MILITARY HERITAGE

Curtis 02313

Blood, Guts, Grease & Glory:
George S. Patton in World War I

MEDIEVAL MELEE AT BOUVINES

Rommel: Defeat at Bardia

ROMAN CIVIL WAR

Battle of San Jacinto: Eighteen Minutes to Freedom

+

American Airships, Brothers' War in Iraq, Manuals of Arms, Samuel White Baker, Book & Game Reviews and More!

MILITARY HERITAGE • FALL/OCTOBER 2008 Volume 10, No. 2

Fall /October 2008

$4.99US $6.99CAN

0 74808 02313 4 84

Retailer: Display Until October 6

KING & COUNTRY'S

ICE COLD IN ALEX

1942 and the war is raging in North Africa... Somewhere in the Western Desert a lone British ambulance is struggling to get from besieged Tobruk to the safety of Alexandria.

This is the basic plot of one of the finest British war films of the 1950's "*Ice Cold In Alex*". It's also the inspiration for one of King & Country's latest 8th Army vehicles... *The Austin K2 Field Ambulance.*

The K2, better known as the "*Katy*" served British and Empire forces with great distinction throughout the war (*and long afterwards*) from Bombay to Benghazi and on to Berlin... and all points in between.

To back up our "*Katy*" we're also releasing a "*Desert Stretcher Party*".

EA027
Desert Austin K2 Ambulance

EA028
Desert Stretcher Party

"Flies in yer beer...
sand in yer grub... dust up yer bum
...and then there's the bloody Germans!"

ANONYMOUS
AUSTRALIAN INFANTRYMAN
TOBRUK 1941

EA030
Eighth Army Tank Riders

THE BIG PUSH

From support troops K&C is going "*on the offensive*" with our brand-new "*Crusader*" tank.

This particular "*Crusader*" is in the markings of the 3rd Hussars of the famous 7th. Armoured Division nicknamed "*The Desert Rats*" and comes with a tank commander and a seated infantryman. Three additional infantrymen are also available with the "*8th. Army Tank Riders*" set.

All of these new sets bring welcome reinforcements to our hard-pressed 8th. Army range of figures and fighting vehicles... look out for them at your favourite K&C dealer and place your order today!

"ALEX" THE FILM

"ICE COLD IN ALEX" was made in 1958 and starred John Mills, Harry Andrews, Sylvia Syms and Anthony Quayle and shot almost entirely in Libya. The "Ice Cold" in the title refers to having a beer "so ruddy cold there's frost on the outside of the glass". All the desert locations and depictions of baking heat will ensure any viewer will be left gasping for a beer as well!

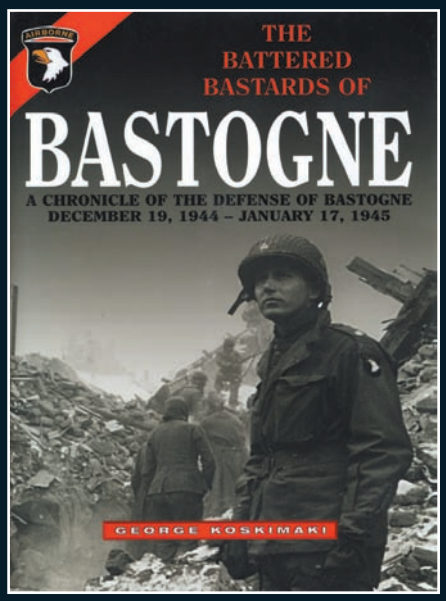
This was the best of the British tanks used by the 8th Army in the desert. It played an important armoured role there until the arrival of the US-made "*Grants*" and "*Shermans*" later in 1942.

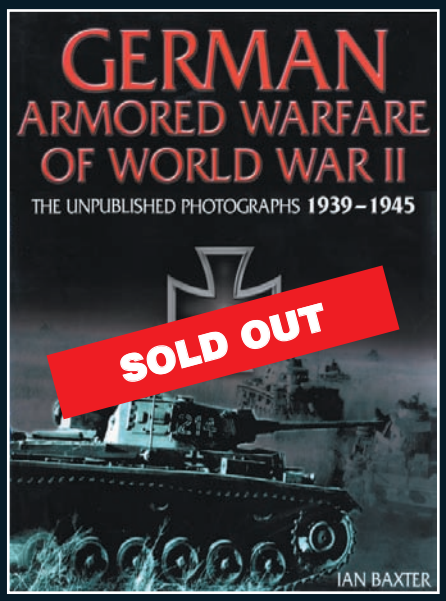
EA029
Crusader Tank

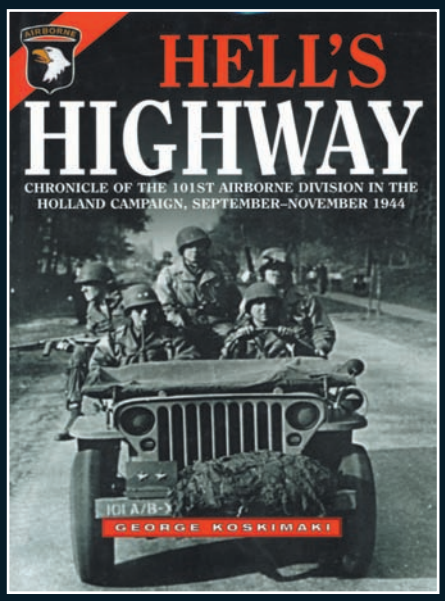
Monkey Depot stocks a huge range of King & Country's many exciting series... to find out more simply contact us today!

Sovereign Collections Recommends

World War II Books For the Serious Collector







The Battered Bastards of Bastogne • Written by George Koskimaki • Fully Illustrated with Photos and Maps • 484 Pages • Copyright 1994 • $32.95. Through the eyes of the US 101st Airborne Division, The Screaming Eagles, *The Battered Bastards of Bastogne* relives the land and air war around Bastogne during the Battle of the Bulge. Firsthand accounts bring the battle back to life, for a look at this battle as viewed by the soldier, not the historian. George Koskimaki weaves the memoirs of each of these men into a cohesive whole. The memories of one soldier fit with those of a nother unit or group in another nearby piece of terrain to present a gripping account of the battle.

German Armored Warfare of World War II-The Unpublished Photographs 1939-1945 • Written by Ian Baxter • Over 350 Previously unpublished photographs of German armor • 224 Pages • Copyright 2003 • 9.5" x 11.5" • $34.95. *German Armored Warfare of World War II* captures the full might of the Panzerwaffe, Hitler's Panzer arm, from its early triumphs to its final demise. Featuring unpublished photographs, many from albums of individuals who experienced the war first-hand, the book presents a unique and vivid record of German armor from 1939 to 1945.

Hell's Highway-Chronicle of the 101st Airborne in the Holland Campaign • Written by George Koskimaki • Fully Illustrated with Photos and Maps 453 Pages • Copyright 1989 • $32.95. Members of the US 101st Airborne Division, The Screaming Eagles, fought in Operation Market Garden to liberate the Netherlands. *Hell's Highway* is the personal account of the 612 members of this force who risked their lives for the freedom of the world. George Koskimaki expertly weaves together individual accounts of the battles and makes them into a cohesive whole. *Hell's Highway* helps us relive the battle by giving us a true picture of the war as seen through the eyes of the men who fought it.

ORDER TODAY BY PHONE: 1-800-219-1187

Or use the coupon to order by mail

Please indicate order quantities and total order below. Check, Money Order, Visa, Mastercard and American Express Accepted.

	Quantity	Price Each	Total
Battered Bastards of Bastogne	_____	$32.95	$_____
German Armored Warfare	_____		$SOLD OUT
Hell's Highway	_____	$32.95	$_____
	Add $5.00 Shipping	+	$ 5.00
		TOTAL	$_____

Name_____

Address_____

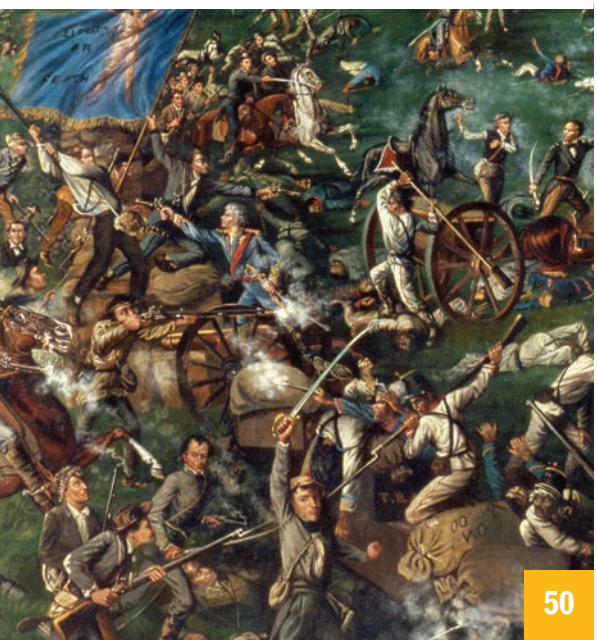
City_____ State_____ Zip_____

☐ Check Enclosed ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐ American Express

Credit Card Number_____

Expiration Date_____

Mail To: Sovereign Collections, 1000 Commerce Park Drive, Suite 300, Williamsport, PA 17701



MILITARY HERITAGE

October 2008

features

columns

COVER: Lieutenant Colonel George S. Patton, Jr., poses in front of a tank at the Tank Corps school near Langres, France, July 15, 1918. Photo courtesy of the National Archives. The article begins on page 42.

Military Heritage (ISSN 1524-8666) is published bimonthly by Sovereign Media, 453-B Carlisle Drive, Herndon, VA 20170. (703) 964-0361. Periodical postage PAID at Herndon, VA, and additional mailing offices. Military Heritage, Volume 10, Number 2 ***Subscription Services, back issues, and Information:*** **1(800) 219-1187** *or* write to Military Heritage **Circulation, Military Heritage, P.O. Box 1644, Williamsport, PA 17703.** Single copies: $4.99, plus $3 for postage. Yearly subscription in U.S.A.: $16.95; Canada and Overseas: $21.95 (U.S.). Editorial Office: Send editorial mail to Military Heritage, 453-B Carlisle Drive, Herndon, VA 20170. Military Heritage welcomes editorial submissions but assumes no responsibility for the loss or damage of unsolicited material. Material to be returned should be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope. We suggest that you send a self-addressed, stamped envelope for a copy of our author's guidelines. **POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Military Heritage, P.O. Box 1644, Williamsport, PA 17703.**

The French victory at Bouvines unwittingly fostered a great advance in the rights of common men—the Magna Carta.

EVERY WAR HAS UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES—that's why the wise leader never starts one. When King John returned to England in October 1214 from the European continent after yet another defeat at the hands of his lifelong enemies, the French, he faced perhaps the greatest unintended consequence in world history. Less than eight months after returning to England, in a sunlit meadow beside the Thames at Runnymede, he would be forced to affix his royal seal to the Magna Carta, the founding document of English—and in time, American—common law. It was both the final blow of the Battle of Bouvines and a significant first step along the labyrinthine path of individual freedom and dignity.

Unlike his late brother, Richard, John had never been a popular ruler in England. While his brother had been nicknamed "the Lion-Hearted," John's subjects called him "Blunt Sword" in mocking homage to his military misadventures. Ironically, it was his rapacious levying of taxes during his brother's reign that earned him his other negative nickname, "the Black Prince," and ensured him a place in popular literature as the evil foil of English folk hero Robin Hood and his Merry Men.

When John set out to reclaim his portion of France in the winter of 1214, many of his overtaxed barons declined to follow him, forcing John to depend on a number of mercenary troops who owed no particular allegiance to him or England. A contemporary troubadour captured the people's view of their monarch on the eve of the invasion: "No one may ever trust him/For his heart is soft and cowardly." True to form, John retreated almost immediately in the face of French resistance. When his subordinates proceeded to lose the Battle of Bouvines, John returned to England empty-handed in every sense of the word. He was broke.

Fearing yet another crushing round of taxes and confiscations from the king, a group of barons led by Robert FitzWalter (whose daughter, he said, the king had once tried to rape) rose in opposition. Declaring themselves "the Army of God and Holy Church," the barons occupied London and demanded sweeping reforms in behalf of "the community of the whole land." The rebels were far from democrats—they were mainly attempting to justify their refusal to serve in the king's army or pay higher taxes and tributes to him—but their rebellion struck a nerve with the English people.

After the Archbishop of Canterbury threw in his lot with the rebels, giving their cause religious sanction, the king had no choice but to meet with his opponents at Runnymede in June 1215. There, they presented him with an extraordinary document entitled the Magna Carta, or great charter, which contained 63 clauses designed to limit the king's power to tax, arrest, or imprison his subjects. Two clauses, in particular, became the foundation for English and ultimately American common law: the right to a speedy trial and the right to a trial by jury of one's peers. For the first time in human history, the divine right of kings had been successfully defied.

The king, consistent to the last, immediately betrayed his promise at Runnymede, plunging the country yet again into civil war. With an army of foreign-raised mercenaries, he ravaged the countryside and laid siege to rebellious barons' castles. In October 1216, however, John died of swiftly striking dysentery. His nine-year-old son Henry inherited both the crown and the Magna Carta, whose far-reaching clauses he immediately endorsed in the name of peace and compromise.

Five and half centuries later, the American Founding Fathers leaned heavily on the Magna Carta while drafting the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. British historian Sir James Holt has written: "The road from Bouvines to Runnymede was direct, short and unavoidable." The road to Philadelphia was far longer and much less direct, but it too began at Bouvines—unintended consequences, indeed.

Roy Morris Jr.

MILITARY HERITAGE

VOLUME 10 NUMBER 2

CARL A. GNAM, JR.
Editorial Director, Founder

ROY MORRIS JR.
Editor
editor@militaryheritagemagazine.com

LAURA CLEVELAND
Managing Editor

SAMANTHA DeTULLEO
Art Director

KEVIN HYMEL
Research Director

Contributors:
Eric T. Baker, John J. Geoghegan, Jefferson M. Grey, Al Hemingway, William McPeak, John Mikolsevek, Gregory Peduto, Barry Porter, Allyn Vannoy, John Walker, William E. Welsh

ADVERTISING OFFICE:

BEN BOYLES
Advertising Executive
benjaminb@sovhomestead.com
(579) 322-7848, ext. 130

MARK HINTZ
Chief Executive Officer

TINA POUST
Comptroller

KATHY PAULHAMUS
MARY NOLAN, SANDRA HILLYARD
Subscription Customer Services
(800) 219-1187

KEN FORNWALT
Data Processing Director

CURTIS CIRCULATION COMPANY
Worldwide Distribution

SOVEREIGN MEDIA COMPANY, INC.
453-B Carlisle Drive
Herndon, VA 20170

SUBSCRIPTION, CUSTOMER SERVICE, AND BUSINESS OFFICE
1000 Commerce Park Drive, Suite 300
Williamsport, PA 17701
(800) 219-1187

PRINTED IN THE U.S.A.

By John J. Geoghegan

The 785-foot-long dirigible USS *Macon* was the pride of the Navy's Lighter Than Air Program in the late 1920s and early 1930s.

IT IS SOMETIMES DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND JUST HOW IMMATURE aviation was in the 1920s and 1930s. Everything about flying was new. Planes sported two sets of canvas-covered wings, had limited navigational ability, and had significantly less ocean-going range than a traditional destroyer. After their debut in World War I, planes held promise as instruments of war, but air tactics were still being refined and the planes themselves were unreliable, evolving, and still unproven. They may have been safe enough to carry mail, but not paying passengers—to say nothing of soldiers. The Air Force did not even have its own branch of the service until 1947.

Nevertheless, after World War I there was a strong feeling among certain members of the United States military that rigid-framed airships, or dirigibles, had a great deal of potential as instruments of war. Anything seemed possible during the quickly changing period of aviation. Between 1923 and 1933, the U.S. Navy's Lighter Than Air (LTA) program produced four such dirigibles. At the time, they were the largest, most expensive aircraft ever built and were spectacular to behold. And though the dirigible seems in retrospect like something of a white elephant, for its time the LTA program was daring, imaginative, and highly innovative.

Dirigibles seemed poised to surpass trains and ocean liners as a better, faster form of transportation, especially across the Atlantic Ocean. The American military had seen the tactical success the Germans achieved using blimps during the Great War, and it acquired what would become the *Los Angeles* (ZR-3) as war reparations from Germany for study and experimentation. The public was also intrigued by the behemoths. They were especially captivated by the German *Graf Zeppelin,* which carried passengers from Europe to the United States, Brazil, and Japan long before commercial aviation was a going enterprise. Indeed, the 1930s saw a craze in America for all things dirigible. Airship designs became an integral part of Art Deco style and could be found on plates, pins, postmarks, and neckties. Newspapers lavished detailed coverage on each transcontinental crossing as if it were an Apollo program moon shot, and miniature *Graf Zeppelin* children's toys, fashioned out of tin, were wildly popular.

The Navy's dirigible program produced the USS *Shenandoah* in 1923, the USS *Los Angeles* in 1924, the USS *Akron* in 1930, and the USS *Macon* in 1933. The *Macon*, at 785 feet long, was literally the queen of the skies. To put her size into perspective, the *Macon* was three times longer than a Boeing 747, 97½ feet shorter than the *Titanic,* more than 15 stories tall, and four times the length of modern-day Goodyear blimps. She even edged out Germany's *Graf Zeppelin* in terms of size. Like the Saturn

Sporting her U.S. Navy insignia, the USS *Akron* flies over New York City on November 2, 1931.

All photos: National Archives unless credited otherwise

V rocket, Navy dirigibles were the high-tech aircraft of their day. The *Macon,* the last of the Navy's dirigibles, was built at a cost of $2.5 million by the Goodyear-Zeppelin Company of Akron, Ohio, a joint venture between the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company and the Zeppelin Company of Germany.

The *Macon* pushed the envelope in every conceivable way. She weighed more than 200 tons, carried a complement of 83 officers and crew over a range of 7,000 miles, and could stay aloft for more than three days. Fully outfitted with a galley, three dining messes, sick bay, smoking room, and separate sleeping quarters for officers and enlisted men, the *Macon* was a self-contained world in the sky. She was kept aloft by nonflammable but very expensive helium gas. Her 12 helium cells were made from gelatin latex and were suspended from a complex internal skeletal structure made of a German-invented alloy called Duralumin 17-SRT. Composed of aluminum, copper, magnesium, and manganese, Duralumin was designed to be both durable and lightweight, the carbon fiber of its time.

Because of her clean lines and overpowering size, the *Macon* was one of the most beautiful airships ever designed. She was powered by eight German-made Maybach VL-II, 12 cylinder engines, each of which generated 560 horsepower at 1,600 rpm. The Maybachs drove an external, triple-bladed propeller that enabled the ship to reach speeds up to 75.6 knots (about 80 miles per hour), a bit faster than her sister ship, the USS *Akron,* which could only do 69 knots, and her props could swivel up and down as well as in reverse. At top speed, she could cross the entire United States in 37 hours.

Being a lighter-than air-ship, weight was everything for the *Macon*. She was actually 8,000 pounds lighter than *Akron,* but keeping her trim while airborne involved a complicated ballet involving fuel, water ballast, helium gas, outside temperature, and altitude, not to mention barometric and wind conditions. To compensate for the decrease in weight that naturally came from fuel consumption, the *Macon* recycled her engine exhaust through condenser units designed to capture water vapor necessary to maintain the ship's trim.

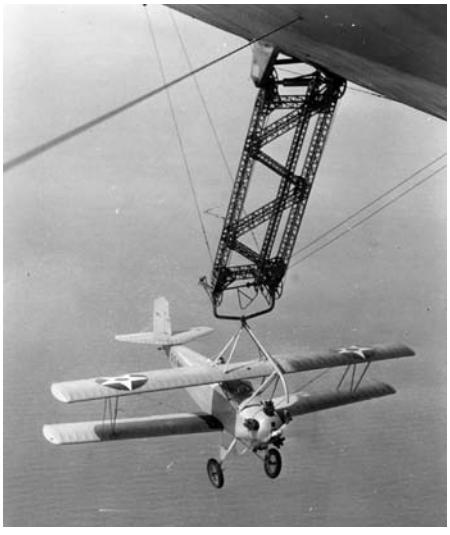
The *Macon* had two control cars, one near the bow where the officers managed the rudder and elevator controls; monitored the altimeter, air speed, and rise-and-fall indicator; and issued commands to the eight engine rooms. A second control car located in the lower stabilizing fin at the ship's tail was a backup in case anything happened to the primary command car. The

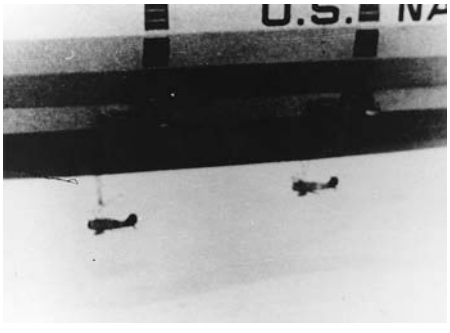
Macon also sported a spy car or "angel basket," which was lowered from the ship's bottom on 3,000 feet of cable to spy on the enemy below while the dirigible stayed hidden in the clouds. The spy car sported a tail fin and rudder pedals to provide a margin of control, and could be used as a raft to retrieve downed pilots. The spy car was the bane of whoever rode in it. It was difficult to control, open to the elements, and virtually guaranteed even its most hardened occupant a severe case of airsickness. The *Macon* carried her own defensive armament in the form of machine-gun installations in the airship's bow, aft, and topside that could be used to defend the airship from attacking aircraft in any direction.

One of the *Macon*'s most appealing features was her ability to launch and retrieve airplanes in mid-flight. She carried five Curtiss F9C-2 Sparrowhawk fighter planes in a hangar inside her belly. The Sparrowhawks, which were known as "parasitic fighters," hung from a rail system inside the airship and were guided from their hangar's four respective corners to a T-shaped opening in the *Macon*'s belly located slightly aft of the control car. A fifth Sparrowhawk could be accommodated in the center of the hangar, but was rarely carried. When ready to be deployed, the Sparrowhawks were transferred to a crane with a harness-like trapeze attachment that lowered the aircraft through the opening without their wheels ever touching the ship. With the aircraft hanging outside but still attached to the airship via a trapeze, an electric-ignition line would be lowered to the pilot, who would connect it to his aircraft and start the engine.

Sparrowhawk pilots turned over their engines outside the airship as a safety precaution to avoid a catastrophic explosion from occurring inside the dirigible. Once the engine was running, the pilot pulled a lever outside the cockpit near the top left wing and released the plane from the trapeze to fly off under its own power.

The *Macon* was not just a catch-and release-program, however; she also retrieved her aircraft in mid-flight. The *Macon*'s Sparrowhawk pilots would fly behind and underneath the airship, guided by two signal men visible from the T-shaped opening who helped them close the gap in the sometimes turbulent slipstream. Carefully maneuvering his throttle at near stall speed, a Sparrowhawk pilot inched his way upward beneath the giant dirigible until the skyhook latched into place on the trapeze catch mechanism. Then the pilot would cut the engine and the plane would be winched back on board. Another trapeze was located near the tail of the *Macon,* where a Sparrowhawk could





ABOVE: Two F9C-2 Sparrowhawks are attached to the *Macon*'s underbelly during this 1934 flight. TOP: In flight, a biplane tests the hook-on device attached to the bottom of the USS *Akron.*

"perch" while waiting its turn to come aboard. No wonder the pilots of this elite group were called "the men on the flying trapeze." They even adopted a special insignia that depicted two trapeze artists poised to catch one another in mid-air (a fat one signifying the dirigible and a skinny one signifying a Sparrowhawk).

Because every pound on a dirigible counted, the protocol was to wait until the mother ship was airborne and then fly the aircraft on board. Neither the *Akron* nor the *Macon* took off with her full complement of fighters on board. In this way, the ship was spared lifting an additional 14,000 pounds that could make a real difference if there was no wind.

Rear Admiral William A. Moffett, chief of the Bureau of Aeronautics, and Captain Garland Fulton were the Navy's two most influential LTA evangelists. Both believed passionately in the strategic value of the rigid-frame airship and its ability to serve as the eyes of the fleet. The *Macon* and the other dirigibles were used as scouting ships to reconnoiter a larger area of ocean in search of the enemy and provide useful intelligence. They could do this faster and more cheaply than a typical destroyer, and great promise was seen in the *Macon*'s ability to warn the Navy of an approaching enemy in the days before radar existed. Meanwhile, the Macon's complement of Sparrowhawks provided protection for the dirigible against enemy ships and aircraft. Although they provided some supplemental scouting, the Sparrowhawks were not the primary scouting vehicles—that was the dirigibles' role.

The main problem with this approach was that the dirigibles kept getting "shot down" during fleet exercises. If the *Macon* was close enough to spot an enemy ship, she was also vulnerable to attack. Nevertheless, during 1934 fleet exercises in the Caribbean, the *Macon*'s performance was judged successful enough that she was ordered west to participate in Pacific Fleet war games, although some Navy higher-ups, including Admiral William H. Standley, chief of Naval Operations, still strongly questioned her usefulness.

Over time, it became obvious that airships were vulnerable to carrier-based planes as well anti-aircraft fire from surface ships. As a result, by 1934 the *Macon* was struggling to find an effective role while an increasingly heated debate raged inside the Navy and the federal government over the long-term effectiveness of rigid-frame airships. To the LTA program's credit, a good deal of flexibility, innovation, and learning was applied toward maximizing the *Macon*'s strategic effectiveness. As a result, *Macon*'s commanding officer, Lt. Cmdr. Herbert V. Wiley, came to believe that the *Macon* had to evolve from a long-range scouting vehicle to a floating platform, or aircraft carrier, with the Sparrowhawks taking over as the principal scouts. Wiley felt that the Sparrowhawks could significantly extend the dirigible's range and more quickly cover a broader area while the dirigible remained safely hidden in the clouds.

By July 1934, Wiley was ready to prove his point and decided on an audacious move to secretly find and rendezvous at sea with the USS *Houston,* which was carrying President Franklin D. Roosevelt and his secretary of the Navy, Claude A. Swanson, from Central America to Hawaii. Wiley successfully located his "prey" despite the ship's position being top secret and sent out two Sparrowhawks to drop packages for the president containing mail and newspapers onto the ship's deck. The pilots missed their target—probably just as well, considering that FDR was situated somewhere directly below—and the packages had to be fished out of the ocean. But the president was suitably impressed to be located 1,500 miles out to sea, and it seemed for a time that the *Macon*'s stock was rising. Wiley's superiors

were less impressed, accusing him of "misapplied initiative" and threatening him with court martial for his reckless actions.

The LTA program faced greater problems than one eager commander's desire to prove the strategic effectiveness of his command. The first dirigible, the USS *Shenandoah,* broke up spectacularly over the Ohio Valley in 1925, killing 14 crew members. Eight years later, on April 4, 1933, the USS *Akron* ran into severe weather off the New Jersey coast and sank tail-first into the Atlantic Ocean. Wiley, who was an officer on board at the time, was one of only three crewmen to survive the crash; 73 others died, including Admiral Moffett, the father of naval aviation, and two other crewmen from a Navy J-3 blimp which had joined the search for survivors.

The *Macon* remained a familiar sight inside her massive hangar at Moffett Air Field in Sunnyvale, California, a few miles from the Stanford University campus. On February 11, 1935, she left the air field to reconnoiter with the Pacific Fleet in southern California. Eager to get under way, *Macon*'s engineers had not yet completed reinforcing her vertical tail fin and supporting structure, which had been damaged on a previous mission over Texas.

The next afternoon, off the coast of Big Sur, the ship ran into a powerful gust of wind, which triggered a structural failure causing the top stabilizing fin to sheer free, sending metal shards into her three rear gas cells and dropping the *Macon* tail-first into the Pacific. It was a virtual reprise of the *Akron*'s fate. Once again, Wiley's luck held out. Only two of his 83 crewmen died in the slow-motion crash—Radioman 1st Class Ernest Dailey, who jumped out of the ship 100 feet above the ocean, and Filipino mess steward Florentino Edquiba, who refused to abandon ship because he could not swim. Survivors were picked up by the USS *Richmond* and USS *Concord* within an hour.

Library of Congress

ABOVE: The crew of a Navy dirigible stands at the ready in front of their barracks. TOP: Onlookers swarm around the wreckage of the USS *Shenandoah,* which crashed during a storm over southern Ohio in September 1925.

The third spectacular crash in 10 years marked an end to the LTA program of building rigid airships. President Roosevelt appointed a private commission to look into the mishaps, and although the commission, chaired by Stanford engineering professor William F. Durand, recommended that the program be continued, neither the Navy nor the government had the stomach to construct any more rigid-body airships. The Navy continued building blimps and semi-rigids until 1962, but the giant dirigibles were doomed because of uncertain strategic benefits, a mixed track record of effectiveness, and radically changing technology—not to mention a Congress that was hard-pressed to justify spending more money on accident-prone aircraft during the Depression. By May 1935, the dirigibles—beautiful as they had been to look at—were an obsolete branch of America's aviation tree. □

By Gregory Peduto

Samuel White Baker discovered one of the sources of the Nile, hunted dangerous game, and rescued his future wife from a slave auction block.

THE MEN OF THE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE BEAT A HASTY RETREAT through the seven-foot-tall African grasses. Poison-tipped arrows let loose by pursuing Bunyoro warriors rained down upon them in deadly torrents. The men could barely keep their composure as the Bunyoro launched an ambush that threatened to swallow up the fleeing column. The panicked soldiers' only solace was that their commander, professional hunter, explorer, and writer Samuel White Baker, was a man of indomitable will and iron determination.

Baker had led the party into the heart of the Sudan to eradicate the slave trade at the behest of Khedive Ismail of Egypt. Baker always led from the front and seldom missed a shot, and this engagement was no exception. He almost single-handedly kept the fierce tribesmen at bay with his muzzle-loading elephant gun, affectionately known as "Baby," which he wielded like a enormous shotgun stuffed with over 40 pellets. He also occasionally fired off explosive rounds that left "very little of a man if they hit him."

ullstein bild

English adventurer Samuel White Baker makes a blood pact with King Rionga near Lake Albert during an expedition to suppress the slave trade in 1872.

Baker's whole life had led to this moment. Born in London in 1821, he was an atypical Londoner. Enthralled with the natural world, the tyke's pockets were constantly crammed with all manner of odorous flora and slithering fauna. His teachers considered him as a "plucky little fellow" with an extremely inquisitive mind that often landed him in trouble. One incident occurred on Samuel's first exposure to his earliest love, gunpowder. The boy's ill-fated experiment resulted in a roaring explosion that blew out every window in his grandfather's house.

When Baker was 12, the family relocated to southwestern England, a place more appropriate for a boy obsessed with stalking, shooting, and explosives. The local children quickly found that the pint-sized youth could scrap with the best of them, and Baker bloodied many insulting lips and offending noses. During his schooling at Gloucester College, the boy developed a reputation as an excellent pugilist, freelance bully slayer, and ballistics prodigy who routinely tried to convince vet-

eran redcoat officers of the superiority of rifled arms to their beloved Brown Bess muskets.

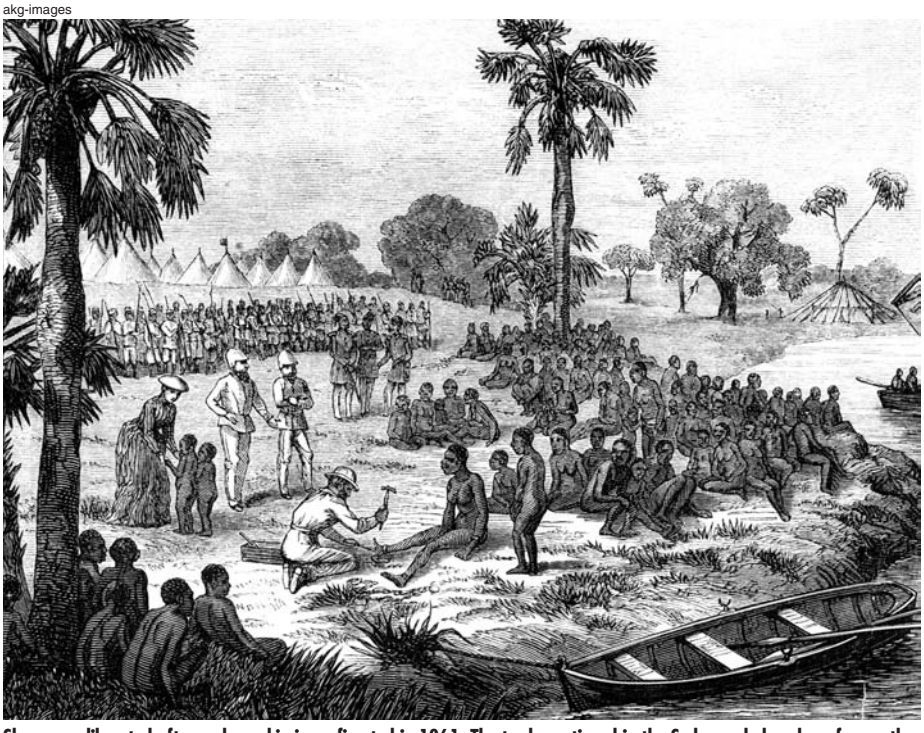
Baker's obsession with rifled arms led him to master gunsmith George Gibbs, who constructed a special rifle of the teenager's own design. A precursor to the modern express rifle, the weapon was a double-barreled muzzle loader capable of hurling a three-ounce belted ball. The rifle weighed an imposing 21 pounds and could handle a charge of 16 drams of powder. Gibbs thought the overly powerful rifle preposterous. The weapon, dubbed "Baby," would have crippled a mere mortal, but Baker was no normal man. When the rifle was fired, the savage recoil spun him around like a dervish, but through brute strength Baker eventually mastered the weapon.

His father, a successful merchant, wanted his son to follow him into the commercial business, but two years in a stuffy office convinced Baker that there was more to life than trade. In 1845, wanting to pit his rifle against the largest beast known to man, Baker trekked to Ceylon (modern-day Sri Lanka) in pursuit of elephants. To prepare for the hunt, he studied the great beasts' skeletons in museums and anatomy textbooks and then applied his knowledge with deadly efficiency to bagging elephants, buffaloes, and leopards. The young explorer found tropical hunting an often life-threatening experience. "Jungle hunting was like shooting in the dark," he later remarked. With the help of his brother John, he founded a mountaintop health resort at Nuwara Eliya for other English immigrants, and successfully raised choice breeds of cattle. Eventually, Baker's Ceylon escapades landed on the pages of two books he authored: *The Rifle and the Hound in Ceylon* (1853) and *Eight Years' Wanderings in Ceylon* (1855).

The books catapulted Baker to stardom as a gentleman of adventure. He followed them with a journey to Constantinople and the Crimea in 1856, and three years later he supervised the construction of a railway across the Dobrudja region of central Europe, linking the Danube with the Black Sea. Baker's growing reputation caught the eye of the exiled Maharajah Duleep Singh, the so-called Black Prince of India, who invited Baker on a hunting trip for wild boar in the frigid recesses of the lower Danube.

