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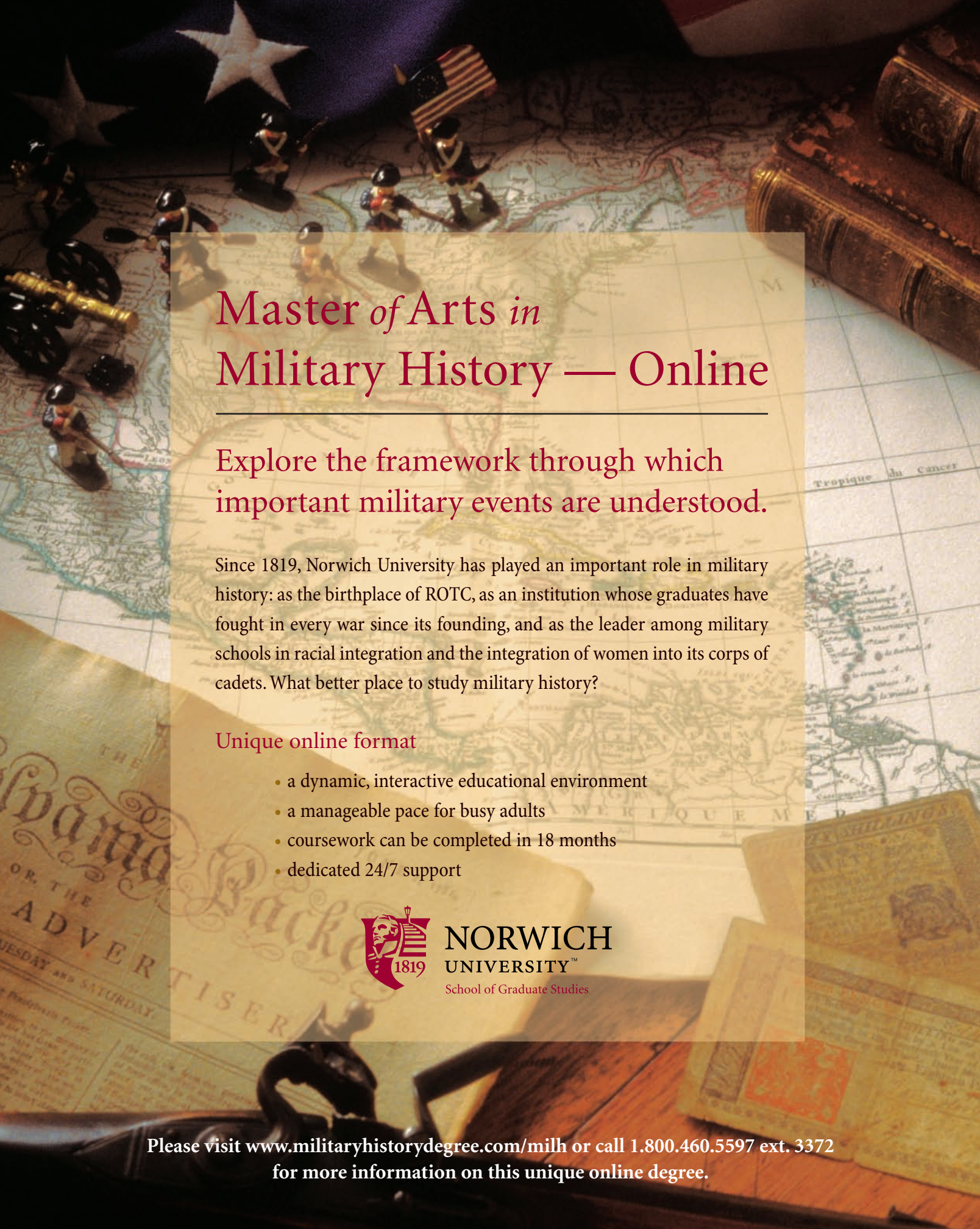

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MILITARY HERITAGE

april 2008

features

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COVER: "Confederate Officer with His Men." Painting by Don Troiani, www.historicalartprints.com.

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Against his better judgment, Ernie Pyle pulled on his gear for one last invasion. At Ie Shima, he met the same fate he had so often chronicled.

ERNIE PYLE DID NOT WANT TO GO TO OKINAWA. HE WAS too old, too tired, and—some said—too jaded for yet another American invasion of ferocious enemy territory. He had been there already, in North Africa, in Sicily, in Italy, and France, giving his readers a ground-level view of the greatest war in human history, as seen through the eyes of the lowly GIs who were fighting it through, one foxhole at a time.

But as the most famous correspondent in World War II, Pyle was captive, in a way, to his own reputation as the weather-beaten Homer for the too often unheralded young men in the ranks. After taking a much-needed break from the war in early 1945, Pyle was implored by readers to return to the front. Pressure mounted (reaching as high, some said, as the White House) for Pyle to go to the Pacific Theater and report on the soldiers, sailors, and Marines fighting there, the same way he had followed American troops across Western Europe for the last two years.

Royally wined and dined at fleet headquarters on Guam, Pyle raised eyebrows by observing that the soldiers and sailors stationed there were sleeping on well-padded mattresses and eating good, hot chow while their counterparts in Europe were still shivering in the grip of the worst winter in modern memory. Marines living in tents on the other side of the island, having just returned from the horrors of Iwo Jima, did not appreciate the remarks.

Some of his fellow newsmen found Pyle a trifle arrogant. One speculated that fame and fortune—he had earned an estimated half-million dollars in 1944—had gone to Pyle's head. The answer was far less cynical: Pyle had simply seen too much death. "I'd become so revolted, so nauseated by the sight of swell kids having their heads blown off," he explained to *Life* magazine, "I'd lost track of the whole point of the war. I'd reached a point where I felt that no ideal was worth the death of one more man."

Nevertheless, as the Marines prepared to assault Okinawa, Pyle reluctantly pulled on his gear for one last mission. Fellow reporter Lisle Shoemaker saw him the night before the invasion, tossing his belongings into boxes. "What are you doing?" Shoemaker asked. "I'm sending all this extra gear back to Albuquerque," Pyle said. Shoemaker asked why. "Because I'm going to get killed on this operation," he was told.

After hitting the beach at Okinawa with the Marines, Pyle moved to nearby Ie Shima, 10 miles northwest of Okinawa, to spend some time with the Army's 77th Division. On the morning of April 18, 1945, he was riding along a quiet beach road with Colonel Joseph Coolidge of the 77th when a Japanese machine gun suddenly opened up on their jeep. The men jumped safely into a ditch, but a moment later the experienced Pyle unaccountably raised his head to look around. A round from the enemy gun struck him in the left temple, just below his helmet, killing him instantly.

Soldiers put up a simple monument on the spot where he fell: "At this spot, the 77th Infantry Division lost a buddy—Ernie Pyle, 18 April 1945." Pyle would have appreciated the simplicity of the tribute. □

Roy Morris Jr.

Editor's Note: Michigan writer Michael Vogel's article on the German cruiser *Konigsberg* is, sadly, his last article for *Military Heritage*. After Michael's untimely death at age 47 in December 2006, his wife, Tami, found it in an envelope on his desk, ready to be mailed to us. We are proud to run it, and we again offer our condolences to Tami, their children, Michael's family and friends. All those who care about history and good historical writing share their loss.

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By Andrew McGregor

Encyclopedia Britannica Online

To end epidemic feuding, Scottish King Robert III hosted the "Battle of the Clans" at Perth in 1396.

Champions from the long-feuding Clan Chattan and Clan Cameron resolve their differences the Scottish way during the Battle of the Clans at North Inch in 1396.

TOP: Scottish King Robert III, as depicted on a 14th-century coin.

THE 14TH-CENTURY SCOTTISH HIGHLANDS REGION WAS AN isolated and undeveloped region of great forests, deep cold lakes, and rocky peaks uncrossed by any road. Towns were few, with most of the population scattered throughout the glens, where they pursued a pastoral life, occasionally enlivened by raids against their neighbors and disputes over land. What went on in the highlands was largely a mystery to the outside world, even including the Scottish king.

In AD 1333, a feud erupted between Clan Cameron and Clan Chattan, two powerful highland confederacies. Most major disputes in the highlands were over land, and this one was no different, involving a claim for restoration of MacIntosh lands in Lochaber that were being held by the Camerons. The MacIntosh chief, leader of the Clan Chattan, attacked and defeated the Camerons at Drumlui, igniting a decades-long feud. The fighting took its toll, and each confederation began to call on its complex network of allies for armed support, threatening to plunge the highlands into a cauldron of unstoppable violence and reprisals.

The fight at Drumlui was followed by the Battle of Invernahavon, which took place sometime between 1370 and 1386. This fierce struggle pitted the MacPhersons, Davidsons, and MacIntoshes (the main elements of Clan Chattan) against some 400 warriors of the Clan Cameron who were returning home from a raid on Clan Chattan lands in Badenoch. A dispute broke out on the battlefield between the MacPhersons and the Davidsons as to which group would take the prestigious position on the

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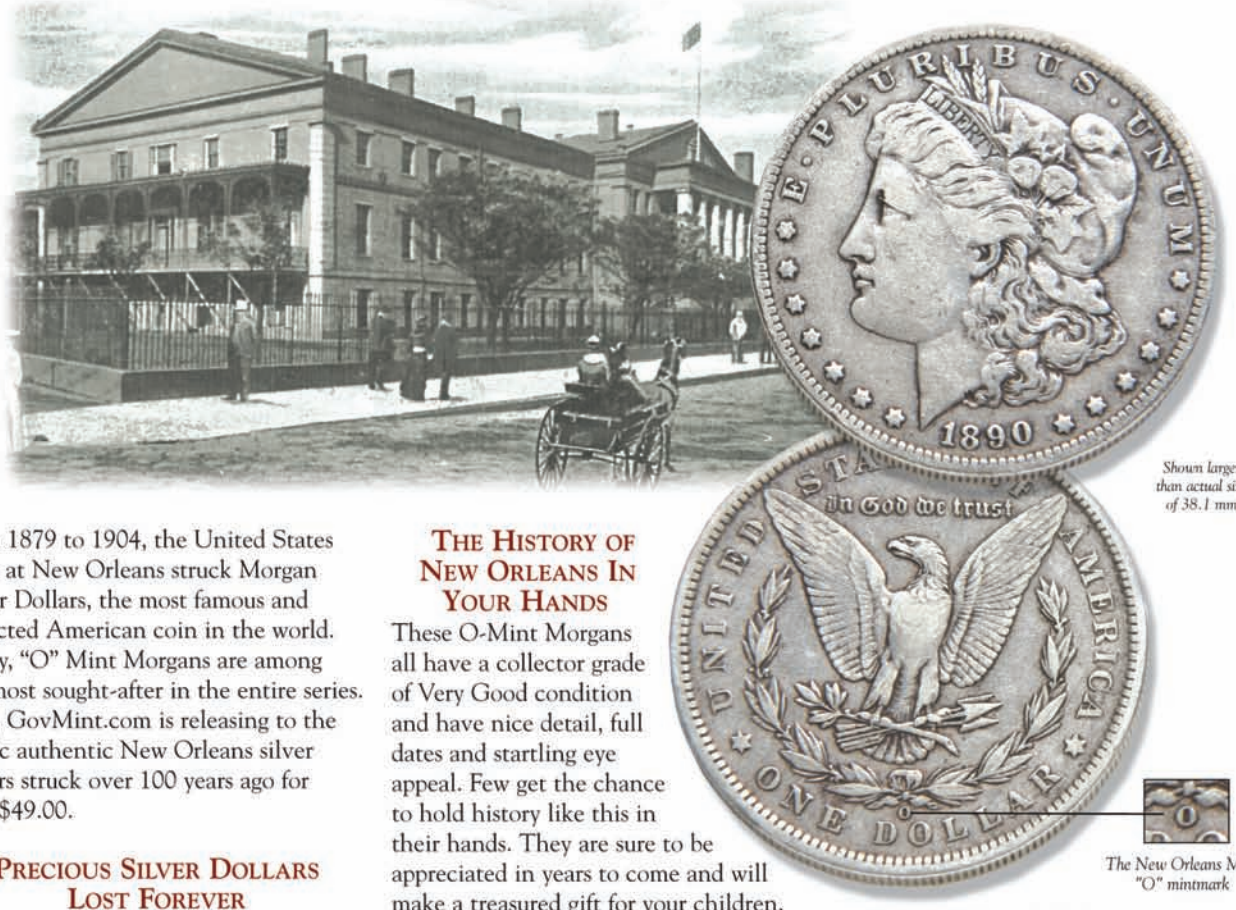

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MacPherson Clan Museum, Newtonmore

The prized black chanter, or Feadan Dubh, of the Clan Chattan was carried at North Inch, where its holder died in the fight.

right of the battle line (a familiar dispute among the proud highlanders, arising again centuries later at Culloden). The MacIntosh chief of the Chattan confederacy settled the dispute in favor of the Davidsons.

There are two versions of what happened next. In the first, the MacPherson chief was offended by the decision and withdrew his men, but upon seeing the Davidsons and MacIntoshes being overwhelmed by their opponents, the MacPhersons rejoined the battle, turning the tide and slaying the Cameron chief, Charles MacGiloney. In the second version, the Davidsons and MacIntoshes were soundly defeated after the MacPhersons withdrew. The next night the MacIntosh chief sent his bard, disguised as a Cameron, to the MacPherson camp. The bard, whose personal safety was traditionally inviolable, accused the MacPhersons of cowardice for failing to take part in the battle, and the outraged MacPherson chief led his men in a savage attack on the Camerons the next morning.

Another notable battle took place at Glasclune in Perthshire in 1392. Fighting had always been common along the highland-lowland border, but the lowland nobles had full confidence that the tactics and chivalry of their knights and men-at-arms would prevail against the wild and poorly organized raiders from the highlands. At Glasclune, however, the lowland knights were badly defeated by a group of highlanders. The sheriff of Angus, Sir Walter Ogilvy, was killed, along with many of his relatives and men. The highlanders had passed from being a traditional nuisance to a serious threat to the established order. There was growing criticism of the king's failure to maintain law and order. (Many of the worst depredations were actually the work of King Robert's younger brother Alexander Stewart, the infamous "Wolf of Badenoch.")

By late September 1396, a decision was made to solve the dangerous clan dispute by means of judicial combat, to take place at the North Inch of Perth under the supervision of the King of Scotland, Robert III. The North Inch was an area of low-lying land beside the River Tay, just outside the town walls, and home to a monastery of Dominican priests known as the Black Friars. The choice of Perth for this unusual mass duel was likely due to the favor shown the town by the king. At the time, the Scottish king and court had no permanent home, preferring instead to pass from place to place, allowing the king to "show the flag" whenever and wherever necessary. Robert III enjoyed his stays at the Black Friars' monastery at Perth, and the marshy ground of the North Inch was a natural choice for the contest, having already been used for a number of individual trials by combat.

The chronicler Andrew Wyntoun, the prior of the St. Serf monastery at nearby Loch Leven, is believed to have walked the 20 miles to the battleground at Perth, although it is possible that his information on the affair was gained through mere hearsay. The monk did not bother to record his memories until some time between 1420 and 1424. As it was, Wyntoun gave little political or historical background of the affair, and his version of the names involved reflects the difficulty or indifference with which Celtic names were rendered into English or Latin by lowland scholars at the time.

From Wyntoun comes the earliest account of the "three score wyld Scottis men," divided into sides of 30 each, "in pursuit of an old feud." He names the two clans involved as Clan Qwhewyl and Clan Ha, and identifies two chieftains who took part as Scha Ferqwharis and Cristy Johnesone. The Clan Qwhewyl almost certainly represents the Clan Chattan, a confederation of related families including the MacPhersons, Davidsons, and MacIntoshes and a number of smaller unrelated "septs," or subgroups, notably the MacGillivrays and MacBeans, that found strength through association with a larger group. The identity of the other feuding clan, the Clan Ha, is more contentious, but a majority opinion seems to have settled on Clan Cameron's claims to have been the second warring party at the trial.

Barriers were constructed around three sides of the intended battleground, the River Tay forming the fourth side. Viewing stands were erected for the king, his court, and noble visitors, some of whom came all the way from France for the spectacle. There was no doubt a large turnout from Perth as well, and hundreds of spectators and vendors flocked in from the hinterland to take in the once-in-a-lifetime event. Funds for erecting the grandstands were taken from the king's customs account at Perth. The exchequer rolls record the expenditure of 14 pounds "for timber, iron and making of lists for 60 persons fighting in the Inch of Perth."

When the warriors were mustered on the field after attending mass, it was discovered that Clan Chattan was one man short. Some sources suggest that the man's nerve broke at the last minute and he swam across the Tay to safety, but these sources may have confused the warrior's absence with the escape made across the Tay by one of the fighters later in the battle. The missing highlander is otherwise described as having missed the fight as the result of a hangover or an overlong dalliance with one of the young ladies of Perth. With none of the fighters on the opposing side willing to relinquish his role in order to even up the numbers, the combat was suddenly in danger of being abandoned. Traditions record that a bandy-legged local smith with no interest in the fight suddenly stepped up and volunteered to join the combat in place of the missing warrior, in return for a gold coin and a guarantee that he would be maintained for life in the unlikely event of his survival.

