetrated deeply into the Bruges Franc Corps, breaking the morale of some of the Flemish who fled toward the town.

For reasons not completely clear, the attack of Artois' wing did not go forward until about 2 PM. Only three of the four divisions on the right wing went forward as Artois held back his division. Many of the knights had spent their entire lives preparing for bloody clashes such as the one that awaited them that day. They surged toward the Groeninge Brook, crossed it, and reformed on the other side. The men of the East Flanders Corps on the right of the Flemish line braced for the attack.

The veteran commanders of the French right wing included Jacques de St. Pol, Count Jean I d'Aumale, and Count John II d'Eu. The men under St. Pol and Aumale struck the East Flanders Corps, while Eu led his knights against the already disrupted Bruges Franc Corps. The French cavalry on the far right sought to reach Guy of Namur's banner but had great trouble penetrating the hedge of pikes pointed skyward. French cavalry managed to penetrate to the location of the banner of Ghent, which was held aloft by a stout-hearted soldier named Zeger Lonke, and knocked him to the ground. Lonke made it back to his feet and waved the banner, which aided in rallying the Ghent contingent. The small number of knights and squires who penetrated the East Flanders Corps were quickly surrounded, unhorsed, and slain without mercy.

In the center, the Bruges Franc Corps, which had been partially disrupted by the charge of the French left wing, did not present a strong front in the presence of another strong mounted attack. The attack of Eu's division against the left flank of the Bruges Corps benefitted from the success the French marshals already enjoyed against the right flank of the Bruges Franc Corps.

From the castle ramparts, the Viscount of Lens watched intently as the French attack achieved substantial success in the center. At about 2:30 PM, he ordered his troops to sally forth from the castle and attack the Flemish center from the rear. French crossbowmen on the castle ramparts fired down on the men of Ypres who were charged with preventing the garrison from joining the main battle. The commander of the Ypres contingent had placed his own crossbowmen in strong positions behind pavises, and they were able to cut down many of the French troops that charged out of the entrance of the castle. The few mounted men from the garrison were quickly surrounded by goedendag-wielding Flemish infantry and slain. The men of the garrison were greatly outnumbered. They never made it to their objective.

Renesse had observed large numbers of men from the Bruges Franc fleeing to the rear but felt it was not his place to rush forward and try to rally them. Rather, he was scanning the battlefield for the right moment to commit his reserve force to the fray. Once the veteran commander had

Both: Kotomi

Three images from a 14th-century chest discovered in 1905 that accurately depicts the Battle of Courtrai. TOP: Militiamen are shown wearing open helmets and mail gloves and wielding pikes, goedendags, and swords. BOTTOM: Flemish foot soldiers block the charge of a French knight by attacking both horse and rider. A pike is thrust at the knight's head while a sword is driven into the horse's chest.

determined that the enemy had committed the bulk of its troops to the battle, he decided the moment had come to put his reserve where it was most needed. Renesse ordered trumpets sounded to signal an advance, and he directed his fresh troops to the center so that they could assist the small number of brave men from the Bruges Franc who had not lost heart and were still fighting the enemy with great determination.

Renesse's men rushed to wherever the French knights were getting the best of the Bruges Franc troops and joined the melee. French knights and squires who had up until then survived numerous attempts to knock or grab them from their saddles were overwhelmed by the reinforced Bruges Franc Corps.

By 3:30 PM, the Flemish infantry had nearly eradicated all of the cavalrymen who had penetrated their formation. And because of the commitment of the Flemish reserve under Renesse there was no danger from that point of the Flemish being driven from the field. The French cavalrymen who were still fighting the Flemish were falling back across the entire front toward the streams.

When the French horsemen began falling back, groups of Flemish troops began chasing after them, hoping to overtake them before they could escape. The distance to the streams was shorter on both flanks, and that is where the Flemish first fell on the French, who had the difficult task of coaxing their horses back across the barrier. Some of the horsemen successfully managed to jump their horses across the stream, but others tried to ride their horses through the stream. These cavalrymen were overtaken and killed by Flemish soldiers bent on revenge.

In the center, a few of the most experienced knights tried to reform to charge again into the Flemish ranks, but they were unable to separate themselves long enough from the pursuing Flemish to reform. In minutes they realized the futility of trying to reform and tried to escape. By that time the fighting was located along the stream banks as the Flemish clubbed and stabbed the French cavalry. Soon the stream bank was blanketed with dead and dying Frenchmen, and in many places the stream ran red with their blood.

Artois was stunned by the repulse of his seemingly impregnable cavalry by militia. He had been entrusted by Philip with vanquishing the rebel army, and he must have realized at that point that he had failed his sovereign lord. He had several hundred knights with him, and he decided to order them to charge at Namur's position in the hope that he could disrupt the Flemish by slaying the man who had been partly responsible for the destruction of his army.

French trumpets signaled a fresh advance. Artois and those troops with whom he shared the greatest bond charged in a tight formation toward the Groeninge Brook. When he reached the Groeninge Brook, Artois shouted, "Let those who are faithful follow!" Then, with a magnificent leap, Artois' horse cleared the stream. One advantage Artois and his men benefitted from was that the Flemish were no longer in a tight body, but instead were scattered in clumps around the battlefield. Artois and his men took advantage of this to steer around some of the groups along the stream and head for Namur's position.

The Flemish troops hurriedly tried to close ranks when they saw not only the charge of Artois' division but also the French rear guard walking their horses closer to the junction of the two streams in the center of the battlefield. Artois rode directly for Namur. The young prince and his bodyguards braced for the attack by the count, whose coat of arms bearing gold fleur-de-lis and castles against an azure background testified to his noble birth.

Artois reached the prince's banner, and being mounted he was able to reach above the man who held the banner and grab hold of it near the top. He managed to tear the banner but had to let it go to fight the prince's bodyguards. Realizing he was surrounded, the count fought with redoubled fury. By that time, Artois had discarded his lance, and he wheeled in circles on his horse slashing at his attackers with his sword.

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An illustration shows French knights being slain as they tried to cross a stream to reach the Flemish ranks. In reality, though, the Flemish waited far behind the stream to receive the attack; but once it failed, the Flemish killed the French in great numbers as they tried to retreat across the stream.

Namur wanted the count taken alive, but the Flemish prince knew that it would be nearly impossible given the rage of the Flemish soldiers. Artois fought bravely and broke out of the encirclement several times until a particularly strong soldier, William van Saaftinge, clubbed Artois' horse, sending it to the ground along with its rider. In their rage, the Flemish stabbed Artois as many as 30 times.

Despite having repulsed the main charge of the cavalry, as well as the follow-on attack by Artois' cavalry division, fear spread like a fire on a thatched roof through the Flemish ranks when they saw the large French rear guard advancing in what they believed was a preparation for an all-out charge. For this reason, some of the Flemish began to fall back from the stream bank. Namur and the other knights in the Flemish ranks began to rally the wavering troops. At that moment, the men of Ypres, who had checked the attack of the castle garrison, joined the main army.

But there was to be no final charge by the French. The co-commanders of the reserve, St. Pol and Boulogne, had seen the Flemish steadily feeding fresh troops into the battle, and they believed that if the bulk of the army had not been able to defeat the Flemish neither would their two divisions. While this was a sound decision, the commanders of the reserve also chose not to try to extract the survivors, some of whom were still on the far bank and desperately outnumbered. It was a cowardly act but may have been a wise one since the Flemish could easily wade through the stream and engage the reserve in an effort to prevent it from safely withdrawing.

When they saw the French rear guard hesitate, the Flemish infantry began cheering, and their front ranks surged across the stream. In response, the commanders of the French rear guard signaled to the remaining troops to retreat. The French reserve was in such haste to leave that it abandoned valuable baggage in its camp to the Flemish. Some of the surviving Brabantine knights along the Great Brook, who had been unhorsed and were stumbling about, tried to pretend that they had been fighting in the Flemish army. However, one of the distinctions between the Brabantine knights and Flemish knights was that the former still had on their spurs, whereas the small number of Flemish knights had removed their spurs to fight on foot as instructed by Namur.

Namur was furious when informed of the deception, and he ordered all slain who had on gold spurs. Once this grisly task was completed, the Flemish proceeded to strip the bodies of the slain French of their gold spurs. Some of the Flemish then went to sack the enemy camp, while others marched in pursuit of the fleeing French, who were trying to reach French-controlled towns of Lille and Tournai.

The 2,000 French casualties of the battle included not only the commander-in-chief, but also the constable of France, one of the marshals of France, and most of the division commanders. The other French marshal, de Trie, was taken prisoner so that he could be ransomed for a large sum of money. The Flemish took pairs of gold spurs from 250 dead knights, and these were mounted as trophies in Courtrai's Church of Our Lady.

The defeat of the most experienced, best equipped warriors in France by militia troops shocked the nobility of Europe. Fourteenth-century chroniclers considered the Battle of Courtrai to be an event of the utmost significance and likened the Flemish victory to some of the greatest military triumphs since recorded history began, including the Siege of Troy and the Battle of Carthage. The war between France and Flanders would drag on for three more years.

On June 23, 1305, Philip signed the Treaty of Athis-sur-Orge with Count Robert III of Flanders. The treaty stipulated that in exchange for conceding several French-speaking towns in western Flanders to the French, including Douai, Lille, and Orchies, Flanders could maintain its prewar status as a fief of France rather than being annexed by France. □

PANZER FURY AT

BY KELLY BELL

The black uniformed German panzer crews climbed into their Panther tanks at 10 PM on June 8, 1944. Their objective was the village of Bretteville just west of the key crossroads of Caen opposite the beaches where the British had come ashore on D-Day two days before.

The engines roared to life, smoke poured from their exhausts, and the tracks clanked as they rolled into the black of night. Because of the threat of attacks on German armored columns by rocket-firing British Hawker Typhoons, it was essential that the attack go forward under cover of night.

The two companies of Panthers from Panzer Battalion I of the 12th SS Panzer Regiment were part of a kampfgruppe whose objective was to disrupt the advance of Canadian forces moving around the left flank of German forces organizing to make a stand at the city and possibly drive the British back to the beaches in the days to follow.

The kampfgruppe moved quickly toward its objective. Rather than having the panzergrenadiers participating in the attack ride atop the tanks, they rode the half dozen kilometers to their objective on motorcycles.

When the Germans arrived at their objective, the defenders were ready. Manning antitank guns, infantrymen of the Regina Rifles Regiment, 7th Brigade, 3rd Canadian Infantry Division scored a number of hits on Panthers at the front of the column. Hoping to take the defenders in the flank or rear, many of the tanks peeled off to the south, driving around the enemy's flank to enter the village from the other direction.

The Panthers rolled into the town and began firing into buildings and into rows of dense bushes where enemy infantry was hiding. Soon a portion of the village was in flames. Thick smoke poured from burning buildings and destroyed tanks, making it doubly hard to see targets in the nocturnal fight. Some of the tank crews, lucky to escape their

British Sherman tanks and infantry had to fend off desperate counterattacks by German units rushing to the Normandy front from other sectors of France. It took the British Second Army more than a month to secure the city, which lay only nine miles from Sword Beach. BOTTOM: The crews of British Cromwell tanks prepare for a fresh attack on Caen. Besides their advantage in numbers, the British tank crews also had more fuel than the Germans.

Bretteville was characteristic of the fighting over a two-month period between the Commonwealth troops and German troops at Caen. In the early days, the Germans launched multiple counterattacks to buy time for German troops stationed at other possible invasion areas on the French coast to reach the Normandy sector.

The Germans managed in the weeks following D-Day to derail the schedule of British Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery, who expected Commonwealth troops to capture Caen on the day after the landings. German Army Group B Commander Erwin Rommel urged his subordinates to rush additional units to Caen to prevent a breakout by Montgomery's troops. Each commander committed the vast majority of his armor to the battle for Caen. It came as a cold shock to Montgomery and the Commonwealth troops that the steel-spined Germans would fight a two-month delaying action before being forced to relinquish the key objective to their equally determined foe.

Like other key cities in Normandy near the invasion area, Caen was an important road junction. The Germans sought to prevent the Allies from capturing it so as to deny them the ability to move east-west and break out from the bocage, which was the patchwork of fields divided by wooded embankments that offered every advantage to the defender and none to the attacker.

On the evening of June 6, Generalleutnant Edgar Feuchtinger's crack 21st Panzer Division assembed south of the city and sliced through the British-Canadian linkup between Juno and Gold Beaches. The 192nd Grenadier Regiment drove all the way to the English Channel coast. However, the former Afrika Korps division's armored elements lost contact with their accompanying infantry, and rather than following it and strengthening the potentially crucial wedge between the invasion beaches the panzers veered westward about five miles behind their advance units and blundered into Allied antitank positions outside Bieville and Periers and were quickly pinned down.

While the 192nd's infantry waited in vain for its tanks to arrive, the situation stagnated. This in itself was a positive development for the Germans. If they could hold the corridor long enough to pack it with armor, artillery, and men, the British beachheads would be isolated and in jeopardy. To the north at Calais there were about 200,000 German troops waiting for a second invasion the Wehrmacht suspected would come there. If German Führer Adolf Hitler were to decide to send these reserves to Normandy, they could have a very consequential influence on the still-vulnerable Allied foothold.

Realizing the peril, 21st Army Group Commander Montgomery rushed fleets of troop-laden gliders into the Nazi-held salient in advance of the beach landings. With virtually no air support, the Germans were unable to stem this mini-invasion from the sky, and when reinforce-

CAEN

BRITISH FIELD MARSHAL BERNARD MONTGOMERY'S ATTACK ON THE KEY ROAD NETWORK WAS MET BY GERMAN UNITS WITH ENOUGH HIGH-QUALITY ARMOR TO INFLICT HEAVY DAMAGE ON ALLIED FORCES. BUT THE BRITISH AND CANADIANS NEVER SHRANK FROM THE DAUNTING TASK.

damaged tanks, ran for protection behind the panzergrenadiers or hitched a lift on friendly vehicles. The Canadians eventually made it too hot for the Germans to stay.

"Through my sight I saw a veritable wall of fire moving toward us about 900 meters away," wrote tank gunner Leopold Lengheim. "There was no time to think, load—fire, load—fire, as fast as possible until it was all over for us as well. Hits to the slanted front armor and the gun ruined its adjustment; our fire lay way short. The next hit went exactly below the commander's cupola. The cupola and the head of our commander were gone."

The desperate and gruesome night fight at

Both: Imperial War Museum

Bundesarchiv Bild 101I-738-0267-18; Photo: Arthur Grimm

ABOVE: A German Tiger I tank rumbles along a road near Villers-Bocage, a key objective west of Caen. Two companies of Heavy Tank Battalion 101, a Waffen SS unit, on June 13 ambushed tank columns of the British 7th Armored Division. **RIGHT:** The 1st SS Panzer Regiment makes its way by rail to the front near Caen. Allied air attacks took a heavy toll on German armored units transferred to the Normandy front by rail.

ments and supplies failed to arrive they were forced to back out of their vital real estate and fell back to Caen. The invaders' beachfront holdings were now more secure, but they could be nothing but a stepping-off point for the inevitable liberation of western Europe, and in the corn-growing belt just in front of them their route was blocked by a ruthless and capable foe.

The vanguard of the 12th SS Panzer Regiment of the 12th SS Panzer "Hitlerjugend" Division had begun arriving southwest of Caen on June 6 to reinforce the 21st Panzer Division. The Hitlerjugend Division was led by Brigadeführer Fritz Witt. Panzer Battalion 2, which was equipped with Panzer IV tanks, arrived during the night. Panzer Battalion 1, which was equipped with Panther tanks, arrived the morning of July 7.

On the morning of June 7, the 21st Panzer and the lead elements of the 12th SS Panzer Hitlerjugend Division, which was led by Brigadeführer (brigadier general) Fritz Witt, were outside the city while preparing for a joint Army/SS attack on Sword Beach. Witt issued the following order for an attack: "Attack the enemy on the left of the railroad line Caen-Luc sur Mer and drive him into the sea." The attack was to begin at 4 PM, but the enemy's initiative would force the commitment of much of this force before that time.

While Panzer Regiment 12 was still arriving that morning, the commander of the 25th SS Panzergrenadier Regiment, Standartenführer (general) Kurt Meyer, was surveying his area of approach from the steeple of the 12th-century Abbaye d'Ardenne three miles northwest of Caen. Meyer was startled by the sight of an advancing armored column. It was the Canadians of the 27th Tank Regiment and 2nd Armored Brigade making a leisurely and (as it turned out) ambitious attempt to take coveted Carpiquet airfield.

Evidently unaware of the powerful, nearby hostile presence, the Canadians rumbled casually along a road lined with camouflaged German Panzer IV tanks and artillery. Meyer, who had at his disposal a battalion of panzergrenadiers and a tank battalion, personally directed the German attack. By then, the Germans at Caen had 50 tanks ready to take on the enemy. When the unsuspecting convoy reached the Caen-Bayeux Road, Meyer screamed "Attack!" into his field microphone.

A reconnaissance by four Panzer IVs of Company 5, Panzer Battalion 2, along the Franqueville-Authie Road ran headlong into Shermans of the Sherbrooke Fusiliers at 2 PM. The doughty Fusiliers managed to knock out three of the four German tanks in a brief but bloody action. When apprised of the bad news, Panzer Regiment 12 Commander Obersturmbannführer (lieutenant colonel) Max Wünsche ordered a general attack by all of the available panzers from II Panzer Abteilung. "Panzers, march!" he shouted into the radio. Hearing the order, all tanks of Companies 5 and 6 of Panzer Battalion 2 positioned to the left of Abbaye d'Ardenne started their engines and lurched forward to hunt for the enemy. The Mark IVs suddenly appeared as if out of nowhere on the enemy's left flank. The unplanned German ambush was a total rout. The Sherbrooke Fusiliers pulled back, leaving in their wake 21 knocked out Shermans. Meyer had pushed to within six miles of Sword Beach. Unfortunately, he had not yet been reinforced with additional armor from either the depleted 21st Panzer or the soon to arrive Panzer Lehr Divisions.

Trying to follow up his triumph with an assault on Sword Beach, Meyer deployed his forces northward. Additional Canadian armor promptly assailed his flanks. When Meyer came under fire from field artillery, naval artillery, and ground attack aircraft, he realized

the odds were too great, broke off the advance, and returned to Caen.

The lengthiest siege of the war in the West was unfolding, and Montgomery's frustration would mount steadily in the coming weeks. Stung by the German counterattacks, Montgomery on June 8 ordered British Second Army commander General Miles Dempsey "to develop operations with all possible speed for the capture of Caen."

On June 9, the 15,000 soldiers of the Panzer Lehr Division began arriving at the front and took up a position on the far left flank of the German line, blocking the Commonwealth advance toward Caen.

Over the next few days the situation on the northern outskirts of Caen stalemated with the 3rd Canadian and 3rd British Divisions keeping the pressure on and tying down the 12th SS and 21st Panzer Divisions while the British 7th Armored Division attempted to wheel around in a great arc, outflank the waiting Panzer Lehr Division, and assault Caen from the west. Things went terribly wrong.

The command of the 1st SS Panzer Corps had recognized the need to bolster the left flank of the Panzer Lehr Division west of Caen but could not draw off any of the scant tank assets of the three armored divisions already deployed at the front. The command, therefore, decided to order those elements of Heavy Tank Battalion 101, which had just arrived at the front and had not yet been committed, to protect Panzer Lehr's unanchored left flank. Company 1 of the heavy tank battalion took up a position 10 kilometers northeast of the outlying village of Villers-Bocage, and Company 2 established itself behind the other company two miles northeast of the village. Company 1 was led by Haupstürmführer (captain) Rolf Mobius, and Company 2 by Oberstürmführer (1st lieutenant) Michael Wittmann.

On the morning of June 13, the 22nd British Armored Brigade made it as far as the outlying village of Villers-Bocage. Wittman was watching. Angered at the nonchalance of the overconfident Englishmen, Wittmann (who had only five of his Tiger tanks on hand) attacked the column alone while his other four tanks laid down covering fire. Wittmann knocked out four Sherman tanks from 80 meters. He then roared up to the column, turned his Tiger parallel to it, and drove alongside the column in the direction of the march, blasting enemy tanks. The other tanks of his company fell in behind him and rounded up more than 200 prisoners.

Wittmann eventually was joined in the turkey shoot by Company 1, and together the two Tiger tank companies knocked out a large number of British tanks. Wittmann spent the day destroying everything Allied he could get in his sights, and that evening, with infantry from the 2nd SS Panzer and Panzer Lehr Divisions strengthening the German line, the surviving "Desert Rats" of the 7th gave up and fell back to Livry five miles to the east.

Wittmann had finished the day with 25 British tanks to add to his tally of 119 Soviet machines he had destroyed in almost three years on the Eastern Front. His exploits this day earned him the rare swords addition to his Knight's Cross and a promotion to captain. More significantly, he and his fellow SS had pulverized the armored spearhead of Montgomery's main thrust. Another major drive on Caen was convincingly stopped. The Germans had shown they were eager to fight and would strive to inflict maximum damage on the British and Canadian forces advancing on Caen.

Bundesarchiv Bild 101I-738-0267-21A; Photo: Arthur Grimm

ABOVE: A column of British armored vehicles smolders in ruin after being blasted by Oberstürmführer Michael Wittmann's Tiger I tank. **BELOW:** A Panther tank and SS panzergrenadiers fire on elements of the British Second Army attempting to capture Caen. The Germans fed their elite panzer units into the battle to thwart an Allied breakout toward Paris.

National Archives

Montgomery was anxious about being overshadowed by the Americans. Maj. Gen. J. Lawton Collins's VII Corps was securing the Cherbourg peninsula on June 22. That same day the British and Canadians saturated the Nazi positions in front of Caen with a massive artillery bombardment before their next advance. It was the 16th day of the invasion. Montgomery had confidently scheduled Caen to be captured on D-Day plus one. It had been two weeks since June 7, and the chagrined field marshal planned to ford the Odon and Orne Rivers, take vitally strategic Hill 112, then send his forces around the city and secure it via a flanking maneuver. On paper it looked easy.

The onrushing British collided with the well-equipped, fanatical teenagers of the 12th SS Panzer Division but managed to force an expensive penetration through antitank positions. If the Allies could consolidate a breakthrough across the Odon Valley, Caen would be successfully outflanked

and the German lines in northern France seriously breached.

Initially things looked promising for the British. Apart from the overworked 12th SS Panzer Division, the British were opposed only by decimated units and lone, panzerfaust-packing grenadiers lurking in hedgerows and orchards. These troops and a few Tiger and Panther tanks managed to slow the encroaching swarms of infantry-laden Shermans, but His Majesty's soldiers were many and determined.

By the end of June, Hill 112 was secure, enabling the Scottish 15th Division to cross the Odon and set up on its left bank. At daybreak on June 30, the 2nd SS Panzer Corps, with heavy mortar and artillery support, launched a sudden counterattack on the strategic heights. Although codebreakers had warned them of the assault and they had crowded tanks, antitank artillery, and part of a machine-gun battalion onto the hilltop, the speed and power of the dawn panzer charge knocked the British off balance, and Hill 112 again changed bloody hands. If only for the moment yet another Allied threat to Caen was averted.