The two became fast friends as they sailed down the ice-capped river. After knocking a hole in the bottom of their boat on an ice floe, the friends put into Viddin, in modern-day Bulgaria, for repairs. There, Baker met his future wife, Transylvania-born Florence Szasz, under highly romantic circumstances. The 14-year-old

akg-images



Slaves are liberated after a slave ship is confiscated in 1861. The trade continued in the Sudan and elsewhere for another decade.

Florence had been kidnapped as a child and raised in an Ottoman harem; she was about to be sold to the local pasha. Smitten with the sad-eyed girl, Baker launched into the bidding and won his future wife and lifelong companion. The pasha was enraged and his cavalry pursued the trio all the way to Bucharest.

The glamorous young couple quickly became a Victorian sensation, traveling the world living out breathtaking, swashbuckling adventures. In 1861, they dashed off to Cairo on an expedition to discover the Holy Grail of Victorian explorers—the source of the Nile. The couple fled marauding hippopotamuses, battled hostile tribesmen, and outwitted unscrupulous Arab slavers. They explored the Atbara and other Nile tributaries, and in Khartoum they met fellow explorers John Hanning Speke and James Augustus Grant, who had already discovered the major source of the Nile in newly named Lake Victoria. The Bakers despaired of finding similar fame, but Speke and Grant collegially told them of another lake through which the Nile flowed, and the Bakers traced the river back to the Nyanza, which they renamed Lake Albert after Prince Albert of England. Upon their return to England in October 1865, they found themselves even greater celebrities, with a gold medal from the Royal Geographical Society and a knighthood awaiting Baker. They also took the time to formalize their hitherto unorthodox relationship, marrying in Piccadilly's Church of St. James on November 4.

In 1869, the Prince of Wales (future King Edward VII) and Princess Alexandra toured Cairo at the behest of Turkish Khedive Ismail, who ruled the country. Their guide was the recently knighted Sir Samuel White Baker. The prince and princess fell in love with the debonair adventurer—Queen Victoria was a little more skeptical about Baker's premarriage shenanigans. At their behest, Baker accompanied them to Ismail's grand masked ball. The khedive used the opportunity to propose a plan for exterminating the slave trade in the Sudan. The royal couple agreed, insisting that Baker was the very man to lead the expedition.

The contract stipulated that Baker would have unlimited powers, with the rank of pasha and governor general of the Equatorial Nile Basin, for four years. His forces consisted of 1,645 men subdivided into two musket-armed infantry regiments, two artillery batteries, and one "very irregular" tribal cavalry unit. One infantry regiment was composed entirely of convicted Egyptian rapists and murderers, while the other was manned by experienced Sudanese veterans who had fought in Mexico under the French.

From these two groups Baker handpicked 46 of the strongest men for an elite personal bodyguard, which he aptly named the Forty Thieves. Baker drilled the group in marksmanship, hand-to-hand combat, and British battle formations. He ensured their unflinching loyalty by increasing their wages, dressing them in brilliant red uniforms over Zouave trousers, and arming them with Snider breech-loading rifles.

Through his years of experience in the African interior, Baker knew that it would be impossible to supply his army by camel train alone. For that reason, he had 15 sloops, six steamships, and 15 *diahbiahs,* commanded by civil engineer Edwin Higginbotham, dismantled and carried over the desert on 1,000 pack camels to the Nile, where they were reassembled near Khartoum. With the equipment in place, the expedition, accompanied as always by Florence, set out for Khartoum.

In February 1870, the army left Khartoum and steamed 648 miles toward Gondokoro, where it ran straight into an impenetrable marsh barrier known as the Sudd. Native guides suggested that they go around the blockage on the Bahr Giraffe, a small tributary of the Nile. With the waters of the river quickly receding, the expedition was now in a race against time. The party found the Bahr Giraffe impassable, and to make matters worse, they had arrived at the height of malaria season. Baker ordered his men to dredge the river amid clouds of buzzing mosquitoes, crocodiles, and poisonous snakes.

On May 26, Baker finally reached Gondokoro, the heart of Bari tribal territory. The Bari were fierce warriors allied with the Arab slavers. They fought in the nude and were organized into clans known as *dungesi,* which could contain as many as 700 men or as few as 20. The clans rarely united to form a cohesive army. Instead, they fought as independent units, armed with spears and fiendishly barbed arrows. To combat these bellicose clans, Baker constructed an ad hoc military outpost he dubbed Ismailia.

At first, the tribesmen did not openly resist. They ignored the fort and continued to raid neighboring tribes for slaves. To punish them, Baker seized the tribe's cattle, and open warfare erupted. Masters of the ambush, the Bari crept up to the edge of the camp and murdered unwary stragglers in the night. Fortunately, Baker's eight years of jungle hunting paid off. Under his direction, the Forty Thieves set decoys to snare any Bari who came within rifle range.

The hit-and-run guerrilla war raged on until Baker realized that pacification could be achieved only through control of the food supply. With this tactic in mind, the army launched a 35-day campaign of nonstop fighting against the tribe. With the goal of capturing grain rather than killing combatants, they surrounded each village in turn and then stormed it at bayonet point. Within weeks, the army controlled the majority of the Bari's corn supply.

Desperate, the starving Bari allied with their

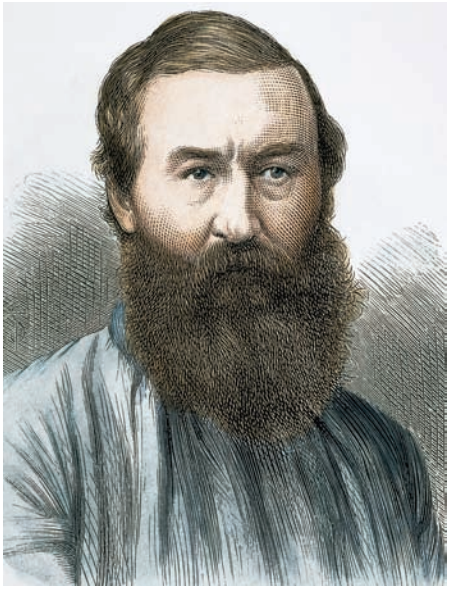
traditional enemies, the Lotuka, and descended on Baker's camp with more than 1,200 warriors, while Baker was raiding on the opposite side of the Nile. Baker had left the inexperienced Colonel Raouf Bey in control of the garrison. Raouf Bey managed to beat back the tribesmen after several hours of prolonged musket fire, but he neglected to use the fort's 8¼-pound howitzer because he had, he admitted later, "forgotten its existence." The failed attack crippled the famished Bari, causing them to lose the will to fight. Baker seized the opportunity by exchanging several elephants he had shot in return for the emaciated tribe's unconditional surrender.

With the pacification of the Bari accomplished, Sam and Florence left Bey behind with a garrison of 340 men and steamed southward on the Nile with a meager force of only 212 men. Along the way, Baker left another 100 men in Madi territory to protect the frail tribe from slavers. The small army continued due south on a collision course with the powerful kingdom of Bunyoro. The Bunyoro was a potent slave trading African principality led by Kabba Rega, a man whose father had attempted to kidnap Florence on Baker's Nile expedition 10 years earlier. Still smarting from that attempt, Baker wanted to settle the score with Kabba Rega, whom he described as "cowardly, cruel, cunning and treacherous to the last degree."

In his haste for revenge, Baker failed to take into account the king's military genius. An African Machiavelli, Kabba Rega had unified the Bunyoro clans after the death of his father through a combination of diplomacy and military might. His vast army was headed by his crack royal guard, the 1,000-strong Bonosoora. Savage fighters, the Bonosoora wore leopard skins and terrifying antelope horn headdresses. Because many Bonosoora had acquired muskets from the Arab slavers, the cadre possessed the firepower necessary to put Baker's Forty Thieves to the ultimate test.

Ignoring the monarch's strength, Baker settled in for a protracted campaign by constructing a fortress outside the Bunyoro capital of Masindi. On the morning of March 31, Baker drilled the Forty Thieves outside the compound. In the distance, war drums reverberated and horns trumpeted. Within moments, thousands of screaming warriors engulfed Baker's men, who quickly formed a square and fixed their bayonets. The Bunyoro were perplexed by the bristling iron hedgehog that gleamed before them. In the face of such overwhelming odds, Baker knew that his only hope rested back at the compound. Sensing the Bunyoro's trepidation, Baker sounded the charge and the Forty Thieves ran over the stunned tribesmen.

The Granger Collection, New York



Samuel White Baker at the peak of his fame in this 1873 woodcut.

Upon hearing the uproar, Florence organized the camp by arming every able-bodied man. She commanded the infirm to load the rifles, pistols, and shotguns for the active combatants. A smaller force of Bunyoro fell upon the camp, but under Florence's stalwart command they were beaten back. When the Forty Thieves returned, they fortified the position with earthwork ramparts, palisades, and ditches. However, they were woefully unprepared for a siege. Low on food, the force could not last a month. Realizing this, the duplicitous Kabba Rega feigned surrender and offered the garrison poisoned plantain cider as a sign of goodwill. The famished troopers gulped down the swill and nearly 50 men immediately fell ill. The quick-thinking Baker saved their lives by immediately dosing them with a vomit-inducing tartar emetic.

A day later, as the Bakers and the Forty Thieves foraged for supplies in Masindi, they fell under heavy tribal musket fire that dropped several of the elite cadre. Meanwhile, thousands of Bunyoro spearmen, led by the crack Bonosoora, streamed through the grasses like an angry swarm of fire ants. Under a hail of shot, Baker's men formed a square and unloaded with their rapid-firing Sniders. The tribesmen fled while Baker's troopers put the capital village to the torch.

With Masindi in ruins, Baker dismantled the camp and burned everything except the essentials. The only escape route to be found was a grueling 100-mile march to Foweera, the capital city of King Rionga, a rival claimant to the Bunyoro throne. Luckily for the company, Florence was prepared. Over the course of several months, she had stockpiled several crates of flour, more than enough for the journey to Foweera. The small force tightened their belts, oiled their rifles, and double-timed to Rionga's capital. Baker carried Baby, a Purdy shotgun, and a brace of double-barreled tiger-hunting pistols. Florence packed a revolver on her hip with a reserve of ammunition secreted in her shirt.

The column fought its way toward Foweera for seven days, under the relentless pounding of musket balls, poisoned arrows, and iron spears. The high grasses necessitated that Baker split the column into three parties, each controlled by a bugler who would give the command to either halt, cease fire, or advance. The famished column stumbled forward, suffering heavy losses. Baker's men eventually reached Foweera, but they were startled to find a smoldering heap of ashes. Girded for more trouble, the troops dug in to face the final overwhelming onslaught as war drums pounded in the distance and the Bunyoro closed in.

At the darkest possible moment, when all seemed lost, Rionga sent word that his armies had arrived—the column was saved. Kabba Rega would not dare attack the heavily armed men in the heart of enemy territory. Nevertheless, Baker had effectively been defeated. His army numbered fewer than 95 men, and his four-year contract was set to expire. Before leaving he constructed a fortress on the outskirts of Bunyoro territory; then he and Florence withdrew northward to Cairo.

Although Baker's expedition, in the end, was a failure, he laid the groundwork for the eventual suppression of the slave trade by General Charles "Chinese" Gordon, who employed many of the forts Baker had constructed as bases of operation. Gordon did not have long to enjoy his triumph—in January 1885 he was killed and beheaded at Khartoum by followers of the radical Muslim leader, the Mahdi. Kabba Rega himself defied colonization for nearly 30 years, pitting his native forces against Maxim guns, frontline Egyptian troops, and British regulars.

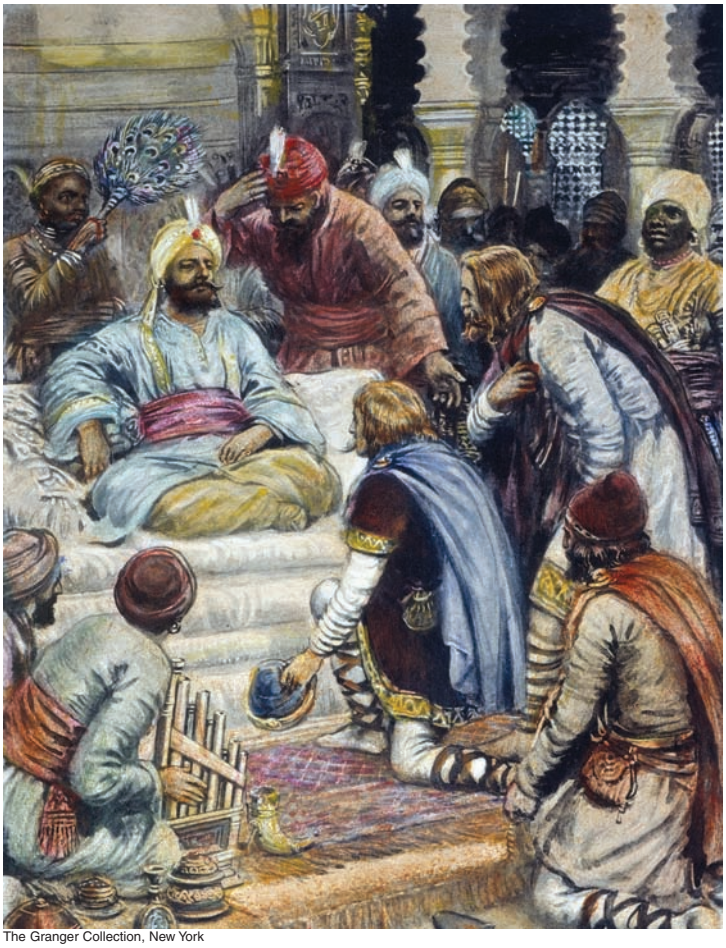
The Bakers retired to England, where they were hailed as national heroes. They purchased an estate in south Devon, Sandford Orleigh, and Baker wrote a book, *Ismailia,* recounting his slave-trade adventures. In 1879, he visited Cyprus for another travel book, *Cyprus as I Saw It.* The couple spent several winters in Egypt and also traveled and hunted extensively in India, Japan, and the Rocky Mountains of the United States. In 1890, Baker published his last book, *Wild Beasts and Their Ways.* Ironically, the stalwart adventurer died quietly at home in Florence's arms in December 1893, at the age of 72. □

By Jefferson M. Grey

Caliph Harun al-Rashid's two sons carried on a fratricidal power struggle that devastated Baghdad in the ninth century.

TO HIS CONTEMPORARIES, HARUN AL-RASHID, FIFTH CALIPH OF the Abbasid dynasty, seemed the most fortunate of men. During his 23-year reign, Harun brought the caliphate to the apogee of its power, winning repeated military successes against the rival Christian Byzantine Empire. The state and its subjects prospered under his rule, and Harun's private life was marked by domestic felicity and fertility—he fathered 11 sons and 14 daughters by at least six wives and various concubines.

In the longer perspective of history, however, Harun is a tragic figure. He tried to forestall a power struggle by dividing authority between his two eldest sons, Amin and Ma'mun, and by carefully delineating the relative precedence and powers that each would have after his death. Ma'mun was Harun's eldest son by six months, but he was the offspring of a harem slave, the captured daughter of a defeated rebel. Ma'mun therefore possessed a lower status in the royal family than did his slightly younger brother Amin, who was the son of Zubaydah, Harun's favorite wife and a well-born member of the ruling house. Amin was given precedence in Harun's line of succession. He was officially named Harun's heir in 791, when he was five years old.



The Granger Collection, New York

Caliph Harun al-Rashid receives an emissary from Frankish Emperor Charlemagne in Baghdad in this 19th-century illustration by Ambrose Dudley.

As the two youths neared adulthood, Harun developed misgivings. Amin was handsome, strong, and courageous, but he displayed a self-indulgent frivolity and lack of seriousness. By contrast, Ma'mun was intelligent, scholarly, and steadier in character. Harun revised his succession plan, which was publicly announced in Mecca's Great Mosque during the annual pilgrimage in January 803. The new plan provided for a finely balanced power-sharing arrangement. Amin would inherit the title of caliph, but his authority would be limited to the western half of the caliphate: Arabia, Egypt, Syria, and Iraq. Ma'mun was to have dominion over the eastern half of the caliphate, encompassing all of Persia as well as the rich but restless region of Khurasan, with its four great cities of Samarkand, Merv, Herat, and Balkh. Amin was enjoined from interfering with Ma'mun's administration. In addition, Ma'mun was named as Amin's successor, and Amin was forbidden to select another heir.

Amin and Ma'mun, then 16 and 17 years old respectively, swore loy-

alty to each other, and Harun required high-ranking civil officials, senior military commanders, well-known jurists, and tribal leaders to do the same. The original agreements, which have become known as the Mecca Protocols, were hung upon the interior walls of the sacred black shrine known as the Ka'aba to ensure that their terms would become widely known.

Harun's carefully constructed arrangements started to fall apart immediately after his death six years later. Although Harun had hoped the Mecca Protocols would ensure peace between his two eldest sons, some of his own top officials considered this virtual bifurcation of the empire to be unworkable and unwise. Foremost among these was Fadl ibn al-Rabi, Harun's vizier, who was with the caliph when he died. Fadl moved quickly to bolster the more blue-blooded Amin's position at Ma'mun's expense.

During the first 20 months after Harun's death, Fadl repeatedly pressed the malleable Amin to test his brother with various actions that transgressed the provisions of the Mecca Protocols. In the late summer of 810, Amin demanded that Ma'mun give up his position in Khurasan and return to Baghdad, ostensibly to assist in running the empire. Ma'mun understood that refusing Amin's demand would mean civil war, but surrendering his authority and returning to Baghdad was no less dangerous. Hoping to buy additional time, Ma'mun responded with a conciliatory letter, contending that "my remaining here will be more profitable to the Commander of the Faithful and more useful to the Muslims." Amin and Fadl brushed aside Ma'mun's protestations. "Two bulls cannot be together in one camel herd," Amin told an adviser who urged him to respect his father's wishes.

That November, Amin decisively repudiated the Mecca Protocols, deposing Ma'mun from his position in Khurasan and the line of succession. As his new heir, Amin designated his young son Musa. Amin also ordered the original Mecca Protocols removed from the Ka'aba and destroyed. Amin and Fadl began organizing a great military expedition that they confidently expected would sweep up the highway from Baghdad to Khurasan, brush aside Ma'mun's smaller provincial forces, and bring him back in shackles to Baghdad.

As commander of his army, Amin selected an experienced but widely feared soldier named Ali ibn Isa ibn Mahan. Ali was originally from Khurasan, where his father had been an early and prominent member of the underground network that organized the Abbasid revolution that overthrew the Umayyad dynasty. Fadl and Amin expected that Ali's appointment as commander of their expeditionary force would terrify the people of Khurasan. But the news that the cruel and greedy Ali would be returning instead fired many Khurasanis with a fierce determination to fight for their property and their lives.

To defend Khurasan against Ali's army, Ma'mun called on Harthamah ibn al-A'yan, perhaps the most distinguished old soldier in the Abbasids' service. Harthamah, an Arab from northern Afghanistan, first entered the military sometime in the 760s. During the next 40 years, he fought rebels in the swamps of the Egyptian delta and on the sands of the Tunisian deserts before assuming the governorship of Khurasan in 806. Where Ali was arrogant, unscrupulous, and self-serving, Harthamah was straightforward, principled, and selflessly loyal. But he was also old and so hobbled by arthritis that often he could not stand.

On March 7, 811, Amin summoned members of the Abbasid family and his principal officers to hear Fadl read a declaration of war against Ma'mun. One week later, Ali led 40,000 soldiers east from Baghdad up the highway toward the Zagros Mountains and the Iranian plateau on the first leg of their 1,100-mile march to Khurasan. Meanwhile, Harthamah awaited the arrival of troops he had called in from the frontier and recruited additional soldiers from among the rebels who had fought against Ali during his governorship. To gain additional time to complete his preparations, Harthamah dispatched a contingent of 3,800 troops under an officer named Tahir al-Husayn to establish an advance post at the walled city of Rayy, where the highway from Baghdad first entered Ma'mun's territory.

Tahir was in his mid-thirties, an experienced professional soldier who had lost an eye in battle. He made a clear-headed assessment of his position. Given that he was outnumbered at least 10-to-1, the obvious course was to accept a siege inside Rayy, holding out within its walls for as long as possible. But Tahir feared that Rayy's citizens, terrified by the size of Ali's army and his harsh reputation, would betray him in hopes of saving their own lives and property. Rather than see his men trapped and hunted down in the streets of Rayy, Tahir led his troops out onto the open plain and established a position west of the city. When Ali arrived with his army, he established his camp on somewhat lower ground; several miles of sand flats and low hills separated the two sides.

Supremely confident, Ali opened the battle

with a crushing attack that drove in Tahir's advance guards and pressed both wings back against the center. Tahir's troops held, but another assault would finish off his force. Resolving that he and his men would take the battle to their enemies, Tahir led squadrons of Khwarazmian horsemen toward the center of Ali's army. Seconds later, his cavalry crashed into Ali's ranks, transforming the scene into a pandemonium of twisting horses, struggling men, and clouds of dust. In the confused melee that followed, Ali was knocked off his horse. Wounded and disoriented, he found himself surrounded by several of Tahir's troops. One of them, a young page from Tahir's bodyguard, closed in, cut Ali's throat, and sliced off his head.

Tahir sent Ali's head back to Ma'mun, along with a letter announcing his victory. But Tahir did not rest on his laurels. Rather than waiting for Ma'mun's main army under Harthamah to arrive from Merv, Tahir marched 100 miles northwest to Qazvin, where he scattered a large garrison of Amin's troops. With his rear secure, he next moved against Hamadan, defeating the new army recently dispatched from Baghdad. After Hamadan fell, Tahir and his army continued west and entered the Zagros Mountains, where he fought off a surprise attack by what was left of Amin's army. When he reached the western side of the mountains near Hulwan, Tahir and his troops were only 150 miles from Baghdad.

Tahir was joined at Hulwan by Harthamah with Ma'mun's main army of 30,000 men. But Ma'mun, his vizier, and Harthamah decided that lower Mesopotamia should be cleared of Amin's forces before they marched on Baghdad. Tahir was dispatched to take the provincial capital of Ahwaz, 260 miles southeast of Hulwan in Khuzistan. During the first half of the year 812, Tahir's army swept through Khuzistan and lower Mesopotamia. He smashed another of Amin's armies outside Ahwaz, killing its commander and taking the city. After he occupied Ahwaz, Tahir turned west for the fortified city of Wasit on the Tigris. Wasit fell on March 20.

After fighting his way through the maze of canals connecting the Tigris and Euphrates rivers south of Baghdad, Tahir reached the capital's southern outskirts that May. In mid-August, Tahir got his army moving again, swinging around the west side of Baghdad. On August 25, he camped at the Anbar Gate, an archway northwest of the city that stood on the road leading to the town of Anbar. This move cut Amin's sole remaining line of communication with the rest of his dominions and initiated the siege of Baghdad.

The Bridgeman Art Library

Battle scene from the War of the Two Brothers, taken from the 1895 edition of *The Arabian Nights*. Ma'mun triumphed over Tahir in the war.

When the siege began, Baghdad was exactly 50 years old. It had been founded in 762 by Mansur, the second caliph of the Abbasid dynasty, who gave it the name Madinat as-Salam, or City of Peace. Mansur's original foundation, the Round City, stood west of the Tigris, a giant pearl resting among branching canals that linked the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. The heavily fortified Round City was protected by a water moat, a raised berm, and three concentric sets of walls made of sun-dried bricks. The outer wall stood 60 feet tall, with circular bastions every 60 yards. The even more massive second wall was 90 feet in height and nearly 40 feet wide across the top. The caliph's soldiers, officials, and servants occupied houses between the second wall and a third wall that marked off the innermost precinct of the Round City. The area inside the third wall was reserved for government offices and the palaces of the reigning caliph's sons, with the mosque of Mansur and the Palace of the Golden Gate at the center.

In contrast with the massive defenses girdling the Round City, Baghdad's remaining residential districts were completely unfortified. The siege did not involve assaults upon a fortified circuit wall but rather upon improvised barricades and fortifications linking house and garden walls that Amin's troops and civilian supporters constructed around the city's outer perimeter. The siege was characterized by street-by-street, and sometimes house-by-house, urban warfare of the most destructive kind.

Both sides made heavy use of artillery to shower stones and Greek fire down upon their opponents. As the bombardments devastated Baghdad's neighborhoods, many of Amin's regular troops, who were relatively well-off and had more to lose, became demoralized and listless. But the urban proletariat, described vividly as "street vendors, naked ones, people from the prisons, riffraff, rabble cutpurses, and people of the market," showed unexpected spirit and developed into the backbone of the defense. These irregular troops, many of whom were of African origin, became known as the Naked Army because they went into battle without armor or other body protection. They improvised helmets and neck protectors from plaited palm leaves, and they made shields and reed mats that they covered with tar and stuffed with sand and gravel.

The first battle of the Naked Army, an attempt to destroy a fire base that Harthamah had established on the eastern bank of the Tigris below the city, ended with a humiliating repulse. But as they gained fighting experience, the naked warriors proved themselves surprisingly formidable. This was epitomized by the battle of the Salih Palace, which took place in February 813, roughly six months into the siege. Ali Farahmard, Amin's commander in the sector of the palaces of Princes Salih and Sulayman on the west bank of the Tigris just north of the Round City, wrote to Tahir offering to surrender the area if he and his officers were granted amnesty. Tahir readily agreed. On the night of February 12, 813, he sent a picked commando force of his best officers to take possession of the Salih palace.

The irregulars of the Naked Army launched a savage counterattack against the Salih palace and its grounds. The fighting ended with an astonishing triumph for Amin's amateur soldiers. Tahir's elite fighters were trapped inside the Salih palace and virtually annihilated. Shocked by the disastrous outcome of his attack on the Salih palace, Tahir ordered vast swaths of the city to be razed.

Amin's irregular troops also proved their mettle in fighting on the east bank of the Tigris. Part of Harthamah's forces under Ubaydallah ibn al-Waddah had occupied the quarter of al-Shammasiyah on the eastern side of the Tigris. Hatim ibn al-Saqr, who commanded Amin's

irregular troops in eastern Baghdad, launched a night attack that caught Ubaydallah by surprise and drove his forces out of al-Shammasiyah. Harthamah brought up additional troops to support Ubaydallah. In the confused night fighting, Harthamah himself was briefly captured by one of the naked warriors, but was not recognized. One of Harthamah's troops soon liberated him, but not before word that he was missing in action had reached his main camp. The camp broke up in panic, and Harthamah's troops fled back up the highway toward Hulwan.

Tahir was exasperated by his senior compatriot's humiliating defeat. He threw another bridge of boats across the Tigris, crossed the river with his troops, and routed Amin's men from al-Shammasiyah. Once the quarter fell, Tahir moved into position on the western bank of the Tigris just below the Khuld and Qarar palaces of Amin and his mother Zubaydah and started pounding them into ruin. As Tahir's artillery began smashing down the roofs and walls of their homes, Amin, his children, and Zubaydah fled to the Palace of the Golden Gate inside the Round City. As he departed, Amin ordered the Khuld palace burned to deny its rich contents to looters. As flames from the caliph's palaces rose into the night, Amin's court all but dissolved. Soldiers, eunuchs, harem women, singers, and musicians scattered into the darkness.

The following day, Amin sent a letter to Tahir, offering to surrender and abdicate if he, his family members, and officials were guaranteed amnesty and safe conduct. When Tahir refused, insisting on unconditional surrender, Amin sought terms from Harthamah, who promised to send a boat to the western bank of the Tigris to take custody of Amin. Outraged, Tahir determined to frustrate Amin's plans. Tahir believed that because he had done the lion's share of the fighting, Amin was properly his prize. Tahir suspected that if Amin was taken to Khurasan, Ma'mun would show mercy to his half brother. Tahir considered it intolerable that Amin should live.

On the evening of September 25, Amin said a tender farewell to his two young sons, then mounted his favorite horse and rode to the river with a few of his officials. When he reached the quay, Harthamah was already waiting in a small bark. As Amin stepped aboard, Harthamah kissed Amin's hands and greeted him fondly. The bark then pushed off into the current, heading for the torchlights on the eastern bank.

Tahir was watching from the riverbank. He had stationed several boats farther out in the river while keeping others hard by the bank until they saw Harthamah's bark start to pull away. As soon as it did so, Tahir's boats set off in pursuit, and a picked group of strong swimmers slipped quietly into the water and swam after the unsuspecting Harthamah and Amin. As Harthamah's bark began to move toward the middle of the river, a swarm of skiffs suddenly emerged out of the darkness. Shooting arrows and hurling bricks, Tahir's men closed on Harthamah's craft. Swimmers came up underneath the bark and flipped it over, pitching Harthamah, his aides, and Amin into the Tigris.

Harthamah was fished out of the river by one of Tahir's skiffs. Amin swam to the riverbank below the charred ruins of the Khuld palace, where he stumbled ashore wearing nothing but his trousers and was quickly captured by Tahir's pages. The half-naked Amin was taken to a house near the Kufah Gate. Just before midnight, a group of heavily armored Khurasanis led by one of Tahir's closest aides burst into the room with swords drawn. Amin defended himself desperately for a few moments with a pillow, but he was pitilessly cut down and decapitated. His remaining troops in the Round City surrendered the following morning. The War of the Two Brothers was over.

Ma'mun apparently had intended to spare his half brother, and his relations with Tahir thereafter were chilly. Rather than confirming Tahir as governor of Baghdad, Ma'mun instead dispatched him to govern the frontier districts of upper Mesopotamia and Syria. After spending seven years in semi-exile, Tahir at last was rewarded with a position that matched his talents and services: viceroy of Khurasan. He died less than two years after assuming his new post. Harthamah had an even less happy fate. In June 816, he was arrested, beaten, and thrown into prison, where he soon died.

Ma'mun ruled the caliphate until he died in 833 at the age of 46. He was an attractive figure: diligent, humane, intellectually curious, and a great sponsor of learning. But the War of the Two Brothers had fatally weakened the military class that comprised the principal support of the Abbasid dynasty, and neither Ma'mun nor his successors managed to create a satisfactory substitute. During the middle of the ninth century, the caliphs increasingly found themselves at the mercy of an expensive and dangerous praetorian guard of Turkish slave-soldiers who made and murdered caliphs as impulse dictated. The caliphate began to fragment, and warlords and provincial leaders paid little heed to the caliph's wishes. By the end of the ninth century, the great empire that Harun al-Rashid had bequeathed to his two eldest sons was nothing more than a fading memory. □

By William McPeak

Medieval books on weapons and warfare are much prized today. One 17th-century manual of arms now auctions for $50,000.

ABOVE: Initial capital detail from a 1582 edition of a military book.

RIGHT: Rare 16th-century military books are highly prized by modern collectors.

All: Author's Collection

THE SPECIAL PACKAGING OF THE PRINTED WORD BETWEEN compact durable covers and a stitched spine—the book—is one of humanity's greatest and most enduring achievements. It is also a fertile field for modern collectors. Some of the earliest and most important examples of European book printing still survive, mostly because of how well made early printed books, called "incunab-ula"—literally, cradle books—were in the mid-15th century. The incunabula were relatively cheap compared with manuscripts, or handwritten books. The best-printed books were often embellished for the upper classes with expensive tooled-leather bindings. In the late 15th century, less expensive and practical vellum (degreased calf skin) bindings appeared. Into the next century, these often had cardboard or thick paper backing covered by vellum to further lower the books' prices. As time went on and the sheer volume of printed books grew, these earlier books tended to become cheaper to buy and collect.

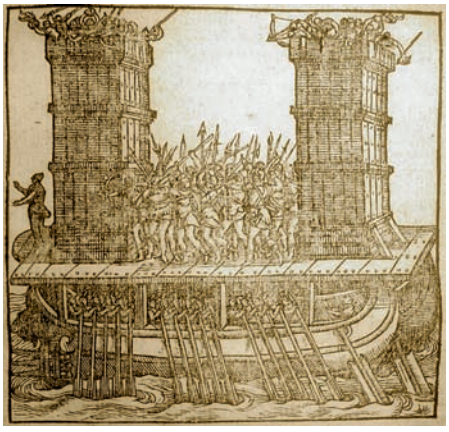
Today, such books are increasingly sought after. War was everywhere in the 15th, 16th, and 17th centuries, and the analysis of strategy and tactics of ancient military men as well as advances in martial technology—gunpowder heading the list—were popular subjects for books. The earliest and rarest printed militaria are illustrated books on the subject of ordnance and the machines of war. The first of these was the *De re militari* by Roberto Valturio, published in Verona, Italy, in 1472. The book contained 82 woodcuts of various cannons, carriages, siege engines, portable towers, even hand-held firearms. Later editions of Valturio's work and other books dealing with weaponry added more up-to-date weapons and other technical innovations.

The histories and technical works of ancient military authors were already in print in the latter half of the 15th century. Roman noble Publius Flavius Vegetius was the most popular with his broad narrative of the Roman army and its downfall. More technical ancient works were also carefully studied, particularly with regard to practical advice on training and drilling. Vegetius's work was first printed at Utrecht in 1475. A few years later he was joined by other ancient authors, including Roman military governor Sextus Julius Frontinus and Greek historians Aelianus Tacticus and Polybius. In the 16th and early 17th centuries, more obscure ancient military authors were added to other editions

of the omnibus book, still entitled *De re militari*.

The history of warfare was joined by insights into ancient cultures and geography. Favorite authors included Greek general Thucydides, who wrote on the Peloponnesian War; Polybius, who wrote on the Third Punic War and the Sack of Carthage; and Roman historian Titus Livius Livy, who produced a massive history of Rome. Livy's astonishing labor has been likened to writing a 300-page book each year for 45 years. Roman senator and governor Cornelius Tactius's *Annales* dealt with the late imperial period and its warfare. Most popular by far was the work of another Roman—Julius Caesar—whose far-reaching military campaigns transformed the republic into an empire. His personal account of his campaigns, starting with the Gallic Wars and the Roman Civil War, extended to the Alexandrine, African, and Hispanic wars. They are all known collectively as the *Commentaries,* and are familiar to every high school Latin student. The format was emulated by 16th-century authors, the two most famous being the *Commentaries on French Military, the Late Italian Wars and the French Wars of Religion* by career soldier Blaise de Monluc and *Discours* by French field commander Francois de al Noue.

Ancient military history was also very much about military leaders. Snatches of biography in ancient histories gave rise to full biographies.



Floating siege towers from a 1607 Flemish edition of Roman historian Vegetius's work.

Alexander the Great was perhaps the first commander singled out for biographical treatment by authors, the best known of whom was the Roman historian Curtius Rufus. Included in this new field was Tacitus's writing about the life of his father-in-law, Imperial general Gnaeus Julia Agricola. A collected format was a convenient means of providing varied biographies for purposes of comparison and contrast.

Second German edition of Johann Jacobi's *The Art of Infantry Warfare* appeared in 1620.

The first and most famous of these was Greek historian Plutarch's *Lives of the Noble Greeks and Romans*. It was first printed in 1472 and was reprinted many times afterward. Plutarch also wrote one of the best full biographies of Alexander the Great.