The contemporary Scottish chronicler Bower's version of the affair, written about 25 years after Wyntoun's original account, first mentions the absence of one of the fighters and his replacement by the Perth smith, Henry Wynd, "a man of moderate height but savage appearance." The account of the smith's role in the battle is still questionable because it does not appear in Wyntoun's earlier account. If Wyntoun was, as believed, an eyewitness to the combat, it seems difficult to believe that he could have forgotten or neglected to mention the ferocious smith who was a central character in all later accounts of the drama. As with Wyntoun, we cannot be sure whether Bower was an eyewitness. Distance from the event suggests he was not, but if he was, he was writing as an old man of events some 50 years in the past. Like so many aspects of this strange story, the participation of the smith may have been real, or it may have been added by the chronicler to give some human interest to what, in reality, was a dark and uninspirational day beside the Tay.

The fighters, following highland tradition, would have stripped to their saffron-colored undershirts, tying the long garment between their legs before going into battle. Chain mail was the usual costume of professional warriors in the Highlands at this time, but protection of the combatants did not figure into the scheme of the trial's organizers. Before highlanders met in battle it was customary for a bard from each side to recite a poem intended to incite the warriors and remind them of their duty to their clan. Following this, the warriors would have hurled insults and brandished their weapons while awaiting the sound of the trumpet that would launch the fray.

Novelist Sir Walter Scott left a vivid account of the battle in *The Fair Maid of Perth*, which succeeds in capturing some of the noise and fury that surrounded the unusual clash: "The trumpets of the king sounded a charge, the bagpipes blew up their screaming and maddening notes, and the combatants, starting forward in regular order, and increasing their pace till they came to a smart run, met together in the centre of the ground, as a furious torrent encounters an advancing tide. For an instant or two the front lines, hewing at each other with their long swords, seemed engaged in a succession of single combats; but the second and third ranks soon came up on either side, actuated alike by the eagerness of hatred and the thirst of honour, pressed through the intervals, and rendered the scene a tumultuous chaos, over which the huge swords rose and sunk, some still glittering, others streaming with blood, appearing, from the wild rapidity with which they were swayed, rather to be put in motion by some complicated machinery, than to be wielded by human hands."

The fighters could carry only a bow, axe, knife, and sword—armor and shields were prohibited. The bows would have been used first, with probably only a small number of arrows allowed on each side before the warriors closed in. One account holds that the bows were actually crossbows, and that three arrows were allotted to each man. In an enclosure at short distance any shot, whether from bow or crossbow, would likely have been lethal in the hands of experienced warriors. Despite some later accounts that mention its use in the fight, the two-handed claymore was not introduced to the highlands until the 15th century, and was thus unlikely to have been employed. The warriors likely paired off in single combat at first, in the highland tradition. As men fell on each side, some fighters would have found themselves facing two or three opponents. In this case death was almost certain, especially as the fighters were without protection. The struggle

was ferocious, "like butchers killing cattle in a slaughter-house," according to Bower.

From time to time, it would have been necessary for the combatants to break off fighting, rest from their exertions, and attempt to staunch the flow of blood from their wounds. The fight would resume on fresh ground, unencumbered by the mutilated bodies of their dying comrades. A story from the folklore of the MacPhersons, repeated by Scott in *The Fair Maid of Perth,* describes the pipers of the respective clans becoming enraged by the slaughter, dropping their bagpipes and going at each other with knives. Having slain his opponent, the mortally wounded Clan Chattan piper picked up his pipes to play the clan anthem with his dying breath.

After several hours of bloodletting, there remained only one man of the Camerons opposing 11 heavily wounded representatives of the Clan Chattan. Rightly judging his chance of survival as nil, the warrior tossed away his sword and struck out across the River Tay. If he survived the swim, the warrior was never heard from again, although Scott records a folktale in which the man was so poorly received on his return to his kin in the highlands that he killed himself.

Another account of the battle, written in 1461, gives a number of different details. Maurice Buchanan's *Book of Pluscarden* records that seven men survived the contest, five on one side and two on the other. Of these two, one managed to cross the River Tay, while the other was either pardoned or hanged. The smith is said to have been related to the winning clan (differing here from virtually every other account), but Buchanan does not mention the clans by name.

A gravestone at a church in Rothiemurchus in Badenoch was for many years believed to mark the resting place of the leader of the Clan Chattan fighters at the North Inch, a certain Shaw Corshiacloch (the buck-toothed), or Shaw Mór (the great), probably the "Scha Ferqwharis sone" (Shaw Farquharson) mentioned by Wyntoun. In the 19th century, Alexander MacKintosh Shaw collected an oral tradition from his great-aunt, regarded as an authority on highland tradition: "Lachlan, chief of MacKintosh and of the Clan Chattan, being too old and infirm to take the field in person, deputed his kinsman, Shaw 'Mor,' a warrior of tried valour and established renown, to fill his place in the combat at Perth; and as a reward for the victory which he obtained, Shaw was presented by the chief with the lands of Rothimurcus in Badenoch."

The participation of Clan Chattan in the duel is undisputed, but there has been considerable controversy over the clan's opponents. Many have suggested that the battle was actually between two branches of Clan Chattan vying for prominence. Traditions held by the MacPhersons and the Davidsons (both of Clan Chattan) insist that the Camerons had no part in the contest. Arguing against this claim is the fact that in the late 14th century, the constituent families of Clan Chattan were neither large nor powerful on their own, and a feud between two individual groups within the confederation would hardly have been serious enough to threaten the stability of the whole nation, the reason given for the duel at Perth. The combative Clan Cameron confederation and its long-standing quarrel with Clan Chattan makes it a much more likely opponent in the contest at Perth. There is also some evidence that Clan Cameron had not yet adopted that name in the 14th century, so they may well have been known as Clan Ha or some other variation at the time. Clan Davidson maintains that it formed one of the two sides in a battle for Clan Chattan leadership, and in 1996 the Davidsons held a celebration in Perth marking the 600th anniversary of the Battle of the North Inch, the clan piper playing a new piece commissioned for the occasion.

The mass duel at Perth left behind little political legacy. Although the Scottish court may have been relieved to remove so many troublesome warriors from the scene in one day, both confederacies were large enough to withstand the loss. Neither side would have taken the result of the combat at Perth as a definitive decision against them in their feud. If the clans involved were indeed the Chattans and the Camerons, they were at each other's throats once again early in the 15th century. There are records of a particularly ruthless attack on Palm Sunday 1429, in which the Clan Chattan set fire to a church where a sept of Clan Cameron was gathered, killing most of those within. The dispute was eventually settled in court near the end of the 17th century, legal proceedings having replaced battles to the death by this time.

The building that Scott described as the home of Catherine Glover, the "Fair Maid" of the novel, can still be seen in Perth. Although the building is the oldest house in Perth, it probably does not date before the 15th century. The building was once the headquarters of the glovers' trade in the densely populated medieval industrial suburb of Perth North Port. The area fell into decay and gained an unsavory reputation until most of its structures were demolished in the 1930s.

In 1745, the Battle of Culloden brought an end to the Jacobite rebellion and dreams of a

Stuart restoration in Britain. The Highland charge, which had triumphed so many times against English arms in the past, proved unequal that day to the disciplined fire and bayonet drill of the Duke of Cumberland's army, which included English regulars, lowland Scottish troops, and anti-Jacobite highlanders. Leading the Jacobite charge were the MacIntoshes of Clan Chattan, who left nearly their entire fighting strength in the mass graves of the battlefield. The Camerons were right behind them, their shot- and bayonet-mangled bodies intermingled with those of their ancient rivals. The monastery of the Black Friars that once dominated the battleground was already a distant memory, having been destroyed by a mob in the Reformation of 1559 after a particularly incendiary sermon by John Knox. The North Inch is now a public park and home to regular athletic activities.

After Culloden, an order was issued to seize all arms in the highlands, where Jacobite support had been strongest. Two of the weapons confiscated were swords allegedly used in the North Inch battle and held at the home of the MacIntosh chief. Another trophy from the slaughter in Perth is the Feadan Dubh, or black chanter, from the pipes carried by the Clan Chattan piper who killed his counterpart before expiring from his own wounds. The chanter's maintenance is regarded as essential for the prosperity of the MacPherson division of the Clan Chattan, although this did not prevent it from being auctioned off by court order along with all the goods of Cluny Castle (home of the MacPherson chiefs) in 1943. It was later purchased by the clan association and placed in the Clan MacPherson museum at Newtonmore, where it may be viewed today.

The unlikelihood of the savage struggle at Perth providing an end to a Highland feud must have been known to the royal court, and it has been suggested by some that the contest was never intended to be more than a courtly diversion, a royal entertainment for visiting dignitaries from France and England. The prohibition on armor and shields suggests that the death of the participants was a desired result, perhaps in the hope that some steam might be taken out of the festering feud through the death of many leading warriors. That the clan chiefs and most of their leading men appear to have avoided the battle suggests that they fully understood this intention. The smoldering enmity that persisted between the Camerons and Clan Chattan well into the 19th century demonstrates that Scotland's lowland nobility had once again failed to penetrate the psyche of their turbulent Gaelic highland neighbors. □

By Michael Vogel

The German cruiser *Konigsberg* fought the British at sea and on land, adding her guns to the legendary East African campaign.

THE FIELD TELEPHONE RANG ON THE BRIDGE OF THE TRAPPED German cruiser SMS *Konigsberg*. On the other end of the line, the coast watcher spoke the words that had been dreaded for almost eight months—the British were coming. On a muddy African river, a drama was about to be played out by the two most powerful navies in the world. In this obscure corner of the world, far from the main theaters of World War I, *Konigsberg* would play a role unlike that of any other German warship in history.

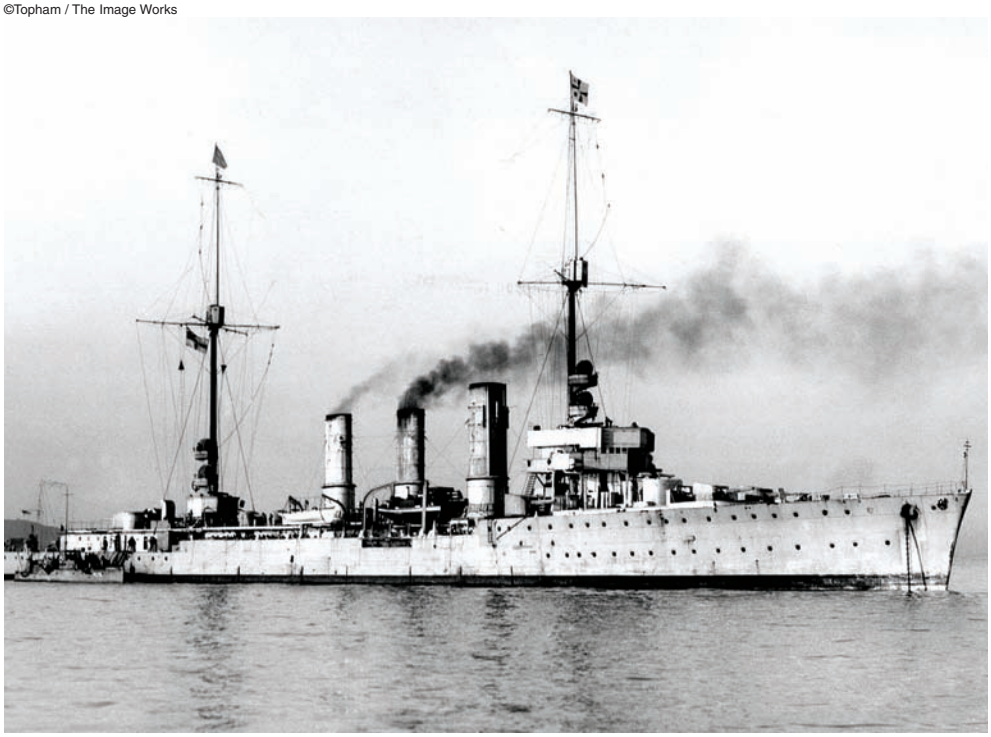
German naval strategy at the beginning of the war was dictated by circumstances. Battleships in the North Sea were to avoid major engagements with the far stronger British fleet while hoping to cut off portions of the enemy fleet and destroy them with tactically superior forces. This led to a four-year stalemate, punctuated by the Battle of Jutland. The situation on the high seas, however, was entirely different. German colonies in Africa and the Pacific offered—at least temporarily—safe havens and supply points for German raiders. As long as they could evade being cornered, the kaiser's ships could wreak havoc on Great Britain's merchant fleet. The battle plan for the Kreuzerkrieg, or cruiser war, was to prey on enemy shipping and use the ships for resupply. Eight light cruisers were in position at the start of hostilities—five in the Pacific, two in the Caribbean, and one lurking in the Indian Ocean. The latter was SMS *Konigsberg*.

Konigsberg had been built in Kiel in 1907. She was 378 feet long and displaced 3,400 tons. Her main armament consisted of 10 4.1-inch guns, plus several saluting guns and machine guns and two 17.7-inch torpedo tubes. At 24 knots, Konigsberg was faster than almost all the other ships of her class and was well prepared for her role in disrupting British shipping. Stowed below deck were two 88mm guns to be used in converting captured merchant ships into auxiliary German raiders.

Konigsberg sailed from Germany on April 25, 1914, and arrived at Dar es Salaam, the capital and main port of German East Africa, on June 6. From there, she would be able to threaten the vital British sea lanes from India around the Cape of Good Hope at the southern tip of Africa, as well as British shipping in the Red Sea. Her main opponent was the British Cape of Good Hope Squadron, made up of three aging cruisers—HMS *Hyacinth*, HMS *Astrea*, and HMS *Pegasus*. Wary of being bottled up as war approached, *Konigsberg* left the harbor on July 31. Taking advantage of a sudden squall, Captain Max Looff easily lost his unwanted British escort.

Heading north, *Konigsberg* captured the 6,600-ton *City of Win-*

German cruiser SMS *Konigsberg*, displacing 3,400 tons, sailed from Germany for Africa in April 1914, just before the outbreak of World War I.



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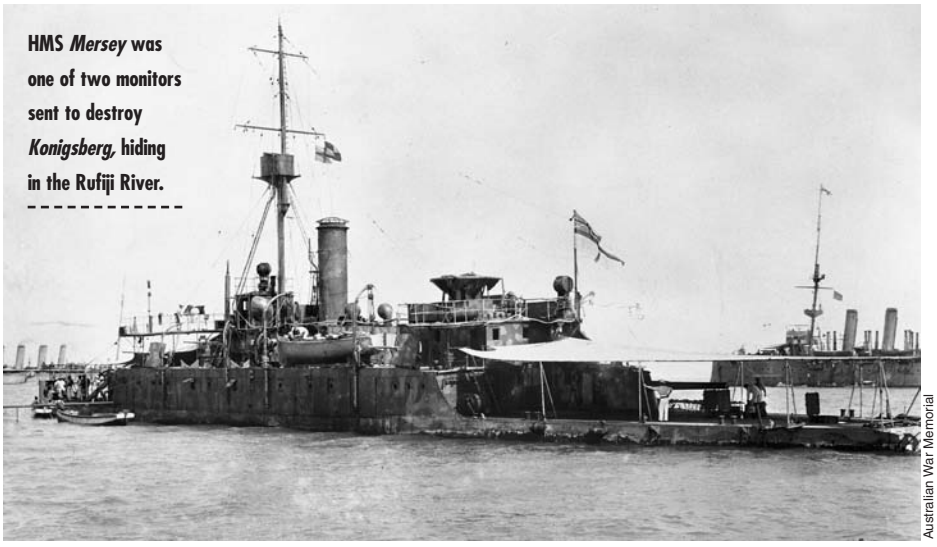


HMS *Mersey* was one of two monitors sent to destroy *Konigsberg,* hiding in the Rufiji River.

Australian War Memorial

chester, loaded with choice Ceylonese tea, off the coast of Aden on August 6—the first British merchant ship taken in the war. Unluckily for the Germans, the merchantman used inferior Bombay coal, which Looff refused to use, even though he had only 200 tons remaining. The Germans sank *Winchester* but kept her gun—it would later appear on the German gunboat *Kingani* on Lake Tanganyika.