Despite punishing attacks by Typhoons, the Germans had managed to amass 7½ panzer divisions around Caen by the end of June. Between them, the divisions had 150 heavy tanks, both the Tiger and newer King Tigers, as well as 250 medium tanks. Montgomery had been fought to a standstill, so it seemed. He issued a directive on June 30 indicating an intention to hold in front of Caen on the Allied left flank in anticipation of an American breakthrough on the Allied right flank. But his headquarters continued working on plans for an eventual breakout on the left.

The goal of Operation Goodwood, which began July 18, was for the British to clear the Germans from the region southeast of Caen. After three days of hard fighting, the British failed to punch through the German defensive belt.

On July 4, Canadian forces reached the heights overlooking Carpiquet airfield. One after another the outlying villages of Ste. Honorine-la-Chardonnerette, St. Manvieu, Blainville, Periers-sur-le-Dan, Anisy, Villons-les-Buissons, and Norrey-en-Bessin fell to the inexorably advancing Commonwealth forces, ringing the main objective in an almost complete encirclement. Eight centuries earlier William the Conqueror had set sail from Normandy to add England to his dominion. Now a far greater invasion in reverse had reached the outskirts of the ruins of his capital.

Montgomery called this offensive to finally drive the Germans from the ruins Operation Goodwood, and in preparation the Royal Air Force (RAF) sent the Avro Lancasters and Handley Page Halifaxes of 625 Squadron on a massive raid the evening of July 7. The heavy bombers unloaded 2,000 tons of high explosives onto the already devastated city. For an hour the bombs drummed to earth as Germans and imprudent townspeople who had not heeded the warning of the impending holocaust delivered via leaflets earlier in the day cowered in stunned terror as their world exploded around them. One young mother who watched two children blinded by flying glass shards covered her own little boy's face with a pillow as she felt the "whole world shudder. It went on and on for 50 minutes with a single break of five minutes."

Furthermore, Allied artillery fired more than 80,000 shells in support of the coming push but overshot the German defense perimeter and killed approximately 5,000 French civilians still in the city.

But German losses were insignificant. The bombing and shelling actually raised the morale of the waiting defenders as they listened in glee to the off-target pounding. Montgomery kicked off his offensive, codenamed Operation Charnwood, at 4:20 AM on July 8 with the Canadians starting at 7:30 AM. The Allies were stunned at the ferocity of the resistance they encountered as Meyer's men fought with their typical abandon. Still, the decimated 16th Luftwaffe Field Division had essentially collapsed, dangerously exposing Meyer's right flank. Also, the British 9th Infantry Brigade and 33rd Tank Brigade had, by midmorning, penetrated into Caen's suburbs. Elsewhere on the sprawling battlefield the British were making progress.

The British pushed the 1st SS Battalion out of Milius, leaving adjacent Epron in danger of being liberated. What was left of the 2nd SS Battalion was encircled in Glamanche, and by 4 PM the British Royal Warwicks had reached St. Contest. In Buron the Canadians had trapped the 3rd SS Panzergrenadier Battalion. At 5:30 PM a counterattack by two platoons of the 3rd SS Panzer Company was hurled back, leaving Commonwealth forces at nightfall still in possession of the day's hard-earned gains. At great cost (262 men killed in the North Shore Regiment alone) the Canadians had taken the towns of Gruchy, Authie, Franqueville, Cussy, and Carpiquet airfield. In other areas the attack fell short of its objectives.

British attempts to reach and secure the Orne River bridges in Caen were blocked by minefields and intense artillery fire. Still, Meyer's command was being bled white, and on July 8, 1st Panzer Corps Chief of Staff Fritz Kramer gave him grudging permission to fall back to the Orne's southern bank. That evening Rommel removed all his heavy weapons from Caen's city proper and set up a new defense line with what was left of Meyer's troops on the southern bank. In the darkness the Allies did not seem to realize their foe was slipping away, and the Germans escaped to set up a powerful riverside position.

The British reached the center of the city on the afternoon of the 9th, but tons of bomb-

blasted debris blocked further progress. Still, they had finally reached their D-Day plus one objective—slightly more than a month late. Even at that point the Germans held the southern part of the city. So far Montgomery's command had taken 3,817 casualties and lost 80 tanks. By ratio the Allies had lost six times as many men as the Germans during the Caen offensive. The tactical bombing was an even greater failure.

The sight of successive waves of medium and heavy bombers droning overhead was heartening to the British and American ground forces, boosting their morale. However, the tangible results were virtually nonexistent. Professor Solly Zucherman served as Royal Air Force Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur Tedder's scientific advisor. An authority on Allied bombing policy, he visited the bombed area as soon as it was secured and was appalled at what he found. Despite the ghastly devastation he could locate virtually no sign of German dead or of destroyed Wehrmacht equipment.

Apart from obliterating an area of profound historical and cultural significance the poundings were militarily ineffectual. A doctor who remained in Caen and survived later wrote, "The bombardment was absolutely futile. There were no military objectives. All the bombardment did was choke the streets and hinder the Allies in their advance through the city."

It also failed to achieve its aim of disrupting the transfer of German forces from the British to the American sectors. The 2nd SS Panzer and the Panzer Lehr Divisions moved westward to effectively block the advance of General Omar Bradley's First Army. By July 10, the First Army had suffered 40,000 casualties, forcing Bradley to halt his slow progress while his command rested, repaired, and absorbed replacements.

Rommel had managed to convey four sizable forces of fresh reinforcements from his 1st and 19th Armies to the Caen salient, enabling him to fight his old foe Montgomery to a standstill. The Germans' ability to move troop columns across unbridged rivers despite heavy air interdiction took Montgomery by surprise and reminded him of a grim possibility that had troubled him for some time. What if Hitler decided to abandon the relatively unimportant Mediterranean coast and shift German forces there north? If he took that course of action, Hitler might be able to stagnate or even turn back the Allied advance. Thus, the British had to find a way to sustain their momentum and compel the enemy to commit all his reserves to engagements already or soon to be in progress and initiated by the Allies.

By keeping the Germans tied up in locations of his own choosing, Montgomery would make it impossible for them to counterattack through some weakly held part of his line. He was especially worried about where his lines intersected the American ones between Caumont and St. Lo. Hitler was indeed considering sending his forces against this vulnerable spot, and only constant pressure elsewhere was keeping the Wehrmacht off it. A strike sorely needed to be made soon to ensure against this dire possibility.

Both: Imperial War Museum

ABOVE: Royal engineers move through a cornfield during the advance on Caen. The British struggled to remove mines and dislodge antitank batteries in their effort to pry the Germans from Caen and its suburbs. BELOW: British infantry of the 1st Welsh Guards take cover behind a Norman hedgerow during Operation Goodwood. The bocage, a patchwork of field and woodlands, heavily favored the defending Germans.

It had been two weeks since the expensive, futile attempt to secure the crucial high ground southwest of the city—specifically Hill 112 in the angle of confluence between the Orne and Odon Rivers. If a second, finally successful blow could be made here things would be looking up with the durable Nazi garrison at last outflanked and outmaneuvered. It was also an obvious place for Montgomery to strike. His beachhead was deepest and most secure to the south, around the city of Bayeaux, but it had moved inland as far as possible because the countryside in front of it consisted of a series of steep, forested ridges bisected by river bottoms and sunken lanes. All this led up to the cliffs, promontories, and deep gorges of the Norman interior. The Germans fully expected another attack on Hill 112 and beyond. The only thing they were unclear on was when.

It had to be soon. Reserves were shrinking. With his flow of replacements steadily ebbing,

Imperial War Museum

ABOVE: British troops patrol Caen on July 10. Royal Air Force medium and heavy bombers pulverized the old city, killing many civilians but causing few German casualties. OPPOSITE: A Sherman tank belonging to the Sherbrooke Fusiliers Regiment rolls through the abandoned streets of Caen. The Canadian armored unit fought many actions against German panzer units in an effort to liberate Caen.

Montgomery contacted an increasingly impatient Supreme Commander Dwight Eisenhower on July 12: "Am going to launch a very big attack next week. VIII Corps with three armored divisions will be launched to the country east of the Orne." The attack he was referring to was Operation Goodwood.

With his predilection for deep thrusts through narrow breaches, Montgomery was habitually menaced on his flanks. To eliminate this danger he contacted RAF Bomber Command and the U.S. Army Air Forces to provide tactical support.

Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur "Bomber" Harris was unhappily aware of the dismal results of the recent bombing of Caen proper, but eventually agreed to provide 1,056 Lancasters and Halifaxes for yet another major raid. They were to line the entry point of the attack corridor with 5,000 tons of high explosives set with delayed fuses to crater the ground, making it difficult to transfer panzers. This also would smash defenses throughout the target area between the Colombelles Steelworks on the banks of the Orne to the west and the villages below the Bois de Bavent to the east. The U.S. Eighth and Ninth Air Forces would hammer the length of the corridor and its exit at Bourguebus with fragmentation bombs from 1,021 medium and heavy bombers in a synchronized Anglo-American attack that was the heaviest ever in support of ground forces.

Goodwood sent more than 10,000 vehicles of all classes (including 870 tanks and 680 tracked carriers) against the defenders. Late on the night of July 17, the 11th Armored clanked as quietly as possible across the Orne. Next came the 7th and Guards Divisions, passing through the gaps sappers had for days been clearing in the defensive minefields. It was 1 AM as the force began assembling at the jump-off point, and with H-hour set for 7:45 AM the tank crews, already exhausted by two days on the road, tried to snatch some sleep. At 5 AM, the first wave of bombers droned overhead, and within seconds the region in front of the armored force was a churning purgatory of titanic explosions.

Several miles out in the English Channel sat the battleship HMS *Roberts*. The last time she had seen action was the World War I Battle of Jutland, but now her elderly but enormous 15-inch rifles were doing such a masterful job of pounding the German antiaircraft positions that only six of the massive air armada's planes were downed.

The unfortunate Nazis beneath these waves of multi-engine, explosive-laden planes were terrifyingly shocked to be deemed worthy of such devastating attention. The landscape-altering storm was indeed like nothing witnessed in the history of warfare. Panzer radio operator Werner Korstenhaus later described it as "a bomb carpet, regularly plowing up the ground. Among the thunder of the explosions we could hear the wounded screaming and the insane howling of men who had been driven mad."

An undetermined but horrific number of Germans lost their minds, committed suicide, were buried alive or blown to atoms by the unearthly bombardment that overturned 63-ton Tiger tanks. Tanks not wrecked by the explosions had their guns, exhausts, air filters, and engine grids choked by the tons of dirt thrown up by the bombing. Their gun sights were knocked off target, and if their motors cranked at all they ran roughly and grudgingly. The infantry fared even worse.

Surviving members of the Luftwaffe's 16th Field Division were so shaken by their ordeal that they lost their muscular control and could not be marched to POW compounds for several hours because they were unable to walk in a straight line.

Montgomery and his planners had fingered elements of the 21st Panzer Division as the greatest threat to the coming Allied advance, but the Douglas Havocs and Martin Marauders of the U.S. Ninth Air Force had raked the 21st murderously. Also, the division had been in continuous combat since D-Day and was significantly depleted even before the air attack. Its surviving members, however shaken, were still proud professionals and had no intention of yielding anything easily.

Drowned out by the last bomb detonations were the crankings of hundreds of tank engines presaging the advance of the huge Commonwealth force down the pathway between Honorine-la-Chardonnerette and Escoville. To the left of the tank column was the accompanying infantry—the 23rd Hussars. Contrary to plans, the foot soldiers were forced to wait while the 3rd Royal Tank Regiment crowded through gaps in the minefield, and the infantry fell behind the armor. Rather than move ahead as a consolidated force, the massive attack group lost cohesion and formed a long, straggling line.

Before even encountering any defenders the divisional reconnaissance company, the Northhamptonshire Yeomanry, lost four Cromwell tanks to mines missed by the sappers. Ahead of them the infantry had made it past the minefields and come under fire from German field pieces ensconced in the sprawling ruins. These foot sloggers sorely needed armored support.

The infantry elements of the 11th Armored, 3rd Monmouth, and 1st Hereford Brigades reached Cuverville about 8:30 AM and accepted the surrender of a number of shellshocked Germans numbed by the night's bombing, but preliminary bursts of automatic weapons fire from the debris made it clear to the riflemen that the

airmen had not finished the job for them. The brigades commenced mustering for a frontal assault. This in itself was time consuming, and the tanks were already beyond the cluttered city streets, having bypassed them before dawn and resumed moving farther down the corridor and toward yet more Nazi strongholds. By the time the foot soldiers finished clearing the enemy from Cuverville, their motorized comrades were far ahead and, without the infantry, wide open for a flank attack.

The Shermans were approaching the 10-foot-high railroad embankment of the Caen-Vimont line. Crossing was tricky. Each machine had to crawl diagonally to the top, ease itself over the tracks, then rush at top speed down the incline without exposing itself too long against the skyline. A few of the Germans' dread 88mm field pieces had indeed survived the night.

The column made it over the railway, but the cloud of dust it kicked up alerted Oberst (colonel) Hans von Luck of the 21st Panzer Division. Watching from an orchard in the lofty village of Cagny, he noted how the mechanized force would skirt that town, passing between it and neighboring Le Mesnil-Frementel. He also took into account the surprising absence of covering infantry.

Hastily assembling five 88mm guns in the orchard, von Luck ambushed the column and knocked out 12 tanks, but his attack came too late. By then more than 100 Shermans had already passed Cagny and were en route to their final destination—Bourguebus.

More time and lives were lost in another attack outside Cagny, this time by six Tigers from the 503rd Heavy Tank Division, which knocked out nine of the grenadiers' tanks. Running off high-octane gasoline rather than diesel, the Sherman was notoriously flammable and outclassed in other ways by the generally larger, better armored and gunned panzers they faced in France. This was more than offset by their greater speed, maneuverability, range, mechanical reliability, and marked numerical superiority. The 3rd Royal Tank Regiment had been shielded from von Luck's 88s by the mass of friendly armor between it and the ambush. Thus far during the advance they had lost just one machine, but as they crossed the Caen-Vimont railway they came under fire from mortars and three self-propelled 105mm guns.

The 3rd quickly lost three of its 19 tanks, and as its commander, Major Bill Close, recalled the squadron on the left "also had several tanks blazing furiously. My orders were to press on and bypass the village." Obeying instructions to advance rather than pause and fight, Close's command ducked into a railway tunnel and made it to the other side where a railroad embankment shielded it from enemy fire. It was soon joined by the rest of the regiment. Ahead, across 3,000 yards of open countryside, lay their temporary objective—the villages of Bras and Hubert-Folie.

In the rear of the main body of the 11th Armored, its commander, Maj. Gen. G.P.B. Roberts, was close to the action in his Cromwell headquarters tank. Assessing how the Guards Armored Division had shored up the eastern edge of the armored corridor, freeing him from fear of counterattack from that sector, and his western flank had left the suburbs and was moving into the city proper, and how the 7th Armored was approaching from the rear with 250 fresh Shermans and Cromwells, things were beginning to look hopeful for this necessarily tentative operation. Furthermore, the 3rd Royal Tanks and Fife and Forfars Divisions still had 40 battleworthy Shermans apiece and were resolutely advancing abreast with just the small towns of Four, Soliers, Hubert-Folie, and Bras between them and Caen.

Their enemy, however, since late 1941 had been learning in Russia how to mend gaping holes in his front lines with improvised units stitched together from rear-echelon personnel. Resourcefulness and flexibility were deeply ingrained in the German way of thinking, and the defenders had wisely spent the time bought by von Luck's attack.

General Edgar Feuchtinger of 21st Panzerhad lined the summit of Bourguebus Ridge with his engineer battalion and divisional reconnaissance battalion. These scout car crews, motorcyclists, bulldozer drivers, and mechanics would keep the British busy while the 1st SS Panzer Division Liebstandarte Adolf Hitler prepared a counterattack.

On the morning of July 18, the crack Liebstandarte Adolf Hitler left the southern perimeter of Caen and, keeping a wary eye on the sky, moved to new positions between Bourgebus and Bras at an elevated spot overlooking the open plain that soon would be literally filled with British armor. Hiding in a labyrinth of sunken roads, the Mark IVs and Panthers had adequate cover versus an opposing force advancing naked over open ground. The tank carrying the RAF forward ground controller had been blown up, so the tankers were now unable to directly call for air support.

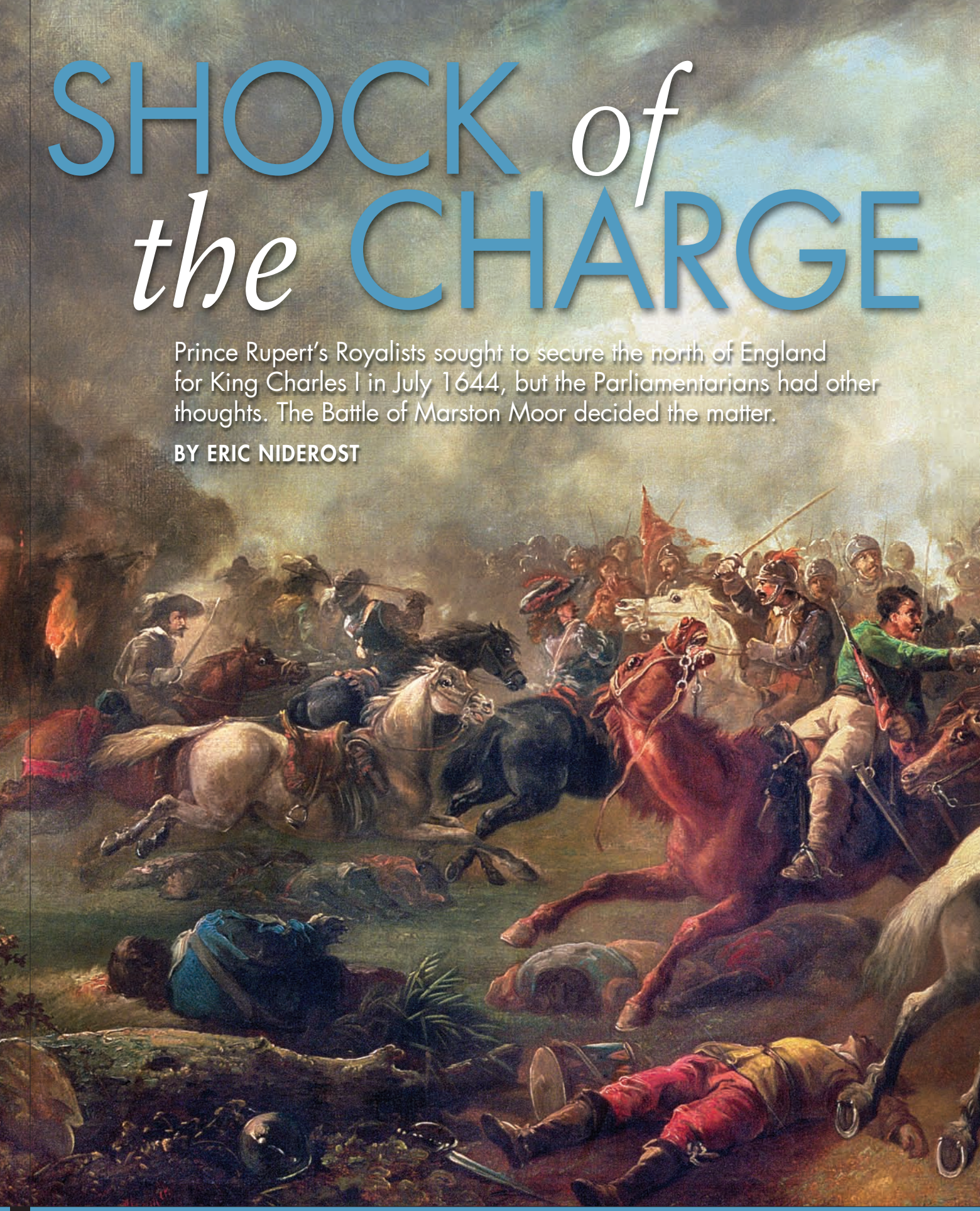
About 3 PM, the Fife and Forfars and 3rd Tanks approached the German-infested high ground. Captain Robin Lemon of the 3rd said, "It was just when the leading tanks were level with Hubert-Folie when the fun began. I saw Sherman after Sherman go up in flames, and it got to such a pitch that I thought that in another few minutes there would be nothing left of the regiment. I could see the German tanks milling about just behind Hubert-Folie and over to the left." It was the Panthers of the 1st SS, whose veteran crews were so accurately shelling the British with guns that outranged the Shermans and Cromwells.

Continued on page 70

SHOCK *of the* CHARGE

Prince Rupert's Royalists sought to secure the north of England for King Charles I in July 1644, but the Parliamentarians had other thoughts. The Battle of Marston Moor decided the matter.

BY ERIC NIDEROST



PRINCE RUPERT of the Rhine did not like to be kept waiting, especially when each passing minute seemed to lessen his chances of victory. It was July 2, 1644, and the prince was facing a rebel army of Parliamentarians and Scots that outnumbered his own Royalist forces. But Rupert knew that if he attacked quickly, and without warning, the advantage of surprise might tip the scales in his favor. To that end, he had sent an order to William Cavendish, Marquess of Newcastle, to join him at Marston Moor. Newcastle commanded troops at York, about seven miles away.

Newcastle's cavalry belatedly showed up at about 9 AM, and the marquess himself arrived with a small troupe of "gentlemen of quality" at about the same time. Rupert's original orders required Newcastle to start his march at the predawn hour of 4 AM, but it was obvious that command had been ignored. Prince Rupert somehow controlled his temper, merely remarking, "My Lord, I wish you had come sooner with your forces, but I hope we shall yet have a glorious day."

The prince also saw that Newcastle's infantry was still absent. Unfortunately for Rupert, many of the Royalist soldiers back in York were busy plundering an abandoned Parliamentary-Scottish camp. The situation was further complicated by the fact that Newcastle's infantry was led by James King, Lord Eythin. Eythin hated the prince, and the feeling was mutual. Eythin and Newcastle may have been deliberately dragging their feet. The prince was still in favor of an immediate attack, but Newcastle demurred.

Newcastle said that he had intelligence that there was some discontent between the English and Scots in the rebel army. Surely the seeds of discord would cause the two allies—strange bedfellows indeed—to go their separate ways. Then, too, the allied Parliamentarian-Scottish army was very large, even larger counting camp followers, servants, and others. Newcastle argued that they could not supply such a host for much longer—they would have to separate soon.

There was some truth to these arguments, but Rupert's instincts were sound. Delay might well be fatal to any hope of victory. Every hour the Parliamentarians grew stronger as more units joined their comrades at Marston Moor. Rupert decided they would wait, even though it was against his better judgment. He may have also felt he needed Eythin's troops from York, and they had still not arrived.

About 2 PM, the Parliamentarians opened up a small cannonade, a weak barrage of exactly four shots. A Royalist officer, Sir Henry Slingby, noted that they were merely "showing their

Furious counterattacks by Parliamentarian cavalry, including Oliver Cromwell's "Ironside" troopers, prevented the Royalist horse from disrupting the advance of the Parliamentary army at Marston Moor.

