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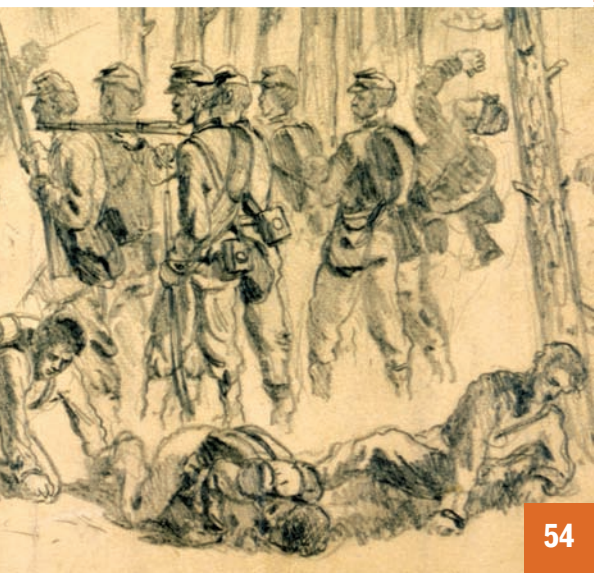

MILITARY HERITAGE

February 2009

features

columns

COVER: An American Marine, with eyes alert and M16 ready to fire, waits in the rubble of Hue, February 4, 1968. Photo © Bettman/CORBIS.

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Bad food, hard beds, and harsh discipline were the common soldier's lot on the western plains in the post-Civil War era.

AS AUTHOR LEE CHAMBERS'S NEW BOOK ON FORT Abraham Lincoln (reviewed in this issue) illustrates, the reading public, both in the United States and abroad, remains fascinated by life in the West following the Civil War. But unlike the Hollywood stereotype of dashing officers, stalwart enlisted men, and beautiful women waiting patiently for them back at the base, life on the typical western army post was unpleasant, uncomfortable, and often unsafe. And it was lived by soldiers who were a far cry in looks and attitude from John Wayne, Errol Flynn, or Henry Fonda.

Contrary to the romantic movie version, most western forts looked more like a ramshackle prairie village. Sprawled across an uninviting countryside, the forts were open to the elements and exposed to the depredations of both enemies and friends. Stray visitors, both human and animal, frequently trudged across the fort's dusty parade grounds. Only the tall flagpole in the middle of the post, topped by a weather-beaten American flag, differentiated the post from the squalid civilian settlements it was there to protect.

Lieutenant Frederick D. Phelps, arriving for duty at Fort Bayard, New Mexico, in 1871, confronted a common if depressing scene: "Huts of logs and round stone, with flat dirt roofs that in summer leaked and brought down rivulets of liquid mud," he wrote, "in winter the hiding place of the tarantula and the centipede, with ceilings of condemned canvas, windows of four dot six panes, swinging door-like on hinges (the walls were not high enough to allow them to slide upward), low, dark and uncomfortable."

At least Phelps, as an officer, rated private quarters. Common enlisted men, paired off as "bunkies," had to share straw-filled mattresses and rickety cots in poorly constructed and badly ventilated barracks. Fat brown rats had the nightly run of the place, and diamondback rattlesnakes and deadly black scorpions took up residence in unwary troopers' boots. Barracks were stifling hot in summer and freezing cold in winter; dust blew incessantly through the cracks in the walls, and snow drifted inside during the not-infrequent blizzards. Privies were located outside, and baths consisted of lukewarm tubs of water dumped unceremoniously over fully clothed and not overly clean soldiers.

The quality of the typical post-Civil War recruit mirrored his uncongenial surroundings. The citizen-soldier of the North, highly motivated and "touched by fire," was a distant memory by the late 1860s and 1870s. In his place in the skeletonized post-war Army was a $16-a-month recruit (later reduced to $13 a month by a parsimonious Congress), increasingly drawn from the immigrant poor of large eastern and midwestern cities. Ill-clothed, ill-housed, ill-fed, and ill-trained, the average western soldier was no beau ideal. As the *New York Sun* complained in an editorial: "The Regular Army is composed of bummers, loafers, and foreign paupers."

Western soldiers had to endure a monotonous daily grind known all too accurately as "fatigue," a military euphemism for manual labor. Operating on the theory that a busy soldier was less likely to be a discipline problem, post commanders kept their charges drudging away at a variety of menial and mind-numbing tasks. In 1878, one such group of exhausted soldiers petitioned Congress to lighten their physical and psychological load, noting: "We enlisted with the usual ideas of the life of a soldier, but we find that we are obliged to perform all kinds of labor, such as building quarters, tables, storehouses, bridges, roads, and telegraph lines, involving logging, lumbering, quarrying, lime-burning, mason work, plastering, carpentering, etc." Maj. Gen. John Pope agreed with the troopers; western forts, he said, were "garrisoned by enlisted laborers rather than soldiers."

Why did men continue to enlist in the Army? German immigrant John Burkman, who served under Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer before the debacle at Little Bighorn, perhaps summed it up best. "The regiment," he wrote, "was the only home I ever knowed." □

Roy Morris Jr.

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By John E. Spindler

The Italian-built SM.91 and SM.92 fighter planes might have made it harder for the Allies to win the air war in World War II.

AT THE OUTSET OF WORLD WAR II, SEVERAL OF THE COMBATANT nations had twin-engined fighter planes in service or being developed. Among those seeing combat by 1940 were such famous aircraft as the German Messerschmitt Bf110, the British Bristol Beaufighter, and the Fokker G.1 from the Netherlands, the plane that some contend started the two-engined, twin-tail-boom, heavy-fighter trend. The American Lockheed P-38 Lightning and the Japanese Kawasaki Ki-45 Toryu were two other fighter planes that were soon to enter military service.

Like the other combatants, Italy also took a strong interest in the twin-engined heavy fighter. Numerous prototypes were produced by several of Italy's aircraft manufacturers, but two of the designs from Savoia-Marchetti might have made winning the air war much more difficult for the Allies had they been developed in time. The Savoia-Marchetti SM.91 and SM.92 had the potential to be among the war's best twin-engined fighters had they entered production early enough and been produced in sufficient numbers to join the Axis war effort.

As early as 1935, the concept had been accepted by Italy that a twin-engined heavy fighter should be part of the Regia Aeronautica, the Italian Air Force. Like most of the equipment ideas for the Italian armed forces, it seemed to be talked about incessantly, but no serious development was undertaken. Finally in late 1941, the Italian Air Ministry put forth a formal request for a two-seat heavy fighter that could also be used as a fighter-bomber. Among the requirements specified by the ministry included demands that the aircraft have a speed capability of 388 mph and a range of 1,000 miles and that it be powerfully armed. Like the better Italian fighters in service at the time, the proposed aircraft would be powered by a pair of German engines that would be built under license in Italy. Specifically, they would be the Daimler-Benz DB605A-1 engines. These were the same type of engines that were powering one of Germany's main fighters at the time, the Messerschmitt Bf109G series.

The engineers at Savoia-Marchetti, designer and producer of arguably Italy's best aircraft, the SM.79 torpedo-bomber, came up with a pair of ideas to meet the ministry's specifications. The first of their designs was the SM.91. In contrast with several Italian aircraft that were of all-wood construction, the SM.91 design was to be all metal. Like another heavy fighter in service with the Regia Aeronautica, the German Messerschmitt Bf110, the SM.91 had a two-seat tandem cockpit that was centered in between the engines. However the twin tail boom design made it look closer to the American P-38 Lightning. As with the other aircraft, the SM.91 was heavily armed, sporting five 20mm cannons. Three of them

The Italian-made Savoia-Marchetti all-metal SM.91 fighter plane, first test-flown in 1943, featured a two-seater tandem cockpit and five 20mm cannons.

All photos: Amber Books

were positioned in the center nacelle with the crew, while the other two were located in the wings between the center nacelle and the engines. To meet the fighter-bomber requirement, there was the capability to mount an external bomb rack. Another feature put into the SM.91 was retractable landing gear, which was now standard for modern military aircraft.

In comparison with aircraft that were similar in design, such as the Lockheed P-38 and Messerschmitt's latest heavy fighter, the Me 410, the SM.91 was a larger plane with a longer wingspan and bigger wing area. At the same time, the aircraft was comparable in weight, except that the DB605A-1 engines restricted the SM.91 to a lesser maximum take-off weight. Although it was only slightly slower than the Me 410, the SM.91 could not come close to the speed of the P-38 Lightning.

Like other military manufacturers, Savoia-Marchetti had to cope with Italy's constant lack of adequate resources. To make matters worse, valuable resources were often wasted on unnecessary and inferior designs. It was not until March 10, 1943, that the prototype SM.91 made its maiden flight. Unlike most of the aircraft developed by Italy, the SM.91 was not flown at the Guidonia air base, which was located east of Rome. Instead, the plane, designated with the number MM.530, first flew at Vergiate, Savoia-Marchetti's factory airfield, which was situated near Switzerland. The prototype was flown by Italian test pilot Aldo Moggi. Although the aircraft handled and performed well, it did not achieve all of the Air Ministry's requests. For example, its maximum speed was only 363 mph, not the specified 388 mph. There is evidence that a second SM.91 prototype, called MM.532, was rebuilt as an SM.91 from an earlier twin-engined plane being developed and built by Savoia-Marchetti, the SM.88

Records show that aircraft number MM.532 had 27 hours of flight time before the Italian armistice took place on September 8, 1943. All development and production was halted on the SM.91 and all the rest of Italy's military equipment as the country split into two sides, those who favored the Allies and those who remained loyal to Benito Mussolini and the Fascists. Like a few other Italian designs, the SM.91 caught the interest of the German military, and the first prototype was taken back to Germany's aircraft test facility at Rechlin in October 1943. It did not survive the war; it is believed that the SM.91 was either destroyed in an Allied bombing raid or else by the Germans themselves.

The second prototype was not confiscated by

The SM.91 was larger, heavier, and slower than similar planes such as the Lockheed P-38 or the Messerschmitt Me-410.

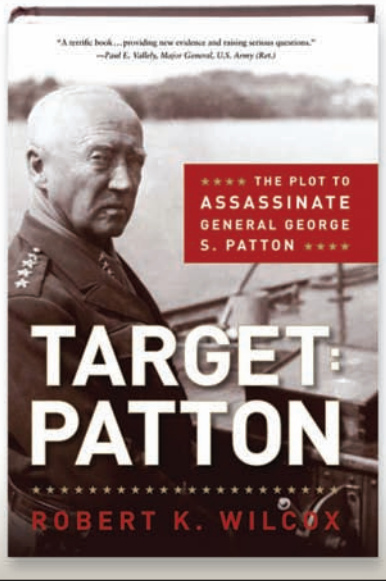
the Germans, and it flew in northern Italy, presumably at Vergiate, on July 10, 1944. For the next five months, it flew for a total of three hours. Tests continued sporadically until December 27, when the second SM.91 prototype was destroyed in an American air attack on the base.

Savoia-Marchetti had a second test design to meet the Air Ministry's heavy fighter requirements. In addition to the SM.91, designers worked on the SM.92, although at a much slower pace. Hindered by not being able to obtain Germany's more powerful Daimler-Benz DB603A engine, Italian engineers looked at ways to reduce the drag on the aircraft, which led in turn to an unconventional design. Although the engines and basic wing and tail design were kept, the center nacelle that housed the pilots and some of the cannons was eliminated. Instead, the two-seat tandem cockpit was place on the port, or left, engine boom. In addition, the tail wheel was able to retract into a pod on the horizontal stabilizer. Armaments were also altered for the new design. A pair of 20mm cannons was placed in the center wing section, while a third cannon was mounted in the starboard, or right, engine and fired through the hub. Underneath both engines was a pair of 12.7mm machine guns, while a fifth 12.7mm gun was positioned with the tail wheel in the pod and was remote controlled.

Because the cockpit had been moved, the SM.92 had a slightly shorter wingspan and wing area than the SM.91. Although it was still larger than the P-38 or Me 410, it continued to have a maximum takeoff weight that was less than either plane. The reduced drag allowed the SM.92 to have a higher maximum speed at 382 mph than either the SM.91 or the Me 410, but it was still slower than the P-38. This reduced drag improved its operational range to 1,263 miles. One might compare the SM.92 with an aircraft of a similar unconventional design, the North American P-82 Twin Mustang. The P-82, which did not see combat in World War II, premiered in the Korean War, where it had the benefit of improved engine technology that allowed it to fly almost 80 mph faster and have almost twice the range of the SM.92.

As with the SM.91, the prototype of the AM.92 was first flown at the Vergiate facilities, with Aldo Moggi again as the test pilot. This aircraft appears to have been designated MM.531, but records to verify this have been difficult to find. The flight occurred on Novem-

What Lies Behind One of the Greatest Unsolved Mysteries of World War II? Lies. Betrayal. *Murder*.



ON A COLD, DREARY MORNING in December of 1945, a dark green Cadillac limousine pulled out from a narrow street in Bad Nauheim, Occupied Germany—and began what was to be the fateful last ride for General George S. Patton, Jr.

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ber 12, 1943, under the watchful eye of German technicians. In fact, the aircraft sported the markings of the Luftwaffe, the German Air Force, and not those of the Italian Air Force, which had remained loyal to Mussolini. By March 1944, the prototype had accumulated 15 hours of flight time. On March 17, the SM.92 was mistaken for an American P-38 Lightning and damaged by a Macchi MC205 fighter on a test flight. The prototype was under repair until June, when it resumed test flights. A further six hours of flight time was logged before the SM.92 was destroyed on December 27, 1944, in the same raid on Vergiate that destroyed the second SM.91 prototype as well.

Although German technicians were interested in SM.92 and its potential, the decision was made to not build any more aircraft and instead to use the resources to benefit Germany's existing aircraft. Practically speaking, this meant that most Italian aircraft ceased to be built because German models had priority. Any engines for Italian aircraft would instead be used in the production of the latest versions of the Messerchmitt Bf109G fighters.

Quite a few successful twin-engined fighters saw combat in World War II. Some were multicrewed, others had one pilot. Some of these aircraft had twin-boom tails, while others had a single boom. The SM.91 and SM.92 were both multicrewed, twin-boom heavy fighters whose test flights showed real promise. Had the Italian Air Ministry requested this type of design a year or two earlier, or if the more powerful Daimler-Benz Db603A engines had been available to Italy, it might have made a real difference in the Axis air efforts. Although there is little doubt that the Allies still would have eventually won the war, there remains a question about what might have been accomplished if Italian industry had been able to produce a couple hundred of the SM.91s or SM.92s. The air war over Italy and Sicily would have been quite different for the American pilots flying P-38 Lightnings in dogfights with the highly maneuverable SM92s or SM91s. Luckily for the Allies, it never came to that. □

The SM.92 moved the cockpit to the portside engine boom and added five12.7mm machine guns. It was faster than the SM.91 and had more range.

By William Stroock

As El Cid, defender of the Christian faith, mercenary warlord Rodrigo Diaz de Vivar became the first Spanish national hero.

RODRIGO DIAZ DE VIVAR, A CASTILIAN MERCENARY WHO SERVED Christian kings and Muslim emirs alike in late 11th-century Spain, was born in 1043 in the village of Vivar, about six miles north of the city of Burgos. His father was a respected soldier, taking several castles and winning at least one pitched battle in a war against Navarre in the 1050s. With his father's military pedigree, Rodrigo was taken into the court of Prince Sancho, future king of Castile. There he spent his formative years training to be a knight. In addition to riding and swordsmanship, Rodrigo's education included Latin, Arabic, the Bible, ancient history, and military treatises.

When Sancho was crowned king of Castile after his father's death in 1065 (Fernando I divided the kingdom between his three sons), Rodrigo was made commander, or armiger, of Sancho's military forces. As armiger, Rodrigo was charged with recruiting, training, and commanding Sancho's household troops, the king's most elite and deadly knights. In this role, Rodrigo eventually became known as *campeador,* or military leader.

In 1068, Sancho began a war against his brother Alfonso of Leon. Rodrigo led the king's household troops at the Battle of Llantada, on July 19, 1068, and again at the Battle of Golpejera, on January 10, 1072, which resulted in the defeat and exile of Alfonso. Rodrigo's final service to Sancho came later that year at the siege of Zamora, which Alfonso had seized in a bid to regain his kingdom. The siege lasted until October 7, 1072, when Sancho was assassinated. Upon the king's death, his army fled.

With Sancho's death, his brother, now styling himself King Alfonso VI, ruled a kingdom that combined Galicia and Castile, with his seat at Leon. Alfonso retained the service of Rodrigo, which speaks highly for Rodrigo's military credentials. Two years later, Alfonso married Rodrigo to his beautiful niece, Jimena Diaz. Despite marrying into royalty, Rodrigo was demoted from armiger. Instead, he tended to various legal and religious affairs throughout the kingdom. He also fought in the 1076 campaign against Navarre, a victory that led to the annexation of several provinces to Castile.

The most important duty Rodrigo performed for the king was the collection of tributes. In 1079, he was

A triumphant Rodrigo Diaz de Vivar, better known as El Cid, enters the Moorish stronghold of Valencia in 1094.

akg-images

one of several noblemen dispatched to collect tributes from the state of Seville. While there, Rodrigo became embroiled in a war between Seville and its eastern neighbor, Granada. In the operations that followed, he commanded a detachment of Christian troops in Seville's army. The campaign culminated near the frontier castle of Cabra, where Seville's army defeated the Granadans in a three-hour battle. Rodrigo captured several prominent Granadan soldiers, including Count Garcia Ordonez.

It was here that the trouble began for Rodrigo. Ordonez was a powerful Castilian count married to the sister of King Sancho IV of Navarre. Ordonez's capture and subsequent ransom by Rodrigo was a humiliation for the royals. To make matters worse, Rodrigo bragged openly of his triumph over Ordonez. After he returned to Castile, enemies began complaining to the king of Rodrigo's various misdeeds.

Two years after the Cabra campaign, a party of bandits from the state of Toledo raided Rodrigo's lands on the River Duero. Enraged, he launched a retaliatory raid against Toledo. When King Alfonso learned of the raid, he was gravely displeased. Toledo's emir, al-Qadir, was friendly to the king and had paid tributes to Castile. Rodrigo's actions were a serious diplomatic provocation; Alfonso needed to take quick action to mollify Toledo. Seeing an opportunity to shame Rodrigo, Ordonez and his allies at court convinced the king to banish him from Castile.

Rodrigo was forced to look for employment in another kingdom. He eventually found work with al-Muqtadir, emir of Zaragosa. Soon after Rodrigo's arrival, the emir died and the kingdom was divided between two sons: al-Hayib, who got the western half based at Denia, and al-Mu'tamin, who retained Zaragosa and Rodrigo's services. With a war for control of Zaragosa looming, Rodrigo was a powerful ally. Not only did his military reputation speak for itself, but Rodrigo also brought a body of Christian knights with him, a sizable contingent of well-trained veterans who were personally loyal to him.

Al-Hayib had allies of his own—Sancho of Aragon and Berenguer of Barcelona—which meant that he could threaten Zaragosa from the north as well as the east. Rodrigo was given command of Zaragosa's armies and skillfully maneuvered to prevent an invasion. When al-Hayib and Sancho moved against the frontier castle of Monzon, Rodrigo marched his army there and reinforced the garrison before they could attack. He then marched south, where he fought and won a small skirmish. Afterward, he refortified and garrisoned the frontier castle of Almenar.

With Almenar protecting his northern flank, Rodrigo returned south and attacked al-Hayib's castle at Escarp. Rodrigo and his men slaughtered great numbers of the Almoravids (also known as Moors) and took the castle. While Rodrigo was taking Escarp, al-Hayib and Berenguer marched back into Zaragosa and besieged Almenar. Rodrigo sent to the king for reinforcements, who brought them to the town of Taramite, northwest of Almenar, and linked up with Rodrigo. At Rodrigo's suggestion, al-Mu'tamin offered tribute in exchange for the enemies' withdrawal, but they refused and offered battle. In the ensuing Battle of Almenar, Rodrigo triumphed. The greatest part of Berenguer's forces was killed, and Berenguer was promptly captured and ransomed. Rodrigo was celebrated as a hero in Zaragosa, where al-Mu'tamin showered him with gifts of gold and silver.

Rodrigo's next great campaign came in 1084, when al-Mu'tamin directed him to attack Aragon. From the fortress of Mazon, he launched a raid into King Sancho's territory and for five days ravaged Aragon and stripped it of its riches. After this, Rodrigo invaded Denia, a raid that culminated in a bloody battle for the castle of Morella. Determined to stop him, Sancho and al-Hayib combined their armies and attacked Rodrigo as he marched along the Ebro River. On August 14, 1084, Rodrigo won a great triumph at the Battle of Ebro, capturing 2,000 men, including 16 nobles, and taking great chests of booty.

While Rodrigo was in exile, Alfonso had been expanding. His most notable conquest was the city of Toledo, which he took in 1085. Alfonso's aggressiveness forced the intervention of a new power, the Almoravids, who were recent Muslim converts from West Africa. Their fanatical zeal helped them establish a vast kingdom whose northern fringe reached the Mediterranean. Desperate for help against the encroachments of Castile, the other Muslim states appealed to their brethren for help. Led by fundamentalist fanatic Emir Yusuf ibn Tashfin, the Almoravids crossed into Spain and defeated Alfonso at the Battle of Sagrajas on October 23, 1086.

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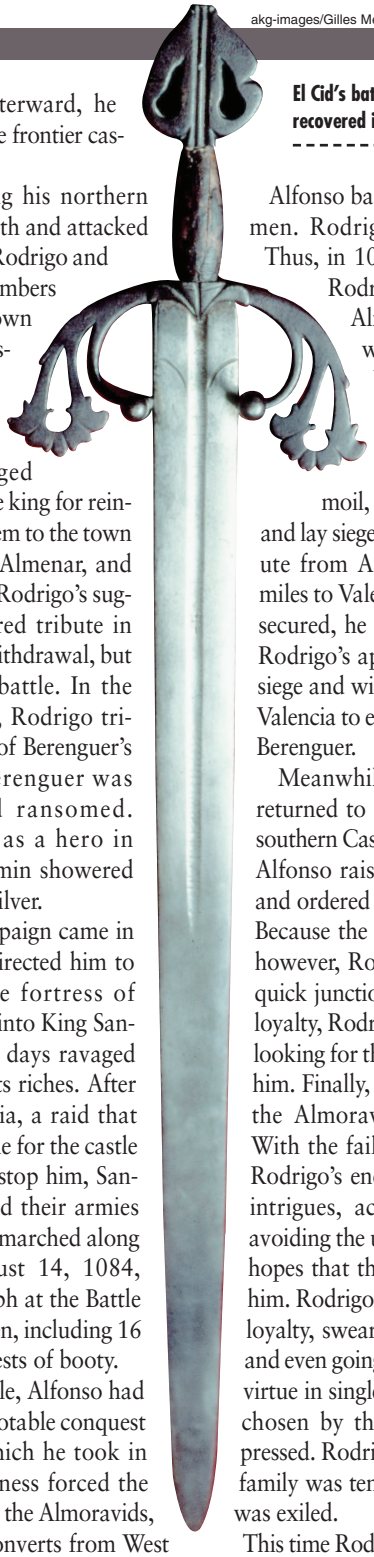

El Cid's battle sword, "La Tizona," was recovered in Alcazar in 1503.

Alfonso badly needed allies and fighting men. Rodrigo was an obvious choice. Thus, in 1087, Alfonso reconciled with Rodrigo. But, rather than fight the Almoravids, Rodrigo's first task was to stabilize the situation in Valencia, which had revolted against Alfonso's puppet ruler, al-Qadir. Trying to take advantage of the turmoil, Count Berenguer had invaded and lay siege. Rodrigo first demanded tribute from Albarracin, a city about 100 miles to Valencia's northwest. With funds secured, he marched for Valencia. Upon Rodrigo's approach, Berenguer lifted the siege and withdrew. Rodrigo remained in Valencia to ensure Alfonso's rule and deter Berenguer.

Meanwhile, in 1089, the Almoravids returned to Spain and besieged Aledo, a southern Castilian stronghold. In response, Alfonso raised an army, marched south, and ordered Rodrigo to link up with him. Because the king remained on the move, however, Rodrigo was unable to effect a quick junction. Lest he be accused of disloyalty, Rodrigo marched to several towns looking for the king but was unable to find him. Finally, as Alfonso's army drew near, the Almoravids withdrew from Aledo. With the failed juncture as ammunition, Rodrigo's enemies at court renewed their intrigues, accusing him of deliberately avoiding the union of the two armies in the hopes that the Almoravids would destroy him. Rodrigo desperately tried to prove his loyalty, swearing several oaths to the king and even going so far as to offer to prove his virtue in single combat against a champion chosen by the king. Alfonso was unimpressed. Rodrigo's land was confiscated, his family was temporarily imprisoned, and he was exiled.

This time Rodrigo did not seek employment with another kingdom. In his operations around Valencia he had seen how unstable the city's government was. Al-Qadir was at odds with a pro-Almoravid faction, while outside Valencia several towns nominally under al-Qadir were in open revolt. Seeing an opportune target, Rodrigo resolved to take Valencia for himself. Again Rodrigo brought with him a sizable contingent of Christian knights. Beyond

The Art Archive/Science Academy Lisbon/Gianni Dagli Orti

El Cid vanquishes an enemy in hand-to-hand combat.

that, he had allies in Zaragosa, contacts he had made around Valencia, and most of all his reputation as a warrior, which enabled him to attract worthy men seeking adventure and glory.

Rodrigo spent the winter of 1089-1090 at Elche. Needing to raise funds for the upcoming campaign, Rodrigo attacked his old enemy, al-Hayib. After taking the castle of Polop, he extracted tribute from the emir. He then marched against Valencia and received additional tributes not only from al-Qadir but from those rebelling against him. Meanwhile, al-Hayib turned to Berenguer for help. Berenguer absorbed al-Hayib's army into his own and went looking for Rodrigo, passing through Zaragosa on his way. Zaragosa's new emir, al-Musta'in, remembering Rodrigo's loyal service to his father, sent a warning to him that Berenguer was coming. With a large force bearing down, Rodrigo retreated to Morella in the mountainous north.

Now on secure territory near the wood of Tevar, Rodrigo tried to provoke Berenguer into battle. There followed an extraordinary exchange of letters between Berenguer and Rodrigo, in which each claimed to have been wronged by the other. Most notably, Rodrigo questioned Berenguer's honor, his fighting skills, and even his manhood. But Berenguer would not be goaded into a headlong charge. Instead, on the eve of battle, he sent a detachment of men around Rodrigo's flank. His men valiantly fought off Berenguer's initial charge. Rodrigo counterattacked, and in the ensuing melee he was wounded and unhorsed. Despite the loss of their commander, Rodrigo's men vanquished Berenguer, looting his camp and taking many prisoners, the count among them.

Rodrigo spent several months at Zaragosa recovering from his wounds and negotiating a favorable truce with Berenguer, who, owing to the sudden death of al-Hayib, found himself without allies. Rodrigo resumed his operations around Valencia. While he was besieging the castle of Liria, however, word arrived from Queen Constance that Alfonso was once again marching against the Almoravids, who had taken Seville. This was a golden opportunity for Rodrigo to prove his loyalty to the king and assert his own power. Rodrigo joined Alfonso outside of Cordoba but gratuitously insulted Alfonso by encamping on level ground in front of the king's pavilions, implying that he was the king's equal. Rodrigo insisted that he had chosen his position by military necessity, but Alfonso was once more enraged and banished Rodrigo from his camp. From then on, Alfonso was his implacable enemy.

The crucible of events now shifted to Valencia, where Rodrigo, Alfonso, and Yusuf vied for the city. Rodrigo acted shrewdly, negotiating an alliance between his friends in Zaragosa and the king of Aragon. In 1092, Alfonso made his move and laid siege to Valencia. Instead of

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confronting Alfonso head-on, Rodrigo chose to draw him away from Valencia by invading Castile. Marching along the Ebro, Rodrigo laid waste to the land. The raid forced Alfonso to lift the siege and rush back to Castile, and the raid was also a personal blow against Rodrigo's old rival, Ordonez, who had extensive holdings along the river. While Rodrigo was in Castile, the Almoravids returned to Spain and took Aledo. In conjunction with Yusuf's advance, the pro-Almoravid faction in Valencia staged a coup and installed its own ruler on the throne.

With Alfonso occupied by Yusuf and the Almoravids, Rodrigo began a campaign of slow strangulation against Valencia. He first took the castle of Cebolla, to the north, which he made his base of operations. After plundering the countryside, he took Valencia's northern and southern suburbs. After his victory, Rodrigo moved south to the town of Villena. In doing so, he drew supplies from previously unravaged territory and positioned himself to block an Almoravid move to relieve Valencia. Rodrigo pressed his siege and, on June 15, 1094, took Valencia by frontal assault, after which his men brutally sacked the town.

After hearing of the ravages inflicted upon Valencia, Yusuf dispatched a large army to liberate it. As the Almoravids marched up the coast and encamped south of the city on the plain of Cuarte, Rodrigo remained inside Valencia. After a 10-day siege, Rodrigo decided on bold action. He led his forces out of the city and divided his troops in two. One wing attacked the Almoravid army, while the other rode around their flank and assaulted the camp. The Battle of Cuarte resulted in an Almoravid rout that yielded vast amounts of treasure and supplies. Most importantly, the battle was the first defeat inflicted upon the Almoravids by Christian warriors.

Rodrigo went on the military and diplomatic offensive, taking the castle of Olocau to the north and confirming his alliance with Aragon's new king, Pedro II. In conjunction with Pedro, Rodrigo fortified and garrisoned his castles on the southern frontier. While doing so, he encountered another large Almoravid army. Not wanting to fight, Rodrigo swung east in an effort to get to the coast and marched north to Bairen, but found that the Almoravids had outraced him and positioned themselves on high ground, blocking his retreat. Trapped, Rodrigo and Pedro unleashed a frontal assault on the Almoravids that swept them from the high ground and pushed them into the sea.