In the 16th century, books on ancient militaria made way for those on medieval and contemporary military history, with a sprinkling of up-to-date military topics such as innovations in military technology. By then, the look of books had been considerably dressed up. Title pages had ornate borders and subtitles, with fancy large initial letters (a holdover from manuscript writing) to start each chapter or section. Partial and full-page woodcuts (pictures printed from carved wooden blocks) illustrated different subjects, and maps and oversize pictures were included as foldouts. Military topics were particularly favorable for these innovations, which also saw the rising popularity of the first pocketbooks—books that were only four or five inches high. A few additional Greek military writers were translated during this period, including the cavalry officer Polyaenus, whose *Strategems of War* was edited and published in a combination of the original Greek and Latin by Swiss scholar Isaac Casaubon in 1589 as a small pocketbook.

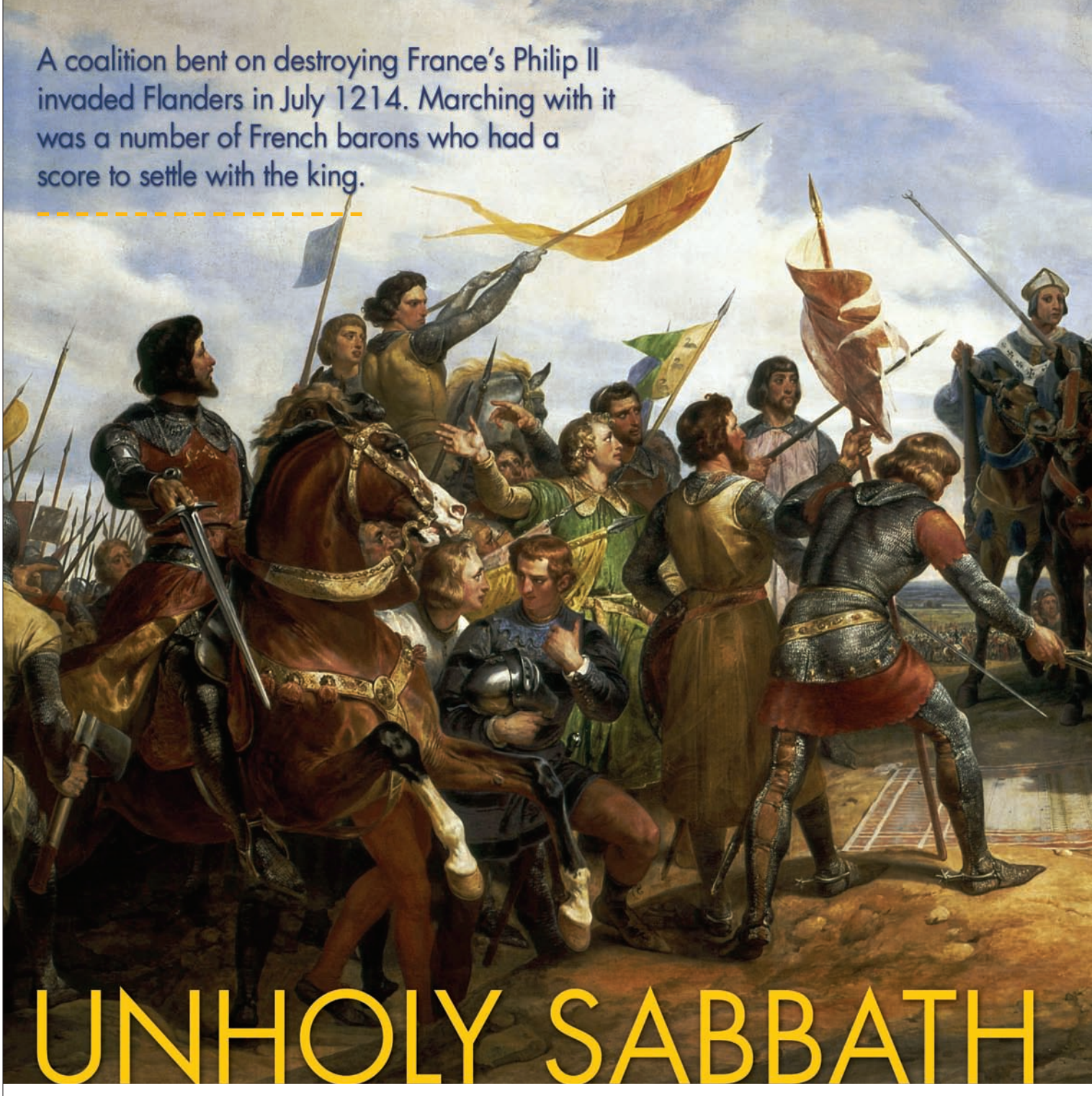
The 16th and early 17th centuries were a period of major conflicts, and changes in military technology were reflected in the books of the time. Warfare was almost constant: the continual threat of Turkish invasion, the Italian Wars of the French kings against the Austrian Hapsburg emperors, the German and French religious wars, and the Dutch Wars of Independence against the Spanish. The latter became conjoined to the terrible Thirty Years' War in 1648 (making the Dutch struggle against the Spanish an eighty years' war). These followed one another throughout the century and were the subjects of various histories and commentaries.

Like ancient military histories, these later varieties were sprinkled with bias. Early political and military histories were particularly prone to exaggerations. Seeking favor with the English Tudor monarchs, transplanted Italian historian Polydore Vergil tinged his *History of England* to discredit the members of the former ruling Plantagenets. Yet there were also some incisive military analysts of the period, including the Italian historian Paolo Giovio, whose *History of Our Time* featured his eyewitness accounts of battles during the Italian Wars, and his countryman Francesco Guiccardini, who produced an insightul *History of Italy*. These and other historians imitated ancient historians in Latin style and format. Giovio had an enthusiasm for the great military men of the past, having a considerable collection of portraits of famous commanders in his home. Emulating Plutarch, he also wrote a biographical collection of past leaders paralleled with recent Italian leaders; it was called *Tributes to the Military Virtues of Illustrious Men*. He wrote several extended biographies as well, including one on the Spanish "Great Captain" of the early Italian Wars, General Gonsolvo de Cordoba.

Practical books reflecting evolving military science began appearing in the late 16th century. These dealt with new technical theories and military exercises—tactical formations for firearms and the pike, drilling with arms, and other battle-ready training preparations. One innovative area of study was in military architecture, particularly the design of fortifications, which had been going through significant changes since the early 15th century. Another fertile area of practical theory was in the realm of ordnance, the accurate firing of cannons, which traditionally had been learned through trial and error.

In 1537, the Italian mathematician and military engineer Niccolo Fontana published his *New Science,* a short treatise on the mathematics of the trajectory motion of cannonball flight. Fontana was nicknamed Tartaglia, meaning "stutterer." As a boy, he had been a victim of French savagery during the 1512 sack of Brescia, when a soldier sliced his palate with a sword, inflicting his lifelong handicap. In his book he showed that ordnance was an exact science wherein shots could be precisely aimed.

Continued on page 64



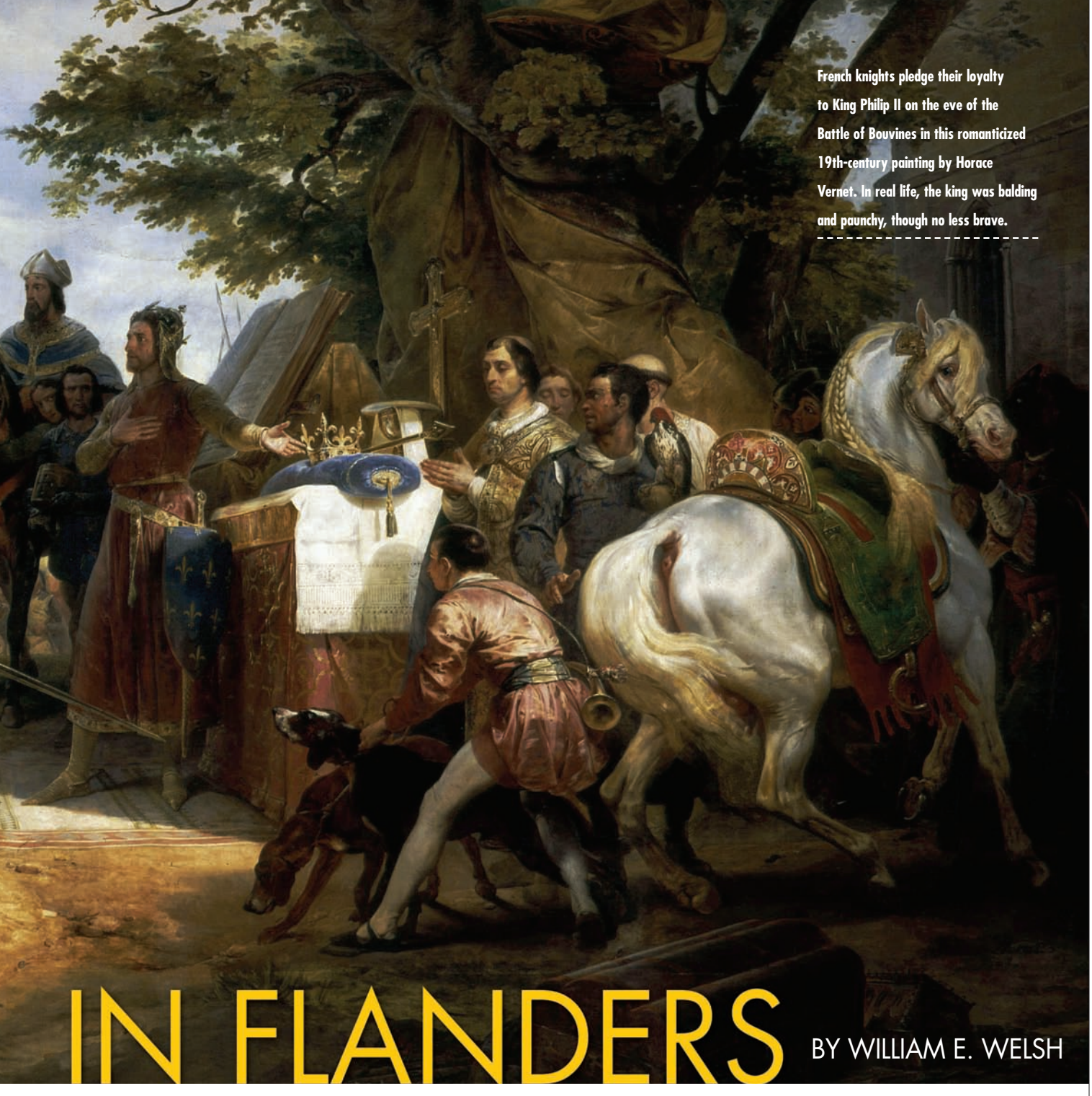
A coalition bent on destroying France's Philip II invaded Flanders in July 1214. Marching with it was a number of French barons who had a score to settle with the king.

UNHOLY SABBATH

With his one good eye, French King Philip II looked east down the straight line of an old Roman road in the disputed county of Flanders on Sunday, July 27, 1214. The French monarch was trying to get the last of his troops across a bridge that spanned the Marcq River at a hamlet called Bouvines. Throughout the first half of the year, Philip's army had ravaged Flanders, but now a mighty host led by Holy Roman Emperor Otto IV and bankrolled by the English crown had crossed the Flemish border, determined to thrash Philip's army and seize Paris.

When he learned that the enemy was on the march, Philip quickly fell back in search of firmer ground on which his knights could maneuver. As he waited for his rear guard to catch up, the 49-year-old king shed his heavy chain mail, wiped the sweat from his bald head, and sat down in the shade of an ash tree, where he refreshed himself with bread dipped in wine.

Before long his most trusted adviser, Brother Guerin, bishop-elect of Senlis, came riding up the road and related what he had just seen. Garbed in the robe of a Knight Hospitaler, Guerin informed the king that the enemy had draped its horses in armor. Both he and Philip knew what this meant—the enemy intended to give battle soon, despite the usual reluctance of medieval armies to fight on the Sabbath. The king summoned his barons and held an impromptu council of war. He had two choices. He could try to get the remainder of his army safely across the bridge, or he could recall his vanguard from the west bank and reform his army with its back to the river. If he did not make a decision soon, his divided troops would be ripe for slaughter.



French knights pledge their loyalty to King Philip II on the eve of the Battle of Bouvines in this romanticized 19th-century painting by Horace Vernet. In real life, the king was balding and paunchy, though no less brave.

The Art Archive/Musee du Chateau de Versailles/Gianni Dagli Orti

IN FLANDERS

BY WILLIAM E. WELSH

The looming battle had been a long time coming. When Philip was crowned on November, 1, 1179, the kingdom he inherited was like a coin clutched loosely in the hand of a child. Although Philip's father, Louis VII, was still alive at the time the young prince was crowned, the older man's health was rapidly failing, and he had lost the strength to rule. The Capetian kingdom that Philip inherited consisted of the Ile de France, a slender finger of territory that included Paris and Orleans to the south. More than half of France belonged not to the French House of Capet, but to King Henry II of England, a savvy monarch who had expanded his territory on the Continent through his marriage of Eleanor of Aquitaine. Henry had inherited the territories Normandy, Anjou, and Maine from his parents, and when he married the Duchess of Aquitaine in 1152, he added her lands to his realm as well.

From the moment he was crowned, Philip focused on expanding the borders of his beleaguered kingdom at Henry's expense. Fortune played into his hands when three of Henry's four living sons rebelled against their father in 1173. The sons, who were unhappy over the terms of the proposed will their father drafted for his succession, required a safe haven and a base from which to launch their rebellion. France stepped in.

The sons' revolt, which was aided by Louis VII, ended in failure the following year, and Louis negotiated a settlement with Henry in October 1174. Still, the rebellious princes continued to scheme against their father. After Henry the Younger and Geoffrey died from sickness in 1183

and 1186, respectively, it fell to Prince Richard to continue the brothers' rebellion. Meanwhile, Philip attacked east, and by 1186 he had grabbed several key territories in a five-year struggle waged alternately against Flanders, Champagne, and Burgundy. In 1189, Philip and Richard joined forces and drove Henry from his base camp at Le Mans, eventually capturing Tours. Henry died in July and was succeeded by Richard, now called Richard the Lion-Hearted.

The following year, Philip and Richard departed for the Holy Land on the Third Crusade. Throughout the initial stages of the campaign, the two monarchs quarreled at every turn. During the siege of Acre, Philip lost an eye. Half-blind and suffering from severe dysentery, he decided to return to France after Acre fell to the crusaders in July 1191. The king's decision to leave the crusade was made as much for political as health reasons. At the time, the succession of the count of Flanders was in question, and Philip was anxious to return and settle the matter in a way that favored his own kingdom.

Map © 2008 Philip Schwartzberg, Meridian Mapping, Minneapolis, MN

The Battle of Bouvines took place in the northern French province of Picardy, between the towns of Tournai and Lille. An old Roman road helped speed the way.

Philip made it safely home, but Richard was not as lucky. While returning overland to England, Richard was captured and imprisoned by the Duke of Austria for several years before being ransomed in 1194. Upon his return to England, Richard learned that Philip had been slowly chipping away at his holdings on the Continent. For the next five years, the two monarchs waged unremitting war against each other. Richard won nearly every encounter. Philip's reversal of fortune did not end until Richard was fatally felled by a crossbow bolt during the siege of Chalus in 1199.

Richard was succeeded by his younger brother, John. Philip immediately took up the sword against John and, unlike his struggles with Richard, enjoyed considerable success against him in the field. The two agreed to a truce in 1200. By the terms of the Treaty of Le Goulet, Philip agreed to recognize John as Richard's rightful heir. In turn, John agreed to recognize that the counts of Boulogne and Flanders were Philip's vassals. John also agreed not to provide financial aid to the increasingly restive Holy Roman Emperor Otto, who was John's nephew.

A series of territorial disputes sparked the flame of war anew in 1204. Over the next two years, Philip conquered Normandy and annexed Brittany, Anjou, Maine, and Touraine. John, having been bested by the more experienced Philip in nearly every engagement, returned to England in 1207. Despite the large areas that he had lost to the French king, John retained Poitou and Gascony. For his military ineptitude, John was mockingly called "Blunt Sword" by his subjects.

While Philip was busy expanding his kingdom, he was also mired in a dispute with Pope Innocent III. The 37-year-old Italian had been elected pope in 1198. By the time Innocent became pope, Philip was married to his third wife, Agnes of Merania. But his estranged second wife, Ingeborg of Denmark, was still living in France. When she appealed the injustice of her circumstances to Innocent, he sided with her and placed a papal interdict on France. After some negotiations, Innocent agreed to lift the interdict in 1200. The following year Agnes died, and Philip agreed to take back Ingeborg as his wife. Philip had no love for her, but he bowed to the pope's wishes, knowing that he would need his political support in the ongoing war against England.

While Philip was busy mending fences with Pope Innocent, John triggered a major dispute with the pope in 1207 when he expelled the Canterbury Cathedral chapter of the church and confiscated its treasury. Angered by John's action, Innocent placed England under an interdict in 1208, and the following year he excommunicated John from the Catholic Church. By then, Philip was back in the pope's good graces, and John was the focus of His Holiness's ire.

The attention of both monarchs, as well as the pope, was keenly focused on the matter of who would succeed Holy Roman Emperor Henry VI, who had died unexpectedly at the age of 32. At the time there were two rivals for the title of emperor: Philip of Swabia, Henry VI's brother, and Otto of Brunswick, who was John's nephew. Not surprisingly, the English king backed Otto, while the French king backed Philip of Swabia. When Philip of Swabia was murdered by one of his enemies in 1208, Philip switched his allegiance to 14-year-old Frederick Hohenstaufen. The balance was tipped to Otto's advantage when Innocent decided to back him, under the mistaken assumption that Otto would stay out of politics on the Italian peninsula.

Public Domain

ABOVE: Holy Roman Emperor Otto IV warmly greets Pope Innocent. They shared an enemy in France. BELOW: Phillip II and English King Richard the Lion-Hearted took part in the Third Crusade in 1190.

The Granger Collection, New York

Otto's father was Henry the Lion, Duke of Bavaria and Saxony, and his mother was Matilda Plantagenet. Born in Normandy, Otto was raised in England under the watchful eye of his grandfather, Henry II. Following the death of Philip of Swabia, Otto was crowned king of Germany, and the following year he traveled to Rome, where Innocent bestowed on him the title of Holy Roman Emperor. From that moment on, Otto began to plot his revenge against Philip, who had annexed a large portion of his uncle's lands on the Continent and had supported his rivals inside Germany. John assiduously courted Otto's allegiance to give him an ally on the Continent who was capable of leading an army and defeating Philip.

Philip had other enemies in addition to John and Otto. The foremost of these was Renaud, Count of Boulogne, who had been in power since 1191. A longtime ally of the English with close ties to Normandy, Renaud was forced by the Treaty of Le Goulet to serve as Philip's vassal. In an attempt to strengthen their ties, Philip proposed a marriage between his son and Renaud's daughter. In addition, he gave Renaud three counties in Normandy.

The king's effort to control the political fortunes of Flanders and bring it under his sway were more overt and heavy handed. When Baudouin, Count of Flanders, and his wife Marie died on the Fourth Crusade, Philip took custody of their two daughters. The eldest, Jeanne, whose dowry included Flanders, was wed in 1212 to the Portuguese Prince Ferrand. Around the time of the marriage, Philip seized several parcels of Flanders that he had lost to Baudouin in previous wars. Philip's use of military force did not sit well with Ferrand or his betrothed.

As he had done with Philip and John, Innocent soon clashed openly with Otto. When Otto tried to extend his power into southern Italy, the aggressive pope excommunicated him in 1211. Otto's excommunication laid the groundwork for a rival king of Germany. Supported by both the pope and Philip, Frederick Hohenstaufen was able to gain enough domestic support to be crowned king of the Germans on December 11, 1212.

Meanwhile, the hatred felt toward Philip by some of his most powerful subjects was coming to a boil. The drift to war increased when Renaud, unable to recover the lands Philip had compelled him to assign to his new son-in-law in 1210, appealed to Otto for support. When Renaud refused to hand over the stronghold of Mortain, Philip seized it by force in September 1211. Renaud subsequently met with Otto in March 1212 in Frankfurt, and Otto offered to arrange a meeting between the unhappy count and John. Two months later, in May 1212, Renaud traveled to England, where he and the English king signed a mutual assistance agreement in which John would pay Renaud 1,000 pounds sterling annually and Renaud would become his vassal and assist him if a fresh war broke out between England and France.

That June, Philip confiscated all English ships in French ports, and John responded in kind by seizing all French ships in his ports. These moves marked the formal outbreak of yet another war between the two countries. By this point, Innocent had resolved to enlist Philip's help in an effort to forcibly remove John from the English throne. In Innocent's thinking, the campaign against John would be a crusade to free the Roman Catholic Church in the British Isles from the tyranny of the English king. At a great council held in Soissons on April 8, 1213, Philip met with his loyal barons and plotted a seaward invasion. Philip designated 26-year-old Louis to lead the invasion, which he estimated would require 1,500 ships to transport the army across the Channel and defeat the English fleet. The fleet assembled at Boulogne in May and from there shifted to Gravelines and Damme, the commercial harbor serving Bruges.

John planned to assail Philip from both the east and west. From the east, Otto would lead an army that included mostly Imperial forces, augmented by contingents from England and discontented barons whose lands were sandwiched between the Holy Roman Empire and France. From the west, John would invade the Continent and begin the slow process of recovering his hereditary lands. English coins funded both armies.

The Art Archive/Bibliotheque Municipale Castres/Gianni Dagli Orti

Portuguese Prince Ferrand is swarmed under and captured by French soldiers at Bouvines. He was held prisoner for 13 years.

To start a new military campaign against Philip, John felt that he needed to patch up his differences with Pope Innocent. He met in May with a papal legate named Pandulf and agreed to abide by the pope's word and become his vassal. The reconciliation was a deft diplomatic move on John's part and brought him renewed support among his unhappy people.

While the French fleet was still at Gravelines on May 22, Pandulf conveyed Innocent's order for Philip to abandon his invasion of England. Whether Philip intended to continue the invasion and defy the pope's wishes is unclear, but events soon forced him to abandon the invasion. While

Philip was busy consolidating his territorial gains in Flanders, an English fleet led by William, Earl of Salisbury, swooped down on the French fleet on May 30 at Damme, destroying a number of vessels and scattering the rest. French forces managed to repulse a land raid by Salisbury, and the English retired to an island off the coast of Flanders. Philip, in a cold rage, turned his attention to conquering Flanders. Throughout the second half of 1213 and into the following year, Philip conducted a steady campaign of siege warfare in Flanders.

Like Renaud, Ferrand was driven into the arms of the English king when Prince Louis confiscated some of his lands—a move that Philip would have been wise to have prevented. In December 1213, Ferrand sailed to England and added his name to the growing roster of those determined to help John overthrow Philip. Henry, Duke of Brabant, a former ally of Philip, also joined the alliance, as did Hugh de Boves, an unsavory knight who had murdered a French official and eluded capture. In keeping with his uncle's strategy, Otto agreed to lead the attack on Philip from the east.

Meanwhile, Philip continued his rampage through Flanders. When he heard that Ferrand had joined the alliance against him, Philip flew into a rage and redoubled his efforts to crush Flanders. One after another, the key towns of Flanders fell before the French monarch's fury. By the summer of 1214, he had taken Tournai, Cassel, Lille, Bruges, and Ghent.

With Philip preoccupied reducing Flanders, John deemed it safe to launch a new campaign on the Continent. The English king landed at La Rochelle in Poitou on February 15, 1214. He was no more successful this time than he had been in the past. After nearly five months of campaigning, John had made little headway in France. When he learned that a small army led by Prince Louis was marching to relieve the siege of La Roche-aux-Moines in Anjou, John abruptly broke off the siege and fled to his base at La Rochelle. Thus ended John's feeble attempt to regain his French inheritance on his own.

By 1214, Otto's position in Germany had begun to deteriorate, not only because he remained excommunicated and in conflict with the church in Rome, but also because of his rivalry with Frederick Hohenstaufen. To continue as emperor, it was imperative that Otto defeat Philip in battle and restore his reputation in the eyes of western Europe. On the surface, the 39-year-old emperor seemed competent enough, but those like Innocent who bothered to scratch away his royal veneer found Otto to be shallow, undependable, and bungling, a shameless braggart whose deeds failed to match his overheated words.

At Aachen, Otto began assembling the Imperial forces that would participate in the upcoming campaign against the French. Although his ultimate goal was to capture Paris, he would have to come to terms with Philip's army in Flanders first. The core of Otto's army consisted of scores of

> "Protect me, and you will do well. For with me, you will lose nothing. But double-cross me and I will pursue you wherever you may go."

Saxon knights accompanied by large numbers of foot soldiers recruited from the Meuse and Rhine regions. Otto characteristically delayed attacking for several months, during which time he lost the vital element of surprise.

When summer came, Otto marched his army west to Maastricht and turned south to Nivelles, where he arrived on July 12. On the march, the emperor was accompanied by the dukes of Brabant and Limbourg. The Imperial army next entered the county of Hainaut, where it set up a large camp at Valenciennes to await allies. Shortly after Otto arrived in Hainaut, he was joined by the counts of Boulogne, Flanders, and Boves, and also by William, Earl of Salisbury. Salisbury, who was known as "Long Sword," was the illegitimate son of Henry II and the half brother of King John. He was the oldest and most experienced leader among the allied commanders.

With Prince Louis still occupied fighting John in Poitou, Philip's chief lieutenants were his cousins—Robert, Count of Dreux, and Pierre, Count of Auxerre—and Eudes, Duke of Burgundy. On par with Philip's cousins and the duke were the bishop of Beauvais and the bishop-elect of Guerin. Wanting to place his army between the Imperial camp at Valenciennes and the English Channel, Philip marched north to Lille. There, he turned east, advancing along a raised Roman road through marshes that provided solid footing for his troops in the low-lying countryside. Arriving at Tournai on July 25, Philip easily brushed aside a small blocking force and occupied the town. At that point, he was resolved to give battle, but he was forced to backtrack toward Lille when his barons warned him that the roads in the area could not accommodate large bodies of men.

Meanwhile, Otto had shifted north to the castle at Mortagne. His scouts informed him on July 26 that Philip was falling back on Lille. With the French forces located at last, Otto resolved to attack at once. The majority of his commanders agreed with him, but one voiced dissent. "I know the French and their daring," warned Renaud. "It would be rash to fight them in open country." The count counseled patience and suggested waiting until the allied forces had improved communications among their various units before offering battle. Despite the warning, Otto remained determined to bring on an engagement. The following morning, his troops marched north from Mortagne, a route that virtually guaranteed that they would collide with the French.

Philip received news of Otto's whereabouts through a message sent to him by an informant in the enemy camp. The message providing information on the enemy's composition and movements came from Philip's former ally, the Duke of Brabant, who despite signing on with the allies dreaded the wrath of the French king if they lost. On the morning of July 27, Philip's army was strung out and heading west on the Roman road from Tournai to Lille. As he was approaching the bridge over the Marcq River at Bouvines, word came from his scouts that Otto's vanguard was within striking distance of the rear guard and closing fast. To quicken the pace with which his forces could traverse the bridge, Philip had his pioneers strengthen the bridge to accommodate 12 men abreast and support heavily laden four-wheeled carts.

Guerin and the Viscount of Melun, protected by a small escort, had decided to ride behind Philip's army as it marched toward Lille and watch for signs of the enemy's approach. They did not have to wait long. The Imperialists forded a stream south of Tournai and made a feint as if they were planning to take the town, before turning west onto the Roman road and heading instead to Lille.

From a rise in the low-lying ground, the two men watched as the allied host drew ever closer. Guerin noted that the enemy horses were covered in protective armor, that the banners of various units were unfurled, and that foot soldiers were leading the host. To Guerin's trained eye, all of these things were indications that the enemy was prepared to go straight into battle despite the Sabbath. Leaving Melun and a small

The Granger Collection, New York

A loyal Peter Tristan shields the fallen King Philip from enemy blows. The king would find another mount and continue the battle.

band of lightly armed horsemen to continue monitoring the enemy's progress, Guerin turned his horse around and rode hastily after the French army.

Like his enemy counterpart, the Holy Roman Emperor had also received fresh information from his scouts. One in particular insisted that the French were in full retreat and showed no inclination to stand and fight. But the Count of Boulogne, who knew Philip was too seasoned a commander to flee in the face of an adversary, suggested that the scout was wrong. Renaud again counseled Otto to avoid bringing on a general engagement until after the allied units had spent more time choreographing their movements. Waving off Renaud's concerns, Otto decided to continue pursuing the French.

Philip may have been reluctant to do battle with the Imperialists because of the Sabbath, but Otto's determination to fight left him little recourse. Although most of the surrounding countryside consisted of marshland dotted with dense willow thickets, the French king noted a level plain about a mile wide on the eastern bank of the Marcq that would afford the French cavalry sufficient room to maneuver. Never one to vacillate, Philip quickly resolved to make a stand and give Otto the battle he so clearly wanted.

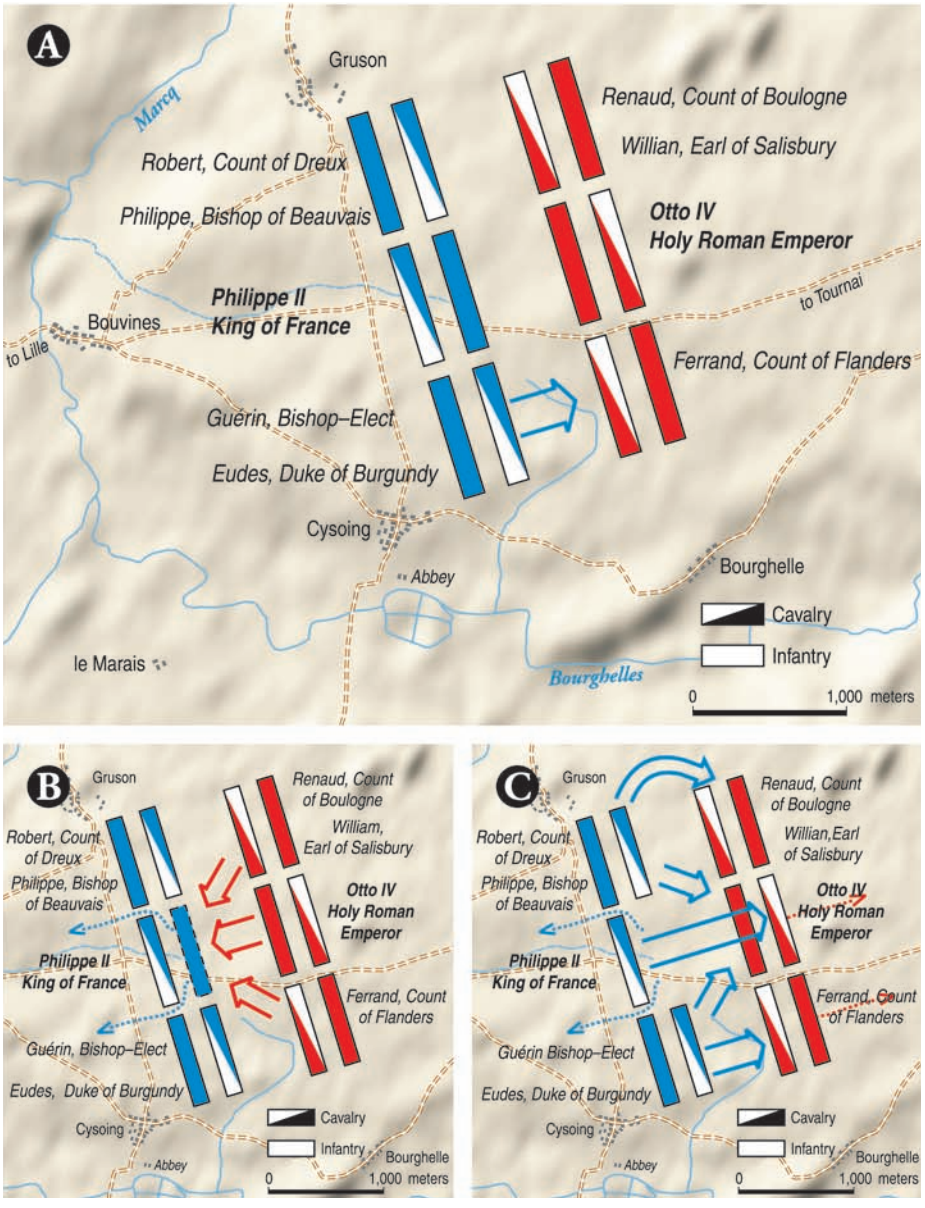
The French king said his prayers at a nearby chapel before donning his armor and mounting his horse. From there, he rode a short distance to meet with his barons. He warned all present to be true to him—unlike Renaud or Ferrand—or else suffer the consequences. "Protect me, and you will do well," he said in a loud voice. "For with me, you will lose nothing. But double-cross me and I will pursue you wherever you may go." At that point, according to the chronicler William of Breton, who was present at the meeting, a cry rose from the French host as the various troops moved to take up their battle positions: "To arms, barons! To arms!"

Otto had told his troops that his cavalry outnumbered the enemy three-to-one and that the French would not like the feel of cold steel. When the lead elements of the allied army led by Renaud and Ferrand caught up with the French rear guard in a wooded tract not far from Tournai, they fell upon it in a spirited attack. The French were forced to fend off half a dozen attacks before they reached Bouvines.

As the rear guard funneled up the Roman road toward Bouvines, Philip ordered the trumpets sounded to recall his vanguard from the west bank of the Marcq. These troops, fresh from several hours' rest, immediately marched back across the bridge. With them they flourished the fabulous oriflamme banner of St. Denis, which featured a yellow sun set against a crimson background. The banner was brought from the church of St. Denis whenever the French king went into battle and the fate of his people was believed to be at stake.

Philip had the bridge dismantled after his vanguard marched across the river to prevent his troops from fleeing if they suffered a reverse on the battlefield. In this way, Philip demonstrated to his men that he intended the army to succeed or else be driven into the river and marshes and be destroyed. The decision to dismantle the bridge reflected the king's faith not only in his abilities as a commander but also in the fortitude and competence of his troops.

The French fanned out onto the plain in either direction, parallel to the river. Philip rode to the center of the army, where he and his household knights took up positions in the second rank. Directly behind the king was a group of clergymen who chanted prayers beseeching the heavens for protection and victory. Placed in the king's battalion to ensure his protection were some of the most distinguished knights of the realm, including William of Barres, Bartholomew of Roye, Gerard la Truie, and William of Garlande. Philip's standard, on which golden fleurs-de-lis were cast against an azure background, was borne aloft by Galon of Montigny. The crack troops filed into position in front of Philip and his knights, who left gaps in their ranks through which the infantry



French troops fought with their back to the Marcq River. Philip had the bridge across the river dismantled to prevent a too-tempting line of escape.

could pass to the front. The foot soldiers had been recruited from the communes of Amiens, Arras, Beauvais, Compiegne, and Corbais. They were superbly outfitted and fought well together.

The rear guard, which filed into position on the right wing, was led by the Duke of Burgundy. Philip, who was concerned about the duke's allegiance and wary that he might switch sides during the battle, ordered Guerin to assist Burgundy and ensure that he remained faithful to the king. Philip had no such concerns about the loyalty of those in whom he entrusted his left wing, his first cousins the Count of Dreux and the Bishop of Beauvais. On the two flanks the cavalry deployed in the front rank, with infantry in the second rank.