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teeth," and no damage was done. But a skirmish took place that foreshadowed the future outcome of the battle.

The Royalists tried to seize a position that would have helped them enfilade the Parliamentarians but were sent packing by cavalry from the Eastern Association led by Lt. Gen. Oliver Cromwell. Parliament attempted to bolster recruiting by dividing its territories into groups called associations. The Eastern Association consisted of East Anglia and the counties from Lincolnshire to Hertford.

Oliver Cromwell was a country squire and member of the gentry, owning lands in Huntington. He was a fanatical Puritan, but he was also a brilliant soldier with a growing reputation. It is said that earlier in the day, a Parliamentary prisoner was brought before Prince Rupert for questioning. Rupert promptly asked, "Is Cromwell over there?"

Eythin finally showed up at 4 PM with infantry and a bad attitude. He promptly criticized Rupert's dispositions, saying they were too close to the enemy. Rupert proposed two courses of action: either attack at once (he still hadn't given up hope) or move the troops back. Eythin became petulant, declaring it was too late in the day to make such a move—not adding that he was partly responsible for that situation.

All: Wikipedia

ABOVE LEFT TO RIGHT: Sir Thomas Fairfax; Alexander Leslie, 1st Earl of Leven; Lt. Gen. Oliver Cromwell; and Lord George Goring. RIGHT: Prince Rupert of the Rhine, the dashing and skilled 23-year-old nephew of English King Charles I, led Royalist forces at Marston Moor.

A second council of war, which included Rupert, Eythin, Newcastle, and Lord George Goring, was hastily assembled. Goring had a reputation for loving the bottle, and in fact was probably an alcoholic, but he was a fine soldier and sound leader in spite of his vices. Much seems to have been discussed, including the terrain, the wind, and the position of a slowly descending sun.

The debate ended when Rupert decided to give battle the next day. It was now about 5 or 6 PM, and he felt it was too late to start a major engagement. This flew in the face of logic because it was summer and there were still some hours of daylight left. Perhaps the weather played a part in his decision because ominous dark clouds were moving in. Before long the area was drenched in a thunderstorm.

In any case, the Royalist troops were told to stand down, and they started to kindle cooking fires for an evening meal. Rupert himself withdrew to the rear for dinner, and Newcastle went back to his carriage to enjoy his pipe.

For a time it did seem as if there would be no fighting that day. The Parliamentarians, many of whom were Puritan, started singing psalms, and thunderclouds loomed above. But the peal of thunder was soon joined by the sound of artillery as the Parliamentary army launched a sudden surprise attack. The Battle of Marston Moor, one of the most decisive clashes in the English Civil War, was about to begin.

The English Civil War had its roots in the conflict that developed between the king and Parliament. King Charles I had many fine qualities. He was conscientious, dignified, and genuinely devoted to his subjects' welfare. Charles was faithful to his wife—unusual for monarchs of the time—and had a refined taste in art.

Unfortunately, he also believed in the divine right of kings—that he was responsible to God alone for his actions. In the 17th century, absolutism was the norm, and rulers on the Continent would have readily agreed with Charles. But in the last century, Parliament had grown in power and confidence. It was Parliament that voted on taxes and supplied the king with the revenue he needed to run the kingdom. Armed with the power of the purse, the lawmakers increasingly guarded their rights as Englishmen against arbitrary rule.

King Charles tried to settle the matter by not calling a Parliament for 11 years. In those years he grew increasingly high handed in his search for money without Parliamentary consent. The most famous example is ship money. Ship money was a kind of tax levied on port towns ostensibly for the maintenance of the Royal Navy. But Charles began to collect ship money from inland towns; the levy was imposed in 1634, 1635, and 1636.

Ship money taxes were supposed to be for times of dire emergency. After the third levy there was widespread opposition because it looked as if Charles was determined to make this a permanent extraparliamentary tax. Puritans also resented Charles's devotion to the Anglican Church, which they considered too Catholic and "popish" for their taste. When Parliament was finally summoned in 1640, its members were in a mood to stand up to the king and his absolutism.

National Gallery, London

The civil war broke out in 1642. A majority of the nobility and a substantial number, though not all, of the landowning gentry rallied to the king. Generally speaking, the south and east favored Parliament, the north and west the king. The business and commercial classes in the towns supported Parliament. London was a major parliamentary center. Parliament also controlled the sea through the navy.

Parliamentary forces did not fare so well for

the first year. They were defeated at Edgehill, which was the first major battle of the war. Charles established his headquarters at Oxford in central southern England and gathered more recruits. He named his nephew, Prince Rupert, General of Horse, essentially commander of all Royalist cavalry. It may have seemed like royal nepotism, but at 23 Rupert was a seasoned and talented soldier who had seen service on the Continent.

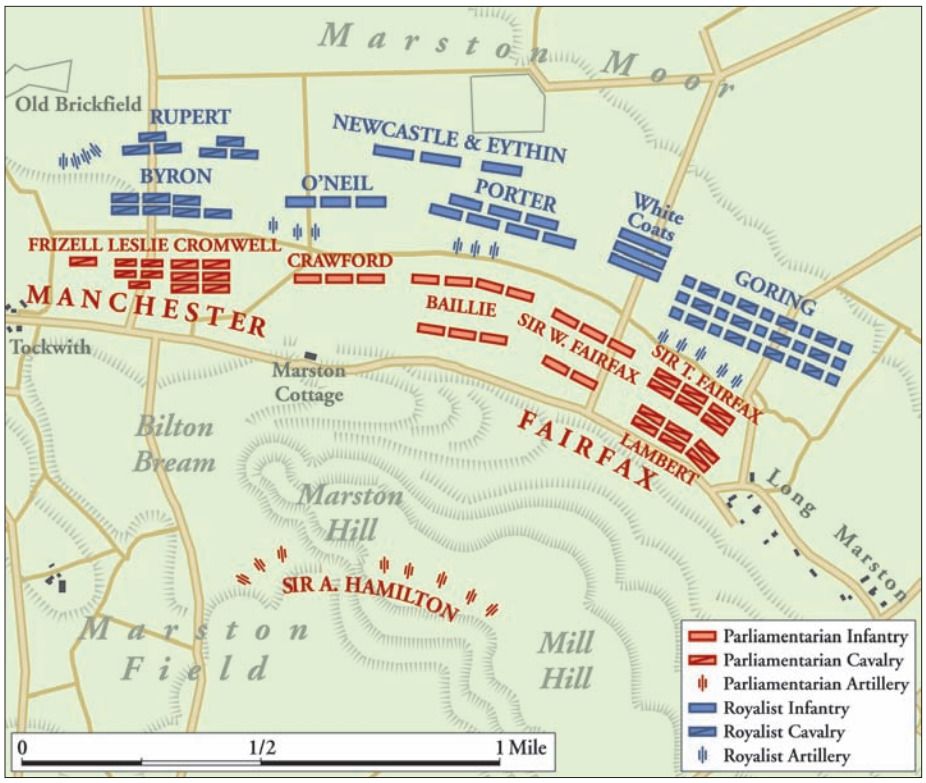
Rupert was a splendid figure "clad in scarlet very richly laid in silver lace and mounted on a gallant Barbary horse," said an eyewitness during the war. His constant companion was Boye, a white hunting poodle quite unlike the French poodle of today's popular imagination. As Rupert's fame as a cavalry commander grew, Puritan propaganda insisted that the dog was a familiar, an evil link to the Devil, much as witches had black cats. Puritans claimed Boye was really a little demon who protected his master's life and sometimes became invisible to scout out enemy positions.

In 1643, the king seemed on the verge of winning the war. The Marquess of Newcastle occupied Lincolnshire, and the king's forces captured Bristol in July. Other Royalist forces overran Cornwall and Devon, except for a few walled towns. Parliamentary general Sir Thomas Fairfax made a thrust at Oxford, but his offensive ran out of steam and he was forced to withdraw. Queen Henrietta Maria rejoined the king at Oxford with reinforcements and welcome supplies.

Heartened by these events, Charles planned a three-pronged attack on London. But holdout Parliamentary towns were thorns in the king's side, forcing him to reconsider. Newcastle did not like the idea of moving south on London when the city of Hull was untaken and possibly threatening his rear. Charles decided to abandon his London offensive and turned to besiege the city of Gloucester. When Fairfax marched to the relief of the city, Charles abandoned the siege and turned to face him at the Battle of Newbury. Technically it was a draw, but the king had lost more men than the Parliamentarians.

Both Charles and Parliament started looking for allies to help decide the issue once and for all. The king looked to Ireland and hoped to forge a link with Irish Catholic rebels. He signed a secret treaty with the Irish Catholics, readily agreeing to major concessions in return for military aid. Unfortunately for the king, a copy of the document was captured by Parliamentary forces, and disclosure of the treaty terms brought great discredit on Charles. To most Puritans, being in league with Irish

Map © 2014 Philip Schwartzberg, Meridian Mapping, Minneapolis, MN



The Royalist army took up a defensive position on the moor to await the attack of the Scots and Parliamentarians who descended from a ridge to begin their attack. The Royalist line, which stretched for two miles, was deployed behind a ditch, which the Royalists hoped would slow the enemy advance.

Catholics was akin to being in league with the Devil.

But Parliament was also seeking foreign help, in its case looking to Scotland. Proud and independent, the Scots were traditional enemies and had fought the English intermittently for centuries. But this was the 17th century, and religion was bound to play a major role in any negotiations. Scotland was mainly Presbyterian and had great religious, not necessarily political, ambitions. Scottish Presbyterians naturally entered into negotiations with their English counterparts, and a deal was soon struck. In the Solemn League and Covenant, Scotland agreed to enter the war on the Parliamentary side.

In January 1644, a large Scottish army of some 24,000 men crossed over the border into England. These "Covenanters" were commanded by Alexander Leslie, the Earl of Leven. He was an experienced soldier, having seen service with the Swedes in the Thirty Years War. Newcastle, who led the main Royalist forces in the north, was immediately thrown onto the defensive.

York was a major prize, so important it was sometimes called the capital of the North. Its loss would be a major blow to the Royalist cause, so Newcastle eventually fell back on York, determined to protect it as best he could. He did allow most of his cavalry under Lord Goring to escape the city before the siege began. That left him with some 800 cavalry and 5,000 infantry to defend the town.

Newcastle had arrived just in the nick of time. Three days later, the Scots arrived before the city walls, accompanied by a Parliamentary army under Ferdinando, Lord Fairfax, and his son, Sir Thomas Fairfax. York is situated at the confluence of the River Ouse and the small River Foss. At the time, York had the only bridges over the Ouse for a considerable distance. That made investment of the city that much more difficult.

The siege dragged on week after week, and the Scots and Parliamentarians—sometimes called the Army of Both Kingdoms—must have grown somewhat discouraged. In early June, after an investment of some six weeks, the besiegers were joined by a third allied force, the Eastern Association Army under Edward Montigue, the Earl of Manchester. Manchester's second in command and general of horse was the formidable Cromwell.

Manchester's arrival signaled a whole new and more intensive phase of the siege. Before June it had been fairly loose, but with the Eastern Association's additional men the siege tightened. Playing for time, Newcastle entered into surrender negotiations with the Scots and Parliamentarians. It was

ABOVE: Lt. Gen. Oliver Cromwell watches from a hill as Parliamentary troops wait in formation on a rain-soaked road. The battle was a defining moment in the stern commander's military career. RIGHT: A fanciful depiction of the death of Prince Rupert's beloved dog Boye during the battle. The Puritans said the dog was possessed by a demon.

a somewhat transparent ruse, but it worked. A general assault was delayed from June 8 to June 15.

Finally wearying of Newcastle's dissembling, the allied armies launched a general assault on June 16. The Parliamentarians detonated a mine against one of York's walls, apparently blowing a hole that was considered practicable for an attack. Maj. Gen. Lawrence Crawford of the Eastern Association led an ill-coordinated assault that turned out to be a bloody repulse. Parliamentary forces were badly mauled, and the York garrison actually took 200 prisoners in the bargain.

This success must have heartened the defenders, but it was only a matter of time before they would run out of food. No city can hold out indefinitely, and a place as important as York would have to be relieved. Actually, help was on the way, but because Newcastle was successfully holding his own there seemed to be no urgency. A relief force under Prince Rupert was heading north in a leisurely fashion, attending to other concerns along the way.

King Charles had realized that York would need help as early as May. Charles summoned a council of war at his headquarters at Oxford to work out the details. Prince Rupert was to go north with a small force that would grow along the way as fresh recruits were mustered and additional units met him en route.

One of Rupert's principal tasks was to secure Lancashire for the Royal cause. This was important because from the Royalist point of view Lancashire was the gateway to Ireland, from which Charles still hoped to import fresh troops, Catholic or otherwise. Rupert set out from Shrewsbury with a small force on May 16, gathering forces along the way. He forced a crossing of the River Mersey at Stockport and stormed Parliament-held Bolton.

It was at Bolton that Rupert's reputation was tarnished by an alleged massacre. The garrison adamantly refused to surrender, and by the rules of war at that time Rupert had every right to take the city by storm. Some 1,600 troopers and citizens were allegedly killed, and Puritan propagandists had a field day blackening the prince's name. Rupert then rested at Bury, and was joined by Goring and the York cavalry that had escaped the siege.

The prince also was joined by fresh regiments raised by the Earl of Derby. Bypassing the rebel stronghold of Manchester, Rupert marched to Liverpool. Liverpool was taken after a siege lasting five days. But in mid-June Rupert received a letter from King Charles that played a major part in the unfolding drama.

"If York be lost," the king's missive read, "I shall esteem my crown little less." This was a clear signal to the prince of York's vital importance. "But if York be relieved, and you beat the rebels' armies of both kingdoms," the king continued, "which are before it, I may possibly make a shift upon the defensive until you come to assist me."

The letter was ambiguous, but a man of action like Rupert was bound to think it meant he was ordered to take on the Scots-Parliamentary army and also relieve York. After the letter was sent, one of the king's officers, Sir John Culpepper, perceptively remarked, "Why then, before God you are undone, for upon this peremptory order he will fight, whatever comes on it!"

The Parliamentarian besiegers were put in something of a panic when it was learned that Rupert was approaching with 18,000 men. The three major besieging armies at York were each separated by the Rivers Ouse and Foss. If Rupert pounced on one army, the other two would find it difficult to come to its aid.

Rupert's approach to York was nothing less

National Gallery, London

than brilliant. Blocked from using the main old Roman road to York, he executed a flank march of 22 miles to the northeast, in essence circling around the Parliamentarians. He crossed the River Ure at Boroughbridge and the River Sale at Thornton Bridge. These two rivers form the River Ouse. Later, Rupert's cavalry surprised and defeated a party of Manchester's dragoons which had been detailed to guard a bridge of boats across the Ouse at Poppelton.

The Parliamentarian-Scottish army lifted the siege on June 30 to meet Rupert in the field. The army abandoned its camp, which held an abundance of ammunition and supplies, including 4,500 pairs of new shoes. The temptation was too great for Newcastle's men as they emerged from behind York's walls. They began looting the camp, which added to the delay in

Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

Prince Rupert wields a standard against an enemy horseman. Seeing his cavalry fall back, Rupert rode to their rescue with troopers belonging to the reserve and his bodyguard. Thus, Cromwell's Ironside troopers traded sword blows with the bravest of the Royalist horse.

joining Rupert's army at Marston Moor.

Even with the arrival of Newcastle's plundering troops that afternoon, the Royalist forces were outnumbered by their foes. Rupert had around 18,000 by most modern estimates, and the Scots-Parliamentarians 28,000. More than 45,000 men were thus present on the battlefield, making it one of the largest ever fought on British soil.

The allied army had the advantage of slightly higher ground, a ridge that stood above a moor. The Royalist army positioned itself on the moor in a concave line almost two miles long, facing south, and positioned in front of a ditch. This ditch line was manned by a party of Royalist musketeers some have described as a "forlorn hope." Their duty was to fire and retire; that is, discharge their muskets to break up an enemy charge, then scamper back to the protection of their main body.

Although the allies had the high ground, parts of the terrain were covered by "cornfields" (the British term for wheat and rye) which might impede the movement of their cavalry. Rupert had taken special note of the drainage ditch that fronted much of the Royalist line, feeling it would be an effective barrier to slow an allied advance at the very least. There was also a hedge near the ditch that would help the Royalists.

The Scots-Parliamentary army's left wing was mainly cavalry, commanded by rising star Cromwell. Behind Cromwell's men were Scots horsemen under Leslie. This was the battle that was to give fame to Cromwell and glory to his "Ironside" troopers, but all too often Leslie's contribution to the victory is downplayed.

The allied center had units from all three armies, although the Scots predominated.There were about 18,000 infantry in the center, pikemen wielding pikes 14- to 16-feet long, and musketeers. The allied right was commanded by Thomas Fairfax, mainly cavalry and dragoons (mounted infantry). Fairfax was in the first line, backed up by a second line under John Lambert and a third line of Scottish horse under Alexander Montgomerie, Earl of Eglinton.

The Royalist army's left wing was commanded by Goring. It consisted of 1,700 cavalry from the Marquess of Newcastle's cavalry (dubbed the "Northern Horse"), 400 cavalry from Derbyshire, and 500 musketeers. The center was mainly infantry, pikemen, and musketeers, nominally led by Eythin. The Royalist right, commanded by John Byron, 1st Baron Byron, had two lines. The first was of cavalry and musketeers, the second had a number of regiments, including some that had come from Ireland.

Rupert also had a cavalry reserve, namely 500 troopers of Prince Rupert's Horse and 140 men of his elite personal bodyguard. The reserve was under Rupert's personal command and could be used as he saw fit. His horsemen were well trained but had a reputation for bad discipline when their blood was up. In the excitement of battle they would singlemindedly pursue foes even if they were needed elsewhere.

The battle opened with a Parliamentarian surprise attack around 7 PM. Cromwell's cavalry troopers smashed into Rupert's right, commanded by Byron. Byron moved up to challenge Cromwell's Ironsides but in so doing committed a couple of tactical errors. First, he moved over the marshy ground that fronted his position instead of letting the enemy come to him. In so doing, he threw away the terrain advantage he had moments before.

The second error was even costlier. Byron led his troopers forward in such a way that they came between Cromwell's horsemen and the Royalist musketeers, all but blocking the Parliamentarians from view. The musketeers were unable to give fire support for fear of hitting their own men.

Continued on page 68

ON SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 1863, six days after the Battle of Chickamauga, Lt. Gen. James Longstreet wrote Confederate Secretary of War James A. Seddon, saying, "I am convinced that nothing but the hand of God can save us or help us as long as we have our present commander." Referring to Braxton Bragg, the commander of the Confederate Army of Tennessee, Longstreet went on to say, "When I came here I hoped to find our commander willing and anxious to do all things that would aid us in our great cause, and ready to receive what aid he could get from his subordinates. It seems that I was greatly mistaken."

Longstreet's letter is filled with desperation and anxiety, and the Confederates were victorious in the battle. In poetic language, Longstreet summarized the situation in the Western Theater as he currently saw it: "Our most precious blood is now flowing in streams from the Atlantic to the Rocky Mountains, and may yet be exhausted before we have succeeded. Then goes honor, treasure, and independence."

Early summer 1863 had been a disaster for the Confederacy with devastating losses at Gettysburg in the East and the fall of Vicksburg in the West. Largely overshadowed by those monumental Union victories, but in many ways no less important, was Maj. Gen. William Rosecrans's brilliant tactical and strategic victory over Confederate General Braxton Bragg's Army of Tennessee in the Tullahoma Campaign, essentially securing middle Tennessee for the Union

"A TERRIBLE CYCLONE"

and positioning the Army of the Cumberland for a direct strike on Chattanooga, Tennessee, the gateway to Georgia and the Deep South. With the Father of Waters running unvexed to the sea for the Union in the West and the Army of Northern Virginia's aura of invincibility shattered in the East, it was up to Bragg at Chattanooga to defend the Deep South from a Union invasion and salvage the dimming ray of hope for the Confederate cause.

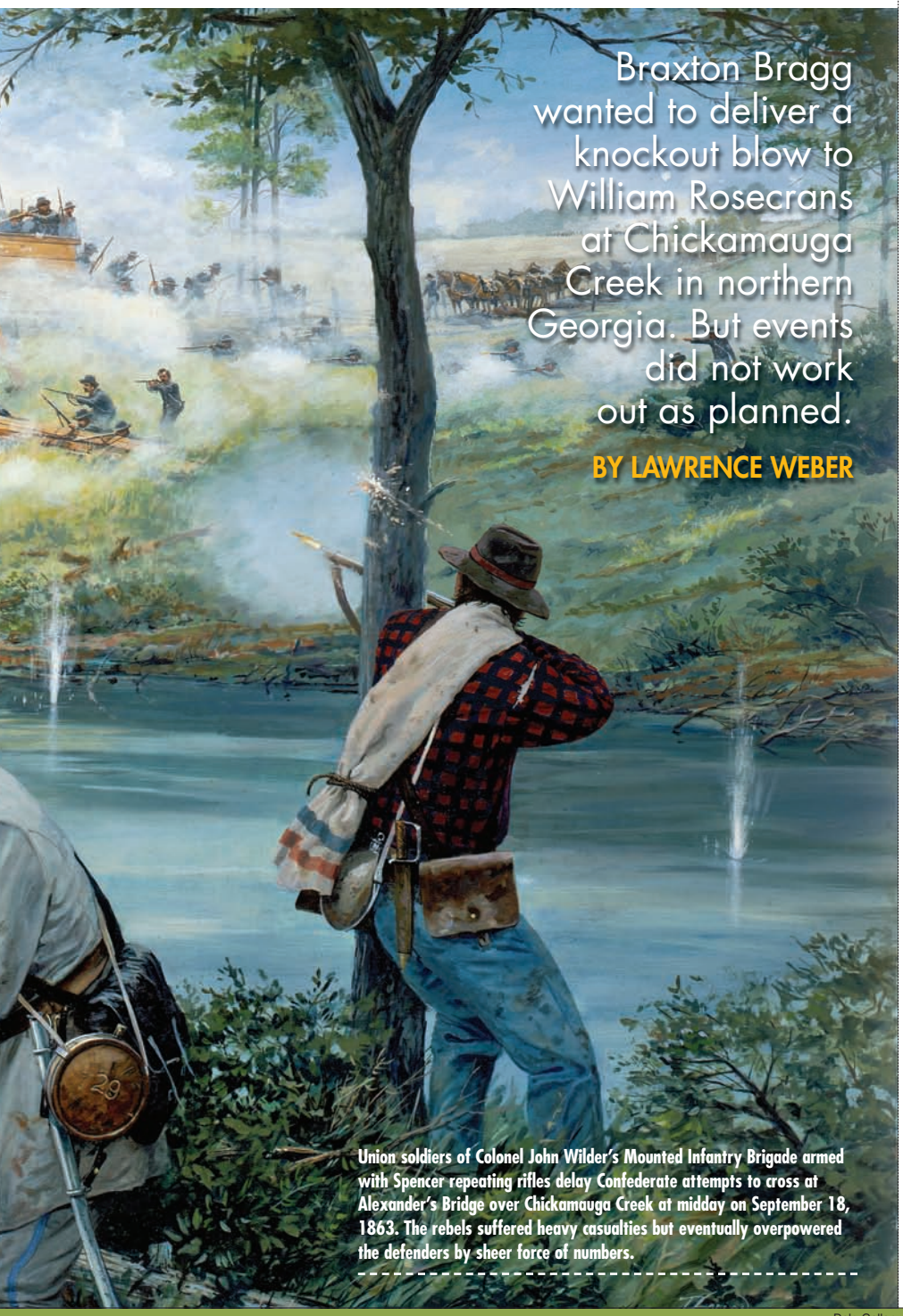
In late summer of 1863, the Union Army of the Ohio, commanded by Maj. Gen. Ambrose Burnside, was threatening the Army of Tennessee's Third Corps, commanded by Confederate Maj. Gen. Simon Buckner, at Knoxville, Tennessee, to the north. Rosecrans's Army of the Cumberland was targeting Bragg's position at Chattanooga to the south, and Bragg knew that he would be called upon to reinforce Buckner's position at Knoxville, which was in imminent danger from Burnside's forces.