After this battle, Rodrigo's last great military operation was against Murviedro, a massive coastal fortress that had aided an incursion into Valencia by the Muslim governor of nearby Jativa. Murviedro appealed to the various Spanish kings for support, but the rulers refused direct battle with Rodrigo, who had bested too many enemies in the past. Abandoned and besieged, Murviedro surrendered on June 24, 1098.

The following year, Rodrigo rushed back to Valencia to defend it against a renewed Almoravid attack, but he died unexpectedly on July 10, 1099. With no successor to Rodrigo (his only son, Diego, had been killed at the Battle of Cuarte), Valencia fell into Almoravid hands in 1102. During the next century, the historical Rodrigo was slowly transformed in poems and ballads into El Cid, a noble and unselfish knight who had battled Muslim infidels in the name of King Alfonso and the Christian faith. (Ironically, Cid was a corruption of the Muslim word for lord, *sidi*.) Rodrigo Diaz de Vivar was many things, but he was not El Cid. He was a good knight and an able field commander, winning no less than seven battlefield victories. But he was also a mercenary warlord, fighting not for a king or a faith—but for himself. With the Reconquista, or reconquering of Spain by Christian fighters, Rodrigo the man became El Cid the legend, the first Spanish national hero. □

By Laura Cleveland

The Terracotta Army of the First Emperor of China, Qin Shi Huang, has peacefully invaded Atlanta's High Museum of Art.

BELOW: A kneeling archer, which is on view at the High Museum, wears heavy armor on his shoulders and torso. RIGHT: Several crossbowmen, with most of their original paint intact, are from Pit 2.

ONE OF THE GREATEST ARCHAEOLOGICAL DISCOVERIES OF THE 20th century was made in March 1974 by a team of well diggers near modern-day Xi'an, China. The workers had stumbled onto a tiny portion of the terracotta army of Qin Shi Huang, the first emperor of China. Further excavations revealed a massive underground complex of pits guarded by an estimated 8,000 terracotta soldiers. Atlanta's High Museum of Art currently is displaying 100 artifacts from the find, including 15 terracotta figures, in one of the largest groups of important works ever to be loaned to the United States by the Museum of the Terracotta Army and the Cultural Relics Bureau of Shaanxi Province in Xi'an, China. Included in the exhibit are recently discovered items from the emperor's tomb complex. Short of a trip to China, this exhibit presents a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for Americans to view these magnificent items up close.

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Entitled "The First Emperor: China's Terracotta Army," the exhibition was conceived by Jane Portal, curator in the Asia Department, and Neil McGregor, director of the British Museum, who were traveling in China to promote understanding between the two nations. With the cooperation and enthusiasm of the Museum of the Terracotta Army, the British Museum opened the exhibit on September 13, 2007. Transporting such large and fragile items as the terracotta warriors and horses was a challenge. The artifacts journeyed by road from Xi'an to Beijing over two days' time, packed securely in 46 crates. Most of the artifacts were then flown to London—the horses made a detour through Amsterdam on cargo planes because of their bulk. The exhibition, which had record-breaking attendance, closed on April 6, 2008. The exhibit was carefully repacked and flown by UPS to Ontario, California, and then made its way by truck to the Bowers Museum in Santa Ana. When the Santa Ana exhibition ended last October, UPS transported the items to Atlanta. After Atlanta, the exhibition will move to the Houston Museum of Natural Science from May 18 through October 16. The final stop will be the National Geographic Society in Washington, D.C., from November 19 through March 31, 2010. Before the exhibition opened in London, Jane Portal said, "So little is known about the first emperor outside China, and yet he is such an important figure in Chinese history. I hope that people who come to the exhibition will get a sense of the grand scale of his vision—the fact that he wanted to carry on ruling over the universe, even after his death."

Construction of Qin Shi Huang's necropolis began in 246 BC, the year he united all of China and declared himself emperor. It continued for 40 years, even after his death in 210 BC, and finally ended in 206 BC, when the Qin dynasty fell. The burial mound is located at Lintong, facing Li Mountain in the south, the Wei River in the north, and Qinling Mountain in the west. A 1.35-mile-by-0.61-mile wall surrounds the necropolis; centered within is the

First Emperor's tomb inside a second wall. More than 700,000 laborers from all over China were used to build the palace. Sima Qian, a chronicler writing a century later, described the palace as having several chambers, including the one in which the emperor is buried. The palace had bronze walls; the ceiling was decorated to represent the heavens, with the sun, moon, and pearl- and jewel-encrusted stars. The floor depicted the known world, the Qin Empire, complete with flowing rivers of mercury.

Buried alive in other pits in the mausoleum were rare birds and animals, as well as the emperor's childless wives. The area between the outer wall and the tomb enclosure has been excavated, and many priceless objects have been recovered from several pits. In 1999, 11 terracotta acrobats and strongmen, designed to entertain the emperor in the afterlife, were found near the tomb mound. A year later, terracotta scribes and civil officials were unearthed, followed by a group of bronze birds, including life-size geese, swans, and cranes. Two half-size bronze chariots with charioteers and four horses were excavated from the so-called Pit of Chariots. The largest pit in the mausoleum contained 150 suits of armor and 50 helmets made from limestone tiles. These were for funerary purposes only—they were much too heavy to wear. Horse armor made of diamond-shaped limestone tiles was also discovered, telling scholars that the armor was in use half a millennium earlier than previously was thought. The tomb itself will be left undisturbed because archaeologists are afraid that the contents will be destroyed by air and light.

Archaeologists long had suspected that treasures from the first emperor's dynasty were buried somewhere nearby, but the exact location was not discovered until 1974, when Chinese peasants unearthed the head of one of the terracotta warriors. The terracotta army was located three-quarters of a mile to the east of the emperor's mausoleum. The mausoleum was protected to the north, south, and west by natural barriers. To the east lay the Great Central Plain and the emperor's enemies, so the army was positioned to defend the burial area. Archaeologists began testing the site and digging carefully in the area. After two years of work, they determined that there were four pits containing over 8,000 figures. The pits, designated Pits 1-4 in order of their discovery, were arranged according to military formations of a battle-ready army of the period.

Pit 1, the first to be excavated, is the most

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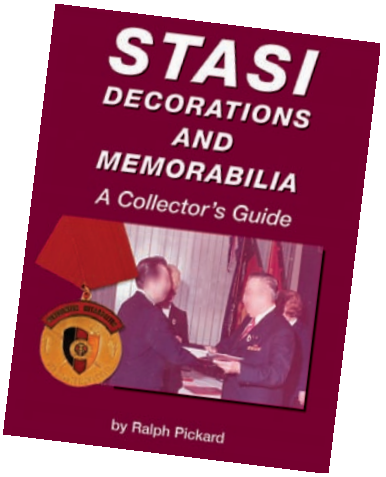

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ABOVE: An infantryman from the museum exhibition wears heavy armor and a cap covering his side-knotted hair. RIGHT: The largest pit in the mausoleum contained 150 suits of limestone tile armor. The suit shown is included in the exhibition.

documented. When archaeologists opened the pit, they found that all of the terracotta figures had been smashed by looters. Each fragment was photographed where it lay, then numbered and documented. A laborious process was begun of matching the pieces to the correct figures and gluing them back together. Pit 1 contains the infantry and charioteers, arranged in rectangular battle formation. The vanguard—three rows of 70 archers each—faces east. The south and north flanks contain bowmen facing outward. Some wear battle dress, others are equipped with armor and are believed to have held weapons originally. Still more warriors line the west side to form the army's rear guard. In the center are troops lined up in nine columns, along with the remnants of eight chariots. Each chariot was pulled by four horses and had a driver and two warriors aboard.

Pit 2, located just over 65 feet east of Pit 1, was discovered in 1976. The pit measures 7,176 square yards and is divided into L-shaped sections. It contains approximately 1,300 warriors, 500 horses, and traces of 89 chariots. One section contains 334 archers, all armed with crossbows, lined up in eight groups; the archers at the front wear armor and are kneeling. A second section of Pit 2 contains remnants of 64 chariots arranged in groups of eight. Nineteen additional chariots and about 100 warriors occupy a third section, with the fourth containing additional chariots and 124 horses and men—the cavalry. The military formation in Pit 2 is much more complex than that of Pit 1. The archers and charioteers would have launched offensives and attempted to break enemy ranks, then the cavalry would have given chase.

Pit 3, also discovered in 1976, is the smallest but the most strategically important. It was the emperor's battle headquarters, containing the command force of 68 warriors, the remnants of a large chariot, and four horses. Numerous bronze weapons and fragments of deer horn and animal bone—signs of animal sacrifice—were also recovered. The command staff of a real army would have performed the sacrifices and

prayed to the gods for victory in battle. Generals of the time carried a "tiger tally," a two-piece identification token. The emperor held one half, and when a general needed permission to move troops and engage in battle, the emperor would show his half to the general. If the pieces matched, the emperor's order was real.

Scholars were excited to find a fourth pit in 1995, but they were surprised to find that it was empty. They thought it should have contained the central force of the emperor's army. One theory holds that the emperor intended to bury most of the tomb construction workers alive in the pits but was convinced to pardon the workers, many of them criminals, in reward for their hard work. It is also possible that construction of the final elements of the army was simply not completed.

Government laborers and local artisans manufactured the figures in what may have been the first assembly line. The figures were made of baked clay composed of loess and quartz sand. The parts of the soldiers' anatomy—heads, torsos, arms, hands, legs, and feet—were molded separately and then mixed and matched to create individual figures. The figures range from 5'8" to 6'5" tall, their stature depending on their rank. Ears, noses, lips, eyebrows, beards, and mustaches were also prefabricated. They were made by hand or in molds, then attached to the figure with a clay-and-water paste. Hair, headdresses, tunics, armor, and gaiters were

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molded and pressed into the unbaked bodies. To individualize the figures' faces, sculptors reshaped some of the features and added extra detail, including frowns or smiles. The army was allowed to dry in the shade and then baked in ovens. Once they were baked, the figures were painted in bright, bold colors. The paint has deteriorated on some of the figures, but remains visible on others.

All of the heads display common characteristics: squarish foreheads, thick lips, mustaches, and beards. They appear alert and ready to fight. The archaeologists originally thought the faces were based on actual members of Qin Shi Huang's army, but they later discovered that eight different face molds were used. Artisans were able to age each figure and add features prevalent in the soldiers' homelands.

Each of the ranks displays the correct clothing for the period. Generals wear double-tailed headgear, tunics falling below the knee, and armor in a fish-scale pattern that falls in a V shape at the midriff. The sleeves on their tunics cover their hands—generals were expected to command, not fight. They sport bow-like decorations on their chests and necks and wear boots with turned-up toes. Officers wear simpler headgear and more protective armor at the shoulders. The sleeves of their tunics leave their hands exposed to do battle, and they wear boxy, flat-toed shoes. Cavalrymen, dismounted and standing near their horses, wear sleeveless jackets of armor made of thick, square plates that appear riveted together. Their heads are covered with close-fitting hats held on with chin straps. Their shoes are light and small. Some of the archers, particularly the standing ones, wear simple tunics with no armor so they could draw their bows without hindrance. The kneeling archers wear heavy armor on their shoulders and torsos. The archers' boots show a distinct tread. The infantry wear battle robes or heavy armor. Their hair is in a topknot, and their hands are positioned to carry spears. Charioteers wear heavy suits of armor with gauntlets, arm guards, tunics, aprons, and collars.

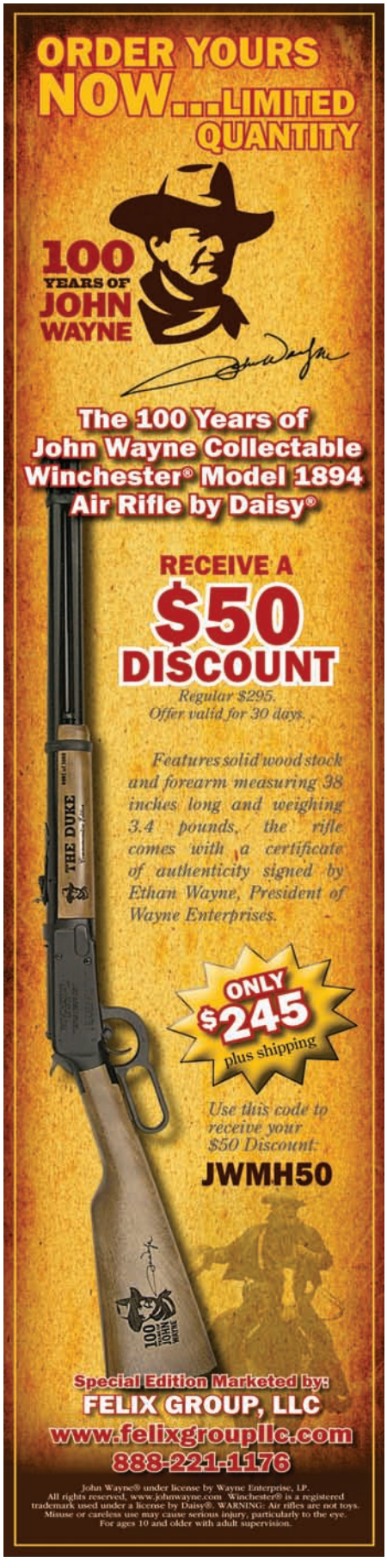
An arsenal of over 10,000 actual weapons was found in the three pits. These finds have given scholars important insights into the arms of the period, about which little was known before the terracotta army was excavated. Among the weapons discovered was the pi, which had a foot-long hexagonal blade with a long tang inserted into a staff up to 10 feet long. The Wu sickle was a heavy strike weapon with a blunt point and cylindrical handle. Qin swords were 32 to 37 inches long and were carried on the back. Made of a bronze and tin alloy, they were nearly as hard as steel. When

Two half-size, single-shaft bronze chariots, each drawn by four horses and driven by a charioteer, were found in the western part of the imperial tomb. One is on exhibit during the tour.

unearthed, the swords had a patina but were not rusted; their blades were as sharp as they were when they were buried. Scholars believe that they were rust-proofed with chromium oxide. Remains of crossbows, the most important technological innovation of the period, were also found. The body of the crossbow was 4½ feet long, made of wood, wrapped with leather strips, and lacquered. The springs and pins were bronze, and they fired bronze darts with pyramid-shaped tips—over 41,000 arrowheads were found in the pits.

"The First Emperor" exhibition presents objects in their historical and archaeological contexts and discusses recent research and excavation. The objects on view represent both the military and civilian worlds of Qin Shi Huang and his desire to rule them both in the afterlife. Among the terracotta items on exhibit in the United States are nine warriors from the army, a court official with writing tools hanging from his belt, a bare-chested strongman, musicians, a kneeling stable boy and a chariot horse. Visitors will see bronze waterbirds discovered beside the complex's underground river. Other items of interest include bronze weapons, stone armor, coins and coin molds, weights and measures, and a restraining iron used on the workforce that constructed the tomb complex.

"This is a fascinating look into the history of one of the world's oldest and richest cultures, as well as one of the world's greatest discoveries—the first emperor's terracotta army," says Michael E. Shapiro, director of the High Museum. "We are proud to continue our tradition of partnering with museums across the globe to bring the world's greatest art to Atlanta. Our visitors will have the opportunity to see these warriors up close and appreciate their magnificence within the context of their creation as well as in the history of China." □



By Peter Kross

American intelligence agents infiltrated a Spanish spy ring operating in Montreal during the Spanish-American War.

BY THE END OF THE 19TH CENTURY, THE UNITED STATES HAD GROWN into one of the major players on the international stage. Americans had tamed a continent from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and the mighty industrial engine of the country was making the nation increasingly self-sufficient and self-confident as it looked across the oceans toward the rest of the world.

In 1898 the United States rushed into war with Spain, which leaders in Washington saw as continuing to interfere in Cuba and other parts of Latin America. In hindsight, the Spanish-American War might have been avoided except for the jingoistic American press, which was clamoring for hostilities to start in the wake of the mysterious sinking of the USS *Maine* in Havana harbor on February 15, 1898, an event that is still being debated today. (Most experts believe the ship was the victim of a boiler-room explosion, not deliberate Spanish sabotage.)

The war with Spain was fought on two different fronts. American troops gathered in convoys off the coast of Florida and stormed the beaches of Cuba, inflicting and taking casualties from Spanish troops as well as from indigenous tropical diseases that felled many more American troops than enemy bullets. In the Pacific theater, the U.S. Navy under Admiral George Dewey decisively bested the Spanish fleet near the Philippine Islands. They were aided by agents of the Office of Naval Intelligence who supplied the Navy with important information on Spanish maneuvers.

As the opposing armies and navies battled with conventional forces, Spain began a covert espionage operation in Montreal, Canada, in an effort to undermine American war efforts. Before the war was over and the ring was eventually shut down, the United States Secret Service would penetrate the operation, conduct "black bag" jobs against the Spanish in Montreal, spy on innocent American citizens, and write forged letters—purportedly authored by Spanish agents—whose sole aim was to create a war cry within

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U.S. warships blockade the Spanish fleet off the coast of Santiago de Cuba, June 3, 1898. They destroyed the enemy fleet one month later. INSET: John Elbert Wilkie, head of the U.S. Secret Service, began his career as a journalist in Chicago.

the United States.

The man who would take on the job of investigating the Spaniards' Montreal spy ring was John Elbert Wilkie, chief of the American Secret Service. Wilkie, born in Elgin, Illinois, in 1860, began his professional career as a police reporter and business columnist for the *Chicago Tribune*. After joining the Treasury Department, Wilkie's first job was to stop a large counterfeiting ring that was changing $1 bills into $100 bills. In the wake of the scandal, the U.S. government was forced to recall all the bills then in circulation. Wilkie worked closely with a Pittsburgh man named William Burns to run a very convincing sting operation that was right out a Hollywood script. In time, they were able to arrest the entire forgery gang.

In the wake of Wilkie's success in breaking up the counterfeiting ring, Treasury Secretary Lyman Gage promoted him from an ordinary agent making $7 per day to the chief of the Secret Service with a salary of $3,500 per year. With the outbreak of the Spanish-American War, Wilkie was tasked with the job of investigating Spanish covert actions in Montreal. The Spaniard at the center of the Montreal spy ring was Ramon de Carranza, a lieutenant in the Spanish Navy. When the war broke out, Carranza was assigned to the Spanish embassy in Washington, D.C., where he served as a naval attaché. Then and later, most nations assigned naval attachés as a cover for their true profession—that of spy. Carranza relished his new position as an undercover operative and took on the Montreal assignment with near-religious zeal.

Carranza had a large number of assets he could use inside the United States, drawing on the immigrant Spanish communities in such cities as Tampa, Key West, New Orleans, and Mobile. The Secret Service received a report that pro-Spanish activists in those cities had obtained money to purchase a gunboat for Spain, as well as to carry out reconnaissance work targeting American naval facilities along the Atlantic coast. Secret Service operatives in the field also received information that Spanish spies had been seen as far west as San Francisco, scouting military facilities in the Bay Area. The intelligence service confirmed reports that the minister of the Spanish admiralty, Segismundo Bermejo, had given the order to destroy American naval facilities on both coasts.

Wilkie's men knew the Spanish were up to no good when, only a few days before war was declared, the Spanish ambassador to Washington, Luis Polo y Bernabe, packed up and left abruptly for a presumably safer haven in Montreal, away from the prying eyes of American agents. Unbeknownst to him, U.S. Secret Service personnel were already watching closely as the ambassador and his entourage arrived in Montreal.

Montreal seemed like a perfect place to establish an elaborate espionage network. The city had a first-class rail system that allowed easy access into and out of town, and it also offered unrestricted ocean access across the Atlantic to Europe. In addition, the Spanish had a long-standing consulate-general office in Montreal from which they could conduct illegal affairs without unwanted interference from the scrupulously neutral Canadian government.

After getting settled in the city, Carranza moved his headquarters to the Windsor Hotel, where he thought he would have a safe place to pursue his covert actions. He was unaware that a number of American Secret Service agents, as well as a few inquiring reporters, were also in residence at the Windsor and were literally tripping over each other in the halls.

To mislead the Americans, Carranza and a number of other high Spanish officials left Montreal, supposedly on their way to Liverpool, England. As their ship headed down the St. Lawrence River, however, a few men, including Carranza, got off the vessel and made their way back to Montreal. Carranza set up his new base of operations at a house on Tupper Street. Carranza was justifiably upset when inquiring Canadian newspaper reporters publicized his return to Montreal. Another person who saw Carranza at his Tupper Street address was an American Secret Service agent known only as "Tracer."

The first undercover agent that Carranza sent to the United States for espionage purposes was an English immigrant named George Downing. Downing had previously served aboard the USS *Brooklyn* as a petty officer, but his true allegiance rested with the Spanish. When Carranza was giving Downing his orders, he did not know that an American agent was in the next room, listening to every word that was spoken. When Downing arrived in the United States, he was immediately arrested while sending a letter to his superiors concerning American naval strength. Downing was later found dead in his cell. When Carranza heard of Downing's demise, he surmised that the agent "had hanged himself—or else they did it for him."

In an effort to place spies within the American military, Carranza used the services of Frank Arthur Mellor, who was sent to him by a detective agency in Canada. Mellor, who came from Kingston, Ontario, convinced two men from his hometown to spy for Spain. This attempt at localized recruitment did not work out well. His first recruit, a man named Atkins, was supposed to head to San Francisco, join the U.S. Navy, and report back to Mellor on what he observed. Before Atkins could head across the border, however, he changed his mind and made his way to the U.S. consul general's office in Kingston, where he told his improbable tale. When Mellor found out what Atkins had done, he beat him to a pulp. To avoid any other incidents, Atkins promptly boarded a ship bound for England.

Not to be dissuaded, Mellor tried to enlist himself at the American army base in Tampa, where troops were preparing to embark for Cuba. The Army refused to allow him to enlist, but Mellor, watching the disposition of troops and ships, sent messages by post to Carranza in Canada. Members of the British intelligence service operating in Canada alerted Wilkie to Mellor's activities. They gave the Secret Service the phony name that Mellor was using, and more importantly, the number of the post office box where he sent his superiors his secret messages. American postal officials were able to seize one of the letters before it reached Carranza. With the incriminating evidence in hand, American authorities arrested Mellor. Like Downing, Mellor died in jail—supposedly of typhoid fever.

To get the goods on Carranza, Wilkie's men undertook a so-called black bag job targeting Carranza's residence. The action was an illegal break-in, much like the Watergate affair 75 years later. On May 27, 1898, U.S. agents entered Carranza's home at 42 Tupper Street while the Spaniard was out having breakfast. They took from his desk a letter supposedly written by Carranza to his cousin, Admiral J.B. Ymay. The letter was sent to Wilkie in Washington via a courier who took it as far as Vermont. One week after receiving the letter, Wilkie gave it to the *New York Herald,* while other copies were sent to the U.S. State Department and the British government.

Upon seeing the letter in print, Carranza immediately charged that its contents had been forged. Carranza was subsequently arrested and in turn sued Joseph Kellert, chief of the Metropolitan Detective Agency in Montreal, for false arrest. He accused Kellert of stealing the letter. The Carranza letter caused a large diplomatic stir involving Canada, Great Britain, the United States, and Spain. The letter was shown to the British ambassador in the United States, Sir Julian Paucefote, who in turn sent it to Colonial Secretary Joseph Chamberlain. All this took place amid legal haggling over whether or not

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American Marines advance cautiously up the outer walls of the Citadel at Hue on February 13, 1968, following the surprise attack by North Vietnamese and Vietcong forces.

CHAOTIC BATTLE FOR HUE

BY JOHN WALKER

As South Vietnamese citizens relaxed during the annual Tet holiday in January 1968, North Vietnamese regulars and Vietcong guerrillas spread out to launch the most audacious offensive of the Vietnam War.

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THE CITY OF HUE was the capital of a unified Vietnam from 1802 until 1945. With its stately, tree-lined boulevards, Buddhist temples, national university, and ornate imperial palace within a massive walled city known as the Citadel, Hue was the cradle of the country's culture and heritage. As late as 1967, Hue remained an open city, unscathed by the various wars that since World War II had raged up and down the Indochinese peninsula. But when Communist leaders in North Vietnam felt compelled to alter their strategy and launch a massive offensive in South Vietnam in early 1968, Hue suddenly found itself the focus of some of the heaviest fighting of the Vietnam War.

Stung by reversals on southern battlefields and fearful of an American invasion of their homeland, North Vietnam's Politburo members voted to abandon protracted-war tactics and mount a three-phase general offensive that would reverse the course of the war against the South Vietnamese and their American allies. When Defense Minister and Chief of Staff General Vo Nguyen Giap, vanquisher of the French in 1954 after a brutal eight-year war, voiced opposition to the offensive, command was given to General Nguyen Chi Thanh, leader of Communist Viet Cong guerrilla forces in South Vietnam. When Thanh died unexpectedly, Giap reassumed command and rapidly massed six North Vietnamese Army infantry divisions in South Vietnam's northernmost province, Quang Tri.

In the fall of 1967, Giap launched a series of big battles near the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) that had two objectives: draw American forces north, away from the heavily populated coastal and lowland cities, and determine if the Americans would respond with an invasion of the north. A massive buildup of Communist troops and equipment in the south began. General William Westmoreland, commander of allied ground forces in South Vietnam, responded by sending more troops and firepower into the northern provinces, but he did not launch an invasion of Laos or North Vietnam. This gave Giap the confidence he needed to order the winter-spring offensive to proceed. Giap would find Westmoreland a far more tenacious commander than France's Lt. Gen. Henri Navarre, who had allowed 15,000 of France's finest troops to be surrounded and destroyed at Dien Bien Phu. Westmoreland, for his part, welcomed Giap's deployment of sizable forces in outlying, sparsely populated areas where America's massive firepower could be brought to bear.

The main effort of Giap's preliminary phase began on January 21, 1968, at Khe Sanh in northwestern South Vietnam, where two NVA divisions lay siege to the U.S. Marine combat base there. Believing the Communists might be trying to achieve another Dien Bien Phu, President Lyndon B. Johnson declared that Khe Sanh must be held at all costs. With all eyes on Khe Sanh, the Communists then launched the main offensive in the early morning hours of January 31. Some 84,000 NVA and Vietcong soldiers, brazenly violating the Tet (lunar new year) cease-fire, mounted simultaneous attacks on 36 of 44 provincial capitals, five of six autonomous cities, including Saigon and Hue, 64 of 242 district capitals, and 50 hamlets.

With many South Vietnamese soldiers away on holiday leave, the Communists enjoyed widespread early success—even the grounds of the U.S. embassy in Saigon were breached. Within days, however, all of the assaults in the smaller towns and hamlets were turned back. Heavy fighting continued for a while in Kontum Province, Can Tho, Ben Tre, and Saigon, but after a week the offensive, by far the largest of the war to date, had been essentially halted everywhere except for Hue. There, the longest and bloodiest battle of the Tet offensive began to unfold.

The third-largest city in South Vietnam with a wartime population of 140,000, Hue was located astride National Highway 1 just west of the coast, about 50 miles south of the DMZ, on one of the principal land-supply routes to allied troops. One-third of the city's citizens lived

All Photos: National Archives

ABOVE: Two North Vietnamese regulars cross a river carrying their weapons on their back during the assault on Hue. OPPOSITE: South Vietnamese (ARVN) troops held the Citadel and airfield north of the Perfume River, while Allied forces defended the MACV compound and Hue University south of the river.

north of the Perfume River in the Citadel. Just outside the walls of the Citadel to the east was the densely populated district of Gia Hoa. The Citadel was an imposing fortress, covering three square miles with a labyrinth of readily defensible positions protected by an outer wall 30 feet high and up to 90 feet thick. Many parts of the wall were honeycombed with bunkers and tunnels built by Japanese occupiers during World War II. At the south end of the Citadel lay another enclave, the Imperial Palace compound, a square with 20-foot-high walls that measured 800 yards per side.

The 1st ARVN (Army of the Republic of Vietnam) Division, commanded by Brig. Gen. Ngo Quang Truong, was headquartered in the fortified Mang Ca compound in the northeast corner of the Citadel. Unfortunately for Truong, who was regarded by many American advisers as one of the ablest senior commanders in the South Vietnamese armed forces, over half his division was on holiday leave and out of the city when the Tet offensive erupted. Most of Truong's remaining units were spread out along Highway 1 from Hue north toward the DMZ. The closest South Vietnamese unit was the 3rd ARVN Regiment, with three battalions, five miles northwest of Hue. The only combat unit inside the city was the division's Hac Bao Company, known as the Black Panthers, an elite all-volunteer unit that served as the division's reconnaissance and rapid-reaction force. Security within the city was the responsibility of the National Police.

South of the river and linked to the Citadel by the six-span Nguyen Hoang Bridge, over which Highway 1 passed, lay the New City. This modern section was about half the size of the Citadel and included about two-thirds of the city's population. It contained the hospital, provincial prison, Hue University, government administration buildings, and the MACV (U.S. Military Assistance Command Vietnam) compound, which housed 200 American and Australian military advisers to the 1st ARVN Division. The advisers were the only allied military presence in Hue when the battle began. Their lightly fortified compound lay on the eastern edge of the city just south of the Nguyen Hoang Bridge.

The nearest U.S. combat base was at Phu Bai, eight miles south on Highway 1. Phu Bai was a major Marine Corps command post and support facility, home to Task Force X-Ray, a forward headquarters of the storied 1st Marine Division. Commanded by Brig. Gen. Foster LaHue, assistant commander of the 1st Marine Division, the task force consisted of two Marine regimental headquarters and three battalions—the 5th Regiment, with two battalions; and the 1st Regiment, with one battalion. LaHue and most of the troops had only recently arrived in Phu Bai from Da Nang and were still getting acquainted with their area of operations when the attack on Hue began. There were U.S. Army units in the area as well. Two brigades of the elite 1st Air Cavalry Division (Airmobile), including the 7th and 12th Cavalry Regiments, were scattered over a wide area from Phu Bai in the south to Landing Zone (LZ) Jane just below Quang Tri in the north. The 1st Brigade of the famed 101st Airborne Division, recently attached to the 1st Cavalry Division, had recently arrived at Camp Evans, north on Highway 1 between Hue and Quang Tri.