When the allied troops drew close to Bouvines, they spread out on both sides of the road to face the French. A large portion of the army was unable to reach the battlefield in time, and Otto probably fielded only 1,500 knights and 7,500 foot soldiers. Still, he had a slight edge over the French, who probably had about 1,300 knights and 6,000 infantry. Shortly before noon, Otto arrived to find the French making a bold stand with their backs against the Marcq. "Who ever told me the King of France was in flight?" he shouted in displeasure.

Otto took his place in the center opposite Philip. He was accompanied by the dukes of Brabant, Louvain, and Limbourg. Renaud commanded the allied right wing, while Ferrand took charge of the left. In the front rank of the cavalry on the allied right, Ferrand would fight with nobles from regions adjoining Flanders and a large unit of German cavalry. The allied deployments mirrored those of the French. The troops on the wings were formed into two ranks, with cavalry in the front rank, while the troops in the center had infantry in the front rank. After the enemy had finished deploying, Philip noticed that their right flank extended beyond the French left flank, and he ordered the French line extended to prevent his army from being outflanked.

As the French looked across the plain at their enemy, they saw that many of the enemy soldiers had sewn crosses onto their tunics. This reflected the belief of many in Otto's army that they were fighting a crusade. An even more stunning sight greeted the French in the enemy center. From the second rank, Otto's banner, depicting an eagle above a dragon with wings, swirled in the hot breeze. Instead of entrusting it to a single standard bearer, Otto had his banner transported into battle in a four-wheeled chariot meant to evoke the glory of ancient Rome.

Because of the Duke of Burgundy's rather taciturn nature, it fell to Guerin to organize the French right wing for battle. The bishop-elect planned to attack the enemy opposite him before they had a chance to rest from their hard march. Following Philip's instructions to watch closely for any duplicitous behavior on the part of the troops under his command, Guerin ordered a group of about 180 knights from Champagne, whose loyalty was suspect, to the back of the front rank. Before he gave the order to advance, the bishop-elect instructed the knights on the right wing to form a wide front so that they would all be able to participate in the action. After he finished his instructions, Guerin ordered forward 150 mounted sergeants from Soissons

FURTHER READING

John Baldwin, *The Government of Philip Augustus*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986.

Jim Bradbury, *Philip Augustus: King of France, 1180-1223*. London: Addison Wesley, 1998.

Paul K. Davis, *100 Decisive Battles from Ancient Times to the Present*. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 1999.

George Duby, *The Legend of Bouvines*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990.

John Fines, *Who's Who in the Middle Ages*. New York: Stein and Day, 1981.

to soften up the enemy before unleashing his more heavily armed knights.

Seeing that the initial wave was composed of commoners, the Flemish knights across the field declined to charge the attackers, whom they disdained as their social inferiors, and simply lowered their lances to receive the attack. The Soissons cavalry might as well have charged a castle wall. A large number of the attackers' horses were disemboweled by enemy lances, and the Flemish line was neither broken nor softened by the fruitless attack.

After the initial charge was shattered, three cocky Flemish knights rode forward and taunted their counterparts to engage them. A group of French knights in the front rank took up the challenge and rode forward to do battle. Two of the three Flemish knights were captured and a third, Eustache of Mechelen, managed to slip away to another location, from which point he shouted, "Death to the French!" In response, a group of French knights rode after him. When they had him surrounded, one grabbed his head while another reached over and slit his throat.

After the three rash Flemish knights had been eliminated, the French cavalry on the right wing rode forward en masse. More than 200 heavily armed knights charged across the field and collided with the Flemish, who had ridden out to receive them. In the swirling melee that followed, many riders on both sides toppled dead to the ground. Others had their mounts killed beneath them. One of these was the heavyset Duke of Burgundy, whose men dismounted and helped him to his feet. A fresh horse was brought forward and Burgundy was assisted into the saddle. Infuriated at being unhorsed, the duke fought furiously astride his new mount.

Several of the French knights on the right gained great renown in the fighting. The feats of the Count of St. Pol, in particular, helped sustain the morale of his fellow knights at the expense of Ferrand's men. "He threw himself unto his enemies as fiercely as a hungry eagle throws himself unto a crowd of doves," wrote the chronicler Breton. Hacking his way through to the rear of the Flemish ranks, St. Pol turned around and rode back, killing several more Flemish knights as he went.

Gradually, the Imperial left under Ferrand began to give ground, and large gaps opened up in their ranks. French attackers poured through. Several French knights managed to reach Ferrand and wound him repeatedly in mounted combat. Although the Flemish count fought fiercely, he was eventually unhorsed and captured. Upon seeing their leader captured and led away, the Flemish foot soldiers on the left flank lost their will to fight and abruptly fled the field.

The Art Archive/Bibliotheque Municipale Castres/Gianni Dagli Orti

Hands bound in front of him, a chagrined Prince Ferrand is escorted to Paris after the battle. He would die a broken man.

The battle in the center was not as one-sided as that on the southern end of the field. After passing through the infantry in the front rank, the Imperial cavalry thundered across the open ground toward the French infantry arrayed in front of Philip and his entourage. Although the French footmen in the front rank were experienced veterans, they were no match for some of the best cavalry in the empire. Many of the French infantrymen scattered in fear that they would be trampled by the enemy horsemen.

To check the enemy's heavy cavalry, Philip's household knights advanced, leaving the king with only a small bodyguard. As some of the most accomplished knights grappled with the enemy, a group of Imperial foot soldiers who had followed the cavalry charged the king's position. Armed with long staffs that required two hands to use and had pointed tips capable of penetrating armor as well as a hook to unhorse riders, the soldiers repeatedly thrust their weapons at Philip in an effort to knock him off his horse. One of the soldiers managed to catch his hook in Philip's chain mail and yank him from his saddle. The French king toppled to the ground with the weapon still embedded in his amor. Several enemy foot soldiers moved in quickly and struck the king, but their blows glanced off his sturdy armor.

Meanwhile, Galon of Montigny twirled the king's standard overhead as a sign to French troops that the king was in desperate straits. Spotting the signal, several of Philip's household knights swung their horses around and fought their way back to their sovereign's side. One of them, Peter Tristan, leaped off his mount and got between the enemy soldiers and the fallen monarch. Others quickly arrived and threw themselves atop the king to deflect any additional attempts to stab him. Once the enemy had been beaten back, a fresh mount was brought to the king and he climbed back into the saddle.

Like the Duke of Burgundy, his brush with death seemed only to whet Philip's thirst for battle. With the dust stirred by so many horses' hooves reducing vision in some parts of the field to just a

Continued on page 66

akg-images

DUEL IN THE DESERT

BY ALLYN VANNOY

The desert sky lit up like a summer lightning storm on the night of December 31, 1941. The distant thunder of hundreds of guns rolled across the sandy, stony ground. The assault force of New Zealand tanks and South African infantry prepared to move forward through breaches in the barbed wire and minefields protecting Axis positions before the much-fought-over Libyan coastal town of Bardia. The final British push had begun.

The South Africans were untested but enthusiastic. They were led by a former South African police officer and attorney, Pierre de Villiers, a strong believer in the use of firepower over manpower. He had served in the Great War, and in 1928 he had been appointed a lieutenant colonel in the South African police, later succeeding to the post of commissioner. De Villiers volunteered for military service when World War II started, and eventually took command of the 2nd South African Infantry Division as a major general in October 1940. He oversaw training of the division, which incorporated a police battalion, and supervised the division's transfer to North Africa in 1941.

The British Eighth Army's second Libyan campaign, dubbed Operation Crusader, began on November 18, 1941. The XXX Corps, under Lt. Gen. Willoughby Norrie, launched the main attack with the mission of destroying Axis armored forces between the Libyan-Egyptian frontier and relieving the besieged British garrison at Tobruk. Meanwhile, the British XIII Corps, under Lt. Gen. Reade Godwin-Austen, comprising the 4th Indian Infantry Division, 2nd New Zealand Division, and 1st Army Tank Brigade, undertook a secondary attack to contain Axis forces in the Bardia-Sidi Omar-Halfaya Pass triangle, close to the border. In reserve was the 2nd South African Infantry Division.

North Africa had been fought over relentlessly by the British and Axis powers for more than a year. The fighting began in September 1940 when the Italian Tenth Army, under Marshal Rodolfo Graziani, invaded Egypt from its bases in Libya. It was part of Italian dictator Benito Mussolini's vision of a new Roman empire—"That great reward for which Italy is waiting," as Il Duce put it. With Great Britain fighting for its life against relentless German Luftwaffe assaults on the home island, Mussolini hoped to grab Egypt, long a British protectorate, before the Nazis could complete their victory in western Europe. To share in the fruits of that victory, Mussolini needed his own battlefield triumph. "To be able to attend the peace conference as a belligerent," he explained to Marshal Pietro Bagdolio, chief of the Italian General Staff, "I need a few thousand dead."

He would soon get his wish. After Graziani chose to dig in at Sidi Barrani, 60 miles inside Egypt, rather than continue all the way to Alexandria as originally planned, the British mounted a spirited counterattack in December 1940. In two months' time the British, led by resourceful Lt. Gen. Richard O'Connor, smashed the Italian advance, capturing 130,000 prisoners and taking the major fortresses at Bardia and Tobruk. Adolf Hitler, alarmed and annoyed at Mussolini's ineffectual empire building, dispatched General Erwin Rommel to North Africa in February 1941. Rommel, en route to becoming a legend as "the Desert Fox," counterattacked the

Bayonet-wielding Australian troops rush through the ruined streets of Bardia in search of stray Axis soldiers to skewer. TOP: German and Italian troops guard the entrance to Bardia, Libya. The North African stronghold would be fought over repeatedly during the war.

British in turn, driving them out of Libya, capturing O'Connor in the process, and besieging Tobruk. That was the situation on the ground when General Sir Claude Auchinleck took over British forces in northern Africa in mid-1941 and prepared to launch—with Prime Minister Winston Churchill's enthusiastic support—Operation Crusader four months later.

While the armored elements of XXX Corps forced the German and Italian divisions back toward Cyrenaica and El Agheila on the Gulf of Sirte, Axis positions in the triangle held firm, threatening British supply and communication lines and effectively immobilizing one full division of Commonwealth troops. On November 23, the 5th New Zealand Brigade, advancing east from Fort Capuzzo toward Sollum, cut off Axis positions at Sidi Omar-Sollum-Halfaya Pass, effectively isolating Bardia. The next day, Axis-fortified positions on the southern anchor of their defensive line at Sidi Omar and Libyan Omar were attacked and reduced by elements of the 4th Indian Division. Axis forces at Sollum, Bardia, and Halfaya Pass continued to hold out.

The 1st New Zealand Division occupied the Fort Capuzzo area south of Bardia and northwest of Halfaya Pass, and moved additional detachments between Bardia and Sollum and to the west of Bardia. The division had contained the Axis forces at Bardia early in the campaign, but British headquarters decided that these troops were needed farther west to assist XXX Corps. The 2nd South African Division, which had been protecting the line of communication along the Egyptian coast, was ordered to relieve the 4th Indian and 1st New Zealand Divisions. The South African division was directed to contain and reduce Axis positions around Bardia.

Although classified as a motorized unit, the 2nd South African Division in reality had only enough transport to carry one of its three brigades at a time, and movement was therefore somewhat slow. However, the division managed to take over the Omars area on December 3. Leaving a small garrison there, it sent a two-battalion brigade forward on December 4 to occupy positions in the Bardia area, and another two-battalion brigade occupied the Fort Capuzzo area five days later.

A good-size portion of the division—one infantry brigade, one infantry battalion, and one regiment of field artillery—was still at the British railhead southwest of Sidi Barrani, at Bir el Thalatha in Egypt, awaiting transport. On December 9, the division occupying the area between Bar-

As Operation Crusader erupted on the Egypt-Libya border, an eager but untested force of Commonwealth troops prepared for a renewed drive on the Axis-held stronghold at Bardia.

Australian War Memorial

dia and Capuzzo had available for action only two infantry brigades (less one battalion), one regiment of field artillery, and an attached New Zealand armored cavalry unit with a few armored cars and just four tanks.

No attempt was made to invest Bardia at the time, since the possibility of an Axis counterattack from the west was still a threat. Instead, six mobile combat teams were organized, each consisting of a platoon of three armored cars, a battery of field artillery with four 25-pounders, a platoon of four 2-pounder antitank guns, a company of motorized infantry, and a detachment of engineers.

These teams were instructed to clear Axis troops from Gambut, about 40 miles due west of Bardia, all the way to the coast. Special attention was to be paid to the wadis (dry stream beds) running north to the sea. By December 15, they had accomplished their mission, destroying a total of 38 Axis tanks, 34 of which were found unprotected at an enemy repair depot. During this period, the South Africans continued to maintain armored-car patrols around the Bardia perimeter and between Bardia and Sollum. On December 15, the 1st Royal Durban Light Infantry Battalion and two companies of the division's machine-gun battalion moved up to Bardia from the Omars region and Fort Capuzzo.

The Libyan port of Bardia was well fortified, the Axis troops having had several months to establish defensive positions and reinforce strongpoints. The ground offered little or no cover for attackers, the perimeter defined by deep wadis. Axis positions were well concealed, dug in, and prepared for all-round defense. In addition to presenting a formidable perimeter, the defenses also featured some 90 strongpoints, cemented in and heavily wired. In many cases, these were strengthened by deep antitank ditches protected by large numbers of mines.

On December 16, the Rand Light Infantry Battalion carried out a reconnaissance-in-force on the Bardia perimeter, approaching along the coast from the north, with the Royal Durban Light Infantry from the south. During the reconnaissance, a third battalion was held in reserve on an escarpment to the west of the perimeter, and two machine-gun companies from the Cape Dutch Machine Gun Battalion supported the action with long-range fire. Both the north and south reconnaissance battalions reached the wire, blew gaps in the line, and penetrated a short distance into the perimeter. These penetrations were immediately met with considerable resistance by the Axis garrison, and the South Africans subsequently withdrew.

In preparation for operations against Bardia, the South African division was reinforced by an additional artillery battalion of 25-pounders and one of 6-inch guns on December 17. On the same day, the British forces captured commanding high ground about 1,500 yards west of the perimeter and held on despite numerous Axis counterattacks. The loss of the key position prevented the Axis troops from observing the attackers' activities to the west, north, and south. The position was of corresponding importance to the South Africans since it afforded a good observation vantage of a major portion of the Bardia defensive perimeter. The ground was now set for battle, but preparations for the assault were just getting under way.

De Villiers firmly believed that firepower was the key to success in battle. He wanted no more personnel to be used than was absolutely necessary to take a position.

Between December 17 and 31, the South Africans initiated an intense harassing effort while also gaining valuable intelligence. Constant shelling and machine-gun fire, uninterrupted night patrolling, and the blowing of gaps in the wire around the perimeter all served to confuse the enemy about the time and place of the planned assault. The New Zealand Cavalry Regiment added to the confusion by ostentatiously demonstrating within full view of the perimeter, with four tanks on the escarpment to the west and armored cars to the south and southwest. A portion of the 2nd South African Division troops continued to contain enemy forces in the area of Halfaya-Sollum while the remainder of the division prepared for the final assault on Bardia.

The division assets available for operations against Bardia included five infantry battalions, a reconnaissance battalion, two companies of the division's machine-gun battalion, a light antitank gun regiment equipped with 2-pounders, all available division artillery (11 batteries of 25-pounders), four batteries of medium artillery (three 6-inch guns and one 4.5-inch), and two battalions of the New Zealand Cavalry Regiment with 114 tanks (Mark III Valentines and Matildas). The tank force represented a substantial portion of the Eighth Army's operational armored assets at the time.

As the South Africans made final preparations to assault Bardia, Operation Crusader was drawing to a close. Heavy fighting back and forth across the Libyan desert between Tobruk and the Egyptian border had finally broken the German-Italian mobile forces. Rommel was making a fighting withdrawal to El Agheila, stubbornly maintaining lines of communication and avoiding being cut off and surrounded. Left in the wake of the British advance was not only the garrison at Bardia, but also pockets of Axis troops at Sollum and Halfaya Pass. These positions represented a thorn in the side of the British that had to be removed in order for the Eighth Army to secure its own lines of supply and continue advancing along the coast.

De Villiers's initial plan of attack at Bardia contemplated an assault down the coastal plain by his South Africans, following the Tobruk-Bardia road, cutting off the northern portion of the perimeter and continuing south. However, when he was promised two full battalions of infantry tanks instead of two companies, the increased armored strike force allowed him to change his plan to an attack from the south. The broad, flat escarpment leading into Bardia from the west presented the most favorable approach for tanks; it was the same ground the British had used during an attack in the previous year. Every effort was made to cause the defenders to expect just such an attack, and a large portion of the defenders' antitank guns were sited to cover this approach.

De Villers's new southward plan of attack was in the hands of subordinate commanders by December 24. Troops were then withdrawn from the line by individual companies and rehearsed in their roles to ensure absolute timing and coordination. The plan provided for three forces—one each to the north, west, and south—which were ordered to "hold, demonstrate, and contain" the enemy forces. The main attack was to be made by a reinforced brigade on the southern perimeter, jumping off at 0500 hours on December 31. In advance of the assault, an artillery bombardment was to be laid down by warships of the Royal Navy standing by offshore.

De Villiers's opposite was a 53-year-old Bavarian, Maj. Gen. Arthur Schmitt, another World War I veteran and a proven field ordnance commander. He had been given com-

Australian War Memorial

Wrecked buildings on the shore of Bardia Harbor reflect the intensity of the fighting during Operation Crusader.

mand of the 556th Rear Area Command, subordinate to Panzer Group Afrika. Because Rommel was short of senior German officers and did not trust the Italians to defend Bardia, Sollum, and Halfaya Pass, he chose Schmitt to command the eastern sector instead. Schmitt's command, designated Division Bardia, included 4,200 Italians from the Savona Division and 2,200 Germans, mostly in administrative services. Although of limited mobility, the defenders were a formidable force, well-equipped in terms of guns and artillery. The Axis units included infantry, engineers, 86 pieces of artillery of various calibers, a detachment of 13 tanks, and service troops. German forces within the perimeter included the 106-man 10th Oasis Company, supported by six 75mm, three 37mm , and three 47mm guns; the 200th Pioneer Battalion; the 33rd Flak Troop with three 88mm dual-purpose guns; and the 5th Light Flak Troop with 16 20mm guns.

Italian forces included the III Battalion of the 40th Bologna Infantry Regiment and the II Battalion of the 15th Savona Infantry Regiment, each with about 600 men and four 65mm guns; elements of the II Battalion of the 16th Savona Infantry and the Coppeta Battalion; the 4th Genoa Cavalry Group with 870 men and 48 machine guns; a company of the 5th Light Tank Battalion with 13 light tanks; an antitank company with eight 47/32 guns; a heavy battery of four 105mm coastal guns; and assorted other support troops. Italian 20mm Breda guns were dug in on reverse slopes, with good fields of fire that could catch tanks and troops coming over the rise to their front. Although isolated from the rest of the army, typically excellent German planning ensured that supplies and water were plentiful and the morale of the Axis troops was good.

The South African plans called for the assault to be carried out in three phases. Phase 1 was to consist of an entry into enemy defenses at two points along the southern perimeter, with the attack coordinated by the commander of the South African 3rd Infantry Brigade. Phase 2 called for an advance on high ground along the southwestern perimeter. The final phase included mopping-up operations on any positions that had been bypassed or that continued to resist.

De Villiers firmly believed that firepower was the key to success in battle. He wanted no more personnel to be used than was absolutely necessary to take a position or secure an objective. To ensure communications and to prevent damaging phone lines, buried conduits were dug in staging areas through which tanks would have to travel, and wires were laid openly along routes where it was unlikely that tanks and Bren carriers would pass. Radio communication was also to be used extensively with pack-radio sets, similar to U.S. Army walkie-talkies, with a range of about two miles. Realizing that the best-planned communication systems could break down, de Villiers saw to it that a number of runners were also standing by.

Engineers were thoroughly trained to support the initial breakthrough. Ample carrying parties were to be provided from the infantry to bring forward engineer stores and explosives prior to the attack, while engineers prepared lanes through the Axis minefields along the perimeter. After the breakthrough, engineers in Bren carriers were to accompany the tanks in order to deal with any minefields they might encounter.

The main assault force consisted of the 3rd Brigade commanded by Brig. Gen. C.E. Borain, and included three battalions—the 1st Imperial Light Horse, 1st Rand Light Infantry, and the Kaffarian Rifles. Support and containment was to be provided by three groups, codenamed Northforce, Kingforce, and Southforce. Northforce, commanded by Lt. Col. J. Butler-Porter, included the 1st Royal Durban Light Infantry, supported by the New Zealand Cavalry Regiment. Kingforce, under Lt. Col. W. Kingwell, included a company of infantry and two platoons of the 7th South African Armored Reconnaissance Battalion and one squadron of the New Zealand Cavalry Regiment. Southforce, under Maj. P.J. Jacobs, included the 7th South African Armored Recon, less one com-

pany and two platoons. In reserve was the 1st South African Police Battalion under Lt. Col. R.J. Palmer. Corps artillery attached included the 234th Battery of the 64th Medium Regiment Royal Artillery, 67th Medium Regiment Royal Artillery, 68th Medium Regiment Royal Artillery, and elements of the 41st Survey Regiment, Royal Artillery.

During the night of December 30-31, one tank battalion, accompanied by infantry and engineers, moved to the assembly areas, the tanks about 1,000 yards to the rear of the infantry. At H-hour minus 3 hours and 5 minutes, the engineers and two infantry battalions, the 1st RLI on the right and the 1st ILH on the left, began their movement forward to the line of departure—a road running 300 yards to the south of the perimeter wire and almost parallel to it.

On a given signal, designated infantry teams assisted in carrying forward bangalore torpedoes and engineer equipment. The troops arrived at their line of departure without incident. At H minus 135 minutes, artillery fire opened in conjunction with a heavy bombardment by the Royal Navy from the Gulf of Sollum. Between H minus 110 and H minus 70, the engineers blew a series of gaps in the defending wire. The infantry crossed the line of departure at H minus 90, then took up a position forming a salient about 400 yards inside the Axis perimeter.

In the rear of the newly established line and under cover of infantry and artillery fire, the engineers widened the five gaps they had opened in the wire, cleared lanes through minefields, and blew the sides of an antitank ditch to create paths for their armor. The tanks arrived at the ditch only seconds before the time fixed for launching the attack and, continuing through the wire and minefields, passed through the infantry.

The RLI Battalion followed the tank column on the right flank and encountered considerable resistance from a series of defensive positions in the southeastern section of the Phase 1 objective

The Art Archive

German tanks shield an artillery trench in the western Libyan desert near Tobruk and Sidi Omar in December 1941.

area. Leaving one company to clear out pockets of enemy resistance, it continued on to its objective. Mopping up was quickly accomplished, and the company rejoined the battalion by about 1000 hours. Meanwhile, the tanks with the right flank, moving behind an artillery, laid down smoke screen, changed direction according to plan, advanced to the northeast at the start of the assault, then made a hard left turn to the northwest as they continued their work of destroying enemy strongpoints and moving on.

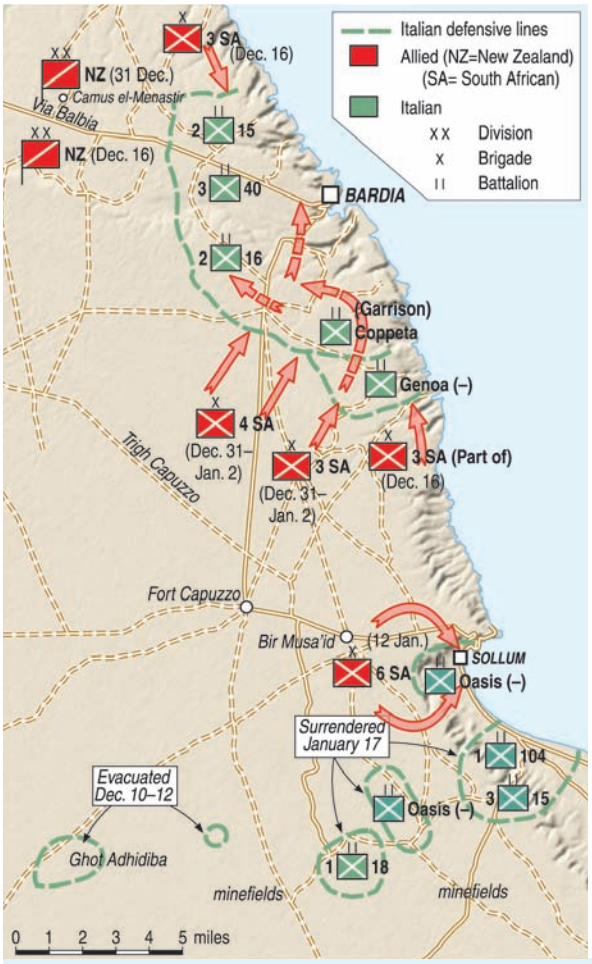
The tanks with the left-flank column, having passed through the infantry, continued north, also behind smoke, on the right of the Sollum-Bardia road. A strong wind came up at this time, rendering the smoke screen less effective, with the result that the tank column took heavy losses from antitank fire in emplacements to the northwest. The tanks then swung around to the right and joined the right-flank tank column in cleaning out the area between the two attacking forces, while the ILH Battalion continued on toward its objective. The troops of the ILH Battalion did not receive much in the way of assistance from their tank detachment because the machines could not operate satisfactorily over the broken ground. In spite of this lack of tank support, the infantry reached its objective on schedule and immediately made contact with the RLI Battalion on the right.

Meanwhile, the Kaffarian Rifle Battalion, following the ILH Battalion on the left flank with the mission of establishing a flank position along the Sollum-Bardia road, received heavy fire from the northwest—the same area where the infantry tanks had come under fire. The battalion commander and the majority of the staff of the Kaffarian Battalion became casualties, and the battalion failed to make contact with the ILH Battalion in position to its front. The assault had reached a critical state. Despite its initial success, it was in some jeopardy of being broken.

Shortly after 1100 hours, de Villiers received word that companies of the Kaffarian Rifles were withdrawing to the wire. At about the same time, information was received that an enemy counterattack was forming to the northwest, in position to threaten his left-flank battalion. As a result, the infantry tanks were moved to the rear of the ILH Battalion to counter this new threat. The 1st SAP Battalion was also moved forward from division reserve to secure the flank in place of the Kaffarian Rifles, which was withdrawn for reorganization and placed in reserve.

Moving with deliberation, the Police Battalion succeeded in establishing a flanking position about 2,700 yards east of the Sollum-Bardia road, but could not reach the ILH Battalion to its front. By arrangement between the two battalion commanders, the Imperial Light Horse made contact with the SAP Battalion during the afternoon. The Axis counterattack from the northwest never materialized. The hard-fighting New Zealand tank battalion, with 50 tanks engaged during the first day of action, had 20 tanks lost or damaged, mostly in the left assault column. During the night, recovery operations managed to salvage three of the tanks.

The South Africans and New Zealanders had penetrated the German-Italian defenses at several points and pressed home their attack but



move on the morning of January 1, the 1st RDLI Battalion, less one company, was withdrawn from the north front, moved around the Bardia perimeter, and put in the line between the 1st SAP and ILH Battalions. The Kaffarian Rifles was assigned to the left attacking brigade and moved into the line. Personnel of the Division Reconnaissance Battalion were dismounted and moved up to relieve the RLI Battalion on the right of the line, which in turn was placed in the line between the ILH and RDLI Battalions. After the rearranging, the units on the line, from left to right, included the 4th Brigade with the 1st South African Police, Kaffarian Rifles, and 1st Royal Durban Light Infantry. Next in line was the 3rd Brigade with the 1st Rand Light Infantry, 1st Imperial Light Horse, and Reconnaissance Battalion. The division was preparing to commit all of its available infantry in a final push.

During the afternoon, prior to launching the assault, a sandstorm blew up that threatened to impede the operation. Bren guns and submachine guns became clogged with sand and were put out of action. Even bolt-action rifles had considerable difficulty. The only weapons other than bayonets and grenades remaining in working condition were the Vickers machine guns, although visibility was so reduced as to make them nearly ineffective. Despite the storm, the South Africans were determined to execute their plans. The Phase 2 attack jumped off in the darkness as scheduled at 2200 hours. The nighttime assault apparently caught the Axis troops off balance, and the 3rd Brigade had little difficulty reaching its objective quickly. The 1st RDLI Battalion, on the right of the 4th Brigade, encountered stronger defensive fire, but drove forward and achieved its objective as well.

While other units were achieving their objectives, the Kaffarian Rifle and 1st SAP Battalions became pinned down by fire from a well-defended Axis position called "the Triangle." Assistance by armor was impossible; the New Zealand tankers could not get into the area because of mines and an antitank ditch. Although the

LEFT: British Commonwealth troops, approaching from the south, bore the brunt of the fighting at Bardia. BELOW: Panoramic view of North Africa, where the British Eighth Army began its remarkable comeback in late 1941. Maps © 2008 Philip Schwartzberg, Meridian Mapping, Minneapolis, MN

had fallen short of securing their objectives. Despite the failure to reach its Phase 1 targets on December 31, de Villiers considered the situation favorable. Working feverishly through the night of December 31-January 1, his staff completed a revised plan for the second phase of the attack. The new plan called for a night attack to the northwest to be launched at 2200 hours by two brigades of infantry supported by tanks. The line of departure was to be the position already established by the 1st SAP and the ILH Battalions.

To carry out the plan, it was necessary to reorganize the attacking forces. In a daring two battalions eventually took the position, they had not reached their objectives by daylight, and a gap began to develop between the Kaffarian Rifles and the 1st RDLI Battalion on its right. De Villiers ordered his tank commander to send a tank company back to close the gap and assist the two battalions in moving forward, but before this could be accomplished, the Bardia garrison suddenly surrendered. (It was later reported that the Axis forces had lost their last well and did not have sufficient forces to retake it.)

After the surrender, Schmitt somewhat ungenerously complained that he would have held out longer if his Italian allies had performed better. The Italian government was highly offended, but Rommel recommended Schmitt for the Iron Cross. In Rommel's view, Schmitt's stand at Bardia had bought him crucial time to consolidate and withdraw his main forces from the deadly British pincers.

The 2nd South African Division reported casualties of 160 killed and 250 wounded, but later information indicated that these numbers were low. The New Zealand tank unit's casualties

Continued on page 63

Bloodbath at the COLLINE GATE

By the winter of 82 BC, the Roman civil war had been raging off and on for six years. The aristocrats of society, known as the Optimates, were pitted against the Populares, or common men, who were demanding more rights and power for their growing numbers. Under the brilliant but brutal leadership of General Lucius Cornelius Sulla, an Optimate, the question of who would control Rome soon would be decided. Sulla had enjoyed the upper hand for months, but now he had been forced to divide his forces and race for Rome, desperately hoping to head off an army that was larger than his own. Sulla's haste looked like the beginning of the end for him and his cause.

Sulla's hurried gambit had its roots in the personal rivalry between him and his former commander and friend, General Gaius Marius. Marius was a so-called new man, a plebeian who had worked his way up the political ranks through hard labor and sharp ingenuity rather than through the family connections that took many aristocrats to the top. He spent a busy career building a power base for common men without lands or titles. In 107 BC, he bucked tradition and acceptable behavior by running for consul, the top spot in the Roman political hierarchy, against the son of an aristocrat and former consul, Quintus Metellus. Marius shocked the Optimates by winning. He further angered them by removing Metellus as general in a campaign against the Numidian ruler Jugurtha in northern Africa and placing himself in command of the Roman armies there. He poured more salt into the Optimates' wounds by doing away with the minimal requirements necessary for a man to become a soldier. In this way, Marius managed to build a large proletariat army that owed its standing—and loyalty—to Marius personally, not to Rome.

Marius's dream of capturing Jugurtha and using the triumph to blunt the anger of the Optimates was sorely disappointed. Instead of bagging the rebellious Numidian himself, Marius saw one of his junior lieutenants, the Optimate officer Lucius Sulla, capture Jugurtha through trickery. And though Marius ultimately received credit for ending the war, all of Rome knew who had truly brought the wily enemy to his knees—an aristocrat who was now the newfound favorite of other aristocrats.

Lucius Cornelius Sulla and his army fight their way into Rome in 82 BC. Sulla's victory made him a virtual dictator, and he extracted a bloody revenge on his opponents.

The Granger Collection, New York

BY BARRY PORTER

While panicky gatekeepers lowered the iron grating over the Colline Gate, crushing both soldiers and senators below, Rome's frightened populace awaited its fate. The long night's fighting dragged on until dawn.

Sulla continued his successful rise under a new commander in Germany, battling and besting the barbarians who had invaded southern France and northern Italy. As for Marius, he also proved victorious against the Germans and in the equally important struggle for the hearts and minds of the Roman people. Although Roman law prevented a man from holding the consulship for two years in succession, by 100 BC, Marius had garnered an unprecedented six consulships.

That same year, Marius's—and Rome's—problems really began. A tribune of the plebeians, Lucius Appuleius Saturninus, sponsored a bill in the Senate that provided for land to be allotted to Latins and Italians who had been soldiers in the African campaign, along with full Roman citizenship for many of them. Unfortunately, some of his fellow plebeians objected to the bill (which might have cut into their own power) and threw the tribune's *comitia* into chaos. As elections drew near, Saturninus became so concerned that his colleague Marius was going to lose the consulship that he hired a group of thugs to attack the rival candidate. Full-blown riots broke out. At the direction of the Senate, Marius led armed soldiers into the forum and forced his own political allies to surrender. Since they were fellow Populares, Marius tried to protect Saturninus and his associates by placing them in the Senate quarters for safekeeping. He did not foresee that an angry mob would quickly storm the building and kill everyone inside. There was nothing he could do to stop it.

The deaths stained Marius's reputation with both the Populares and the Optimates. As Optimate senators gleefully struck down Saturninus's legislation, Marius had to deal with angry plebeians who blamed him for his allies' murders. Marius found it prudent to get out of Rome for a few years. He hurried to Pontus, in Asia Minor, where he hammered out a deal with a potential enemy of Rome, Mithridates VI. He took a hard line with the Pontus leader, forcing Mithridates to agree not to invade neighboring lands, and he was rewarded with a rise in his reputation and a safe return to Rome in 96 BC. For the time being, at least, he had been rehabilitated.

Library of Congress

Exiled by Sulla, former military commander Caius Marius sits dejectedly among the ruins of Carthage. He died in North Africa.

Sulla, meanwhile, had also risen in reputation during Marius's years in exile, and it did not sit well with the Populare leader. The rivalry between the two men came to a head when Sulla was accused of extortion by a politically motivated friend of Marius at the same time that Marius was publicly leading efforts to tear down a new statue that depicted Sulla accepting Jugurtha's surrender. Civil war might have broken out then and there, but a new conflict suddenly intruded: the Social War between the Romans and the indigenous Italians, who were sick of being treated as second-class citizens in their own country.