If Bragg was going to successfully defend the critically important transportation and supply city of Chattanooga from an impending attack by Rosecrans's Army of the Cumberland, he simply could not justify ordering reinforcements to Buckner at Knoxville.

Bragg was determined to maintain possession of Chattanooga at all cost. If one of the last pivotal cities in Tennessee had to fall to the Union, it would have to be Knoxville. Bragg reasoned that the distance between the two cities was so great that spreading their military line so thin would be dangerous, especially since he had also received intelligence that Rosecrans' Army of the Cumberland was on the move again, this time attempting to outflank his position from the south by way of the city of Bridgeport, Alabama. With Maj. Gen. Ambrose Burnside's Army of the Ohio threatening to cut Buckner's Third Corps off from Bragg at Knoxville via the northeast and Rosecrans' Army of the Cumberland attempting to outflank Bragg's Army of Tennessee from the southwest, Bragg ordered Buckner to abandon Knoxville in early September 1863, with "great regret and reluctance," and move closer to his position at Chattanooga along the Hiwassee River.

Everywhere he went, disappointment and failure seemed to haunt the mercurial Braxton Bragg, especially when he looked back upon events in the Kentucky and Murfreesboro Campaigns. Humiliated by the lack of confidence his lieutenants had demonstrated in his ability to successfully command (several corps commanders, including Lt. Gen. William Hardee and Lt. Gen. Leonidas Polk attempted to secure Bragg's removal from command of the Army of Tennessee by unsuccessfully petitioning Jefferson Davis in Richmond), Bragg decided to ask his generals for a vote of confidence. Like Bragg's recent military setbacks, the vote of confidence backfired when the majority of generals openly rejected him. On the eve of the Chickamauga Campaign, Bragg had all but lost the morale of his army.

Before Bragg could stop Rosecrans's flanking maneuver from engulfing his position, soldiers from the Union's XIV and XX Corps, commanded by Maj. Gen. George Henry Thomas and Maj. Gen. Alexander McDowell McCook, respectively, were moving into Georgia through several mountain gaps southwest of Bragg's position. To Bragg, it was clear that Rosecrans's army was not only targeting Chattanooga, but perhaps clearing a path for a deeper invasion of the lower southeast through Georgia to the Atlantic. On September 9, 1863, in a letter to Confederate Secretary of War James Seddon, Bragg wrote, "Rosecrans' main force had obtained my left and rear. I followed



Braxton Bragg wanted to deliver a knockout blow to William Rosecrans at Chickamauga Creek in northern Georgia. But events did not work out as planned.

BY LAWRENCE WEBER

Union soldiers of Colonel John Wilder's Mounted Infantry Brigade armed with Spencer repeating rifles delay Confederate attempts to cross at Alexander's Bridge over Chickamauga Creek at midday on September 18, 1863. The rebels suffered heavy casualties but eventually overpowered the defenders by sheer force of numbers.

Dale Gallon

and endeavored to bring him to action and secure my connections. This may compel the loss of Chattanooga, but is unavoidable." With Lookout Mountain still between the Army of Tennessee and the Army of the Cumberland, Bragg reluctantly withdrew from Chattanooga to meet the enemy at the mountain gaps. Bragg moved his army to La Fayette, Georgia, and positioned his men directly across the center of the XIV Corps line, which "checked the enemy's advance, and as I expected, he took possession of Chattanooga."

As difficult as it was to surrender Chattanooga to the enemy without a fight, Bragg knew that Rosecrans was making a critical mistake in dividing the Army of the Cumberland across three distant locations: Chattanooga, Davis' Crossroads, and Alpine. If Bragg could attack each Union corps separately, he could destroy the Army of the Cumberland, reclaim Chattanooga, and save the Deep South from an enemy invasion. It was an audacious plan, and time would be of the essence if it was to be carried out successfully.

Bragg authorized a strike at the center of the Union position just west of the Dug Gap along Pigeon Mountain on the morning of September 10, hoping to draw the XIV Corps into a trap without adequate access to timely reinforcements. Dispatching several Confederate divisions commanded by Maj. Gen. Thomas Hindman from Longstreet's corps and Maj. Gen. Patrick Cleburne from Lt. Gen. Daniel Harvey Hill's corps, into the wooded gap in the mountain, Bragg's forces were instructed to draw the enemy into battle and then crush them with their superior numbers.

The lead division of the Union XIV Corps, the Second Division, commanded by Maj. Gen. James S. Negley, was completely unaware that his men were marching straight into the heart of Bragg's main army. When skirmishing erupted in front of Dug Gap, the surprised Union soldiers

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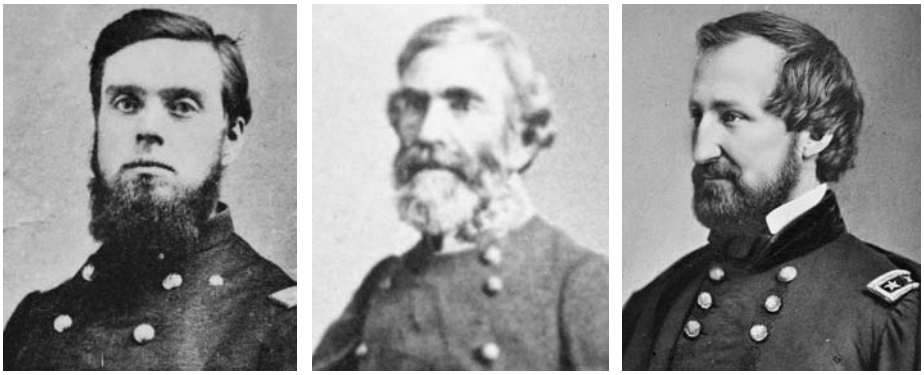

Union Colonel John Wilder, Confederate General Braxton Bragg, and Union Maj. Gen. William Rosecrans.

courageously drove the Confederates back into Dug Gap. But on gaining higher ground, the Union troops noticed that Bragg's men had them nearly surrounded with superior numbers. At that moment not a single unit of Federal troops was in supporting distance of Negley, whose troops were isolated near the western end of Dug Gap, and therefore easy prey for the enemy. With Hindman's men on the Federal left, Cleburne's forces directly in front of him and on his right, and Buckner's corps supporting them in reserve, Negley was in a perilous situation. As the sun was setting on this dangerous encounter, Negley withdrew his men into the woods west of Dug Gap and alerted Thomas of his situation.

On the Confederate side, speed was the key to the strike, and everyone seemed to understand that except Hindman. On the eve of the Battle of Davis' Crossroads, Bragg wrote Hindman: "The enemy is now divided. Our force at or near Lafayette is superior to the enemy. It is important now to move vigorously and crush him." If the Confederate attack was to be successful, everything would hinge on Hindman's initial flanking attack at first light against Negley's men. At the sound of gunfire, Cleburne's men would spring into action in a frontal assault of the Union position and crush the enemy. The attack never manifested itself, as Hindman believed that the Federal forces in front of him were much greater than they actually were.

All through the night and into the predawn hours of the September 11, the First Division of the XIV Corps, commanded by Brig. Gen. Absalom Baird, sped to the aid of Negley's men. Reaching the eastern foot of Lookout Mountain at dawn, Baird's men briefly rested and then resumed their rapid pace for an additional nine miles to reach the rear of Negley's forces. Together, Negley and Baird faced the heart of Bragg's forces alone, as Thomas's remaining two divisions were still concentrated west of Lookout Mountain.

Sensing an opportunity still at hand but perhaps slipping away, Bragg once again ordered an attack on September 11, but by the time any concentrated effort manifested itself the Federal forces were already withdrawing smoothly through Stevens Gap. Facing almost certain annihilation, Negley and Baird managed to escape the snake pit that was Davis' Crossroads. The commander of Negley's advance guard heaped an abundance of praise on Negley, saying, "The extraction of our division from the environment of Dug Gap by General Negley was to my mind the most masterly piece of generalship I saw during the war." Thomas was not quite as pleased with the near destruction of two of his brigades, even if they did miraculously escape. "Nothing but stupendous blunders on the part of Bragg can save our army from total defeat," wrote Thomas.

Rosecrans was almost the complete antithesis of Bragg. Trusting, brilliant, and genial for the most part, Rosecrans inspired tremendous loyalty in his men, especially his subordinates. Rosecrans was not without flaws, though. At times, he could become moody and brusque of temper, and he was known to explode in anger without notice, leaving men dumbfounded and hurt only to just as quickly return to his amiable self as if nothing had happened.

On the eve of the greatest battle in the West, Rosecrans was literally one victory away from achieving military immortality. A victory over Bragg in northern Georgia could cut the eastern part of the Confederacy away from the Gulf states, essentially shattering the Confederacy and hastening the war's end.

Initially, Rosecrans viewed Bragg's early movements as a retreat and occupied Chattanooga with the extreme left of his army, placing a brigade from Maj. Gen. Thomas Crittenden's XXI Corps to guard the important city while ordering all remaining forces to pursue Bragg into Georgia. Everything changed for Rosecrans several days after the Battle of Davis' Crossroads when he received intelligence, as he stated in his official report of the battle, that "the main body of [Joseph] Johnston's army [the Department of the West] had joined Bragg, and an accumulation of evidence showed that troops from Virginia [the lead elements of Longstreet's I Corps, Army of Northern Virginia] had reached Atlanta on the 1st of the month.... It was therefore a matter of life and death to effect the concentration of the army."

Finally recognizing the danger in which he had placed his army, Rosecrans ordered his forces to consolidate, moving two brigades from McCook's XX Corps to hold Dougherty's Gap and sending the remaining men to the defense of Thomas in the center of the line. Rosecrans also ordered Crittenden to move

from Ringgold to Lee and Gordon's Mill and then from Lee and Gordon's Mill to the southern spur of Missionary Ridge. But on learning that Bragg's forces were near Dalton and Ringgold, Crittenden was ordered back to Lee and Gordon's Mill, close enough to support the other corps commanders if necessary.

After the lost opportunity at Davis' Crossroads, Bragg turned his attention to the Union's XXI Corps, which was positioned near Lee and Gordon's Mill and in a similar logistical predicament as Negley's men were several days earlier. With a distance of about 12 miles separating Crittenden's forces from Thomas's forces in the center of Rosecrans's line and recognizing the proximity of his entire right wing to Crittenden, Bragg ordered Polk and Maj. Gen. William H.T. Walker to strike at the lead division of the XXI Corps on the morning of September 13.

Promising additional support from Buckner's corps, Bragg knew that the attack would be all but foolproof. And just like at Davis' Crossroads, Polk failed to engage the enemy. Bragg arrived at Polk's headquarters at 9:00 AM and found the lieutenant general getting ready to eat breakfast. Bragg was livid. "Attack for the love of God, attack!" Bragg said to Polk. Citing the need for additional men to ensure success, Polk simply disregarded Bragg's direct order. By the time Bragg had personally sent his troops forward to pursue Crittenden, the targeted enemy had disappeared behind the protection of Missionary Ridge. Opportunity had once again slipped away from Bragg and the Confederacy.

For the next four days, Bragg and Rosecrans shored up their armies, maneuvering them into positions of respective strength for the inevitable battle that was brewing. With Rosecrans's army moving northeastward toward Chattanooga on September 17, Bragg came up with a ruse. Maj. Gen. Joseph Wheeler, with two divisions of cavalry, would be sent all the way to the extreme left flank of Bragg's line. From there they would press the enemy at McLemore's Cove. This offensive on the Union right wing would divert Rosecrans from Bragg's real plan, which was to surprise and envelope the Union left flank on the morning of September 18.

The spearhead of Bragg's surprise attack against the Union left was Brig. Gen. Bushrod Johnson's division, which represented the extreme right of Bragg's army. Johnson's men were instructed to move across Chickamauga Creek at Reed's Bridge at 6 AM, turn left, and move toward Lee and Gordon's Mill. Bragg then ordered Maj. Gen. William H.T. Walker's

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In the fighting at Dug Gap on September 10-11, a portion of Maj. Gen. George Thomas's XIV Corps was nearly destroyed, but the Confederates moved too slowly to trap it. If either Rosecrans or Bragg were to emerge victorious in the next engagement, mistakes would have to be minimized or eliminated.

men to cross at Alexander's Bridge, farther south along Chickamauga Creek, and unite with Johnson's men to drive on the enemy's flank and rear. After Walker's crossing came Buckner's men, who were instructed to cross the Chickamauga at Thedford's Ford, where they were to push the Union men up the stream from Polk's position at Lee and Gordon's Mill. Polk was then ordered to join the attack at Lee and Gordon's Mill, but unlike the other generals he was given multiple options as to where he should cross the Chickamauga, all contingent on the enemy's positions. Bragg then ordered Hill to cover the left flank of the attack, concentrating on Lee and Gordon's Mill to ensure that the enemy could not adequately reinforce there.

On the receiving end of Johnson's spearhead strike were members of the Union's First Brigade, Second Cavalry Division, commanded by Colonel Robert Minty. Around 7 AM, Minty was informed by courier that the enemy was advancing in a large force. Minty, determined to meet the enemy, wrote, "[I] strengthened my pickets on the LaFayette road and moved forward with the Fourth Michigan, one battalion of the Fourth Regulars, and the section of artillery, and took position on the eastern slope of Pea Vine Ridge." Heavily outnumbered, Minty's men heroically delayed the Confederate onslaught for hours. Around 10 AM, Minty noticed a heavy column of dust moving toward Dyer's Ford, north of Reed's Bridge, and beyond his reach, which if unchecked could envelop and trap his men. Minty notified Colonel John T. Wilder of the First Brigade (Mounted Infantry), Fourth Division, XIV Corps. Armed with Spencer repeating riffles, Wilder's brigade answered the call, sending nearly two regiments to support Minty's position, which was slowly deteriorating as the afternoon wore on.

As Minty and his men were retreating across Reed's Bridge to their early morning positions near camp, the Confederates, with a force of about 7,000, were in hot pursuit, led by Brig. Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest. At this point, the Confederate commanders recognized that the Union forces were significantly fewer than their own and really opened up on Minty and Wilder, driving both men back toward Lee and Gordon's Mill. Eventually, reinforcements led by Confederate Maj. Gen. John Bell Hood arrived on the scene late in the day, but by then most of the fighting had ended. Reporting on the day's events, Minty wrote, "With 973 men, the First Brigade had disputed the advance of 7,000 rebels from 7 o'clock in the morning until 5 in the evening, and at the end of that time had fallen back only 5 miles. On arriving at Gordon's Mills my men were dismounted, and, together with Colonel Wilder's brigade and a brigade from General Van Cleve's division, repulsed a heavy attack at about 8 PM."

The flanking maneuver against Rosecrans's left wing failed in its attempt to annihilate Crit-

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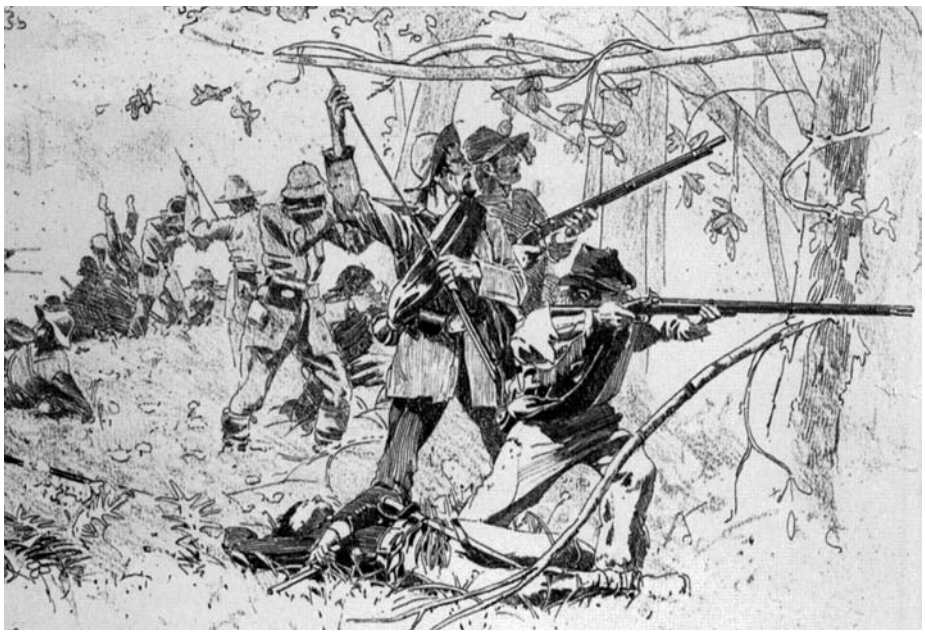
ABOVE: Dismounted Union cavalry backed by a section of artillery substantially delayed the Confederate crossing at Reed's Bridge about 1 1/2 miles north of Alexander's Bridge. Union delaying tactics on September 18 bought Rosecrans precious time in which to concentrate his army for the main battle. BELOW: Savage fighting in thick woods occurred throughout the first day of the battle.



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tenden's force. It also severely altered Bragg's overall plan of attack, which was to place his army between Chattanooga and Rosecrans, essentially desiring to fight from the north to the south. Because the flanking maneuver failed, Bragg had to engage the Army of the Cumberland in an east-west position with Chickamauga Creek to his rear. Wilder and Minty bought Rosecrans time to concentrate his army, which he did. Rosecrans ordered General Thomas to relieve Crittenden's corps by moving the bulk of Thomas's XIV Corps behind Crittenden and to his left. Crittenden was ordered to secure the LaFayette Road and meet up with Brig. Gen. Thomas Wood, First Division, XXI Corps, at Lee and Gordon's Mill. McCook was ordered to close his position with General Thomas and protect Crittenden's right, essentially functioning as reserves. The cavalry force, commanded by Brig. Gen. Robert B. Mitchell, was instructed to guard McCook's right and to monitor crossings on the Chickamauga.

When night fell on September 18, Bragg was confident that the left wing of Rosecrans's army was entrenched near Lee and Gordon's Mill. Bragg had no idea that during the night the XIV Corps was marching northward to relieve Crittenden's men and to establish battle lines that would stretch as far north as Reed's Bridge Road. Without this critical information, Bragg planned to attack the left wing of the Army of the Cumberland again with a concentration of his forces in the vicinity of Lee and Gordon's Mill at dawn on September 19. Bragg failed to consider whether any Union forces were positioned beyond his right flank. At dawn, it occurred to him he ought to find out, and so he sent Forrest to reconnoiter along the Jay's Mill Road west of the mill. The order would have a profound effect on the course of the battle.

The Battle of Chickamauga actually began in the early morning of September 19, just hours after Bragg's failed surprise attack on the Union left, when Union Colonel Daniel McCook, Second Division, Second Brigade Reserves Corps, concluded that remnants of an isolated Confederate brigade from Bragg's failed flanking maneuver remained encamped in the woods near Reed's Bridge Road and Jay's Mill, just waiting for sunlight to gather their bearings. Determined to make a name for himself and perhaps earn his brigadier's star, McCook spent the entire night planning a surprise attack on this isolated and unidentified Confederate brigade. The first point of attack would be to prevent the Confederate brigade from having an escape route, so McCook ordered Lt. Col. Joseph Bingham's 69th Ohio to take his men and burn Reed's Bridge immediately. This order was given around 2 AM on September 19.

At 6 AM, just as McCook was about to give the order to fall in for his early morning attack, McCook was handed a message from Rosecrans to McCook's commanding officer, Maj. Gen. Gordon Granger, ordering Granger to withdraw McCook and Second Brigade, First Division, led by Colonel John Mitchell, from their positions. McCook was devastated but began to withdraw. As the XIV Corps continued to move northward into battle lines, McCook encountered Thomas. Imploring Thomas to rescind Rosecrans's order, McCook explained the remarkable opportunity that was at hand for the Union Army.

Thomas rejected McCook's supplications to overturn Rosecrans, but captivated by the idea that there could be a relatively easy move against Bragg, Thomas sent a brigade from his own corps (Colonel John T. Croxton, Second Brigade, Third Division) to investigate the situation. According to Brig. Gen. John M. Brannan, commanding Third Division, XIV Corps, around 7 AM, "the Second Brigade, having advanced about three-quarters of a mile toward the Chickamauga, came upon a strong force of the enemy, consisting of two divisions instead of the supposed brigade." The Union had just stumbled

upon Forrest's four brigades of cavalry, which Bragg had sent northward without much thought, along with two infantry brigades from Walker's reserve corps, commanded by Brig. Gen. Matthew Ector, and Colonel Claudius Wilson in reserve. When Croxton stumbled on these Confederate forces, he allegedly sent back a sarcastic oral inquiry to Thomas asking which of the four or five enemy brigades in his front was the one he was instructed to capture.

Recognizing that this initial skirmish was rapidly escalating into something more significant, Thomas ordered Brannan's two other brigades, commanded by Colonels Ferdinand Van Derveer and John M. Connell, along with Baird's entire division, into the fight. This was a significant move because it took the offensive away from Bragg, who assumed that the Federal army would fight from a defensive position. Thomas's move also interfered with Bragg's initial plan to engage and envelop the left wing of the Federal army, since Rosecrans was now engulfing the right wing of the Army of Tennessee. Had Bragg stuck with his initial plan of attack, Hood and Buckner would have been able to advance through a major gap in the Union lines between Crittenden's troops at the mill and Thomas's men at the Kelly farm. The only opposition they would have met would have been from Wilder's brigade, which had built breastworks west of the Viniard farm.

Fighting between Croxton and Forrest was intense, disorienting, and deadly. As Croxton drove Forrest's cavalrymen back toward Reed's Bridge Road, Wilson and Ector came up in reserve to defend him. With Ector pressing Croxton from the northeast and Wilson moving in on Croxton from the southeast, Croxton's men were in danger of being flanked. Croxton shifted part of his line to form a salient against Wilson's flanking maneuver and successfully drove Wilson back toward Jay's Mill Road. Recognizing that ammunition was nearly exhausted, Croxton's men fell back to a natural ridge where they were eventually relieved by Brig. Gen. John H. King, from Baird's division.