Opposing the allied troops in the region were at least 8,000 well-trained, well-equipped Communist soldiers. The majority were NVA regulars armed with a vast array of weapons, including brand-new AK-47 assault rifles, RPD machine guns, B-40 rocket-propelled grenade launchers, rockets, mortars, and recoilless rifles. The NVA were backed by six Vietcong main force battalions, including the 12th and Hue City Sapper Battalions (a typical VC main force battalion numbered between 300 and 600 veteran, skilled soldiers). The Communists had prepared extensive plans for the assault on Hue, which would be directed by General Tran Van Quang, commander of the B4 (Tri Thien-Hue) Front. The plan called for a division-sized assault on the city while other units cut off access to block allied reinforcements.

With detailed information on civil and military installations within Hue, the Communists divided the city into four tactical areas and prepared a list of 196 specific targets. Communist assault troops received intensive training in urban warfare tactics before the offensive began. Vietcong cadres also prepared detailed lists of "cruel tyrants and reactionary elements" to be rounded up during the early hours of the attack. The list included South Vietnamese government and military officials, civil servants, American civilians, educators, clergy, foreigners, and other so-called "enemies of the people" who were to be relocated into the jungle outside the city once they were apprehended. The Communists were well aware that the bad weather that traditionally accompanied the northeast monsoon season would hamper allied aerial resupply operations and close air support, which would otherwise have given the allies in Hue a significant advantage.

A wave of premature attacks—possibly launched because North Vietnam's calendar differed from South Vietnam's—began shortly after midnight on January 30-31. All five provincial capitals in II Corps and the city of Da Nang in I Corps were attacked. The Vietcong assaults began with mortar and rocket attacks, followed by massed ground assaults by battalion-sized units backed in some areas by NVA regulars. The attacks were not well coordinated, and by daylight almost all the Communist attackers had been driven from their objectives. Although American forces were placed on maximum alert and similar orders were issued to all ARVN units, the allies still responded without any real sense of urgency. Orders canceling leaves came too late or were disregarded. At 3 AM on January 31, NVA and Vietcong forces launched a

countrywide general offensive.

After learning of the premature attacks, Truong still believed the enemy would not attack Hue directly. Accordingly, he positioned his remaining troops around the city to defend outside the urban area. When the Communist attack began, the only regular ARVN troops inside the city were the Black Panther Company, guarding the Tai Loc airstrip at the northwestern corner of the Citadel. Large numbers of Vietcong guerrillas had already infiltrated the city, mingling with the throngs of people who had come to Hue for Tet. In the early hours of January 31, the guerrillas took up positions within the city and waited to link up with NVA and Vietcong assault troops.

At 3:40 AM, the Communists launched a rocket and mortar barrage from the mountains west of the city and followed it with a three-pronged ground assault. A four-man NVA sapper team, dressed in ARVN uniforms, killed the guards and opened the western gate to the Citadel, allowing the lead elements of the 6th NVA Regiment to enter the old city and launch the main attack. As Communist fighters poured into Hue, the 800th and 802nd Battalions of the 6th Regiment rapidly overran most of the Citadel. Truong and his staff held off the attackers at the 1st ARVN Division compound, while the Black Panther Company held its position at the eastern end of the airfield. After the 802nd came close to penetrating the 1st Division compound, Truong ordered the Black Panthers to withdraw from the airfield to bolster his defenses at the division compound. Except for the 1st ARVN Division compound, by dawn of January 31 the NVA 6th Regiment held the entire Citadel, including the Imperial Palace.

Across the Perfume River in southern Hue, much the same situation existed. Allied advisers in the MACV compound awoke in the early-morning hours to the sound of bursting rocket and mortar rounds. Grabbing any weapons that were at hand, the advisers were able to successfully repulse the Communist ground assault on the compound, which lacked the cohesion of the attack against the Citadel. After their initial assault stalled, the 4th NVA Battalion of the 804th NVA Regiment, supported by local guerrilla companies and elements of the Hue City Sapper Battalion, maintained a virtual siege of the compound with mortars, rockets, and automatic-weapons fire.

While fighting raged around the MACV compound, two VC battalions took over the Thua Thien Province headquarters, police station, and other government buildings south of the river. At the same time, the NVA 810th Battalion took up blocking positions on the southern edge of the city to prevent reinforcements from that direction. By dawn, the NVA 4th Regiment controlled all of Hue south of the river except for the MACV compound and the LCU (landing craft utility) ramp on the waterfront northeast of the compound. At dawn on January 31, nearly everyone in the city could see the gold-starred, blue-and-red National Liberation Front flag flying over the Citadel. While Communist troops roamed the streets consolidating their gains, political officers marched with them, reading out names from their blacklists and instructing South Vietnamese and foreigners alike to report to a local school for relocation.

At the same time the Communists were attacking Hue, the Marines in Phu Bai had their hands full. Enemy rockets and mortars struck the airstrip, and enemy infantry units hit Marine and South Vietnamese units in the region. LaHue received reports of enemy strikes all along Highway 1 between the Hai Van Pass and Hue. Altogether, the Communists struck 18 targets. At this point, LaHue had little reliable intelligence on the situation inside the city. All he knew was that the 1st ARVN Division and MACV compound had been attacked. Because of Communist mortaring of the LCU ramp in southern Hue, the allies stopped all river traffic into the city.

With only a tenuous hold on his own headquarters compound, Truong ordered his 3rd Regiment, reinforced by two airborne battalions and a troop of armored cavalry, to fight their way into the Citadel from their positions northwest of the city. After encountering intense small-arms and automatic-weapons fire, the units managed to reach Truong's headquarters, arriving in the late afternoon. Costs were high, including 40 killed and another 91 wounded. Meanwhile, a call

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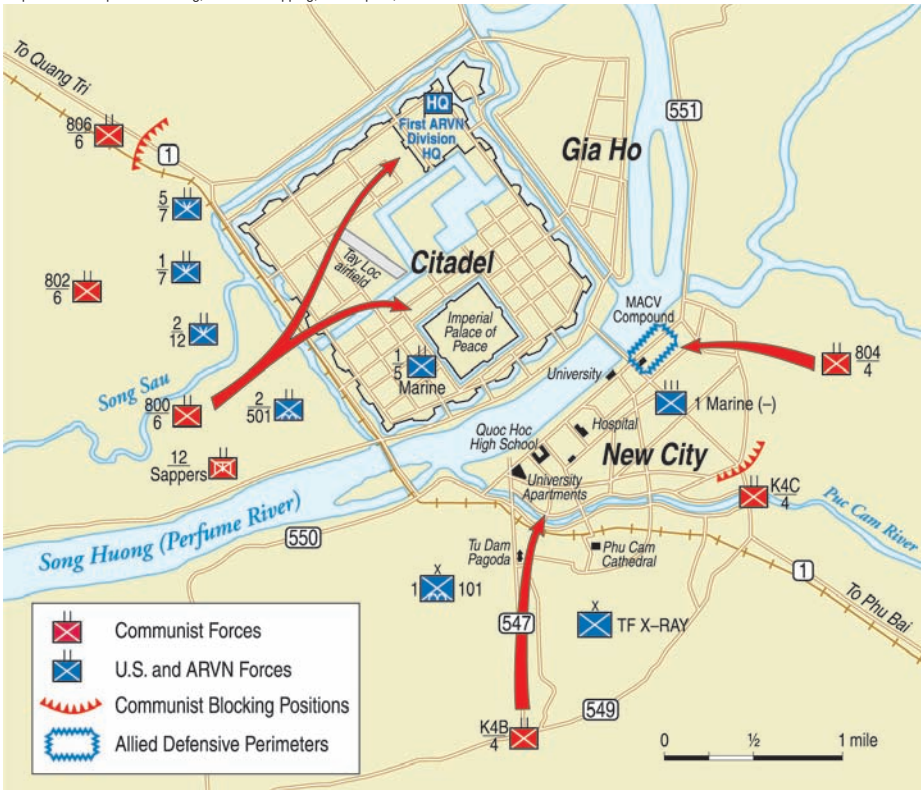

for reinforcements had gone out from the embattled MACV compound, but the plea was lost in the confusion caused by the simultaneous attacks. Lt. Gen. Hoang Xuan Lam, commander of South Vietnamese forces in I Corps, and Lt. Gen. Robert Cushman, III Marine Amphibious Force (III MAF) commander, were unaware of the enemy's true strength inside Hue but were all too aware that reinforcements were needed on both sides of the river.

While Lam and Cushman prepared to reinforce their units in Hue, the Communists moved to prevent those reinforcements from reaching the embattled defenders. The NVA 806th Battalion blocked Highway 1 northwest of Hue, while the 804th and K4B Battalions took up positions in southern Hue and the 810th dug in along Highway 1 south of the modern city. Having received no reliable intelligence to the contrary, LaHue believed only a relatively small Communist force had penetrated Hue as part of a diversionary attack. Thus misled, he sent only one company to deal with the situation. Company A, 1st Battalion, 1st Marines (A/1/1) was ordered to move up

ABOVE: Marines in F Company, 2nd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, blast away at enemy forces around the Citadel on February 16, 1968. OPPOSITE: ARVN soldiers bring in North Vietnamese prisoners at the height of the battle.

Highway 1 from Phu Bai by truck to relieve the surrounded advisers at the MACV enclave.

Heading north, the Marines of A/1/1 were joined by four M48 tanks from the 3rd Tank Battalion. When the convoy crossed the bridge that spanned the Phu Cam Canal into southern Hue, the Marines were hit with a withering cross fire from enemy automatic weapons and B40 rocket fire. The convoy was finally halted by the intense Communist resistance between the canal and the river short of the MACV compound. With Company A pinned down, Lt. Col. Marcus Gravel, battalion commander of 1/1, organized a reaction force made up of himself, officers from his command group, and G Company, 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines. The relief force pushed north up Highway 1, reinforced by two self-propelled 40mm guns. Meeting light resistance, the force linked up with A/1/1 and, with the aid of four tanks and the 40mm guns, the combined Marine force fought its way to the MACV compound, arriving at 3:15 PM. Ten Marines were killed and 30 wounded.

Gravel received orders from LaHue to cross the Perfume River with his two companies and push through to the 1st ARVN Division compound in the Citadel. Leaving Company A behind to help defend the MACV compound, Gravel took Company G, backed by three of the original M48 tanks and several others from the ARVN 7th Cavalry Squadron, and moved out to comply with LaHue's orders. Leaving the tanks on the southern bank of the river to provide direct fire support, Gravel and his small group of Marines attempted to cross the Nguyen Hoang Bridge. Another 10 Marines were killed or wounded as the relief force encountered a hail of machine-gun fire from a position at the north end of the bridge.

Two Marine platoons made it across the bridge and turned left, paralleling the river along the Citadel's southeast wall. They immediately came under heavy fire from AK-47 rifles, machine guns, B40 rockets, and recoilless rifles from the walls of the Citadel. With his outnumbered force pinned down, Gravel was forced to withdraw. After two hours of intense fighting, the company made it back to the bridge, and by 10 PM the 1st Battalion had established defensive positions and a helicopter landing zone near the MACV compound along a stretch of the river. A third of the men in Company G had been killed or wounded.

With Truong fully occupied in the Citadel north of the river, Lam and Cushman agreed that ARVN forces should be responsible for clearing the Citadel and the rest of Hue north of the river, while Task Force X-Ray would take responsibility for the southern part of the city. Since the palace and historical buildings in the city were sacred to the Vietnamese people, the commanders imposed limitations on the use of artillery and close air support to minimize collateral damage, a decision that would lead to difficulties. Eventually, the restrictions would be lifted when it was realized that artillery and air support were needed to dislodge the tenacious Communist defenders from the city.

Cushman moved to reinforce Hue and seal off the enemy inside the city. On February 2, the 1st Air Cavalry Division's 3rd Brigade was given the mission of blocking enemy approaches into the city from the north and west. The brigade airlifted the 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry, into an LZ six miles northwest of Hue on Highway 1. By February 4, the cavalrymen had moved across country from the LZ and established a blocking position on a hill overlooking a valley four miles west of Hue that provided excellent coverage of the main enemy routes into and out of the city.

Meanwhile, the 5th Battalion, 7th Cavalry conducted search-and-clear operations along suspected enemy routes west of Hue. On February 7, they made contact with an entrenched NVA force and tried for 24 hours to expel the Communists. The enemy forces, however, stymied the cavalry's advance with heavy automatic-weapon and mortar fire. For the next 10 days, the two air cavalry battalions engaged in heavy fighting with the entrenched enemy forces. Although they were unable to dislodge their foes, the cavalry units partially blocked the enemy's movement and kept the NVA units from taking part in the battle raging within Hue.

The task of getting allied reinforcements into Hue was made more difficult by a change in the weather on February 2. Temperatures fell into the 50s and heavy rain began falling. Gravel's Marines were ordered to attack and recapture

> Small groups of Marines moved doggedly from house to house, blowing holes in walls with rocket launchers and recoilless rifles, then sending in fire teams and squads to clear each building room by room.

the Thua Thien Province headquarters building and prison, located six blocks west of the MACV enclave. Gravel launched a two-company attack supported by tanks, but the Marines immediately ran into trouble. Heavy sniper fire erupted, along with 57mm recoilless rifle fire, which

knocked out one Marine tank. The assault was stopped cold, with the Marines falling back to their position near the MACV building.

LaHue now realized that he had vastly underestimated the strength of the enemy forces south of the river. He called in Colonel Stanley Hughes, new commander of the 1st Marines, and gave him overall tactical control of U.S. forces in the southern part of the city. Assuming control of the battle, Hughes promised Gravel reinforcements and ordered him to conduct "sweep and clear operations to destroy enemy forces, protect U.S. nationals, and restore that [southern] portion of the city to U.S. control." Accordingly, Gravel ordered Company F, 2/5, to relieve a MACV communications facility near the U.S. consulate that had been surrounded by Vietcong guerrillas. After fighting all afternoon and losing three men killed and 13 wounded, the Marines were unable to reach their objective, taking up night defensive positions and waiting for the morning to renew the attack.

The next day, with additional reinforcements, the Marines finally relieved the MACV radio facility late in the morning. After three more hours of intense fighting, they reached the Hue University campus. During the night, enemy sappers had destroyed the railroad bridge over the Perfume River west of the city but had left untouched the bridge across the Phu Cam Canal. At 11 AM, Company H, 2/5, commanded by Captain Ron Christmas, formed a convoy and crossed the bridge over the canal, backed by two U.S. Army trucks mounted with quad .50-caliber machine guns as well as two Marine "Ontos"' tracked vehicles, each armed with six 106mm recoilless rifles. As the convoy neared the MACV compound, it came under heavy enemy machine-gun and rocket fire, and it responded with heavy fire of its own. Soon, H Company joined Gravel at his position near the MACV building. The NVA and VC gunners continued to pour machine-gun and rocket fire into the Marine positions. At the end of the day, two Marines had been killed and 34 wounded.

On the afternoon of February 2, Hughes decided to move his command group from Phu Bai into Hue, where he could more directly control the battle. Accompanying Hughes in the convoy was Lt. Col. Ernest Cheatham, commander of the 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines, who had been sitting frustrated in Phu Bai while three of his companies—F, G, and H—fought in Hue under Gravel's command. Hughes quickly established his command post in the MACV compound. The forces at his disposal included Cheatham's three companies from 2/5 and Gravel's depleted battalion consisting of A Company, 1/1; a provisional company made up of one platoon of B Company, 1/1; and several dozen cooks and clerks who had been sent to the front to fight alongside the infantry.

Hughes directed Gravel to anchor the left flank with his battalion to keep the main supply route open. He then ordered Cheatham's three companies to attack south from the university toward the provincial headquarters, telling Cheatham to "attack through the city and clean the NVA out." Cheatham devised a plan for his battalion to move west along the river from the MACV building, attacking with Companies F and H in the lead and G Company in reserve. He soon found that the plan, though simple, was extremely difficult to execute. The distance from the MACV enclave to the confluence of the Perfume River and the Phu Cam Canal was almost 11 city blocks, each of which the enemy had transformed into a fortress that would have to be cleared building by building, room by room. The last time American Marines had been involved in urban combat had been in Seoul during the Korean War in 1950.

The Marines launched their advance toward the treasury building, but made slow progress. Each time they tried to advance, they were hit with a withering array of mortar, rocket, machine-gun, and small-arms fire from prepared positions in the buildings to their front. The Marines simply did not have enough men to deal with the entrenched enemy. By the evening of February 3, they had made little progress and were taking increasing casualties. The next morning, Hughes met with his two battalion commanders. He told Cheatham to continue the attack and Gravel to secure Cheatham's left flank with his battalion, which now had only one company left after the previous day's fighting. As Gravel ordered his Marines into position, they first had to secure the Joan of Arc school and church. His men immediately ran into heavy enemy fire and began fighting house to house. Eventually, they secured the school, but they continued taking fire from enemy

gunners in the church. Reluctantly, Gravel gave the order to fire on the church, and Marines pounded the building with mortars and 106mm recoilless rifle fire, finally killing off or driving away the defenders.

With Gravel's men in position to screen his left flank as far as the Phu Cam Canal, Cheatham began his attack at 7 am on February 4. It took 24 hours of heavy fighting just to reach the treasury building. Attacking the rear of the building after blowing holes through adjacent courtyard walls with 106mm recoilless rifle fire, the Marines finally recaptured the treasury. Faced with rapidly deteriorating weather, the Marines found themselves in a nightmarish room-by-room, building-by-building struggle to clear an 11-block area south of the Perfume River. Small groups of Marines moved doggedly from house to house, blowing holes in walls with rocket launchers and recoilless rifles, then sending in fire teams and squads to clear each building room by room.

Progress was slow and costly. On February 5, Christmas's H/2/5 Marines recaptured the Thua Thien provincial capital building after a particularly vicious battle. Using tanks and 106mm recoil-

less rifles mounted on mechanical mules (flat-bedded, self-propelled carriers about the size of a jeep), the Marines advanced against heavy automatic-weapon, rocket, and mortar fire. Using their own mortars and CS gas, a crowd-control agent, the Marines overwhelmed the defenders in mid-afternoon. The provincial headquarters had served as the command post of the NVA's 4th Regiment, and with its loss the Communist defense south of the river began to falter.

Despite the Marines' quick adaptation to street fighting, it was not until February 11 that the 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines reached the confluence of the Perfume River and the Phu Cam Canal. Two days later, the Marines crossed to the western suburbs of southern Hue, aiming to link up with troopers of the 1st Cavalry and 101st Airborne who were moving toward the city. By February 14, most of Hue City south of the river was in American hands, but mopping-up operations would take another 12 days due to continued sniper, rocket, and mortar fire. The fight for southern Hue cost the Marines 38 dead and 320 wounded; the bodies of over 1,000 NVA and VC soldiers were strewn about the city south of the river.

While the Marines fought house to house to retake the southern part of the city, heavy fighting north of the river continued. Despite the efforts of the American units trying to seal off Hue from outside reinforcement, Communist soldiers and supplies continued to flow into the Citadel from the west and north and even on boats coming down the river. On February 1, the 2nd ARVN Airborne Battalion and the 7th ARVN Cavalry recaptured the Tay Loc airfield, but only after suffering severe casualties and the loss of 12 armored personnel carriers. Later that day, Marine helicopters ferried part of the 4th Battalion, 2nd ARVN Regiment, into the Citadel from Dong Ha. Once on the ground, the ARVN attempted to advance but found the going difficult. By February 4, their advance north of the river had essentially stalled among the houses, alleys, and narrow streets adjacent to the Citadel wall, leaving the Communists still in possession of the Imperial Palace and most of the surrounding area.

On the night of February 6-7, NVA troops counterattacked and forced the ARVN troops to pull back to the airfield. At the same time, the NVA rushed additional reinforcements into the city. Truong responded by redeploying his units, ordering the 3rd ARVN Regiment to move into the

ABOVE: A bogus NVA photo purports to show an assault on the Marines at Khe Sanh. The terrain is too gentle, and such attacks usually came at night to avoid American artillery fire. OPPOSITE: A Navy corpsman tends to a wounded Marine of 2nd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment. The Marines suffered nearly 1,000 casualties during the battle.

Citadel and take up positions around division headquarters. By the evening of February 7, Truong's forces inside the Citadel included four airborne battalions, the Black Panthers, two armored cavalry squadrons, the 3rd ARVN Regiment, the 4th Battalion of the 2nd ARVN Regiment, and a company from the 1st ARVN Regiment. Despite the heavy buildup of forces, Truong's units still failed to make any headway against the dug-in North Vietnamese, who had burrowed deeply into the walls and the tightly packed buildings. It seemed that nothing could stem the flow of Communist reinforcements moving into the city.

With his forces stalled, Truong appealed to the Americans for help. On February 10, Cushman ordered LaHue to send a Marine battalion to the Citadel. The next day, after LaHue ordered Major Robert Thompson's 1st Battalion, 5th Marines to move to the northern part of the city, Marine helicopters lifted two platoons of Company B/1/5 into the ARVN headquarters complex inside the Citadel. A day later, Company A and five M48 tanks, along with a third platoon from Company B, made the journey by landing craft across the river from the MACV compound along the moat to the east of the Citadel through a breach in the northeast wall.

The next day, Company C joined the battalion as well. Once inside the Citadel, the Marines were ordered to relieve the 1st ARVN Airborne task force in the southeastern sector. At the same time, two battalions of Vietnamese Marines moved into the southwest corner of the Citadel with orders to sweep west. Aware of the allied buildup, the Communist forces prepared to hold their positions at all costs. The next day, after he conferred with South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van Thieu, Lam authorized allied forces to use whatever weapons were necessary to expel the enemy from the Citadel—only the Imperial Palace remained off limits to artillery and air support.

The mission of the 1/5 Marines was to push their way down the east wall of the Citadel toward the Perfume River, with the Imperial Palace on their right. At 8:15 AM on February 13, with heavy rain falling, Company A moved out and followed the wall in the direction of a distinctive archway tower. As the Marines neared the tower, NVA soldiers opened up with rockets and automatic weapons from concealed positions dug into the base of the tower. The thick masonry of the tower's walls protected the Communist defenders from the heavy fire directed at it. The fresh Marine unit had just arrived, and the men found themselves unfamiliar with city fighting, surrounded by houses, gardens, buildings two and three stories high, and paved roads littered with abandoned vehicles.

After losing 15 killed and 40 wounded, the Marine advance against the south wall stalled; Thompson pulled A Company back and sent in B and C Companies. Once more the Marines were raked by intense small-arms, machine-gun, and rocket fire that seemed to come from every direction. Backed by air strikes, naval gunfire, and artillery support, the Marines inched forward. The fighting within the Citadel proved even more savage than the Marines had encountered in the battle for southern Hue. That night, Thompson requested continued artillery strikes to soften up the area for the next day's assault.

At 8 AM on February 14, the Marines renewed the attack, but made almost no headway against the entrenched Communist defenders. Not until the next day, after Company D, 1/5 was inserted into the fighting by boat, was the wall tower finally recaptured. Six more Marines were killed in action and more than 50 wounded. That night the NVA retook the tower for a short time, but D Company, commanded by Captain Myron Harrington, counterattacked and reclaimed it.

On the morning of February 16, Thompson's Marines again advanced along the Citadel's southeastern wall. From that point until February 22, the fighting seesawed back and forth while much of the Citadel was pounded to rubble by close air support and artillery. Bitter hand-to-hand fighting erupted on many occasions, the defenders occupying row after row of single-story, thick-walled masonry houses jammed close together and backed by solid walls riddled with spider holes and other fighting positions. M48 tanks and Ontos tracked vehicles found it extremely difficult to maneuver in the narrow streets and alleys of the Citadel. The Marines' 90mm tank guns were ineffective against the concrete and stone buildings, their shells often ricocheting off the thick walls. The tank crews switched to concrete-piercing fused shells that resulted in excellent penetration. From that point, the tanks proved invaluable. The savage block-by-block fighting was reducing Hue to ruins. Many enemy troops killed or wounded by the Marines lay where they had fallen, trapped in the rubble of homes and courtyards, attracting rats and dogs. Because of health concerns, the Marines formed details to bury the enemy dead as rapidly as possible.

By February 17, the Marines of 1/5 had suffered 47 killed and 240 wounded in five days of fighting, the battle so intense that U.S. Navy medics and doctors had a difficult time keeping up with the casualties. The next day, his depleted battalion exhausted and almost out of ammunition, Thompson rested his troops in preparation for a renewal of the attack. The following morning, 1/5 began inching forward toward the Imperial Palace, paying dearly for every inch of ground taken.

While the Marines were fighting their way toward the palace, a South Vietnamese Marine task force entered the battle. Beginning at 9 AM on February 14, these fresh troops launched their attack from an area south of the 1st ARVN Division headquarters, moving in a westerly direction. Ordered to make a turning movement to the left in order to take the southwest sector of the Citadel, they made little progress, encountering fierce enemy resistance as the two sides engaged in vicious house-to-house fighting. In two days, the South Vietnamese Marines advanced fewer than 500 yards. North of the Vietnamese Marine units, the 3rd ARVN Regiment, in the northwest sector of the Citadel, was having problems as well. On February 14, Communist forces broke out of the salient west of the Tay Loc airfield and cut off the 1st Battalion, 3rd ARVN Regiment in the Citadel's western corner. It would take two days of bitter fighting for the ARVN to break the encirclement.

The Communist forces were having problems of their own. On the night of February 14, a U.S. Marine forward observer, working with ARVN units inside the Citadel and monitoring enemy radio frequencies, learned that the NVA was planning a battalion-sized attack through the west gate of the Citadel. He alertly called in fire from Marine 155mm howitzers and naval gunfire on preplanned targets around the west gate and the moat bridge leading to it, catching the NVA battalion coming across the moat bridge. A high-ranking NVA officer and a large number of reinforcements were killed. U.S. intelligence then learned that the NVA/VC were staging out of a base camp 12 miles west of the city and that reinforcements from that area were entering the Citadel using the west gate. Acting on this information, elements of the 1st Air Cavalry Division launched coordinated attacks on the city from their blocking positions to the west. On February 21, the 1st Cavalry troopers moved up and successfully sealed off the western wall of the fortress, depriving the defenders of incoming supplies and reinforcements and precipitating a rapid deterioration

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Twisting THE LION'S TAIL

BY ERIC NIDEROST

For the long-suffering citizens of London, the sight of a Dutch fleet sailing impudently up the Medway River was the last in a string of natural and man-made disasters. Panic ruled the streets.

Lieutenant-Admiral Michiel de Ruyter was a man of action, but he could be formidable even in repose On June 7, 1667, de Ruyter was sitting in the great cabin of the Dutch flagship *Harderwijk* listening stolidly while Cornelius de Witt finally revealed his plans for a raid on England to a group of assembled naval officers. De Witt was the brother of Grand Pensionary (chief of state) Johan de Witt, so his words carried a great deal of weight. When the expedition left the Netherlands, the commanders had been purposely left in the dark, for reasons of secrecy. Now all would be revealed.

De Witt read the secret orders, and though they were technically written in the name of the Estates General, the mastermind of the plan was de Witt himself. The proposal was so bold and daring that it left many of the Dutch mariners astounded. They were to sail into the Thames estuary, enter the Medway River, and proceed to the great dock at Chatham, where many of England's proudest warships were laid up. Once they arrived at their objective, the raiders were to sink or burn as many ships as they could, taking care to carry off the best ships as prizes. Such a raid would strike a heavy blow to England's power and prestige, since the Royal Navy was the island nation's pride. Chastised and humbled by defeat, the English might accept a peace on Dutch terms.

It was a plan that was easy to write down on paper but formidable to execute on the high seas. The Thames estuary was full of treacherous currents and dangerous sandbars, notoriously tricky to navigate. In addition, the Eng-

The English flagship *Royal Charles,* center, her coat of arms clearly visible on the stern, is captured by the Dutch during their daring raid on Chatham shipyard in 1667. Painting by Peter van de Velde.

lish had several forts in the area, and the entrance to the Medway was bound to be patrolled by guard ships that would bar their way. The Medway was governed by the ebb and flow of tides from the Thames estuary, which necessarily meant that Dutch progress to Chatham would be very slow—perhaps lasting days. While the Dutch struggled up the Medway, the English would be given time to mount an adequate defense.

The Dutch officers who listened to de Witt raised all these objections, loudly expressing their doubts in no uncertain terms. It seemed foolhardy, even suicidal, to strike so deeply into enemy territory, the officers objected. De Witt looked at de Ruyter, and it was plain by his expression that he, too, had doubts about the operation. De Ruyter was the greatest living Dutch admiral, a man respected and loved by his men, who had given him the nickname Bestevaer, or Grandfather, in token of their affection. If he accepted the mission, however reluctantly, the others would go along. The admiral, a stocky man with thick jowls and a slightly upturned mustache, decided to give his blessing to the plan. "Orders are orders," he declared flatly. The other officers were suitably influenced by de Rutyer's no-nonsense approach to the situation. By the next day, most of them were positively enthusiastic about the enterprise. The great Medway raid would proceed on schedule.

The Medway raid was the climax of what historians would come to know as the Second Anglo-Dutch War. The First Anglo-Dutch War, which took place from 1652 to 1654, ended in an English

Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

triumph. For the next decade, there was an uneasy peace, but it was only a matter of time before England and the Netherlands would be at war again. The Anglo-Dutch conflicts were rooted in the ever-growing commercial rivalry between two great maritime nations whose prosperity was founded on trade and territorial expansion. The Dutch insisted on the right to trade with anyone, free of any restrictions, yet they jealously guarded their own colonies and excluded outsiders. The English coveted Dutch trade routes and colonies, while the Dutch rightly looked on the English as ruthless business competitors.

England's King Charles II genuinely appreciated the way the Dutch had given him refuge during his exile in the 1650s, but he was not about to let personal sentiment interfere with national interests. His brother James, Duke of York, and a number of other nobles had founded the Royal African Company to exploit the riches of the great continent, knowing that they would be clashing head-on with Dutch interests already established there. In 1664, the Royal African Company boldly captured the Dutch colonies and trading posts along the African coast, even though the two nations were technically at peace. The English also seized New Amsterdam in America, which had long been a thorn in the side of their own colonial ambitions. They renamed the colony New York. These aggressive acts moved the English and Dutch ever closer to war.