Marius once again proved himself a capable general by turning back the tide of Italians at Fucine Lake and Asculum after several other generals had failed to do so. However, he was still widely disliked by the Optimates in the Senate, and he never received any official promotion for his most recent victories. To make matters worse, Sulla proved just as successful in the Social War, capturing the rebel stronghold at Pompeii, and was voted in as consul in 88 BC and given a command against an enemy that Marius thought he had tamed already—Mithridates VI, who was busy rampaging through Asia Minor and killing any Romans who stood in his way.

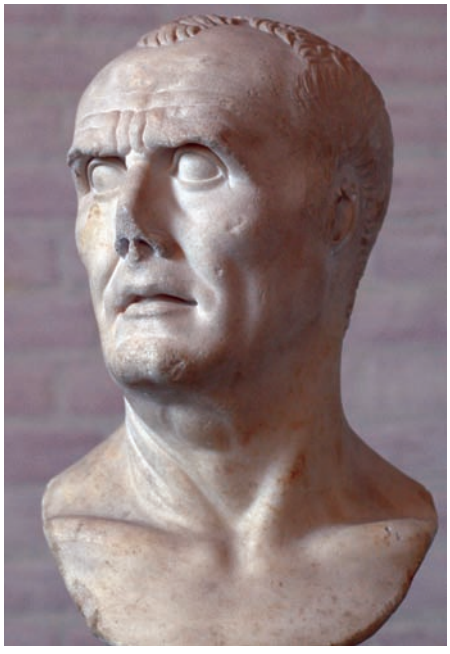
With the Social War won (although the Romans won militarily, the war ended ironically with the passing of the Lex Julia, which gave the Italians the enfranchisement they had been fighting for all along), Sulla prepared to leave Rome. A political partisan of Marius's introduced a series of new bills in the tribune's *comitia* that renewed the rivalry between the two classes and their champions. The tribune Publius Sulpicius Rufus proposed legislation that would distribute the newly enfranchised Italians evenly among the 35 voting tribes in the tribune's *comitia,* thus favoring the Populares at the expense of the Optimates. He also proposed that all senators who owed a minimum amount of money be removed from office and that the field command against Mithridates be transferred from Sulla to Marius. This last suggestion of course enraged Sulla, and he tried to check the advance of the bill through the *comitia.* Sulpicius fought back and tensions quickly escalated until riots began again and Sulla found himself running for his life.

Sulla met up with his army, which was busy preparing to march to Asia Minor, and convinced them to march with him back to Rome instead. Now it was Marius's and Sulpicius's turn to run for their lives. Sulla captured Rome within the space of a few hours and had no difficulty in having Marius and his associates declared public enemies of the state. Sulpicius was hunted down and killed, but Marius managed to escape to North Africa, where many veterans from his previous African campaign still lived. Meanwhile, Sulla dismantled Sulpicius's legacy by making all of his bills null and void. Sulla then went to work undermining the power of the plebeians. First, he forced the newly enfranchised Italians to be distributed among eight tribes rather than the entire 35. Then he decreed that only matters receiving the prior approval of the Senate could be brought before the *comitia,* and that such business would not be brought before the tribune's comitia but before the *comitia centuriata,* which was comprised of both plebeians and aristocrats and usually favored the Optimates. Since tribunes, who tended to be Populares, were prevented by law from presenting bills before the *comitia centuriata,* their power to influence Roman policy was severely blunted.

Sulla prepared to take his army to Asia Minor to deal with Mithridates. Before he left, he made one of the newly elected consuls, Lucius Cornelius Cinna, a Populare (and the father-in-law of a rising young tribune named Gaius Julius Caesar), promise that he would not meddle with the changes Sulla had made while he was away. Cinna agreed—at least long enough to get Sulla out of Rome. Once Sulla was gone, however, Cinna reintroduced Sulpicius's legislation to distribute the new Italian citizens among the 35 tribes of the tribune's *comitia.* Once more, turmoil rolled through the Forum. In short order, Cinna was declared a public enemy and his fellow consul, Gnaeus Octavius, restored the distribution of new Italian citizens to the way Sulla wanted it.

But Cinna's removal from Rome did not end the political turmoil. Cinna, like Sulla, raised an army within Latium and Campania, where he found support among plebeians and Italians. At the same time, Marius landed in Italy with his North African army and conquered Ostia, Rome's port. The two men joined forces and together marched on Rome.

All: Public Domain



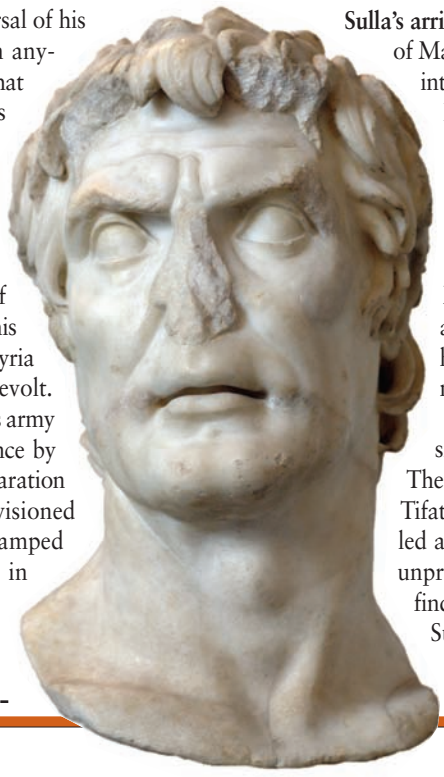
LEFT: Pontus ruler Mithridates VI. RIGHT: Gaius Marius.

This time there was a bloodbath. Marius, driven by spite at his ill treatment, cut off the head of the rival consul Octavius and exhibited it in the Forum alongside the heads of other Optimates killed by his order. For five days the slaughter continued, until Cinna became so sickened by the excesses that he turned his own men against Marius's murderers. Apparently Marius had slaked his thirst for physical vengeance, at least for the time being, and he joined with Cinna to institute their political revenge, exiling Sulla, repealing his laws, and officially restoring Marius as the commander of the eastern armies against Mithridates. They then manufactured their election as joint consuls in the year 86 BC. This was Marius's seventh consulship, but he did not have long to enjoy it. Within days he fell ill and died.

As the remaining consul, Cinna took sole control of the city. With the government now under his thumb, he spent the next three years restoring order and ensuring peace within the walls of Rome. He cancelled three-fourths of all outstanding debts, which favored his fellow plebeians, and instituted regulations over future loans of money. He also distributed the new Italian citizens among the 35 tribes of the tribune's *comitia*, which he hoped would bring an end to that lingering fight. The Senate cooperated with him, not because they favored Cinna's legislation, but because they really had no choice if they wanted to maintain the peace—and keep their heads.

Despite progress on the home front, everyone in Italy was well aware that Sulla still commanded an army and that he was not at all happy with the sudden reversal of his fortunes. Cinna, more than anyone, understood the danger that awaited him beyond the walls of the Eternal City; while the Senate attempted to negotiate with Sulla, Cinna prepared for war. In 84 BC, he left his co-consul, Gnaeus Papirius Carbo, in charge of Rome and shipped out with his troops to cross the sea to Illyria to put down a simmering revolt. Cinna also wanted to give his army some much-needed experience by fighting the Illyrians in preparation for the larger battle he envisioned with Sulla, who was camped uncomfortably nearby in Greece. It was a good idea—the more experience Cinna's soldiers gained, the better able they would be to meet the challenge of defeating Sulla's veterans. Cinna, however, did not count on bad weather and nervous troops. As his army crossed the Adriatic, some of the unstable transports encountered rough waves and sank. Their heavily armored passengers drowned within sight of land. The loss was devastating to the troops' morale, but Cinna insisted that they continue onward. The soldiers resisted, and in the end they mutinied, stoning Cinna to death and bringing his campaign against Sulla to an abrupt end.

Back in Rome, word reached Carbo of Cinna's disaster. Unfortunately for the Populares, Carbo did not command the same degree of loyalty that Marius and Cinna had enjoyed, nor did he possess their flair for generalship. In fact, he was widely considered outright incompetent, and he was not reelected consul the following year. As the year 83 BC dawned, Sulla landed at Brundisium in southern Italy with 40,000 troops, while two new, inexperienced consuls with equally inexperienced armies at their command marched south to meet him.

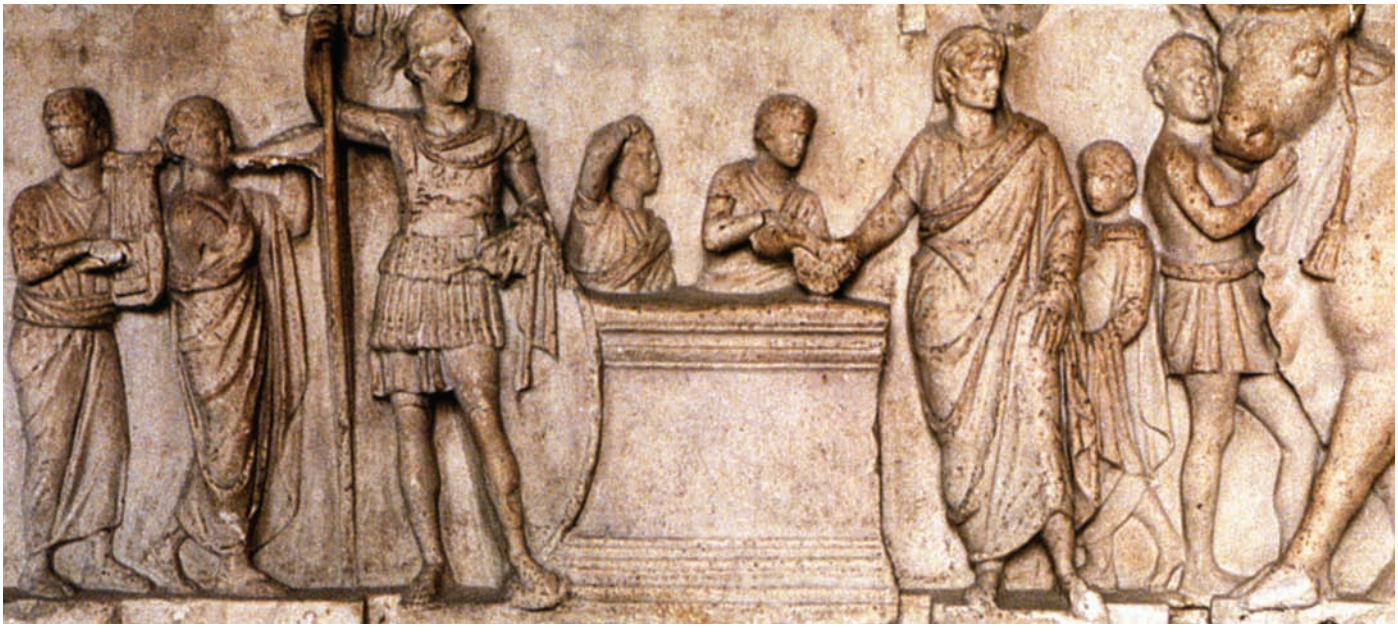


Lucius Cornelius Sulla.

Sulla's arrival in Italy inspired other exiled Optimates to join him. A bitter enemy of Marius, Quintus Caecilius Metellus Pius, governor of Africa, led his forces into Italy to stand by Sulla. Other experienced generals, including Gnaeus Pompeius, nicknamed Pompey, arrived with three legions. Meanwhile, Marcus Licinius Crassus, one of the richest men in Rome, also added his experience, wealth, and army from Spain to Sulla's cause. Sulla's ranks swelled to 50,000 men, soldiers who were loyal only to him, battle-seasoned veterans from the campaign against Mithridates who were willing to fight to the last man for control of Rome. (Crassus, who a decade later would put down the slave revolt led by rebel leader Spartacus, had accumulated much of his fortune by buying up burning buildings and having his 500-man private fire department put out the flames before his new property was destroyed.)

Sulla's force made it as far as Campania in central Italy without opposition. Once they met the opposing forces, they were scarcely challenged. The army led by one consul, Gaius Norbanus, was defeated badly at Mount Tifata, near Capua, and the other consul, Lucius Cornelius Scipio Asiagenus, led an army so frightened by the ferocity of Sulla's soldiers and their own unproven abilities that they abruptly changed sides. Asiagenus, suddenly finding himself without any men to command, surrendered without a fight. Sulla allowed him to return to Rome, perhaps to communicate terms to the Senate for Rome's surrender, but Asiagenus immediately began to build a new army for a new campaign. Unfortunately for him, his new

Library of Congress



IF MARIUS HAD HOPED HIS SOLDIERS, MANY OF THEM LOYAL TO HIS DEAD FATHER, WOULD NOT SWITCH SIDES, HE WAS SORELY MISTAKEN.

soldiers were just as raw as his previous troops, and when they met Sulla's forces on the battlefield they, too, abandoned Asiagenus to stand behind Sulla.

The year came to a close, and a bitter winter interrupted the fighting, while widespread panic gripped the citizens of Rome. The elections of 82 BC reflected the politicians' desperation. Carbo was elected as consul for the third time and Gaius Marius the Younger, the 26-year-old son of Sulla's old rival, became co-consul. Together they recruited troops from the Samnites in southern Italy, who had fought an unsuccessful war of their own against Sulla in the previous decade, and among the veterans who had fought loyally for Marius the Elder at the height of his popularity. As their forces began to grow and improve in quality, the Populare leaders turned their brutal attention to Rome's government. Many of the senators who had recently come out in support of Sulla were slaughtered in the streets. It was manifestly unsafe to take sides—one way or the other—in the political turmoil.

When winter passed, the fighting in Italy began anew. Carbo took his forces north to confront Pompey's legions, while Marius went south to stop Sulla's advance. Carbo's troops were no match for Pompey's veterans. Carbo was quickly defeated and forced to retreat to Etruria, while Pompey's and Metellus's African soldiers secured northern Italy for Sulla.

Marius the Younger did not have any better luck in holding Rome with his Samnite forces. When he met Sulla's army at Sacriportus a long, vicious battle ensued. If Marius had hoped his soldiers, many of them loyal to his dead father, would not switch sides to his father's bitter enemy, he was sorely mistaken. Most of his troops did desert him, and Marius and his few remaining allies were forced to retreat to the walled town of Praeneste, 23 miles southeast of Rome. Sulla followed and laid siege to the town. As the attack continued, Sulla left his trusted lieutenant Ofella Lucretius in charge while he took the bulk of his army and hurried on to Rome.

When Sulla entered the Eternal City, he discovered to his fury that many of his friends and supporters had been butchered by the urban praetor Lucius Junius Brutus Damasippus, upon the orders of Marius the Younger. Even senior senators had not been spared the sword. The massacre strengthened Sulla's resolve; he immediately marched his soldiers out of Rome again and hurried north to confront Carbo at Etruria.

Carbo put up a heroic fight, but with no relief in sight, he suddenly lost his nerve and fled through the front lines to Libya. With Carbo gone and Marius the Younger under siege, the veteran soldiers of the elder Marius either surrendered to Sulla's forces or ran for safety. The Samnites and Lucanians, however, proud Italians who long had fought for citizenship against the Optimates, picked up a few of those veterans and marched together in a combined force of 70,000 toward Praeneste, determined to rescue Marius the Younger from the ongoing siege. Sulla quickly brought his legions into battle to join his allies already besieging the city. Samnite leader Pontius Telesinus issued orders for his men to slam into the Sullan legions. Telesinus's army outnumbered Sulla's by several thousand, but despite their desperate efforts, they could not break through the enemy's lines. Sulla's men struck back hard, but they, too, found that they could not break the other side.

Confronted with a series of indecisive battles and hearing that Pompey's forces were advancing against his rear, Telesinus decided upon a new strategy to draw Sulla's armies away from Praeneste. By night, his Samnite and Lucanian forces made a surprise dash for Rome, which Sulla in his haste had left undefended. Sulla, realizing immediately what was happening, divided his forces, sending his cavalry ahead to hinder the enemy while he led his army forward at all possible speed.

As night fell, Telesinus camped a little more than a mile away from the Servian Wall at Rome's northeast entrance, the Colline Gate. When dawn came, several thousand men from within the city, either supporters of Sulla or loyal patriots who could not stand by and see Rome invaded by non-Roman Italians, rode out and attacked Telesinus's army. They were soon overwhelmed, and the cries of panicked men and women echoed through the city streets as everyone prepared for a massive invasion. At the nadir

of Roman hopes, Lucius Cornelius Balbus, in charge of Sulla's 700 horsemen, arrived outside the wall. Once his horses were refreshed, he led his cavalry in an attack on the Italians.

While his horsemen harassed the enemy, Sulla arrived on the scene, making camp outside the Colline Gate at noon. He allowed his men to eat a quick meal, then formed them into battle lines. By late afternoon, they were ready. At least two of Sulla's lieutenants implored him to let his men rest after their fight at Praeneste and their long march to Rome, but Sulla was adamant. In the enemy camp, Telesinus also readied his men for battle, going from rank to rank and proclaiming boldly that the "final day is at hand for the Romans." Then, amid the clamor of soldiers unsheathing their weapons and the thunder of horses bearing down on the city, Sulla's trumpeters sounded the charge.

The clash was ferocious. Sulla led the left wing while Crassus controlled the right. As the battle progressed, the left wing began to fold. Sulla rode up on his white horse to rally his troops. He was immediately recognized by the enemy, who showered him with spears. Sulla did not see the attack coming, but his groom managed to lash Sulla's horse, sending the animal bursting forward. The spears grazed the horse's tail and landed harmlessly in the earth. Sulla, realizing his close call, kept on the move, entreating his warriors to do whatever they could to keep his lines strong. It was too late. His left wing broke under the enemy onslaught. Many of Sulla's men ran for the Roman walls and the gate, seeking protection behind the barrier, but the old men guarding the gate dropped the portcullis on the bolters' backs, killing several unwary senators as well as soldiers. The fighting continued on into the night, and Sulla was forced to retreat to his camp.

Sulla and many of his supporters feared that all was lost. Refugees from the fighting fled back to Praeneste and tried to convince the lieutenant in charge there, Ofella Lucretius, to end his siege and retreat to safety. For long hours, many Romans—including Sulla—thought the city had fallen to the Samnites and Lucanians. But gradually messengers showed up at Sulla's camp asking for food and describing what had happened during the long night of fighting. Although Sulla's left wing had collapsed, the right wing under Crassus had held firm. Telesinus had been killed in the battle, and his Roman allies had fled. Crassus's troops killed the majority of the enemy until the Italians fell back and fled to the city of Antemnae. Crassus followed and now was encamped outside the city, awaiting Sulla's arrival.

Sulla, understandably ecstatic, led his troops to Antemnae. There, through negotiation with the inhabitants of the city, 6,000 enemy troops were taken into custody. They were all that was left of the great army led by Telesinus. By the next day, many of the Roman generals who had fought beside Telesinus were rounded up and beheaded. Sulla ordered their heads placed on pikes alongside that of the unfortunate Telesinus and sent to Praeneste, where they were paraded around the city walls for all the inhabitants—and Marius the Younger—to see. The message was clear: Carbo and Telesinus had been defeated. Only Marius and a few Roman soldiers and senators remained to oppose Sulla's might.

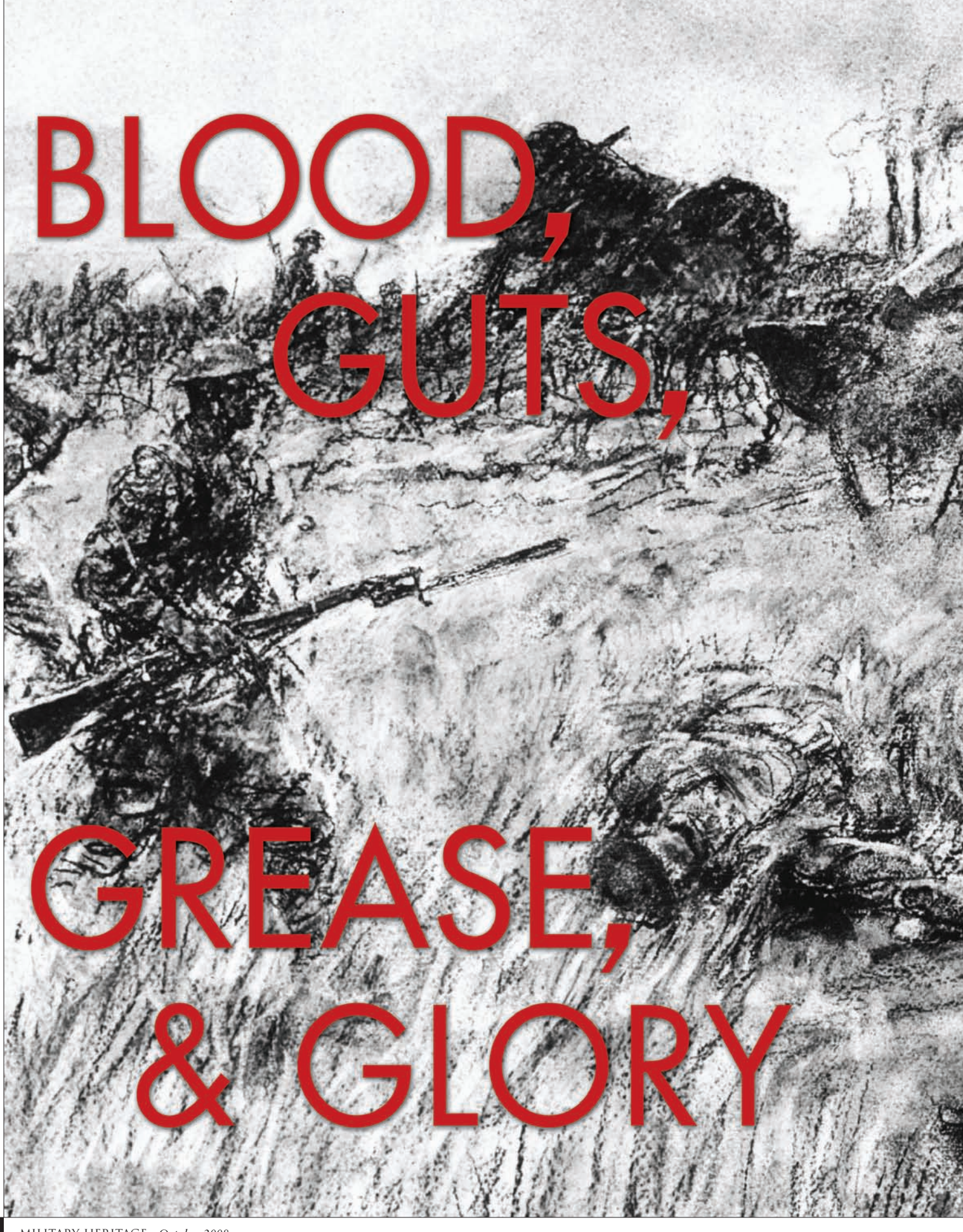
The inhabitants surrendered Praeneste to Lucretius. Marius tried to hide from the Romans in an underground tunnel, but before long he realized that escape was impossible and he committed suicide, ordering one of his slaves to kill him with his own sword. Lucretius cut off the younger Marius's head and sent it to Sulla, who placed the grisly trophy in the Forum for all of Rome to see. The senators who had fought beside Marius were taken prisoner and executed. The other inhabitants of Praeneste were disarmed and marched out of the gates and onto the open plain beyond. Lucretius selected a few who had helped him take the city and removed them from the group. The rest were divided up into three sections—Romans, Samnites, and Praenestians. By Lucretius's command, the Romans were pardoned, although he still believed that they deserved death. All the male Samnites and Praenestians were killed; their women and children were left unharmed. After the mass executions, Lucretius ordered the town plundered, a task his soldiers carried out eagerly and effectively.

Public Domain

ABOVE: Another view of Sulla's triumphant entry into Rome. He expanded voting rights for citizens before retiring three years later. OPPOSITE: Soldiers of the late Republic sport long shields, plumed helmets and an officer's cuirass. Carving on the Temple of Neptune in Rome, c. 100 BC.

When Sulla returned to Rome, he brought with him 6,000 prisoners from Antemnae. The battle at the Colline Gate had cost him dearly. Of the astonishing 50,000 men who had died there, many had been his friends and colleagues. In a cold fury, Sulla stood before the Senate—what was left of the Senate—at the temple of Bellona and began to speak in a low voice. While he spoke, the 6,000 prisoners confined nearby were cut to pieces by his soldiers. The screams and shrieks of the victims shattered the air. Sulla continued speaking without varying his tone, dismissing the cacophony as a little matter of housekeeping. He knew exactly what was happening. He wanted the Senate to know that he knew, and that it did not bother him a bit. When he finished, the last cries of the slaughtered were a mere echo.

The killing would not end there. Sulla's reign, much like his enemy Marius's, was bloody and vicious. Lists of "proscriptions" were posted throughout the city. On the lists were the names of Sulla's old political enemies as well as many Romans whose only crimes were to be too wealthy or to own too much land. The men on the lists lost both their fortunes and their lives, while their widows were expressly forbidden to remarry. Sulla, as the unchallenged leader of the Optimates, allowed free elections to be held and set up new rules that expanded the Senate from 300 to 600 members and prescribed a 10-year interval between consulships to ensure a stable government. But his ceaseless revenge against those who had opposed him far overshadowed any triumph of governance he might have enjoyed in his final days. Even worse, he had provided a working blueprint for ensuing dictatorial generals to force theirs ideals upon a frightened government. When Sulla retired to his farm in 79 BC, he had already plowed a path—however unwittingly—for another such general, Gaius Julius Caesar, to complete the destruction of the Roman republic. Rome had not seen the last of its civil wars—far from it. The next few decades would feature incessant infighting among the social and political elite of Rome. The bloodbath at the Colline Gate, terrible though it was, would prove to be a mere shadow of things to come. □



BLOOD, GUTS, GREASE, & GLORY

American doughboys follow "The Tanks" into action across a ruined landscape at Seicheprey in this sketch by official U.S. Army military artist Captain Harvey Dunn.

National Archives

BY JOHN MIKOLSEVEK

History is full of great men and great deeds. All American schoolchildren know the story of George Washington crossing the Delaware River in the dead of winter during the Revolutionary War. Yet how many are told of Washington's less successful exploits in the French and Indian War? While George S. Patton was no George Washington, he nevertheless was one of the most controversial and popular commanders in American history. After World War II, children heard the saga of "Old Blood and Guts" and how he led the swift-moving Third Army across western Europe in pursuit of the crumbling Nazi Army. But Patton's military achievements did not begin and end in World War II. Instead, they started in World War I. And without his experience in the Great War, Patton might never have learned the fine art of command, of how to combine soldiers and tanks into one irresistible, mighty phalanx—a skill that served the Allies well in the next war.

When the United States declared war on Germany and the Central Powers on April 6, 1917, Patton was serving on the staff of General John J. Pershing, his mentor and idol. As a soldier and commander, Pershing was everything the 31-year-old Patton wanted to be. Strong-jawed, muscular, and imposing, Pershing garnered respect just by walking into a room. A tough disciplinarian, he demanded the most from his staff and soldiers; his aides lived in fear of his wrath. Patton began to mimic Pershing in word and deed. Already known as a loud-mouthed martinet, Patton, during his time with Pershing, refined his ideas and beliefs on military protocol. Strict about discipline, he insisted on perfect military protocol. A formal salute became known derisively among the men as a "Georgie Patton."

FIERY YOUNG OFFICER GEORGE S. PATTON RODE INTO ACTION IN WORLD WAR I AT THE HEAD OF THE U.S. ARMY'S BRAND-NEW TANK CORPS. IT WAS THE BEGINNING OF A STORIED CAREER.

After accompanying Pershing on his punitive expedition against Mexican revolutionary Pancho Villa in 1916, Patton joined the general's personal staff, where he used his wife Beatrice's vast fortune, his own political connections, and a growing relationship between his sister Nita and Pershing to cement his ties to the quick-rising general. After the United States declared war, Patton followed Pershing to Europe. Along with 60 other officers and 128 War Department clerks, civilians, and enlisted men,

Patton left New York City on May 28 aboard the British steamer HMS *Baltic*. During the voyage, Patton kept himself in shape, collected money for war orphans, and worked on his French. While participating in the Stockholm Olympics in 1912, where he finished fifth in the pentathlon, Patton had fallen in love with French culture and language, and although far from fluent in French, he became an instructor on the voyage over. Even Pershing frequented his lessons.

On June 8, *Baltic* docked at Liverpool to wild celebration, including the playing of "The Star Spangled Banner" by the Royal Welch Fusiliers. At last the Americans had arrived. After landing, Patton's first assignment was to lead 67 troops to their quarters in the Tower of London. While not particularly thrilled with the assignment, Patton knew that almost every officer back home would trade jobs with him. Although still far from the front, he was closer to it in London than he would have been in Washington, D.C. For the next few days, Patton kept busy socializing, drinking, and fruitlessly ordering his troops around. After a week of celebrating, Pershing and his staff left for France. Arriving in Paris on June 13, Patton finally saw his first glimpse of the war, "several train loads of British wounded; they did not look very happy." He believed that it was only a matter of time until he had his own crack at fighting.

All photos: National Archives

ABOVE: Colonel Samuel D. Rockenbach, chief of the American Tank Corps. TOP: General John J. Pershing, commander-in-chief of the AEF.

Once again without specific duties, Patton functioned basically as the commander of the headquarters troops. The job entailed commanding guards on duty, making sure that there were enough chauffeurs for the automobiles and that the cars were running perfectly. Patton complained to his wife that "personally I have not a great deal to do. I would trade jobs with almost anyone for anything." Freely utilizing his wife's wealth, he purchased a 12-cylinder, five-passenger Packard automobile worth $4,386—the equivalent of more than $50,000 today—and endeavored to be seen everywhere. The fancy new car turned the heads of many superior officers, who sometimes wondered how a young captain could afford such a vehicle.

On July 20, Patton traveled with Pershing to meet with the British commander in chief, Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig. Prior to departure, Patton installed a license plate on the front of their automobile that read, "U.S. No. 1." During the meeting, Pershing impressed Haig, who nevertheless judged Pershing's staff to be rather unspectacular. But Haig liked Patton, writing in his diary after the meeting that "the A.D.C. [aide-de-camp] is a fire-eater and longs for the fray." For Patton, there could be no greater praise.

Despite the praise from Haig, Patton's disgust with his monotonous job continued to grow, as more of his West Point classmates were promoted ahead of him. Patton soon began to look for other jobs. By late July, for the first time, he had a serious conversation about tanks and their role in the war. Trained as a cavalryman and therefore appreciative of mobile warfare and aggressive tactics, Patton seemed less than enthusiastic about tanks, writing, "The tank is not worth a damn." He stuck with his staff job, but after following Pershing's move to Chaumont on September 1, he grew more frustrated, reporting himself to be "nothing but [a] hired flunky. I shall be glad to get back to the line again and will try to do so in the spring. These damn French are bothering us with a lot of details which have nothing to do with any- thing. I have a hard time keeping my patience."

Patton began to discuss with his wife the possibility of joining the tank corps. "There is a lot of talk about tanks here now and I am interested as I can see no future to my present job," he wrote. "The casualties in the tanks are high, that is lots of them get smashed, but the people in them are pretty safe as we can be in this war. It will be a long long time yet before we have any [tanks] so don't get worried. I love you too much to try to get killed but also too much to be willing to sit on my tail and do nothing."

By early October, Patton met and discussed with Colonel LeRoy Eltinge the role of tanks. Eltinge believed Patton should join them. On October 3, Patton submitted an application to the Tank Service (later called Tank Corps). In the letter, he wrote of his cavalry background, his mechanical ability, and his fluency in French that made him the right man for the job. Showing his usual flair for self-promotion, Patton described his experience during Pershing's expedition into Mexico, when he had led a small group of men on a raid that took the lives of three Mexican banditos, including Pancho Villa's chief lieutenant, Julio Cardenas. During the raid, Patton noted, he had used an automobile to help in the surprise attack, adding, "I believe that I am the only American who has ever made an attack in a motor vehicle."

While waiting for an answer, Patton entered the hospital with a case of jaundice, but he was soon healthy and ready for his new duty. On November 10, he was officially chosen for the Tank Corps and was ordered to prepare a school for light tanks. Orders in hand, Patton wrote his last diary entry as a staff officer: "This is [my] last day as staff officer. Now I rise or fall on my own."

Patton's first assignment in the Tank Corps was to learn as much about the tank as possible. In order to begin the American Expeditionary Force Light Tank School, Patton, along with 28-year-old Lieutenant Elgin Braine, was ordered to visit the French tank training center at Chamlieu for two weeks, followed by one week at a tank factory at Bilancourt. Braine, a reserve officer, was originally assigned to the 1st Infantry Division, but was transferred to serve under Patton because of his mechanical and technical expertise. During their weeks studying French light tanks, Patton and Braine made four suggestions that were eventually adopted. These included a self-starter, improvements in the fuel tank to protect against leaks, an interchangeable mount that allowed the tank to carry a 37mm cannon or machine gun, and a steel panel to separate the crew from the engine. While at Chamlieu, Patton drove his first tank, a French Renault. His first impression of driving a tank was that it was easy to control; he thought anyone who could drive a car could

operate a tank. In typical Patton fashion, he amused himself by knocking over trees with his new toy.

After three weeks of intense study, Patton and Braine began the process of creating the Light Tank School. Before this could happen, the Tank Corps first had to decide which tanks to use. Following a fact-finding mission, the War Department settled on the Mark VII as the nation's heavy tank of choice. The Mark VII, a close model of the British heavy tank, weighed a massive 43 tons, had an 11-man crew, and a dizzying maximum speed of 6.5 miles per hour. For the light tank, the Americans chose to copy the French Renault. The U.S. model weighed 6.5 tons, with a maximum speed of 5.5 miles per hour and a two-man crew to operate it: a gunner, usually a sergeant, and a driver, usually a corporal. Each tank was equipped with a 37mm cannon or a French Hotchkiss 8mm machine gun. Communicating inside the tanks proved difficult. Completely closed in, with little light seeping through, early tankers devised a primitive but effective way to communicate. Unable to talk because of the noisy engines, the gunner would kick the driver in the back of the head to go forward, a kick on his head to stop, and a kick on either right or left shoulder to go left or right. Prior to the use of radio communication, this was the best the tankers could do.

With heavy and light tanks selected, the Tank Corps began to organize and produce its own tanks. Unfortunately for the Americans, manufacturers at home were ill prepared for the large task ahead—only 26 ever arrived in Europe. To supply the AEF with the tanks it needed, the U.S. government reached an agreement with Allied Commander in Chief Marshal Ferdinand Foch for the transfer of existing light and heavy tanks to the Americans.

With the tanks on order, the Tank Corps had to grow into a fully operational branch of the AEF. Colonel Samuel D. Rockenbach was formally appointed chief of the Tank Corps on December 22. Rockenbach, a graduate of Virginia Military Institute, was 22 years older than Patton and his opposite in almost every way. A stoic, even-tempered figure, Rockenbach lacked a sense of humor and was chosen not for his great mind but for his work ethic. At first, Patton and Rockenbach's relationship was rocky, and Patton's first comments on Rockenbach were extremely critical. "Col. R. is the most contrary old cuss I ever worked with," he wrote. "As soon as you suggest anything he opposed but after about an hours argument comes round and proposes the same thing himself. So in the long run I get my way, but at a great waste of breath. It is good discipline for me for I have to keep my temper."