With Federal reinforcements being rushed into the fight, Walker countered with his final division, commanded by Brig. Gen. St. John R. Liddell. Liddell's division was divided into two brigades, commanded by Colonel Daniel C. Govan and Brig. Gen. Edward C. Walthall, and an artillery unit under the direction of Captain Charles Swett. Liddell sent Govan and Walthall's brigades slamming into Baird's right flank, with King's brigade and Federal soldiers from Colonel Benjamin F. Scribner's First Brigade, positioned near King's right rear, taking the brunt of the assault. Govan and Walthall's men overwhelmed the Federals, who were unable to adequately respond. According to Baird, "Complete destruction seemed inevitable. Four pieces of Colonel Scribner's battery were captured after firing 64 rounds, and the enemy, sweeping like a torrent, fell upon the regular brigade before it had got into position, took its battery, and after a struggle in which whole battalions were wiped out of existence, drove it back upon the line of Brannan." Recalling this day 24 years later, Scribner wrote, "It seemed as though a terrible cyclone was sweeping over the earth, driving everything before it. All things seemed to be rushing by me in horizontal lines, all parallel to each other. The missiles of the enemy whistling and whirring by, seemed to draw the elements in the same lines of motion, sound, light, and air uniting in the rush."

The near annihilation of Baird's division by Liddell's men resulted in the death of approximately 400 Union soldiers with an additional 400 captured or wounded. Baird's remaining piecemeal force fell back post haste to the relative safety of the LaFayette Road behind Palmer's Second Division, XXI Corps, and Brannan's Third Division, XIV Corps. As Walthall and Govan pursued the retreating Federals back toward the LaFayette Road, Brannan's forces waited to strike.

"The order was given to retreat. I ran through a solid line of blue coats. As I fell back, they were upon the right of us, they were upon the left of us, they were in front of us, they were in the rear of us. It was a perfect hornets' nest. The balls whistled around our ears like the escape valves of ten thousand engines."

Men of the First Brigade of Brannan's Third Division, XIV Corps, commanded by Colonel John M. Connell, were ready for the Confederate onslaught. As Govan's brigade charged headlong into the pursuit of King and Scribner, Colonel Morton C. Hunter of the 82nd Indiana instructed his men to lie down in the grass and wait for the retreating Federals to pass them by. When Govan's men were within 50 yards of Connell's hidden line, Hunter's men were instructed to rise from the ground and unleash a volley straight into the charging Confederate center. No sooner had the 82nd Indiana fired its murderous surprise volley than the 2nd Minnesota Infantry, under the command of Colonel Van Derveer, rose from the grass in surprise and repeated the collective assault. With artillery support from Battery I, 4th U.S. Artillery (3rd Brigade), Govan's pursuit of the retreating Federals was checked, and Liddell's division retreated into dense woods.

The counterattack on Govan and the eventual offensive push against Walker's reserve corps allowed Federal forces under Brannan and Baird to regroup. Thomas also committed troops under the command of Brig. Gen. Richard W. Johnson, Second Division, XX Corps, to the fight to support Baird's right. With renewed vigor, the Federal forces resumed the offensive and relentlessly pursued Walker's corps back to some high ground to the east. By noon, much of the ground gained by the Confederates during the morning was given back to the Federals as the battle began to transition into a new phase south of Jay's Mill.

The second major phase of the battle began shortly after noon on September 19, when five Confederate brigades from Maj. Gen. Benjamin F. Cheatham's division entered the fight on Walker's left. Standing against Cheatham's division were Brig. Gen. Richard W. Johnson's Second Division, XX Corps, and Maj. Gen. John M. Palmer's Second Division, XXI Corps. Dense wooded terrain and irritating, bristly thickets made this portion of the battle especially dangerous and deadly. For two hours, Cheatham's men assaulted the Union center, exhausting the majority of their ammunition and gaining little ground on the entrenched Federals, who fought back valiantly and eventually charged back. As the Federals advanced upon Cheatham's men, Confederate Private Sam Watkins, First Tennessee Infantry, from Brig. Gen. George Maney's brigade, Cheatham's division described the scene:

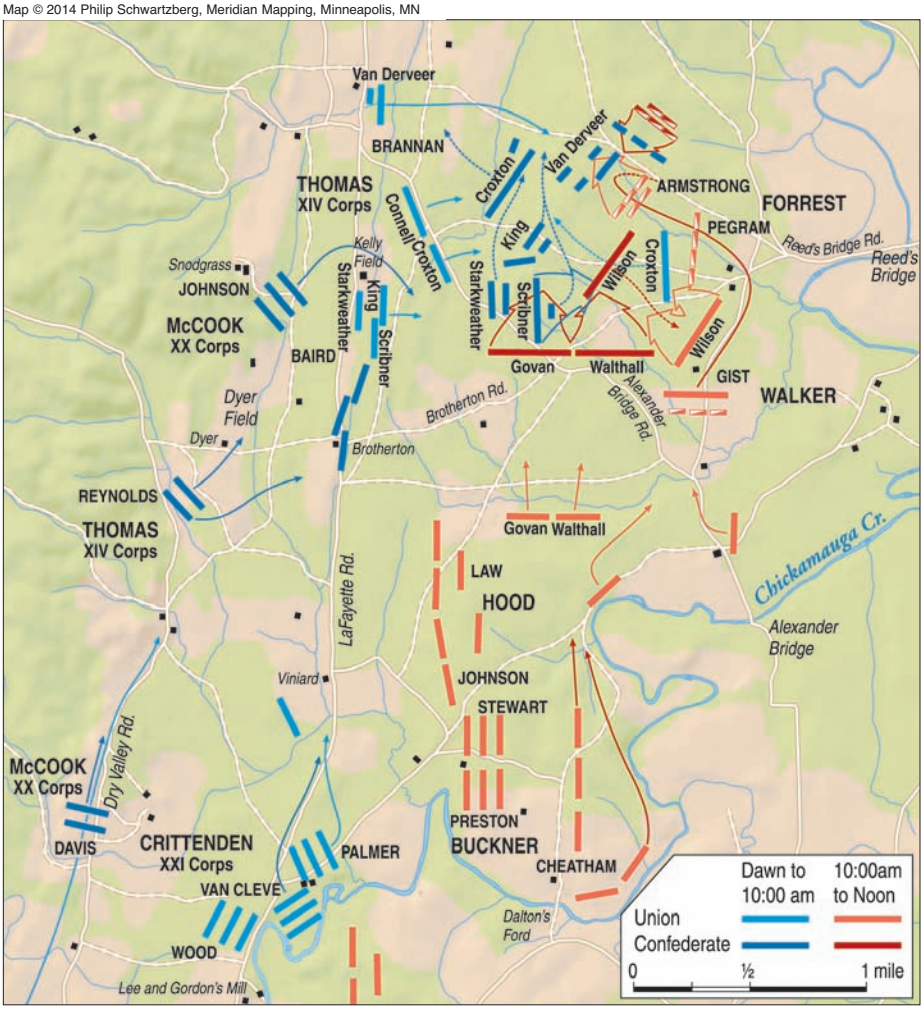
"We held our position for two hours and ten minutes in the midst of a deadly and galling fire, being enfiladed and almost surrounded, when General Forrest galloped up and said, 'Colonel Field, look out, you are almost surrounded; you had better fall back.' The order was given to retreat. I ran through a solid line of blue coats. As I fell back, they were upon the right of us, they were upon the left of us, they were in front of us, they were in the rear of us. It was a perfect hornets' nest. The balls whistled around our ears like the escape valves of ten thousand engines."

With Confederates retreating from the Union center, Rosecrans informed Crittenden that he was "in hopes we will drive them across the Chickamauga tonight." Union optimism was a bit pre-

mature as Bragg committed the divisions of Maj. Gen. Alexander P. Stewart, Hood, and Bushrod Johnson to the fight just south of the Brotherton Road. Stewart's division struck first, slamming into Brig. Gen. Horatio P. Van Cleve's Third Division, XXI Corps. Receiving the brunt of the Confederate onslaught were Van Cleve's First and Second Brigades, commanded by Brig. Gen. Samuel Beatty and Colonel George F. Dick, respectively.

As Stewart's lead brigade, commanded by Brig. Gen. Henry D. Clayton, emerged from the dense woods south of the Brotherton Road, the fight continued in earnest to move southwestward. For the next two hours, Clayton battled Van Cleve's men in an open field with no breastworks or protection of any kind. It was a murderous dual to the death. Though Clayton had only three regiments engaged, his losses were 604 killed and wounded, which amounted to about 200 men

Map © 2014 Philip Schwartzberg, Meridian Mapping, Minneapolis, MN



Maj. Gen. George Thomas's XIV Corps stationed on the Union left bore the brunt of the fighting on the morning of the first day of the battle. Despite strong attacks by the Confederates, the Union center held during afternoon fighting.

per regiment. With losses mounting on both sides, Stewart decided to relieve Clayton's brigade around 3:15 PM, sending in the division of Brig. Gen. John P. Brown.

Brown's fresh Confederate brigade overwhelmed the exhausted Federal forces under Beatty and Dick and drove the two Union brigades back toward the LaFayette Road. In the madness of the battle, exploding artillery pieces caused the arid landscape to ignite in a hellish inferno of gray-black smoke, which bought Dick's brigade a moment to regroup. As the smoke fell all around the charging Confederates, Dick's brigade managed to fire a single volley into the disoriented Tennesseans, which stunned them to a halt. Noticing the bewilderment of Brown's men, Dick's brigade counterattacked.

Dick's counterattack, which only momentarily halted Brown's charge, was quickly supported by a well-timed assault from the 75th Indiana, commanded by Colonel Milton S. Robinson of Colonel Edward King's brigade. The dual attacks by Dick and Robinson sent Brown's men rushing back into the woods. Palmer, pleased with Robinson's attack, nevertheless warned Robinson that Stewart would be back, and that he should be ready for him. Stewart did come back, and with a vengeance. Of the 800 men under Robinson's command, only 50 would be left in fighting condition when the day was done.

The succession of attacks from Clayton's brigade, Brown's brigade, and finally from Brig. Gen. William B. Bate's brigade eventually succeeded in driving Beatty's and Dick's brigades back across the LaFayette Road just south of the Brotherton house. Colonel William Grose, commanding Third Brigade, Second Division, XXI Corps, under Palmer was also driven across the Brotherton Road by Bate, who pursued him northwestwardly. Grose, running low on ammunition from the intense fighting, eventually had to retire from the field, leaving the Union center in crisis.

By 4 PM, Confederate forces had regained the field of battle and were beginning to exploit a critical gap in the Union center near the intersection of the Brotherton and LaFayette Roads, when artillery positioned near the northern side of the Union center stopped the Confederate infantry from widening the gap. This delay gave Thomas an opportunity to reinforce the Federal center by shifting Brannan's division south to fill the dangerous gap. Thomas also sent Baird's division forward to secure the Federal left flank, once again unifying the Union battle line.

While Federal and Confederate forces remained locked in combat near the Brotherton and LaFayette Roads, Rosecrans decided to commit the division of Brig. Gen. Jefferson C. Davis, XX Corps, to the fight near the Viniard farmstead between the Glenn-Kelly and Alexander Roads. Rosecrans hoped that Davis's division would be able to turn the Confederate flank of Stewart to the northeast, but Davis ran straight into the division of Bushrod Johnson, who promptly attacked Davis's left wing, under the command of Colonel Hans C. Heg, and drove them back across the LaFayette Road. According to Colonel John A. Martin, commanding Third Brigade, First Division, XX Corps, "The stream of wounded to the rear was almost unparalleled. Still the brigade held its ground, cheered on by the gallant, but unfortunate, Colonel Heg, who was everywhere present, careless of danger ... Colonel Heg was mortally wounded; but the remnants of the brigade, falling back to a fence a short distance in the rear, held the enemy in check until reenforcements came up and relieved them."

As the brigades of Brig. Gen. John Gregg and Colonel John Fulton (Johnson's brigade) pressed forward on the Federal left, they became detached from each other with Fulton

Confederates advance through thickly wooded terrain. Fighting continued after dark and the first day of the battle ended inconclusively with the Union line generally parallel to the LaFayette Road.

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drifting northward toward the Brotherton field and Gregg moving southwest toward the Viniard farm. Fulton encountered and successfully engaged King's brigade near the Brotherton field, but Gregg ran into the soldiers of Colonel John T. Wilder's mounted infantry brigade, who were armed with seven-shot Spencer carbines and were waiting in reserve near the Viniard farm. Wilder's men unleashed a deadly hailstorm of lead upon Gregg's surprised brigade, and Gregg himself was severely wounded in the neck. Wavering under such terrible conditions, Gregg's brigade began to fall back. Brig. Gen. Evander McNair's reserve brigade was called forward to relieve Gregg, but it also was pressed back as the battle continued to shift south.

Around 3 PM, Brig. Gen. Thomas J. Wood, commanding First Brigade, XXI Corps, was sent into the fight along with Maj. Gen. Phillip Sheridan's Third Division, XX Corps. For the next 2½ hours, Hood, Stewart, and Johnson's men attempted to crush and turn the Federal right flank to no avail in some of the bloodiest combat of the entire Civil War. The optimism emanating from Rosecrans's camp around midafternoon had evolved into uncertainty as War Department correspondent Charles A. Dana telegraphed Washington that the situation at Chickamauga "now appears to be an undecided contest."

Dana's message rang true as Hood and Johnson hunted the brigades of Davis and Wood, mercilessly driving them across the LaFayette Road by dusk. Just as the Confederates were positioning for a crushing final blow to the Federal right flank near the Viniard farm, Wilder's mounted infantry, once again in perfect position hidden by the wooded geography west of the Viniard farm, opened fire on the charging Rebels and dropped them in their tracks. Wilder wrote in his battle report: "In these various repulses we had thrown into the rebel columns which attacked us closely massed, over 200 rounds of double-shotted 10-pound canister, at a range varying from 70 to 350 yards, and at the same time kept up a constant fire with our repeating rifles, causing a most fearful destruction in the rebel ranks. After this we were not again that day attacked."

What the Confederates needed near the Viniard farm was reinforcements; they did not receive them. In a puzzling turn of events, the hard-fighting brigade of Irish-born Confederate Maj. Gen. Patrick R. Cleburne, who was in the vicinity of Sheridan and Davis and was reportedly crossing Thedford's Ford around 4:30 PM, was instructed by Bragg to march northward toward the right side of the Confederate line rather than reinforce and potentially turn the Federal right. Bragg critically failed to comprehend the situation on his own left flank, stubbornly adhering to his original plan to position his army between the Federals and Chattanooga. This failure to fluidly adjust to the ever changing nature of real-time battle situations proved costly, especially because Cleburne's attack was completely unnecessary. Unbeknownst to Bragg, Thomas had already made plans to withdraw Baird and Johnson to more suitable ground along a ridge near the Kelly field for the attack that was surely going to come the next day.

At 6 PM, with approximately 10 minutes of daylight remaining, Cleburne's division, arranged in a single battle line three brigades wide with Brig. Gen. Lucius Polk (a nephew of Lt. Gen. Leonidas Polk) on the right, Brig. Gen. S.A.M. Wood in the center leading the charge, and Brig. Gen. James Deshler on the left, the Confederates entered the Winfrey field. As total darkness swept over the field of battle, Federal and Confederate forces became intermingled in hand-to-hand combat, which occasionally deteriorated into friendly fire. Retreating soldiers from the 6th Indiana, who had just witnessed the death of their commander, Colonel Philemon P. Baldwin, ran straight into Brig. Gen. John Starkweather's brigade advancing on the enemy. Starkweather's men mistook the retreating Federals for advancing Confederates and opened fire on them.

On the Confederate side of the fight, Brig. Gen. Preston Smith mistakenly rode up to what he thought was a southern straggler to discipline him, when in reality he was a Pennsylvania sergeant who shot the general off his horse, mortally wounding him. The futility and senselessness of the night fighting became apparent to both sides as losses mounted, and by 8 PM Confederate forces had driven the Federals off the Winfrey field to positions close to where Thomas had ordered them hours earlier. For all their effort, the Confederates were in no position to pursue. The daylong fight had come to an end with inconclusive results.

Rosecrans wrote: "The roar of battle hushed in the darkness of night, and our troops, weary with a night of marching and a day of fighting, rested on their arms, having everywhere maintained their positions, developed the enemy, and gained through command of the Rossville and Dry Valley roads to Chattanooga, the great object of the battle of the 19th."

Bragg wrote: "Night found us masters of the ground, after a series of very obstinate contests with

Continued on page 69

Triumph At PLASSEY

BY LOUIS CIOTOLA

A British counteroffensive led by Colonel Robert Clive in the Bengal region of India in 1757 culminated in a showdown with the Nawab of Bengal during a driving monsoon.

FOR NEARLY 200 YEARS, India was the jewel in the crown of the British Empire. Untold wealth flowed from such cities as Bombay, Madras, and Calcutta, supplying Great Britain with much of what made it possible to construct its world empire. It is almost unbelievable that all of that was initiated through the exploits of just one man, Colonel Robert Clive. It was Clive who dreamed about becoming the first governor of a British India. Until his achievements in Bengal, culminating in the victory at Plassey, the British and the East India Company were more concerned with trade than any grandiose political schemes. Plassey changed everything. As much a coup as an actual battle, Clive's triumph eliminated any hope that India would remain free of foreign rule.

The events that so profoundly altered the course of both India and the British Empire took place in 1756-1757, solely within the confines of the eastern province of Bengal, India's most prosperous concerning trade with the outside world. It was there that Mirza Muhammad, better known as Siraj-ud-Daula or "Lamp of State," reigned as Nawab, having succeeded his grandfather, Aliverdi Khan, in early 1756. Technically, the Nawab of Bengal was one of many viceroys or subahdars serving the Mogul emperor, but in reality, with the decline of the empire, men such as Siraj-ud-Daula ruled as independent kings.

At 27 years old, Siraj-ud-Daula had grown to be a cruel man, known for his affinity for torturing both man and beast. This tendency did not affect his ability to govern, for if he was known as a weak ruler, he was also recognized to be quite talented in regard to affairs of state. He was especially wary of the activities of Europeans, who in the last two centuries had descended on his country like, as his predecessor once described, a swarm of bees.

The English hive in Bengal, centered on the city of Calcutta, was prospering immensely from the trading privileges, or firman, granted by the Mogul emperor to the British East India Company back in 1717. But in early 1756, it faced an almost equally immense problem. The defenses of Fort William, constructed within Calcutta, were in an advanced state of disrepair. With renewed war with France threatening, it was imperative that its governor, Roger Drake, oversee the restoration of the fort, which had lost much of its garrison to the defense of Madras. There was a catch. Such repairs would no doubt alarm Siraj-ud-Daula, as he was paranoid of every seemingly militant gesture the Europeans made.

Perhaps Governor Drake would still have avoided the Nawab's wrath had it not been for his harboring a fugitive by the name of Krishna Das, a Hindu nobleman accused of embezzling the Nawab's money as well as being involved a plot to overthrow him. Naturally, this only served to increase Siraj-ud-Daula's suspicions against the English, and when Drake expelled the emissary who had traveled to Calcutta to address the grievance, his patience was exhausted. "What honor is left to us," the emissary asked, "when a few traders who have not yet learned to wash their bottoms reply to the ruler's order by expelling his envoy?"

Siraj-ud-Daula was determined to regain that honor. As punishment for the diplomatic fiasco, he led his army to the town of Kasimbazar outside his capital at Murshidabad and sacked the English trading factory located there. Drake, rather than be intimidated, remained defiant and prepared for the attack on Calcutta that he was certain would come.

What was once far from inevitable became a self-fulfilling prophecy. On June 16, Siraj-ud-Daula arrived outside the city with some 50,000 men. The garrison and accompanying militia inside Fort William numbered no more than 500. Given the state of the fortifications and disloyalty of many of the native defenders, the result was a foregone conclusion. Drake fled the city in an infamous display of cowardice, leaving John Holwell to defend the fort and the women and children who remained inside. Without any hope of salvation, he surrendered on June 19. Elated with himself, the Nawab wrote to the emperor that his was "the most glorious achievement in Indostan since the days of Tamerlane."

Meanwhile, Drake and his fellow refugees from Calcutta made their way down the Hugli River to Fulta. There they wilted in number, eaten alive by disease, but continued to reject talk of peace all the same. The Nawab had no interest in harassing them any further. He had made his point and fully expected them to pay

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Elephants draped in scarlet and gold were part of Siraj-ud-Daula's 60,000-man army. At the Battle of Arcot, Robert Clive and 300 British troops routed the raw and undisciplined host.

him for the return of their trading privileges. Although he underestimated British resolve, it would be some time before there would be any type of retaliation. The first reinforcements to arrive from Madras, some 200 men under Major Kilpatrick, landed at Fulta on July 30 and suffered as much as those already there. By the time further help arrived, many of them were already long dead.

When news of the fall of Calcutta reached the British in Madras, there was at first indecision on the part of the East India Company's Madras Council regarding how to respond. A planned expedition into the Deccan Plateau would naturally have to be scrapped for the recapture of Calcutta, but how it would be handled was another matter altogether. On the one hand, dispatching a large number of troops from Madras to Calcutta would weaken the former, making it vulnerable to a French attack should war with that country be renewed. On the other hand, sending too small a force would still weaken Madras while also ensuring failure at Calcutta. Consequently, the Madras Council opted for a strong expedition to Bengal but was prepared to order its recall should Madras become endangered.

National Army Museum

ABOVE: British Colonel Robert Clive, who at the time of Plassey already had a growing military reputation. BELOW: British Major Eyre Coote led the 39th Regiment of Foot at Plassey.

National Portrait Gallery

The company's first choice to command the land forces in the expedition fell through due to illness. Its second, Colonel John Aldercron, commander of the king's regiment in the naval squadron of Vice Admiral Charles Watson, refused due to disagreements regarding deployment and plunder, which he would not agree to share with the company. That left Robert Clive.

Clive was certainly not a last resort. The hero of Arcot was a member of the Madras Council with extensive military and political experience in India. His affiliation with India began in an inauspicious manner when he arrived on the subcontinent in 1744 as a clerk for the East India Company. He had his first taste of battle serving in the company's forces during the First Carnatic War. He made a name for himself in the fall of 1751 for boldly seizing the city of Arcot in the Carnatic region of southern India along the Bay of Bengal during the Second Carnatic War. For nearly two months, Clive's small command withstood a siege by a much greater force led by Raza Sahib, the son of French ally Chanda Sahib, the Nawab of Arcot. During the campaign, Clive showed himself to be a bold strategist and an unflinching opponent on the battlefield. He subsequently returned to England where he made an unsuccessful bid for Parliament before returning to India as a colonel in the British Army.

As head of the Bengal expedition, Clive was granted unprecedented power, being in control of military forces without having to answer to Drake or the other civilian leaders exiled at Fulta. This extreme measure was taken purely to prevent the Bengal Council from attempting to keep Clive there in the event he was recalled to Madras. The Madras Council, however, placed Aldercron's marines under Watson rather than Clive to reduce friction. Nevertheless, Clive was fully contented by what he had obtained, writing home to his father, "It is by far the grandest of my undertakings. I go with great force and great authority." If all went as he desired, that force would catapult him to the very heights of British power in India.