The Dutch finally decided to act, dispatching de Ruyter to Africa to retake what the English had so impudently stolen. The English public clamored for war, their passions stoked by a steady stream of scurrilous anti-Dutch broadsides and pamphlets. Not all English grievances were trumped up. In 1623, a group of English traders had been tortured and killed by Dutch troops on Amboina in the Spice Islands (now Indonesia). The Dutch government later apologized for the massacre and offered compensation to survivors, but many Englishmen still hungered for revenge. Charles II heeded the bellicose mood that was sweeping the country and declared war on the Netherlands in May 1665.

The Second Anglo-Dutch War was going to prove different from the first conflict. At first, the Royal Navy garnered fresh laurels at the Battle of Lowestoft, just off the English coast. The Duke of York's fleet administered a crushing defeat on the Dutch, who lost 30 ships, 5,000 men, and three full admirals. But sometimes history can be altered by trivial events. James went to bed early, and his aides were made of less stern stuff. They vacillated when they should have ordered a pursuit of the Dutch fleet's broken remnants. The opportunity for total victory was lost, and the Dutch were allowed to lick their wounds and live to fight another day.

As the months went on, England was distracted by a series of unprecedented disasters. The first occurred in the summer of 1665 when bubonic plague, the dreaded Black Death of the Middle Ages, returned with a vengeance. The wealthy escaped to the countryside, while the poor died in droves in London, the pestilential city. By the time the plague finally abated, nearly 100,000 Londoners—perhaps one-quarter of the population—had succumbed. Noted diarist Samuel Pepys observed that he could walk down normally busy Lombard Street and not meet 20 people along the way. Church bells rang incessantly for the dead.

London had hardly recovered from one disaster when it fell victim to another. In the summer of 1666, a huge fire started by sparks from a bakery blowing onto the thatched roof of a nearby inn lasted four days and consumed a good part of the city. When it was over, some 4,000 Londoners were dead and 13,000 houses, churches, libraries, and hospitals were in ashes. "You would have thought that it had been Doomsday," said a stunned survivor. In retrospect, the fire helped to create a relatively cleaner, healthier—at least by 17th-century standards—capital city, but in the short run it was a disaster, "a most horrid, malicious, bloody flame," Pepys called it.

The year 1666 was also a mixed blessing on the war front. The Royal Navy gave a good account of itself in the celebrated Four Days' Battle that June, but the English line was broken by the Dutch under de Ruyter and they were forced to withdraw. Charles II had famously declared that "it is upon the navy that the safety, honor, and welfare of the realm chiefly depend." Few Englishmen would dispute that statement, but Parliament was reluctant to give the Navy the funds it desperately needed to survive. It was literally a "penny wise, pound foolish" policy that ultimately led to maritime disaster. All agreed on the necessity of a navy, but no one wanted to pay for it. The Navy could barely meet its expenses, yet most Englishmen resented the excise taxes levied to support the fleet

The Royal Navy's funding problems, though acute, were only part of the story. The Navy Board was responsible for the building and repair of Royal Navy ships, as well as keeping them adequately supplied. But the naval administration was notoriously corrupt, even by the loose standards of the 17th century. Contractors often overcharged the government and supplied inferior goods. Bribery and rigged contracts were commonplace, and naval supplies—even heavy ordnance—were stolen and resold. In the early years of the king's reign, naval commissions were purchased by the gentry, many of whom had little or no experience of the sea. But it was the common sailor who suffered most of all. Living conditions aboard English ships were Spartan at best, appalling at worst. Food—what there was of it—grew moldy and weevil-infested. Water quickly went bad, and the lack of fresh vegetables led to scurvy. Many of the men were pressed, or forced, to serve in the Navy by being virtually kidnapped off the street. Pepys, who was clerk of the acts for the Navy Board, detested the practice, considering it "a great tyranny," but it continued unabated.

But even the most willing mariners found life hard, especially when they were not paid for years. "Keep the pay, keep the man," sailors said

derisively. The government tried to fix the problem by issuing "tickets," promissory coupons that were supposed to be legal tender. After a time, most merchants refused to accept them. Naval families became destitute, and some experienced real starvation. Mariners were understandably bitter about how they were being treated, becoming reluctant to risk their lives in the service of so stingy a government. Morale plummeted, and men deserted at the first opportunity. Not all naval administrators were greedy or incompetent. Pepys, now known mainly for his famous diary, which vividly details both the events of the day and his numerous amorous affairs, was a patriotic, hard-working man who did his best to help introduce badly needed reforms and regulate accounting procedures to reduce corruption. But actual reform took years to achieve, and England was about to face a more immediate crisis.

In the spring of 1667, King Charles II found that funds allocated for the Navy were quickly drying up. There was simply no money to maintain the fleet at its current levels, much less expand it for war operations. The king could have negotiated with Parliament, but he was reluctant to do so. The lawmakers might want to reduce the royal prerogative and weaken his powers as England's monarch. (A generation earlier, the lawmakers had certainly weakened his father's powers, chopping off his head and instituting a short-lived commonwealth under Puritan leader Oliver Cromwell.) The great fire of London had also devastated the English business community, a chief source of funds. The only alternative was to reduce the Royal Navy by laying up most of the capital ships, mothballing them at the Chatham dockyard in Kent until funds might become available again. Crews, which numbered in the hundreds on larger vessels, would be reduced or dismissed entirely. Little thought was given to the possibility of a Dutch invasion.

The king began a series of peace negotiations with the Dutch at Breda, which further reinforced English complacency. The English did not think that the Dutch would attack while meetings were in progress. Charles also forged a secret connection with Louis XIV, the powerful king of France. He hoped that French pressure might make the Dutch think twice about any offensive action.

In the meantime, reports coming out of Holland indicated that a large Dutch fleet had recently set sail, destination unknown. This news prompted Charles to issue an order to the lord lieutenants of the maritime counties of the eastern and southeastern coasts to put their militias on full alert. On June 6, the Duke of York ordered the Navy Board to issue an alarm to the dockyard at Chatham. As the country's premier dockyard and shipbuilding facility, Chatham was vital to the nation's defense. In charge of the dockyard was Resident Commissioner Peter Pett, a man whose father, Phineas, had designed and built many of England's finest vessels. Upon hearing the warning, Pett ordered that "all persons in this river [Medway] strictly look to their duties." Admirable sentiments, but Pett seems not to have done much for the next three days. On June 9, 30 Dutch ships were spotted in the Thames estuary. There was a distinct and ever-growing possibility that the raiders were headed for Chatham. Pett immediately sent a letter to the Navy Board lamenting the fact that he had no senior officers to assist him in the defense.

The next day, King Charles ordered George Monck, Duke of Albemarle, to go to Chatham and organize the defenses there. Albemarle was an old soldier, someone who would not be prone to panic (as Pett seemed to be). This was fortunate, because widespread unease, if not absolute panic, had begun to sweep the country. Pepys, going down the Thames to Gravesend, encountered many refugee boats hurriedly sailing in the opposite direction. As he put it, "I met several vessels in my going down, loaded with the goods of the people of Gravesend. Such was their fright." Sailors' wives marched the streets crying, "This comes of your not paying our husbands; now your work is undone."

Although wild rumors probably inflated its danger, the Dutch fleet was certainly formidable. There were 62 ships of the line, or frigates, about 15 smaller ships, and about a dozen fireships, vessels that were deliberately set ablaze and cast loose in the enemy's direction. Fire was a great

It was said that during the raid English voices were heard on Dutch ships, gleefully crying, "We did heretofore fight for tickets; now we fight for dollars!"

The Bridgeman Art Library

ABOVE: The burning of Sheerness by the Dutch fleet. Painting by Willem Schellinks. OPPOSITE LEFT: Johan De Witt, Dutch chief of state. OPPOSITE RIGHT: Admiral Cornelius De Witt.

danger in the age of wooden ships, and the presence of a fireship could cause great havoc in an enemy battle line. The Dutch raiding fleet was organized into three squadrons. The first was commanded by de Ruyter, the second by Lieutenant-Admiral Aert Jenesse van Nes, and the third by Lieutenant-Admiral Baron Willem Joseph van Ghent.

Although de Ruyter's fame overshadowed him, van Ghent was the real mastermind of the operation. It was he who did all the operational planning, which included landings by Dutch marines. The Dutch marines were the first in early modern European history to be used in amphibious operations. Van Ghent had once commanded them, but during the Medway raid they were under an English renegade named Colonel Dolman. Once ashore, they would attack enemy positions and seize enemy goods. Dolman was not the only turncoat in the expedition. In fact, there were a number of English sailors aboard the Dutch ships, ready and willing to pilot the raiders though the treacherous sandbars and shoals. It was said that during the raid English voices were heard on Dutch ships, gleefully crying, "We did heretofore fight for tickets; now we fight for dollars!" The English government's short-sighted fiscal policies were bearing bitter fruit.

Map © Philip Schwartzberg, Meridian Mapping, Minneapolis, MN

The third Dutch squadron under Admiral van Ghent arrived off Sheerness around noon on Monday, June 10. Sheerness is located on Sheppey Isle, a small island just off the mouth of the Medway as the river enters the Thames estuary. Sheerness was home to a new fort that commanded an excellent view of the river mouth. Unfortunately, it was only half built. According to one story, angry workmen had deliberately walked off the job because they had not been paid. The overall defense of Sheerness had been entrusted to Sir Edward Spragge, a doughty old soldier of proven ability. But Spragge had little to work with—just the partially built fort, the frigate *Unity,* and a handful of ketches and fireships. The garrison was also unreliable and able to bolt at a moment's notice. The Sheerness fort boasted 16 cannons, but they had been poorly mounted on soft soil. When they discharged, their carriages were driven into the ground, rendering them incapable of further use. As a stopgap solution, some wooden planks had been hastily thrust under the carriages to take the recoil.

The Dutch decided to attack about 5 o'clock that afternoon. Captain Jan van Braakel in *Vrede* was to lead the assault, accompanied by two other warships. Van Braakel was to bombard the fort after sailing as close to shore as he could. Once he opened the attack, the rest of the squadron was to follow in quick succession, pounding the English fort into rubble. While the British were occupied with this artillery duel, Dutch marines would be put ashore to take the fort by land. As he engaged the fort, van Braakel noticed that *Unity* and some English fireships and ketches were positioned nearby. *Unity* fired a broadside at the approaching Dutch, who responded by launching a blazing fireship of their own.

Unity saw the blazing hulk bearing down on her and quickly decided that discretion was the better part of valor. *Unity* beat a hasty retreat up the Medway, the English fireships and ketches following close behind. Sheerness Fort was on its own. Dutch cannons pummeled the fort, pockmarking its half-finished masonry with a steady hail of iron shot. One Englishman was killed outright, severely unnerving the gun crews. A cannonball smashed into another man, tearing off his leg and thigh. Blood poured from the jagged wound, spreading gore all over the parapet as the other gunners looked on in horror. A rumor went through the ranks like wildfire—there was no surgeon available; anyone who was wounded would surely die. This idle rumor triggered a stampede, in which all

FAMOUS DIARIST SAMUEL PEPYS, FATHER OF THE ROYAL NAVY

Samuel Pepys is best known for the diary he wrote from 1660 to 1669. Because it was never intended for publication, the diary is frank and even ribald. He wrote magnificent eyewitness accounts of such events as the black plague and the fire of London, but modern readers remember him more for his erotic pursuits. In one famous passage, he admits that his wife once caught him making love to another woman.

But Pepys was much more than just a Don Juan in a curly wig. He was also a great naval administrator, whose tireless efforts helped create a powerful and professional Royal Navy. Born in 1633, he was the son of a tailor, but was lucky enough to receive a good education. Although his family was of modest means, his cousin was Edward Montague, the Earl of Sandwich.

With Montague's patronage, Pepys was appointed clerk of the acts for the Navy Board. The Navy Board consisted of three commissioners and three civil servants, including a treasurer/comptroller, surveyor, and clerk of the acts. As clerk, Pepys was technically a recording secretary, keeping minutes of board meetings, but over time he realized that he could also be influential in setting naval policy.

Pepys was not averse to taking "presents," which might be considered bribes today but were commonplace in the era. But he detested the kind of inbred corruption and inefficiency he saw in the Navy, and he did all in his power to help correct these abuses. He did not always succeed, but he never ceased trying.

Pepys distinguished himself from his contemporaries by actually learning about the industry he was about to enter—and in 17th-century England, the Royal Navy was an industry. Shipbuilders, sail makers, rope makers, victuallers (food and drink providers), and slop-suppliers (sailors' clothing) all depended on Navy contacts. These contracts were often poorly written, allowing for overpricing and shoddy goods. Pepys combated the abuses.

Not content with being a mere clerk, he learned about shipbuilding, rope making, and the best ways to measure timber. Pepys soon discovered that although King Charles II had a genuine love of the sea and ships, he had no comprehensive plan for funding the Navy. Charles was intelligent, but he was too self-indulgent to work hard on anything for very long. The pleasure-loving monarch didn't want to deal with Parliament, and Parliament was notoriously parsimonious.

In the 1670s, James, Duke of York, was forced to resign as Lord High Admiral because he was a Catholic. Charles appointed Admiralty commissioners to replace his brother and created the post of secretary of the admiralty for Pepys. To have an effective

but seven men took to their heels. The brave seven remained at their posts, working the guns as best they could, but it was clear the fort would soon fall. Around 800 Dutch marines under the renegade Colonel Dorman landed about a mile away without opposition. The loyal seven were forced to abandon their posts, leaving Sheerness Fort to the enemy.

A small party of Dutch seamen was the first to actually enter Sheerness Fort. Captain Cornelis Gerrits Vos, master of the yacht *Jonge Prinz,* launched a longboat and landed well before the marines arrived. One of his first acts was to haul down the British Union flag and replace it with the Dutch colors. (Vos later received 100 ducats from the Admiralty of the Maas for his courage and initiative.) The raiders were gratified by their victory, made sweeter by the enormous amount of valuable stores they found within the fort. There was sawn timber, masts, spars, stockpiles of iron and brass, and barrels of gunpowder, resin, and tar—the latter two items crucial in shipbuilding and maintenance. The stores were removed as booty, and the fort's guns were taken as well. As a final vengeful measure, the fort itself was demolished. The previous year, an English raiding force had landed on the Dutch island of Terschelling and disgraced themselves by burning and looting the fishermen's houses they found there. It was an incident that would long be remembered by the Dutch, who were at pains to prove that they were more civilized than their island enemies. For that reason, strict orders were given for the Dutch sailors and marines to refrain from looting.

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ABOVE: Dutch troopers storm Fort Sheerness in the mouth of the Medway at the beginning of their raid. OPPOSITE: The sinuous route followed by de Ruyter's ships illustrates the great risks the Dutch took in going up the Medway to Chatham.

For some Dutch crew members of *Vrede,* the temptation was too great, and the sailors plundered the deserted homes, bringing back all the booty they could carry. In fairness to the Dutch, the looting at Sheerness was the only black mark in a raid that generally respected private property. It was said that some Scottish and English troops, ostensibly sent to protect lives and property, did more looting than the enemy. In the meantime, the Duke of Albemarle had his hands full organizing an adequate defense. He arrived at Gravesend accompanied by a swarm of courtiers whom Pepys viewed with a certain middle-class contempt. To Pepys, there were "a great many idle lords and gentlemen with their pistols and fooleries." When Albemarle arrived at Chatham in the early morning hours of Tuesday, June 11, he found the dockyard in a considerable state of disarray.

Panic was sweeping Chatham, and of 800 dockworkers only a dozen men still remained. Albemarle found the remainder "so distracted by fear, that I could have little or no service from them." There were few boats available to transport troops or to tow the large warships that lay at Chatham. Chatham's last remaining defense was an 800-yard iron chain with six-inch links that stretched across the river at Gillingham. The chain was suspended on floating platforms and oper-

Navy spokesman in Parliament, it was arranged that Pepys be elected a member representing Castle Rising in Norfolk. In April 1675, he gave a speech in the House of Commons about the state of the Navy, and in April 1677, he gave another speech urging Parliament to vote enough money to build 30 new ships. Parliament was usually a tough sell, but he convinced members to vote for the necessary 600,000 pounds for the project. It was a personal triumph for the low-born Pepys.

Pepys was also instrumental in the establishment of the Royal Mathematical School at Christ's Hospital, which trained 60 boys a year in navigation. These youths would then go on to become officers in both the Royal Navy and on merchant ships. But his greatest success in reform came in December 1677, when he proposed that no young man be appointed lieutenant until he had served for three years, received a certificate from his captain, and passed an examination on navigation and seamanship in the Navy Office. Before this time, a noble pedigree was considered more important than professionalism, and the service contained many aristocratic fops and incompetents, men who might be brave in battle but were not really qualified for positions of responsibility and skill. To his credit, King Charles backed Pepys's plan, and the first qualifying examinations were held the very next year.

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Pepys was appalled by the Medway raid, and for a time he was fearful that many heads would roll—perhaps even his own. He noted gloomily that "I do believe it will cost blood to answer for these miscarriages." But the Royal Navy recovered quickly from the Medway raid, and by the 1670s it was again strong and powerful. Pepys himself served as a Navy administrator until 1688 but resigned after William III replaced James II in the Glorious Revolution. In spite of some ups and downs in their service, Pepys felt loyal to the Stuarts.

Pepys lived in a comfortable retirement at Clapham until his death in 1703. Today he is held in high esteem by naval historians as a man who laid the foundations of Royal Navy greatness, and by readers of English literature as a nonpareil diarist and sexual adventurer. □

ated by pulleys, but the sheer weight of the chain caused it to dip below the waterline some nine feet. It was feared that shallow-draft Dutch ships might slip across it across unimpeded, so the ponderous links had to be readjusted.

Two guardships, *Charles V* and *Matthias,* were positioned above the chain to bring their broadsides against any Dutch ship that attempted to cross over. *Monmouth,* with 66 guns, was moored in such a way as to bring her guns to bear in the gap between the other two ships' fields of fire. *Unity,* which provided additional firepower, was stationed below the chain. In the meantime, de Witt and van Ghent decided to push on to Chatham. Everyone was in high spirits; the raid was succeeding beyond all expectations. More than a dozen English vessels were moored at Chatham, including some of the proudest ships in the Royal Navy. The most tempting prize was *Royal Charles,* a 1,250-ton, three-decker ship that had carried King Charles back from exile in 1660. She had been the English flagship in several ensuing naval battles and was the very symbol of Britannia's mastery of the seas.

It was decided that Captain Thomas Tobiaz, an Irishman in Dutch service, would lead an advance party up the Medway River. This party would consist of three frigates, four armed yachts, and two fireships. The rest of the squadron would follow closely. Tobiaz left Sheerness about 6 AM on Wednesday, June 12. The entire Dutch force was strung out in a single-file, line-astern formation, in part because of the narrowness of the river. As yet, there was no serious opposition to the raiders. The British Army was in embryonic form. Parliament distrusted standing armies as possible instruments of royal tyranny, and kept a wary eye on any attempts to expand it. There were few truly professional regiments, and those that did exist were mainly part of the king's household troops such as the Lord General's Regiment of Foot Guards, later the Coldstream Guards. These professional soldiers were scattered about the country. In their place, a heavy reliance fell on the county militias, few of which could be counted on to stand up in a real confrontation.

Mary Evans Picture Library

The Dutch progress up the Medway was slow but steady, but soon they found themselves blocked by the Gillingham chain. While van Ghent and de Witt debated what to do next, they received an unexpected offer by Captain Jan van Braakel, master of *Vrede.* Van Braakel was under something of a cloud because he had allowed his men to forage and loot on Sheppey Isle. He had been put under arrest, and now was confined to the *Agatha.* Chafing under close confinement and eager to redeem himself, van Braakel offered to use *Vrede* as a kind of decoy to draw English cannon fire. He would sail toward the chain first, allowing the two Dutch fireships to come behind him and lend support. De Witt and Van Ghent reluctantly agreed—there seemed to be little alternative.

Once van Braakel was aboard *Vrede,* he got under way at once. The English guardships commenced firing, supported by shore batteries that had been hastily put in place a day or two before. *Vrede* weathered the iron gauntlet, but one more obstacle remained before reaching the chain—the 44-gun *Unity.* Instead of slugging it out with the English ship, van Braakel did the unexpected—he came alongside and boarded her. *Unity* was crewed by 150 men, but most of them were civilians—Thames watermen who had been pressed into service and scarcely knew one end of a sword or pike from the other. It was debatable if they even knew how to serve the cannons, and there was little artillery fire from the unlucky ship. As soon as the first Dutchman set foot on *Unity,* the crew took to their heels. A few were captured; the rest made good their escape. *Vrede* suffered light casualties. Three men were wounded and one subsequently died.

While *Vrede* was busy with *Unity,* the Dutch fireship *Susanna* sailed up to the chain but failed to break it. Minutes later, she was completely consumed in flames and out of action. A second fireship, *Pro Patria,* took her turn and was more successful. *Pro Patria* broke through the iron links, clearing the way for the Dutch to proceed to Chatham. *Pro Patria* sailed on, positioning herself alongside the English guardship *Matthias,* which was anchored just above the now-broken chain. The Dutch fireship set *Matthias* alight, and within minutes the ship was a raging inferno from stem to stern. *Matthias* blew up with a deafening roar, great gouts of smoke and flame spreading blackened debris far and wide. A third fireship, *Delft,* tried to get near the *Charles V,* but the latter's well-served guns sank her before she could get too near. The Dutch persisted, and a fourth fireship finally managed to get *Charles V* into her fiery embrace. Some of the English crew fled, but others stayed on. Van Braakel came alongside with a boarding party, and the sight of the fierce Dutch officer approaching with sword drawn compelled the rest of the crew to surrender.

After accepting their capitulation, van Braakel ordered his trumpeter to go aloft and haul down the English flag. This was a calamitous turn of events, but England's humiliation was just beginning. The Dutch tried to put out the fires on *Charles V,* but eventually they were forced to abandon the vessel. A short time later the ship blew up. *Monmouth,* seeing the destruction of her two sister guardships, decided that it was high time to leave the scene. Longboats towed the great ship up the river and out of harm's way. The sad events were witnessed by Lord Brouncker, Sir John Mennes, and Peter Pett from a barge a safe distance away. They managed to dispatch boats to pick up survivors in

the water but could do little else to rally the English defenders.

The greatest prize of all, *Royal Charles,* was just a short distance from the broken chain and well within reach of the Dutch raiders. The great ship was only half rigged and had only 32 of her normal complement of 80 guns. She had a skeleton crew, and the handful of sailors managed to provide some reinforcement after they were told to rush to the ship "on pain of death." The raid was at its height. Historian William Laird Clowes described the scene in vivid prose: "The river was full of moving crafts and burning wreckage; the roar of guns was almost continuous; the shrieks of the wounded could be heard even over the noise of battle, the clangor of trumpets, the roll of drums, and the cheers of the Dutch as success after success was won. Above all hung a pall of smoke, illuminated only, as night closed in, by the gleam of flames on all sides and the flashes of guns and muskets."

When the Dutch approached *Royal Charles,* her crew abandoned ship without hesitation. In fairness to the seamen, they had few if any arms to fight with, and their morale was low after seeing the debacle at the chain. A boarding party of only nine Dutchmen took possession of England's proudest vessel. Cornelis de Witt wrote a glowing report to the Estates-General detailing the victory, penning the missive in the admiral's cabin aboard *Royal Charles*—the very place where the Duke of York had directed successful operations against the Netherlands during the Four Days' Battle. Now the tables were turned.

By late Wednesday the tide ebbed, halting further Dutch progress up the river. There were still some tempting prizes ahead: *Royal Oak, Loyal London,* and *Royal James.* De Ruyter came up the Medway and conferred with van Ghent and de Witt as to the next course of action. It was decided that four warships and three armed yachts should sail up the river and engage Upnor Castle, a Tudor-era fortification that guarded Chatham. While Upnor was being kept busy, five fireships would slip past and get alongside *Royal Oak, Loyal London,* and *Royal James* in an effort to set them ablaze. The attempt would begin the next day.

The Duke of Albemarle had placed Sir Edward Scott, a reliable man, in charge of Upnor Castle. Provisions were sent to the castle, along with reinforcements in the form of an extra company of soldiers. The extra troops would make sure that any landing by Dutch marines, as at Sheerness, would be repulsed. Sixteen more ships were ordered scuttled by Albemarle to prevent their capture. Some 30

Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

ABOVE: The stern piece bearing the coat of arms of Charles II is all that remains of his captured flagship today.
OPPOSITE: English sailors abandon the sinking London as she burns at anchor in the Medway.

ships were sunk by the English themselves, which prompted a satirist to write: "Of all our navy none should now survive./But that the ships themselves were taught to dive."

Albemarle's chief worry was the all-important dockyard and the new dockyard a little farther up the river. These facilities were crucial if England was to maintain its position as a major maritime power. If they were destroyed, it would be a crippling blow to the country's power and prestige. Luckily for the English, 10 large guns from the Tower of London arrived on the scene and were mounted in a nearby field overlooking the new dockyard. Another 50 cannons were placed in various positions where they could be trained on any Dutch ship attempting to come upriver. The Dutch would get a warm welcome. Albemarle spent all night on the arrangements, making the rounds to provide encouragement to his men. The Chatham defenders seem to have been made of sterner stuff. It was clear that the Dutch were about to face their first really serious opposition. As the Duke later recalled, "I stayed all night on the place by the men, and having no money to pay them, all I could do or say was little enough for their encouragement, for I had no assistance from Commissioner Pett."

The Dutch made their move around noon on Thursday, June 13. They moved forward in good style, but then the favorable northeast wind started to die down, stalling the effort. The wind did not pick up again until around 2 PM, and by that time the leading Dutch ships were well within range of Upnor Castle and the surrounding shore batteries. This time, the Dutch were not going to be unscathed. English gunfire was heavy, a rain of cannonballs that smashed into wooden bulkheads and killed and wounded several Dutch sailors. Nevertheless, the fireships managed to approach *Loyal London, Royal Oak,* and *Royal James,* which had been grounded in shallow water. Enough of their upper works remained above the waterline to catch fire.

The Medway River was narrower here than at the chain, and the fighting was even more intense. The shore was thick with English cannons, their combined discharges creating an ear-splitting roar that could be heard for miles. The Dutch replied as best they could, but for once the sheer weight of metal seemed to be on the English side. The English fought bravely, but it was now the courage of despair. All knew in their hearts that they were witnessing a great humiliation, the greatest naval defeat the island nation ever experienced. De Ruyter was in his element, directing operations in

Continued on page 66

The Relief of LADYSMITH

For 119 days, the British garrison at Ladysmith held out as Boer gunners hammered them from the hills beyond. Meanwhile, a relief column struggled mightily to reach the besieged township.

BY JOHN BROWN

In the early hours of October 12, 1899, Commandant-General Piet Joubert and 15,000 Boers crossed the border between Transvaal and Natal near Laing's Nek in southern Africa. Joubert's main force, led by General Daniel Erasmus's 2,000-man commando, followed the railway line south through Newcastle toward the township of Dundee. Paralleling him on his left was General Lucas Meyer's 3,000-man commando. General Johannes Kock, with his Johannesburg commando and German and Dutch volunteers, came in from the corner of the Orange Free State south of Majuba and advanced on Dundee. *London Times* reporter Leo Amery vividly described the Boers' departure as "an endless procession of silent misty figures, horsemen, artillery, and wagons, filing past in the dark, cold night along the winding road that led to where the black shoulder of Majuba stood up against the greyer sky."

The Boers were setting out to punish the British for taking the side of their emigrant countrymen, the so-called Uitlanders, who had flocked into the gold-rich Boer republics of Transvaal and the Orange Free State throughout the past two decades. After an abortive raid on Johannesburg by English guerrillas in 1896, relations between the Boers and Great Britain continued to worsen. Transvaal President Paul Kruger gave the British an ultimatum—stop building up British forces in the colonies of Cape Colony and Natal, or face the consequences. Kruger's ultimatum had expired—unanswered—at midnight on October 11.

Major General Sir Penn Symons, a headstrong fire-eater, was commander in chief of British forces in Natal. For defense against a Boer attack, he had some 10,000 troops in Ladysmith and had positioned Brig. Gen. James Yule's 8th Brigade at Dundee, 70 miles northeast of Ladysmith. The brigade comprised four battalions—the 2nd Dublin Fusiliers, the 1st Royal Irish Fusiliers, the 60th Rifles, and the 1st Leicesters. There was also one cavalry regiment, the 18th Hussars, and three batteries of field artillery armed with six 15-pounder guns.

***The Relief of Ladysmith on 27th February 1900,* by John Henry Frederick Bacon, depicts the dramatic moment when Sir George White, left, greeted British cavalry leader Major Hubert Gough with a heartfelt handshake. OPPOSITE: Eagle-eyed Boer sharpshooters pose with their ever-present Mausers outside Ladysmith during the siege.**

The Bridgeman Art Library

By separating his forces, Symons had left himself in a dangerous position. It was completely against the advice of General Sir Redvers Buller, who was on his way from England with a 47,000-man army corps and had strongly warned Symons that British forces in Natal should not be pushed too far northward, but instead should be concentrated on the defensive along a line behind the Tugela River. Symons did not take the warning.

Meyer's commando reached Talana Hill, a steep ridge two miles east of Dundee, at dawn on October 20. In the valley below, Symons had his four battalions on parade in full battle gear. They were facing north toward Mount Impati, a few miles north of Dundee, from which point they knew Joubert's main army was advancing. Suddenly, some of the troops noticed movements in the mists on Talana Hill and were able to make out Meyer's commandos hauling three field guns into position. Some of the British troops broke into laughter; the idea of a couple of thousand Boers attacking an entire British brigade was comical. A few minutes later, a barrage of 75mm shells wiped the smiles from their faces.

All three of Symons's artillery batteries went into action, and for 10 minutes there was a brisk exchange of shells, but no one, at least on the British side, was injured. Even before the exchange ended, Symons had issued orders. Meyer's commando coming from the east must not be allowed to link up with Joubert's main army coming from the north. That link could come in just a few hours. Meyer's commando must be defeated immediately.