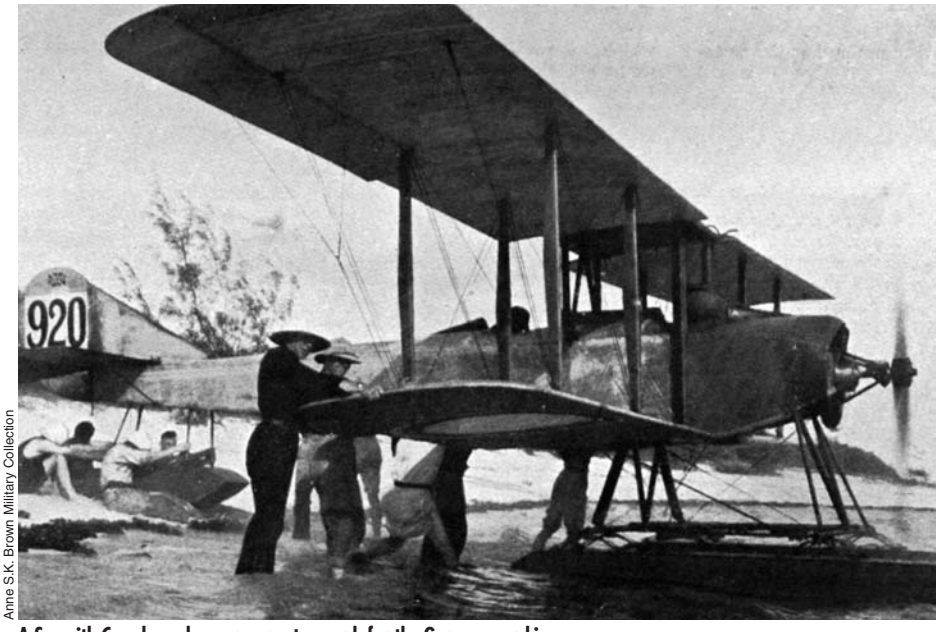
The coal situation was Looff's most urgent problem; *Konigsberg* had left Dar es Salaam with only 830 tons in her bunker. Shortly after her encounter with *Winchester, Konigsberg* came across two German merchantmen, from whom she took on 80 tons of coal as well as a number of marines and sailors returning to Germany from duty in China. Instead of a trip home, they were thrust into a new adventure that few of them would survive. By the time *Konigsberg* finally rendezvoused with her supply ship off Italian Somaliland, she was down to a mere 14 tons of coal, and drinking water was being severely rationed. *Konigsberg* took on 850 tons of coal, water, and mail from home, and Looff felt ready to begin merchant-raiding in earnest. All that was required were new targets. But these proved elusive. With the outbreak of the war, British merchantmen had sought refuge in the nearest harbors, so Looff and *Konigsberg* headed south to Madagascar in hopes of finding French shipping to prey on. There, too, the merchantmen had taken shelter in the harbor of Diego Suarez, which was protected by coastal guns.

Needing minor repairs as well as refueling, *Konigsberg* required a safe anchorage. Realizing that the British would be keeping a close watch on East African ports, the Germans had prepared a secret haven. Prior to the war, the complex set of waterways that make up the delta of the Rufiji River, 100 miles south of Dar es Salaam, had been charted, and four channels were found that were deep enough for *Konigsberg*. The British had no idea the Rufiji was navigable for a ship of *Konigsberg*'s size, and it was a perfect place to refuel and conduct repairs.

Konigsberg was seaworthy on September 19, when Looff received intelligence that a British cruiser was at Zanzibar. Leaving the safety of the muddy Rufiji that night, *Konigsberg* completed the 100-mile trip and boldly entered Zanzibar harbor at 5 o'clock the next morning. There she found *Pegasus,* the smallest and oldest cruiser of the Cape of Good Hope Squadron, while she was repairing her boilers. Within 20 minutes *Pegasus* was afire, her forward turret smashed. It was gunnery practice for the German cruiser. In the one-sided pounding, *Pegasus* was hit an incredible 200 times, suffering 31 dead and 55 wounded. *Konigsberg* escaped without a scratch. On his way out of the harbor, Looff spotted the picket ship *Helmuth,* which he had missed going in, and pumped three shells into her, causing her to explode as well.

Forced back to her sanctuary on the Rufiji by boiler problems, *Konigsberg* moved farther inland to Salale. The engines could be repaired only by the machine shops in Dar es Salaam, 140 land miles away. A road was cut through the jungle, and tons of boiler and engine parts were dragged on sleds by thousands of overworked Africans. New parts were fabricated and returned within 10 days.

Greater defensive measures were taken to protect the cruiser. Colonel Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck, commander of the Schutztruppe, or defense force, in German East Africa, dispatched a 150-man force to guard the approaches. A chain of sentry posts was set up along the coast and on tiny Mafia Island, four



Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

A Sopwith Camel seaplane prepares to search for the German warship.

miles offshore. Lining the channels were well-dug-in positions and treetop observation posts equipped with small arms, light guns, and wire communications. Makeshift torpedo launchers were constructed by slinging a torpedo between two tree trunks. A small crew would ride and guide the strange craft to within 1,000 yards and launch the torpedo. The idea was tested and worked tolerably well. Field guns were set up to cover the most likely approaches. Hidden far up the Rufiji, Looff did not miss a trick. Since *Konigsberg*'s masts and funnels could be seen from a distance, he had palm trees tied to them as camouflage.

But *Konigsberg*'s luck was running out. Before the engine parts were reinstalled, the British had found her hiding place. The British cruiser *Chatham* had discovered records on the seized German liner *Prasident* indicating that coal had been transferred in lighters to the village of Salale on the Rufiji six weeks earlier. Its final destination could only have been the *Konigsberg*. On October 20, one of *Chatham*'s sharp-eyed lookouts spotted a ship's mast jutting from the top of a tall palm tree. *Konigsberg* had been found at last. From eight miles out, just beyond *Konigsberg*'s range, *Chatham* fired a volley. No hits were scored, but fires were started on the supply ship *Somalia,* leaving her a burned-out hulk and denying *Konigsberg* the coal she would need for a prolonged high-seas cruise. "We have been discovered," Looff informed his crew. "Our fate is sealed."

Looff moved his ship farther up the shallow river, beyond the reach of the British warship. *Chatham* was soon joined by *Dartmouth* and *Weymouth,* and a full-scale blockade was put into place. Under heavy bombardment, the British tried twice to brave the German shore defenses, but the landings were driven off by the well-prepared enemy. Next, they sank an old collier, the 3,800-ton *Newbridge,* to block the Simba Uranga channel and eliminate one of *Konigsberg*'s possible escape paths to the sea. At the same time, the British enlisted the help of South African big game hunter Pieter Pretorious, who knew the Rufiji valley intimately. Pretorious canoed to within 300 yards of the ship, where he took depth soundings and spent a month painstakingly measuring the rise of tides on an hourly basis.

The net tightened. On January 12, 1915, the British took Mafia Island from the small German force. An airfield was laid out and several aircraft were brought in, a coaling station was set up, and more British ships joined the blockade. *Konigsberg*'s sanctuary had become her prison. Even worse, the fetid climate was turning her into a plague ship. By early January, Looff's crew had suffered 50 cases of malaria and two deaths from typhoid. Another crewman died after losing a leg to a crocodile. On New Year's Day, HMS *Fox* sent *Konigsberg* a jaunty radio message: "A happy New Year. Expect to have the pleasure of seeing you soon." The Germans replied: "Many thanks. Same to you. If you want to see us we are always at home."

Konigsberg could not run, but she could still fight. Quoting Goethe, Looff urged his men on. "Rather an end in terror, than terror without end," he said. Not one to let any available asset go unused, Lettow-Vorbeck insisted that part of the ship's crew be transferred to him. Over

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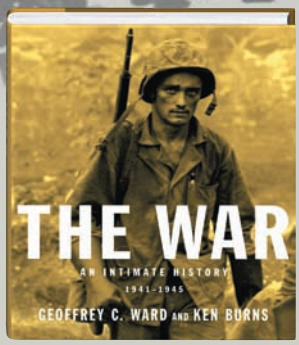

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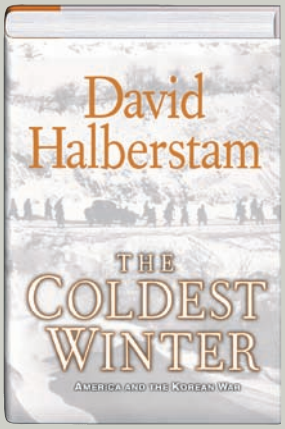

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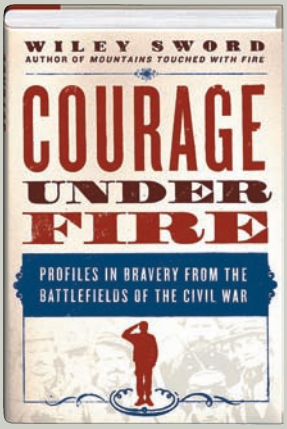

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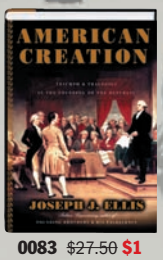

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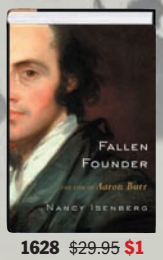

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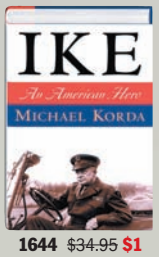

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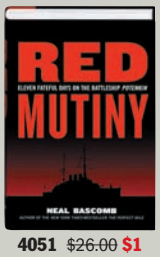

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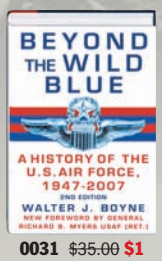

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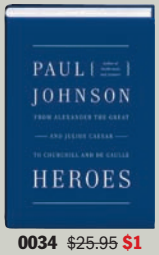

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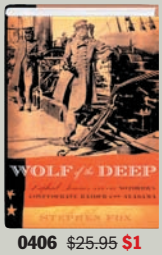

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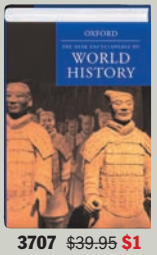

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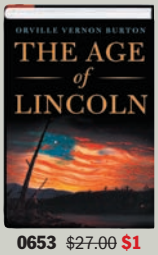

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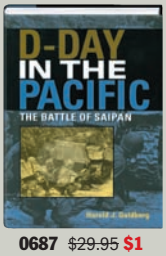

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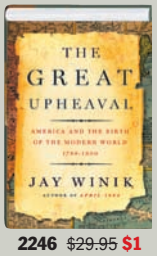

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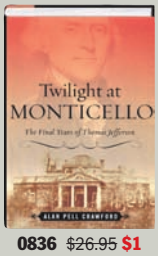

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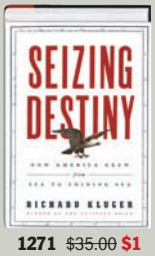

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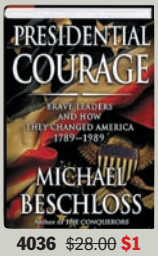

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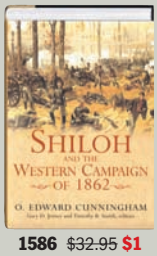

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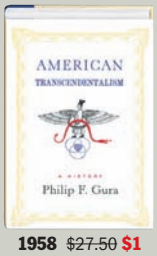

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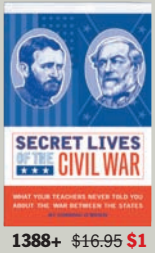

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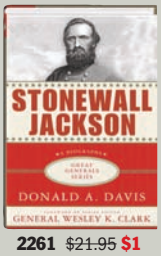

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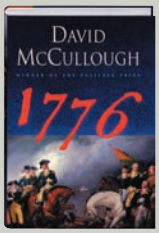

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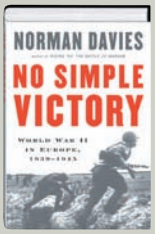

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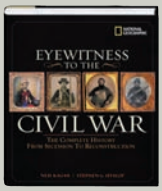

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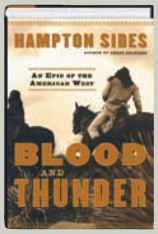

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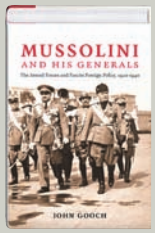

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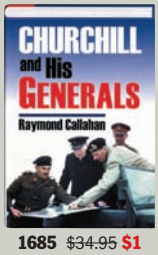

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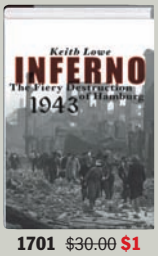

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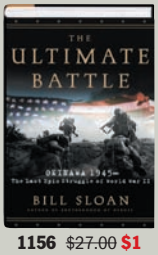

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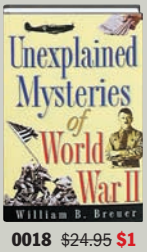

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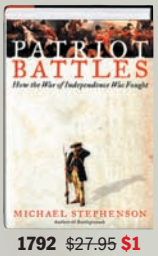

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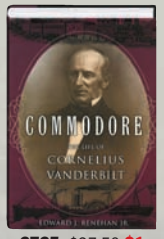

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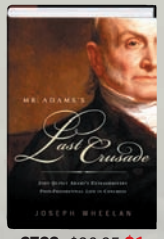

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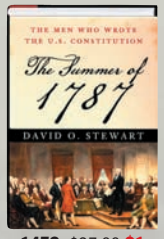

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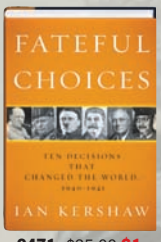

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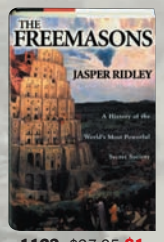

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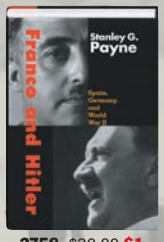

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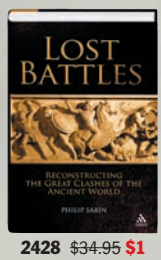

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Australian War Memorial

***Konigsberg* lists helplessly on the Rufiji River after being scuttled by her crew in July 1915.**

Looff's bitter objections, 100 sailors and marines were dispatched to join the Schutztruppe's land war in German East Africa.

Konigsberg had not been forgotten by Berlin, and an ambitious resupply effort was initiated. On February 19, the 3,600-ton blockade-runner *Kronborg* left Hamburg disguised as a Danish freighter. She arrived off the coast of East Africa in April with a precious cargo of 1,000 rounds for *Konigsberg*'s guns, thousands of shells for Lettow-Vorbeck's artillery, two new 60mm guns, 1,800 rifles, 3 million rounds of ammunition, six machine guns, and 3,000 tons of coal.

Looff planned to meet *Kronborg* 400 miles northeast of Rufiji, but radio communications between the two ships were intercepted by the British, and they were waiting for him. Unable to break out, Looff instructed *Kronborg* to head for Manza Bay near Tanga instead. This message, too, was intercepted, and British Admiral Herbert King-Hall, aboard *Hyacinth,* located *Kronborg* on April 14. After a voyage of 10,000 miles, the captain of the German blockade-runner was not to be denied so close to his destination. Lieutenant Carl Christiansen headed for the shallow water behind a wooded peninsula, where *Hyacinth* could not follow. Taking a heavy pounding, Christiansen ordered *Kronborg*'s sea cocks to be opened, flooding the hold. The Germans then started a fire on deck to give the impression that *Kronborg* had been mortally wounded. The ruse worked. The crew escaped into the bush and met up with a detachment of German Askari, well-trained native troops who proceeded to drive away a British boarding party from the wreck.

What followed was a truly remarkable salvage operation. All available German soldiers and sailors, along with 2,500 Africans and Arabs, labored day and night to save much of the priceless cargo. *Konigsberg*'s ammunition survived, although the rifle cartridges had been affected by salt water and were unusable in that condition. Each one was taken apart, cleaned, dried, and reassembled—it took months of tedious effort. *Kronborg*'s arrival and salvage "aroused tremendous enthusiasm," Lettow-Vorbeck reported, "since it proved that communication between ourselves and home still existed. Many who had been despondent now took courage once more, since they learned that what appears impossible can be achieved if effort is sustained by determination."

Finding *Konigsberg* had been tough enough, but getting at her was proving to be even more difficult for the British. They needed something with a shallow enough draft to penetrate the twisted Rufiji and with heavy enough firepower to outgun the German ship. As it turned out, they had two vessels that fit the bill. Before the beginning of the war, the Brazilian navy had ordered two shallow-draft gunboats for use on South American rivers. The British took over the armored and turreted "monitors," so called because they resembled Union Civil War vessels. Christened HMS *Severn* and HMS *Mersey,* the vessels were 265 feet long and 49 feet wide. Most important for their mission up the shallow Rufiji, they drew less than 6½ feet of water fully loaded. Each mounted two powerful 6-inch guns and another 4.7-inch gun to support 160-man crews.

After a heavy bombardment of the German shore defenses, the monitors began their trip upriver on July 6, 1915. In spite of the softening up, they moved forward through a barrage

of bullets and shells from both shores. The vessels anchored 11,000 yards from *Konigsberg* while aircraft carried out ineffective bombing runs. *Konigsberg* replied with her usual excellent gunnery and quickly found the range, hitting *Mersey* twice, knocking out her forward 6-inch gun, and killing the crew. The monitors replied, and a shell from *Severn* penetrated *Konigsberg*'s officer's mess, killing a sailor. Two more shells struck the upper deck and bridge, killing three more crewmen.

At 3:30 PM, the monitors retired, having fired 635 shells, only four of which scored hits, one striking *Konigsberg* below the waterline. The German vessel had been wounded but was still full of fight. The Germans buried their dead, evacuated 35 wounded, and removed all combustibles from the ship in preparation for the enemy's next move. It was not long in coming. On July 11, *Severn* and *Mersey* steamed close again, trading fire with *Konigsberg*. Eight shells landed in rapid succession—*Konigsberg*'s fate was sealed. At 1:16 PM, a series of explosions shook the cruiser; smoke rose 200 feet into the air. Fires raged from bow to stern. At 2:30, the monitors retired to Mafia Island. The last act was left to *Konigsberg* herself. George Koch, the ship's first officer, put detonators under the two torpedoes and blew up the ship.

Konigsberg's final act of defiance came at a heavy price. Of the 213 men aboard the ship during the battle, 32 were killed and 123 wounded, including Captain Looff, who later was awarded the Iron Cross, first class. (Nearly half his crew received the Iron Cross, second class.) His final communication to Berlin was proudly defiant: "SMS *Konigsberg* is destroyed but not conquered." Looff's words would prove prophetic.