Aldercron reluctantly loaned his men to the expedition, but he would not risk his artillery. As a result, the enterprise was delayed until October 16, 1756, as substitute company guns were assembled and embarked to join the 528 soldiers, 109 artillerymen, 940 sepoys, and 160 native support troops waiting to set sail. The delay meant that being caught in the monsoon would now be unavoidable. So dominating were the winds that at one point the fleet was blown off course all the way to Ceylon, forcing two ships to return home. It was not until December 15, after an agonizing two months at sea, that the remainder of the fleet anchored off Fulta.

"There is less reason to apprehend a check from the Nawab's forces, than from the nature of the climate and country," wrote Clive, no doubt influenced by the tumultuous journey and the conditions he discovered in Fulta. His instructions were not necessarily to engage those forces, but to see what could be done through diplomacy to restore what the company had lost. Ignoring Drake, both Clive and Watson wrote the Nawab demanding satisfaction for the attack on Calcutta. In his letter, Clive sought to intimidate, assuring Siraj-ud-Daula that he too was a great warrior. The Nawab was unimpressed.

As it turned out, the Nawab's impression was quite inconsequential as Clive had already decided to act militarily. He could hardly stay in disease-ridden Fulta, nor could he provide time for Calcutta to be reinforced. The only logical option was to attack. His first target was the fort of Budge-Budge, which he reached by marching while Watson sailed up the Hugli with the fleet. Anticipating that the defenders were holed up inside, he was subsequently caught by surprise when 3,000 of them led by Calcutta's governor, Manik Chand, launched a sudden attack, which was likely accidental. Although afflicted with a slight fever, Clive managed to keep his 260 troops in good order and withstood the assault, which cost the enemy some 150 men. A swift counterattack drove them off.

His men exhausted, Clive decided to wait until the following day to assault the fort, even though Watson had already commenced his naval bombardment. The decision did not sit well with Major Eyre Coote, who led Aldercron's marines and despised Clive as a "company soldier," or with many of his men. That evening, a drunken Irishman by the name of Strahan foolhardily took matters into his own hands, charging Budge-Budge entirely on his own. Inspired by the display, many of Coote's men rushed to join him, finding Strahan bloodied but miraculously still alive. Because Manik Chand had fled, the fort fell easily with the loss of only four wounded.

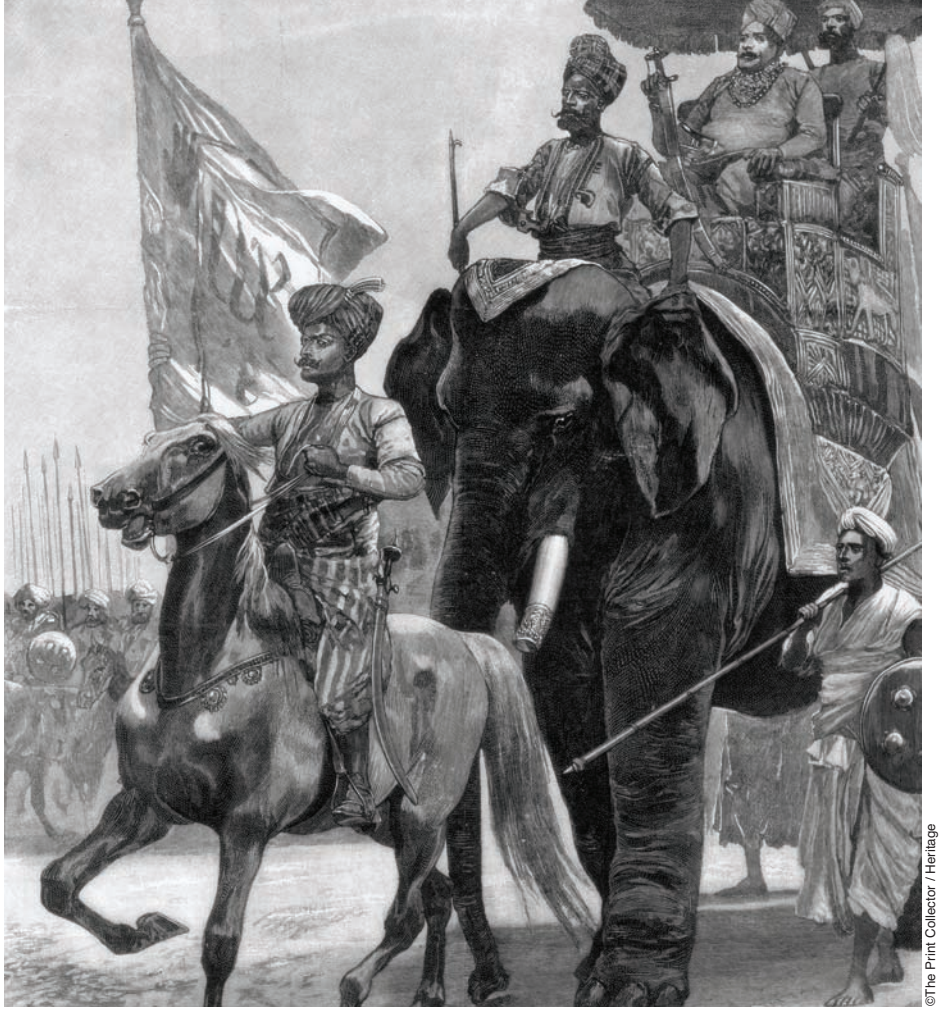
If the victory at Budge-Budge had been easier than expected, the recapture of Calcutta was positively anticlimactic. On January 2, 1757, Watson's fleet began its bombardment of Fort

William, and again Manik Chand fled, this time without even the pretense of resistance. The real anxiety came after the enemy had gone, once Coote had occupied the fortress. On the approach of Clive's sepoys, Coote, acting on Watson's orders to allow no one admittance, barred their entry. Soon after, an infuriated Clive arrived on the scene and refused to leave. Coote appealed to Watson, who promptly dispatched word to the "company soldier" that if he failed to vacate Fort William he "should be fired out." Petty disagreements, it seemed, threatened to undo everything that had been thus far accomplished.

It took the intervention of Thomas Latham, a naval captain and friend of Clive's, to settle the dispute. Clive, as the leading authority on the scene, was granted Fort William but then turned it over to Watson, who represented the king. Watson in turned handed it over to the civilian authorities, Drake and the Bengal Committee. Drake once again took his place as governor and as the head of the committee promptly attempted to turn everything full circle by asserting his power over Clive. Clive would have none of it, simply assuring the committee that he would do his best to work in cooperation. Although Calcutta had been retaken, he was much more concerned with contending with the Nawab, who was not likely to allow a defeat to go unanswered, than with playing politics with a group of ex-refugees. Recognizing the still pertinent danger, Watson agreed to place Coote and the king's soldiers under Clive's command.

Clive now set out to intimidate the Nawab, ordering Kilpatrick forward with 500 men to take the town of Hugli, an important supply depot, hoping to both enhance Calcutta's security and push Siraj-ud-Daula to either negotiate or come out and fight. Following an eight-hour bombardment on January 9 courtesy of Watson, Kilpatrick stormed Hugli, which had been unsurprisingly abandoned by Manik Chand. For the next nine days, Kilpatrick's men looted the town before withdrawing on January 18.

The attack had the desired effect of rousing the Nawab, but events were moving far too slowly for Clive, who feared that if he failed to press the issue the enemy would have time to solicit the aid of the French. News that war had erupted in Europe between Great Britain and France made the situation urgent. Little did Clive know how hesitant the French were to assist a ruler in whom they possessed little trust. Nevertheless, Siraj-ud-Daula would come, with or without the French, and it was necessary to prepare. To this effect, Clive ordered the restrengthening of Fort William and the formation of the native Lal Paltan, or Red Brigade, the scarlet-dressed mercenaries who formed the British Bengal army.



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Nawab of Bengal Siraj-ud-Daula arrived at the battle in a howdah atop an elephant. Although technically a viceroy serving the Mogul emperor, the nawab ruled more like an independent king.

Clive set about provoking the Nawab into attacking prematurely, and in this he succeeded. Without fully developing any real strategy, Siraj-ud-Daula marched his force of 18,000 cavalry, 15,000 infantry, 40 cannons, and 50 elephants to the very outskirts of Calcutta. He established his headquarters just beyond a defensive trench, known as the Maratha Ditch, that surrounded the city, at the house of a former English prisoner, the Hindu merchant and notorious double dealer Ominchand. Here, with Ominchand acting as an intermediary, he contemptuously talked peace with the British envoys.

Rather than await the inevitable attack on Fort William, Clive chose to adopt a typical French strategy and launched a surprise night raid on the Nawab's headquarters, intending to kill, capture, or at the very least intimidate him. Right from the start things went wrong. The operation did not commence until dawn, when a thick fog had descended over the area. As a consequence, the 470 European soldiers, 800 sepoys, and 600 sailors loaned from Watson to pull the artillery became lost and confused on their way to Ominchand's gardens. Unknowingly, they headed straight into the center of the enemy camp instead of the causeway leading to the gardens. Alerted to their presence by the noise, 300 horsemen of the Nawab's Pathan guard charged forward. Although the British managed to repel the attack, it was clear their objective was ruined, as by now the enemy was taking measures to protect the approaches to their headquarters.

As the fog lifted, the British found themselves assailed from all sides. First one escape route was cut off, then another, forcing them to charge their way through at a heavy cost of men and cannons. Two of the Nawab's guns firing from across the Maratha Ditch tore into them, at one point lighting the powder pouch of a grenadier and triggering a violent explosion. It was many hours before Clive and his men at last made their escape. Their casualties amounted to 57 killed, including Clive's aide-de-camp and secretary, and many more wounded, losses they could ill afford. Siraj-ud-Daula, meanwhile, could more easily absorb his 1,300 casualties, but when his troops became mutinous following the fight he prudently chose to withdraw. It was "the warmest service I ever

yet engaged in," said Clive.

The fog attack was a complete failure from a military standpoint, but from a political one it brought Siraj-ud-Daula to the peace table. Thanks in part to a looming Afghan threat, the Nawab now willingly offered to restore the company's trading privileges, compensate it for the extensive damage done to Calcutta, and consent to the city's fortification. Clive, impressed by his own losses, eager to satisfy the company's desire to get back to business, and still fearful of an alliance between the Nawab and the French, jumped at the offer. In less than two months he had reversed all the events of the previous year.

Not everyone saw it that way. Watson was reluctant to abandon the momentum and when peace was made refused the Nawab's personal gift to him. He was either unconvinced or unconcerned that the French would interfere, despite the still elevated tensions. But Clive's focus had already shifted to driving the French from Bengal altogether, arguing that the lull in fighting with the Nawab and the possession of an army provided the perfect opportunity to strike, specifically against their fortress at Chandernagore. There, the French, led by Pierre Renault, were already proving hostile by agreeing to blockade the Hugli for Siraj-ud-Daula to prevent British passage. It seemed only a matter of time before the two officially united. Besides, the company had long ago decided that forcing the French out of Bengal was the primary objective.

Because of his recent treaty with Siraj-ud-Daula, Clive required his permission to move against Chandernagore. He sent the recently released Watts along with Ominchand, who was specifically requested by the Nawab, to negotiate for it. But Siraj-ud-Daula had no intention of granting his consent. The contending presence of both European powers was an assurance for the Nawab that neither would be able to muster the additional strength necessary to challenge his power. It was a precarious balance the Nawab worked hard to maintain.

Suddenly, and quite conveniently for Clive, that balance was wrecked when a powerful Afghan army materialized along the Nawab's northwestern frontier. Desperate for assistance, he asked the British for help. Clive agreed to assist but emphasized that he could not march so far from Calcutta with his enemy to his rear at Chandernagore. Reluctantly, Siraj-ud-Daula relented on the point, or at least he appeared to, for his letter to that effect was extremely ambiguous. That did not stop Clive, nor Watson and Watts, from interpreting it as permission to strike. When the Afghan threat turned out to be empty and the Nawab again became more vocal in his objections, the British Army was already much too far along to be halted.

Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

An illustration of a British sepoy in his East India Company uniform. The Sepoys tramped to Plassey along the riverbank, while the British soldiers rode with the supplies and artillery in a fleet of boats.

Supplemented by 500 native reinforcements from Bombay, Clive reached Chandernagore on March 8. It was not until March 13 that he initiated hostilities. Although he bombarded the 700-odd defenders, of whom 237 were French, he was unable to storm the fort itself until Watson's fleet came into play, a necessity made challenging by the intentionally sunken obstacles in the Hugli meant to thwart a naval approach. Withering French fire from within the fort kept his men more than occupied in the meantime.

When Siraj-ud-Daula learned of the British attack, he was enraged and demanded its immediate cessation. Predictably, Clive ignored him. For the time being the Nawab's forces, led by Rai Durlabh, were keeping their distance while elements within his government pressured him not to intervene. On March 23, Watson's ships finally navigated through the obstacles and began their bombardment. The French retaliation was brutal. All three participating ships were heavily damaged, with the 70-gun third rate *Kent* suffering 37 dead while the captain of the 60-gun fourth rate *Tyger,* Admiral Pocock, was wounded. Watson himself was lucky to escape unharmed. But the French were being hit even harder, and after three hours of murderous fire they opted to surrender.

Siraj-ud-Daula's first inclination was to threaten the English with war, yet a renewed Afghan scare prompted him to instead send Clive a letter of congratulations. When the Afghan crisis again passed, the Nawab switched back to hostility, ordering his general, Mir Jafar, to join his forces with that of Rai Durlabh, who had assembled at Plassey. At the same time, he began to actively petition for French support, a prospect now made much more likely.

It was all rather convenient for Clive, who was looking for a way to really make it big in India. Mounting tensions with the Nawab allowed him to honestly inform the Madras Council that it was too dangerous to return with the situation in Bengal being so unsettled, enabling him to maintain control of an army with which to assert himself. The only problem that remained was finding a way to even the odds against Siraj-ud-Daula and his massive army.

Clive decided that the best way to do that was to exploit the internal divisions within the Nawab's military and government. Siraj-ud-Daula's policies and personality were far from universally loved. The prominent Hindu bankers known as the Seths, for example, resented the disruption in trade with the Europeans and were eager to be rid of its cause. At the same time, generals such as Mir Jafar and Rai Durlabh, as well as Manik Chand, grew weary of the abuse they suffered at his hands. He had even once threateningly pointed his cannons at Mir Jafar, turning him into a man willing to act in an underhanded fashion should an opportunity to better his own position present itself.

Clive provided that opportunity. Making contact with the disaffected general through Watts, he offered British recognition to Mir Jafar as the new Nawab in return for military assistance in overthrowing Siraj-ud-Daula. Mir Jafar eagerly accepted, bringing Rai Durlabh and Manik Chand into the conspiracy as well. But there soon after appeared a potentially fatal snag. Ominchand, the sly Hindu merchant not quite trusted by anyone, had previously drawn up his own plot with the Seths, which had been rejected by Clive and the other conspirators. That rejection, in addition to Mir Jafar's efforts to prevent him from getting wind of the real plot, triggered a huge crisis when Ominchand learned of what was happening through his network of spies. Resentful and always looking to line his pockets, he threatened to expose the

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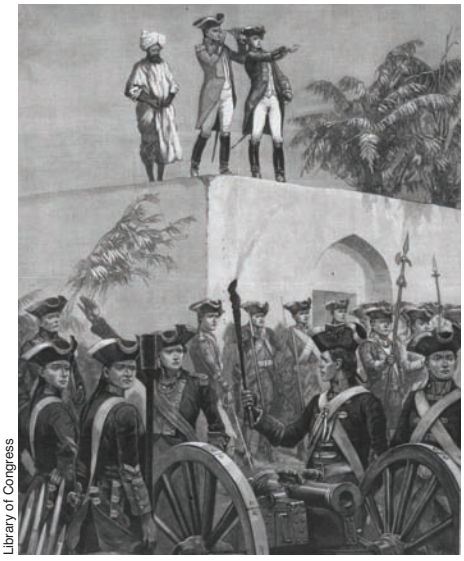

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ABOVE: Clive's men captured several key positions from the Nawab's men at Plassey with well-timed bayonet charges. LEFT: Clive uses a telescope to observe enemy positions on the morning of the battle from the roof of the Nawab of Bengal's hunting lodge.

plan to Siraj-ud-Daula unless he received a large share of the spoils.

No one wanted to see Ominchand get away with such treachery, least of all Clive. He consequently resolved on a bit of deception designed to outwit the crafty merchant. Drawing up two treaties, one that summarized his terms with Mir Jafar and another that did the same but included a provision to compensate Ominchand, Clive sought to trick him into believing that the conspirators had caved in to his demands. But in reality only the first treaty would be real, while the second, the one Ominchand would see, would be a fake. It was a shady strategy to say the least, and it would come to put a stain on Clive's reputation.

Because of the dangerous nature of the game, Watts was not able to attain Mir Jafar's signature until June 5, but once he did so the British sprang into action. After establishing the flimsy pretext that Siraj-ad-Daula had failed to abide by the terms of their previous treaty, Clive began his offensive on June 13. He marched from Chandernagore with nearly 3,000 men, including Coote's 39th Foot, 2,000 sepoys, and 150 sailors loaned by Watson. The army dragged with it eight six-pounder cannons and two small howitzers. As usual, the Europeans traveled most of the way by boat while the sepoys trudged along the riverbank. There was a sense of urgency in the air. Soon the rains would come, making any such operations nearly impossible. Making matters even more pressing was the state of the newborn conspiracy. The longer Clive dallied, the greater the chance it would unravel.

It appeared to Clive that he had reason to worry. Siraj-ud-Daula had joined Rai Durlabh and Mir Jafar at Plassey and, fearing treason, asked the latter to pledge his loyalty on the Koran, a request the general could hardly refuse. Of course, Clive was unaware of his co-conspirator's dishonest pledge, but Siraj-ud-Daula's presence with Mir Jafar at Plassey was enough to spark obvious concerns regarding the state of the plot. In reality, relations between the Nawab and his general were anything but cordial. Siraj-ud-Daula's well-placed paranoia had prompted a failed attempt to arrest Mir Jafar. It was a decision he quickly regretted when he realized that he needed the general, least of all to calm his mutinous army, which at the end of the day only agreed to remain in the field on payment of a hefty sum. Nonetheless, the Nawab was now watching Mir Jafar closely, an unforeseen development that imperiled the plot considerably.

On June 18, Clive sent Coote ahead to capture the village of Kutna and its large supply of rice. The defenders fled the fort without attempting to resist. Clive arrived shortly thereafter expecting to meet Mir Jafar and his promised 10,000 men, but the Nawab's presence at Plassey restricted the general's freedom of movement. Clive began to fear the worst. Increasing his concern was the ambiguity of Mir Jafar's letters and rumors that he and the Nawab had reconciled their differences. Did Mir Jafar intend to honor his deal with the British, or had he indeed devoted himself to the enemy? Clive simply did not know.

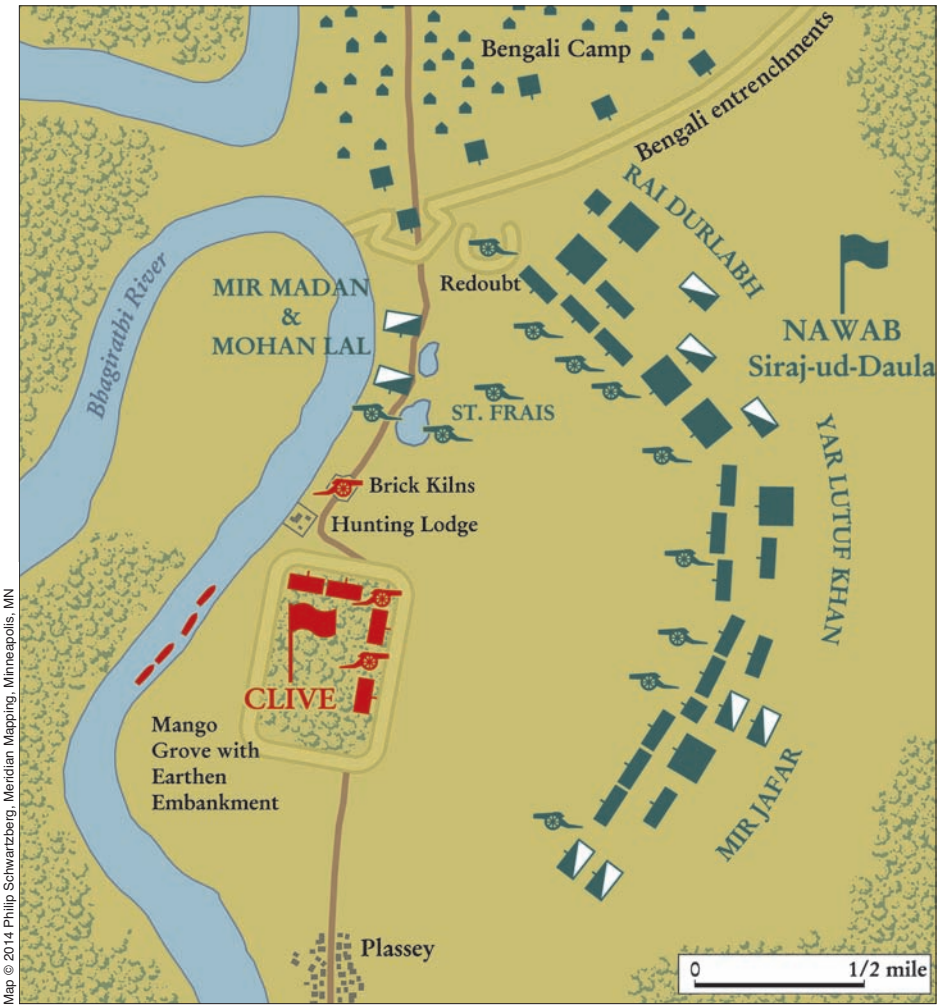
Upon his arrival at the Bhagirathi River, Clive was forced to make the most important decision of his life. His choices were to either cross the river and proceed to Plassey or remain where he was and await events. Both options carried tremendous risk. The river was fordable at the time, but should Clive cross only to be betrayed by Mir Jafar and defeated at Plassey, it would likely be impossible to escape back across, as the river would by then surely be swollen by the monsoon rains. The army would be trapped and annihilated. But failing to cross would expose him as being weak, which

would certainly cause Mir Jafar to pull his support for the plot, assuming he had not already secretly done so. Furthermore, delay would provide time for Siraj-ud-Daula to acquire French reinforcements, 300 of which were only three days march away. The dilemma could scarcely have been more gut wrenching, and for the first time Clive wavered in his typically resolute self-confidence.

On June 21, Clive took the unusual step of garnering other opinions, calling a council of war to debate the options. Unsurprisingly, Coote loudly voiced a desire to meet the Nawab in battle, though he did so under the mistaken belief that Clive intended to withdraw all the way back to Calcutta. Clive, however, along with a number of other officers, expressed the imprudence of such an action. It was just too great a risk.

A mere one hour following the council, Clive suddenly changed his mind. Why he did so remains unclear, though undoubtedly he came to the conclusion that the current situation was likely his only chance to achieve the lofty goals he had set for himself. It was a case of high risk, high reward.