Talana Hill was in fact twin hills, 600-foot Talana to the north and 550-foot Lennox Hill

to the south. At the base of Talana was a eucalyptus wood and Smit's Farm, consisting of a number of farm buildings and fields ringed with stone walls. This was the place, Symons decided, from which to launch a concentrated infantry attack. He would use the tactics of the time, the tactics all regular armies were trained to follow—first, an artillery barrage; second, an infantry attack; and third, a cavalry charge to cut off the enemy's retreat.

Some of Symons's officers were alarmed by his belief in the virtues of close-order, concentrated attack. To them, an open-order formation was the only tactic to use against magazine rifles. But Symons had made up his mind. His artillery would deal with the southern part of the ridge,

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ABOVE: Sir George White's broken army retreats into Ladysmith on "Mournful Monday," October 3, 1899, beginning the 119-day siege. RIGHT: Boer soldier-statesman Piet Joubert.

Lennox Hill, and his infantry would concentrate in the few hundred yards covered by the stone walls and the eucalyptus wood directly below Talana, before storming the hill in overwhelming strength. There was no time for maneuvering—it was to be a knockout blow before Meyer could link up with Joubert. Symons told his cavalry commander, Lt. Col. B.D. Moller, not to wait for the infantry but to act on his own if he saw a chance. At about 7 AM, Moller rode off to the back of Talana Hill to cut off Meyer's line of retreat.

The infantry assault began at 7:30. In the lead was the 2nd Dublin Fusiliers, followed by the 60th Rifles and the 1st Royal Irish Fusiliers, who would charge straight through to take the final objective, the summit. The battalions gradually worked their way up the hill in the face of intensive fire from the Boers' German-made Mauser rifles, but as they reached the top, shrapnel from their own artillery caused severe casualties and halted them. The Boers retreated down the other side of the hill, mounted their horses, and rode away. The artillery did not fire on them, thinking the riders were the 18th Hussars. The Hussars had, in fact, ridden round the back of Mount Impati, where two days later they were surrounded and forced to surrender. The attack had cost the British 51 dead, including the CO of the 60th, and 203 wounded, including Symons, who died a few days later.

The British garrison at Ladysmith celebrated Talana Hill as a victory, but General Sir George White was more concerned with Joubert's main force, some of whom were reported to have occupied Elandslaagte, 15 miles up the railway line from Ladysmith. The Boer troops were Kock's commando, which had diverged from Joubert's force. White sent the 7th Brigade, comprising 1,630 infantry, 1,314 cavalry, and 552 gunners with 18 guns and commanded by Colonel Ian Hamilton, by train to Elandslaagte. They found the 1,000-man commando with three 75mm guns occupying a small ridge south of the railway station. Hamilton ordered an immediate attack.

It was afternoon and a storm was approaching when the British attack went in against volleys of rifle fire. The battalions involved were abruptly brought to a halt. The storm broke over them, giving the battalions an opportunity to renew the attack and clear the crest of the ridge. The cavalry charged as the Boers withdrew, killing some 60 of them, including Kock. British casualties in the action were 50 killed and 213 wounded.

A new threat to Ladysmith was now developing from the west, with Boer Commandant Henrik Prinsloo coming along the railway from Harrismith. On October 24, White tried to prevent a junction of Prinsloo's commando and Joubert's forces by personally leading three battalions of infantry and the 5th Lancers and 5th Dragoon Guards to occupy some hills northwest of Ladysmith. The attempt failed—the Boers had gotten there first.

Meanwhile, at Dundee, Yule's brigade was coming under increasing artillery bombardment, including a much-dreaded "Long Tom," a Creusot 155mm gun throwing a 94-pound shell. Yule sought White's permission to withdraw to Ladysmith by the one route still open to him. White agreed, and the brigade began a

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forced march that brought them into Ladysmith on October 26. This increased White's numbers to 13,745 soldiers and 5,400 civilians, including 2,400 African servants and Indian camp followers. The next day, Joubert's forces were reported closing in from the north. One commando had occupied Pepworth Hill, four miles northeast of Ladysmith, where it was hastily building a platform for a Long Tom. White decided to attack Pepworth Hill.

He would use two brigades. The 8th Brigade would make a night march around to the eastern flank of the hill and attack from that direction at dawn on October 30, while the 7th Brigade created a diversion by advancing directly toward the hill. Artillery support would be by 15-pounders and a recently arrived naval gun detachment of four 12-pounders and two

4.7-inch guns. The cavalry would then sweep around the eastern flank and drive the fleeing Boers up against two battalions of infantry that had night-marched around the western flank of the hill.

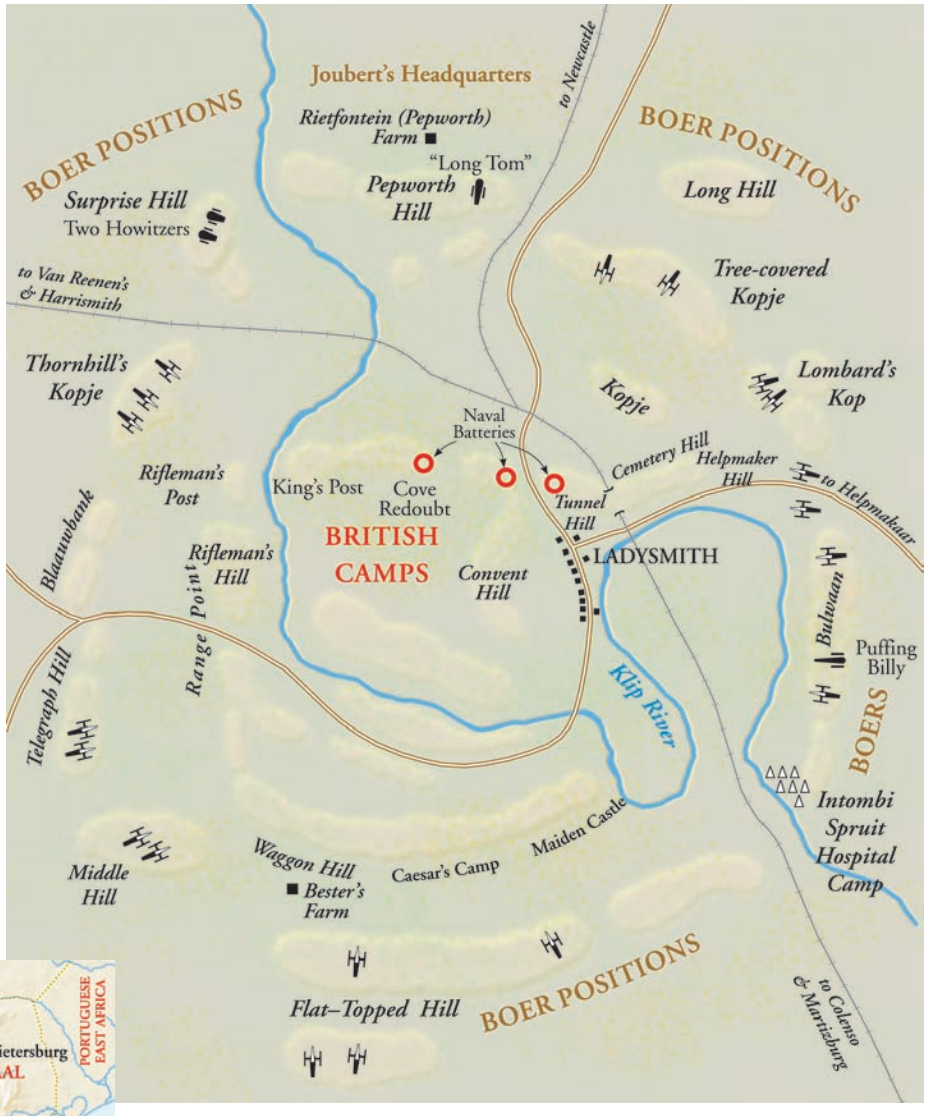
The ensuing operation was a disaster. The Boers, whose scouts had warned about a coming attack, had moved their positions to three nearby hills. The British brigades launched their attacks against empty defenses and immediately came under Boer rifle and artillery fire from the three hills. They panicked and retreated, along with the cavalry. The two battalions that had marched around the western flank of Pepworth Hill were isolated and forced to surrender. Lt. Col. Sir Henry Rawlinson described the debacle somewhat mildly in his diary: "This has not been a successful day. Now we shall have to sit down in Ladysmith and stand investment and bombardment, which is very unpleasant. Ladysmith is one of the most indefensible localities I ever came across. It is like the bottom of a tea cup with one side broken out and a large basin outside the tea cup."

After the setback, White could still have withdrawn to the Tugela, although he would have had to abandon or destroy a huge amount of stores and supplies at Ladysmith. But he was too depressed to make the decision; he did nothing. Three days later, on November 2, Boer commandos cut the railway and telegraph lines south of Ladysmith. All communication with the outside world would now depend upon African runners or carrier pigeons.

On November 9, Joubert held a council of war outside Ladysmith. As he saw it, there were three options open to the Boers: they could launch an all-out attack on Ladysmith, divide their forces between Ladysmith and the Tugela line, or drive directly south in the hope of reaching Durban before British reinforcements could arrive. It was decided that they would drive directly on Durban.

Meanwhile, Buller had arrived in Cape Colony, where he would assemble his corps of 47,000 with the intention of defeating Boer forces while advancing on and occupying Bloemfontein, the capital of the Orange Free State, and Pretoria, capital of the Transvaal. With that accomplished, the presidents of both republics would be forced to surrender. But Buller found, to his consternation, that White was not holding Natal as he had assumed, but had allowed himself to be besieged in Ladysmith, with no intention of trying to fight his way out. Buller decided to take Lt. Gen. Sir Francis Clery's 2nd Division and, with himself in command, undertake the relief of Ladysmith and the clearing of all Boers from Natal. Clery's 2nd Division began disembarking at Durban on November 12.

The leading brigade of the 2nd Division, commanded by Maj. Gen. Henry Hildyard, reached Willow Grange, 10 miles south of Estcourt, where Joubert's force had concentrated. Hildyard immediately attacked. He inflicted few casualties on the Boers, but Joubert, who had been injured when thrown from a horse, decided to withdraw and set up defenses on the Tugela at Colenso. The Boers withdrew, taking with them 2,000 horses and cattle. The young Louis Botha took Joubert's place as commandant-general.



Maps © 2009 Philip Schwartzberg, Meridian Mapping, Minneapolis, MN

ABOVE: Deadly accurate Boer artillery commanded the hills around Ladysmith.
LEFT: The Boer republics of Transvaal and Orange Free State were surrounded by British colonies.

Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

The 5th Irish Lancers go into action in the hills near Ladysmith.

Buller arrived in Natal to find that Botha and his Boers were occupying positions astride the demolished rail bridge over the Tugela at Colenso. He established himself at Frere, 10 miles south of the river, with 19,000 men in four infantry brigades, two regiments of cavalry, and some locally raised mounted troops. From Frere, he attempted reconnaissance of the area to Colenso, but fast-riding, sharp-shooting Boer patrols frustrated all such attempts. Lacking information on Colenso's defenses and the numbers of Boers manning them, Buller decided on a wide flanking move to the west. He would cross the Tugela at Potgieter's Drift, 15 miles upstream of Colenso, and come in behind the Colenso defenses close to Ladysmith. Buller informed White of his plan by heliograph on December 11.

Buller's immediate problem was how to get across the river. Only three drifts were known to be fordable at the time: Old Wagon Drift half a mile upstream of the demolished railway bridge at Colenso and just downstream of the iron road bridge that was still intact; Bridle Drift four miles upstream; and Robinson's Drift, another three miles upstream. All three were stoutly defended, as were Colenso and the hills behind it.

Buller's plan of attack was for his cavalry and mounted infantry to cover the flanks of the attacking infantry with those on the right flank to try to occupy Hlangwane Hill south of Colenso. Hildyard's 2nd Brigade was to attack at Wagon Drift while Maj. Gen. Fitzroy Hart's 5th Brigade attacked at Bridle Drift. The other two brigades, the 4th and 6th, would be held in reserve. The attacks would open up with a bombardment by a dozen 15-pounders, four naval 12-pounders, and two naval 4.7-inch cannons, all commanded by Colonel Charles Long.

The 2nd and 5th Brigades advanced at dawn on December 15, but Long, anxious to get his guns into action as far forward as possible, went ahead of Hildyard's 2nd Brigade and sited two batteries east of Colenso station, only 1,000 yards from Boer positions north of the river. The six naval guns came in behind him. On the left, Hart marched his brigade in close order toward Bridle Drift. But Hart was using an inaccurate map and that fact as well as a misunderstanding by his African guide and interpreter caused him to direct the brigade into a loop made by the river and a spruit, or stream, where the brigade came under Boer artillery and rifle fire.

Buller saw all this from his headquarters on Naval Gun Hill, two miles south of Colenso, and sent gallopers to tell Hart to extricate himself. Buller could also see that Long's guns were under intense Boer fire and that Hildyard's brigade had not even started its approach to Colenso. Then the guns ceased firing, the crews killed or taking cover in a nearby gully. Buller rode out to check on his remaining guns and to see Hildyard. Even if Hildyard got across the river without artillery support, he would be in a precarious position because of Hart's failure to cross the river upstream and turn the Boer flank. Buller ordered the action aborted and as many guns and crews as possible withdrawn.

Buller then rode to a large *donga* behind the gun positions while Hildyard led two battalions into Colenso looking for guns and any British troops still there. Buller was hit in the side and badly bruised by a bullet as he asked some troops to go forward to help with the gun rescue. Some complied, including three of his personal staff—Captains H.N. Schofield and Walter Congreve and Lieutenant Frederick Roberts, son of Field Marshal Lord Frederick Roberts. Schofield managed to bring two guns back, but Congreve and Roberts were wounded while trying to recover the other guns. Roberts died later in the day. All three officers were awarded the Victoria Cross. (Congreve and Roberts were two of only three pairs of fathers and sons who were awarded the VC. Roberts's father was awarded it in the Indian Mutiny in 1858, and Congreve's son was awarded it in France in 1916.)

"I do not think I am strong enough to relieve White. Colenso is a fortress that, if not taken in a rush, could only be taken by a siege."

Further attempts to rescue guns led to more casualties, and Buller called off the effort. During the afternoon, Hart's battered brigade was extricated from the loop. British casualties in the action at Colenso were 143 killed, 755 wounded, and 240 missing, mostly captured. It was by no means a disaster but, as Buller described it in a cable to the War Office in London, it was "a serious reverse." In another cable to the secretary of state for war, the Marquis of Lansdowne, Buller said: "My failure today raises a serious question. I do not think I am now strong enough to relieve White. Colenso is a fortress that, if not taken in a rush, could only be taken by a siege. My view is that I ought to let Ladysmith go, and occupy good positions for the defense of South Natal."

Lansdowne, in collusion with other politicians, persuaded Prime Minister Lord Robert Salisbury to appoint Roberts commander of all British forces in South Africa, with Buller to remain in Natal as his subordinate and Maj. Gen. Lord Horatio Kitchener as Roberts's chief

of staff. By appointing popular heroes Roberts and Kitchener, the Salisbury administration hoped to escape most of the criticism caused by the failures at Colenso and the battles of Magersfontein and Stormberg that same week, which quickly become known across Great Britain as "Black Week."

Roberts's plan of campaign was to abandon attempts to relieve Kimberley and Mafeking and approach Ladysmith by a turning movement. Roberts assumed that Buller, having been reinforced with Lt. Gen. Sir Charles Warren's 5th Division, would hold an "entrenched camp" at Chievely and use the rest of his force to turn the enemy position on the Tugela. If that succeeded, Roberts reasoned, "I imagine it would be desirable to evacuate Ladysmith and hold the line of the Tugela."

After the Boer victories of Black Week, President Kruger urged his commanders to take the offensive and attack the isolated British garrisons at Mafeking, Kimberley, and Ladysmith, with the first blow falling on Ladysmith. Ladysmith had been under siege for six weeks, with White seemingly content to sit and do nothing until he was relieved. For the troops and civilians inside the garrison, the monotony was broken only by sporadic Boer gunfire. Some officers tried to persuade White to take the offensive. He agreed only to mount limited raids on Boer guns threatening the town. In the early hours of December 8, 600 men of the Imperial Light Horse and Natal Carbineers attacked a Boer Long Tom and a 4.5-inch howitzer on Gun Hill, two miles east of the defenses, and blew up both guns. Three days later, an attack by men of the 2nd Rifle Brigade on a howitzer to the northwest of the defenses was less successful; the gun was blown up, but the raiding party lost nine killed and 52 wounded before fighting its way back to Ladysmith.

The Boer guns continued their destruction, and daytime temperatures soared to between 100 and 105 degrees, making life miserable for the British defenders. Illness and fevers, particularly enteric fever, reduced the forces capable of manning the defenses. Buller's failure at Colenso was a severe blow to morale in the town.

After a relatively quiet Christmas at Ladysmith, some 2,000 Boers, on the night of January 5, 1900, attacked the southeast corner and eastern end of the 150-foot steep hill called Platrand, and by dawn they had driven the British from the crest of the hill. Rawlinson and Maj. Gen. Sir Archibald Hunter organized a counterattack and stabilized the position, but suffered heavy casualties every time they tried to drive the Boers from the crest of the hill. The next day, the Boers attacked the naval gun emplacement but were driven off. The British attacked Platrand again and reached the crest, but the Boers fought on until darkness fell and then disappeared into the night. British casualties in the action were 17 officers and 152 soldiers killed, and 28 and 221 wounded. Boer casualties were unknown but more than 50 bodies were found on the battlefield.

Roberts agreed to a proposal by Buller that he again try to relieve Ladysmith. He planned to have Maj. Gen. Neville Lyttelton's 4th Brigade distract Botha by a feint attack at Potgieter's Drift on the Tugela, while Warren, with 10,600 infantry, 2,200 mounted troops, and 36 guns, would cross the river seven miles higher up at Trikhardt's Drift and capture the hills beyond. Then Buller, with 7,200 infantry, 400 mounted troops, and 22 guns, would attack the hills beyond Potgieter's, which were believed to be more strongly defended. Once they were through the hills, only 15 miles of open plain, with no easily defended obstacles, lay between them and Ladysmith.

There was nothing wrong with Buller's plan; the flaw was in giving the principal part to the newly arrived Warren. Warren took two days to move the five miles to Trikhardt's Drift, two more

British officers scan enemy positions across the Tugela River at Colenso. They somehow overlooked the Boer riflemen sheltered below in their trenches.

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days to cross the river, and two more days to launch his first attack, on January 20, against the Rangeworthy Hills, which were his main objective. Warren's orders included breaking the Boer line west of a 1,500-foot-high, flat-topped hill named Spion Kop (Lookout Hill).

British maps of the area were rudimentary, and no one really knew what shape the hill actually was or what lay immediately beyond it. Warren dithered over the problem and decided that he would attack Spion Kop itself. If the kop was taken and held and heavy guns were installed on it, the Boers would be driven back to the plain. Buller agreed that Warren should attack the hill; as soon as the attack succeeded, Buller would push his own force forward from Potgieter's.

On the night of January 23, Maj. Gen. E.R.P. Woodgate led an assault group of his 11th Lancashire Brigade up a steep spur to the top of the kop and drove off the Boer picket. The troops then dug in as best they could on the sloping, stony plateau they thought, in the dark and mist, was the crest of the hill. As far as they could tell they were masters of the mountain. Woodgate sent one of his officers back to brief Warren and Buller and ask for naval guns and more of his brigade to be sent up.

When the sun came up next morning and the mist began to clear at about 8 AM, the Lancashires found that Spion Kop was not as they had supposed. The small triangle of the summit, about an acre in extent, was overlooked by two knolls. As soon as there was enough light, Boer defenders

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British troops man their own trenches at the Orange River during the advance to Ladysmith. They learned the value of cover the hard way.

unleashed almost point-blank rifle fire at the British troops. Boer artillery soon found the range and pom-pom and heavier shells began to explode among the Lancashires in the long, shallow, crescent-shaped trench they had dug in the dark. They had taken the mountain, but they were now trapped upon it.

The morning wore on with some 2,000 soldiers packed within a perimeter about a quarter mile around. As the sun rose higher and hotter, the soldiers, without water or food, suffered badly. The Boers, too, were suffering from lack of water and food and were becoming increasingly demoralized. Their attack on the kop, at heavy cost, had only half succeeded, and the large groups of Boer horsemen on the plain below were refusing to join in the battle. Hopelessness began to take hold of the Boers on the kop, and after midday some began abandoning the positions they had seized with such heroism a short time before. Confusion and demoralization set in among the survivors on both sides; the atmosphere was described by an English war correspondent as "that acre of massacre, that complete shambles." That night the British withdrew under cover of darkness, leaving behind 243 bodies piled three-deep in the grisly trenches.

Buller, anxious to restore his tarnished reputation, decided to try again to break through to Ladysmith. Having tried to break through the Boers on the right and center of their position, he decided now to break through on their left, at Vaal Krantz. On February 5, following a feint attack that did not deceive the Boers, Buller's main force began crossing the Tugela at the exact point where the Boers expected them. Then, when the brigade leading the attack had crossed the Tugela, Buller inexplicably halted the attack, leaving the brigade across the river to attack by itself. When the brigade reached the crest of Vaal Krantz, Buller ordered Lyttelton, their commander, to withdraw. Lyttelton ignored the order at first, but, realizing the attack was failing, he withdrew the next day and returned to Chieveley. The brigade had taken 400 casualties.

In Ladysmith, morale had sunk even lower, if that was possible. The siege had now lasted for 100 days. Medical arrangements were bad—some 563 soldiers had died of sickness, 393 from typhoid. By January 30, White's hopes of using his cavalry had vanished, and the horses were eaten by the starving garrison. Meanwhile, Buller had come to the conclusion that his next attack must use different tactics. Instead of throwing in all his forces to gain a swift victory, he would try a gradual and more methodical advance, each step supported by the largest possible number of guns. The terrain northeast of Colenso lent itself to this method, being dominated by a series of hills leading up to the southern bank of the Tugela.

Buller's next attack began on February 12 with the temporary occupation of Hussar Hill, four miles east of Colenso. From this hill, Buller could view the Boer positions on the series of hills running northwest for three miles to the river. These would provide the stepping-stones that would lead Buller to a position from which he could tackle the formidable gorge through which the railway ran on the north bank of the river to Ladysmith.

Colonel Lord Dundonald's brigade occupied Hussar Hill on February 14. The next day, the 6th Fusilier Brigade took Green Hill, and three days later the Boers abandoned all their posi-

tions south and east of the Tugela. Colenso was reoccupied. From the summit of Monte Cristo Hill, Buller could see the outskirts of Ladysmith lying below. Inspired, he ordered a pontoon bridge across the river north of Colenso, below Hlangwane. While it was being built, he ordered Lt. Col. Alec Thorneycroft's Mounted Infantry across the river to occupy Fort Wylie. When the pontoon bridge was completed on the 21st, Buller sent the 11th Lancashire Brigade across it to take the two hills on the far side.

On the 23rd, Hart's 5th Irish Brigade passed behind Wynne's Hill to attack the hill to its right. To get to the hill, he led his three battalions—the Inniskillings, Connaught Rangers, and Dublin Fusiliers—along a narrow gorge and across a railway bridge. There they came under heavy Boer fire and Hart, impatient and headstrong, ordered his battalions into the attack, one after the other, up a steep, rocky hillside in heavy rain. It was a near disaster. Hart suffered 500 casualties, the majority in the Inniskillings, which lost 72 percent of its officers, including the CO, and 27 percent of its men. Two reinforcing battalions from the Durham Light Infantry and Rifle Brigade stabilized the situation by digging in on the lower slopes. They were unable to help the wounded Irish left on the summit.

The next day, February 25, was a Sunday, and Buller arranged a six-hour truce to recover the wounded and bury the dead. He now made a significant change to his plan. He would relocate the pontoon bridge farther downstream, below Hart's Hill, and send the 5th Division across it to attack the three hills astride the railway as it led away from the river toward Ladysmith. The attacks would be heavily supported by artillery. Confident his plan would succeed, Buller on December 26 signaled White: "I hope to be with you tomorrow night."

The next morning the 6th Brigade attacked Pieter's Hill and cleared it of Boers by the afternoon. The 5th Brigade attacked Railway Hill and cleared it as well, and the 4th Brigade drove the Boers off Hart's Hill. Early the next day, British forces crossed the Tugela and, meeting only little resistance, pushed on across the plain. In Ladysmith that morning, the 118th day of the siege, people saw a long column of Boers trekking away to the northwest. At 1 PM, White received a message from Buller: "I beat the enemy thoroughly yesterday and am sending my cavalry to ascertain where they have gone to. I believe the enemy to be in full retreat."

The Boers were indeed in full retreat. G.S. Preller, a Boer artillery officer, wrote: "All the best efforts did not avail, we had lost the battle—hopelessly lost—we had to retire. The enemy were masters of the bloody battlefield and we had to flee. God, how I have prayed never to see this. All was lost here. Back for home." The cavalry moved ahead, breaking into a gallop as they neared Ladysmith. They galloped past the hospital and on across the Klip River. At 6 PM, two squadrons of cavalry, one of the Imperial Light Horse and one of the Natal Carbineers, rode into Ladysmith amid scenes of emotion and jubilation. They stopped opposite the jail, where White and his staff were waiting. White, stooped over and looking 10 years older, was a pathetic figure. "Thank God we kept the flag flying," he told the assembled crowd, adding in a faltering voice, "It cut me to the heart to reduce your rations as I did. I promise you, though, that I'll never do it again."

Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

Another view of the White-Gough handshake at Ladysmith. Drawing by Alfred Pearse.

Three days later Buller, unaware of the tension between relievers and relieved, reluctantly led a ceremonial march through the town. White's force did not conceal their resentment at the slowness of the relief, and Buller's force in turn resented how fit the garrison looked and how little it had done to help itself. The bitterness was apparent on both sides. Lt. Col. G.H. Sim called it "one of the most mournful pageants that could have been devised by idiotic generals." Years later, General Warren "could not bear to think of it, the march of 20,000 healthy men triumphant and victorious, through the ranks of the weary and emaciated garrison, who were expected to cheer us and who actually tried to do so—it was an ordeal for me and many others."

For his part, White was embarrassed and insulted after hosting Buller at a celebratory luncheon. Buller joked ungraciously that there seemed to be a lot of food, which White had been hoarding for just such a special occasion. One of White's staff recalled later: "Buller himself arrived and made himself as unpleasant as he could. We had saved up a few stores and used up everything giving him a good lunch. The ungrateful ruffian now goes about saying the Ladysmith garrison lived like fighting cocks and that stories of hardships are all nonsense."

On that less than collegial note, the relief of Ladysmith ended. White was refused another command in southern Africa and was invalided home. Astonishingly, he eventually became a field marshal and governor of Chelsea Hospital. Buller, nicknamed "Sir Reverse" for his South African misadventures, remained despite all his reverses the most beloved British general of the war. Although his soldiers often laughed at him and nicknamed him the "Tugela Ferryman" because he had led them back and forth across that river so often, they never let him down. Returning to England, he resumed his command at Aldershot, but a year later he was dismissed from the army after a public argument with Roberts over whether or not he had ordered White to surrender Ladysmith. Buller remained a popular national figure until his death in 1908, hot-tempered, bibulous, and jolly to the last. In his hometown of Exeter, admirers erected a statue to him; it said simply: "He saved Natal." □

JUDAS MACCABEUS, HAMMER *of the* JEWS

Threatened with the destruction of their ancient culture, Jewish rebels rose in opposition to their Syrian occupiers. An unlikely new hero would lead the way. | BY KELLY BELL

By 167 bc, when a full-scale revolt erupted in Judea, it had been more than 400 years since an organized Jewish army had taken up arms against an enemy. In 586 bc, the valiant defenders of Jerusalem had fought a hopeless battle against a massive Babylonian invasion force. After that, the only Jewish warriors were those occasional mercenaries who enlisted for pay in the causes of other nations. The Judean revolt's roots went back to 198 bc, when Syria's Seleucid dynasty forcibly took Palestine from its previous rulers—the Egyptian Ptolemies. Both these Gentile factions were descended from Greek generals (Seleucus and Ptolemy) who had inherited the regions 200 years earlier after their master, Alexander the Great, died childless in 323 bc.

At first, the changeover in occupying forces had little effect on the Jews, who remained free to practice nominal self-government and, most importantly, their faith, under their new ruler, Antiochus III. Tolerant administration had always been the policy of the Ptolemies, and generations of Judeans had become accustomed to benign overlords. But upon the death of Antiochus III and the ascension of his son Antiochus IV Epiphanes in 175 BC, intolerance and tension began to grow in the Jewish homeland.

Caught between hostile Egypt to the south and the looming proximity of Rome to the northwest, the Syrians also faced threats from the ambitious Medes and Parthians to the southeast. The situation instilled a great deal of understandable uneasiness in Antiochus IV, who realized that with its proximity to Egypt and its commanding heights overlooking the vital coastal trade route, Judea had to be strongly secured for strategic reasons. He resolved to do this via the arbitrary imposition of Greek ritual and culture on its Jewish inhabitants in an attempt to establish a common language and the practice of overall Grecian civilization to create unity in his empire. This attempt to force paganism on the Jews would prove to be a mortal mistake.

Issuing orders for the Hellenization of Judea in 168 BC, Antiochus departed to attack the Egyptians, apparently never considering the possibility of armed resistance from the long-sedate Jews. The Jews, however, were implacably devoted to their god Jehovah, and the majority of them considered idolatry inconceivable. Tensions rose. Apart from their centuries of docility, however, the Jews were hampered in their resistance by their relatively sparse numbers. The population of Judea at the time was 250,000 at most, with only a fraction of these being able-bodied young men. This too may have led to the seeming casualness on the emperor's part when he enforced idolatry upon his presumably meek subjects. Things were about to go terribly wrong.