The war was over for the ship, but not for her guns or crew, many of whom were incorporated by Lettow-Vorbeck into the Schutztruppe. A full company was added under Lieutenant Koch; the men were trained in bush fighting and taught Swahili to facilitate communication with their fellow infantrymen. Other officers and crew returned to sea aboard a small fleet of gunboats on Lake Tanganyika. Two of *Konigsberg*'s guns were mounted on the *Graf von Gotzen*, a big steamer launched on June 1. A year later the ship was scuttled, and Lettow-Vorbeck cannibalized her guns for his land army.

Konigsberg's other guns would make the greatest contribution to the war. The Germans began salvage operations the very evening of the battle. All of *Konigsberg*'s 10 4.1-inch guns were salvaged and dragged 140 miles to Dar es Salaam by 400 Africans. Equipped with gun carriages, the ship's pieces represented the largest artillery pieces in the African theater. Installed at several ports, they provided long-range naval defenses and allowed Lettow-Vorbeck to reduce the British garrisons there.

By the spring of 1916, the Allied offensive was in full swing. On May 9 and 10, the Germans counterattacked South African troops at the vital crossroads of Kondoa Irangi. Several of *Konigsberg*'s guns were used to great effect. Lettow-Vorbeck knew that Dar es Salaam could not be held in the long run. He placed Looff in charge of the last-ditch defense, which now amounted to a 125-man contingent of former crewmen and two 4.1-inch guns commanded by Lieutenant Richard Wenig, who had lost a leg during *Konigsberg*'s last battle.

The British launched their main attack on Dar es Salaam on August 16. Five ships loaded with troops entered the harbor, supported by 15 other vessels who kept up a steady bombardment offshore. One of *Konigsberg*'s guns was destroyed, but not before it managed several hits on the British troopships. The British attack was repulsed, but landings at nearby Bagamoyo succeeded, knocking out another of *Konigsberg's* guns stationed there. From Bagamoyo, thousands of British troops advanced on Dar se Salaam, and Looff's tiny force withdrew in good order on September 2.

In November 1917, Lettow-Vorbeck was faced with the choice of fighting a last stand in German East Africa or invading Portuguese East Africa. Choosing the latter course, he reduced his army to a more manageable 2,000 men and left an unhappy Captain Looff to oversee the surrender of the rest. The last of Konigsberg's big guns went with Lettow-Vorbeck on his invasion, commanded by the indomitable Lieutenant Wenig, who dragged the 16-foot-long gun the length of Portuguese East Africa and back again, one inch at a time, before blowing up the last of *Konigsberg*'s mighty guns instead of surrendering it to the British.

Not a man given to bestowing unearned praise, Lettow-Vorbeck summed up the performance of *Konigsberg*'s crew and guns: "Rendered excellent service." They had indeed. The crew had fought with him for over three years in the forbidding jungles of East Africa after spending three months at sea and eight months blockaded in the Rufiji delta. They paid a high price for their achievement. Of the original crew of 250 officers and men, only Captain Looff, Lieutenant Wenig and 13 others survived the war.

Two of *Konigsberg*'s 4.1-inch guns still survive: one in Pretoria, South Africa, and the other in Mombasa, Kenya. The Kenyan piece stands beside one salvaged from *Konigsberg*'s old victim, HMS *Pegasus*. □

By Susan Ludmer-Gliebe

The ancient Spanish fortress at Salses safeguarded the nation's northern border as a formidable barrier to French expansion.

IN THE AUTUMN OF 1495, THREE YEARS AFTER THE CHRISTIAN reconquest of Islamic Spain, Queen Isabella I of Castile and her husband, King Ferdinand II of Aragon, sent a letter to their master architect. "You will immediately depart for Salses," they instructed him. "You must expressly examine the town to see whether it may be fortified to make it a good stronghold."

The location of Salses fortress in northern Spain was dictated by the presence of a natural spring—a necessity in the event of an enemy siege.

Looking at Salses today, visitors can easily understand why the Catholic monarchs penned such a command. Sitting on a narrow strip of land overlooking salt lagoons and the Mediterranean Sea on one side and the Corbiere hills and nearby Pyrenees Mountains on the other, Salses straddles an often disputed and recurrently shifting frontier between Spain and France, two of Europe's most dominant powers.

The Spanish royals were not the first to recognize Salses's evident strategic position. In Roman times, a small *castrum,* or fortified encampment, called Salsulae was built abutting the Via Domitia, the military road linking Rome and Cadiz in southern Spain. Today, only small vestiges of the *castrum* remain, lying scattered amid wild almond trees, but the name has remained.

Isabella and Ferdinand's demand was in direct response to events developing across the sea on the Italian Peninsula, which had possible repercussions on the Iberian Peninsula as well. With the death of King Ferrante of Naples a year earlier, the French crown asserted its right to much of southern Italy, initiating with the Battle of Fornovo the first chapter in what became known as the Italian Wars. Soon after the victorious French monarch Charles VIII entered Naples in October 1495, the Spanish monarchs responded with their own military efforts to interfere with France's imperial ambitions by dividing its attention. In addition to sending troops to Italy, Spain would

All photos: Forteresse de Salses

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amass large armies on each end of the Pyrenees, the Basque region to the west, and the Roussillon plains in the northern part of Catalonia to the east. They would dare France to respond.

The fortification of Salses played a key role in Spanish thinking as a base for future attacks and as a defensive barrier to their powerful neighbor to the north. As a result of the Spanish monarchs' direct involvement, Spain reorganized and modernized its military, most importantly by establishing a standing army that would become a keystone to the nation's military supremacy during the 16th century. At Salses, the logical methods applied to the battlefields were affirmed and copied. The actual building of the fort was run on a strict military basis, even though the craftsmen who built its walls, carved its doors, and tiled its floors were civilians.

Construction of the fort, an unusual blend of Moorish and Castilian architectural elements, began in June 1497 and cost a substantial 43,725 maradevis—about 116,601 gold ducats—in an age in which a worker earned about 15-20 maradevis a day. By any measure, the resulting structure was enormously impressive, as even a cursory walk around its perimeter walls, stretching more than a mile, will attest. It was one of the largest forts of its time.

"We know exactly how many nails, how many bricks were used and how much they cost," explains Jean-Michele Pheline, administrator of the fortress. "We know that the ironwork came from the forges at Arles-sur-Tech, that the local limestone was milled at Armentera and then transported by boat or cart to the site, and that most of the wooden handles for the various imported metallic tools were locally made." Even the smallest details of quotidian life are known, including a list itemizing the fort's larder. When, for example, the French attacked in 1503, there were exactly 400 sides of salt mutton in storage. These very specific details are known because 10,000 primary documents from the reign of Isabella and Ferdinand have survived in the national archives of Castile.

Yet until recently, various guidebooks to the fortress wrongly identified the master architect who built Salses. Throughout their official correspondence, the Spanish monarchs used the salutation "Master Ramero" when writing or referring to their architect. For years it was assumed that "Ramero" referred to one Francisco Ramirez of Madrid. Ramirez was a great expert on artillery and served the crown as a secretary. But he did not build Salses, although he was coincidentally an acquaintance of the man who did.

By trawling through previously unpublished documents in the Castilian archives, French historians finally learned the correct identity of the brilliant architect who designed Salses. You can even see his flowering signature at the bottom of one of the documents found in bundle No. 140 of the archives. His name was Francisco Ramiro Lopez. Known for his skills in siege attacks, Ramiro Lopez distinguished himself in the battles that recaptured Mirabella and Ronda, among others, from the Moors. The Spanish crown rewarded Ramiro Lopez for his military actions by offering him a number of gifts and awards, including a castle in Andalucia and the right to restore the great palace of the Nasrid rulers, the Alhambra. Ramiro Lopez had previously designed other forts in southern Spain and southern Italy, but Salses was to be his crowning achievement.

ABOVE: A 60-foot-high dungeon served as a command post and final refuge, separated by small courts that provided light. CENTER: The common is organized around a four-sided courtyard with archways providing access to chapel, barracks, and stables. TOP: Salses is protected by a wide dry moat, glacis, and three independent pointed towers.

The most striking feature of the military masterwork is the immensely thick, 33-feet-wide escarpment walls that lie deeply embedded in the ground beyond a moat and a sloping glacis beyond. Half the walls' heights are buried in the ground, presenting a colossal and imposing armored profile to the world. Other features, not so evident, are of equal interest. "Outside, you cannot imagine what's inside," notes tour guide Michele Pillierz Tardieu as she guides visitors through long, labyrinthine passageways and confusing corridors that lead to hidden vaults and unexpected galleries. She is not the first to make such an observation. One enemy commander, Sebastien de Pontault de Beaulieu, noted that "there is more room under ground in this castle than above, for it is casemated and countermined all over."

Above ground, the fort rises between three and seven floors. The overall effect of the vast masonry, as one contemporary observer commented, is "to make Salses not one fortress but several." Equally exceptional for a fort of its time and place is the technical sophistication of its hydraulic and water systems, used for both military and domestic purposes. The four handsome, extremely tall *mudejar*—brick artillery towers—functioned as ingenious fire protection and ventilating systems. Each tower contained a well, and the water for each, which came from an underground source, cooled cannons by spraying them with water and removed toxic fumes by absorbing the smoke. "The Spanish learned about hydraulic and water distribution systems via the Muslims," says Pheline.

Throughout the fort, water was used most cleverly. Sluice gates distributed water to washbasins, to latrines, to the stables for horses, and even to the governor's private chamber, where he could enjoy a comfortable bath in his own tub, which visitors can still see today. The fort contains not one but two moats, each of which could be flooded with little difficulty. "They knew to flood the canals to choke the French forces so they had to surrender," Pheline adds. This happened during one of the last sieges of Salses, before the Spanish capitulated to the French in the mid-17th century.

Today, Salses displays an intriguing mix of archaic and modern military elements. The modern ideas reflected important and far-reaching changes in military technology that were becoming ascendant as the fort was being built. Particularly significant was the increasingly sophisticated artillery. Cannons were becoming smaller, lighter, more mobile, and more precise. The addi-

tion of trunnions allowed for more accurate aim, while the replacement of stone with cast-iron balls added greater range and force.

Spain learned firsthand the effectiveness of such newly evolving artillery when the French attacked the fortress, not yet completed, in 1503. Although equipped with 17 pieces of heavy artillery, 39 pieces of light artillery, and hundreds of shields, pikes, lances, hackbuts (early handguns), and other weapons, the fort's 1,350 infantry and cavalry were no match for the French, who fired 1,500 cast-iron cannonballs as they brought down the counterscarp and destroyed much of the fort's northern outer works.

The Spanish were saved from defeat by the timely arrival of King Ferdinand with a 20,000-man army, but a valuable lesson was learned. "The whole artillery system was changed," says Pheline. "The walls and towers were thickened, the posterns were transformed. With all the changes, Salses became a much more efficient fort and one of the most powerful ever built."

The transformed and strengthened fort had a definite dissuasive effect—it was not attacked again for over 100 years. When Salses did fall to the French, it was as much a result of internal Spanish discord and dissent as to the military resources and abilities of the French. Its loss provides a cautionary tale of the price of empire building. The 16th century saw Spanish imperialism run amok. In spite of the enormous riches flowing in from the New World—a spectacular 500 million gold ducats were imported from the Americas between 1500 and 1600—Spain became exhausted economically and physically. In 1557, the crown declared bankruptcy. "God wants us to make peace," explained the Conde Duque de Olivares, Spain's chief minister, "for He is depriving us all the means for waging war."

It was Olivares, in effect, who wrote the last Spanish chapter of the Salses fortress. Relentlessly demanding more money, supplies, and troops from independently minded Catalonia to counter the French, who had entered the region and captured Salses in 1639, Olivares encountered a defiant and rebellious local response—riots, revolts, and regular clashes between peasants and soldiers. In effect, a civil war raged between the Spanish crown and the Catalonians. The renowned *tercio,* the Spanish tactical formation inspired by the Roman legions and Swiss infantry, was deployed against the local populace. During the Catalonian revolt, Salses passed back and forth between Spain and France. By 1643, Olivares had been forced to retire in disgrace, and Salses was no longer a Spanish possession.

ABOVE: A masterpiece of military architecture, Salses was designed by Francisco Ramiro Lopez, King Ferdinand II's premier artilleryman. It combines the features of a medieval chateau with a modern fortress. BELOW: With walls almost 30 feet thick, the fortress is connected by a labyrinth of zig-zagging internal defenses.

The formal end came in the autumn of 1659, when the ministers of a resurgent France and a diminished Spain met on a neutral spit of land in the middle of the Bidassoa River at Bayonne, France. The meeting resulted in the Treaty of the Pyrenees. In language that was at once pompous, questionable, and inexact, the treaty declared that "the Pyrenees Mountains which anciently divided the Gauls from the Spains, shall henceforth be the division of the two said kingdoms." The practical effect of the treaty was to cede from Spain to France significant territory, including almost all of Catalonia north of the Pyrenees. Salses became French.

Today, the azure waters of the Mediterranean have receded far from the old shoreline. The formal boundary line separating the two countries for the past three centuries is a moot scribble in a quasi-unified continent. But the tumultuous past is not forgotten in this small corner of the world. Yards away from the fortress, on a plain brick wall, is graffiti in the Catalan language: "Catalonia is neither Spain nor France." □

The fortress is open throughout the year; hours vary according to season. Guided visits in English are available. For more information, contact: Salses Fortress, 66600 Salses-le-Chateau, Pyrenees Oriental, tel. 04-68-60-13, fax 04-68-38-69-85, jean-michele.pheline@monum.fr. Or visit the official French website at http://salses.monuments-nationaux.fr/en.

By Allan T. Duffin

Project X-Ray's imaginative bat bombs were intended to rain fire on unsuspecting Japanese cities. They might even have worked.

IMAGINE THOUSANDS OF BATS—SILENT, GRAY-FURRED, VIGILANT—huddled in the rafters of your home or office, each carrying a tiny device no larger than a thimble. Suddenly the devices explode, one after the other, engulfing everything in a ball of flame. In a matter of minutes, entire buildings are incinerated, leaving behind only scattered mounds of charred wood and piles of ash.

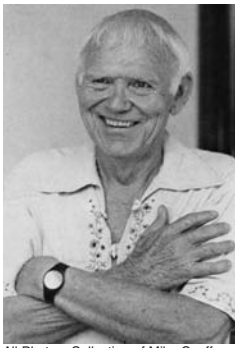
While this description sounds torn from the pages of a particularly far-fetched science fiction novel, it's closer to reality than one might think. During World War II, a quirky inventor proposed that one million bats be gathered from caves in Texas, strapped with napalm incendiaries, and packed 1,000 at a time into cluster-like bombs. Dropped from American aircraft over Japan, the bombs would fall to a predetermined altitude, then release the bats to roost in the paper-and-wood buildings below. A timing device would trigger the bombs, setting the napalm aflame and incinerating entire Japanese cities.

The man who suggested that imaginative scenario to the American government in 1942 was neither a chemist nor an expert in ordnance. Lytle "Doc" Adams was a dental surgeon and part-time inventor from Irwin, Pennsylvania. When he wasn't poring over mouthfuls of teeth, Adams was perched at a drawing board, generating concepts both wild and practical. At the 1934 Century of Progress Exposition in Chicago, Adams demonstrated an airborne mechanism that picked up and dropped off bags of mail using a ground-based hook-and-cable snaring device. The airplane carrying the mail would stay aloft, never needing to touch the ground. The unique mail delivery did not catch on.

The advent of World War II sent Adams's imagination into overdrive. He was mulling over how he could contribute to the war effort when a visit to the bat-infested Carlsbad Caverns in New Mexico triggered a fresh idea: "[I] had been tremendously impressed by the bat flight," he later recalled. "Couldn't those millions of bats be fitted with incendiary bombs and dropped from planes? What could be more devastating than such a firebomb attack?"

In mid-January 1942, Adams fired off a letter to President Franklin Roosevelt. "Dear Mr. President," wrote Adams, "I attach hereto a proposal designed to frighten, demoralize, and excite the prejudices of the people of the Japanese Empire." Outlining what he called a "practical, inexpensive, and effective plan," Adams theorized that airplanes could carry millions of the winged "fire starters" to their targets. An

RIGHT: Bats swarm from Ney Cave, near Bandera, Texas. BELOW: Jack Couffer, team member for Project X-Ray, published a book, *Bat Bomb*, about his experience.



All Photos: Collection of Mike Couffer

ABOVE: Bats on the loose in Frio Cave, Texas, part of the estimated 100 million Mexican free-tailed bats in the Southwest. RIGHT: Jack Couffer's pet bat, Flamethrower, nestles tamely on his shoulder.

intrigued Roosevelt pegged the concept worth pursuing. In an interagency memorandum, he wrote: "This man is not a nut. It sounds like a perfectly wild idea but is worth looking into." The government's interest in Adams's seemingly cockamamie idea was not surprising. After all, the same government was researching pigeon-controlled missiles and bombs triggered by atomic chain reactions. In the heat of wartime, anything that sounded even halfway feasible was at least taken under advisement.