As the Tank Corps prepared to begin training, Patton wrote a paper about light tanks. The 58-page report was, he bragged, "the basis of the U.S. Tank Corps. I think it's the best Technical Paper I ever wrote." The paper dealt with the mechanical structure of the tank, the organization of tank units, the tactics of tank forces, and methods of instruction and drill. Patton, while neither a great writer nor a revolutionary thinker, correctly believed that mobility was the most important factor in a tank.

ABOVE: George S. Patton at the Tank Corps School near Langres, July 15, 1918. INSET: Skipper and gunner in a "whippet" tank north of Verdun.

Through mobility, he said, the tank could attack quickly, and with its increased speed and maneuverability, the tank would face less fire and be less vulnerable to enemy attacks.

The most insightful aspect of Patton's paper dealt with tactics and training. While a firm believer in the weapon's power, he also believed that tanks should function as an aid for infantry. The main tactical value of a tank was to help the infantry advance by running over barbed wire, preventing the enemy from manning trench defenses, shielding infantry from enemy machine-gun fire, neutralizing enemy strongholds, preventing counterattacks, and seizing the initiative and attacking beyond the final objective. While most tanks in World War I were inserted piecemeal, Patton correctly believed that tanks should be employed en masse.

Finding the land on which to train tankers proved to be difficult. For the training center, Patton chose Bourg, a small village five miles south of Langres. The ground was level and perfect for tank training, and a lone railroad track was beneficial in getting troops and eventually tanks to the center. At first, the French refused to allow the AEF access to the land. This infuriated Patton, who felt that the French were acting more like enemies than allies. "We are more or less held up now by the French who seem to put every obstacle in the way of our getting the ground we want for Tank center," he groused. "You would think they were doing us a great favor to let us fight in their damn country." Displaying great diplomatic patience, Patton was able to secure the land, and by January the tank school was becoming a reality.

The next month, Patton learned of his promotion to major. He immediately pinned two golden oak leaves on his shoulders signifying his rank. Unlike most officers during this time, Patton wore his rank proudly and never feared the Germans' penchant for shooting officers. Soon, he had the

American tanks move into battle line in the Argonne Forest on September 26, 1918.

tank school up and running. With over 200 men in training at Bourg, Patton provided the best learning environment he could for his troops. Kept busy around the clock, a typical day for soldiers in the tank school began at 8:20 for morning drills, followed by close-order drills, exercises on saluting at 8:35, then calisthenics and fitness drills at 10:05, instruction in guard duty and military courtesy at 10:45, followed by foot drill at 11:20. After recess and lunch, officers were required to receive pistol instruction at 1 PM, followed by machine-gun and foot drill at 1:50 and theory and operation classes from 2:50 to 4. The rest of the day, the soldiers were expected to keep the training center in shipshape order.

In March, Patton and Rockenbach spent a week in England attempting to get some modifications for their tanks. "I argued in favor of four speeds," Patton recalled, "but was ruled an ass." Following the trip, Rockenbach made his first inspection of the tank school and was extremely impressed. After the visit, Patton was in rare form, giving a speech on discipline. "Lack of discipline in war means death or defeat, which is worse than death," he warned. "The prize for this war is the greatest of all prizes—freedom. It is by discipline alone that all your efforts, all your patriotism, shall not have been in vain. Without it heroism is futile. You will die for nothing. With discipline you are irresistible."

On March 19, Patton received word that he had been promoted to lieutenant colonel, and he was further elated to hear that 10 Renault tanks were on their way to Bourg. Following a few weeks of training with actual tanks, he and his troops put on their first demonstration on April 22. The demonstration went extremely well, and Patton noted, "The show came off all right except that it was raining hard and very cold so that one got stuck in a shell hole but I had a reserve one ready and every thing went on fine." To celebrate the school's success, six days later Patton organized the 1st Light Tank Battalion, with himself as battalion commander.

While happy with the tank school's progress, Patton grew bored with the safety of rear duty and longed for a glimpse of the front. "I am getting ashamed of myself when I think of all the fine fighting and how little I have had to do with," he told his wife. On May 21, he finally had a chance to travel to the front. Traveling with a French major named La Favre, Patton once got within 200 yards of the German line. Willing to risk his life for a bit of fun, La Favre turned sarcastically toward the German line and exposed his bottom to enemy fire as he adjusted his leggings. Patton, not to be outdone, took off his helmet, lit a cigarette, and began to smoke. Luckily for both La Favre and Patton, German sharpshooters disdained to fire on the two show-offs.

Returning from his trip, Patton reorganized the tank school and formed a second battalion. As the equivalent of a regimental commander, he appointed a chief of staff, adjutant, reconnaissance officer and supply officer. He placed Captain Joseph Viner in command of the 1st Battalion, also named the 344th Tank Battalion, and Captain Sereno Brett in command of the 2nd Battalion, also named the 345th Tank Battalion. In June, Patton accepted a spot at the Army General Staff College in Langres. While busy with the tank school and not really interested in staff duty, he decided to take the class because most general officers had taken it. On August 20, while still in class, Patton received an urgent message: "You will report at once to the Chief of Tank Corps accompanied by your Reconnaissance officer and equipped for field service." For Patton, it was a dream come true. For the first time in his life, he would lead large numbers of men into battle.

By the late summer of 1918, the AEF had grown large enough to participate fully in the war. Although divisions had been pushed into battle to stop the German summer offensive, the St. Mihiel attack would be the first major engagement the AEF would participate in as a whole. Located 20 miles southeast of Verdun, the town of St. Mihiel had fallen into German hands in 1914. Four years later, the Germans still held on to 150 square miles of French territory. While cutting off the salient was important, the real prize was the ancient fortress of Metz, 30 miles beyond St. Mihiel. The original plan called for an all-out attack on St. Mihiel, with 15 Amer-

ican divisions and four French divisions moving against the flanks of the salient.

Unfortunately, French and British fear caused a change in the plan. Supported by Foch, Haig believed that a complete breakthrough of the St. Mihiel salient was risky and unnecessary. Instead of pushing forward with a breakthrough, the armies would stop and prepare for the major engagement against the Hindenburg Line. The new plan called for the forces to free the railroad through St. Mihiel to Verdun and to establish a base for further operations. After cutting off the salient, the AEF would reorganize and swing north to the Meuse-Argonne Hindenburg Line.

Patton set out to see the terrain on which his beloved tanks would fight. During the last week of August, Patton and some French soldiers explored the section designated for the Tank Corps. Patton found the ground soft, but he decided that it was suitable for tank use. With this knowledge in hand, he set about devising his own plan for his tanks. The plan called for Patton's 1st Tank Brigade to support the 1st and 42nd Divisions, which were located almost directly in the center of IV Corps. Meanwhile, the AEF received 225 light tanks from the French. Out of the 225 light tanks, Patton got 144 of them and planned to put them all to use. Before going into battle, he gave another grandiloquent speech. "American tanks do not surrender," he roared. "As long as one tank is able to move it must go forward. Its presence will save the lives of hundreds of infantry and kill many Germans. Finally, this is our big chance. Make it worthwhile."

The day of attack arrived. On September 12, 550,000 doughboys and 3.3 million artillery rounds launched their attack on the St. Mihiel salient. Patton wrote in his diary, "When the shelling first [started] I had some doubts about the advisability of sticking my head over the parapet, but it is just like taking a cold bath, once you get in it's all right. And I soon got out on the parapet." By 9:15, Patton was growing weary of staying behind the lines. The excitement of the battle and the urge to prove his courage were too much for him to ignore. He decided to leave his command post and see for himself what was going on.

Patton moved on foot toward the action and immediately saw the wrath of war as the dead lay scattered across the field. As for his tanks, he came upon a few stuck in the mud and trenches, but in general the tanks were performing well. Patton eventually met up with some French tankers under his command around the town of St. Baussant, and he also encountered Brig. Gen. Douglas MacArthur, commander of the 84th Brigade. The two conversed on a hill as bullets whizzed by. "I joined him and the creeping barrage came along toward us," Patton recalled. "We stood and talked but neither was much interested in what the other said as we could not get our minds off the shells." One well-placed artillery round on that cold, rainy, September day could well have changed the course of World War II.

After talking with MacArthur, Patton moved on toward the action. In Essey, he met some American soldiers who were afraid to cross a bridge a French soldier had told them was mined. "This made me mad," Patton said, "so I led them through on foot but there was no danger as the Bosch [was] shelling the next town." After crossing the bridge, he hitched a ride on a nearby tank. A few miles out of town, while still on the top of the tank, Patton noticed paint chips beginning to fly off the tank—he couldn't hear anything over the noise—and immediately jumped off the vehicle into a shell hole. Unfortunately for Patton, the tank crew did not notice his hurried departure and went on, leaving him in a wide-open field with infantry troops still 600 yards behind. Stuck in the shell hole, Patton again pressed his luck. "The bright thought occurred to me that I could move across the front in an oblique fashion and not appear to run from the Germans yet at the same time get back," he recalled. "Finally I decided that I could get back obliquely. So I started listening for the machine guns with all my ears. As soon as the m.g.'s opened I would lay down and beat the bullets each time. Some time I will figure the speed of sounds and bullets and see if I was right. It is the only use I know of that math has ever been to me."

"GEORGE PATTON WAS ALWAYS ON THE FRONT LINES, NEVER IN THE REAR WITH THE RED CROSS. THAT WAS ONE OF THE SECRETS TO HIS GREATNESS."

Pulling a tank out of a ditch during the American attack on the German line at the St. Mihiel salient.

After his narrow escape, Patton rejoined the infantry and began organizing an attack of the town of Beney. Around 3 PM, exhausted and content with the progression of the battle, he sat down for his first meal, only to find that a mischievous German POW had replaced the food in his hamper sack with rocks. He made do with some crackers taken from a dead German. Following the successful attack on Beney, both the 1st and 2nd Tank Battalions settled in for the night. The next day, Patton and his tanks moved forward against little German resistance. On September 14, his

forces pushed aside German resistance and captured the town of Jonville.

For the Allies, the battle of St. Mihiel was a tremendous success. More than 16,000 Germans were captured, along with 450 guns; and more than 7,000 Germans were killed, wounded, or missing. Only a few hundred American deaths were reported. Of Patton's 174 tanks engaged in the battle, three were destroyed, 22 were ditched, and 14 broke down. With only five killed in action and 19 wounded, Patton's tank forces had done extremely well. The performance of the tanks, while far from perfect, proved to doubters that tanks were an important and powerful weapon, not just a laboring machine.

Patton believed that he and his forces had done well but could do better. Personally, Patton had shown great courage under fire and tremendous leadership qualities. Rockenbach, however, believed Patton's conduct during the battle was less than exemplary. As a tank brigade commander, he felt that Patton's duty was at headquarters, not running around in a field chasing tanks. In Rockenbach's reprimand of Patton's conduct, he listed three points: "1. The five light tanks of a platoon had to work together and not be allowed to be split up. 2. When a tank brigade was allotted to a corps, the commander was to remain at the corps headquarters or be in close telephonic communications with it. 3. I wish you would especially impress on your men that they are fighting [with] tanks, they are not infantry, and any man who abandons his tank will in the future be tried." Patton's personal leadership during the battle endeared him to his soldiers. While Rockenbach considered Patton's wandering off to the front line a weakness, others considered it a strength. "George Patton was always on the front lines, never in the rear with the Red Cross," wrote Captain Viner. "That was one of the secrets to his greatness."

With the St. Mihiel salient closed, the AEF immediately readied itself for the next move, the Meuse-Argonne offensive. For that attack, 10 divisions planned to attack in the first wave, while eight others waited in reserve. Collectively, the AEF faced 18 well-trained German divisions. Following an artillery bombardment, the American forces were to attack a 20-mile-wide, 13-mile-long area. Throughout the area were countless German defense fortifications, dugouts, and other obstacles. Patton devised a plan for a concentrated tank thrust through the enemy defenses. The 1st Tank Brigade was ordered to support the 28th and 35th Divisions of I Corps as they attacked from the west. The two units would break out of the line and advance as far as they could.

The attack started on September 26 as the artillery bombardment broke through the heavy fog. Around 6 AM, Patton seemingly disregarded Rockenbach's advice and reprimand and left his command post to see how his tanks were performing. Once again traveling on foot, Patton followed tank tracks on the Clermont-Neuvilly-Boureuilles-Varennes road, and after a few kilometers met up with some of his tanks. Almost immediately German artillery shells hit and were followed by machine-gun fire. After ordering everyone to hit the dirt, Patton ordered all ground troops toward a railroad cut.

Once in the safety of the cut, Patton waited for the firing to end. While waiting for the attack to subside, more and more infantry troops began running from the front, seeking protection in the cut. With the attack dying down, Patton noticed tanks stopped before a large trench. Seizing a lull in the German bombardment, he organized the infantrymen and marched them to the trench. As they approached the trench, Patton ordered all to hit the dirt again, as machine-gun bullets flew over their heads.

After the fire died down again, Patton immediately ordered the men to help get the tanks across the trench, and the men began to tear down the trench walls. The Germans began another barrage, and machine-gun fire burst out from the front. Unmoved by the firing, Patton ordered his troops to hold their ground and continue digging. While some continued to dig, others fled back to the railroad cut. Patton, angry at their lack of courage, continued to dig and even hit a few soldiers over the head with a shovel to keep them working. With the fire

An American tank moves to the front past German prisoners carrying their wounded to the rear on the first morning of the attack at St. Mihiel.

increasing and more troops falling on the side of him, he pushed forward, yelling, "To hell with them, they can't hit me!"

Finally the tanks advanced past the trenches, and Patton readied himself and his motley group of soldiers to advance. Waving his big walking stick over his head, he tried to rally the troops and shouted, "Let's go get them! Who's with me?" Caught in the moment, 100 soldiers jumped to their feet and ran down the hill with Patton. German machine-gun fire increased fantastically, causing Patton and his soldiers to hit the dirt after only 50 yards. With machine-gun fire growing stronger by the minute, Patton had a sudden vision: "I felt a great desire to run, I was trembling with fear when suddenly I thought of my progenitors and seemed to see them in a cloud over the German lines looking at me. I became calm at once and saying aloud, 'It is time for another Patton to die.' [I] called for volunteers and went forward to what I honestly believed to be certain death. Six men went with me; five were killed."

Patton quickly picked himself up, waved his walking stick, and shouted to the six men following him, "Let's go, let's go!" As the other men quickly fell, Patton's orderly, Private First Class Joseph T. Angelo, wondered what the lunatic was trying to prove, armed with only a walking stick. Forced to take cover with Angelo in a shell hole, Patton once again tried to advance. A few seconds later, he felt a shock of a bullet enter his leg. Struggling to move, Patton managed to crawl back in the shell hole with Angelo. Angelo managed to bandage his wound, and the two awaited help. After a few hours, the fire abated and Patton, still conscious, was placed on a stretcher and taken to the medic tent.

Injured and suffering from massive blood loss, Patton ordered the medics to take him to the 35th Division headquarters so he could give his report of the front. After reporting to the headquarters, Patton was sent to Hospital Number 11 for immediate surgery. The next morning he awoke, dazed but otherwise feeling rather good. The bullet had entered his left thigh and exited two inches to the left of his rectum. Patton wrote home to tell his wife that he was "missing half my bottom but otherwise all right."

Once again, Patton's tanks proved their worth. Overall the two battles, St. Mihiel and the Meuse-Argonne offensive cost the AEF 117,000 casualities, but they inflicted 100,000 casualties on the enemy while 26,000 prisoners, 874 cannons, and 3,000 machine guns were captured. The two battles helped push the Germans to the brink of defeat. For Patton, however, the war was over.

A few days after being wounded, Patton was proud to read stories of his death-defying exploits. The headline of one story read, "Col. Patton, Hero of Tanks, Hit by Bullet—Crawled into Shell Hole and Directed Monsters in Argonne Battle." While thrilled with what he had done so far, Patton was slightly depressed, writing to his wife, "I feel terribly to have missed all the fighting." Bored with hospital life and frustrated by not being able to fight, he was cheered by another promotion—this time to colonel. To his immense gratification, he was also awarded both the Distinguished Service Medal and Distinguished Service Cross, and he wore them with pride for the remainder of his life.

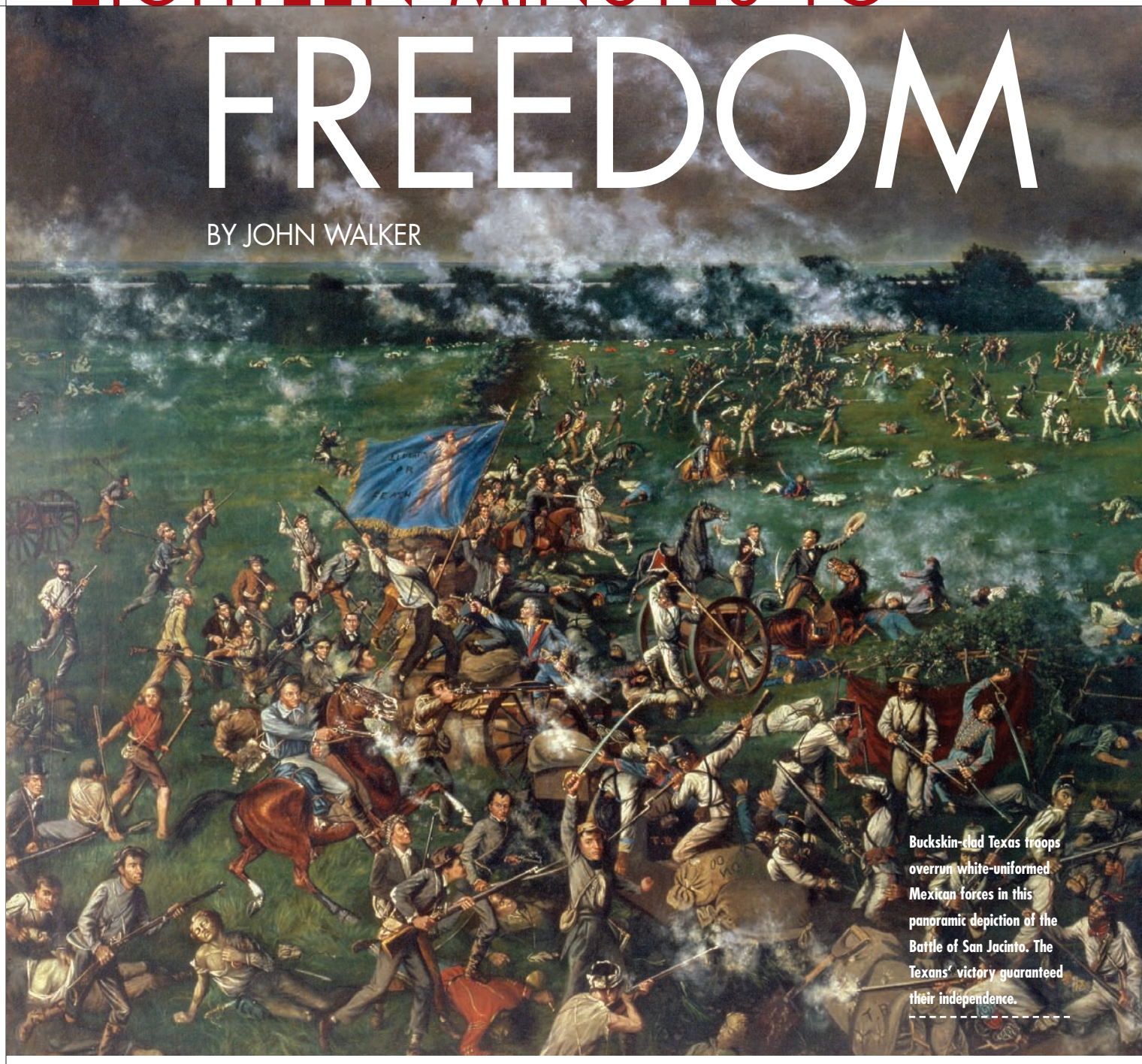
A tank joins a mixed convoy of vehicles and horses at Essey, France.

The war ended while Patton was still recovering, and he noted almost sadly in his diary: "Peace was signed and Langres was very excited. Many flags. Got rid of my bandage." After getting out of the hospital and writing his numerous reports, Patton returned to his tanks, but without the war his job was boring, and he was saddened as many of his soldiers left for home. He remained in France for months after the war, and he prepared to leave with his brigade around March. Patton left aboard the SS *Patria* on March 1 and arrived in New York with much fanfare on March 17, 1919. Swamped by numerous newspaper reporters, Patton was quoted in the *New York Evening Mail* as saying, "The tank is only used in extreme cases of stubborn resistance. They are the natural answer to the machine gun, and as far as warfare is concerned, have come to stay just as much as the airplanes have."

The war was over, the Allies had won, and Patton had surpassed all expectations. The beginning of the Patton legend was born. World War I reinforced what Patton had trained his whole life to become, a battlefield commander. The Great War showed him for the first time to be a fine officer and leader of troops. Almost single-handedly, he had created a tank school and trained the 1st Tank Brigade. He had learned how to command and motivate troops and, ultimately, how to lead them in combat. Everything Patton did in World War II started in World War I. Indeed, it is hard to imagine General Patton rolling victoriously across Germany in 1945 had not Colonel Patton first slogged through the mud in France in 1918. □

EIGHTEEN MINUTES TO FREEDOM

BY JOHN WALKER



Buckskin-clad Texas troops overrun white-uniformed Mexican forces in this panoramic depiction of the Battle of San Jacinto. The Texans' victory guaranteed their independence.

As long afternoon shadows rolled across the prairie near the confluence of the Buffalo Bayou and the San Jacinto River in eastern Texas on April 21, 1836, two armed camps—one a small Texan force, the other a 1,400-man-strong Mexican army—lay within a scant 1,000 yards of each another. All was calm in the Mexican camp during siesta hour. The army's commander, President Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, was so convinced that no attack was imminent that, even with his men virtually within sight of the enemy, he had neglected to deploy pickets. Arms stacked, Santa Anna's infantrymen slept, talked, cooked meals, or played cards while their cavalry comrades unsaddled their horses and let them graze or rode them bareback to the water's edge.

The drowsy stillness was suddenly shattered at 4 PM, when some 930 Texan soldiers came charging forward on foot and horseback, hidden by the almost waist-high prairie grass, and launched a devastating surprise assault against the larger Mexican force. The climactic battle of the war for Texas independence was about to be fought. For General Sam Houston's ragtag "Texian" army, it was now or never—the fate of the nascent Republic of Texas hung in the balance.

With their backs literally to the water, Texas revolutionaries stormed across the flood plain at San Jacinto toward an unwary Mexican army enjoying a siesta. The fate of the Texas republic lay in the balance.

The State Preservation Board, Austin, Texas

During the early years of the 19th century, droves of Anglo-American colonists had settled in Texas, then part of the northern Mexican province of Coahuila y Tejas. They were given generous grants of land in return for agreeing to become Mexican citizens, abide by the laws, and practice Catholicism. By the late 1820s, however, the Mexican government began restricting American immigration. In 1829 the comparatively liberal Federalist government was displaced by the Centralists, who voided much of the nation's 1824 Constitution that had granted a great deal of autonomy to regional governments in Mexico's provinces. When the Centralists attempted to enforce their new policies in the north, relations between the Mexican government and restive American colonists quickly deteriorated.

Outright rebellion broke out in 1835, after Santa Anna rescinded the constitution altogether and assumed dictatorial control over the nation. After capturing a few small outposts and defeating the small Mexican garrisons in the area, the Texans, side by side with many Tejanos, ethnic Mexican residents of Texas, declared their independence on March 2, 1836. It was a bold move,

considering the fact that only about 30,000 colonists lived there, sharing the land with more than 20,000 Native Americans, at least half of whom were unfriendly. The Republic of Mexico, although in a constant state of revolutionary turmoil, numbered eight million people.

Hundreds of volunteers from the United States flocked into the fledgling Republic of Texas to aid the colonists in their quest for independence. Two regiments of volunteers were organized to augment the regular Texan army commanded by Houston. The Kentucky Rifles, a company raised in Cincinnati and northern Kentucky by Sidney Sherman, was the only group in the Texan army that wore formal uniforms. The New Orleans Greys, another company raised in the United States, marched to San Antonio de Bexar to serve under a regular Texas army officer. Other volunteers, including both Texan and Tejano colonists, formed companies to defend various places that might be targets of Mexican intervention. One company was composed entirely of Tejanos commanded by 30-year-old Captain Juan Seguin, son of one of the wealthiest and most respected patriarchs in Texas, Erasmo Seguin. The Seguins, father and son, held an understandable grudge against the Mexican government. When Brig. Gen. Martin Perfecto de Cos, Santa Anna's brother-in-law, occupied San Antonio de Bexar in late 1835, his soldiers mistreated the elder Seguin. As a result, the influential clan became staunch revolutionists. Erasmo Seguin turned over the resources of his large ranchos around San Antonio to the rebels and made large contributions of food, horses, and mules to the insurgents.

Library of Congress

El Presidente, Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, after he overthrew the Mexican government in 1833.

Santa Anna personally led a force of over 6,000 Mexican regulars on a treacherous 800-mile winter march through the northern Mexican deserts into Texas to crush the insurrection. El Presidente had already brutally suppressed widespread rebellions across Mexico in Tampico, Yucatan, and Zacatecas. The Mexican army was a mixed force of regular infantry and cavalry units as well as reserve infantry battalions and prisoners from the Yucatan impressed into the army. Santa Anna's line troops were armed with .75-caliber "Brown Bess" muskets, the standard-issue British infantry firearm since 1722. His elite riflemen, known as *cazadores,* were issued the .61-caliber Baker rifle, a more accurate firearm at longer ranges than the Brown Bess musket. Mexican cavalrymen were armed with British Paget carbines, sabers, and lances. Several of Santa Anna's general officers were foreign mercenary veterans, including Brigadiers Vicente Filisola of Italy, Adrian Woll of France, and Antonio Gaona of Cuba.

El Presidente was supremely confident as his army headed north. The rebels, to him, were merely a horde of mercenaries and opportunists looking to rape and plunder his native country. He would do to them what he had done to the insurrectionists in Zacatecas. "The invaders," he wrote, "were all men who, moved by the desire of conquest, with rights less apparent and plausible than those of Cortes and Pizarro, wished to take possession of the vast territory extending from Bexar to the Sabine, belonging to Mexico. What can we call them? How shall they be treated? All the existing laws marked them as pirates and outlaws." The appropriate punishment for pirates was death, he said, and death they would receive. Santa Anna informed Brig. Gen. Joaquin Ramirez y Sesma, commander of his advance infantry brigade, of the policy to be adopted toward the rebels: "The foreigners who are making war against the Mexican nation, violating all laws, are not deserving of any consideration, and for that reason no quarter will be given them." Besides, he said with a grim smile, "If you execute your enemies, it saves you the trouble of having to forgive them."

Santa Anna entered the provincial capital of San Antonio de Bexar and laid siege to the Alamo, a small redoubt defended by 190 hardy volunteers under the command of Colonel William B. Travis. Rather than simply surrounding the fortress with a small force of his own, the vainglorious dictator, who styled himself the "Napoleon of the West," insisted on attacking, sustaining heavy losses in the process—some 600 Mexicans were killed or wounded in the subsequent attack. Santa Anna executed the only seven survivors of the battle, including former U.S. member of Congress David Crockett of Tennessee, and burned the bodies of all the defenders.

Another Mexican force led by the capable General Jose Urrea, which constituted the right wing of Santa Anna's army, defeated a second Texan force under Colonel James Fannin near Goliad and accepted the surrender of some 390 soldiers. Santa Anna callously ordered their wholesale execution, much to the dismay of Urrea, who had petitioned for their parole to New Orleans. Urrea rode away, leaving the prisoners in the care of an underling. The prisoners were marched onto the prairie and massacred on Palm Sunday, March 27, 1836. The atrocity served to further inflame Texan and Tejano colonists, as well as the people of the United States. Santa Anna cynically spared Goliad's medical personnel and sent them to care for his wounded at the Alamo.

After hearing of the Goliad massacre, Houston retreated slowly eastward to the disappointment of his eager volunteers, who wanted to stand and fight, and Texas President David G. Burnet. Burnet, a fierce critic of Houston, sent the general frequent dispatches imploring him to turn and fight. Houston's military experience and knowledge of Indian warfare, however, convinced him that the only chance for victory for his outmanned, untrained little army was to lead the enemy toward the East Texas woodlands, where he had more population to draw on; the long marches would wear down the Mexican columns and stretch their lines of supply. Houston also needed time to drill at least the basic rudiments of warfare into his undisciplined troops.

Afraid that Mexican forces were rapidly approaching, Burnet and his cabinet abandoned the capital at Washington-on-the-Brazos and hastily crossed the prairie toward the Gulf of Mexico, eventually reestablishing government functions in Galveston. In the wake of the retreating army and government, thousands of panicked colonists, both Texan and Tejano, fled eastward in what became known as the "Runaway Scrape." Men, women, and children packed what belongings they could into wagons and carts, onto horseback or on their own backs, and fled in terror across the rain-soaked countryside, moving eastward toward the Louisiana border.

Santa Anna pursued Houston's ragtag army, which had grown to about 1,180 men, and devised a trap in which three columns of Mexican troops would converge on the Texan force and destroy it. The northern wing, about 800 men commanded by Gaona, was ordered to destroy all settlements in its way and push toward the Louisiana border. The main, or middle, column was spearheaded by another 800 men under Sesma. It aimed at the towns of

Gonzales on the Guadalupe River and San Felipe de Austin on the Brazos River. The 2,000-man coastal force, led by Urrea, was to drive about 150 miles along the coast of Texas, the island of Galveston its ultimate objective.

At this stage of the incursion, Santa Anna amazingly grew bored, regarding the remainder of the campaign as little more than a mopping-up operation (and a lot of work for his firing squads). El Presidente considered returning to Mexico City and leaving the Texas expedition in the hands of his second-in-command, the suave Italian general, Vicente Filisola. Filisola, a professional soldier who did not like the idea of splitting the army into three columns, and Colonel Juan Almonte persuaded Santa Anna to remain in Texas. Deciding to take possession of the Texas coast and seaports, Santa Anna crossed the Brazos River on April 15 and marched rapidly eastward for Harrisburg. When Santa Anna arrived at Harrisburg on the night of April 15, he found it deserted. After setting fire to the town, he and his 750 *soldados* marched east to New Washington, located at Morgan's Point on San Jacinto Bay, hoping to trap the fleeing insurgent government with its back to the water.

Library of Congress

Santa Anna's troops came within a hair's breadth of doing just that. As Burnet and his staff began rowing out to a ship in the bay, a patrol of Mexican cavalry clattered up to the pier and prepared to open fire. Almonte, in command, chivalrously forbade his soldiers to fire; he had spotted a woman, Burnet's wife, in the rowboat. His attempt to capture the Texan government having failed, Santa Anna decided to find and destroy the only remaining semblance of rebellion left in Texas—Houston and his little band. Supremely overconfident, the dictator had dangerously scattered his forces. The hunter was about to become the hunted.

ABOVE: Shouting "Remember the Alamo!" Sam Houston readies his men for battle in this 1912 illustration by Seymour Thomas for *Munsey's* magazine. LEFT: Sam Houston in more peaceable times.

Meanwhile, Houston's army had received a much-needed gift from the citizens of Cincinnati, Ohio—two six-pound artillery pieces the men dubbed "the Twin Sisters." Houston crossed the Brazos River on the *Yellow Stone* steamship and arrived at Spring Creek on April 16. The next day, to the immense gratification of his men, Houston took the road to Harrisburg instead of the road to Louisiana. After a two-day march of 60 miles, Houston's little army arrived at Buffalo Bayou. Across the water they could see that Harrisburg had been burned to the ground; Santa Anna had obviously been there first. Houston desperately needed to ascertain Santa Anna's whereabouts and maneuver him into an advantageous position for battle before he had time to concentrate his forces. Houston's luck held. His best scout, Erasmus "Deaf" Smith, returned to camp with a Mexican courier who had been captured carrying saddlebags stamped with the name of William Barrett Travis. The bags contained special dispatches to Santa Anna giving the complete disposition of his columns, their strengths, and whereabouts.

On April 19, Houston's men crossed Buffalo Bayou on crudely built rafts. After leaving 248 sick and ineffective men and guards at a camp near Harrisburg, they crossed Vince's Bayou on the only available bridge and gained the sea-level plain known as San Jacinto. The field was small—barely three square miles—and roughly triangular. It was bounded on the northwest and northeast by Buffalo Bayou and the San Jacinto River, respectively, and was open to the southwest by the Texas coastal plain. Since neither stream was fordable, the position Houston took up was a virtual dead end except for Lynch's Ferry, which crossed the San Jacinto River at the northern end of the triangle. Much of the plain was grassy, but there were substantial stands of live oak

forest running along the bayou. Houston hid his troops in one of these Spanish moss-covered live oak stands located near the northern end of the virtual island.

About noon the next day, the vanguard of Santa Anna's 750-man force reached San Jacinto, burning the town of New Washington behind them. Finding himself cut off from Lynch's Ferry, the dictator took up a position in some live oaks near the southeast corner of the prairie. Houston's men were well protected within their line of trees, their two six-pounders deployed about 10 yards out on the plain. Mexican gunners unlimbered their one 12-pounder cannon and opened

"IN A SECOND WE WERE INTO THEM WITH GUNS, PISTOLS, AND BOWIE KNIVES. IN A SHORT TIME, THEY WERE RUNNING LIKE TURKEYS, WHIPPED AND DISCOMFITED."

fire on the Texan lines. Santa Anna clearly wanted to draw the Texans out into the open to probe their strength and perhaps provoke an attack. The Texan artillery, under the command of Colonel James Neill, began returning fire.

The artillery duel continued for several hours. In the process, Neill's hip was shattered by a well-aimed blast of grapeshot. A shot from one of the Twin Sisters damaged the Mexican piece, and as Mexican cavalrymen began drawing it back to safety, Colonel Sherman sallied forth with 50 horse soldiers to capture the enemy piece. He failed miserably, losing two men and several horses. Worse yet, he almost triggered an attack by the Mexicans, prompting an infuriated Houston to take away Sherman's command of the cavalry and give it to Mirabeau Lamar. A volunteer private in the cavalry, Lamar had distinguished himself in the skirmish, saving the lives of two Texans, including Secretary of War Thomas Rusk, who had joined the army to confer with Houston. Lamar was immediately promoted to colonel by Houston.

Santa Anna withdrew his forces about three-quarters of a mile, placing his army with its back to Peggy's Lake. His troops spent the rest of the afternoon and night constructing a five-foot-high barricade of trunks, baggage, and pack saddles to serve as breastworks for the infantry. By dawn of April 21, the Mexicans had completed their defenses and braced themselves for an attack by the Texan army. None came.