Shortly thereafter, as if from the hand of providence, he received a letter from Mir Jafar. While the general still appeared noncommittal, the letter warned of the Nawab's entrenchments at Plassey and urged an immediate attack. It was enough to convince Clive that at the very least Mir Jafar



Map © 2014 Philip Schwartzberg, Meridian Mapping, Minneapolis, MN

would stand neutral. The following afternoon he ordered the army to cross the river. After an eight-hour march through pouring rain, it arrived at Plassey at 1 AM on June 23, camping in an orchard of mango trees known as the Orchard of a Hundred Thousand Trees. There, Clive learned that Mir Jafar had yet to abandon the Nawab. He could do little but nervously wait to see if his gamble would bring glory or disaster.

Clive had ample reason to be concerned. Peering through a telescope from the roof of the hunting lodge where he spent his sleepless night, Clive saw amassed against him an army that greatly outnumbered his own. Factoring in those contingents led by Mir Jafar and Rai Durlabh, whose loyalties were as yet uncertain, the Nawab's forces amounted to some 60,000 men. It came as a surprise because the rumors of mutiny had convinced Clive that many of Siraj-ud-Daula's soldiers must have surely deserted. Two-thirds of the force consisted of infantry, while the other 20,000 was cavalry, including the skilled Pathans armed with swords and long spears. But the Pathans were the exception. Most of the Nawab's soldiers were poorly trained and undisciplined.

Siraj-ud-Daula's front line stood just 200 yards from Clive's position and consisted of many of his best troops, specifically 7,000 infantry and 5,000 cavalry commanded by Mir Madan. Mir Madan stood in support of the artillery, which totaled 53 pieces and was predominantly situated atop the high banks of two ponds, where it was manned by some 50 Frenchmen led by Monsieur de St. Frais. Farther back with the rest of the army were a number of elephants, draped in cloth of scarlet and gold. But that was only part of the Nawab's force. An even larger contingent of his army under Mir Jafar stretched east of the grove along the British right flank. If it was indeed Mir Jafar's intention to betray Clive, he was in the perfect position to swiftly outflank and quite possibly destroy him. That those men were in fact under his co-conspirator's command, Clive was as yet unaware.

Initially, Clive did not intend to use the mango grove, which sat behind a mud bank, was 300 yards long, and stretched for about a mile. Instead, he massed his army with the grove to its back, placing the Europeans in the center and the sepoys on the wings. Between them on both sides he positioned three cannons while the rest, including the howitzers, remained to the rear on the left flank protected by brick kilns that sat 200 yards in front of the hunting lodge.

The battle began promptly at 8 AM when the Nawab's cannons opened fire, to which the British responded in kind. Although the British guns were more efficient than their rival's, it was soon obvious that it was they rather than the enemy who were getting the worst of the bombardment. Siraj-ud-Daula could easily absorb his losses, while Clive could not. After 30 minutes of punishment at the cost of 10 Europeans and 20 sepoys, Clive amended his error of leaving his lines exposed by pulling them back behind the mud bank and into the mango grove. Casualties subsequently dropped off significantly as the enemy fire soared harmlessly overhead into the trees.

Meanwhile, his army had been at Plassey for hours and still there was no word from Mir Jafar. Clive now decided to avoid a formal battle. Instead, he planned to stay put and wait for nightfall, when he would attempt a repeat of the strategy he used before Calcutta. It would be a huge gamble, but so far luck had been with him in such ventures. Whether it would work or not

depended largely on the huge segment of the enemy army sitting idle on his right flank. If it remained uncommitted, he would have a chance.

At 12 PM it began to rain, and it continued to do so for 30 minutes. To preserve their powder, the British covered their cannons and ammunition with tarpaulins, a precaution not taken by the Nawab's men. As a result, the Nawab's powder was soaked, and his cannons fell silent. But rather than prompt a British attack, it had the exact opposite effect, convincing Mir Madan that if his cannons were useless so too must be the enemy's guns. Under that false assumption, he led his troops forward only to be surprised when the British six-pounders proved fully operational. The cannons delivered a withering fire, one shot striking Mir Madan in the thigh. Mortally wounded, his men carried him from the field, and the offensive quickly petered out.

Mir Madan's death shook Siraj-ud-Daula to his core. With the loss of another honorable general, Bahadur Ali Khan, there seemed no one left upon whose loyalty the Nawab could rely. In a panic, Siraj-ud-Daula summoned Mir Jafar to his headquarters. Throwing his hat to the general's feet, he begged him for his loyalty. Mir Jafar graciously complied, but just as before his pledge was dishonest, as was his advice to withdraw to the entrenchments, which he gave alongside Rai Durlabh. Once out of the Nawab's presence, he hastily scratched a letter to Clive imploring him to attack. With everything in the balance, he was likely waiting to see which side would prevail. If Siraj-ud-Daula pulled back and the British advanced, there would be an all-out battle and he would soon have his answer, as well as be in a better position to unite with Clive if the circumstances proved right. But the conditions at Plassey proved impossible to control. His letter failed to reach Clive because the messenger was afraid to proceed through the firing, leaving events to chance.

Mir Madan's disastrous charge had not altered Clive's plan. His objective remained to strike after nightfall. But when he went back to the lodge to change his wet clothes, events suddenly escaped his control. Heeding the ill-intentioned advice of his generals, the Nawab ordered his army to fall back, although some, chiefly de St. Frais and Mir Madan's replacement, Mohan Lal, did so only reluctantly. For Siraj-ud-Daula, as for Clive, the battle was supposed to be over. Major Kilpatrick, however, interpreted the enemy movements as a sign of exploitable weakness that demanded immediate action. Without orders, he charged a detachment forward, seizing the banks from which the French had just withdrawn. The battle was on again.

Clive returned to the front lines beside himself with anger. Kilpatrick's attack exposed his forward units, leaving him with no choice but to fully engage in battle with an all-out offensive to support those who had charged ahead. Besides, at that juncture a withdrawal would likely be construed as a sign of weakness and prompt an enemy counterattack. He ordered Coote's two divisions and a company of grenadiers to advance. Upon reaching the scene of the action, Clive assumed command over Kilpatrick's men, sending the insolent major to the rear of the army after a severe dressing down.

National Portrait Gallery

ABOVE: The victorious Clive meets Mir Jafar following the Battle of Plassey. Mir Jafar kept his troops out of the fight. He succeeded Siraj-ud-Daula as nawab, but was only a puppet ruler under the British. OPPOSITE: Colonel Clive's small army was nearly encircled by the Nawab's mighty host at Plassey. But what they lacked in numbers, the British made up for in leadership and fighting spirit.

When the British advanced, Mohan Lal and the French turned to resist. While the French occupied a redoubt and a wooded hill where they repositioned their cannons, Mohan Lal led a spirited counterattack. With the support of St. Frais' guns, the Nawab's cavalry stormed forward into an unbreakable wall. After losing many men and a significant number of officers, Mohan Lal fell back again. The British now held all of the momentum, but it was still not safe to surge ahead. The Nawab's troops that had been sitting on their right flank during the entire course of the battle remained. If Clive chose to charge into the enemy at his front, those on his flank could easily swoop in and surround him.

For a brief moment around 3 PM, that fear appeared close to being realized when those same enemy troops began marching toward the river to his rear. Unsure of their identity, the British opened fire, but as they drew closer Clive discovered that the threat was in fact Mir Jafar, who had decided to stand neutral after all. Armed with that most vital of information, he now had the green light to press on full force against what remained of Siraj-ud-Daula, leading the charge against the redoubt while Coote made for the hill. In the face of heavy musket fire, both forces captured their objectives, sending the French fleeing to the rear. The attack precipitated mass confusion within the rest of the enemy host as both men and elephants stampeded backward to escape the onslaught. The confusion turned into sheer panic when one of the Nawab's ammunition depots suddenly exploded. What had begun as a likely defeat for the British had become a total rout of their enemy.

Mir Jafar, as it turned out, had only made his move to join Clive's lines on word that Siraj-ud-

Continued on page 68

By Christopher Miskimon

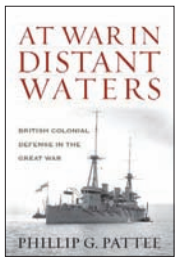
The British Navy had an effective strategy in hand to deal with German raiders when World War I broke out.

THE STRENGTH OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE LAY IN ITS COLONIES. Together, they formed a vast trade network which gave the United Kingdom a decided advantage in military ability, finance, and commerce. When used in synchronized effort, this system could bring enormous power to bear on any opponent. This was a strength the British had used for decades to maintain and expand their control over their empire and prevent the rise of competitors.

Before World War I, Great Britain controlled 50 percent of the world's shipping tonnage and 80 percent of the international communications network, comprising telegraph lines and the then new technology of radio. Also, the world's merchants obtained necessary credit and bought insurance in the exchanges of London. England truly was the superpower of the era.

By 1914, an opponent had risen to challenge this supremacy. Germany, ambitious and eager, had its own plans for a rise to preeminence. Knowing a war with Great Britain was possible, Germany made preparations. It possessed a small empire of its own, colonies scattered throughout Africa and the Pacific Ocean.

These holdings prepared for war by creating a support network for commerce raiders, both regular warships and converted merchantmen. Ordnance was stockpiled to arm these civilian ships upon a war's outbreak. Telegraph and radio stations were established to improve the coordination of the fleet. A number of support vessels were designated to provide the commerce raiders with fuel and provisions. Germany recognized the trade routes connecting the British Empire were a weak spot to be exploited during a conflict. The Kaiser's government also knew the Royal Navy would blockade Germany from the outset, so its raiders would need this external network for their survival.



Likewise, the British knew the threat posed by the German Navy and planned for the reduction of that threat. ***At War in Distant Waters: British Colonial Defense in the Great War*** (Phillip G. Pattee, Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, MD, 2013, 288 pp., maps, notes, bibliography, index, $59.95, hardcover) reveals how Great Britain studied the problem, decided on a course of action, prepared itself, and when the time came, acted to eliminate this peril to trade, the lifeblood of the empire.

The defense of its trade routes had begun centuries earlier for the British and was ingrained to the point it was really second nature for the government. A vast network of overseas bases was created to defend these

The German Navy assembled in Kiel Harbor before World War I. Once the war began, Britain quickly blockaded Germany, which prevented the Axis power from reinforcing its colonies by sea, and then chased down German raiders one by one.

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Israel: Its Success for the Long Haul

What Are Israel's Great Strengths to Achieve Its Continued Success?

On its 65th birthday, Israel can be described as a great success. Now, looking forward, we need to project what Israel will be like for the next 60 to 100 years. From what we can foresee, it is going to be a continuation of its success. There are good reasons for this optimistic assessment.

What are the facts?

National Security. The balance of military power, as compared to its neighboring Arab enemies, is decisively in favor of Israel. Israel's military might is substantially greater than that of any combination of its potential adversaries. It is highly unlikely that any Arab state would venture to attack powerful Israel. Military threats are more likely to come from non-state adversaries such as Hamas or Hezbollah. Israel's non-state enemies are armed with thousands of rockets, virtually all of them supplied by Iran. But Israel's sophisticated missile defense systems would be fully competent to intercept and incapacitate virtually all such incoming rockets.

The only credible threat would be an implacably hostile Iran. It is, however, certain that Israel, with or without the help or approval of the United States, would not allow Iran to be in a position to attack. If worse came to worst, there is, as a last resort, Israel's own nuclear potential, which, though unconfirmed, is purported to be formidable.

A Strong Economy. Next to military power, a strong economy is a fundamental requirement for a successful future. Israel's economy is vastly ahead of its neighbors – unique in the Middle East and equal to most and superior to some European countries. Israel was admitted into the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), a union of the most developed countries of the world. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has expressed its confidence in Israel's long-term vitality.

Israel is a fount of productivity. Most major American companies have subsidiaries and research/development affiliates in Israel. Israel is a world leader in microchip technology, in medical instrumentation, in missile defense, in robotics, in unmanned aerial vehicles and in many other categories. Although much effort has been expended by Israel's enemies to isolate it economically, that is a forlorn cause and will continue to be unsuccessful.

As a result of ceaseless exploration, huge oil and gas fields have been discovered in the Israeli sector of the Mediterranean, which, beginning almost immediately, will fulfill its domestic demands and will, in all likelihood, propel Israel to become an exporter of such products.

A Cohesive Society, a Flowering Democracy. Unique in the Middle East, Israel is a democracy on the US model. That means a state of laws and of the will of its citizens. Although a highly militarized nation, and in contrast to all of its neighbors, there has never been any hint of a putsch or of a coup in Israel. It has the same important institutions as our country, including the nation's Supreme Court playing an important and decisive role.

> "Yes, indeed, the future of the Jewish state for the next 60 to 100 years seems to be assured."

Despite having successfully integrated millions of people since the country's creation in 1948 – the population is essentially homogeneous, united by the Jewish faith. Even the large block of Soviet immigrants has been successfully absorbed. The large contingent of Ethiopians has had a somewhat more difficult adjustment. Many of the Arab citizens, even though all venues are available to them, have still not fully accepted their country. Much work remains to be done. The most difficult remaining division is between the secular majority and the ultra-religious *haredim*. But even they are beginning to adapt and to integrate, with many of the young *haredim* willing to serve in the IDF, the country's military. Israel is blessed with a disproportionate number of college graduates – probably the highest percentage of population in the world. It has the highest number of Nobel laureates to population and the highest percentage of patents issued.

International Relations. Even despite its problems with Arab and Muslim nations, Israel has full diplomatic relations with 156 out of 193 U.N. members. The only implacable enemy is Iran, which, under the Shah, was one of Israel's firmest allies. Turkey, also a former close friend, is, under its current Islamist government, in an ambiguous relationship with Israel. The two fastest growing and most populace countries – China and India – are in friendly relationships with Israel. They are not infected by the anti-Semitic virus that has poisoned much of Europe. They think of Israel as an ancient civilization, just like their own. But the most important international connection by far is that with our country, the United States, which has been a strong and generous supporter of Israel from the very day of its creation and considers it to be one of its most important and most reliable allies.

Yes, indeed, with its strong military, its flourishing economy, its cohesive population, and its firm international relations, the future of the Jewish state for the next 60 to 100 years seems to be assured.

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routes and allowed the British to quickly respond to threats. Since the bulk of worldwide telegraph and radio infrastructures were in British hands, they were well placed to hinder telegraph communications of opposing nations to a great degree. By design, the Royal Navy was to be as large as the next two navies combined. However, that navy had three responsibilities: defend the home islands, protect colonies. and safeguard trade, requiring it to disperse.

The Germans knew the threat all this posed to their desires and built a fleet large enough to be an effective rival. German foreign policy first acquired then prepared its colonies in much the same way Britain did so it could challenge the British on a global scale. German strategy called for keeping the bulk of the fleet at home to pose a threat to England while having enough cruisers and commerce raiders abroad to damage British commerce. Since the United Kingdom controlled most of the telegraph network, radio stations were set up to coordinate the raiding effort. All in all, the similarity of situations for each country in terms of its colonies meant both could anticipate the other's likely movements and attempt to counter them.

When war came, however, Germany quickly found itself outmatched. The British coordinated efforts with various Dominion nations and colonies to nullify German colonies and bases. In some cases this meant outright occupation. In others, raids to destroy facilities and radio transmitters sufficed. A few attacks were averted by local German governors, who agreed to essentially proclaim neutrality. With the German fleet bottled up, there was almost no way to provide aid or reinforcements, allowing Britain to deal with each in turn. While several German raiders were able to tally impressive numbers of merchant seizures, all were eventually run down and sunk or chased into neutral harbors to be interned. Raiders using neutral harbors were likewise attacked by furious British efforts to force the neutral nations to take action. As a consequence, Germany abandoned the raider concept and began using submarines to strangle Britain.

Pattee's book concentrates mainly on the strategic levels of British planning and action in defense of the empire. One might fear a book on this subject, written by a scholar, would be stuffy and dense, fit only to impress other scholars. This work is impressively researched and well written with an easy to follow narrative. The author makes his points clearly and supports them with reasonable evidence. He is able to pull together a worldwide effort and show its interrelation in the bigger picture of World War I.

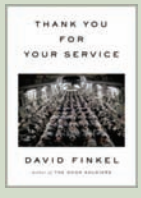
SHORT BURSTS

The Swamp Fox—Francis Marion's Campaign in the Carolinas 1780, David Higgins, Osprey Publishing, 2013, 80 pp., $18.95, softcover. This is a summary of Francis Marion's guerrilla war during the American Revolution. His efforts spurred a harsh British reaction, which turned sentiment against them in the American South.

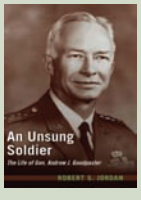
British Infantryman Versus Zulu Warrior Anglo-Zulu War 1879, Ian Knight, Osprey Publishing, 2013, 80 pp., $18.95, softcover. This is part of a new series comparing the combatants on two sides of a conflict. This volume compares the training, tactics, and effectiveness of the two opponents in the Zulu War.

The Western Front Companion: The Complete Guide to How the Armies Fought for Four Devastating Years, 1914-1918, Mark Adkin, Stackpole Books, 2013, 528 pp., $69.95, hardcover. This extensive reference work is devoted to all the armies that fought on the Western Front. Information on uniforms, tactics, weaponry, and orders of battle are included.

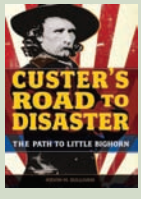
Boneyard Nose Art: U.S. Military Aircraft Markings and Artwork, Nick Veronico, Stackpole Books, 2013, 208 pp., $36.95, softcover. A photographic work dedicated to the nose art of aircraft retired to the famous "boneyards" of obsolete warplanes in the American southwest, this book includes planes from World War II to the Gulf Wars and is designed for historians, modelers, and aviation buffs.



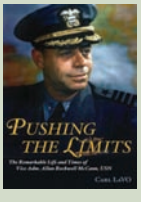
Thank You for Your Service, David Finkel, Sarah Crichton Books, 2013, 256 pp., $26.00, hardcover. A sequel to the author's *The Good Soldiers,* where he was embedded with a U.S. Army unit during the troop surge in Iraq, this book covers the experiences of the soldiers and their families after their return to the United States.



An Unsung Soldier: The Life of General Andrew J. Goodpaster, Robert S. Jordan, Naval Institute Press, 2013, 240 pp., $40.95, hardcover. This is a biography of an American officer who served in the higher circles of the U.S. defense community and NATO during the early years of the Cold War. After retiring, he was called back to duty to fix West Point after an ethics-related scandal.

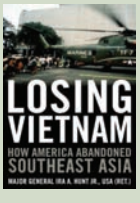


Custer's Road to Disaster: The Path to Little Bighorn, Kevin M. Sullivan, Twodot Press, 2013, 212 pp., $16.95, softcover. This book is a brief biography of George A. Custer, highlighting the major events that molded the man. The author assesses how these formative experiences led to Custer's eventual fate.



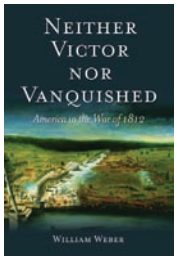
Pushing the Limits: The Remarkable Life and Times of Vice Adm. Allan Rockwell McCann, USN, Carl Lavo, Naval Institute Press, 2013, 272 pp., $44.95, hardcover. Allan Rockwell McCann began his career in submarines but rose to command the battleship USS *Iowa*, served in various important staff positions, and was aboard the first submarine to navigate under the polar ice.

American Heroes on the Homefront: The Hearts of Heroes, Oliver North and Bob Hamer, Simon & Schuster, 2013, 244 pp., $30.00 hardcover. A companion piece to Oliver North's television series covering veterans and their families, each chapter of this book focuses on a different veteran and their family, including those whose loved one did not return.



Losing Vietnam: How America Abandoned Southeast Asia, Ira A. Hunt Jr., University Press of Kentucky, 2013, 399 pp., $40.00, hardcover. After the United States withdrew from Vietnam, the American government began to cut funding for the support of South Vietnam and Cambodia. This book reveals how this action helped doom Southeast Asia in its fight against communism.

Neither Victor Nor Vanquished: America in the War of 1812, William Weber, Potomac Books, Washington, D.C., 2013, 241 pp., maps, notes, index, $27.50, hardcover.

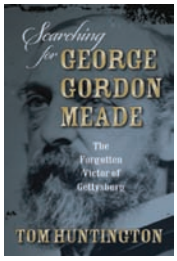


We are in the middle of the 200th anniversary of the War of 1812, a conflict that still engenders discourse about its conduct. Parts of the war appear as a comedy of errors and poor planning, while other events are marked by acts of valor and daring conduct. With both good and bad, it was a formative experience for the young United States.

The war is examined here from several new angles, attempting to provide a fresh take. Each of the first four chapters examines a different aspect of the war. This includes assessments of the effect of the war on America's development, a new look at the performance of the American military, and a review of the governors, who largely prosecuted the war instead of the weak and nascent federal government.

The rest of the book is devoted to what-if scenarios exploring how things may have happened if certain key events turned out differently. Chapters look at the Battle of Bladensburg, how America might have evolved if the war had never happened, and other circumstances. Overall, the book is informative and succeeds in its goal of showing a new perspective on the War of 1812.

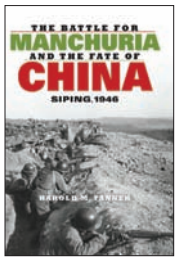
Searching for George Gordon Meade, The Forgotten Victor of Gettysburg, Tom Huntington, Stackpole Books, Mechanicsburg, PA, 2013, 406 pp., maps, photographs, notes, index, $32.95, hardcover.



American Civil War Union General George Gordon Meade's name is known to most history students, but often their knowledge of him largely stops there. Others have supplanted him in fame: Robert E. Lee, Ulysses S. Grant, Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson, and William T. Sherman all went on to fame in the annals of American military history, while Meade has mostly languished in posterity. The author of this biography challenges that assumption, stating Meade was an important player in the war's prosecution, who was pushed aside by more flamboyant leaders or men who simply came after him. Before the Battle of Gettysburg, Meade fought in many major battles and campaigns. He took command of the Union Army three days before that critical battle took place. At the strategic town in Pennsylvania, he defeated the Army of Northern Virginia, which by then had an impressive record. Afterward, he went on to command the Army of the Potomac until Appomattox, though Grant exceeded him in fame. His contributions are many, but he is largely unrecognized.

The author asserts that Meade suffered in reputation because Lee's army did make its escape from Gettysburg. Also, Meade was a temperamental man and his hostility toward the press and some politicians was returned. Grant's rise, while not intended to hurt Meade, did so nonetheless. In a break from a straightforward biography, the author describes his travels in creating his book, meetings he had with various Civil War buffs, such as those who belong to the General Meade Society of Philadelphia, and other stories of his pilgrimage to understand one of the American Civil War's important generals.

The Battle for Manchuria and the Fate of China: Spring, 1946, Harold M. Tanner, Indiana University Press, Indianapolis, 2013, 266 pp., maps, photographs, notes, index, $35.00, hardcover.