After due consideration, the government green-lighted the project and assigned oversight duties to the Army Air Force. Adams swiftly assembled a ragtag team of researchers that rivaled any group of comic-book heroes. In addition to Dr. Jack von Bloeker, a mammalogist from the Los Angeles County Museum, there was a pilot turned movie actor, 24-year-old Lieutenant Tim Holt; the brothers Bobby and Eddie Herrold, an ex-hotel manager and workout king, respectively; ex-gangster Patricio "Patsy" Batista, who claimed to have worked for Al Capone; another set of brothers, the unassuming Frank and Mark Benish; and Ray Williams, a lobster fisherman turned Marine. Rounding out this distinctly odd group were two high school student assistants from von Bloeker's laboratory, Jack Couffer and Harry Fletcher. Most of the team members enlisted in the Air Force for the duration of the project. Adams, well aware of the prestige and political value of military rank, unilaterally promoted many of his team to "acting" noncommissioned officer status. Harvard chemist Dr. Theodore Fieser, the inventor of napalm, would join the team later.

Adams's hiring practices were as eccentric as the man himself. Experienced scientists like von Bloeker and Fieser, trained assistants like Fletcher and Couffer—these selections made perfect sense from a research perspective. But what about a lobster fisherman and a mafia wheel man? "I think Doc Adams picked them because he felt that they would be loyal to him," recalled Jack Couffer. "He chose them more for personality than technical expertise. It was a very oddball team." Couffer, who would later write about the project in his 1992 book, *Bat Bomb*, remembered Adams as "a very appealing character. He was always happy, always jolly, and able to talk to anybody and immediately engage them. He could talk to some old desert rat as quickly as a major general and win him over. That's why I think he succeeded in getting anybody to listen to his crazy idea."

Couffer's introduction to Adams and the bat bomb project was pure Hollywood. "Adams untied a frayed rope from around a worn-out leather briefcase and dove into the interior," Couffer recalled. "He pulled forth a document

Continued on page 68

John Churchill, mounted right, sword in hand, directs the victorious English forces at the Battle of Blenheim in this 1743 painting by John Wootton.

MASTERSTROKE *at* BLENHEIM

Only a supremely confident—or supremely foolish—commander would have sent the center of his army splashing across a wide river in full view of the enemy. The Duke of Marlborough was no one's fool.

When Louis XIV assumed the throne of France in 1661, Europe was at peace. He acknowledged as much in his memoirs: "Everything was quiet everywhere. Peace was established with my neighbors probably for as long a time as I should myself desire." The desire for peace, however, soon conflicted with the new king's desire for extensive territorial expansion. This lust for territory increased dramatically when Louis married his Spanish cousin, Marie-Therese, in 1660. He now considered the strategically located Spanish Netherlands (present-day Belgium) as part of his rightful dowry. Control of the disputed territory would extend French holdings all the way to the banks of the Rhine, which Louis recognized

The Bridgeman Art Library

as one of France's "natural boundaries."

Other European nations, beginning with the Spanish Netherlands' nearest neighbors, the Dutch, naturally disagreed. They were joined in opposition to France by the Protestant princes of Germany, the Holy Roman Empire of central Europe, Sweden, and Spain. For a quarter of a century, fighting flared and sputtered between the French and the Dutch, with Germany, Sweden, and England occasionally drawn into the fray. In 1686, the Grand Alliance took shape against Louis's territorial ambition, the League of Augsburg, spearheaded by Dutch Statholder William of Orange. England and Savoy were added to the list of nations contesting France. For the next nine years, the War of the Grand Alliance flared and sputtered on land and at sea, spreading as far as North America, where it was known as King William's War. (Adding to Louis's woes, the Glorious Revolution of 1688 brought William of Orange to the English throne as William III.) Louis, thwarted for the time being, accepted renewed proposals for peace. While the Treaty of Ryswick ended the War of the Grand Alliance, it did nothing to allay the underlying tensions within Europe that Louis had fanned so recklessly.

As long as Louis was on the throne, France would be a looming threat to the status quo in Europe and the colonies. Another alliance against Louis was formed, consisting of the Habsburg Empire, England, the Netherlands, Brandenburg-Prussia, and most of the other German states. Louis, in turn, was supported by Savoy, Mantua, Cologne, Bavaria, and Spain. The struggle, known as the War of the Spanish Succession, had long been foreseen. The two main competitors for the Spanish inheritance were the king of France and the emperor of Austria, each of whom had married a sister of King Charles II of Spain, and each of whom hoped to place a younger member of his own family on the throne after the king's death.

BY JONAS L. GOLDSTEIN

Previously, Louis had compromised regarding the Spanish succession by signing two treaties with England that agreed to partition the enormous Spanish empire to preserve the balance of power in Europe. Spanish noblemen understandably objected to this intrusive division of spoils, and the

dying King Charles II attempted to settle the issue by leaving his entire empire to Louis XIV's grandson, Philip, Duke of Anjou. This put the French king in a difficult moral position. Should he accept the provisions of Charles's will or stand by the conditions of his treaties with the British? He decided to embrace the former and fulsomely recognized his grandson as King Philip V of Spain.

William III of England at first acquiesced, for he had had enough of war. But when Louis, sensing victory, boldly recognized the Catholic pretender Charles Stuart as the legitimate heir to the throne of England, Parliament and the English public cried out for war. This enabled William to win parliamentary support for raising the armies needed to confront France. With Philip as king of Spain, Louis marched his troops into the Spanish Netherlands and thereby provoked the Habsburg Empire into war.

While the allied forces possessed two of the great generals in history in the Duke of Marlborough and Prince Eugene of Savoy, Louis's army was superior in numbers. Marlborough, born John Churchill, was the eldest son of Sir Winston Churchill and Elizabeth Drake, a descendant of naval hero Sir Francis Drake. At 16, Churchill obtained a commission in the Foot Guards. In 1668, he volunteered to serve with the Tangier garrison and gained valuable experience in irregular warfare fighting against the Moorish tribesmen. Ten years later, he obtained the position of lieutenant colonel in the Duke of York's regiment. He became a favorite at the court of the sybaritic King Charles II, even sharing one of the king's mistresses, and after Charles's death he continued to enjoy the support of his successor, James II.

Turning against James in the Glorious Revolution, Churchill threw his weight behind William of Orange, who rewarded him with the created title Earl of Marlborough and immediately sent him to command the English Hudson's Bay Company in North America. The abstemious king did not entirely trust the notoriously libertine Marlborough, and he threw him into the Tower of London for a time in 1692 for allegedly conspiring to restore the Catholic monarchy. He was soon freed, but he never again enjoyed the king's confidence. Luckily for Marlborough, King William fell off his horse and died of a broken collarbone in 1702, bequeathing his kingdom to his sister-in-law, Queen Anne, who had a warmer place in her heart for the gallant, if no longer young, officer. With war now looming again in Europe, the queen appointed Marlborough a Knight of the Garter, a captain-general, and a duke. Through her favor, he became the leader of the confederation of European states now opposing Louis XIV.

The first actions of the War of the Spanish Succession took place in Italy. In 1702, the Habsburg monarch Leopold I sent his best general, Prince Eugene of Savoy, to attack French positions in northern Italy. Eugene, son of the Count of Soissons, had been born in Paris and educated in France. He had married a niece of the powerful French Cardinal Mazarin, but switched loyalties and entered the service of Austria after Louis XIV refused him a command in the French army. Eugene's early experience was gained in campaigns against the Turks, which led to a command in Italy in 1691. He returned to the east to defeat the Turkish commander Elmas Muhammad at Zenta in 1697.

Eugene's first objective was to overrun Spanish territories on the Italian peninsula and then strike France's satellites in Germany. Louis sent an army under the command of Marshal Nicolas Catinat to occupy Rivoli. The French intention was to prevent the Austrian army from entering Italy. However, Eugene was able to outmaneuver Catinat, and Louis was forced to replace him with Francois Villeroi, who in turn was captured in an Austrian raid on Cremona on February 1, 1702, and replaced by the Duc de Vendome. The campaign evolved into one of guerrilla warfare. The French remained in garrisons along an increasingly extended front, never sure where Eugene and his men would strike. The Austrians repeatedly defeated forces that outnumbered them substantially. Louis finally expanded the size of his army in Italy, and in the end Eugene withdrew.

BESIDES TAKING ON THE LOGISTICAL CHALLENGES OF MARCHING A LARGE ARMY NEARLY 300 MILES IN THE FACE OF THE ENEMY, MARLBOROUGH WOULD UNAVOIDABLY HAVE TO EXPOSE HIS FLANKS TO ATTACK AT ANY TIME.

The alliance took further action in July 1702, when the Austrians invaded Alsace with an army under Prince Louis, Margrave of Baden. Meanwhile, an Anglo-Dutch force under the command of Marlborough captured the French fortresses of Venloo, Ruremonde, and Liege along the Meuse River that fall. In the spring of 1703, Marshal Claude de Villars of France advanced through the Black Forest with the intention of attacking Vienna. In the end, he remained in the Danube Valley to hold off the alliance armies of Louis of Baden and General Herman Otto von Limburg-Styrum. Villars maneuvered successfully to keep their armies from joining, and he defeated them at the Battles of Munderkingen on July 31 and Hochstadt on September 31. In the latter battle, the Austrian army dug in between Ulm and Ingolstadt in an effort to block the French-Bavarian thrust along the Danube toward Vienna. Villars routed the Austrians, inflicting 11,000 casualties while losing only 1,000 men. Aggressive French action at the time—which Villars repeatedly urged—probably could have put Austria out of the war. But the timid Maximilian, Elector of Bavaria, refused to join Villars in an all-out drive to take Vienna, and Villars resigned in disgust. Operations on both sides ceased for the year.


Library of Congress

In the spring of 1704, Louis turned away from the Low Countries. He intended, instead, to conquer the Austrian Habsburgs. His plans envisioned the French commander, Marshal Villeroi, assuming the defensive in Flanders, while armies under Marshal Camille de Tallard advanced across the Rhine. Marshal Ferdinand de Marsin and the Elector of Bavaria would move against the Habsburgs from the Danube, while the French army in Italy would attack through the Tyrol. This, Louis thought, would bring Austria to its knees.

French forces invaded southern Germany in April 1704. Supported by Hungarian rebels, they seemed on the threshold of extinguishing Habsburg power. The fortress cities of Augsburg, Regensburg, and Landau fell to Louis's forces,

and Emperor Leopold I desperately appealed to Queen Anne for immediate assistance. The queen, in turn, looked to her favorite, Marlborough, for advice. Marlborough, who had been contemplating a thrust southward to the Moselle River from the Netherlands, now switched plans and began a bold advance at the head of an Anglo-German army from the Netherlands to the Danube Valley. It was a daring move. Besides taking on the logistical challenges of marching a large army nearly 300 miles in the face of the enemy, Marlborough would unavoidably have to expose his flanks to attack at any time. One false step or aggressive move by the French or Bavarians could throw the entire undertaking into disastrous disarray. To mask his plans from his allies, the Dutch, who understandably opposed leaving their own homeland vulnerable to attack, Marlborough represented his move as a mere thrust toward the Moselle to draw off Bavarian pressure from the United Provinces. He did not say that he had no intention of stopping before he reached the Danube.

The movement was brilliantly organized, with Marlborough arranging for supply depots to be established in advance along the way. In addition, his route was chosen to mislead the French into pursuing him, rather than reinforcing Maximilian. Twenty-one thousand men, 16,000 of whom were English, started the march, crossing the River Maas by a hastily constructed pontoon bridge near Ruremonde on May 20 and rendezvousing at Bedburg, 20 miles northeast of Cologne. Dragoons led the way, riding outside the main stream of infantry and wagons and acting as a protective screen of scouts. Marlborough started the massive march with 34 field pieces and four howitzers. He picked up additional guns along the way. To deceive the enemy, he followed an unorthodox routine. The men were roused at a very early hour, one or two in the morning, and marched at top speed to the next arranged depot. There they drew rations, pitched their tents, and rested during the remainder of the day. By adopting this stop-and-go system, Marlborough hoped to keep his men relatively fresh while also confusing enemy scouts and avoiding the great clouds of dust that normally advertised the presence of great armies on the move.

Each day would begin with long lines of red-coated infantry swinging into the roadway, their bayonet-topped muskets bristling in the breeze. Following the troops was a convoy of wagons laden with ammunition, medical supplies, bricks (to make bread ovens), and tons of oats for the 14,000 cavalry horses, 5,000 artillery horses, and 4,000 draft animals needed by the army. A staggering 100 tons of oats per

The Granger Collection, New York

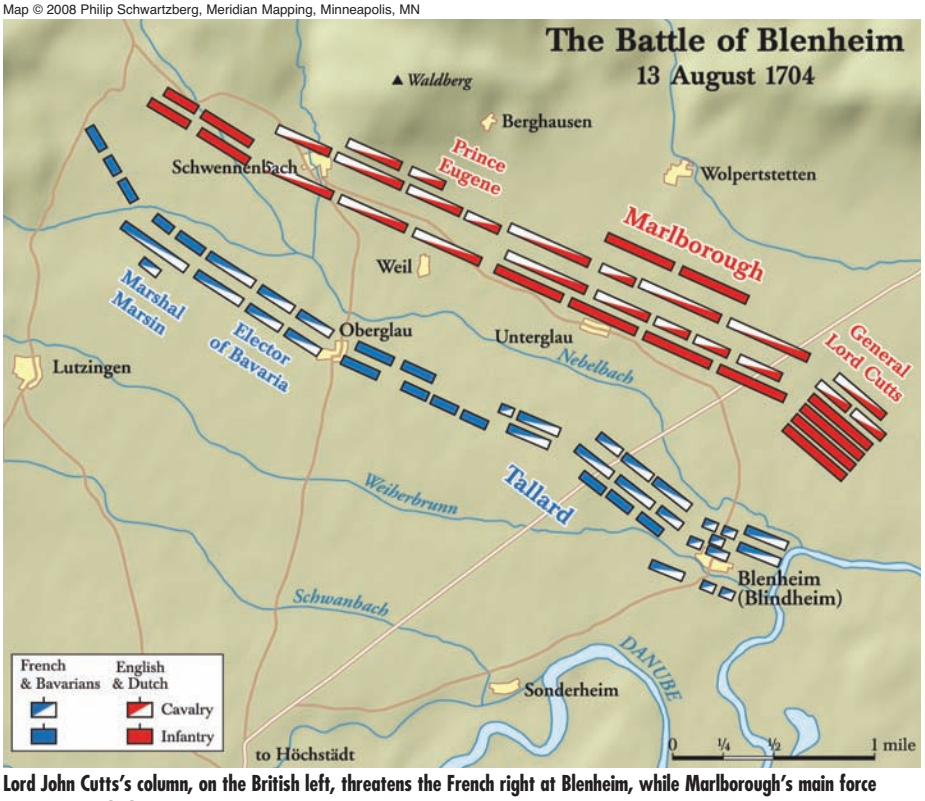
ABOVE: Churchill is characteristically at the forefront of his troops going into battle. OPPOSITE: John Churchill, the first Duke of Marlborough, at the height of his glory.

day was needed to keep the animals in top shape. For the more refined officers, a groaning cortege of baggage carts brought up the rear; they were loaded down with furniture, silver plate, and candlesticks—all the accoutrements necessary to keep a gentleman-officer in suitable trim during the campaign. For the more humble foot soldiers, Marlborough arranged for German cobblers at Heidelberg to prepare enough new shoes for 14 full battalions. In contrast with the haughty French, who simply foraged or stole whatever they needed from the local populace, Marlborough made sure that the cobblers were well paid for their services.

Even with such meticulous advance planning, the grueling effort soon took a toll, and large numbers of infantrymen dropped out from exhaustion. The army crossed the River Main near Kassel and reached the Neckar River on June 3. The column then advanced into the valley of the Danube, near Ulm. There, Marlborough linked up with Margrave Louis of Baden, who had been providing flank protection, and the Duke of Wurttemberg, who brought up the remaining segment of the allied army, consisting of Danish cavalry and some additional German infantry. By the 22nd, Marlborough had reached Elchingen, having taken just under five weeks to march some 300 miles from the Netherlands.

Earlier, on June 10, the duke had met for the first time with Prince Eugene at the village of Mondelsheim, halfway between the Danube and the Rhine. Marlborough suavely played host to his younger comrade, escorting him to dinner at a lavishly set banquet where the generals and their beribboned staffs dined by candlelight and traded toasts of the finest vintage wines. Eugene, wearing his trademark shabby brown coat—Louis had once derided him as "le petite abbe [the little priest]"—periodically dipped into his pocket for a pinch of the finely ground Spanish snuff he sniffed constantly. On June 13, Louis of Baden joined them in Fross Heppach. Among them, the three generals commanded a force of nearly 110,000 men. It was decided that Eugene would return with 28,000 men to the lines of Stollhofen on the Rhine to keep an eye on Villeroi and Tallard and prevent them from going to the aid of the Franco-Bavarian army on the Danube. Meanwhile, Marlborough's and Baden's forces, totaling 80,000 men, would combine for a decisive march to the Danube to seek battle with the Bavarian elector and Marsin before they could be reinforced by Louis.

Sensing Marlborough's destination, the French marshals met at Landau in Alsace on June 13 to rapidly construct an action plan of their own to save Bavaria. Louis's approval for their plan arrived on June 27. Tallard was to reinforce Marsin and Maximilian on the Danube, moving via the Black Forest with 40 battalions of infantry and 50 squadrons of cavalry. Villeroi was to pin down the allies at Stollhofen, and if the allies moved all their forces to the Danube, he was to join Tallard and General Francois de Coigny with 8,000 men, to protect Alsace. On July 1, Tallard and his army of 35,000 recrossed the Rhine and began their march. Maximilian and Marsin had collected approximately 55,000 men at Ulm, and this force was to be supplemented by Tallard's army of 30,000 for the invasion.