When Antiochus laid siege to Alexandria, Italian emissaries quickly informed him that if he did not desist, Roman intervention would immediately ensue. Saddled with such a preponderance of enemies, he wisely yielded, broke off his investment, and withdrew along the coastal highway. By this time, defiant Jews had already rioted in Jerusalem. Learning of this, a humiliated and worried Antiochus was delighted by what he saw as a glittering opportunity to salvage the prestige lost in the abortive Egyptian campaign. Here was a war he could claim, however implausibly, was forced upon him by an enemy that he could easily crush. Afterward, he could trumpet this victory to the seemingly endless array of bellicose neighbors, who might think twice before attacking him.

Antiochus dispatched one of his most competent generals, Apollonius, to quell the Jewish insurrection. The Seleucid troops massacred most of the Jewish population of Jerusalem, burned revered documents containing Mosaic law, and threw young mothers and their newly circumcised infant sons to their deaths from city walls. They also looted the temple and desecrated its holy sanctuary by converting it into a shrine to Zeus. Word spread swiftly. In his overconfidence, Antiochus overlooked the fact that the army he had sent against the Jews was not of the highest caliber. These troops were not led by inspiring campaigners like Alexander, nor were they the well-trained, well-equipped, and well-motivated legions of Rome. Instead, they were a motley aggregation of con-

The Triumph of Judas Maccabeus, by famed artist Peter Paul Rubens, captures the legendary allure of the Jewish rebel leader.

The Bridgeman Art Library

scripts and mercenaries whose abilities and incentives varied greatly. Most had little field experience in the phalanx and cavalry tactics devised earlier by the Greeks. The Seleucid force also contained some Jewish soldiers of fortune who were as infuriated at the Syrians as were the insurgents. These men quickly defected to the rebels and contributed their crucial experience and military training to the patriot cause.

After bloodily securing Jerusalem, Antiochus sent his forces into the unfamiliar Judean hill country to finish the task of Hellenization. An officer named Apelles led a patrol into the village of Modiin and ordered the local priest, Mattathias, to blasphemously sacrifice a pig, which Jews regard as an unclean creature. When Mattathias refused to comply, another Jew offered to perform the sacrilege, whereupon the aged holy man whipped out a dagger and killed both the traitor and Apelles. Mattathias's five sons incited the townspeople to rise against the invaders and wiped them out, marking the first in a lengthy string of reverses for the Seleucids in what came to be called the Maccabean Revolt.

Leading his small band of about 200 people (with perhaps 50 fighting men) into the easily defended Gophna Hills, Mattathias commenced training the peasants in the guerrilla tactics he realized were their only hope against the mighty Seleucid empire. Since no Syrians had escaped Modiin, it took time for their main force to learn of their comrades' demise. (Or perhaps they assumed the missing unit had simply deserted, a not uncommon practice for this particular army.) In any case, it took a year for the invaders to react. By this time, Mattathias had died and had been succeeded by his middle son, Judas (also called Judah). The Jews had productively spent the hiatus training, recruiting, and gathering information. Judas constructed an efficient intelligence-gathering apparatus while sending out agents to spread word of the revolt, enlist new men, and collect whatever weapons could be found or fashioned.

The smashing victory provided the Maccabees with a crucial boost in confidence. They began to think of outright independence rather than mere survival. The Judean army was swelling, and its commander was far superior to his counterpart.

Apart from a few rusty heirlooms, arms were few. Judas would have to make do with modified farm implements until up-to-date weapons could be captured. If early battles could be won, he reasoned, the enemies' swords, armor, catapults, spears, javelins, bows, slings, shields, and battering rams would be a windfall. Until then, Judas realized, he would have to move slowly. He had his steadily growing forces ambush and annihilate Seleucid patrols, amassing a new arsenal in the process. He also spent a great deal of time with his lieutenants, formulating unconventional tactics for which his dogmatic opponents would be unprepared. The Maccabees' hit-and-run tactics increased their fighting

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strength and kept the Seleucids befuddled, off balance, and generally in retreat. As the surrounding countryside slowly came under Jewish control, the Syrian garrison in Jerusalem was isolated and in danger of being overwhelmed or simply starved into submission. When word of the grave situation reached Apollonius at his headquarters in neighboring Samaria, he moved tardily to intervene.

It was time for Judas and his men to mount their first major field operation. The Seleucids' favored battle tactic was the phalanx. Heavily armored infantry would draw together in a tight formation, as if on parade, with the men in each line shoulder to shoulder and closely following the rank in front of them. The smallest phalanxes contained 2,000 men spread over an area 120 yards wide by 15 yards deep. The warriors in the first five lines held their spears horizontally, while the 11 lines following them held theirs aloft, essentially in reserve for those rare occasions when they were needed. Flank protection was provided by cavalry and less heavily armed infantry. It was a powerful but unwieldy formation that compromised the element of surprise.

Raised and trained in this traditional method exclusively, the Syrians had never considered the benefits of interfering with an opponent's deployment or altering their tactics to exploit battlefield circumstances. Since these head-on shoving matches were the only stratagem they had ever used, the possibility of fighting in any other fashion never occurred to them. Judas and his comrades, on the other hand, had never waged any kind of large-scale combat before, and they were careful to consider all options. For the invaders, an unconventional test of nerves was looming.

Sometime in 166 BC, Apollonius's 2,000-man expedition advanced on Jerusalem via the mountainous route from Samaria. Skirting the Jews' Gophna stronghold to the west, the Seleucids passed through terrain marked by craggy defiles and canyons perfect for ambush, but since they had never heard of an ambush, they did not guard against one now. Dividing his 600 men into four units, Judas deployed at Nahal el-Haramiah a few miles northeast of his headquarters. Blithely unaware of the suicidal blunder they were committing, the Syrians marched in orderly rows into a narrow passage flanked by hundreds of well-trained and highly motivated Jewish warriors.

It was late afternoon when a sealing unit fell upon the vanguard of the column, causing great confusion and havoc. Troops to the rear could not see what was going on and continued to press forward, bunching the regiment into a

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ABOVE: Pitched battle between Maccabees and Bacchides, from a 15th-century French translation of Flavius Josephus's *Antiquites Judaiques*. OPPOSITE: Syrian troops under King Antiochus IV plunder Jerusalem in this 15th-century illustration.

mass of flailing, panicky men unable to comprehend what was happening to them. The valley's eastern slope came alive with the main Judean force, which smashed into the Seleucid flank while the third and fourth attacking units moved in from the north and east. Jewish archers killed Apollonius; and his leaderless, trapped, and totally confused men were left to fend for themselves in a type of battle they had not known existed. In short order, the Syrian forces were wiped out en masse, and their weapons and equipment fell into the rebels' eager hands.

The smashing victory provided the Maccabees with a crucial boost in confidence. They began to think of outright independence rather than mere survival. The Judean army was swelling, and its commander was far superior to his counterpart, General Seron, who was overconfident and all too eager to reach the trouble spot, crush the insolent band of renegades, and boost his own standing in the army. Seron had a low opinion of Apollonius's ability and saw his incompetence as the sole reason for his defeat, not considering the possibility that Judas and his officers were brilliantly adaptable. The only apparent adjustment Seron made was to march his force along the Mediterranean shore with its broad coastal plain, thus precluding ambush. Turning inland in the vicinity of Jaffa, the Seleucids passed Lod en route to their surrounded comrades in Jerusalem. After combining their forces, they would fan out into the countryside in a sweeping search-and-destroy campaign against the Jewish rebels.

Hoping to elude detection, Seron made for the city via a secondary route through the pass at Beth Horon. Jewish lookouts immediately noticed, however, and Judah prepared to take full advantage of a handy bottleneck he knew along the trail. The 1,000-man Maccabean army prepared to destroy the invaders. The ascent to the pass was flanked by steep slopes perfect for ambush, and Seron took the precaution of having his command file through with long gaps in

The Granger Collection, New York

ABOVE: Judas Maccabeus pursues new Syrian commander Timotheus in a wood engraving after Gustave Doré. OPPOSITE: Judea, overlooking vital coastal trade routes and bordering powerful Egypt, was strategically vital to Syria. It had been 400 years since Judean Jews last rebelled.

individual units, making the entire column over a mile long and impossible to trap in its entirety inside the canyon.

Armed with the sword he had taken from Apollonius's corpse, Judas personally led the sealing unit that attacked and decimated the Seleucid vanguard and made a point of quickly killing the general. Seron was one of the first men to die in the engagement, as Jewish archers on both slopes unleashed a lethal volley from their bows and slings. As the column's leading elements staggered back in disorder, the Jews attacked with their recently won swords. Again seized by fear, shock, and utter bewilderment, the Syrians hastily retreated, leaving behind 800 dead and the bulk of their equipment. As the rear elements turned and fled, the rebels took up the chase, pursuing them to the coastal plain and killing many more Syrians.

When news of the triumph spread through the hills, Judas's army expanded to more than 6,000 men, with recruits streaming in from all parts of Judea. Antiochus finally comprehended that his opponent was a natural military genius, gifted in the uses of opportunity, terrain, surprise, morale, and confidence. Judas's veterans were also doing a masterful job of training the mass of newcomers in using the latest batch of captured armaments.

At this point, an unrelated civil war broke out in the eastern region of the Seleucid Empire. Word of Seron's fate reached Antiochus as he was preparing to quash this mutiny and replenish his dwindling financial reserves. He elected to go ahead with his domestic mission and entrust dealing with the Judeans to his relative, Lysias. However, he had a problem always associated with a two-front war—limited manpower. A substantial percentage of the Syrian forces earmarked for the domestic unrest had to be siphoned off to Judea.

Lysias's military experience was limited, but it did not take an Alexander to understand the emperor's instructions to his embarking kinsman: "Uproot and destroy the strength of Israel and the remnant of Judea. Blot out all memory of them in the place. Settle strangers in the territory and allot the land to the settlers." Lysias, perhaps wisely, did not deign to lead the expedition himself. He gave the task to Generals Ptolemy, Nicanor, and Gorgias. Setting out in the spring of 165 BC, the Syrian force numbered about 20,000 men. Pitching an enormous base camp at Emmaus in the foothills just above the Ajalon valley, the triumvirate felt certain they would not be taken unaware in a narrow canyon. They were determined to engage their opponent on open ground, without giving adequate thought or preparation to the enemy's already well-established adaptability.

Judas had organized his army into smaller, more manageable units able to fight independently in a somewhat more conventional manner. The Syrians would not be facing a strictly irregular force this time, but a well-trained and well-motivated professional army fighting for its survival against opponents who were there

for no other reason than to obey orders. While both sides were making last-minute preparations, the Seleucids were unexpectedly reinforced by a number of fresh troops from Idumea, just south of Judea. The sprawling bivouac was further crowded by masses of camp followers and slave traders who anticipated a bonanza of merchandise after the expected defeat of the Jewish insurgents. Apart from chains and whips, the slavers also brought hefty amounts of gold and silver in preparation for setting up a lucrative market. The camp was becoming a richer prize by the hour.

Judas and his brothers Simon, Johanan, and Jonathan commanded four 1,500-man brigades, which they assembled at Mizpah on the road to Beth Horon immediately northwest of Jerusalem. After confirming the enemy's position, Judas moved his headquarters to a hilly area near Latrun. The opposing camps were now within eyesight of each other, and the rebels decided to let their foes make the first move. They could see from the swarming patrols and bustling activity that the Syrians were preparing to attack first anyway.

Gorgias intended to surprise the Jews by assaulting them at night, but the Maccabean espionage network made sure that its commander in chief was forewarned, and he quickly devised a countermeasure. Ordering a number of bonfires lit, Judas gave Syrian scouts the impression that his camp was fully manned, while he withdrew the bulk of his troops and left a skeleton crew to tend the fires and act as decoys. When Gorgias's 6,000-man force surged into the Jews' former positions, it found only the rear guard, which fled into the Shaar Hagai valley. In the darkness, the Seleucids predictably mistook this small band for the main body of revolutionaries and set out in pursuit through the narrow defile, where they were bushwhacked by 1,500 waiting warriors.

Judas had positioned another 1,500 men north of the Syrian camp to assault it from the rear when he and his remaining 3,000 soldiers launched their planned daybreak attack, but the enemy had its own spy ring and was alerted to the rebels' approach. Judas was stunned to find the opposing army fully prepared for battle, drawn up in its phalanx on the plain in front of its camp at daybreak.

With the critical element of surprise gone, Judas again called upon his resourcefulness and divided his command into three 1,000-man battalions to strike the Seleucids in their vulnerable western flank. While one of these groups engaged the covering cavalry, the other two assailed the enemy formation from the side. Fortunately for the Jews, the bristling phalanx was facing south, and they had appeared to the west. Had they come up directly in front of it, they probably would have been unable to make their countermove without the Syrians noticing and turning to face them. As it was, the Seleucids, still knowing just one way to fight, began to yield in bloody hand-to-hand combat.

There were still some 12,000 soldiers in the Emmaus encampment. These had not expected to have to fight that day, assuming that Gorgias's phalanx would shield them from the enemy. When the sound of the battle reached the 1,500 Jewish troops to the north, they assumed that their camp was under assault and charged down from their hidden position. This attack caught the numerically superior Syrians completely off guard, and the Seleucid forces were thrown into disarray. By this point, the phalanx was collapsing and its survivors were retreating in terror to the presumed safety of their base. But upon reaching it, they were caught up in grisly pandemonium and cut to pieces among stampeding horses, freight-carrying elephants, and terrified slave traders and their entourages.

After the Jews had killed 3,000 of Nicanor's men, the remnant fled toward the coast. With remarkable presence of mind, Judas forbade his men to pursue them or begin looting—Gorgias had not yet been finished off. Setting fire to the camp, the Jewish warriors sent thick columns of smoke aloft, drawing Gorgias's attention away from the small force harassing him. Fearing that they would soon be caught between two bodies of expert, determined warriors, the remaining Syrians succumbed to fear and joined the mass flight to the seacoast, hotly chased by the entire Judean army. The rebels, meanwhile, helped themselves to the copious treasures of the enemy encampment, including another cache of weapons and other equipment.

Map © 2009 Philip Schwartzberg, Meridian Mapping, Minneapolis, MN

Things looked bleak for the Jews' reeling overlords. Lysias survived the destruction at Emmaeus, made it back to Antioch, and wasted no time in raising another force to resume the conflict. Still hoping to join forces with his Jerusalem garrison, Lysias again set out along the coastal route, but this time he bypassed the lethal uplands and approached through friendly territory, turning north and setting up camp at Beth Zur in southernmost Judea. Intending to march his force of 24,000 men to Jerusalem and establish it as an impregnable nerve center for his forces throughout the region, Lysias began fanning out his troops in all directions from the Holy City, stamping out rebel resistance as it was encountered. The flaw with this scenario was that there was no way to reach Jerusalem without traversing the highlands, and the Jews had massed in the ravine-bisected region around Hirbet Beth Heiran.

Judas divided his troops into four units of varying size, with 5,000 men held in reserve. As the Hellenist columns filed through yet another of Judea's treacherous canyons, they were once again ripe for the slaughter. Lysias had impatiently pulled together a large body of mercenaries and

untested, poorly trained conscripts with the intention of overwhelming the revolt through sheer force of numbers. The size of his force made it easy for the Maccabees to track as it tramped conspicuously along the flat coastal plain. Lysias set himself up for disaster when he turned inland and entered the hill country after establishing a base camp on the upland border.

Trudging uphill under the weight of their armor and weapons, the Seleucids were totally vulnerable when 3,000 screaming Jews charged from a just-bypassed gully. The unprepared, unmotivated invaders at the head of the column quickly broke and commenced streaming back the way they had come. The mass flight panicked the following units, which were then assailed from both sides of the canyon by two 1,000-man Jewish columns. There were still 8,000 Syrians in the base camp, and to engage them Judas had set aside the 5,000-man reserve force. However, the encamped Syrians immediately took to their collective heels as the decimated advance units fled through their midst with hordes of shrieking Jews in eager pursuit. By the time the Jewish warriors reached the enemy bivouac, they found no enemies left to fight—they had all stampeded south to the relative security of the Idumean city of Hebron.

Judas decided not to chase his beaten enemies into hostile territory. He had already killed 5,000 of them in yet another military disaster for the unfortunate Antiochus. With his keen analytical mind, Judas realized that his latest victory had been made much easier than it might have been simply because his counterpart had allowed anger, impatience, arrogance, and fear goad him into acting without adequate preparations. The rebel warlord correctly assumed that his enemy would not yet give up the fight. The Seleucids were certain to reach out to a more capable commander and send him into Judea with another formidable army. But racked by an internal power struggle, the Syrian regime was in no position to embark on another punitive expedition. There was a hiatus in the war, and Judas spent the lull proclaiming to his countrymen their independence and restoring freedom of worship.

There was still the matter of the obtuse Jerusalem garrison, whose members had spent the past few months fortifying themselves and stocking their stronghold with food, water, and weapons while Judas was occupied elsewhere. Part of the Syrian force was entrenched in a fortress called the Acra, and the Jewish patriots attacked this position soon after entering the city following Lysias's defeat. While fighting was still in progress, holy men entered the temple, restored it, and removed the pagan profanations. The Talmud records that after the priests consecrated and rededicated the sanctuary in 164 BC, a one-day supply of oil burned for eight days. This miracle marked the beginning of the festival of Hanukkah.

Syrian forces elsewhere in the area, unwilling to confront the Maccabees in pitched combat, assaulted unarmed civilians in Galilee and Gilead, east of the Jordan River. Dispatching to Galilee a 3,000-man rescue expedition commanded by his brother Simon, Judas took another 8,000 men, forded the Jordan, and embarked for Gilead through the Trans-Jordan desert. Simon quickly defeated a small enemy force, rescued prisoners, and returned with them to Judea. Meanwhile, Judas concentrated on a string of fortified towns east of the Golan Heights. Starting with Bostra, he invested and overwhelmed each settlement's Hellenist occupiers until coming at last to Dathema, which was under siege by Seleucid and Idumean troops who were scaling the outer walls. Slicing into the surprised besiegers from the rear, Judas quickly put them to flight.

Following this impressive showing, Judas cleverly negotiated a treaty of alliance with Rome that recognized Judea as an independent state. For the first time since before the Babylonian exile, the Jews had their own sovereign nation.

He next made an exploratory foray to the northwest and engaged the new Syrian commander, Timotheus, who counterattacked out of the city of Raphon. Judas not only turned back this thrust, but also captured and sacked the city. Having delivered the persecuted Jews of Gilead, he fought his way back through hostile territory and returned to Judea. At about this time, word arrived in Judea of the death of Antiochus and a resultant power struggle between his son Antiochus V Eupator and the late ruler's regent, Phillip. Realizing the already weakened Seleucid Empire was in turmoil, Judas decided to take advantage of his captured siege equipment and invest the Syrian-held fortress at Acra.

The next Maccabean attack on the bastion came early in 162 BC. The defenders fought it off, aided by the sizable contingent of Hellenist Jews within the fort who were fearful of being executed as traitors should they be captured alive. After the initial storming attempt, Judas reassembled his soldiers into siege positions to compel a slower but inevitable surrender. Syrian agents escaped from Acra and made their way back to Antioch, where they begged Lysias to relieve the embattled defenders.

The Maccabees had not expected Lysias to leave his capital until after settling with Phillip, but Phillip was off campaigning against Lysias's forces in the east and was momentarily out of the way. Mustering an army of 30,000 heavily armed men and 30 war elephants, Lysias set out for Jerusalem via the same route he had taken the last time, approaching from the south. This army attacked the border town of Beth Zur, forcing Judas to leave off besieging Acra and hurry to meet the unanticipated threat. Evidently thinking that the best way to surprise his enemies was to act conventionally, Judas did not attempt to relieve Beth Zur, but instead took up positions 12 miles south of Jerusalem at Beth Zecharia. After securing Beth Zur, Lysias marched out to meet his longtime nemesis. Having ruefully learned his lesson, he deployed units on the flanking high ground to screen him from any more avalanches of screaming rebels cascading onto unguarded flanks.

For the first time, the Maccabees were fighting a defensive battle. It was an unfamiliar sensation, and the hulking, armored elephants unnerved them. In desperation, Judas's younger brother Eleazar ducked under one of the behemoths and thrust his sword into the animal's chest, killing it. The pachyderm fell and crushed the young warrior—the first of Judas's siblings to die in combat. The Syrians were finally fighting the kind of battle for which they had been trained, and they pressed irresistibly forward, crushing the Jews by force of numbers.

Ignoring any pangs of pride or wounded ego, Judas wisely ordered retreat. Electing to not try and defend Jerusalem with his battered army, he stopped just long enough to fortify the Temple Mount before withdrawing to Gophna. When they entered the city, the invaders immediately assailed the temple garrison, but they were bloodily repulsed. The insurgents were praying the Seleucids would not learn of a serious shortage of food and other supplies that was endangering the entire revolution, and far-

away upheavals again came to the Jews' aid.

Messengers informed Lysias that Phillip was en route back to Antioch, fully intending to take over the government. On the brink of his sorely needed and unexpected victory, the Seleucid leader was trapped in a dilemma, but he devised an ingenious solution. Realizing that the revolutionaries would be unaware of the situation with Phillip, he offered a truce to the surprised Judas, promising a degree of autonomy and religious freedom. After the Maccabees accepted the terms, Lysias hurried back to Antioch, crushed Phillip's forces, and consolidated his position as Seleucid ruler—briefly.

Emperor-to-be Antiochus V Eupator was just nine years old in 162 BC when his cousin Demetrius was freed by the Romans, who had been holding him as a political hostage, and returned to Antioch. Demetrius quickly gained popular support, seized power, and executed Lysias and the young Antiochus. Demetrius reimposed the oppression in Judea, and the Maccabees, who had ruefully sworn off conventional tactics, resumed their irregular resistance, ambushing and routing a large Syrian force commanded by General Nicanor just north of Jerusalem in the spring of 161 BC. Nicanor's head and hands were hung from the temple gate.

Following this impressive showing, Judas cleverly negotiated a treaty of alliance with Rome that recognized Judea as an independent state. For the first time since before the Babylonian exile, the Jews had their own sovereign nation. Demetrius feared a Rome-supported Judea might induce another of his inherited enemies, Egypt, to join the alliance and invade his empire through Judea. Basing his actions on reports that the Maccabean army was disbanding, Demetrius dispatched a 24,000-man expedition in the spring of 160 BC. Sure enough, Judas was unable to mobilize more than 3,000 troops. Joining battle at Elasa, about six miles east of Beth Horon, the armies clashed briefly before the Jewish warriors, demoralized by the eight-to-one odds, broke and fled, leaving their peerless commander with just 800 valiant veterans. Leading his small band in a desperate charge on the enemy's right flank, Judas killed a great number of Seleucids but failed in the crucial objective of killing their commander, General Bacchides. Instead, Judas and his little group of loyalists were wiped out.

It had taken the Syrians far too long, but in Bacchides they finally found a leader capable of concocting viable strategy and instilling needed flexibility into Syrian formations. Considering the overpowering numerical advantage

The Granger Collection, New York

Maccabean troops attack a Syrian caparisoned elephant at the Battle of Beth Zur in 162 BC. Engraving after Gustave Doré.

the Syrians enjoyed in that April clash, it could be said the Maccabees were drawn into a trap even if they realized it from the beginning, for they could not afford to allow this pagan multitude to rampage unchecked throughout Judea. Confronting it when they did, before they had time to assemble sufficient soldiers, was unavoidable—and fatal.

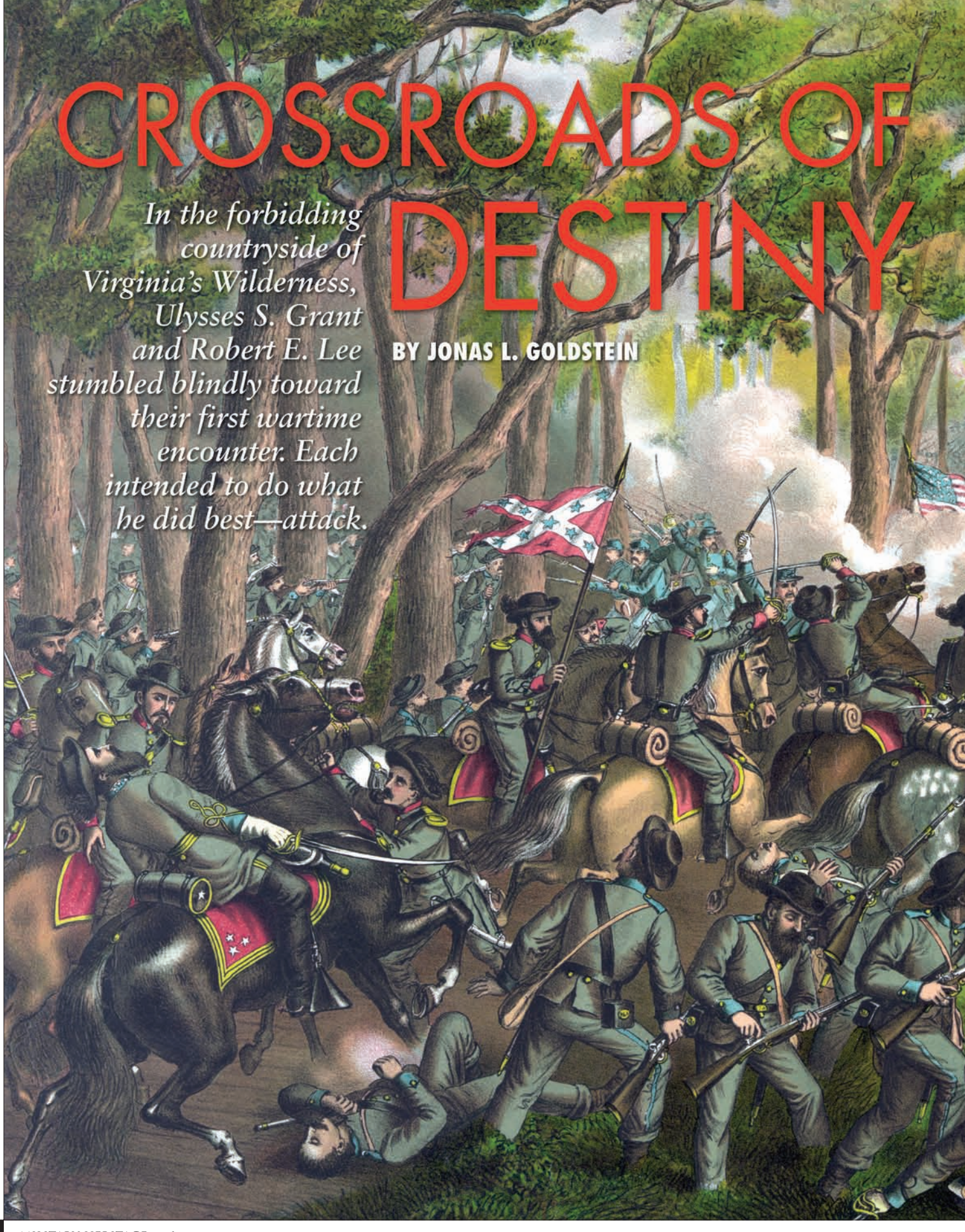
For no small reason, Judas was called "the Hammer." His unparalleled battlefield adaptability, proficiency in exploiting an enemy's mistakes, ability to fight at night, and effective use of terrain, surprise, and espionage made him the bane of succeeding Seleucid commanders. After Judas's death, his brothers Jonathan and Simon eventually achieved the Judean dream of religious and political independence. It was the first time in recorded history that a subject people had won a revolutionary war for religious freedom.

Because he fought in just one poorly chronicled war, Judas Maccabeus has largely been lost among the giant shadows cast by Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar, Genghis Khan, Napoleon Bonaparte, Shaka Zulu, and other great conquerors. Unlike them, Judas was a man of noble motives who fought because he had no other choice. Unfettered by outmoded convention, he taught himself and his followers to fight via methods too subtle to be perceived by their powerful but outmoded adversaries. Today's high-tech military strategists would be well served to study the humble partisan leader of long ago, who wanted nothing more for himself and his people than to be allowed to live and worship in peace. □

CROSSROADS OF DESTINY

In the forbidding countryside of Virginia's Wilderness, Ulysses S. Grant and Robert E. Lee stumbled blindly toward their first wartime encounter. Each intended to do what he did best—attack.

BY JONAS L. GOLDSTEIN



The year 1864 was shaping up to be a critical one in the three-year-long Civil War. During the previous year, Federal armies had gained control of the Mississippi River and consolidated their grip on Tennessee. Only two significant Confederate military forces still remained in the field. In northern Georgia, General Joseph E. Johnston's Army of Tennessee, having retreated from Chattanooga, was engaging Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman's Union forces on their drive toward Atlanta. Meanwhile, in the eastern theater, General Robert E. Lee's redoubtable Army of Northern Virginia was opposed by the long-suffering Army of the Potomac, still buoyed by its great, if incomplete, victory at Gettysburg six months earlier.

In February 1864, the ever-aggressive Lee planned once again to take the offensive. Recognizing that the Confederacy lacked the resources to gain a permanent advantage by a lengthy campaign in northern territory, he aimed to embarrass the enemy and prevent them from initiating a major campaign of their own. In mid-March, Lee learned that Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant had assumed command of all Union armies. Toward the end of the month, northern newspapers reported that the new Federal commander intended to make his headquarters in the field with the Army of the Potomac. This indicated that Virginia would be his main theater of operations. Southern scouts confirmed that Grant had indeed joined Maj. Gen. George G. Meade at Culpeper Court House, a small Virginia town immediately north of the Rapidan River. Lee monitored Meade's growing buildup with concern but not panic.

Confederate Lieutenant General James Longstreet, left, reels in the saddle after being wounded during the desperate fight at Orange Court House on May 6, 1864. Lithograph by Kurz & Allison.