The tap of a drum at 4 AM served as reveille in the Texan camp on April 21. No more than a mile apart from each other on ground located on the cattle ranch of Peggy McCormick, the two armies were eager to end the campaign and its incessant marching. The previous day's inconclusive skirmishing had only whetted the appetites of those who were hungry for combat. An hour later, the Mexican soldiers were roused from their slumber. Santa Anna stirred briefly at 9 AM, when his brother-in-law arrived with 400 of the 500 reinforcements he had ordered. Although his troops were elated at the new arrivals, Santa Anna was furious with Cos. He had told his kinsman to bring 500 of his best foot soldiers from the Velasco area, but Cos had hurriedly pulled less-experienced men from various battalions and hurried his march to San Jacinto. In the final push to reach the field, about 100 men had fallen behind and been abandoned. Since the new arrivals had marched all night, Santa Anna ordered them to stack their arms and get some sleep after taking up positions on the army's right flank, close to the water. El Presidente retired to his tent while the rest of the army settled down to rest under the oak trees.

Texan scouts had watched as Cos's column approached from the direction of Vince's Bridge and notified Houston when they reached the Mexican camp; it didn't come as a surprise to Houston, as his scouts had captured several of Filisola's couriers carrying messages indicating he had received his commander's request for additional troops. Houston now began forming a plan to destroy Vince's Bridge, which lay about eight miles southwest of Lynch's Ferry, to deny his enemy further reinforcements and to possibly initiate an attack of his own later that afternoon. The fair, dry weather pleased Houston immensely. "This is going to be a damn good day to fight a battle," he said happily. The weapons most of his men carried—old, muzzle-loading flintlock muskets—were adversely affected by wet and windy conditions. The Twin Sisters, as well, performed better in dry weather; they had to be ignited with flares. Nature, it seemed, was on the side of the Texans.

At 10 AM, Colonel John Wharton, Houston's adjutant general and another staunch critic of the general, made the rounds through camp, visiting each mess. Although no attack plan had been issued, on his own Wharton exhorted the men: "Boys, there is no other word today but fight, fight! Now is the time!" In the late morning, Houston had Deaf Smith ride out to a rise between the two camps to form an estimate of the size of the Mexican army. Smith and Private Walter Lane rode to within 300 yards of the enemy encampment. Smith took out his field glasses and counted the enemy tents, deducing that Santa Anna's force numbered about 1,500 men; he and Lane then rode back and shared their information with Houston.

Shortly before noon, Houston held a council of war with Colonels Sherman and Edward Burleson; Lt. Cols. Henry Millard, Alexander Somervell, and Joseph L. Bennett; and Major Lysander Wells. Two of the junior officers voted to attack the enemy in his position, while the others favored waiting for Santa Anna to attack. The main concern of the officers opting for a defensive posture was that most of the attack would come over open ground, where the attackers would be vulnerable to Mexican cannon and musket fire. The Texans were also woefully short on bayonets. Houston withheld his own views, but later, fearing the specter of additional reinforcements reaching his foe, decided to attack the Mexican camp that afternoon. He submitted his daring plan to Secretary of War Rusk, who approved it. Houston made the rounds of the camp, asking the men if they were ready to fight, and was answered in the affirmative. By 3 PM, convinced his foe was not ready to attack, Houston ordered the troops to be assembled. Wrote one Texan, "There was a rejoicing throughout the camp." Another wrote "The announcement of the decision to fight acted like electricity."

By 3:30 PM, the Texan army was formed into lines of battle for the impending assault, screened from the enemy's view by trees and a slight ridge that ran across the open prairie between the opposing armies. Deaf Smith and six volunteers rode past the left flank of the Mexican army unmolested and made their way along Buffalo Bayou to Vince's Bridge. Unable to completely burn the bridge, Smith and his men destroyed the remnants, sending what was left of the structure falling into the bayou before heading back to the Texan camp, thus cutting off the avenue for further reinforcements to Santa Anna's army. Either in encouragement or panic—perhaps some of both—Smith rode up to his comrades, shouting, "Vince's Bridge is down! Fight for your lives!"

Houston went to work deploying his army for battle. On the Texan left, closest to the river, he put the 2nd Regiment of Texas Volunteers, 330 infantrymen under the command of Sherman. Next in line came the unit he considered the backbone of his army, the 1st Regiment, 386 men, under the command of the old Indian fighter, Ned Burleson. In the center of the line were the Twin Sisters and 32 artillerymen commanded by Lt. Col. George Hockley. On their

right came the 92 men of the regular Texan army under Millard; the band, a drum and three fifes, marched with the regulars. On the far right, under the newly promoted Lamar, were the 63 troopers of Houston's small cavalry force.

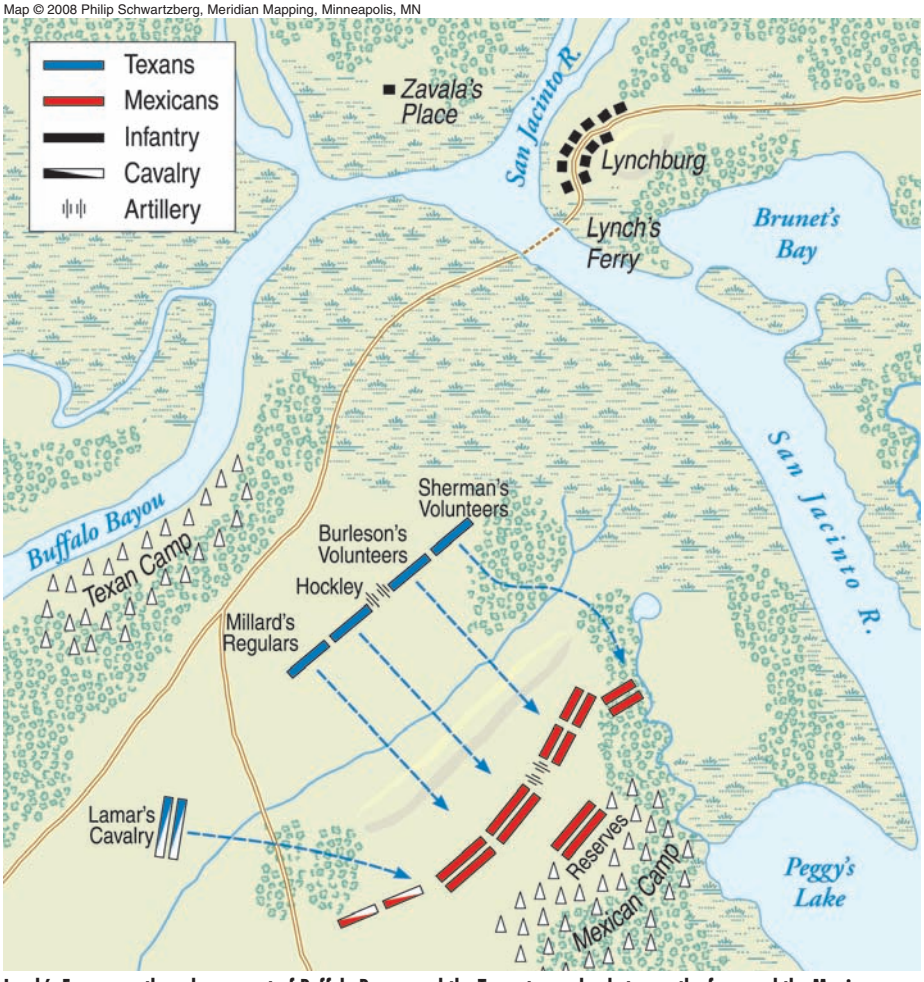
The army stood in two thin lines stretching some 900 yards, each man ready for action, armed with flintlock muskets, pistols, swords, and bowie knives. Houston mounted a giant white stallion named Saracen and rode along the lines, inspecting the army that would decide the fate of Texas. The inspection ended with the 2nd Regiment on the far left. Houston told Rusk to stay with Sherman's regiment as the attack unfolded; when the armies made contact, Rusk was to ride over to the center and report to Houston. The plan called for Sherman's men to move against the Mexican right, which lay in a grove of trees, its movement screened from the rest of the army. Houston had decided to outflank the Mexican left with his cavalry, stretching his troops even thinner.

At about 4 PM, Houston took up a position in the center of the line, a few yards out front, sword in hand, and waved his army forward. Some 930 Texan volunteers emerged from the timber, each of the units in column, the soldiers at trail arms. The Texans emerged from the thin woods and moved quickly over the ridge in the center of the plain, 500 yards from the Mexican lines. Colonel Pedro Delgado apparently noticed the oncoming Texan line first, and soon a *cazadore* bugler on the right trumpeted a call to stations. Brig. Gen. Manuel Fernandez Castrillon, a competent officer who had been at odds with Santa Anna over the location of the camp, quickly recognized the gravity of the situation and shouted for a stout defense to be conducted. His cries aroused some of the lethargic defenders, but others continued to lie about. With the enemy just minutes from reaching their barricade, the bulk of Santa Anna's 1,400 soldiers still were not aware that the Texans were actually attacking their camp.

Castrillon and Lieutenant Ignacio Arenal rushed out of their tent to take charge of the lone Mexican cannon. At the same time, Delgado rushed about, trying to rally fleeing dragoons as they raced for the trees beyond the camp and spanking scared infantrymen on the backsides with his saber in an effort to force them to fight. All efforts were in vain. "They were a bewildered and panic-stricken herd." Delgado recalled. "His Excellency running about in the utmost excitement wringing his hands and unable to give an order. Some cried out to commence firing; others to lie down to avoid grape shots. Among the latter was his Excellency."

A few of the men on the Mexican outpost line began firing their muskets, but in their surprise and excitement they fired high, and few of the Texans were hit. Houston's men continued their advance with their cannon out ahead of the infantry and Lamar's cavalry swinging around to the right. At a range of 200 yards, the Twin Sisters unlimbered and swung about, firing improvised shrapnel rounds of chopped-up horseshoes and gouging holes in the Mexican breastworks. As the Texan line swept forward, the cannons were manhandled with rawhide ropes to within 70 yards of the enemy's works and opened fire once more. The Texans moved swiftly across the field. From a quickstep, the emboldened attackers broke into a trot; the neat, parallel lines merged sloppily into one great mass of roaring men.

Houston, 20 yards out in front, realized that he had little actual control over the frenzied body of soldiers. He endeavored, however, to stop the men long enough to send one standing, massed volley against the enemy lines. Even that simple maneuver was too much to comprehend for some of Sherman's men on the Texas left, who discharged their weapons indiscriminately. An enraged Houston, who wanted every cartridge to count, roared across the field, "Hold your fire, goddamn



Lynch's Ferry was the only way out of Buffalo Bayou, and the Texas troops lay between the ferry and the Mexicans. Santa Anna had effectively trapped himself.

you, hold your fire!" At this juncture, the usually unflappable Thomas Rusk was unable to contain himself. He galloped hard for the Texan left, screaming, "If we stop we are cut to pieces. Don't stop—go forward—give them hell!"

Sherman's 2nd Regiment made contact first, managing to sneak up through the timber, just inland from the marshes and river. Cos's men, on the Mexican far right, were caught utterly by surprise. Alphonso Steele, a private in Sherman's unit, later wrote, "When within 60 or 70 yards we were ordered to fire. Then all discipline, as far as Sherman's regiment was concerned, was at an end. We fired as rapidly as we could. As soon as we had fired, each man reloaded and he who got his gun ready first moved on without waiting for orders." The Mexican defenders, at least during the initial moments of the attack, managed to put up a vigorous defense, their makeshift breast-

works offering some protection for their riflemen. "Their breastworks were composed of baggage, saddlebags, and brush, in all about four or five feet high," remembered James Winters of Sherman's regiment. "There was a gap eight or ten feet wide through which they fired the cannon."

Sherman's eager troops crashed heavily into the right wing of the Mexican line. Soon the smoke from the cannon and the small arms made it almost impossible to see clearly. In his report after the battle, Houston credited Sherman with being the first to shout, "Remember the Alamo! Remember Goliad!" The cry was soon echoing up and down the Texan line. A member of Seguin's company, Sergeant Tony Menchaca, took up the cry in Spanish, his loud, impassioned voice striking terror into the Mexican troops just yards away. As he had been ordered, Rusk left Sherman's unit and rode out in front of the battle line to report to Houston, telling his commander, "The 2nd Regiment has made contact with the enemy in gallant style." Houston and Rusk were both exposing themselves to a dangerous crossfire; at one point, Houston narrowly avoided being struck by his own artillery.

The Mexican resistance was stoutest under Castrillon, around the 12-pounder cannon. The piece was discharged three times and was being loaded for a fourth shot when a round from one of the Texan guns struck the cannon's water bucket, stunning some of the gunners and putting the others to flight. Castrillon tried desperately to keep the cannoneers from fleeing, to no avail. Five Texan infantry companies swarmed over the area around the 12-pounder, killed any remaining crew members, and captured the piece. Attacker Walter Lane wrote of the episode, "As we charged into them, the general [Castrillon] commanding the Tampico Battalion, their best troops, tried to rally his men but could not. He drew himself up, faced us, and cried out in Spanish, 'I've been in forty battles and never showed my back. I'm too old to do it now.'" Rusk yelled to his men not to shoot Castrillon, and even knocked up some of the Texans' guns, but others ran around him and riddled the Mexican general with musket balls.

Santa Anna's personal secretary, Ramon Caro, felt that the president later placed unfair blame on Castrillon for the surprise attack; Caro believed the commander in chief was equally liable for the lack of vigilance against an enemy that the day before had made a false attack to feel out the Mexicans' strength. Santa Anna claimed that he was sleeping soundly when he was awakened by the sound of the firing. He said he became aware immediately that his forces were under attack and that there was "unexplained disorder. The enemy had surprised our advance posts." He also claimed that he dispatched units to reinforce the Mexican troops holding their line and to check the oncoming Texans. Caro dismissed his commander's assertions out of hand. "The principal movement of the enemy was the complete surprise," he wrote. "The rest of the engagement developed with lightning rapidity, so that by the time he [Santa Anna] reached our front line it had already been completely routed."

Once Sherman's regiment swept into the Mexican camp, the breastworks no longer offered any protection. Few men had bayonets, so their firearms became war clubs once the opportunity to reload was lost. Wrote Lane: "In a second we were into them with guns, pistols, and bowie knives. In a short time, they were running like turkeys, whipped and discomfited." When Houston and Rusk were about 40 yards from the enemy's works and almost directly in front of the Mexican artillery, a sudden volley of shots struck and killed Houston's horse, slamming the uninjured commander to the ground. After remounting, Houston made it almost to the breastworks before he was hit just above the left ankle by a three-ounce rifle ball and his second horse was shot from under him. After he was given another mount, the painfully wounded Houston charged boldly among the enemy's tents. The Texan cavalry, advancing on the right, tried to block the enemy's only exit from the battlefield, but Lamar had too few men to accomplish the task. His troopers cut a swath among the enemy, however, and the riderless horses of dead and wounded Mexicans added greatly to the swirling confusion among the defenders.

Although some of the Texans had been shot down during the advance, the larger number of casualties occurred in front and inside the enemy's campground. Moving forward under heavy fire, Burleson's 1st Regiment suffered twice as many casualties as Sherman's. Sherman's and Burleson's regiments, together with Hockley's two cannon, Millard's regulars, and Lamar's cavalry, all came together in shredding the Mexican camp with a deadly fury. Houston was highly visible at all times, and his men were unaware he had been seriously wounded until much later. "Where our two regiments came together, and the Mexicans rallied," wrote Stephen Sparks, "about ten acres of ground was literally covered with their dead bodies." The Mexican army consisted of professional soldiers, but they had been trained to fight in ranks, exchanging volleys with their opponents; they were ill-equipped to fight well-armed Anglo-American and Tejano frontiersmen in hand-to-hand combat. Their quick-thinking commander mounted a horse and fled toward Buffalo Bayou just before the camp was overrun.

An abashed Santa Anna, hat in hand, surrenders to the wounded Sam Houston after the Battle of San Jacinto. Painting by William Huddle.

The State Preservation Board, Austin, Texas

Organized Mexican resistance ended after a mere 18 minutes, but the killing was far from over. The massacres at the Alamo and Goliad were too fresh in the men's minds to be forgiven. Mexican troops who threw down their arms and begged for surrender received the same degree of mercy that the Texans' had received earlier—none. By this time, Cos's reinforcements had been routed on the Mexican right, the survivors crowding the Mexican center and adding to the confusion. The men of Burleson's regiment had overrun the breastworks in the enemy center, rapidly killing and wounding any Mexican soldiers who chose to stand and fight. After the initial onslaught the Texans continued, chasing the horrified fugitives and shooting them down in droves, killing

any unfortunate wounded they happened to come across. About 50 yards behind the Mexican camp lay a tidewater bayou and a small body of water, called Peggy's Lake after Mrs. McCormick. There, according to Private Washington Winters, "occurred the greatest slaughter. The Mexicans and horses killed made a bridge across the bayou."

Between 200 and 300 Mexican soldiers jumped into the water and were attempting to reach a small island several hundred yards out into the lake; Texan riflemen cut them down as they swam. Out of ammunition and without time to reload, some Texans splashed into the water with their bowie knives and hatchets to exact revenge. Wharton rode up and ordered the riflemen to stop firing, but they refused. With their men excited to a feverish intensity, the Texan commanders were unable to restrain their troops; some were content to let their men have their way. "We followed the enemy," wrote one captain, "shooting and killing them, for more than a mile."

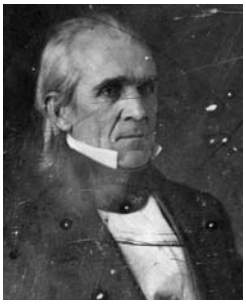
The rout was over, Houston wrote in his after-action report, in less than 20 minutes, but the indiscriminate killing went on for the better part of another hour. His victory complete but his wound causing him immense pain, Houston continued to issue orders for his officers to restore order, but it did little good. Houston feared that his men might use up all their ammunition and break a good number of their muskets swinging them as clubs and that they might be surprised by a column of fresh enemy troops who had found a way to reach the field. Houston was quoted in later years as stating that 100 well-disciplined Mexican soldiers could have wiped out his command after the men had broken ranks and begun wildly shooting, stabbing, and clubbing the enemy. "Gentlemen," he told one group of rampaging Texans, "I applaud your bravery. But damn your manners."

Once the slaughter at Peggy's Lake was finally halted and the men had a few minutes to calm down, a wave of elation swept over the Texans as they realized what had been accomplished. The band's drummers beat the call for assembly, bringing the various companies slowly back to camp. Sherman and his men began taking prisoners of the Mexican survivors who wanted to surrender; hundreds were quickly rounded up about the camp. About three miles from the battlefield, more than 200 Mexican soldiers came out of some woods and surrendered en masse to Rusk and a group of Texans. Houston's report noted that 630 Mexican soldiers were killed and another 730 captured, of which 208 were wounded. Only seven Texans were killed outright; four more died of their wounds

Continued on page 65

By Al Hemingway

Tennessean James K. Polk reshaped America by sheer will and determination during his single term as president.

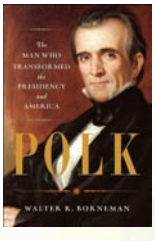


ABOVE: President James K. Polk. BELOW: U.S. troops take the San Mateo Convent at Churubusco during "Mr. Polk's War." The painting is by James Walker.

NEVER LET IT BE SAID THAT JAMES KNOX POLK WAS NOT A determined man. Although he suffered from ill health most of his life, this did not deter Polk from working tirelessly to rise to the top in politics as a Democrat, with fellow-Tennessean Andrew Jackson as his mentor. Once installed as president in 1845, he would dramatically reshape the course of American history by sheer force of will—and the injection of thousands of American troops into Mexico. The result would be the largest territorial gains for the nation since the Louisiana Purchase four decades earlier, along with a still-smoldering dispute with our neighbors to the south.

Born in North Carolina in 1795, Polk relocated with his family to Nashville, Tennessee, when he was 11 years old. His father, a successful planter, wanted his five sons to have a college education, and James, the eldest of 10 children, graduated from the University of North Carolina in 1818. (His youngest brother, Samuel, was expelled from Yale for his part in a student riot and died of tuberculosis at the age of 22.)

In his new book ***Polk: The Man Who Transformed the Presidency and America*** (Random House, New York, 2008, 422 pp., photographs, maps, index, notes, $26.95, hardcover), historian Walter Borneman examines the life and political career of our country's eleventh president. Although Polk often is referred to as a "dark horse" candidate, Borneman contends that such was not the case. When he campaigned for the presidency, Polk had been a Washington insider for quite some time. The Tennessean had been a member of Congress for 14 years, including four as Speaker of the House, and then had served as governor of Tennessee for two years. Polk was no stranger to politics.



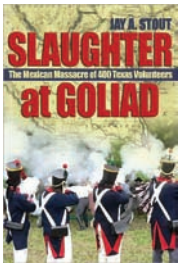
When he won the presidential election of 1844 by a mere 38,000 votes over Kentucky Senator Henry Clay, Polk promised that he would serve for only one term. In those four years, however, he would do more than many presidents do in two terms. He established an independent treasury, decreased the tariffs, and oversaw the opening of the Smithsonian Institution, the erection of the Washington Monument, and the opening of the U.S. Naval Academy. It was also during his tenure that the first postage stamps were issued.

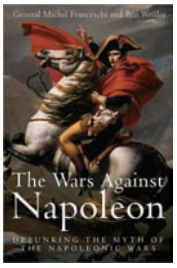
Despite these accomplishments, Polk's greatest legacy to America was its incredible growth during his term in office. First, he settled a long-simmering dispute with Great Britain over the boundary line of Oregon Territory without going to war. Such was not the case with Mexico. After the admission of Texas as a state in the Union in 1845, Mexican President Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna marched northward at the head of a huge army to reclaim Texas for his country. Polk felt—rightly or wrongly—that he had no choice but to enter into hostilities with Mexico. The conflict soon became known as "Mr. Polk's War." In spite of the war's increasing unpopularity, as demonstrated by the opposition of a young Whig congressman from Illinois named Abraham Lincoln, Polk persevered.

In the face of political adversity (Polk had disputes with politically ambitious Whig general Zachary Taylor and timid Secretary of State James Buchanan), he eventually signed a peace treaty with Mexico that increased the size of the United States by 500,000 square miles—or 38 percent. By using both political and military force, the frail politician from Tennessee had accomplished his major goal. After his term was finished, true to his word, he vacated the office of president. Three months later, he would be dead from cholera.

One important aspect of Polk's administration was the shift in power between the two political branches of the government to increase the president's ability to initiate a war. "The transformation from the congressional power to declare war versus the executive power to wage war really starts with Polk," said Borneman. "There were many congressmen and senators opposed to Polk's expansionist policies, but once Polk blew the charge, so to speak, they found themselves unwilling to vote against appropriations for men and supplies and open themselves up to charges of being unpatriotic."

Since that time, presidents have exercised their power to coerce Congress into declaring war.





From the Spanish-American War to Vietnam and the present conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, presidents have taken the lead in conducting—one might even say starting—wars. "When Polk's war message finally reached Congress," wrote Borneman, "it asked for congressional concurrence that a state of war already existed rather than a deliberation about whether or not one should be declared." As Borneman's biography amply demonstrates, Polk's legacy continues to affect the government to this day.

To Conquer Hell: The Meuse-Argonne, 1918 by Edward G. Lengel, Henry Holt, New York, 2008, 491 pp., photos, maps, index, notes, $32.50, hardcover.

On September 26, 1918, 2,700 Allied howitzers began an ear-shattering cannonade to signal the largest, and final, operation of World War I. Known as the Argonne Forest campaign, over one million American Doughboys squared off against 40 German divisions in the final push to end the death-choked conflict.

Prior to the attack, most American troops were situated near the town of St. Mihiel salient and had to be moved to the new sector. In a mere two weeks, then-Colonel George C. Marshall would gain recognition as the man who was in charge of this massive movement of men and materiel. Allied troops jumped off just north and northwest of the town of Verdun. The ground they traveled over was hilly and wooded and the enemy had four years to construct numerous fortifications to impede the progress of the assaulting forces. Despite horrendous casualties, the Allies drove deep into German territory. The huge offensive was the impetus that finally ended "the war to end all wars" on November 11, 1918.

It was during this campaign that Tennessee Sergeant Alvin York was awarded a Medal of Honor for capturing 132 German prisoners single-handedly. Future World War II generals George S. Patton and Douglas MacArthur led troops into battle and learned valuable lessons that they would apply in the next war.

More than 26,000 American were killed and another 96,000 wounded during the six-week offensive. "Of all the soldiers in American history, the Doughboy is the first to have experienced modern industrialized warfare," writes author Lengel. "He did so without preparation of any kind—military or psychological—and suffered terribly as a result. Yet no other soldier in American history or perhaps the history of the world learned how to fight in such a short period of time."

Slaughter at Goliad: The Mexican Massacre of 400 Texas Volunteers by Jay A. Stout, Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, MD, 2008, 242 pp., photos, maps, index, notes, $29.95, hardcover.

Early in the morning of Palm Sunday, March 27, 1836, Mexican soldiers marched 342 "Texian" volunteers from Fort Defiance in Goliad to the outskirts of town. The prisoners had been captured at the Battle of Coleto Creek a week earlier when the group had attempted to vacate Goliad. Their leader, James Walker Fannin, had been ordered by Texas General Sam Houston to abandon the fort and move his force to the Guadalupe River near the town of Victoria.

Fannin's men were pursued by General Jose de Urrea, who already had defeated Texan forces at San Patricio, Agua Dulce, and Refugio. Urrea's troops caught Fannin's command in a vulnerable position near Coleto Creek. After several hours of fighting, and seeing Urrea reinforced with additional infantry and artillery, Fannin opted to surrender. A little more than a week later most of his men, including himself, would be gunned down, bayoneted, and clubbed to death in one of the worst massacres ever perpetrated upon American fighting men.

Jay Stout, a retired U.S. Marine Corps fighter pilot, has done a masterful job of retelling the events that led up to the massacre and its aftermath. One interesting question he poses is why the slaughter has been largely forgotten. One reason, he asserts, is that most Texans—then and now—simply could not fathom that the Mexican soldier was the equal or superior of the Anglo fighting man. As Goliad historian Harbert Davenport said in a 1938 speech commemorating the graves of the slain, Texans believed that "the men of Goliad had let them down" and that "even Texan valor was not proof against hunger, thirst, and tactical errors, and that Mexicans could be brave." No braver, one might add, than the Texans who went to their unarmed deaths at Goliad.

The Wars Against Napoleon: Debunking the Myth of the Napoleonic Wars by General

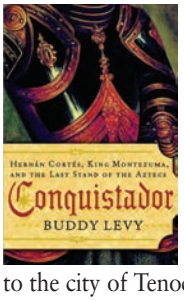
Michel Franceschi and Ben Weider, Savas Beatie, New York, 2008, 227 pp., photos, maps, index, notes, $32.95, hardcover.

Was Napoleon Bonaparte a warmonger? Did the French ruler voluntarily start the wars that would devastate Europe and rob the French people of their freedoms and civil liberties? Two distinguished historians answer these questions in the negative and defend their findings in their latest offering, *The Wars Against Napoleon*. The authors argue that Napoleon was not a "megalomaniac conqueror" who "bled France white to achieve his ends." Instead, they view him as a righteous man who was the successor to the French Revolution of 1789 which sent the country into turmoil.

The "Little Corporal" advocated the Declarations of the Rights of Man and Citizen and personal freedoms for the citizens of France, the authors declare, and because of his ideals he would "become public enemy number one for monarchial Europe." In their view, Napoleon was a democrat, defending the blissful dawn of freedom that the poet William Wordsworth had witnessed arriving in France.

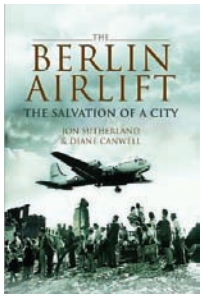
This book is bound to elicit fervent debate among Napoleonic scholars and historians. The authors are challenging the image of Napoleon as an "unrepentant swashbuckler" bent on world domination. Instead, they offer a more compassionate portrait of an individual who was an "incomparable genius" at war while contesting inherited European royalty. In the end, he would pay for his transgressions with exile and death. Whether or not it was a fitting punishment, it is undeniable that millions of soldiers and civilians died in the Napoleonic wars. For them, there would be no freedom—democratic or otherwise.

Conquistador: Hernan Cortes, King Montezuma, and the Last Stand of the Aztecs by Buddy Levy, Bantam Books, New York, 2008, 448 pp., photos, maps, index, notes, $27.50, hardcover.



The word "conquistador" evokes images of pitiless, armor-clad warriors invading exotic foreign lands in the name of Spain. One such individual, Hernan Cortes, left his mark on history by laying siege to the city of Tenochtitlan and decimating the Aztec empire in 1521.

Urged on by visions of gold and immense wealth, Cortes went to the New World in 1519, landing in present-day Cuba. Despite orders not to sail farther, he left for Mexico and went ashore in April 1519 to claim all its riches for Spain. The ensuing months saw Cortes's men move steadily into the interior of the country. Along the way, they battled numerous indigenous peoples and gained a fearsome reputation for barbarity after the massacre at Cholula.



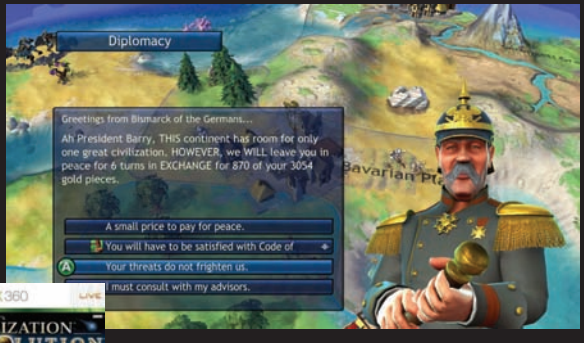
In November, Cortes's force entered the city of Tenochtitlan, present-day Mexico City, and met the Azetec ruler Montezuma. Moody and indecisive, Montezuma received Cortes in his court and presented him and his men with copious gifts. At some point, for reasons still unclear, Cortes took Montezuma hostage. The friendship between the two groups immediately disintegrated, and an all-out war erupted. When Montezuma was stoned to death by his own people, the Spaniards fled and eventually laid siege to Tenochtitlan. By mid-August 1521, after the Spaniards had destroyed the city's water supply, the starving Aztecs surrendered.

Within a 2½-year period, Cortes had laid waste to the great Aztec empire. Essentially, this is a tale of the collision of two vastly different civilizations, one trying desperately to preserve its way of life, the other determined to destroy what it could not bend to its will. History recounts who won that clash.

simulation gaming *By Eric T. Baker*

Revolution: "Just one more turn!"

Sid Meier's Civilization Revolution, from Firaxis for the Xbox 360, PS3, and DS, is not a traditional war simulation. Instead of a historical battlefield or time period, the player starts with a single city and a single fighting unit, both of which are based on a historical culture (Roman, Greek, Zulu, Aztec, etc). The goal is to build and grow this modest start into a civilization that will dominate the game map, either militarily, culturally, technologically, or economically. The player can decide how many other cultures he will compete against, how large and what sort the map the battles will be contended on, and how smart the AI players will be. The game can also be played against other humans in a variety of ways, depending on the machine the game is on.



The first *Civilization* game was published in 1992. The publishing history of its updates and redesigns is complicated, but Revolution is basically an upgrade of 2005's *Civilization IV* that has been optimized for consoles and handhelds. That optimization primarily means that unlike previous *Civilization* games, players don't have to build and command their workers as well as their military units. There is a manual option to direct (but not build) the workers for those who want it, but players can't particularly improve on the returns created by having the AI manage the workers based on one of four preset strategies. These strategies are as close as the game comes to letting the players automate their cities.

Of the four ways to win *Revolution,* the quickest (at least at easy difficulty levels) is the military victory. The key to combat is stacking three units of the same type in one square. The player can then combine these units into a single army unit. Since combat is unit against unit, it is a tremendous advantage to pit an army against a single, normal unit. A unit that wins three battles becomes veteran and one that wins three more starts earning special abilities. The battles are animated and move at a pace fast enough to be entertaining but slow enough to tell if the player's unit is losing. Players can end a battle by retreating their unit, which is important to preserve it if it has special status or abilities. Units damaged in this way need to be healed to regain their full strength.

The reason that *Civilization* games remain popular after so many years, and the reason that *Revolution* is a good game, is the "just one more turn" effect. All games and particularly all turn- based games have this; the situation has built up and the player wants to

The Berlin Airlift: The Salvation of a City by Jon Sutherland and Diane Canwell, Pelican Publishing Company, Gretna, LA, 2008, 215 pp., photos, index, $24.95, hardcover.

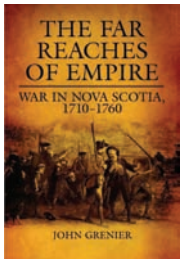
"There is no question in my mind whatever that the German economy is the heart of Europe," remarked then-U.S. Secretary of State George C. Marshall in 1947. At the time, it was a visionary—or at least optimistic—statement. By the end of World War II, the German economy lay in ruins along with its cities and manufacturing infrastructure. The Allies, principally the United States and Great Britain, realized that a strong German market meant a stable Europe. The Soviets, however, did not care one iota about Germany. The Nazis had brought death and destruction to their country, and now the victorious Russians were scavenging anything they could from the war-torn nation.

When the Allies merged economically in their zones of interest in Berlin to counter the Soviet takeover of Czechoslovakia, the Russians were angered. Both sides argued about the currency issue as well. The Russians wanted to print their own money, while the West wanted to introduce their own currency. After the Berlin City Council authorized the use of the new western money, the Russians took action.

On June 11, 1948, Allied rail service between Berlin and the West was suspended. Less than two weeks later, all communication with the outside world was severed as well. In essence, the Berliners were marooned on a city-size island, without access to food or medical supplies.

Immediately, the United States Air Force began airlifting in supplies to the besieged occupants. Dubbed Operation Vittles, the airlift incorporated a variety of American and British cargo aircraft that flew countless sorties to transport much-needed goods to the strangled city. When it was finally over, 328 days later, the Allies had delivered nearly 2,400,000 tons of provisions to the hungry people of Berlin.

The authors have written an engrossing account of the heroism and determination by countless individuals, most notably the pilots who flew the missions and made the Berlin Airlift perhaps the greatest humanitarian effort in world history.



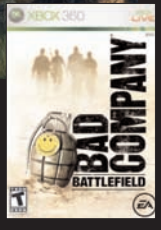
The Far Reaches of Empire: War in Nova Scotia, 1710-1760 by John Grenier, University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, OK, 2008, 270 pp., illustrations, maps, notes, index, $34.95, hardcover.

Historian and active-duty Air Force officer John Grenier has penned an absorbing account of the bloody 50-year struggle for Nova Scotia. Often overlooked because of its distant relationship with mainland Canada, this far-flung portion of the New World played an important role in the French and English clash to dominate the North American continent.

Acadian immigrants from west-central France first settled the region in the late 1600s. When the English finally wrested control of the peninsula from France, they ordered the predominately French population to swear an oath of allegiance to the English king. Those who refused were deported to other French colonies in North America. Some made their way to Louisiana and would eventually become known as Cajuns, a corruption of Acadians.