Lord John Cutts's column, on the British left, threatens the French right at Blenheim, while Marlborough's main force waits to attack the center.

The Allies needed a base for provisions and a good river crossing. On July 2, Marlborough stormed the key fortress of Schellenberg, located on the heights above the fortified village of Donauworth, part of the defensive line constructed by the legendary Swedish King Adolphus Gustavus in the previous century. Realizing all too well that he was pressed for time, Marlborough disdained a tactical siege and sent his men forward in an all-out attack. Count Jean d'Arco had been sent with 12,000 men from the Franco-Bavarian camp to hold the town, but after a ferocious and bloody battle on the grassy slopes below the town, Schellenberg quickly succumbed, forcing Donauworth to surrender shortly afterward. The British lost 5,374; French losses were even heavier.

Following his victory at Schellenberg, Marlborough discerned that the Elector of Bavaria was wavering in his allegiance to Louis XIV. If the inconstant Maximilian saw that his continued hostility to the Habsburg emperor would lead to the destruction of his country, then Marlborough believed Bavaria could be lured away from the French. Since his tactical options were limited, he wanted to force the elector into open battle before Tallard's reinforcements arrived. Throughout July, Marlborough sent allied troops into Bavaria to burn and destroy buildings and crops. Bavaria had not experienced such ferocious warfare within its borders since the last three years of the Thirty Years' War, six decades earlier. The brutal Allied policies bore bitter fruit. The Bavarians were terrified of the Allied raiding parties and many fled to the cities for safety, taking with them exaggerated tales of death and destruction.

As expected, Maximilian wavered in his support of the French, until he received a letter from Tallard reassuring him that Tallard was en route through the Black Forest and would soon be in Bavaria with 35,000 men to attack the allied invaders. Marlborough was disappointed that his hopes of negotiating with the elector proved to be nothing but a waste of time—to say nothing of Bavarian property and lives. If Maximilian was determined to remain an enemy, Marlborough decided, then his people would have to suffer the consequences for their master's stubbornness. He ordered the ravaging of Bavaria to be intensified. Some 372 towns, villages, and farmhouses were demolished in a final spate of cold-blooded ruthlessness.

BLENHEIM PALACE, Marlborough's Luxurious Sanctuary

To honor the Duke of Marlborough for his victories against the French and Bavarians, Queen Anne decided to build him an extraordinary palace. The location was to be the Royal Manor and Park of Woodstock, which had been the English sovereign's exclusive property since Henry I's acquisition of the land 500 years earlier. The queen ordered 15,000 acres of land to be cleared and the ruined manor home leveled so that a new castle could be built. Parliament agreed to fund the project and allocated 240,000 pounds for the task. Anne chose Sir John Vanbrugh as the project's architect.

Marlborough's wife, Sarah, was Queen Anne's closest friend and confidante. She had befriended the young princess, and when Anne became queen she served as her Mistress of Robes. However, their relationship became strained, and following their first quarrel in 1711, money for the construction of Blenheim ceased. The Marlboroughs were forced into exile abroad until the queen's death on August 1, 1714. Over time, the escalating costs were deemed unacceptable by a less friendly political administration, and construction was suspended in 1712.

Upon his return from exile the day after Queen Anne's death, Marlborough decided to complete the project at his own expense. Work restarted in 1716. Marlborough suffered a stroke in 1717, and the duchess took control of the project herself. It was completed in 1722, during the reign of King George I.

Blenheim is the supreme example of English Baroque architecture. The Great Hall is remarkable for its proportions and 67-foot-high ceilings. The stone enrichments were carved by Grinny Gibbons and—somewhat ironically—portray the arms of Queen Anne. The ceiling, painted in 1716 by Sir James Thornhill, shows Marlborough victorious, with the battle order at Blenheim spread out for view. In the salon, used as the state dining room, the main frescoes and ceilings were painted by Louis Laguerre. Much of the chapel was designed by Sarah, and the tomb was designed by William Kent as a memorial to the first duke and duchess and their two sons.

The plan of Blenheim Palace is basically that of a large central rectangular block, containing behind the southern façade the principal state apartments. On the east side are the private apartments of the duke and duchess; on the west along the entire length is a long gallery originally conceived as a picture gallery. The central block is flanked by two service blocks enclosing a square courtyard. The east court contains the kitchens, laundry, and other domestic offices, while the west court, adjacent to the chapel, contains the stables and indoor riding school. The three blocks together form the Great Court,

Meanwhile, Eugene was approaching Marlborough. Both men hoped to bring the enemy to battle. Eugene, on discovering that the French army had slipped away, desired to join Marlborough's force. Tallard's maneuvers presented a dilemma for Eugene. If the allies were not to be outnumbered on the Danube, he must either try to cut off Tallard before he could get there or hasten to reinforce Marlborough. However, if he withdrew from the Rhine to the Danube, Villeroi might also make a move south to link up with the elector and Marsin. Eugene compromised. Leaving 12,000 troops behind to guard the lines at Stollhofen, he marched off with the rest of his army to reinforce Marlborough against Tallard. The two men rendezvoused on August 12 at Hochstadt. Marlborough dispatched the troublesome Baden (who tended to question every order) to besiege Ingolstadt with a force of 15,000 men, thereby reducing the allies' combined strength to about 56,000. Their Franco-Bavarian opponents under the overall command of Tallard, slightly outnumbering them, took up positions on the south bank of the Nebel River and waited for all hell to break loose.

Advancing in eight columns, Marlborough and Eugene spent the morning of August 13 deploying their forces on the north bank of the Nebel. Tallard and Maximilian, meanwhile, moved forward to a new camp, not expecting an allied attack. So certain was the former that the enemy would not advance that he sent a letter to Louis the next morning, declaring firmly that the enemy would no doubt retire on Nordlingen. Tallard's error may seem blatant, but by the accepted military thinking of the day it was pardonable. The Franco-Bavarians outnumbered their opponents. The strong position they had taken was secured by the Danube River against any attempt to outflank their right and the wooded hills to the north discouraged a turning movement in that direction. The marshy Nebel River was a considerable barrier against frontal attack, and the heavily fortified village of Blenheim anchored the Franco-Bavarian right.

Tallard deployed into position on a wide floodplain between Blenheim to his right and Lutzingen on his left, 2 1/2 miles away. In the center was a third fortified village, Oberglau. The plain had been planted with vast expanses of wheat, but the wheat had been harvested and the ground was as stubbled as an old soldier's shaved head. On the allied right, Eugene faced Marsin and Maximilian between Lutzingen and Oberglau, where the ground was considerably less favorable for attack and maneuver, being laced with ditches, hills, thickets, and brambles. Marlborough stood opposite Tallard at Oberglau.

Marlborough's battle plan was brilliantly simple: he would attack the enemy where he least expected it—at his strongest point. Pressure on both wings would convince the French and Bavarians that the central thrust was merely a feint and would serve the additional purpose of drawing off enemy strength. Meanwhile, with true English obstinance, Marlborough would crash through the enemy center. To do so, however, he would first have to cross the Nebel River in full view of the French commander. It was a maneuver fraught with high peril and the promise of high rewards.

As the Allies prepared to attack, their tents and baggage were sent back from camp to Reitlingen. The assault started at 2 AM on the morning of August 13. A vanguard of 40 squadrons was sent forward toward the enemy position. The main allied force, in nine columns, followed at 3 AM, pushing forward toward the Nebel. Mist obscured the march, giving the allies an enormous advantage. At 6 AM, Marlborough and Eugene met in Eugene's tent to finalize plans for the day's attack before separating their armies into two wings. Marlborough, with 36,000 troops, was to attack Tallard's equal force on the left, while Eugene, leading 16,000 men, would fight Maximilian's and Marsin's combined army of 24,000 troops on the right. By 7 AM the fog finally lifted, revealing to the astonished French commanders the attacking army on the far side of the Nebel River, just half a mile distant. Drums beat, trumpets sounded, and cavalry foragers were hastily recalled as the regiments formed up and the initial artillery bombardment began. The individual Franco-Bavarian forces deployed with infantry in the center and cavalry on the wings, the two cavalry wings meeting at Oberglau.

Their left flank was less of a concern to the three Franco-Bavarian commanders. Marsin and Maximilian realized that a full-scale attack was impossible through the woods to their north. Any force would be cut down by their cavalry. However, eight divisions were sent to garrison the village of Oberglau to strengthen its defense. To the left of Oberglau were two lines of the elec-

designed to overpower the visitor. Pilasters and pillars abound, while from the roof, great statues in the Renaissance manner of St. Peter's in Rome gaze down on visitors. Assorted statuary in the guise of martial trophies and the English lion devouring a French cock also decorate the lower roofs.

The park and gardens at Blenheim provide a majestic setting for the palace. The original plans were by Vanbrugh and Marlborough himself. Set in 2,100 acres of beautiful parkland, the palace is surrounded by sweeping lawns, formal gardens, and a magnificent lake. Marlborough showed from the beginning a strong personal interest in the formulation of Blenheim's gardens. He hurried his gardener, Henry Wise, because he thought he might not live long enough to enjoy them. The gardens were planned in two main parts: the Great Parterre and the walled Kitchen Garden, which, concealed half a mile from the palace, was to be the finest of its kind. The Grand Parterre, nearly half a mile long and as wide as the south front, is a formal garden created by Vanbrugh with the help of Wise. It has a military framework with trees aligned appropriately. Everything within sight of the house is formal and symmetrical.

Also in the park, completed after Marlborough's death, is the Column of Victory. It is 134 feet high, with a lead statue of the duke at its top. It terminates in a great avenue of elms leading to the palace; the elms were planted in the positions of Marlborough's troops at the Battle of Blenheim. The palace has been the home of the Churchill family for the past 300 years and was the ancestral home of World War II Prime Minister Winston Churchill. Today it remains in the possession of the present Duke of Marlborough, John George Vanderbilt Spencer Churchill.

Charles, the ninth Duke of Marlborough, who devoted years to caring for and improving the palace, wrote in April 1914: "Blenheim is the most splendid relic of the age of Anne, and there is no building in Europe, except Versailles, which so perfectly preserves its original atmosphere. I offer my tribute of gratitude to the memory of the Queen by whose hand it was bestowed." □

Library of Congress

Blenheim Palace today. It has been home to generations of Churchills.

Courtesy of the Council, National Army Museum. London/The Bridgeman Art Library

tor's horse and the bulk of Marsin's cavalry. Farther to the north, at Lutzingen, there were five elite battalions of Bavarians. This deployment left Tallard with just nine battalions of inexperienced foot soldiers at the center of his line, although he did possess cavalry strength in reserve. Tallard's plan, hotly contested by the other commanders, was to allow the enemy to cross the Nebel and then drive them back, while attacking their flank from Blenheim. This decision not to defend the river aggressively ultimately would prove fatal to the Franco-Bavarian hopes.

At 12:30 PM the battle commenced in earnest when Lord John Cutts attacked Blenheim. The village, a warren of interlocking stone houses and stables, was considered impregnable—not that Marlborough minded. He was not so much concerned about taking Blenheim as he was about forcing the French to weaken their reserves by reinforcing their right. Cutts played his part to perfection, repeatedly battering up against Blenheim's defenses. Four brigades of infantry—two English, one Hessian, and one Hanoverian—assaulted the village, braving heavy musket fire to reach the barricaded walls and streets where the defenders had overturned wagons and thrown furniture from the windows of farmhouses to bar the way. A crack English unit led the way, stabbing through holes in the French defense, firing over parapets, and even attempting to tear open barricades with their bare hands. French reserves, including elite heavy-cavalry gendarmes, arrived in Blenheim and pursued the allied battalions as they fell back. A Scots battalion, the 21st, lost its colors, but a volley by its Hessian allies unseated the gendarmes and allowed an alert Scot to scoop up the lost standard.

Once Cutts had initiated the action at Blenheim, Marlborough and Eugene began their general advance across the Nebel. Prior to the attack, Marlborough had arranged his men in an unusual tactical formation designed to cope with the paramount dangers of crossing water and marching into the face of a strong enemy. He ordered his brother, Charles Churchill, to draw up the infantry into two lines. The first, comprising 17 battalions, was to spearhead the attack, while the second column of 11 battalions would follow in the rear. In between the infantry formations rode 71 squadrons of cavalry, again divided into two lines. The entire force totaled about 23,000 men.

> THE FRENCHMEN CHARACTERISTICALLY ATTACKED WITH ÉLAN, BUT THE ENGLISH CAVALRY DID NOT BREAK AND RUN; INSTEAD IT DEPLOYED IN THREE GROUPS AND FELL ON THE FRENCH …"

On the allied left-center, Marlborough's engineers repaired the bridge at Unterglau across the Nebel, which had been damaged by the French. In addition, five mobile pontoon bridges were laid between Unterglau and Blenheim. Separate probing attacks on Blenheim, Oberglau, and Lutzingen were easily repelled. However, the French and Bavarians in the three villages were sufficiently pinned down to enable Marlborough to bring contingents of his cavalry across the Nebel and launch them against the French troops in the open ground between Blenheim and Lutzingen. In the center of the battlefield, Marlborough's main force crossed the Nebel, the first line of foot followed by a second line of cavalry. In accordance with his plan, Tallard did not attack while the Nebel was being crossed. He belatedly ordered a cavalry charge by the same gendarmes who had been bloodied earlier at Blenheim. The Frenchmen characteristically attacked with élan, but the English cavalry did not break and run; instead, it deployed into three groups and fell on the French flanks and rear. Tallard watched, dismayed, as the red-coated dragoons drove off his horsemen.

Once across the Nebel, Marlborough deployed his men in a unique formation: two lines of infantry between two lines of cavalry. This allowed them to repel repeated French cavalry charges. The allies continued to take heavy cannon fire. At one point Marlborough, attempting to inspire his men by leading from the front, was almost killed when a cannonball kicked under his horse's feet. To the surprise and delight of his foot soldiers, the duke emerged unscathed through a cloud of dust with the Order of the Garter still sparkling on his gold-and-scarlet coat.

While Marlborough crossed the Nebel in the center, Eugene mounted an assault on the allied

right. The rough ground prevented him from making much headway, although Marlborough was not greatly alarmed—his plan to divert enemy attention was working. At 3 PM, the French mounted a fierce counterattack at Oberglau, spearheaded by the fiery "Wild Geese," an Irish brigade serving in the French ranks against the hated English. Marlborough rode to the scene and dispatched a message to Eugene calling for reinforcements. Eugene was having troubles of his own, but he immediately ordered his cuirassiers to strike the French flank and help repel the breakthrough. As quickly as it had arisen, the French counterattack fizzled. Marlborough was saved.

By 5:30 PM, following a quick but effective volley by 40 massed cannons, the allies breached Tallard's center, their forces streaming through the gap beyond the Nebel. Marlborough relied on his infantry in the intense hand-to-hand fighting. There were no French forays from Blenheim on Marlborough's flank, as Tallard had planned, since Cutts blocked them effectively. Meanwhile, on Eugene's wing, Marsin and Maximilian had repeatedly thrown the Allies back across the Nebel. However, Eugene's forceful attacks prevented them from supporting Tallard elsewhere.

In response to Marlborough's breakthrough, Marsin's regiments fell back toward Oberglau, leaving Tallard's force isolated in the face of another charge by Marlborough's cavalry squadrons. Tallard's own cavalry fled behind Blenheim and on toward the Danube. Marlborough's troops swept to the rear of Blenheim, surrounding the large French garrison. Charles Churchill was preparing to assault the village when the French proposed a parley. They sought terms that would enable their regiments to leave with honor, but the allies would only accept complete submission. Finally, 24 battal-

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ABOVE: French Marshal Camille de Tallard hands over his sword to Crown Prince Frederick of Hesse-Cassel after the Battle of Blenheim. Tallard would remain a prisoner for seven years. OPPOSITE: Three panels by Louis Laguerre depicting the Battle of Blenheim. Left to right: attack on the village of Blenheim; French infantry in the center of the field; Prince Eugene of Savoy attacking the French left.

ions of French foot and four regiments of dragoons surrendered to Marlborough. The defeat of the French and Bavarian army was complete. While still in the saddle, Marlborough scribbled a hasty note to his wife, Sarah, announcing a "glorious victory." It was that.

In the confusion, Tallard was wounded and captured, and many of his men drowned in their attempt to escape across the Danube. Marsin and Maximilian, witnessing the collapse of Tallard's army, set fire to Oberglau and Lutzingen and retreated to the northwest. Tallard lived for seven years as a prisoner in England. Upon his return to France in 1712, he was greeted with kindness by Louis XIV and accepted back at court. Casualties at Blenheim were very high owing to the exchange of fire between nearby lines of closely packed troops, the use of artillery against such formations, and cavalry engagements relying on cold steel. Marlborough and Eugene suffered 12,000 casualties, while Franco-Bavarian losses totaled 38,000, 15,000 of them prisoners. Forty-three percent of all troops engaged at Blenheim had been killed, wounded, or taken prisoner.

The victory gave the allies the initiative. The safety of Vienna was assured, and the French armies were driven from Germany. Maximilian was forced into exile, and his state was annexed by the Austrian Empire. The Battle of Blenheim marked the first great defeat of a French army in the field during the reign of Louis XIV, and it strengthened the resolve of the German princes who opposed him as it reinvigorated the war party in the Netherlands. In Spain, the battle caused the defection of some influential noblemen from Philip V. Most important, it stirred the English nation to unparalleled outbursts of pride and enthusiasm.