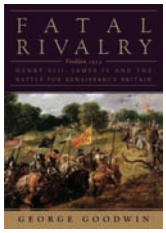


China has been a battleground nation for centuries, ranging from foreign interventions like the Opium Wars to internal struggles such as the Taiping Rebellion. Most Westerners are generally familiar with the Chinese Civil War, which raged in the years following World War II. However, the details of that struggle are often untold and generalized largely because the names, place, and geography of China are unfamiliar. This book seeks to reveal some of the details of a war that did much to shape the modern world.

After World War II ended, Manchuria became a literal chess board as various factions pursued different goals. The nationalist and communist Chinese, who had mostly put aside their fight to combat the Japanese, now began to vie for the future of China. Soviet occupation forces added their agenda to the mix. Finally American special representative George C. Marshall, the general who planned American victory in World War II, arrived to broker a cease fire between the communists and nationalists. While his efforts were ultimately successful in achieving a temporary cessation of hostilities, the prospect of true peace and cooperation between the two sides was nil.

While Marshall worked toward peace, the Chinese fought through spring and early summer 1946. Most of the book concentrates on the fighting around the city of Siping in Central Manchuria. After recounting the battle, the author considers the what-ifs of the situation, evaluating the effects the Siping fight on the rest of the war and how things might have evolved had the outcome of the battle been different.

Fatal Rivalry: Flodden 1513, Henry VIII, James IV and the Battle for Renaissance Britain, George Goodwin, W.W. Norton and Co., New York, 2013, 288 pp., maps, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index, $29.95, hardcover.

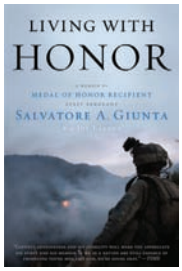


One of England's greatest battles took place on September 9, 1513, when British forces commanded by Thomas Howard, Earl of Surrey, took on an invading Scottish army under their own King James IV. Relations between the two countries had been difficult for centuries; occasional treaties of friendship were always temporary.

This time war came due to Scotland's alliance with France. King Henry VIII invaded France on June 30, 1513, and King Louis XII called upon Scotland to honor its obligation to come to France's aid. James IV complied and invaded England in August with an army of 42,000. With Henry in France, his wife Catherine of Aragon acted as regent and set into motion a defense. An army of 26.000 Englishmen led by Surrey rushed north to meet the Scots. In September they met at Flodden. The Scottish were defeated, and James IV lay dead on the field. It was a resounding victory for the English, securing their northern flank.

As with most situations of the period, there was extensive political maneuvering along with diplomatic exchanges and plotting by various rulers and members of the nobility. The author works through these complexities to show how all of this affected the eventual outcome. This book is rich in detail and written to make the subject readily understood by modern readers. Fewer books on Renaissance warfare are published these days; this book is a welcome addition, and its publication commemorates the recent 500th anniversary of the battle.

Living With Honor: A Memoir by Medal of Honor Recipient Staff Sergeant Salvatore A. Giunta, Salvatore Giunta with Joe Layden, Threshold Editions, Simon & Schuster, New



York, 2013, 291 pp., photographs, $16.00, softcover.

The United States has always been blessed to gain the written word of a large number of its veterans. The nation's above average literacy rate means common soldiers are able to share their experiences of war in the first person rather than just anecdotal stories shared in the writings of the officer class. This is so common in America now that most citizens simply take it for granted. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have and are producing their share of these memoirs. Compared to earlier conflicts, these struggles have produced relatively few awards of the U.S. military's higher medals, particularly the Medal of Honor. This book presents the story of one of those soldiers.

Staff Sergeant Salvatore A. Giunta followed a common path into the army; he wandered into a recruiting office during a free T-shirt giveaway, got intrigued, and enlisted a week later. He became a paratrooper in the 173rd Airborne Brigade and soon found himself serving in Afghanistan. Ambushed by Taliban fighters, his squad was decimated. The squad leader was wounded, and Giunta fought his way to him to give aid. He continued fighting even after being wounded. Giunta also saved another wounded soldier as insurgents tried dragging the helpless man away.

While Giunta was awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions that day, the book covers much more of his life and military service. Giunta tries to impart the relatively normal nature of his life and his rejection of the notion he is a hero, stating he did nothing other soldiers would not have done in his place.

Taking Fire: Saving Captain Aikman, A Story of the Vietnam Air War, Kevin O'Rourke and Joe Peters, Casemate Publishers, Havertown, PA, 2013, 216 pp., photographs, glossary, $32.95, hardcover.

On June 27, 1972, Captain Lynn Aikman

flew his McDonnell Douglas F4 Phantom aircraft on a bombing mission over North Vietnam. After dropping his payload on a truck repair depot, he turned his plane for home. On the way he was attacked and shot down by an enemy MiG fighter. Both Aikman and his backseater, Tom Hanton, managed to eject, but their ordeal was just beginning. Hanton landed near a village and was soon a prisoner. Aikman was injured during the ejection but landed far enough away to have a chance at escape if help could get there in time. That help arrived in the form of a U.S. Air Force pararescue jumper named Chuck McGrath. As McGrath prepared to pull Aikman to safety, enemy fire hit the rescue helicopter's hoist, and the two men were trapped on the ground. A desperate gamble was undertaken to save the two men.

While the book focuses on this one daring mission to save Aikman, it also tells the story

games

By Joseph Luster

Warface guns for Xbox 360, *Rambo* draws more blood in a videogame comeback attempt, and *Homefront* hopes the second time's the charm.

PUBLISHER CRYTEK
DEVELOPER CRYTEK KIEV
SYSTEM(S) XBOX 360
AVAILABLE EARLY 2014

WARFACE

Warface is another of many shooters that take war into the near future, doubling up on tech while sticking to real-world locations and a first-person perspective. Originally released as a PC exclusive in 2012, the free-to-play action is finally making its way to consoles—Xbox 360, specifically—with a debut set for 2014. It remains to be seen how smooth of a transition Crytek Kiev's FPS will make, but it certainly makes a good case for itself with the intensity and visual polish for which Crytek as a whole is known.

Set in the year 2023, *Warface* comes into focus in a world full of chaos and corruption; crumbled nations standing beneath the imposing shadow of a new world order. That order is Blackwood, a military force that takes control of the world's resources and makes battlefields out of its cities. Thus, an elite force known as Warface is formed to take on Blackwood, and you have a solid impetus for plenty of combat on the frontlines.

Warface offers up four classes of soldiers to choose from, with Rifleman, Medic, Sniper, and Engineer options available to swap between at any time across locations ranging from the Balkans to South America. As with most games of its type, though, working together is optimal. While there are plenty of ways to take on the game's scenarios as a solo war machine, special cooperative moves make playing together a much more enticing method.

Free-to-play games—typically bolstered with in-game transactions of some kind—have been doing their thing on PC for a while now, but it's also something we're seeing more on consoles across a variety of genres. *World of Tanks* blazed its way to a

worldwide Xbox 360 release, and even fighting games have gotten in on the fun, with Namco Bandai testing the waters with free-to-play versions of *Tekken* and *SoulCalibur.* From the same publisher we have the upcoming dogfighter *Ace Combat Infinity,* which entered beta testing in Japan back in December. There's also *Killer Instinct,* which returned to the arena with a similarly experimental pricing model on Xbox One, so the stage is more or less set for more games like *Warface* to take the console plunge.

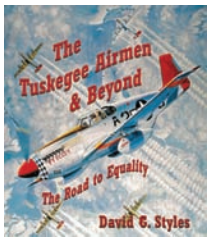
RAMBO: THE VIDEO GAME

Many folks likely share some of the same first Rambo-related game memories, if they have any at all. For one it might go back to 1988's Nintendo Entertainment System outing from Acclaim, while another ventures even further into the past with *Rambo* on Commodore 64 or ZX Spectrum. He's mowed down enemies across everything from those to Sega Master System and Sega Genesis, even stopping for an earth-shaking run in Japanese arcades not too long ago, and now John Rambo is set to return to consoles in the appropriately titled *Rambo: The Video Game.*

As over-the-top as the *Rambo* films gradually

of the Air Force pararescue service, a group that even today receives little attention or recognition for its efforts to rescue downed aviators. It is a small community working at great risk to give aircrew the confidence that if downed every effort will be made to bring them home. The authors extensively cover the rescue jumpers themselves, showing how they come into the Air Force and then join this elite group. Those interested in air combat or Vietnam will enjoy this book, which is full of rich technical detail.

The Tuskegee Airmen and Beyond: The Road to Equality, David G. Styles, Dalton Watson/Quayside Books, Minneapolis, MN, 2013, 304 pp., photographs, appendices, index, $45.00, hardcover.



The Tuskegee Airmen are perhaps the best known group of black soldiers in American military history. Like many servicemen of their race, acknowledgment of their efforts has come late. Fortunately for many of them, that recognition arrived while they were still alive to receive it. Thousands of their comrades across American history were not so lucky, beginning with African Americans who fought in the Revolutionary War and in every conflict since. This book tells the story of African Americans in military service throughout U.S. history with a particular focus on the Tuskegee Airmen.

The first four chapters of the book are devoted to the early history of African American soldiers from the Revolution through World War I. The next five chapters focus on the rise of black aviators, the Tuskegee Airmen and others in World War II. The remaining chapters highlight the post-1945 experience, desegregation of the military and the struggle for real equality for African American service members. Their fight to rise to the highest ranks of the military is also chronicled. The final chapter addresses the efforts of African Americans in the space program. □

PUBLISHER REEF ENTERTAINMENT

DEVELOPER TEYON

SYSTEM(S) PC, XBOX 360, PLAYSTATION 3

AVAILABLE 2014

became, 1982's *First Blood* remains a pretty harrowing tale of the effects of war and life after the smoke clears. Smartly, developer Teyon is including that first film as part of the game's basis, with scenes from it and its sequels playing out on PC, Xbox 360, and PlayStation 3.

Despite the series' questionable history in the form of interactive entertainment, it's hard not to be at least a little optimistic about the prospects of *Rambo: The Video Game.* It's not exactly visually stunning, but its unerring faithfulness to the source material—Jerry Goldsmith's rousing scores and all—should at least give rise to some major nostalgia in fans of the franchise. From the small town madness of *First Blood* through the one-man Vietnam War of *Rambo: First Blood Part II* and *Rambo III*'s rumble in the Middle East, it looks like we're in store for a real hands-on highlight reel. Let's just hope it actually comes out this time.

HOMEFRONT 2

It was back in the June 2011 issue that we first took a look at THQ and Kaos Studios' *Homefront* in review form, and you know what? It wasn't that bad. Time may not have been kind to both it and its cre-

ators—THQ has since gone bankrupt, Kaos shut down, and rights to the property now belong to Crytek—but *Homefront* is getting another shot with a sequel planned for 2014 on as-yet-undetermined platforms.

PUBLISHER CRYTEK

DEVELOPER CRYTEK UK

SYSTEM(S) TBA

AVAILABLE TBA

The first *Homefront* put players in the role of former U.S. Marine Corps combat helicopter pilot Robert Jacobs, who joins American resistance fighters in a battle against the Korean People's Army, which has established one hell of a military occupation of the United States. Things certainly could change by the time it sees release, but initial rumblings had the follow-up's story taking place after the final battle of the first game. From there, the action would continue to South Asia and Japan, with the player once again taking on the KPA as a U.S. rebel.

We closed our review by saying the folks responsible have "something solid to build on here should they decide to escalate their fright-night future war story," and we'll see if that holds any weight once *Homefront 2* steps further into the light. □

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marston moor

Continued from page 45

The Royalist musketeers, many of whom didn't have their matches lit for firing, also had problems due to the suddenness of the allied attack. In contrast to the later flintlock, the matchlock musket featured a long, coiling cord called a match. When the burning end of the match came in contact with powder in the pan, it ignited the main charge through the touchhole. The matchlocks were clumsy enough, but trying to light a match in battle and in wet conditions following a thunderstorm was nearly impossible.

Cromwell's troopers routed the first Royalist line, and some of Rupert's right-wing units began to give way and fall back. Rupert himself arrived on the scene accompanied by his reserve cavalry and bodyguard. The sight of their young and dashing commander gave the Royalists heart, and the prince was able to rally his men. The Royalist right stabilized somewhat, and Rupert's and Cromwell's troopers fought with a passion hardly equaled on any battlefield. Cromwell himself was wounded in the neck and was forced to temporarily withdraw to get his wound dressed. The situation was saved by the Scottish cavalry under Leslie, which outflanked Rupert's horse and hit them hard. The Royalist troopers were utterly routed, and Rupert himself only evaded capture by hiding in a beanfield.

In the center, the Parliamentarian-Scottish army met with mixed success. Crawford's infantry made good progress, overrunning the ditch, and other allied infantry captured four Royalist field pieces. But the right side of the allied center did not do so well. They were mainly Scottish infantry commanded by Sir James Lumsden. Lumsden ruefully admitted later, "They carried not themselves as I would have wished." Some even took to their heels, running away "in a panic fear." Scots were seen shouting in their native dialect, "Ways us (woe is us), we are all undone."

On the whole, though, the allied attacks on the left and center were doing well. The allied right was quite another story. The ground there greatly favored the Royalists. There were ditches and whins (hedges and bracken), which caused great disorder. Fairfax's troopers were forced to go down Atterwith Lane, a narrow path that crossed a ditch but allowed them to ride only four abreast.

Goring had the foresight to post musketeers in that area, and Fairfax's troopers were decimated by a storm of lead. Seeing his enemy in such difficulty, Goring led a counterattack that routed most of the allied right wing. Darkness was beginning to fall as half the Scottish infantry and all of Fairfax's infantry fled the field.

Unfortunately, Goring's undisciplined troopers either pursued the fleeing Parliamentarians or turned to plunder the allied camp. Their absence or preoccupation with plunder was going to have an impact on the battle's final outcome. Not all Royalist cavalry dispersed. Some troopers rallied behind Sir Charles Lucas and attacked the right flank of the allied army.

At this point, Cromwell's men, full of religious zeal and superbly disciplined, swung around to engage the victorious Royalist left. This time the shoe was on the other foot; Goring's troopers were confused, scattered, and exhausted. They were easily routed. The tables had turned, thanks to Cromwell's tough cavalry. Once the Royalist cavalry was defeated, attention turned to the king's infantry.

But Newcastle's Regiment of Foot, nicknamed "Whitecoats" because of their undyed wool jackets, stood their ground. Their courageous last stand enabled remnants of Rupert's army to fall back on York. They refused quarter and would not surrender. The musketeers fired, reloaded, and fired until all their ammunition was gone, and the pikemen kept the cavalry at bay with a prickly hedgehog of points. Finally, Colonel Hugh Frasier's dragoons came up and decimated the Whitecoats with musket fire. There were only 30 survivors when the regiment finally surrendered. Rupert's army had been destroyed, with more than 4,000 dead.

There was no doubt the king's cause had received a major blow. The triumphant allied army took 10 pieces of ordnance, more than 4,000 muskets, 800 pikes, and numerous swords, bandoliers, and barrels of powder. According to one report, more than 100 colors (regimental flags) were also taken. The Royalist debacle was complete.

There were about 1,500 Royalist prisoners, including Lucas, Maj. Gen. Porter, and Maj. Gen. Tilliard. York was only a temporary refuge for Rupert and the shattered remains of his army. Eventually, York surrendered and fell into Parliamentarian hands.

But above all, the legend of Rupert's invincibility was shattered forever. Rupert's beloved dog Boye, the animal who the Puritans had said was a demon, was killed on the battlefield, a poignant symbol of the prince's downfall. This was not the end of the Civil War, which dragged on until 1649 and the king's execution. However, it certainly was the beginning of the end for the Royalist cause, and in some respects the rise of Cromwell as a major military figure and leader. □

plassey

Continued from page 61

Daula had fled the battle. The Nawab already was long gone, escaping the scene on camelback, when the remnants of his army finally dissolved around 5 PM. The pursuit of the vanquished continued for six miles until, for lack of cavalry, the British were forced to abandon the chase.

The battle cost the Nawab more than 500 men. British losses amounted to less than 70, mostly wounded, and of those predominantly sepoys. At first glance, the lopsided results and the fact that only a quarter of the Nawab's army actually fought might give the impression that Plassey was not a battle at all, but for those who experienced it, especially Robert Clive, the dramatic uncertainties made it very much a battle until the very end. While it may be said that Plassey was fought more with the pen, Mir Jafar's cooperation was nevertheless fully dependent on Clive's effective use of the sword.

Meeting Clive after the battle, Mir Jafar was surprised by the Englishman's generosity given the former's lack of participation. "I congratulate you on the victory, which is yours, not mine," Clive wrote him. But in reality, Clive could afford to be generous because the victory was in fact his. Mir Jafar may have become the new Nawab, but being the Nawab now meant little more than being a British puppet.

Mir Jafar followed Siraj-ud-Daula to Murshidabad but initially made no attempt to capture the fugitive ruler. It was only a few days later, after Siraj-ud-Daula had again fled, that Mir Jafar's men intercepted him. He was taken back to the capital and there stabbed to death before his mutilated corpse was paraded through the streets on the back of an elephant.

Although the Nawab's treasury was significantly less than what had been estimated, Clive still walked away with 180,000 pounds worth, which, along with his wages, made him at the age of only 32 one the wealthiest men in India. More important, the agreement with Mir Jafar awarded roughly three million rupees in compensation to Calcutta and also extremely favorable trading rights, including the exclusion of the French from Bengal.

For Clive, wealth was always secondary to status, and high status he achieved, becoming the first British governor of Bengal. Although the crafty and arguably underhanded manner in which he attained that goal somewhat haunted him until his tragic death in 1774, his accomplishments in 1757 have stood the test of time, outlasting even the British Raj in India, which he more than any other individual made possible. □

caen

Continued from page 39

To the rear the 23rd Hussars saw the smoke of battle and came rushing to help, but there was little to be done. The Fifes were wiped out, and survivors of the other units were withdrawing under fire. Montgomery's forces left 106 tanks burning in the barren cornfields south of the city. At about 5 PM, the Northhamptonshire Yeomanry sent its Cromwells in a final attempt to continue the thrust's momentum beyond Caen, but again the Germans, with their panoramic view of the battlefield, were ready, and the Yeomen clanked back in crestfallen defeat minus 16 of their machines.

Although he had finally managed to take all of Caen, Montgomery had not accomplished the major aim of driving past it and depriving the Nazis of the ability to counterattack. The Wehrmacht would damagingly strike westward from the towns of Mortain and St. Barthelemy on August 7. Close inspection and hindsight would later reveal that the seemingly disastrous day of July 18 did have positive results. While the bulk of German strength was occupied south of Caen, Canadian forces secured all the eastern bank of the Orne, consolidating the Allied hold on the city.

Furthermore, it had also been a costly battle for the Germans. Between them the 21st Panzer and 1st SS Panzer Divisions lost 109 tanks and half their precious 88mm guns that day. The Allied bombing wiped out the 16th Luftwaffe Field Infantry Division, and two other panzer divisions that had been scheduled to oppose the Americans were now compelled to stand watch on the British front. The ferocity of the Allied air and ground assaults had shaken the German high command, whose ranks were further distracted on July 20 when news arrived about the faraway attempt on Hitler's life.

The 5,537 Commonwealth troops who perished during Goodwood had not died in vain. Although their advance had staggered to a bloody, premature halt they enabled the Americans to finally break out of their confinement in Normandy during Operation Cobra, clearing the way for Allied forces to complete their task of liberating Europe.

Montgomery's career and reputation would survive this wrenching campaign. There was no way it could have been won easily, and it is arguable whether any other commander would have done better.

William the Conqueror's city was now controlled by soldiers from the nation he had defeated so many centuries earlier. They would not be staying there long. □

militaria

Continued from page 23

the conflict from nearly 100 years ago.

The outer wall of the new museum is home to the Portrait Wall, which portrays the personal sacrifices of those who served in the war, and this is regularly expanding to contain new material.

The Memory and Exhibit Halls, which are part of the original structure from 1926, also offer additional items of interest. Rotating galleries are held in the Exhibit Hall, while the Memory Hall is used primarily to offer a personal look at the war with items that are tied to specific individuals.

Additionally, visitors can take an elevator ride to the top of the 217-foot tall tower, which offers stunning views of Penn Valley Park, the nearby Federal Reserve, and of course the Kansas City Skyline. The Walk of Honor on the ground level further offers a lasting remembrance, carved in granite, of those who gave their lives and must not be forgotten.

Keeping with the theme, the museum's small but quaint café—aptly named the "Over There Café"—offers simple fare, but unlike other museums, which seem more like a fast food restaurant, this one actually makes dishes to order. Most of the dishes are named for figures from the war but still done in a respectful way.

Artifacts in the permanent collection truly make this a world class museum and, sadly as with many institutions, only a portion is on display. Only about seven percent of the entire collection is on view through the new museum halls, as well as the Exhibit and Memory Halls. Much of the additional collection is housed within the facility.

The 20,000-square-foot research center, which is a level below the new museum, is available for those working on special studies and can be visited with special permission. Additionally, the public research room is open daily to allow visitors to access the library holdings. While much of the collection is therefore unavailable at most times, fortunately the museum's staff works hard to make sure that crucial items are loaned out at times.

"The museum regularly loans materials to other museums for special exhibitions," said Cart. "We currently have a number of objects on loan and on exhibit at the Woodrow Wilson Home and Museum in Staunton, Virginia, as one example."

As with other institutions, the collection also is continually growing, thanks in no small part to the efforts of Cart and contributions from private collectors. In many cases, standout items get front and center treatment.

"When the museum acquires new materials, like the Hindenburg tunic and cap, then those we try to get on exhibit as soon as possible," said Cart. "Other materials that tell a good story are also rotated onto exhibit. Some organic materials do need to 'rest' so they are rotated off on a regular basis and similar items put in their place."

Moreover, the museum could see growth in its future as well. Cart told Military Heritage that there are additional plans for a large, special exhibition space to be built on the east side of the main museum floor, hopefully for the war's centennial in 2014. This would certainly increase what could be displayed for visitors to see.

Even with so many standout items on display, Cart noted that a few hold a special place in his heart and certainly draw a share of attention as well.

"The Model 1917 Army Harley Davidson motorcycle, the trench experience vignettes, the French 75mm gun, and the women's uniforms," he names as just a few items that seem to remain popular with visitors. Of course, there is that Renault FT-17, which was painstakingly transported to the museum. This tank reportedly has ties to Kansas City, the home to its World War I era crew.

However, even with these artifacts, Cart did note that there are still many items the museum would like to see added to its permanent collection in the years to come.

The wish list includes "an original airplane from the war; German, French or British vehicles, important persons' uniforms, and … German U-boat materials" to name just a few.

Given that the 100th anniversary of the Great War is approaching, many items have circulated, and donations have made the museum's collection all the greater.

As that major anniversary approaches, Cart noted that the National World War I Museum will be ready with commemorations and will look back at what so many fought and died for all those years ago. "We will have numerous special events and activities to commemorate the centennial. While there are no specific plans to share at this time, we plan to host many events here at the museum and partner with others to do the same throughout the country."

The museum is located at the corner of Main Street and Memorial Drive. It is closed on Mondays, as well as Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and New Year's Day. It is operated in agreement with the Kansas City, Missouri Board of Parks and Recreation Commissioners. □

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