Many other players besides the two European nations were involved in the conquest of the Acadian Peninsula. Various Indian tribes such as the Abenakis, Maliseets, and Mi'kmaqs, along with French Roman Catholic priests, greatly influenced the course of Nova Scotian history. Each side utilized harsh means during the military campaigns to gain control of the country. Raiding villages and indiscriminately killing men, women, and children were trademarks of the brutal warfare that would continue in Nova Scotia and elsewhere in the New World during the French and Indian War of the mid-18th century.

see just one more turn to see how things will turn out. *Civilization* may not have invented this effect, but it has perfected it, as many a wife can attest after having found their husband still at the computer long hours after they were told, "Just one more turn and then I'm coming to bed." *Revolution* hits that sweet spot between too much going on to keep track of and too little going on for the game to be interesting.

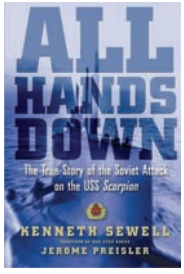


While not quite as long running, the *Battlefield* franchise, from EA Dice, also has a series of games for the PC and consoles. Their latest is for Xbox 360 and the PS3, is set in the modern world, and is called **Battlefield: Bad Company**. The player takes the role of a new member of B Company, which is a dumping ground for hard cases. Over the course of the single-player game, the character and his squad go AWOL on a Three Kings quest for personal gain. There is also a multiplayer mode for up to 24 players.

Battlefield games are known for their open, destructible maps, and *B:BC* is true to that heritage. The only real limit on the player's ability to deform the landscape is that he can only carry one support weapon and one main weapon at a time. Thus the player can blow open walls with a shoulder-fired missile, but to do so he has to put down the radio that calls in artillery barrages. What *B:BC* adds to the franchise, at least in the single-player game, is a certain humor based on the outlooks of the irregulars that the player finds himself "serving" with. Irreverent and irresponsible, they will keep the player smiling as the map blows up around him.

Finally there is Gary Grigsby's **War Between The States** for the PC from Matrix games. Grigsby is a designer famous for his pioneering wargames for SSI, going all the way back to *Guadalcanal Campaign* in 1982. In his latest game, he takes on the Civil War at the strategic level. Players try to win the war as either the Union or the Confederacy in a game scaled so that picking the right generals and spending political capital are as important as deciding when the troops should dig in and when to keep them moving. There are also modes that allow for cavalry raiding and scouting, as well as a complete simulation of the naval aspect of the war. It is a compelling take on the famous war. □

All Hands Down: The True Story of the Soviet Attack on the USS Scorpion by Kenneth Sewell and Jerome Preisler, Simon & Schuster, New York, 2008, 277 pp., photos, index, notes, $26.00, hardcover.



All Hands Down reads like a James Bond spy novel. One would expect to see Goldfinger or Dr. No appear at any moment. But such is not the case. That is what makes this book so intriguing—the characters and events depicted are all true.

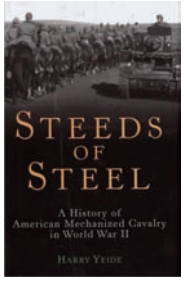
The submarine USS *Scorpion* was lost at sea on May 22, 1968, with the loss of 99 lives. The authors, after exhaustive research, claim that she was torpedoed in retaliation for the earlier sinking of *K-129,* a Russian sub that sank off the coast of Hawaii under similar puzzling circumstances.

The Kremlin erroneously believed that *K-129* was struck by American torpedoes. According to the author, the Communists immediately plotted revenge. They set a trap to lure an American submarine into the Atlantic to investigate the "strange behavior of several Soviet vessels." The scheme worked. Taking the bait, senior American naval officials dispatched the Scorpion to the scene. She suddenly went down with all hands.

For more than 40 years, both governments have kept the incident top secret. The authors believe that President Lyndon Johnson, his hands full with the Vietnam War and social upheaval on the home front, did not want the truth to emerge. Indeed, both countries labored to keep the belligerent acts quiet rather than allowing them to become public and perhaps escalate into full-scale war. When questioned about the matter, Rear Admiral Pitr Navoystev, first deputy chief of operations for the Soviet Navy, replied: "You will learn that there are some things both sides have agreed not to address, and one is that event (*Scorpion*) and our *K-129,* for similar reasons."

No one knows the real truth—probably not even the 99 seamen who went down with the *Scorpion* that May afternoon in 1968.

Steeds of Steel: A History of American Mechanized Cavalry in World War II by Harry Yeide, Zenith Press, Minneapolis, MN, 2008, 320 pp., photos, maps, index, notes, $27.95, hardcover.



At the onset of World War II, the U.S. Army still had horse-mounted cavalry units within its ranks. Soon, however, these horse soldiers would be riding steel chargers instead of stallions into battle. By the end of the conflict, American armored units had compiled an impressive record on the battlefield. It did not come easily. Initially, German armored vehicles were far superior to American tanks. Improvements, however, were steadily introduced as the war progressed, and these enhancements greatly benefited American crewmen.

From the arid African deserts to the beaches of Normandy and the jungles of Guadalcanal, American tanks and their crews fought bravely against a determined enemy. "One might think that the mechanized cavalryman of World War II had started a new mounted tradition that would last as long as the internal combustion engine drives war machines," writes Yeide. "But only our descendants are likely to know whether the new cavalryman will keep his place for a similar age."

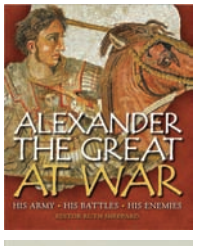
Hell Hath No Fury: True Stories of Women at War from Antiquity to Iraq by Rosalind Miles and Robin Cross, Three Rivers Press, New York, 2008, 395 pp., index, $14.95, softcover.

"They fought like devils, far better than the men," said Georges Clemenceau, referring to the role of French women in the 1871 republican revolt in France. When the government soldiers stormed their barricades and overpowered them, these heroic women chose death instead of surrender and were eventually executed.

Down through the ages, the gentler sex has often played a prominent role in many of the world's conflicts. The authors have collected assorted vignettes of women who have demonstrated indomitable courage in combat as soldiers, nurses, secret operatives, and pilots. From the celebrated male-hating tribes of the Amazons of ancient times to the modern-day soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan, the book is chock full of interesting tales of female combatants. The authors also discuss the radical Islamic female zealots who have strapped explosives to their bodies and detonated it, killing themselves and other innocent people.

Hell Hath No Fury is a timely book, considering the ongoing debate on whether or not women should serve in American combat units directly involved in fighting the enemy. This passionate discussion has been argued for years from both sides of the aisle, and will no doubt continue to be debated for some time in the future.

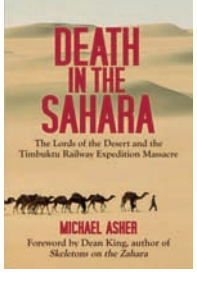
Alexander the Great at War: His Army, His Battles, His Enemies edited by Ruth Sheppard, Osprey Publishing, New York, 2008, 256 pp., illustrations, maps, index, $24.95, hardcover.



In a little over a decade, Alexander the Great led a combined Greek and Macedonian army and set out to conquer the known world. This latest entry by Osprey Publishing traces the leader's rise to power, his battlefield exploits, and the forces that opposed him. As with all of Osprey's books, this one is full of detailed drawings, photographs, and maps to complement the text.

Author Sheppard goes into detail on the armor and weaponry used by Alexander's army, as well as tactics he employed to crush his foes. The countries Alexander subdued were greatly influenced by the Greek culture, and many villages and towns still bear his name. Even before his untimely death at the age of 33, accounts of his deeds were being written. The legend of Alexander the Great continues to this day. As Sheppard writes, "His ability to fascinate and perplex shows no sign of fading. The name of Alexander the Great lives on."

Death in the Sahara: The Lords of the Desert and the Timbuktu Railway Expedition Massacre by Michael Asher, Skyhorse Publishing, New York, 2008, 304 pp., notes, index, $24.95, hardcover.

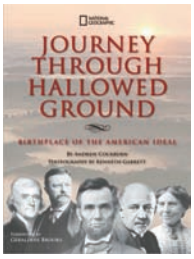


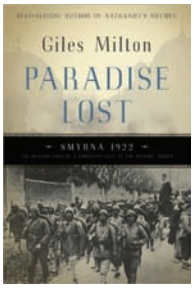
By the late 19th century, the French government visualized a railway from Algeria to Timbuktu that would run nearly 1,000 miles across the unforgiving Sahara Desert. The purpose of the Trans-Saharan railroad was simple: to transport Africa's riches, gold, ivory, and gum to the French colony of Algeria for shipment to France.

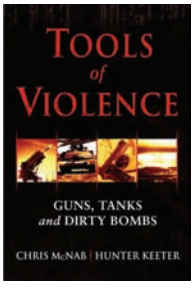
What the planners failed to take into account was the cruel geography of the arid land and its merciless inhabitants, most notably the Tuareg, an extremely wily and vicious bunch that hacked their adversaries to death. A 100-man party, underarmed and foolishly employing the enemy as guides, set out in December 1880. The expedition was doomed from the start. Before long, the Tuareg began eliminating the group one by one. With no camels or supplies, the sur-

vivors traveled for hundreds of miles to safety. Only 12 were left. The men stayed alive by eating insects and the carcasses of dead animals. Some even resorted to cannibalism during their horrifying four-month trek.

Death in the Sahara is a remarkable tale of survival. The author crossed the Sahara personally and lived among the populace for three years. His firsthand experiences add to the stark realism of the book.







Journey Through Hallowed Ground: Birthplace of the American Ideal by Andrew Cockburn, National Geographic Books, Washington, DC, 2008, 224 pp., photographs, index, $35.00, hardcover.

The phrase "hallowed ground" was first penned by President Abraham Lincoln in the Gettysburg Address in November 1863. The National Geographic Society has profiled a 175-mile region of such ground from historic Gettysburg to Charlottesville, Virginia, in a new book entitled *Journey Through Hallowed Ground*.

Richly detailed photographs enhance the book, which closely examines why a seemingly unimportant tract of land holds so much historical significance for Americans. For more than 400 years, this section of the nation has seen more than its share of history, containing nine presidential homes, numerous Civil War battlefields, 15 national historical landmarks, and 13 national parks. As the eminent historian C. Vann Woodward has stated, "This part of the country has soaked up more blood, sweat, and tears of American history than any other part of the country. It has bred more founding fathers, inspired more soaring hopes and ideals and witnessed more triumphs, failures, victories, and lost causes than any other place in the country."

Paradise Lost, Smyrna 1922 by Giles Milton, Basic Books, New York, 2008, 464 pp., notes, index, $27.95, hardcover.

On September 9, 1922, Turkish cavalry rode into Smyrna, a once-affluent city in Asia Minor that had suffered greatly during the Greco-Turkish War of 1919-1922. At the end of the bloody conflict, the Turks established their own republic.

As the triumphant Turkish horsemen trotted into the predominately Christian city that morning, the inhabitants did not realize what horrid events were about to unfold. Despite the Turks' assurance of no reprisals, their soldiers soon went on a rampage of looting, raping, and killing, especially in the Armenian quarter, which left 100,000 dead and another 300,000 homeless. All the while, Western allies quietly sat offshore and ignored the horrendous atrocities taking place within the city. The United States did not want to become directly involved because it wanted to protect its oil and trade interests in Turkey.

In the end, the once-thriving metropolis of Smyrna was leveled. Turkish soldiers set fire to the city and watched as the raging blaze ravaged homes and businesses. The author has tracked down survivors of the genocide, providing firsthand accounts of the bloodshed and unspeakable acts perpetrated upon the population. Aboard the battleship USS *Simpson* that day, American diplomat George Horton later wrote, "One of the keenest impressions which I brought away with me from Smyrna was a feeling of shame that I belonged to the human race."

Tools of Violence: Guns, Tanks and Dirty Bombs by Chris McNab and Hunter Keeter, Osprey Publishing, New York, 2008, 320 pp., photos, notes, index, $24.95, hardcover.

Since men first began to wage war, their choice of weapons to kill or wound their adversaries has constantly evolved from sticks and stones into sophisticated machinery capable of delivering incredible firepower on the battlefield. The authors, experts on military technology, discuss everything from hand-held firearms to the newest missiles employed by today's military.

The book contains a wealth of information on the rifles, grenades, and ammunition carried by infantrymen. Mines, tanks, rockets, grenade launchers, fighter aircraft, and attack helicopters are also examined. There is even a section on the simplest form of weapon widely used today—the suicide bomber.

"With a significant portion of the world either at war or drawn into violence at some point during the last decade," write the authors, "the relevance of weaponry to the everyday experience of millions has, unfortunately, made itself all too clear. The bottom line is that while this is ostensibly a book about guns, tanks, and dirty bombs, it is really a book about people." □

duel in the desert

Continued from page 35

included three officers killed, along with 20 enlisted men killed and wounded. Of some 114 tanks engaged, 30 were destroyed and another 24 were damaged. The scales were more than balanced by the capture of Bardia and the liberation of some 1,150 Commonwealth prisoners, including 650 New Zealanders. The British also reported the capture of more than 8,000 prisoners, of whom approximately 1,800 were Germans.

Several factors contributed to the success of Allied operations at Bardia. Even though it was their first action, the South African troops were carefully and thoroughly rehearsed with their combat engineers and New Zealand tank units. Artillery barrages were well coordinated and effective use was made of smoke during Phase 1 of the attack. Command flexibility was demonstrated by the key decision to make a night attack during Phase 2. In addition, de Villiers's directions were quickly transmitted to the troops through a well-planned and smoothly functioning communication system. Despite some setbacks, the South African commanders were able to adjust their plans quickly and continue the assault, allowing the Axis forces little opportunity to recover. Bardia was an example of a sound tactical plan carried out by well-organized and well-prepared troops, even if they were not yet combat veterans.

With Bardia eliminated, other isolated German-Italian strongholds on the Libya-Egypt frontier soon fell to Commonwealth forces. Sollum surrendered to the South Africans on January 12 after a small but fierce engagement. Another 5,000 Axis defenders, surrounded in fortified positions at Halfaya Pass, held out against terrific artillery and aerial bombardment with relatively few casualties, before giving in to starvation and thirst on January 17.

Having taken these key positions, the Eighth Army's communication and supply lines were cleared from Tobruk to the railhead at Bir el Thalatha, and the next phase of the desert war moved forward to positions west of Tobruk. Six months later, on June 21, 1942, two complete infantry brigades of the 2nd South African Division, as well as most of its supporting units, would be captured at Tobruk when the fortress fell to the advancing Afrika Korps after the Battle of Gazala. By then, the seesaw war for North Africa had entered another cycle, and the second Battle of Bardia was just a dim memory, lost in the never-ending swirl of dust and sand in the unforgiving Libyan desert. □

Continued from page 21

Soon, practical books on gunnery were being published, and simple geometrical ranging instruments developed as applications from Fontana's scholarly foundation.

Battlefield maneuvering had advanced dramatically from the end of the 15th century, with massed block formations of infantry pikes followed by similar arrays for firearms after the mid-16th century. The need for speed and maneuverability called for a high level of discipline in weapon handling and orderly drill. One of the early eye-opening results of this training was the defeat of heavy cavalry by the massed firepower of the matchlock long arm. The various lancer cavalries licked their wounds and revamped with the use of the first semiautomatic firearm ignition system, the wheel lock. They also practiced block formation maneuvers meant to counteract the potent firearm infantries.

Period histories chronicled these dramatic changes. But there were also a small number of conservative authors in France and England who printed treatises against the use of firearms and other innovations. Some of the latter were particularly stubborn about keeping the longbow up front on the battlefield. But the century's various wars marked progressive field validation of effective well-executed firearm tactics.

This revolution on the battlefield influenced an innovative new book format in the early 17th century—the manual. After nearly a century of steadily evolving practices, there was a great need to render intricate battle orders and maneuvers into a simple printed format, with the bonus of technically accurate and quality illustrations. Inspired by a study of ancient tacticians on military exercises, Dutch Count Maurice combined basic arms drill with the illustrative expertise of Flemish artist and engraver Jacob de Gheyn into the first illustrated manual of arms, the historic *The Exercise of Arms* (1607). The book contained 117 detailed copper engravings for the firing of long arms and the proper manipulation of the pike. Wilhelm Hoffman plagiarized Maurice's book in a reduced format in 1609. Two years later, the first full manual for cavalry, *Rules for Cavalry,* by Knight Hospitaler Lodovico Melzowith, appeared. This was followed almost immediately by another significant book dealing with light cavalry by Hungarian General Giorgio Basta, better known as "Butcher Basta" by the people he suppressed.

The illustrated manual took on an encyclopedic format a few years later with the concerted efforts of a veteran officer of considerable experience. Johann Jacobi von Wallhausen had served in the Low Countries under Maurice, and then had spent four years as a lieutenant colonel in the service of the Elector of Mainz before moving on to become the principal captain of the city of Danzig. Jacobi found that he had a real sense of mission in teaching military essentials, and he authored a number of military manuals. For the all-important illustrations he turned to another Flemish family of artists, the De Bry brothers. In 1615 his *The Art of Infantry Warfare* appeared in German, the first complete manual of infantry training and tactics with accurate illustrations. The book had foldout pages with the manual of arms for long arms and pike and also the first bird's-eye view of infantry formations for defense against heavy cavalry. Jacobi brought out a similarly comprehensive manual for cavalry, *The Art of Cavalry* in 1616, and the next year he followed up with another on the pike. He published three other military works meant to be a complete compendium of military science. His comprehensive works label him the most important military writer before the Thirty Years' War.

Having a well-stocked library—military and otherwise—was a sign of one's level of prestige, and personal libraries grew in the 17th and 18th centuries. The auctioning of libraries became prevalent in the 18th century and reflected a rise in the worth of old books. Their worth grew steadily through the 19th century, and by the 20th century the competition for collecting historically important early printed books rose progressively. Prices also rose. Larger books are more desirable. A folio-size book—12 inches and up in height—is more valuable than an octavo, a book about eight inches high.

Early militaria books are rare. Some simple vellum-bound editions of ancient military history and commentaries printed from 1600 can still be found for $300. But specialty subjects from the 16th and 17th centuries are at a premium. Complete cutting-edge manuals of arms and tactical exercises are particularly rare. The directions and illustrations for everything from arranging troops to setting up camp often were torn out of the books for future reference. Others were simply thumbed out of existence from hard use by officers in the field, despite special battlefield bindings with wrap-around leather and a secure buckle to protect them. De Gheyn's landmark *Exercise* is so rare that a first edition easily hovers above the $50,000 price range.

Military books of all sorts remain one of the most popular areas of publishing. Whether military history, weaponry, or training manuals, all had their start with the evolution of movable-type printing and the first books on militaria, the revolutionary incunabula. □

Continued from page 57

and another 30 were wounded. The Texans seized all the goods left in the enemy camp, including about $1,200 in cash, 600 muskets, 300 sabers, 200 pistols, several hundred mules and horses, and the nine-pounder cannon.

Late in the afternoon, Houston returned to camp and finally allowed his wound to be examined. Even at rest, he continued to fret over the possibility of an unexpected enemy assault. He called for Colonel Almonte, an English-speaking aide to the dictator, and asked him where Santa Anna had gone. Almonte responded truthfully that he wasn't sure but that he had seen him riding away from the field when it became evident the battle was lost.

An observant Texan scout, Henry Karnes, had noticed a group of Mexican soldiers galloping from the field as the tide turned; he quickly called for volunteers to mount a pursuit. One soldier who answered the call was the redoubtable Deaf Smith. On April 22 their diligence was rewarded when they captured the haughty Santa Anna. He had abandoned his worn-out horse and moved on foot into the marshes in the direction of Vince's Bridge. Exhausted, the mud-covered Mexican president spent the night of April 21 lying in reeds and grass not far from the battlefield. As he resumed his escape attempt the next morning, Santa Anna became disoriented and headed back toward the Texan camp. He found some shabby, albeit dry, clothing in a deserted slave cabin, where he was discovered and captured by Karnes and Smith. As he was being escorted into the Texan camp, the prisoner's true identity was discovered when he was greeted with cries of "El Presidente" by other Mexican soldiers. A quick search of his clothing revealed a shirt held together with diamond studs.

Santa Anna was quickly brought before the wounded Houston, who was reclining in discomfort in the open air beneath a large tree and was in no mood for Santa Anna's bellicosity. Encircled by vengeful Texans, Santa Anna demanded to be given the courtesy that his status as a prisoner of war required. Visibly trembling, the dictator told Houston, through an interpreter, "That man may consider himself born to no common destiny who has captured the Napoleon of the West, and it now remains for him to be generous to the vanquished." Houston replied angrily that no such generosity had been extended to the garrisons at the Alamo and Goliad, but Santa Anna need not have worried about his fate. Houston had no plans to execute the generalissimo—Santa Anna was worth much more to Texas alive than dead. Houston and Rusk spent 90 minutes conferring with Santa Anna, during which time he promised to stop the war and send Filisola and the other troops out of Texas. Houston agreed, as a temporary solution, to a limited withdrawal of Mexican troops rather than absolute surrender or a full-scale retreat. Caro was summoned to prepare Santa Anna's dispatch to Filisola to that effect. Santa Anna ordered Filisola, Urrea, and Gaona to march back to San Antonio and Victoria under a flag of truce, pending his own negotiations with Houston to put an end to the war.

In the Texan camp, Houston's aides busied themselves with counting up the spoils of battle. One comparatively compassionate Texan, John Linn, seeing the Mexican corpses festering in the sun, suggested to Houston that several hundred heavily guarded prisoners bury their dead comrades. When Houston repeated this suggestion to Santa Anna, the dictator replied cavalierly that he was wholly indifferent to the disposition of his men's bodies. The Mexican corpses remained on the field throughout the summer. Eventually, local ranchers finally buried the Mexican dead in a common grave, the whereabouts of which remains unknown.

On May 14, Santa Anna signed the Treaty of Velasco, in which he agreed to withdraw his troops from Texan soil and, in exchange for safe conduct back to Mexico, to lobby for recognition of the new republic. For various reasons, however, the safe passage never materialized. Santa Anna was held for six months, during which time his government disowned any agreement he might enter into, and he was finally taken to Washington, D.C. There he met President Andrew Jackson before he returned in disgrace to Mexico in early 1837. By then, Texan independence was a fait accompli, although Mexico did not officially recognize it until the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ended the Mexican War in 1848.

For Mexico, the Battle of San Jacinto, one of the most decisive battles in the history of the Western Hemisphere, was the beginning of a downward military and political spiral that would result in the loss of nearly a million square miles of territory. For the Texans, their shockingly swift victory led to annexation by the United States and the resultant war with Mexico. In the end, the American government gained not only Texas but also New Mexico, Nevada, California, Arizona, and Utah, as well as parts of Oklahoma, Kansas, Wyoming, and Colorado—almost one-third of the present-day United States. All things considered, it was not a bad day's work for 18 minutes of battle. □

Continued from page 29

few yards, the king committed all the remaining cavalry in the French center to a counterattack. Despite surprisingly good coordination between the Imperial knights and foot soldiers in the center, fierce fighting by the flower of French chivalry and their veteran king gradually drove the Imperial troops backward across the field.

Through twirling clouds of dust, the French knights spied Otto astride a powerful steed. Clad in a gold tunic and clutching a gold shield with a black eagle emblazoned on it, the emperor became the primary target of the French knights as they dashed through the confused welter of men and horses. William de Barres, Gerard La Truie, and other French nobles managed to ride around the Imperial infantry and reach the emperor's position. A sharp melee ensued as the French knights charged the emperor's bodyguard.

La Truie swung his dagger in a wide arc at Otto's chest, but the weapon merely glanced off the emperor's armor. He swung a second time and sunk his blade deep into the head of Otto's horse. With a loud scream, the horse broke free of the melee and rode a short distance before crashing to the ground. A group of four Imperial knights turned away from the fight and rode swiftly to the emperor's rescue. One of them turned over his mount to Otto, and the shaken emperor rode swiftly away from the battle.

Rather than watch the destruction of his army, Otto began an eight-mile ride back to Valenciennes. De Barres gave chase, but several Imperial horsemen overtook him and stabbed his horse, putting an end to his pursuit. Meanwhile, French troops broke apart the chariot bearing the enemy standard and carried off the prize to Philip. The dukes of Brabant and Limbourg followed Otto's lead and also fled the battlefield to avoid capture. When the French king learned that Otto had fled, he laughed heartily and said, "We will not see his face any more today!"

Although the French had triumphed on two-thirds of the field, fierce fighting continued on the French left. Convinced that Philip was disinclined to show mercy to him, Renaud was determined to fight as long as possible. Rather than try to flank the French to the north, Renaud and Salisbury ordered an oblique attack on the French center in an effort to overwhelm it. Seeing the enemy right wing strike for the French center, Dreux and Beauvais ordered their men forward to block the thrust.

Morale on the allied right was strong thanks to the mesmerizing presence of Renaud. A tall man who was well schooled in combat, he sat astride his horse in full armor, wearing a helmet with two black plumes that could be seen from afar by friend and foe alike. As the fighting ground on through the afternoon, he scolded De Boves for bringing on a battle that he was sure would end in defeat. "Here's the battle you wanted, and which I didn't," he spat. "Now you can flee in panic like the rest of them. As for me, I shall continue fighting and be captured or killed." Needing no further encouragement, De Boves rode away shamelessly from the battle.

Even though the French had the upper hand, it was well within the realm of possibility that Renaud and Salisbury might be able to capture the bridge over the Marcq. For this reason, the French could not claim victory until they had obliterated the allied right. Sensing the urgency of the situation, Beauvais ignored the ecclesiastical ban against men of the cloth shedding blood and plunged into the thickest part of the fighting. Swinging a mace that could punch a hole through armor, Beauvais fought his way to Salisbury's position. Pulling up alongside the Englishman, the bishop swung a fearful blow that broke Salisbury's helmet and sent him tumbling to the ground. As soon as he fell, the earl was captured and whisked to the rear by French infantry.

Facing an enemy with superior numbers, Renaud was forced onto the defensive. He ordered the 700 foot soldiers under his command to form two ranks and array themselves in a semicircle with their pikes thrust outward. The count and his knights used the semicircle as a field fortress, sallying forth repeatedly to strike the enemy. When they became winded, they simply withdrew inside the curtain of pikes. As the steamy afternoon dragged on, the fighting became a war of attrition. After many determined sorties, Renaud had no more than six knights left in the saddle.

Despite the odds, he continued to fight. On one of his sorties, a French infantryman named Pierre de la Tournelle managed to slip under Renaud's horse and thrust his sword into its belly. The horse fell to the ground, pinning its master's leg in the process. The French infantry swarmed over Renaud, ripping off his helmet and slashing his face. One of the men tried to stab him in the groin but failed. Guerin, seeing the commotion, rode over and dispersed the soldiers. Exhausted by long hours of combat, Renaud surrendered to the bishop-elect. While being dragged off to Philip, Renaud tried to escape but was subdued by foot soldiers intent on bringing in a man deemed an arch-traitor to the king.

By sunset, Otto's army was no more. Philip's men gave pursuit, but the king called them back after they had gone only a mile. He wanted to keep his army together and to make sure that his prisoners did not escape in the commotion. Shortly after nightfall, Philip ordered trumpets sounded to recall his men to camp. Despite their weariness, the French stayed up deep into the night celebrating their triumph.

When the army returned in triumph to Paris, the population launched a weeklong celebration to honor the king and his army. The triumphant army brought with it 130 prisoners, among whom were five counts. Philip granted clemency to all the prisoners except Renaud and Ferrand, whom he deemed the worst sort of traitors. The prisoners were placed in the custody of various French nobles or imprisoned in Paris. All of those who received clemency eventually were freed after their ransom was paid. Ferrand remained in custody for 13 years before being released in 1227, a sick and broken man, after the deaths of Philip and Louis. Renaud, who was imprisoned for life, eventually committed suicide.

The reputation of both King John of England and Holy Roman Emperor Otto IV were irreparably tarnished by their defeat at Bouvines. A month after the battle, Philip marched with his army to western France to apply pressure to John's allies in Poitou and Gascony. He eventually signed the Truce of Chinon in September 1214. The terms of the treaty, which were highly favorable to Philip, required John to pay 60,000 pounds in reparations to the French crown and to cede Anjou, Brittany, and Poitou to Philip as well. The next year, back in England, John was forced by his disgusted barons to sign the Magna Carta, the first real check on the heretofore "divine right of kings." Otto, similarly disgraced, was soon deposed and died in exile.

After Bouvines, Philip held sway over northern France from the Bay of Biscay to the edge of the Holy Roman Empire and, most importantly, controlled the valuable wool trade in Flanders. The French king, who was henceforth called Philip Augustus for his achievement in battle, turned over command of the French military to his son, who upon his father's death became King Louis VIII. As for Philip, he reigned for nine more years before passing away at the age of 58 in 1223.

Peace settled over France for a time. The rusting swords and spears that lay scattered in the fields surrounding Bouvines were ample proof that the French, under Philip, had demonstrated both the will and the ability to vanquish their foes. France had become a unified country instead of a mere royal possession. □

Black Listed Cancer Treatment Could Save Your Life

Baltimore, MD— As unbelievable as it seems the key to stopping many cancers has been around for over 30 years. Yet it has been banned. Blocked. And kept out of your medicine cabinet by the very agency designed to protect your health—the FDA.

In 1966, the senior oncologist at a prominent New York hospital rocked the medical world when he developed a serum that **"shrank cancer tumors in 45 minutes!"** 90 minutes later they were gone... Headlines hit every major paper around the world. Scientists and researchers applauded. Time and again this life saving treatment worked miracles, but the FDA ignored the research and hope he brought and shut him down.

You read that right. He was not only shut down—but also forced out of the country where others benefited from his discovery. That was over 39 years ago. How many other treatments have they been allowed to hide? Just as in the case of Dr. Burton's miracle serum these too go unmentioned.

Two-Nutrient Cancer Breakthrough...

Decades ago, European research scientist Dr. Johanna Budwig, a six-time Nobel Award nominee, discovered a totally natural formula that not only protects against the development of cancer, but people all over the world who have been diagnosed with incurable cancer and sent home to die have actually benefited from her research—and now lead normal lives.

After 30 years of study, Dr. Budwig discovered that the blood of seriously ill cancer patients was deficient in certain substances and nutrients. Yet, healthy blood always contained these ingredients. It was the lack of these nutrients that allowed cancer cells to grow wild and out of control.

By simply eating a combination of two natural and delicious foods (found on page 134) not only can cancer be prevented—but in case after case it was actually healed! "Symptoms of cancer, liver dysfunction, and diabetes were completely alleviated." Remarkably, what Dr. Budwig discovered was a totally natural way for eradicating cancer.

However, when she went to publish these results so that everyone could benefit—**she was blocked by manufacturers with heavy financial stakes!** For over 10 years now her methods have proved effective—yet she is denied publication—blocked by the giants who don't want you to read her words.

What's more, the world is full of expert minds like Dr. Budwig who have pursued cancer remedies and come up with remarkable natural formulas and diets that work for hundreds and thousands of patients. *How to Fight Cancer & Win* author William Fischer has studied these methods and revealed their secrets for you—so that you or someone you love may be spared the horrors of conventional cancer treatments.

As early as 1947, Virginia Livingston, M.D., isolated a cancer-causing microbe. She noted that every cancer sample analyzed (whether human or other animal) contained it.

This microbe—a bacteria that is actually in each of us from birth to death—multiplies and promotes cancer when the immune system is weakened by disease, stress, or poor nutrition. Worst of all, the microbes secrete a special hormone protector that short-circuits our body's immune system—allowing the microbes to grow undetected for years. No wonder so many patients are riddled with cancer by the time it is detected. But there is hope even for them...

Six-time Nobel Nominee's Two-Nutrient Cancer Breakthrough Revealed

Turn to page 82 of *How to Fight Cancer & Win* for the delicious diet that can help stop the formation of cancer cells and shrink tumors.

They walked away from traditional cancer treatments...and were healed! Throughout the pages of *How to Fight Cancer & Win* you'll meet real people who were diagnosed with cancer—suffered through harsh conventional treatments—turned their backs on so called modern medicine—only to be miraculously healed by natural means! Here is just a sampling of what others have to say about the book.

"We purchased *How to Fight Cancer & Win*, and immediately my husband started following the recommended diet for his just diagnosed colon cancer. He refused the surgery that our doctors advised. Since following the regime recommended in the book he has had no problems at all, cancer-wise. If not cured, we believe the cancer has to be in remission."

—Thelma B.

"I bought *How to Fight Cancer & Win* and this has to be the greatest book I've ever read. I have had astounding results from the easy to understand knowledge found in this book. My whole life has improved drastically and I have done so much for many others. The information goes far beyond the health thinking of today."

—Hugh M.

"I can't find adequate words to describe my appreciation of your work in providing *How to Fight Cancer & Win*. You had to do an enormous amount of research to bring this vast and most important knowledge to your readers.

My doctor found two tumors on my prostate with a high P.S.A. He scheduled a time to surgically remove the prostate, but I canceled the appointment. Instead I went on the diet discussed in the book combined with another supplement. Over the months my P.S.A. has lowered until the last reading was one point two."

—Duncan M.

"In my 55 years as a Country Family Physician, I have never read a more 'down to earth,' practical resume of cancer prevention and treatments, than in this book. It needs to be studied worldwide for the prevention of cancer by all researchers who are looking for a cure."

—Edward S.,M.D.

"As a cancer patient who has been battling lymphatic cancer on and off for almost three years now, I was very pleased to stumble across *How to Fight Cancer & Win*. The book was inspiring, well-written and packed with useful information for any cancer patient looking to maximize his or her chances for recovery."

—Romany S.

"I've been incorporating Dr. Budwig's natural remedy into my diet and have told others about it. Your book is very informative and has information I've never heard about before (and I've read many books on the cancer and nutrition link). Thanks for the wonderful information."

—Molly G.

Don't waste another minute. There are only a limited number of books in stock—and unless order volume is extraordinarily high we may not be able to print more life-saving copies. Claim your book today and you will be one of the lucky few who no longer have to wait for cures that get pushed "underground" by big business and money hungry giants.

Get your copy of *How to Fight Cancer & Win* on our website: www.agorahealthbooks.com/P6J8C or call **1-888-884-7598 and ask for code P6J8C** to order by credit card. Or write "Fight Cancer—Dept. P6J8C " on a plain piece of paper with your name, address, phone number (in case we have a question about your order) and mail it with a check for $19.95 plus $5.00 shipping to:

Agora Health Books
Dept. P6J8C-680SFCBK
P.O. Box 925
Frederick, MD 21705-9838

If you are not completely satisfied, return the book within one year for a complete and total refund—no questions asked. This will probably be the most important information you and your loved ones receive—so order today!

ID# P6J8C

Master *of* Arts *in* Military History Online

Explore the framework through which important military events are understood.

Since 1819, Norwich University has played an important role in military history: as the birthplace of ROTC, as an institution whose graduates have fought in every war since its founding, and as the leader among military schools in racial integration and the integration of women into its corps of cadets. What better place to study military history?

Unique online format

- a dynamic, interactive educational environment
- a manageable pace for busy adults
- coursework can be completed in 18 months
- dedicated 24/7 support




NORWICH UNIVERSITY™
School of Graduate Studies

Please visit www.militaryhistorydegree.com/milh or call 1.800.460.5597 ext. 3372 for more information on this unique online degree.