Blenheim was followed by the conquest of southern Germany, as Bavaria was taken out of the war. After the battle and its subsequent retreat to the Rhine, the Franco-Bavarian army was largely ineffective. The allies were able to retake the major fortresses of Ulm, Ingolstadt, and Landau before the close of the year. Marlborough won other battles, but none had the dramatic impact of Blenheim, in part because that victory preserved the anti-French alliance. He benefited personally from the battle as well, when Parliament provided the funds with which he built a beautiful and impressive palace named after his great victory.

The French defeat was kept from Louis for some time, and when he was informed he became quite depressed because this was his first loss of consequence. Blenheim shattered the myth of French invincibility that had developed during the previous 50 years, and the French were thrown onto the

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A heavily outfitted Marine advances under fire at Okinawa.

All Photos: National Archives

HELL'S

BY JOHN WALKER

OWN CESSPOOL

Located less than 400 miles from the Japanese mainland, the heavily fortified island of Okinawa would prove to be the last—and toughest—nut to crack in the American island-hopping campaign in World War II.

On Easter morning, April 1, 1945, the Pacific island of Okinawa trembled beneath an earth-shaking bombardment from American combat aircraft overhead and ships steaming offshore in preparation for an amphibious landing of unprecedented magnitude. The commander of Japan's massive 32nd Imperial Army, Lt. Gen. Mitsuri Ushijima, stood quietly on the crest of Mount Shuri near the southern end of the island, calmly watching the spectacle. He and his chief of staff, Maj. Gen. Isamu Cho, and his senior operations officer, Colonel Hiromichi Yahara, watched through binoculars as the American landing force—four infantry divisions commanded by U.S. Army Lt. Gen. Simon Bolivar Buckner—disembarked from some 1,000-odd landing craft and pushed ashore unchallenged.

For almost a year Ushijima's army, more than 100,000 strong, had been busy constructing an intricate system of hidden bunkers and fortified ridges in Okinawa's hilly southern region. Thousands of island residents had been impressed to help build the Japanese defenses. Ushijima had stationed the bulk of his strength in the south and planned to lure the American invasion forces into a catastrophic battle of attrition after allowing them to land on the island unmolested. The Japanese strategy was to drive off the American fleet with conventional attacks and suicidal kamikaze attacks and then annihilate the stranded invasion force. So many American soldiers, sailors, and Marines would perish, Ushijima reasoned, that the Americans would shrink back with horror at the mere thought of invading the Japanese mainland, some 350 nautical miles away.

As American tank and infantry units moved toward the southern end of the island, they would confront an intricate system of two concentric defensive lines constructed along a series of hills, ridges, and draws—the Machinato Line—and behind it the even more heavily fortified Shuri Line. The defenses were manned by veteran, well-armed Japanese soldiers who would remain loyal to their Bushido code of warfare and fight to the death rather than be captured. Yahara, a gifted strategist who helped design and implement the Japanese strategy, was short on tanks but had stockpiled hundreds of heavy weapons and artillery pieces of every caliber—150mm howitzers, 120mm mortars, 47mm antitank guns, and the dreaded 320mm "spigot" mortars—in hidden caves and concrete bunkers that were virtually impervious to air and artillery fire. Yahara's concept of a yard-by-yard war of attrition, or *jikyusen,* was a radical departure from previous Japanese island defenses, all unsuccessful, which had concentrated on annihilating the enemy at the water's edge with massive banzai charges and frontal assaults.

The American military wanted Okinawa for three reasons: its seizure would sever the remaining southwest supply line to resource-starved Japan; American medium-range bombers could reach the Japanese mainland from the four airfields on the island; and Okinawa's harbors, anchorages, and airfields could serve as a final staging area for the planned late-1945 invasion of the Japanese mainland itself. A huge assemblage of forces from Admiral Chester Nimitz's Central Pacific island-hopping campaign and General Douglas MacArthur's Southwest Pacific advance converged on Okinawa. In all, Buckner commanded more than 180,000 troops from four Army divisions (the 7th, 27th, 77th, and 96th) under Maj. Gen. John Hodge, and three Marine divisions (the 1st, 2nd, and 6th) under Maj. Gen. Roy Geiger. It was many more troops than Buckner's namesake father had commanded—and surrendered to Ulysses S. Grant—at Fort Donelson, Tennessee, during the American Civil War.

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

ABOVE: The main American assault on Okinawa came on the western side at Hagushi Bay, but fighting would also be heavy on the southern and northwestern ends of the island. RIGHT: Marines inch their way up a battle-scarred hillside during the heavy fighting on the southern end of Okinawa.

The Japanese invasion of China in the 1930s initially had little impact on the inhabitants of the Ryukyu Island chain, which runs southwest from the Japanese home island of Kyushu toward Taiwan. Despite its size—it was the largest of the Ryukyu Islands—and its dense native population, Okinawa had neither surplus food nor significant industry to assist the Japanese war effort. The island's main wartime contribution was the production of sugar cane, which was converted into commercial alcohol for torpedoes and engines. From the first days of the Pacific War, Okinawa was fortified as the front line of defense for mainland Japan. Land and farms were forcibly expropriated throughout the island, and Japan's Imperial Army began the construction of numerous air bases. Almost half a million Okinawans were intermingled with the Japanese garrison as active, if unwilling, participants in the island's defense. To keep them loyal, Ushijima had propagandized the populace by telling them that capture by American forces would result in torture, rape, and death, to which suicide was infinitely preferable.

By autumn 1944, Okinawa had been targeted for invasion by Allied forces. The largest amphibious assault of the Pacific War, dubbed Operation Iceberg, would involve assembling one of the greatest naval armadas in history. Admiral Raymond Spruance's Fifth Fleet included more than 40 aircraft carriers, 18 battleships, 200 destroyers, and hundreds of assorted support ships. The initial assault on the 60-mile-long island was planned for April 1, 1945. On September 29, 1944, B-29 bombers conducted the initial reconnaissance mission over Okinawa and its outlying islands. On October 10, the day after the fearsome and fanatical General Cho boasted to a group of Okinawans in the capital city of Naha that the Japanese defenders would win a decisive victory, nearly 200 of Admiral William "Bull" Halsey's planes struck Naha in five separate waves and almost devastated the city. Meanwhile, the U.S. Air Force, under the leadership of General Curtis LeMay and operating from bases in the Mariana Islands, began a strategic bombing campaign using B-29s against the mainland of Japan, a campaign that culminated in horrific incendiary raids in March 1945.

Less heralded, but arguably more effective in undermining Tokyo's military strategy, was the extraordinary success of the American submarine fleet. In 1944 alone, approximately a half million tons of Japanese shipping was sunk by American subs. By early 1945 it was too hazardous for Japanese troop ships to attempt to travel outside the main islands.

In mid-March 1945, a combined British-American fleet of more than 1,300 ships gathered off Okinawa to prepare for the naval bombardment; the first kamikaze attacks of the campaign began on March 18. Named for the "divine wind"—typhoons that in 1274 and 1281 had blown away Kublai Khan's Mongol armadas and saved Japan from invasion—the Kamikaze Special Attack Corps was an example of the desperation infecting Japan's Imperial Headquarters in Tokyo by early 1944. From the moment Japan entered World War II, it began losing pilots far more rapidly than they could be replaced. By 1944, new Japanese

pilots, who were being sent into combat with less than one-third the flight training time that American pilots received, were being shot down in disproportionate numbers. The antiaircraft capabilities of U.S. Navy ships had also increased to such an extent that attacking an American vessel had essentially become a suicide mission anyway. The Japanese decided that it would be more practical for their pilots to deliberately plunge their aircraft into the enemy's warships, ensuring the ship's destruc-

tion as well as their pilots'. The operational creed became "one plane, one ship." Some 4,000 Japanese planes were stockpiled for the kamikaze attacks.

American troops secured two positions prior to landing day. The small island groups of Kerama and Keise, southwest of Okinawa, could be used to provide anchorages for ships and as an artillery base to back up ground forces once they went ashore. Against occasionally stiff resistance from isolated garrisons, American forces secured Kerama on March 28 and Keise on March 31. At Kerama, they also destroyed 350 suicide boats, speedy craft loaded with depth charges that the Japanese had planned to use against the Allied fleet. U.S. planners anticipated a bloodbath when the main landing took place since it would be the first time that American and Japanese forces would clash on Japanese soil. American intelligence, unfortunately, grossly underestimated the size of the garrison on Okinawa, placing the number at no more than 65,000 troops. In fact, Okinawa harbored some 110,000 crack Japanese soldiers, at least five times the number that had badly bloodied U.S. forces at Iwo Jima. In addition, some 20,000 Okinawans had been drafted into home defense units, or *boeitai,* to serve as auxiliary forces.

The American planners, who saw the Okinawa campaign as an exercise in overwhelming material and numerical advantages, were unaware that many advantages remained with the Japanese defenders. In the war of attrition to come, the Japanese had packed more than 100,000 troops into the southern third of the island where they, not the Americans, possessed the high ground and the greater concentration of force. The island itself was larger than many of the other Pacific atolls stormed in earlier campaigns, and its unpredictable weather, razor-sharp coral rocks, and dense vegetation gave defenders even more advantages than they had enjoyed at Iwo Jima, where a garrison of 23,000 Japanese troops had claimed the lives of 6,000 Marines.

The people of Okinawa had long been resigned to the severe typhoons that periodically swept their island, but nothing in their experience equaled the *tetsu no bow*—storm of steel—that pounded the island on April 1 preceding the American landing. Indeed, it was the heaviest concentration of naval gunfire ever to support an amphibious landing. While the 2nd Marine Division conducted a demonstration landing on Okinawa's southeast beaches, the 7th and 96th Infantry Divisions of the Army's XXIV Corps and the 1st and 6th Marine Divisions of the III Marine Amphibious Corps crossed the Hagushi beaches. Some 16,000 troops landed in the first hour, and by nightfall more than 60,000 American troops were safely ashore, with another 120,000 waiting in ships offshore. Marine and Army units advanced rapidly inland toward the vital airfields of Kadena and Yontan. Within three hours, troops of the 6th Marine Division had seized Yontan, while soldiers of the 7th Infantry Division advanced to secure Kadena and continued inland. By day's end, the Americans had secured a beachhead nine miles wide and three miles deep, at a remarkably small cost of 28 men killed or missing and 104 wounded.

American forces moved rapidly eastward to cut the island in two in just four days, capturing as much territory as planners had expected to take in three weeks. Marines of the 6th Division wheeled and turned north, moving up the island until they reached the Motubu Peninsula, where the Japanese had entrenched around the rugged hills of Yaeju-Dake. More Japanese were waiting on the island of Ie Shima as well. As the Marines closed in on Yaeju-Dake, troops of the Army's 77th Infantry Division invaded Ie Shima. After 12 days of heavy fighting against 2,000 dug-in defenders, Motubu was secured by the Marines on April 20 at a cost of 213 killed or missing and 757 wounded. The GIs who attacked Ie Shima encountered heavy resistance as well, but they were also able to achieve their objective. Some 4,700 Japanese soldiers died on Ie Shima, while the men of the 77th lost 172 killed, 902 wounded, and 46 missing. Ie Shima was quickly turned into an ideal base for American fighter aircraft. (The celebrated American war correspondent Ernie Pyle was killed by Japanese machine-gun fire on Ie Shima on April 18.)

Each night, squads of Japanese suicide troops ventured out and infiltrated American positions, throwing grenades and wreaking havoc on their exhausted enemies.

While the fighting heated up in the north, Army units began advancing southward on April 9 and immediately hit stiff resistance when they struck Ushijima's first line of defense, the Machinato Line. Anchored on the Machinato Inlet, it included a series of fortified ridges, draws, cliffs, and caves, most notably Kakazu Ridge, where coral hills were pitted with caves and passageways filled with enemy soldiers that blocked movement along Okinawa's west coast and stretched from one end of the island to the other. After failed assaults on the southwestern part of the island between April 9 and 12, American GIs suffered nearly 3,000 casualties, killing more than 4,000 Japanese in the process but failing to secure even a few hundred yards of coral.

For more than a month, a seemingly endless succession of heavily defended enemy positions stalled Buckner's offensive. A typical ridge on Okinawa had enemy machine-gun positions on the forward slope and on nearby hills that intersected each trail, while mortar crews were dug into invisible positions on the reverse slope to rain shells down on the advancing Americans. Japanese artillery, located farther back at higher elevations, incessantly fired shells of every caliber night and day, inflicting staggering casualties and sending droves of shell-shocked GIs to aid stations in the rear. Each night, squads of Japanese suicide troops ventured out and infiltrated American positions, throwing grenades and wreaking havoc on their exhausted enemies.

Buckner committed two full-strength divisions against the Machinato Line, the 7th Infantry Division on Okinawa's east coast and the 96th Infantry Division on the west, but neither made significant forward progress. By April 12, however, the Americans had cemented their line, their right flank along Kakazu Ridge, their center across from Tombstone Ridge, and their left abutting the town of Ouki. Kakazu Ridge was a 280-foot-high elevation that was home to 1,200 defenders. On April 9, Colonel Edwin May's 383rd Regiment attacked the ridge in the predawn hours, hoping to catch the Japanese by surprise. With no artillery preparation, the men of the 383rd went in without tank support as well, because the approaches to Kakazu were cut by a deep gorge. May's troops made it to the crest of the ridge against little opposition, but when dawn came a massive artillery and mortar barrage hit the attackers hard and a Japanese counterattack drove them off the narrow crest. By late afternoon May's units had been forced to withdraw, suffering the loss of 23 killed, 47 missing, and 256 wounded. The next morning American artillery and naval guns again pounded Kakazu Ridge, and two regiments charged up the hill, only to be stopped cold by Japanese defenders who emerged unscathed from the reverse slopes.

The Japanese launched a carefully designed counterattack on April 12. In the past, outright banzai charges had been disastrous, so the Japanese turned to stealth instead. During the night, dozens of Japanese infantry squads tried to infiltrate American lines and ambush rear-echelon support

elements the next morning. Only one infiltration attempt succeeded, however; the rest met heavy resistance and were shredded by alert defenders. A Japanese survivor later wrote, "Continuous mortar and machine gun fire lasted until dawn, when we, having suffered heavy casualties, withdrew. The company fell apart during the withdrawal." An American report stated that the Japanese dead were "stacked like cordwood."

On the U.S. left, XXIV Corps troops managed to advance into the town of Ouki, but they were repulsed and withdrew after hours of fierce fighting. In the center, American forces fought their way up aptly named Tombstone Ridge, but were also thrown back by the Japanese defenders, some using flamethrowers. All along the Machinato Line, Ushijima's troops stopped virtually every attempt by the 96th and 7th Divisions to advance during the second week of April. The defenders paid a staggering cost for their initial successes, however. American casualties were estimated at 2,900 (451 killed, 2,198 wounded, and 241 missing), while Japanese losses were believed to number at least 5,750. Some Japanese officers, claiming they had no reinforcements to replenish their units after suffering such heavy losses, called for an all-out offensive to blunt the American onslaught.

On April 14, Buckner came ashore and informed his commanders that he wanted the American line to advance immediately from coast to coast. To get things moving, he advanced the 27th Infantry Division and deployed it in the western sector opposite Ushijima's left, moved the 96th to the center, and kept the 7th along the east coast. After some 19,000 shells pounded the Machinato Line, all three divisions moved out on April 19, but by day's end the American forces had made almost no progress. A tank advance by the newly arrived 27th ended with 22 of 30 tanks lost to antitank weapons and suicidal Japanese soldiers carrying satchel charges. Finally, some progress was achieved on April 20, when troops from the 27th Division breached the Machinato Line and moved five miles south before digging in.

Meanwhile, the U.S. fleet had begun suffering under the first successive waves of kamikaze attacks. On April 6-7, Imperial Headquarters in Tokyo launched the long-promised air and sea attacks on the Allied fleet off Okinawa. All day on April 6, some 223 Japanese planes attacked the American armada offshore and various radar-picket destroyers northeast of Okinawa. Despite inexperienced pilots and inadequate air cover from Zero fighters, the unprecedented number of aircraft engaged allowed the Japanese to hit at least 14 American ships, sinking four and damaging 10 others. During the next 10 weeks, the Americans offshore would face at least 10 organized attacks involving hundreds of planes, sometimes as many as 350 at a time.

The second portion of the Japanese counterattack involved the super battleship *Yamato,* whose 70,000-ton displacement and nine massive 18-inch guns made her the world's largest and most feared battleship. Given enough fuel

A JAPANESE OFFICER TELLS HIS STORY

Colonel Hiromishi Yahara was third in command of the Japanese defenses on Okinawa. It was he who designed and implemented the *jiykusen,* or the yard-by-yard battle of attrition that cost the American forces so many casualties in the three-month battle, and he was the highest ranking officer to survive the battle and make it back to Tokyo. Before the overall commander on the island, Lt. Gen. Mitsuru Ushijima, committed ritual suicide in the battle's final days, he instructed Yahara to escape to Tokyo to make a final report to the emperor.