All photos: Library of Congress

In Washington, D.C., Grant was the toast of the town. President Abraham Lincoln had summoned the victor of Fort Donelson, Vicksburg, and Chattanooga to the Union capital to receive his well-earned promotion to lieutenant general—the first man since George Washington to hold that exalted rank in the United States Army. In promoting his fellow Illinoisan, Lincoln had ignored widespread rumors of Grant's occasional binge drinking. "I can't spare this man, he fights," the president had said, joking that perhaps he should find out what brand of whiskey Grant drank and send a case to the rest of his generals to stiffen their resolve. The soldiers in camp were less impressed. One private noted the new commander's less than impressive physical appearance. "Of all the officers in the group," he said, "I should have selected almost anyone but him as the general who won Vicksburg. But for his straps, which came down too far in front of his shoulders on his rusty uniform, I should have taken him for a clerk at headquarters rather than a general." Said another private: "He cannot be worse than his predecessors; and, if he is a fighter, he can find all the fighting he wants. We have never complained that Lee's men would not fight."

The main Union objective was the Confederate capital of Richmond, located approximately 70 miles to the south. The Union Army had been stymied along the Rapidan since the previous fall. What had prevented the Federals from advancing was not the river itself, but the strength of the defensive works at Mine Run, works that Lee, a former engineer, had converted into a natural fortress. High hills on the southern bank lined with interlocking rifle pits and artillery positions made crossing the river extremely difficult. If the Confederate leader could secure Richmond against secondary threats, he proposed to President Jefferson Davis on April 15, "I could draw [Lt. Gen. James] Longstreet to me and move right against the enemy across the Rapidan. Should God give us a crowning victory here, all their plans would be dissipated, and their troops now collecting on the waters of the Chesapeake would be recalled to the defense of Washington."

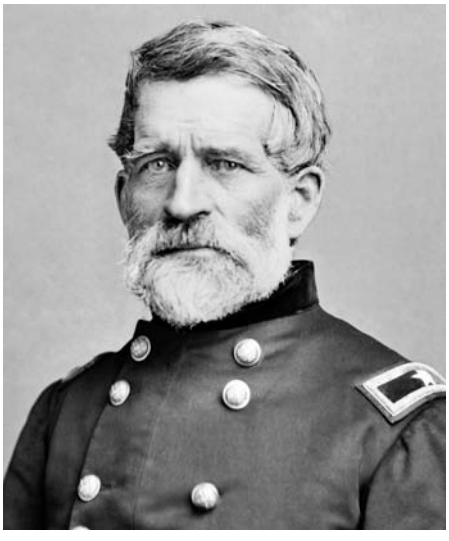
The instrument to accomplish this was the Army of Northern Virginia. Heading Lee's three corps were Lt. Gens. Longstreet, Richard S. Ewell, and Ambrose Powell Hill. Lee's premier fighting unit was Longstreet's I Corps, which came primarily from the Deep South. On the face of it, Lee's plan was logical. A few miles below the Rapidan fords on Lee's right sprawled a densely wooded area known as the Wilderness of Spotsylvania. From the Confederate perspective, this location offered an ideal battlefield. Meade's artillery and cavalry would be severely handicapped, and he would have difficulty applying his superior numbers in force. The 70-mile-wide, 30-mile-long stretch of second-growth timber, wiry underbrush, brackish water, and barren soil was all too familiar to the Union soldiers—they had suffered a disastrous defeat there at Chancellorsville exactly one year earlier. Indians legends said the Wilderness was haunted, and no one who had survived the previous spring's debacle doubted it in the least.

RIGHT: Brigadier General Lysander Cutler commanded the famous Irish Brigade. BELOW: Lieutenant General A.P. Hill headed III Corps of the Army of Northern Viginia.

Grant, who was probably the least superstitious man in either army, had no fixed plan of campaign beyond the general idea of avoiding the strong defensive line occupied by Lee at Mine Run and finding a way to draw him into an open battle. "My general plan," he recalled later, "was to concentrate all the force possible against the Confederate armies in the field. To get possession of Lee's army was the first great object. With the capture of his army Richmond would necessarily follow." The only question was where. Federals had mustered nearly 120,000 men and 316 guns. The Army of the Potomac had been organized into three corps—the II, V, and VI—commanded respectively by Maj. Gens. Winfield Scott Hancock, Gouverneur K. Warren, and John Sedgwick. The IX Corps, reorganized under Maj. Gen. Ambrose E. Burnside, was intended to function as a mobile reserve. The Confederates, for their part, had only 64,000 men and 274 guns. The Army of Northern Virginia stood on the east side of the Rapidan River. Mine Run was on its right, extending north. The Federals realized the difficulty involved and wanted to avoid fighting in the Wilderness if at all possible.

Grant planned to send Meade's Army of the Potomac, supplemented by Burnside's corps, directly against Lee, while Maj. Gen. Benjamin E. Butler's Army of the James advanced up its namesake river toward Richmond and another army under Maj. Gen. Franz Sigel threatened the Confederates' western flank. Lee, meanwhile, decided to wait and strike Grant when he crossed the Rapidan. The river drew an unofficial boundary between Union-held northern Virginia and the rest of the state still under Confederate control. Lee's troops remained behind their works lining the river's southern bank, just above the village of Orange Court House. On the river's far side stood Meade's army.

On May 4, Lee sent another letter to Jefferson Davis, stating: "You will already have learned that the army of General Meade is in motion, and is crossing the Rapidan on our right, whether with the intention of attacking, or moving toward Fredericksburg, I am not able



to say. But it is apparent that the long threatened effort to take Richmond has begun, and that the enemy has collected all his available force to accomplish it. Success in resisting the chief armies of the enemy will enable us more easily to recover the country now occupied by him." Other than writing to the Confederate president, Lee made no other preliminary moves to reunite his scattered army, which was still in various winter camps at Orange Court House, Gordonsville, and Clark's Mountain. Perhaps Lee underestimated his new opponent—he had usually faced inferior generals on the battlefield. Lee's I Corps commander, James Longstreet, had no such misperceptions. He had been Grant's closest friend in the prewar army and had even served as best man in Grant's wedding to a Longstreet cousin, Julia Boggs Dent of St. Louis. He understood Grant in a way that Lee did not. "That man," he warned, "will fight us

Members of the Union VI Corps fight in the deep woods. Sketch by battlefield artist Alfred A. Waud.

every day and every hour till the end of the war." Lee ignored the prescient warning.

By the afternoon of May 4, the first critical phase of the Federal offensive had been completed: the crossing of the Rapidan at Ely's and Germanna Fords. The cavalry had crossed the night before to establish a bridgehead and scout ahead. Once on the opposite bank, each of the Federal corps had headed in a southeasterly direction but had gone only a short distance before making camp. Warren's corps went only as far as Wilderness Tavern, six miles south of the river. At the same time, Hancock stopped his command a shorter distance from the Rapidan at defeat-haunted Chancellorsville. Sedgwick, meanwhile, followed Warren's route and had encamped along the road leading to Wilderness Tavern, one of the few landmarks in the gloomy woods. The army's supply train was not expected to be south of the river until late on the fifth.

The Union soldiers, many of them as green as grass, camped for the night amid the disinterred remains of their hastily buried comrades at Chancellorsville. As night thickened, they grew uneasy, seized by "a sense of ominous dread which many of us found impossible to shake off." "It was a very easy matter to discover just where pools of blood had been," noted one soldier, "for those particular spots were marked by the greenest tufts of grass and brightest flowers to be found upon the field." A veteran cavalryman pried up a bullet-shattered skull from a shallow grave and rolled it across the ground at the new men. "That is what you are all coming to," he said, "and some of you will start toward it tomorrow." Another veteran warned that "the wounded are liable to be burned to death." Few soldiers slept well that night.

Grant and his personal entourage crossed the river at Germanna Ford. In contradistinction to his normal wear, Grant had pulled on a pair of yellow dress gloves and a black slouch hat with a gold cord to mark the occasion. Illinois Congressman Elihu B. Washburne, his political mentor, rode at Grant's side, dressed entirely in black and causing the soldiers in line to wonder aloud if the somberly dressed stranger was Grant's "personal undertaker." A northern newspaperman asked the general how long he thought it would take to reach Richmond. Grant responded good-naturedly: "About four days—that is, if General Lee becomes a party to the agreement; but [if] he objects, the trip will undoubtedly be prolonged."

Providing all went as expected, Grant would meet Lee's forces where the North's numerical superiority could be used to its advantage. However, that afternoon he and Meade made a critical decision that shaped the nature of the upcoming battle. Meade's original plan called for the infantry to march at a sustained pace throughout the day. They had started just after midnight, and a forced march would bring them through the Wilderness before sunset. Meade's timetable assumed that Lee would be taken by surprise and would react slowly, allowing the Army of the Potomac to maintain the initiative.

If Lee moved first, however, all those careful calculations would be upset. The problem was the massive army wagon train. The infantry might clear the Wilderness by nightfall, but it would be impossible for its wagons to do so. Accordingly, and with Grant's approval, Meade halted the march in the afternoon to allow the wagons to catch up, thus giving Lee the opportunity to initiate hostilities in the Wilderness, where odds favoring the Confederates were the greatest. The Confederate leader already had decided to divide his army, outnumbered 2-to-1, and march toward the Federals. The scheme entailed risk, but Lee counted on the dense underbrush of the terrain to offset Grant's considerable advantage in troops and weapons.

The Wilderness was traversed by four principal roads. Two ran south from the Rapidan, and two ran east from Orange to Fredericksburg. The Army of the Potomac was marching on the roads

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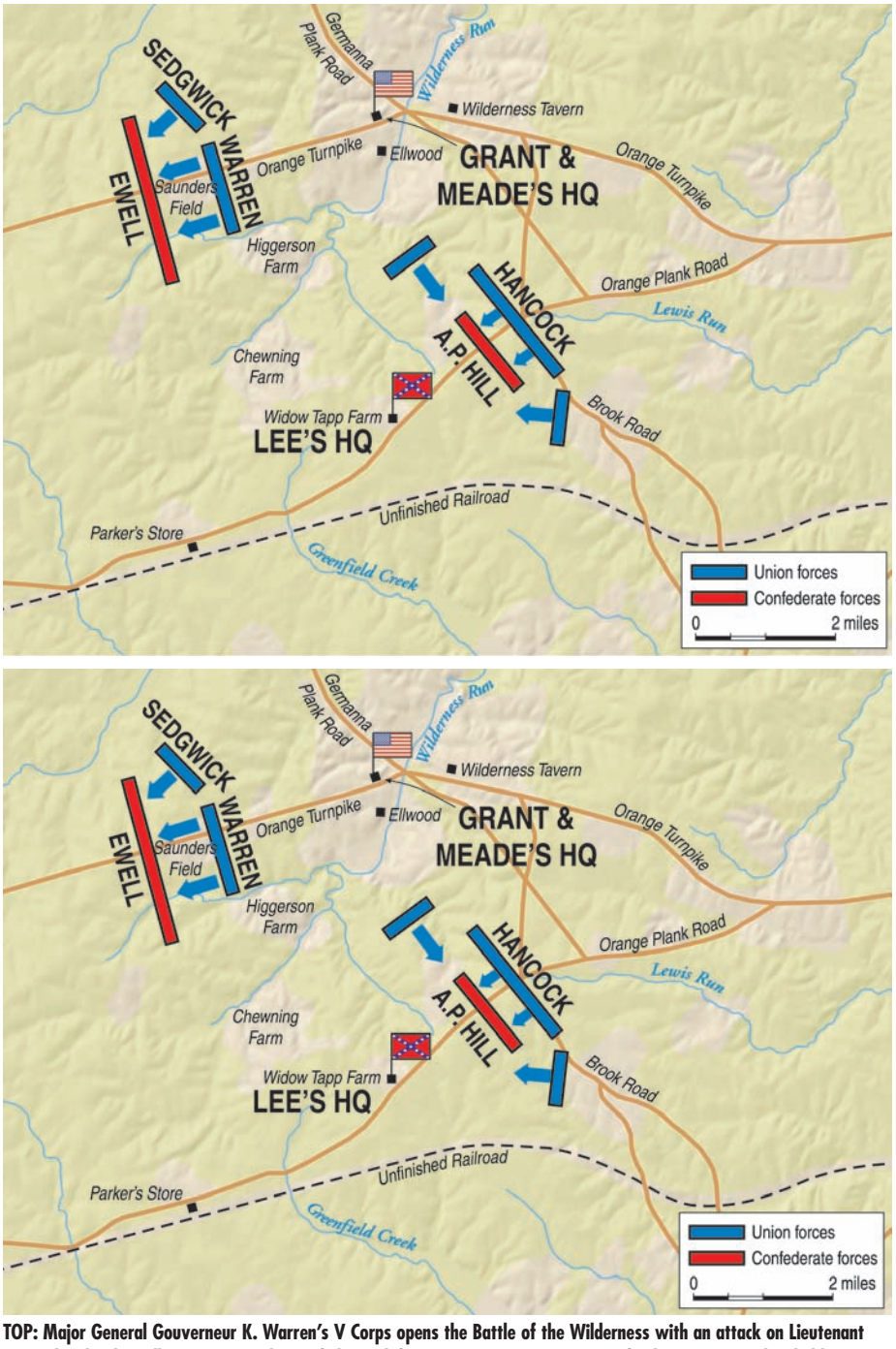


TOP: Major General Gouverneur K. Warren's V Corps opens the Battle of the Wilderness with an attack on Lieutenant General Richard Ewell's II Corps on the Confederate left. ABOVE: James Longstreet's fresh troops, spearheaded by General David M. Gregg's Texas brigade, retake lost ground on May 6.

running south. Lee would soon move along those heading east. Both sets of roadways intersected in the vicinity of Wilderness Tavern, a ramshackle stagecoach depot five miles below the Rapidan. If Lee were to encounter Meade in the midst of the Wilderness, he would have to take steps to stall the Union advance. Otherwise the Federals might march through the Wilderness before he had sufficient opportunity to maneuver his own army into place.

Grant and Meade had crossed the Rapidan below the main position of Lee's army, Confederate headquarters being at Orange Court House. After crossing, while Grant was waiting for lunch, a courier brought a message from a signal corps station in the rear, which had intercepted and deciphered a dispatch from a Confederate station on Clark Mountain. It stated that Ewell, commanding the left wing corps of Lee's army, was already moving forward, apparently meaning to cut the Federal line of march. Lee's purpose was to pin Grant in place with Ewell and Hill, then swing his entire army into action. Grant immediately ordered Burnside to force march his IX Corps from the Rapidan and rejoin the rest of the army.

Early on May 5, Ewell deployed along the western edge of a clearing named Saunders' Field. Meade ordered Warren's V Corps to attack immediately, but the troops were unable to form rapidly in the woods. First light came early in springtime Virginia, and by 5 AM, Union columns had been on the march to take their positions. Warren rode to the front and reluctantly ordered the advance to begin. The slightly built general had been born in New York and attended the United States Military Academy at West Point. During the war, he had served during the Peninsula campaign and at Fredericksburg. He had initiated the defense of Little Round Top during the Battle of Gettysburg, an act that had won him a promotion to major general.

The inbred caution of the Army of the Potomac prevented the hammer blows Grant wanted from being delivered promptly, and the time lag worked to Lee's advantage. Ewell's II Corps moved east toward Grant along Orange Turnpike. Lee reminded Ewell that he was not to bring on a major engagement until Longstreet arrived, instructing him: "Captain [R.E.] Wilbourn reports everything moving to our right except cavalry, if so, better move the divisions to occupy lines at Mine Run, and be prepared for action." By then, Grant was advancing in force to meet the thrust on his right. Ewell's corps advanced until 10 o'clock, when suddenly it was brought to a halt about two miles from where the old Ford Road crossed the turnpike. Ahead, Federal troops were moving south through the intersection of the two roads. Just hours before, Union headquarters had learned of Ewell's advance up the Orange Turnpike, and Meade had immediately ordered Warren, whose divisions, had already moved past the intersection of the turnpike and Germanna Ford Road, to reverse his course and attack the Southern force.

Meade again ordered Warren to attack immediately, but his troops had trouble forming in the woods. It was nearly 11 AM before V Corps's lead division first made contact with Brig. Gen. John M. Jones's Confederate brigade. "A red volcano yawned before us," one Maine soldier remembered, "and vomited forth fire, and lead, and death." The woods became a bedlam of noise, so loud that the soldiers could not even hear their own rifle fire. The furious Union assault caught Jones's troops by surprise. They broke for the rear. Before long

the 5th Confederate Brigade, which had been posted behind Jones, was also caught in the confusion and left in a temporary state of panic. Jones, seeing his line waver, rode to the front to encourage his troops. Soon he was cornered by two Pennsylvania privates, who demanded that he surrender. Refusing to hand over his sword to men of lesser rank, Jones remained on horseback. Unimpressed, the Northerners simply shot him off his horse and stole his sword. Jones died immediately.

The entire II Corps was in a desperate situation. Ewell quickly brought up Brig. Gen. John B. Gordon's brigade, which managed to check the Union advance. Spearheading Gordon's advance was a leather-lunged private from the 26th Georgia. Nicknamed "Gordon's Bull," James E. Spivey emitted a truly awe-inspiring battle cry, described by listeners as "a kind of scream or low, like a terrible bull, with a kind of neigh mixed along with it, and nearly as loud as a steam whistle." Inspired by Spivey's unearthly yelling, Gordon's men struck the famous Iron Brigade, commanded by Brig. Gen. Lysander Cutler. For the first time in its proud history, the Iron Brigade broke and ran, leaving behind a pair of silver bugles that the Georgians scooped up and added to their own regimental band. Ewell's fortunes improved as other brigades, including Brig. Gen. Cullen A. Battle's command, joined the fight. Before long the Federals were outflanked and forced to withdraw. Union reinforcements consisting of two full divisions were moving by then, but they could do nothing to stall the Confederate counterattack.

Ewell's men had regained the ground lost at the outset of the struggle. At that point, he halted his brigades where they were and had them dig in on both sides of the road. Eventually, the Confederate works extended for about a mile north and south of the turnpike. For the balance of the day, Warren attempted without success to drive Ewell's corps from its defenses. Ewell, born and raised in Virginia, was another West Point graduate, having later served in the cavalry during the Mexican War. He had joined the Confederacy in 1861 and was promoted to brigadier general. As a major general, he had commanded a division during Stonewall Jackson's inspired Shenandoah Valley campaign. A severe knee wound during the Battle of Groveton had resulted in the amputation of Ewell's right leg, but he returned to duty as a lieutenant general in May 1863. Subsequently, he fought at Gettysburg with questionable results before participating in the Wilderness battle.

In the late afternoon, while the fighting along Orange Turnpike was winding down, another battle was developing a few miles to the south in

Union soldiers carry their wounded comrades to safety from the burning woods of the Wilderness in this Waud sketch.

the vicinity of the junction of Brock Road and Orange Plank Road. There, Maj. Gen. Henry Heth's division of Hill's corps was being attacked by both Sedgwick's VI and Hancock's II Corps. The attack, like the one launched against Ewell, came without much warning. At about one o'clock, the Confederates made contact with the skirmishers of Brig. Gen. George W. Getty's division of the VI Corps, which had halted and deployed in line of battle. Skirmishing continued until an intense battle developed. The Federal assault fell entirely upon Heth's unsupported division. It was, said one North Carolina soldier, "a butchery pure and simple, unrelieved by any of the arts of war." To another Confederate, it was not even a formal battle, but simply "bushwhacking on a grand scale."

Although outnumbered more than 3-to-1, the Confederates successfully halted the enemy's advance, while inflicting heavy casualties of their own. The Union leadership committed more men into the fight, thereby increasing the pressure on the already hard-pressed defenders. Hancock advanced again and the weight of the attack began to tell. A portion of Heth's force was in dan-

"It seemed as though Christian men had turned to fiends, and, hell itself had usurped the place of earth."

ger of giving way at a critical moment. Hancock then launched a massive frontal attack and later hit the enemy's left flank, ultimately resulting in the rout of the Confederate III Corps. Hancock, born in 1824 in Pennsylvania, had distinguished himself at Gettysburg. Grant considered him in many ways his most able general. To prevent reinforcements from being provided to assist Hill, simultaneous attacks were made against other Confederate units. The Southern right offered some resistance at first, but the strength of the Federal offensive quickly began to tell.

With only two divisions, Hill fought a stubborn defensive action against overwhelming odds and was saved by the arrival of night. By then, as one young Confederate told reinforcements rushing to enter the fight, "dead Yankees were knee deep all over four acres of ground." At that time, Lee ordered Longstreet to abandon his flanking movement and hurry to relieve Hill. Lee assumed that Longstreet would arrive before daylight, and so permitted Hill's tired men to rest without repairing their lines. Lee sent a telegram to Confederate Secretary of War James Seddon, reporting the fighting. "The enemy crossed the Rapidan yesterday," said Lee. "A strong attack was made upon Ewell, who repulsed it. The enemy subsequently concentrated upon General Hill, who resisted repeated and desperate assaults. By the blessing of God we maintained our position."

Grant, understandably, had a different view of the situation. "I feel pretty well satisfied with

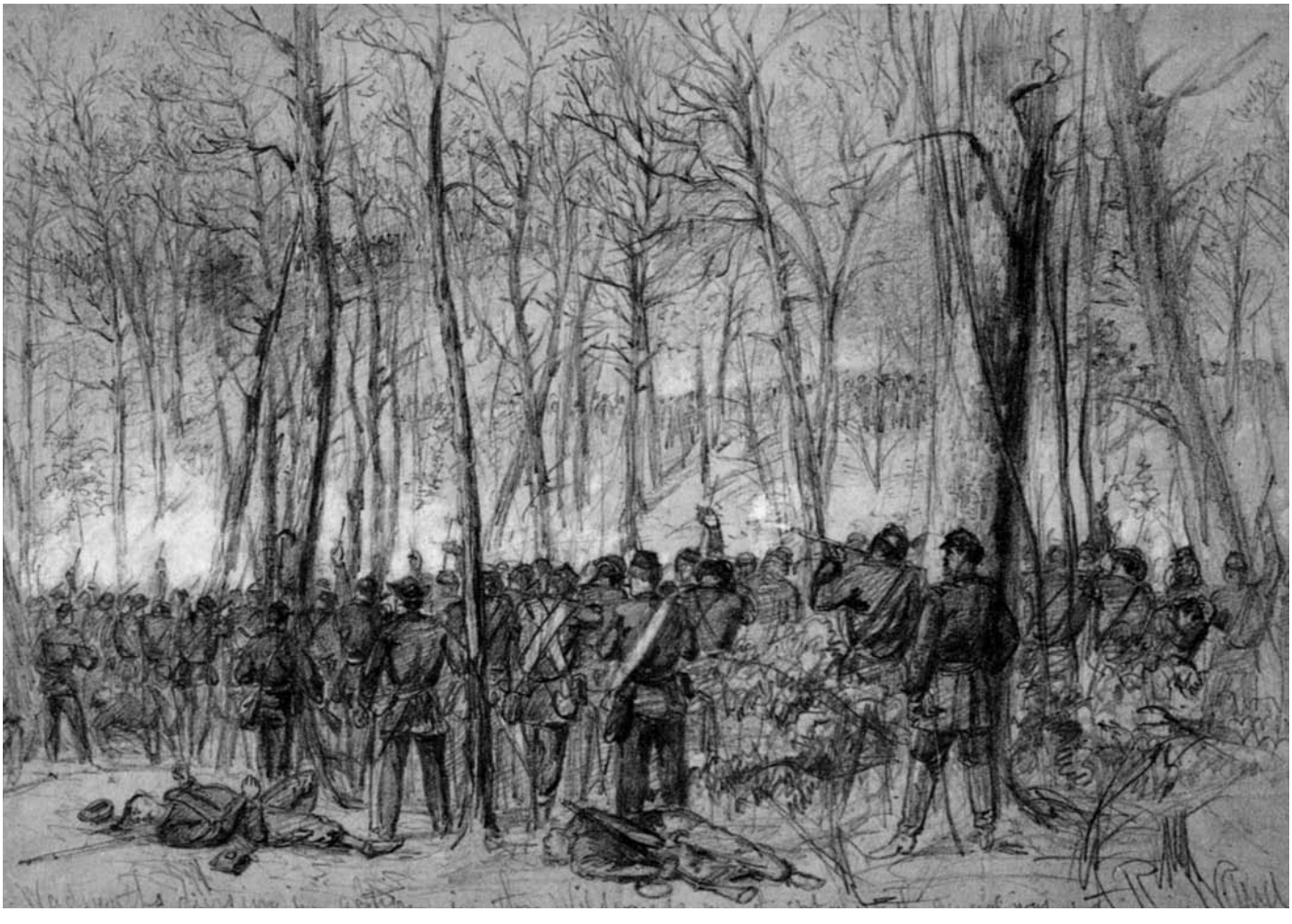
the results of the engagement," he told Meade, "for it is evident that Lee attempted by a bold movement to strike this enemy in the flank, but in this he failed." Grant's plan for May 6 was simple enough: Warren and Sedgwick would renew their attack against the Confederate II Corps, hold Ewell in place, and prevent any reinforcements from being sent to Hill. Hancock, meanwhile, reinforced with all available forces, would deliver the principal Union attack along the Orange Plank Road and annihilate Hill before Longstreet arrived. Meanwhile, Grant recommended that everyone try to get a little sleep. "We shall have a busy day tomorrow," Grant advised, "and I think we had better get all the sleep we can tonight. I am a confirmed believer in the restorative qualities of sleep, and always like to get at least seven hours of it." In the pitch-black battlefield around him, thousands of Union and Confederate soldiers were already sleeping their last sleep.

Longstreet's corps, which since its arrival from Tennessee had been posted at Gordonsville, 20 miles distant from Hill, was delayed in reaching the scene. At first light, Hancock attacked. With the help of Wadsworth, he easily overwhelmed Hill and poured into Widow Tapp's Field, where Lee had his headquarters. "We are driving them beautifully," Hancock cried. "Tell Meade we are driving them most beautifully." At the last moment, Longstreet's Confederates reached the clearing. David M. Gregg's Texas brigade led the way. The Texans cheered lustily as their line of battle passed through their comrades' disordered columns. Lee himself rode out to greet them. "Who are you, my boys?" he cried. "Texas boys!" they yelled back. "Texans always move them!" Lee cried. Enlivened by the greeting, Lee spurred his horse through an opening in the trenches and followed Gregg's men as they moved rapidly forward. When the men recognized him, they cried: "Go back, General Lee! Go back! We won't go on unless you go back!" With some difficulty, Lee's aides managed to turn around the general's horse. Longstreet, coming upon the scene, thought that Lee was "off his balance." Finally, the Confederate leader retired out of danger.

By 10 o'clock, Longstreet's men had regained the ground lost earlier in the day. While Hill's men filled the gap between Longstreet and Ewell, Longstreet's fresh troops pushed back the flustered Union troops. Longstreet first repulsed Hancock, then launched a surprise attack against the Union southern flank from an unfinished railroad gradient. The Federal right wing was driven back in confusion. "The terrible tempest of disaster swept on down the Union line," one New Yorker recalled, "beating back brigade and brigade until upwards of twenty thousand veterans were fleeing, every man for himself."

Having achieved his objective, Longstreet planned a flanking movement to force the enemy from the crucial intersection of the Brock and Plank Roads. Instructions were issued to the various brigade commanders, and Longstreet moved up the Plank Road nearer the action. "We shall smash them now," Brig. Gen. Micah Jenkins told a fellow staff officer. Suddenly, some of his men opened fire on some stragglers from another Confederate brigade who had been mistaken for the enemy.

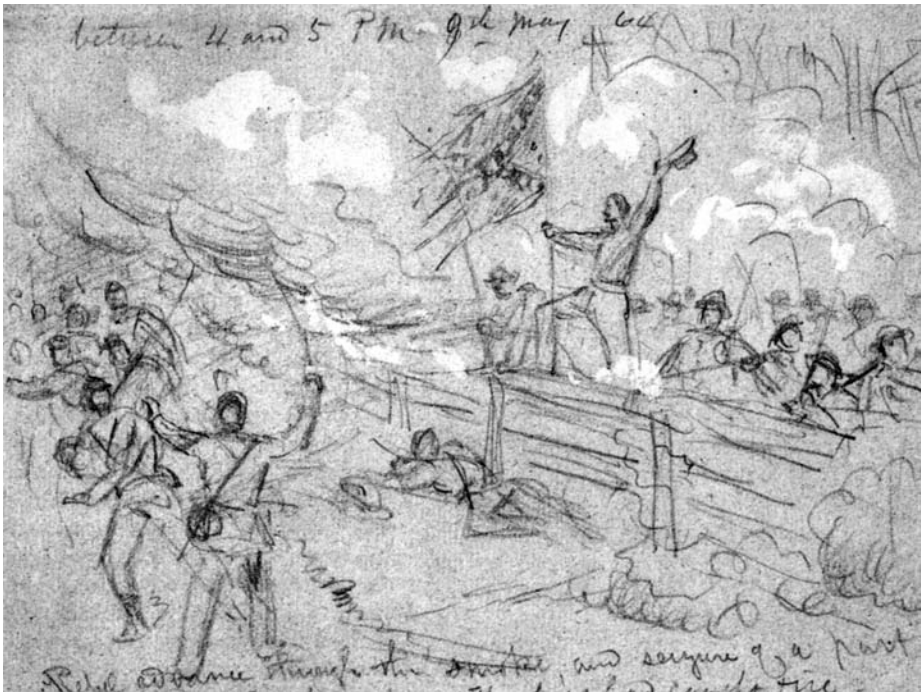
General James Wadsworth's division continues fighting near the spot where he was fatally wounded.



Longstreet rode ahead to stop the firing. Mistaking the approaching horsemen for Union cavalry, the Confederates in the woods opened fire, blasting Jenkins from his saddle with a fatal head wound and striking Longstreet in the shoulder and throat. "At the moment that Jenkins fell I received a severe shock from a minié ball passing through my throat and right shoulder," Longstreet recalled. "The blow lifted me from the saddle, and my right arm dropped to my side, but I settled back to my seat, and started to ride on, when in a minute the flow of blood admonished me that my work for the day was done. As I turned to ride back, members of the staff, seeing me about to fall, dismounted and lifted me to the ground."

Longstreet gasped out a final order directing his men to take the Brock Road, but his wounding had broken the Confederate momentum. When the gray-clad troops finally resumed their advance some four hours later, the results were disastrous. They ran into a strengthened Federal line and, after a difficult struggle, were repulsed. The fighting now settled down on the Southern right. Lee once again attacked Hancock, who was entrenched along the Brock Road. A portion of Hancock's works ignited, and Southerners poured through the breach, only to be driven back by well-placed Union artillery. Fighting closed around 6 PM. Shortly before dark, Gordon assaulted the northern end of Grant's line and overran a portion of Sedgwick's corps. Darkness ended the attack. With the repulse of Gordon's attack on the Union right, the two-day Battle of the Wilderness came to a close.

Both sides spent the whole day of May 7 straightening out their positions, but that night Grant withdrew to the northeast. Lee had fought Grant to impasse and occupied a strong position along high ground. It was clear to Union leaders that continued attempts to force their way through the Wilderness would be extremely costly, so the Northern army simply maneuvered to a route where it could attack in open country. After dark, Grant started south toward the crossroads hamlet of Spotsylvania Courthouse, intending to interpose himself between Lee and Richmond. "I can certainly drive Lee back into his works," Grant told his staff, "but I shall not assault him there; he would have all the advantages in such a fight. If he falls back and entrenches, my notion is to move promptly toward the left. This will, in all probability, compel him to try and throw himself between us and Richmond, and in such a movement I hope to be able to attack him in a more open country, and outside of his breastworks."



Confederate troops swarm over Federal breastworks at the height of their May 6 assault in the Wilderness.

Grant had suffered a tactical defeat, but he persisted in his strategic goal of attempting to destroy Lee's army. Lee had thwarted a well-provisioned force twice as large as his own, but his grievous loss in men had fatally gutted his offensive capacity. Henceforth, the Army of Northern Virginia would fight defensively. The Federals had suffered 17,666 causalities (2,246 killed, 12,073 wounded), the Confederates, 7,750. In all, five generals were killed, six wounded, and two captured. The deadly logic of Grant's mathematical equation remained the same: the more men he lost, the more men Lee would lose, and Grant had more men to lose. The numbers were all on his side.

For the troops of the Army of the Potomac, the realization that they were moving south—not retreating north again—was uplifting. When Grant and Meade rode past the ranks, wild cheers echoed through the forest. Following the stalemate of the Battle of the Wilderness, the Federal army moved toward a key junction on the way to the Confederate capital of Richmond. The Army of Northern Virginia successfully blocked the way, and the Battle of Spotsylvania Courthouse ensued. Early on May 12, Grant struck hard at "Bloody Angle," trying to eliminate the salient. For almost a week the Federals probed the Confederate flanks, but found no exploitable weakness. The battle, which finally ended on May 20, had been costly. Casualties included 17,400 Federals and 9,600 Confederates.

Grant would write in his memoirs: "More desperate fighting has not been witnessed on this continent than that of the 5th and 6th of May. Our victory consisted in having successfully crossed a formidable stream, almost in the face of an enemy, and in getting the army together as a unit. We gained an advantage on the morning of the 6th, which, if it had been followed up, must have proven very decisive. In the evening the enemy gained an advantage; but was speedily repulsed. As we stood at the close, the two armies were relatively in about the same condition to meet each other as when the river divided them. But the fact of having safely crossed was a victory."

The Battle of the Wilderness marked the beginning of a 40-day campaign that included some of the bloodiest fighting of the Civil War. Grant intended nothing less than a showdown between the Army of the Potomac and the Army of Northern Virginia. In this, Grant said, his design was "to hammer continuously against the armed force of the enemy and its resources, until by mere attrition, if by nothing else there should be nothing left for Lee but an eventual submission to the loyal section of our common country, to the Constitution and the laws." He would make good on his plans, but only after another 11 months of hard fighting. Behind him, in the Wilderness, he left a place where, as his aide Colonel Horace Porter said, "It seemed as though Christian men had turned to fiends, and, hell itself had usurped the place of earth." □

By Al Hemingway

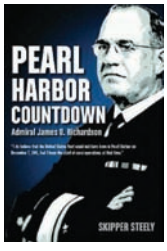
Questions still linger about how much American leaders knew ahead of time about the Japanese sneak attack on Pearl Harbor.

NEARLY SEVEN DECADES AFTER THE SNEAK ATTACK ON PEARL Harbor by the Japanese Navy and Air Force on the morning of December 7, 1941, controversy still surrounds the history-changing event. Numerous books and articles have been written assessing the military and political situation at that time. The nagging question has always remained: "How much did our leaders know ahead of time and, if so, who was to blame for the failure to alert the American fleet in Hawaii?"

ABOVE: Admiral James O. Richardson takes the oath before testifying in the Congressional Pearl Harbor Investigation. BELOW: Devastation of the U.S. fleet.

In Skipper Steely's new book, ***Pearl Harbor Countdown: Admiral James O. Richardson*** (Pelican Publishing Company, Gretna, LA, 2008, 543 pp., photos, notes, index, $35.00, hardcover), readers are given a rare glimpse into what transpired prior to the assault from an individual who had unimpeachable firsthand knowledge: Admiral James O. Richardson, commander of the American fleet in the turbulent days before the onset of World War II.

Born in Paris, Texas, in 1878, Richardson graduated from the United States Naval Academy in 1902. He went on to hold numerous positions before President Franklin D. Roosevelt appointed him commander-in-chief of the U.S. Fleet. Richardson's pleas for more men and supplies and repairs to his ships fell on deaf ears in Washington. He openly disagreed with FDR's decision to station the fleet permanently at Pearl Harbor and argued about what he called the "inadequate anchorages, airfields, recreational venues, and other necessary facilities to care for thousands of sailors."



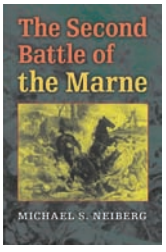
Richardson later wrote: "In 1940, the policy-making branch of the Government in foreign affairs—the President and the Secretary of State—thought that stationing the Fleet in Hawaii would restrain the Japanese. They did not ask their senior military advisors whether it would accomplish such an end. They imposed their decision upon them." The Texas native also spoke out publicly about how the U.S. Navy was totally unprepared for combat. The Axis powers had been in a war mode for years, he said, and in those dark days as the world witnessed the military conquests and ultimate subjugation of the people of Europe and Asia by the Nazis and the Japanese.

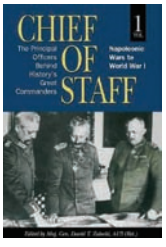
After a meeting with Roosevelt in the fall of 1940, in which Richardson warned that the "senior officers of the navy do not have the trust and confidence in the civilian leadership of this country," the president quietly made arrangements to have him relieved of command. On February 1, 1941, Richardson turned over the responsibility of the American fleet to Admiral Husband E. Kimmel, whose own career would be ruined

Both: National Archives

after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor 10 months later.

How much did Richardson know? Although kept in the dark about many issues, especially the breaking of the Japanese code, he fully realized that the United States would ultimately have to enter hostilities against Japan and Germany. Richardson authored a book of his own entitled *On the Treadmill to Pearl Harbor.* Unfortunately, he later burned his diary and other pertinent documents before his death in 1974 that might have shed important information on the strategy—or lack of one—before the Japanese sneak attack.





Although Richardson did not trust Roosevelt personally, he was careful not to accuse him of intentionally placing the fleet in harm's way at Pearl Harbor. Martin Merston, a reviewer for the *Journal of Historical Review,* wrote of Richardson's book: "It should be noted that Richardson has not in any way suggested that FDR deliberately stationed the Fleet at Pearl in order to 'bait' the Japanese to attack. Such an implication might be derived from a similar set of facts, but Richardson, to his dying day, remained a dedicated naval officer, not a politician, thereby embodying the highest traditions of the Navy."

Military intelligence overlooked, prescient warnings from experienced commanders ignored, administration critics demoted and demonized—it all sounds uncomfortably familiar today. And in the end, FDR actually won the war that had been forced upon him.

The Second Battle of the Marne by Michael S. Neiberg, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, IN, 2008, 217 pp., illustrations, maps, notes, index, $27.95, hardcover.

The beautiful Marne River valley, located in the northeast section of France, was the scene of much bloody combat during World War I. In 1914, British and French forces combined to hold off a massive German assault in the region by the "narrowest of margins." Four years later, in 1918, German General Erich Ludendorff devised a plan that would punch a hole in the Allied lines and enable the Germans to race to Paris and sue for peace from a position of strength. On July 15, 23 German divisions attacked the French Fourth Army in the east. Meanwhile, another 17 divisions struck the French Sixth Army on the western flank. Although, both assaults were eventually stymied, the German drove dangerously close to the French capital.

German casualties in the failed campaign were estimated at 168,000. Allied dead and wounded, including the newly arrived American Expeditionary Force, totaled approximately 120,000. Ludendorff's audacious scheme backfired, and Germany ultimately lost the war.

Neiberg reexamines the role of the French Army and its commander Ferdinand Foch during the second Marne campaign. He notes that the opinions surrounding the French Army were "universally full of praise and admiration" from both British and Americans. He also praises Foch's role during the battle and how he "proved a keen sense of what the Germans opposite him were trying to accomplish."

The Second Battle of the Marne did not alter the outcome of the war for the German government. It only managed to send thousands more Allied and German soldiers to their premature deaths on the killing fields of the serene and pastoral Marne River valley.

Chief of Staff: The Principal Officers Behind History's Great Commanders, Volume 1, edited by Maj. Gen. David T. Zabecki, AUS (Ret.), Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, MD, 2008, 241 pp., illustrations, notes, $39.95, hardcover.

Teamwork is an essential part of any joint undertaking. Individuals from every conceivable occupation and background form bonds to organize and complete a project successfully. The military is no exception. One of the most important roles in the military chain of command is the chief of staff. It is his job to assure that the commander's plans are interpreted correctly so that they can make a smooth transition from battlefield maps to the battlefield itself. This essential duty not only promotes victory, but also saves lives.

This book is a collection of brief profiles of well-known chiefs of staff throughout military history, written by eminent historians and retired military officers, from the Napoleonic era to World War I. Each chapter is preceded by a chronological time line of the person's life.

Perhaps the premier chief of staff was Louis-Alexandre Berthier, who served in that capacity for Napoleon in his numerous campaigns. Described as the quintessential chief of staff, Berthier proved invaluable to the "Little Corporal" as a liaison between the commander and his junior officers. He was extremely efficient and could memorize the locations and troop strength of each command in the army. Unfor-

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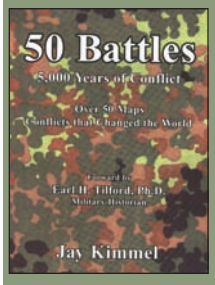

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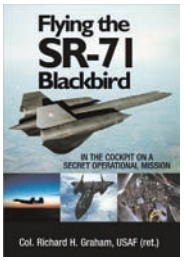
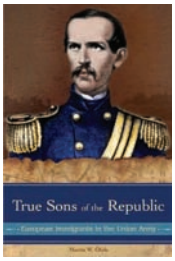
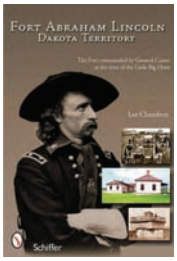
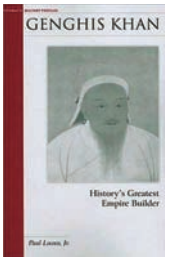
tunately, Berthier, brilliant as Bonaparte's right-hand man, was incapable of commanding an army in the field. Although serving on Napoleon's staff for many years, he never successfully grasped his leader's astonishing talent for strategy and boldness during battle.









Chief of Staff is an enlightening and entertaining work that informs the reader about the important duties of the titular military position. Although it is the commander who receives the accolades if he achieves victory, it is often the man behind the scene, his chief of staff, whose invaluable assistance makes it possible.

Flying the SR-71 Blackbird: In the Cockpit on a Secret Operational Mission by Colonel Richard H. Graham, USAF (Ret.), Zenith Press, Minneapolis, MN, 2008, 304 pp., photos, index, $25.95, hardcover.

When the people of Okinawa first saw the slender, evil-looking black SR-7 for the first time, they would point skyward and exclaim "Habu!" It was the name of a poisonous pit viper of the same color that inhabited the island. Although often referred to as the Blackbird, the nickname of "Habu" stuck. From 1964 until 1989, the SR-71 patrolled enemy skies, logging more than 17,000 sorties. With only 32 of the planes built, and a dozen of these destroyed in accidents, the Blackbird crews constitute a small and unique alumni organization.

The author himself is a member of that distinguished group. For 15 years, he worked within the SR-71 community, commanding the 1st Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron in 1981. Graham has more than 4,600 flying hours to his credit, as well as a host of awards and decorations. He goes into detail about every facet of the aircraft. It could reach a speed of Mach 3 and altitudes of over 80,000 feet. Because the Blackbird could attain such unprecedented altitudes and speed, not one was ever shot down by an enemy surface-to-air missile.

Graham's account of his time as a Blackbird pilot is fascinating. His book is the definitive story of the complex duties and secret missions flown by the crews of the dreaded "Habu."

True Sons of the Republic: European Immigrants in the Union Army by Martin W. Ofele, Praeger Publishers, Westport, CT, 2008, 200 pp., photos, notes, index, $49.95, hardcover.

"Stand by the Union; Fight for the Union; Die for the Union!" was the northern battle cry in the early days of the American Civil War. Thousands flocked to enlist when President Abraham Lincoln called for volunteers to fight after the Confederacy bombarded Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor, South Carolina, in April 1861.

Included in that influx of would-be soldiers were many individuals who were born in Europe or had recently immigrated to the United States. Although numerous ethnic groups joined the Union cause, the two primary European factions were the Germans and Irish. Prominent Irish and German citizens who had prior military experience in earlier European revolutions quickly organized their own regiments and used their national heritage to urge others to enlist.

The famed Irish Brigade was arguably the most famous. Officially known as the 69th New York Infantry, the unit's well-known green flag with the harp and Gaelic battle cry of "Faugh a ballagh," or "Clear the way," gained them notoriety in numerous Civil War engagements.

As the author states, Abraham Lincoln at the end of the war "certainly made no ethnic distinctions when he wrote: 'For the great Republic—for the principle it lives by, and keeps alive—for man's vast future—thanks to all.'"

The Mammoth Book of Inside the Elite Special Forces by Nigel Cawthorne, Running Press, Philadelphia, PA, 2008, 551 pp., $13.95, softcover.

The top secret and fascinating world of Special Forces has always intrigued historians and history buffs alike. Clandestine operations involving shadowy figures dropped behind enemy lines have been the focus of low-intensity conflicts since the end of World War II.

In his newest account of this unique group, the author describes every facet of what it takes to become a member of such elite units. Training is extremely rigorous to weed out those who cannot endure the taxing life of a member of a Special Forces Team. At the Special Air Service training center in Hereford, England, only 10 percent of candidates successfully pass the induction course.

Cawthorne goes into detail on the various weapons that team members carry, the use of demolitions, insertions and extractions, cold weather training, communications equipment, and clothing they wear. He also gives a brief history of each service's elite force and describes the various campaigns they have participated in since their formation.

Covert operations have been an integral part of wartime strategy since man has waged war. Highly trained individuals are in constant demand to gather reliable intelligence for the commanders in the field. The sign over the doorway to the training facility for the U.S. Navy SEALs sums it up best: "The More You Sweat in Peace, The Less You Bleed in War."

Fort Abraham Lincoln Dakota Territory: The Fort Commanded by General Custer at the time of the Little Big Horn by Lee Chambers, Schiffer Books, Atglen, PA, 2008, 172 pp., photos, illustrations, bibliography, $19.99, softcover.

What was it like to live on a military installation in the late 19th century? What was the daily routine for a soldier? What did they eat? What did they wear? How did they enjoy their off-duty hours?

All of these questions are answered in Lee Chambers's newest book. A retired police officer, Chambers developed a strong interest in the American cavalry and its history because his father was a member of one of the last horse-mounted units in the U.S. Army. The author goes into great detail on the day-to-day activities of common soldiers at Fort Abraham Lincoln in Dakota Territory. Originally called Fort McKeen when it was constructed in April 1872, the outpost was redesignated Fort Abraham Lincoln later that same year. Fort Lincoln was quite large for the period, housing not only cavalry but also regiments of infantry to protect settlers from the ever-present threat of hostile Indian actions.

The fort's most noted commander was George Armstrong Custer. On May 17, 1876, Custer, rode out with the 7th Cavalry and one company of infantry to begin his final campaign against the Sioux. Slightly more than a month later, he and 262 of his troopers would be killed at the Battle of the Little Bighorn.

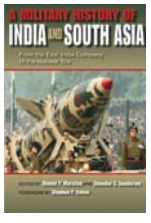
In 1894, Fort Abraham Lincoln was razed, signaling the end of an era in our nation's history. The day of the horse-mounted cavalry would soon be a thing of the past.

Genghis Khan: History's Greatest Empire Builder by Paul Lococo, Jr., Potomac Books, Dulles, VA, 2008, 91 pp., maps, notes, index, $13.95, softcover.

Considered by many to be nothing more than a ruthless conqueror, Genghis Khan in fact was a multifaceted individual. The son of a minor tribal chieftain, he had an uncanny ability to organize and inspire loyalty in his men. He did the unthinkable and eventually formed the isolated clans on the Mongolian Steppes into one extremely mobile and powerful force.

Khan took the time to study and gain a better understanding of his opponents. He understood the important uses of propaganda, economic concerns, and diplomacy to conquer an enemy. However, as the author states: "Let there be no mistake, battle was the primary tool for this conqueror." An incredible warrior, leader, and tactician, Genghis Khan was able to motivate his people and take his mighty hordes to ultimately overrun China, Central Asia and Persia. Whatever his reputation, few military leaders in human history have accomplished so much.

A Military History of India and South Asia: From the East India Company to the Nuclear Era edited by Daniel P. Marston and Chandar S. Sundaram, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, IN, 2008, notes, index, $24.95, softcover.



This book is an eye-opener, dealing with the tumultuous military history of India from the arrival of the British in the 18th century to the present day. A collection of 13 articles, each focusing on a specific period, are featured from prominent scholars and historians.

Great Britain's occupation of India and its concomitant formation of the East India Company is always a captivating topic. Raymond Callahan, history professor at the University of Delaware, goes into exhaustive detail on the Sepoy rebellion of 1857. He notes that the 1857 Mutiny "left a great scar across the face of the British Raj," and would remain in the British psyche until India won its independence in 1947.

Since that time, India has emerged into the nuclear age. Rajesh M. Basrur, director of the Centre for Global Studies at Mumbai University, asserts that it did so primarily because of disputes with neighboring China, although he points out that Sino-Indian relations have improved considerably in the past decade.

The United States is attempting to bring modern-day India into the world sphere as a "responsible nuclear power." Basrur feels certain that India will follow a course of "nuclear restraint and remain a cautious and prudent nuclear power." One can only hope, for everyone's sake, that he is right. □

intelligence

Continued from page 21

to deport Carranza from Canada.

Ambassador Paucefote met with Wilkie along with another man named Calderon Carlisle, who was a legal adviser to the British embassy in Washington. Carlisle, who was fluent in Spanish, verified the authenticity of the letter. But the matter was far from over. On June 11, the governor-general of Canada, Lord Aberdeen, officially asked the Spanish government to recall Carranza to Spain. The Spanish government refused to go along with the request, saying that Carranza was an innocent victim of an American-Canadian plot. In the end, Carranza, as well as Captain Juan Du Bose, who had served as the chief attaché at Spain's Washington embassy, quietly returned home.

In 1899, a year after the end of the Spanish-American War, the final chapter to the Carranza letter was finally revealed. It proved to be a huge embarrassment to both Wilkie and the Secret Service. The *Montreal Star* wrote an article on the activities of one George Bell, a Canadian citizen who made an incredible allegation. Bell said that he had broken into Carranza's Tupper Street residence, stolen the letter, and given it to Wilkie. Bell said that Wilkie had used a forger to falsify the letter. Bell said he was telling his story because Wilkie had failed to pay him the full amount owed, giving him only $50 of the $1,000 he had promised to deliver.

The newspaper published both versions of the letters. The American press soon picked up the *Montreal Star*'s version; reaction was swift. Soon there was another unexpected twist. Ralph Redfern, who was employed by the Secret Service in its Boston office, said that he, not Bell, had pilfered the letter from Carranza's residence. Redfern claimed the original letter, proving American allegations, was on file at Secret Service headquarters, but over the years it mysteriously disappeared.

In the wake of the Carranza affair, Wilkie and the Secret Service took a hit in the press for the way the agents had conducted themselves at the time of the Tupper Street break-in. The Secret Service was damaged even more when its agents failed to protect President William McKinley from an assassin's bullet on September 6, 1901, at the hands of anarchist Leon Czolgosz while the president was attending a trade show in Buffalo, New York. The Montreal spy case was promptly forgotten, but over the years it would become apparent that the resourceful Wilkie had set the blueprint by which American intelligence agents would function, at home and abroad, in the modern age. □

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battle for hue

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of the enemy's strength inside the Citadel.

By February 22, the NVA held only the southwestern corner of the Citadel. A fresh U.S. Marine unit, Capt. John Niotis's Company L, 1/5, was brought in for the final assault on the Imperial Palace. Leading his Marines along the wall and breaching the outer perimeter of the palace, Niotis and his men were hit by devastating fire from the remaining defenders. Niotis pulled his troops back for another assault. While the Marines prepared for their next assault on the imperial city, it was decided, in the name of political expediency, that a South Vietnamese unit should liberate the palace.

On the night of February 23-24 the 2nd Battalion, 3rd ARVN Regiment launched a surprise attack westward along the wall in the southeastern sector of the Citadel. The NVA were caught off guard but quickly recovered. A savage battle ensued, the South Vietnamese valiantly pressing their attack. Deprived of their supply centers to the west, the Communists were forced to pull back. Part of the ground gained by the South Vietnamese was the plot upon which the Citadel flagpole stood. At dawn on February 24, the South Vietnamese flag replaced the Vietcong banner that had flown over the city for 24 days. Later that day, after the 1st ARVN Division reached the outer walls of the Citadel and linked up with elements of the 1st Air Cavalry, the last Communist positions were rapidly overrun by the allied forces and abandoned by the Communists, who fled westward toward sanctuaries in the jungles of Laos.

On March 2, the battle for Hue, the longest sustained infantry battle of the war to that point, was officially declared over. Losses were high. In 26 days of fighting, the ARVN lost 384 men killed, more than 1,800 wounded, and 30 missing. The U.S. Marines suffered 147 dead and 857 wounded, while U.S. Army units lost 74 dead and 507 wounded. The allies claimed that over 5,000 Communists, whose total forces during the fighting within the city had risen to about 12,000 men, had been killed inside the city and another 3,000 killed in battles in the surrounding areas. Much of the once beautiful city lay in ruins; 40 percent of the city was destroyed and 116,000 civilians were left homeless.

The Tet offensive and its attendant attack on Khe Sanh was a staggering failure for the Communists. Of the 84,000 troops committed to Tet, nearly 58,000 had been killed. The Communists had expected the ARVN to crumble, but it had fought hard and well; nothing resembling a general uprising took place. But although the allies had won a great tactical victory, the Tet offensive turned the tide of the war in favor of the Communists. The offensive created a political crisis within the Johnson administration, which became increasingly unable to convince the American public that the Communists had suffered a devastating defeat. All the optimistic assessments made prior to the offensive by the Pentagon and the administration came under heavy criticism and ridicule. On March 31, Johnson stunned the American people by announcing that he would not run for reelection. Moreover, he was severely curtailing the bombing of North Vietnam and would pursue peace negotiations with the enemy, virtually admitting that the war had been lost.

Even the North Vietnamese admitted they had suffered a terrible defeat—more Communist soldiers died in 1968 than did American soldiers during 10 years of involvement. The Communist strategy of bringing local VC cadres into the streets resulted in an unmitigated disaster. Instead of sparking a countrywide insurrection, it ended up a bloodbath, virtually destroying the Vietcong infrastructure in the south and eliminating the VC as an effective fighting force.

The keys to the failure of the general uprising were easy to discern: Hanoi had underestimated the mobility and vastly superior firepower of the allied forces; Hanoi's battle plan was too complex and difficult to coordinate; and instead of concentrating their forces on a few specific targets, they attacked everywhere, resulting in their forces being defeated piecemeal. After the catastrophe, NVA General Tran Van Tra stated bluntly: "We did not correctly evaluate the specific balance of forces between ourselves and the enemy, did not fully realize that our capabilities were limited, and set requirements that were beyond our actual strength."

Hanoi, however, soon realized that its huge sacrifices had not been in vain. Tran Do gave some insight into how defeat was transformed into victory: "In all honesty, we didn't achieve our main objective, which was to spur uprisings throughout the South. Still, we inflicted heavy casualties on the Americans and their puppets, and this was a big gain for us. As for making an impact in the United States, it had not been our intention—but it turned out to be a fortunate result." Despite the overwhelming tactical victory achieved by the allies in Hue and on other battlefields throughout South Vietnam, in the end the Tet offensive proved a strategic defeat for the United States. Ironically, the overwhelming victory achieved by the allies in the Tet offensive marked the beginning of the end for the American presence in Indochina. □

lion's tale

Continued from page 37

an open rowboat under heavy fire and swinging a cutlass over his head.

Royal Oak had a contingent of Scots soldiers under Captain Archibald Douglas. When the great ship was burning, the heat grew so intense that the soldiers were forced to abandon ship. Douglas refused, remaining at his post until consumed by the flames. There was no real reason for Douglas to sacrifice himself in that way, but his suicidal act was considered by many to have at least partly redeemed the country's honor. He, at least, did not run away.

The fighting slackened as the three vessels burned fiercely. The Dutch decided to quit while they were ahead. The dockyards were a tempting target, but English resistance was fierce, and the river was growing ever narrower. The triumphant raiders withdrew, navigating the treacherous, shallow river with some difficulty. When they reached the safety of the open sea they celebrated by firing their cannons. Samuel Pepys, ever the realist, concluded: "Thus, in all things, in wisdom, courage, force, knowledge of our own streams, and success, the Dutch have the best of us, and do end the war with victory on their side."

The Great Medway Raid was over. Four capital ships had been lost, and many smaller vessels had been sunk or otherwise damaged. The total loss for the Royal Navy was estimated at close to 200,000 pounds. The English could take comfort only in the fact that the dock facilities were still intact. Peace negotiations accelerated, and the war ended formally in July 1667. The two countries divided the world into colonial spheres of influence. The Dutch took the East Indies, while the English contented themselves with their holdings in North America.

Charles II took the defeat personally. Chatham's ill-starred naval commissioner, Peter Pett, was hauled before an examining committee and made to answer for his—and many others'—mistakes. Pett, "a weak, silly man" in Pepys' view, was a convenient scapegoat. In short order, he was bundled off to the Tower of London. Four months later, after peace was restored, he was released into personal and professional oblivion. Meanwhile, *Royal Charles* was towed back to Holland and exhibited as a kind of 17th-century tourist attraction. The ship had too deep a draft to be used in the shallow waters of the Netherlands, and after a few years of display, she was scrapped. The stern's royal coat of arms was saved and now rests in the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam. □

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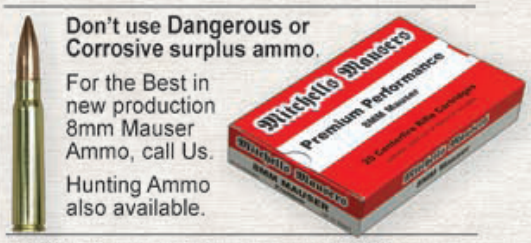

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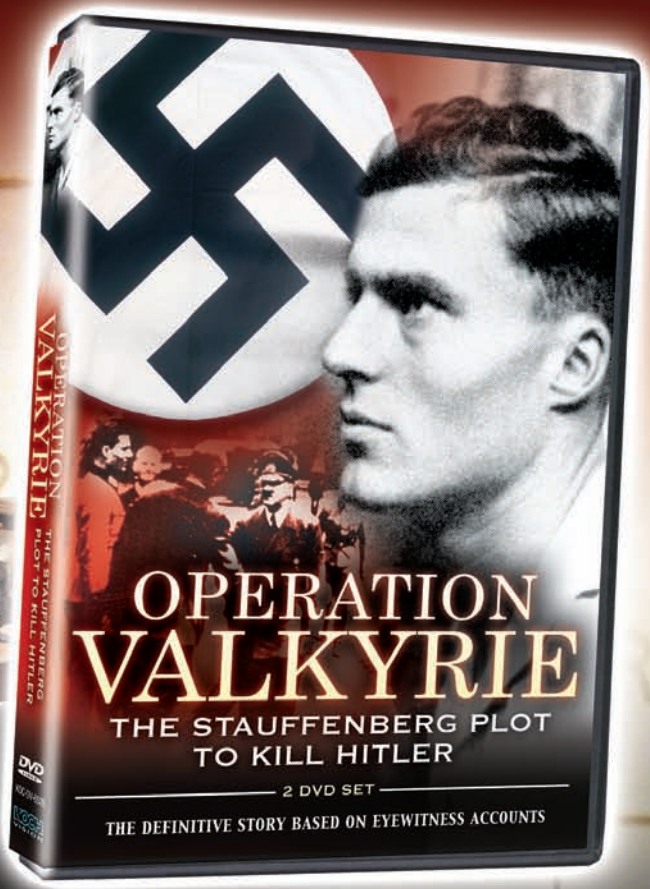

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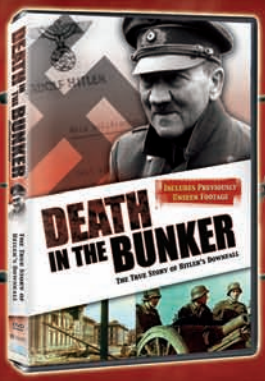

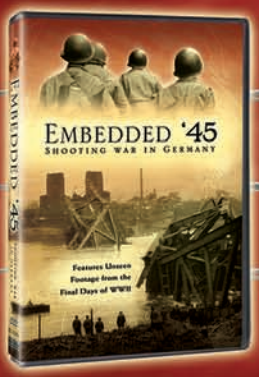

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