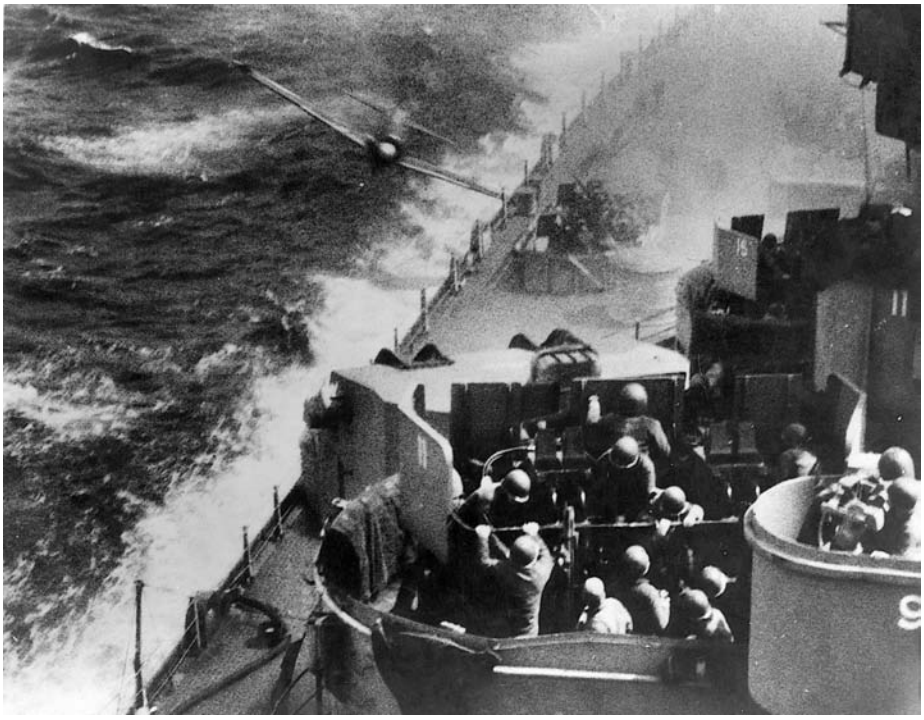
Yahara was captured by the Americans, which bothered him immensely—to be captured or to surrender was considered a disgrace to one's family—but eventually he did return to Japan. In 1973, Yahara still felt strongly that the garrison at Okinawa, as well as the people of Okinawa themselves, had been betrayed by Imperial Headquarters in Tokyo. Because he faced personal attacks for surviving the battle, Yahara decided to write a book to set the record straight. The result is a fascinating and unique look at the last, decisive battle of the Pacific War, written by a surviving member of the defeated Japanese command on Okinawa.

Yahara was a gifted and meticulous strategist, highly respected by his peers. Because he had spent two years in the United States as an exchange officer prior to World War II, he knew his enemy better than did his superiors at Okinawa, Ushijima and Maj. Gen. Isamu Cho. Yahara makes a startling revelation in the book regarding the events surrounding the American landing on Okinawa on April 1, 1945. According to Yahara, the plans drawn up in Tokyo called for Japanese air power to play the decisive role in the battle for Okinawa prior to the actual landing. Japanese planes flying from the mainland along with aircraft launched by the Japanese Combined Fleet—conventional fighters and kamikaze suicide attackers—were supposed to strike the U.S. Fifth Fleet offshore prior to the landing and annihilate the American landing forces while they were still in their ships. The 32nd Imperial Army entrenched on Okinawa was to play a minor role, mopping up the survivors of the American landing forces as they struggled ashore. To Yahara, the failure to launch the promised air attack on April 1 sealed the fate of the island's garrison—it never had a chance for victory. Hundreds of thousands of Okinawan citizens had been betrayed as well, Yahara believed, sacrificed to the whims

for a one-way trip, *Yamato* was directed to beach herself on the coast of Okinawa and become both an artillery platform and a target to divert American carrier aircraft from air assaults on Okinawa itself. Yamato was given no air cover, however, and on April 6 swarms of American carrier aircraft began deluging the ship with fire. One day later she sank, along with a cruiser and most of the screening destroyers.

The kamikazes returned on April 12 in ever greater numbers. Some 350 bombers and fighters sortied from Kyushu, intermingled with escort fighters and a small number of experienced pilots who would make conventional attacks. The Japanese dropped chaff (thin foil strips) to confuse radar, and attacked near dusk, coming in from all directions and altitudes. The Zeros damaged some of the largest ships in the Allied fleet—the carriers *Essex* and *Enterprise*, the battleships *Missouri, New Mexico, Tennessee*, and *Idaho*, the cruiser *Oakland*, and dozens of destroyers, minesweepers, and gunboats. On April 16 the kamikazes managed to hit another carrier, *Intrepid*, as well as more destroyers and minesweepers. On May 3 and 4, some 305 Japanese planes damaged nearly a dozen picket destroyers and support ships.

Concerned about the slow progress achieved thus far by American ground forces, Admiral Chester Nimitz, commander in chief of the Pacific Fleet, flew to Okinawa and conferred with Buckner. Nimitz complained that his fleet of almost 1,600 ships "was losing about a ship and a half a day" to suicide attacks, and he urged Buckner to mount an amphibious assault behind Japanese lines to break the stalemate. Buckner demurred, preferring to continue his straight-ahead attacks. Buckner would continue to pour more men into piecemeal frontal assaults, ignoring pleas from his subordinates to starve, surround, or bypass the seemingly impregnable pockets of Japanese resistance. Maj. Gen. Andrew Bruce, commander of the 77th Infantry Division, argued for a southern landing behind the Shuri lines to force the Japanese to fight in two directions, but Buckner rejected his plea.



ABOVE: Naval gunners aboard USS *Missouri* work feverishly to take out a diving Japanese kamikaze before he strikes their ship. OPPOSITE: Marines advancing on the run. Two are carrying communications wire and radio equipment to stay in contact with other units.

Constant pressure by Buckner's three Army divisions, with resulting heavy losses on both sides, finally split open the Machinato Line in late April. The so-called blowtorch and corkscrew method used by the attackers, in which gasoline was pumped into caves and ignited and cave entrances were blown up by explosives, ensured that the fighting would be vicious, close-up, and often hand-to-hand. With the exception of two heavily defended pockets near the center and the right flank where the defenders still held fast, the Japanese began withdrawing from their original line under the cover of

of the Japanese high command.

Although his love for his country never wavered, Yahara was unique among his peers. He fully recognized the flaws in traditional Japanese military thinking—the Bushido code, or way of the warrior—and he was disgusted as he watched his superiors repeat the errors of previous eras. The Imperial Army had a "blood and guts" mentality; it had been undefeated since winning the Sino-Japanese War in 1895. To the Japanese militarists' way of thinking, the combination of Japanese spirit and the willingness to die for the emperor would overcome any material advantage enjoyed by an enemy.

Yahara was convinced that the initial Japanese strategy for Okinawa—depending on air power—would fail. Japan's air forces were seriously degraded by early 1945, and it had lost many experienced pilots. American aircraft were now technically superior, and Japan's navy was down to just a few surviving carriers. Yahara believed that the only chance for his country's survival lay in the proper use of its remaining ground forces. After the promised air assault scheduled for April 1 did not materialize, he went ahead with his planned defenses on the ground. He would fight for time, making the invaders pay dearly for every inch of ground, to allow Japan to prepare its defenses on the main islands for the Allied invasion that was sure to come. Yahara's tactics on Okinawa would utilize the island's terrain, which was perfectly suited for defense, to wage an ugly war of attrition. His soldiers would go underground in caves and concrete bunkers to survive air, artillery, and naval gunfire, and then battle American ground forces for every inch of island real estate. His intricate, multilayered defensive positions and the tenacity of the 110,000-man 32nd Army combined to prolong the battle for three long and exceedingly bloody months.

In his book, Yahara admits that he despised both the self-delusion practiced by his superiors and the false propaganda foisted upon the Okinawan people, who were told that capture by American troops would result in rape, torture, and death, to which suicide was preferable. Thousands of Okinawan men, women, and children were ordered to stay in caves alongside Japanese troops, who were preparing to fight a last-ditch defensive battle. The flower of the island's youth—boy soldiers and teenaged girls who worked as nurses' aides—were sacrificed to the directives of the Japanese commanders. In many cases, they were forced to hurl themselves from the low southern cliffs into the sea so that they, too, could die for the emperor. ■

artillery barrages. From April 25 to May 3, American units made steady advances toward the Shuri defenses. Buckner rearranged his front lines, bringing the 6th Marine Division down from the north to face Ushijima's western flank and replacing the weary 27th Infantry Division with the 1st Marine Division. In the eastern sector the 77th Division moved up to give the weary 96th some rest, while the 7th remained on the western flank of the Army's sector. The American front now consisted of two Marine divisions on the west and two Army divisions in the east.

Meanwhile, urged by his frontline commanders to launch an offensive, a reluctant Ushijima agreed, unleashing a surprise attack on the reorganized American lines on May 3. He sent two waves of engineers around the western and eastern flanks in amphibious assaults designed to land behind American lines and distract them while a third attack targeted the center of the American line. The operation proved disastrous from the beginning. On the western shores, the engineers landed opposite the Marine line rather than behind it, and Marine mortars and machine guns quickly annihilated the attackers. On the eastern shore, American naval vessels alertly spotted the assault barges and opened fire, destroying most of the Japanese landing craft and killing most of the engineers. The Japanese infantry attack, set to jump off at dawn, was delayed, and the 2,000-man force was shredded by heavy and accurate American artillery fire. The ill-advised offensive cost the Japanese almost 7,000 of their most seasoned frontline troops, 19 artillery pieces, and much valuable real estate. When the attackers faltered, troops from the 1st Marine Division advanced several hundred yards across no-man's-land. Operations Officer Yahara later wrote, "This disaster was the decisive action of the campaign."

The bloodbath was far from over, however. It would drag on for another seven bloody weeks, in part because Buckner's frontal-assault tactics played directly into the hands of Ushijima's strategy of attrition. After the failed offensive, Ushijima continued withdrawing his troops to the Shuri Line, an eight-mile path stretching from Yonabaru on the east coast through tortuous ridges near Shuri castle, and into the port city of Naha on Okinawa's western coast. On May 11, Buckner began an offensive against the Shuri Line with his rearranged forces. Once again, Army units in the east encountered fierce resistance all along the line. Closest to the coast, XXIV Corps units bogged down for two days at a key height called Conical Hill before gaining a foothold on the crest and withstanding vicious Japanese counterattacks for another three days. Farther west, the 77th Division battled through its own hell, especially at Ishimmi Ridge, a 350-foot rise a third of a mile from Shuri.

> For five straight days the ebb and flow of an ugly war of attrition continued unabated, with the crest of Sugar Loaf changing hands numerous times ...

The two Marine divisions fighting along the western half of Buckner's line faced a particularly daunting task in their efforts to eliminate the stronghold at Shuri. Four locations in particular tested the Marines' tenacity—Dakeshi Ridge, Wana Ridge, Wana Draw, and, above all, Sugar Loaf Hill. The 1st Marine Division advanced toward Dakeshi Ridge on May 11, but gained little ground against an enemy dug in on both slopes. Under horrific fire, the Marines resorted to doing much of their fighting in squad-sized units. A solitary Marine would edge cautiously forward toward an enemy machine-gun position or cave, while his buddies laid down a heavy covering fire, and then he would toss in a satchel charge or grenade. Anyone staggering out of the cave would be cut down by rifle fire or flamethrower. After three days of heavy fighting, Dakeshi Ridge fell. Wana Ridge and Wana Draw took longer; Marines moved against Wana Draw on May 14, but could not advance against heavy fire from hundreds of hidden enemy positions. The constant shelling from both sides, together with torrential rains that began on May 21, turned Wana Ridge and Wana Draw into muddy quagmires. Corpses of slain Marines had to be left where they were because retrieving them exposed more men to the heavy artillery placed on Shuri Heights. The remains of dead Americans and Japanese slowly rotted or were blown to bits by shells that fell around the clock. It seemed to American commanders that Ushijima's artillery had virtually every inch of ground to the Japanese front bracketed. The numbers of men sent to the rear suffering from combat fatigue soared.

By the end of May, the ground advance had begun to resemble a World War I battlefield, as troops became mired in mud, and rain-flooded roads inhibited evacuation of the wounded.

LEFT: One Marine consoles another who has just lost a buddy in battle. BELOW: The body of a Japanese soldier merits only a passing glance from hard-bitten Marines.

During the struggle for Okinawa, American troops were given two pieces of earthshaking news: President Franklin D. Roosevelt had died on April 12 and Nazi Germany had surrendered on May 8.

Unfortunately for them, the war against Japan would continue.

The focus on Okinawa shifted to Sugar Loaf Hill. The hill had not looked especially imposing to the first Marines who advanced toward it, but Ushijima considered it the key to the entire Shuri defenses. Sparsely dotted with shrubs and trees, Sugar Loaf was a height of coral and volcanic rock, 300 yards long and 100 feet high, supported on the southeast by another mound, Half Moon Hill, and to the

south by yet another promontory, Horseshoe Ridge. Sugar Loaf was the most visible feature of a three-pronged spear pointed directly at the advancing 6th Marine Division. Each of the three peaks could deliver murderous fire from heavy guns against any other peak attacked by the Marines; attacking troops charging one precipice could be cut down by converging fire from the rest of the triangle. In addition, the entire complex could be raked by Japanese artillery, mortars, and machine guns emplaced on Shuri Hill, where the 1st Marine Division's advance had been abruptly halted.

Units from the 6th Marine Division advancing toward Sugar Loaf fell into a bloody pattern of doggedly fighting their way to its narrow crest, holding it briefly against fierce counterattacks, then falling back under unbearable pressure. For five straight days the ebb and flow of an ugly war of attrition continued unabated, with the crest of Sugar Loaf changing hands numerous times; more and more dead Marines lay strewn about the bloody approaches. A breakthrough finally took place on May 17, when a Marine battalion seized a large portion of Half Moon Hill, which enabled them to rain down heavy fire support on Sugar Loaf Hill the next day. Japanese artillery on Wana Ridge was being gradually reduced as well by Marine units fighting farther east. On May 18 the Marines launched two diversionary attacks, one against Half Moon and Horseshoe Hills and the other against Sugar Loaf's right flank, drawing much of the Japanese fire and allowing a force of tanks and infantry to rush around Sugar Loaf's left flank, attack it from the rear, and rout the remaining Japanese defenders.

Finally, Sugar Loaf fell silent. During the 10-day period up to the capture of Sugar Loaf Hill, the 6th Marine Division lost 2,662 killed or wounded and another 1,289 cases of combat fatigue, about the same number of casualties suffered during the entire fighting at Tarawa. The 29th Regiment suffered 82 percent casualties and essentially ceased to exist. Ushijima, short on troops and supplies, began pulling units out of Wana Draw and the Shuri Line in late May, allowing more Marines to pour into Shuri, many of whom moved over from Sugar Loaf Hill.

Marines ascend shell-pocked Sugar Loaf Hill after its capture. The hill alone cost the Marines nearly 4,000 casualties.

The unrelenting pressure on the Shuri Line convinced Ushijima to withdraw to his final defensive positions on the Kiyamu Peninsula; his troops began moving out on the night of May 23, leaving behind rear elements that continued to slow the American advance. Many Japanese soldiers too wounded to travel were given lethal injections of morphine or were left to die on their own. By May 31 the Americans realized that the Japanese had evacuated large numbers of troops from the Shuri defenses; pursuit continued from late May until June 11. By the first week of June, U.S. forces had captured only 465 enemy soldiers while claiming 62,548 killed. It would take two more weeks of hard fighting and an additional two weeks of mopping-up operations using explosives and flamethrowers before the battle would finally come to an end. In early June, Marines cleared the Oroku Peninsula in the west while Army units destroyed Ushijima's eastern flank by routing the defenders at Yaeju-Dake. The Japanese survivors, some 30,000 troops who had retreated to the Kiyan Peninsula, now had nowhere to go; two-thirds of them would fight to the death.

Japanese resistance was finally overcome between June 11 and June 21, as soldiers and Marines slowly closed in on remaining pockets of resistance. Of the remaining exhausted Japanese defenders who faced the final onslaught, some one-third made the decision to surrender. The remainder fought to the death, committed suicide with grenades, or were killed in droves making suicidal charges against entrenched American positions. The 2nd Marine Division's 8th Regiment had come ashore to fill out the 1st Marine Division for the final assaults of the campaign. On June 3, while he was personally reconnoitering the front of the 8th Marines' position, General Buckner was killed by an enemy artillery barrage. The next senior general officer was Maj. Gen. Roy Geiger, the commander of the Marine forces on Okinawa, who was spot-promoted to lieutenant general and became the first and only Marine naval aviator ever to command an American army in the field.

The Japanese defenses were all but overwhelmed by June 16. Ushijima, realizing that the end was near, dissolved his staff on June 19 and ordered all available troops to go over to guerrilla

Continued on page 69

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LET NO ONE

MOURN

BY LUDWIG HEINRICH DYCK

akg-images

Beset on all sides by barbarian invaders, newly crowned Roman Emperor Decius sought to avenge his son's death by defeating Goth King Cniva after the Battle of Philippopolis. "Let no one mourn," was his battle cry.

It was early spring, AD 235, on the Rhine frontier. In the imperial tent of a Roman encampment, 26-year-old Emperor Severus Alexander wept at his mother's side. Around them were gathered friends and followers. Fear was in everyone's eyes. Severus's mother, Julia Mamaea, had been the emperor's faithful adviser for a 14-year reign that had brought peace and stability to the Roman Empire. Now, she had no more advice that could save her son, or herself, or anyone else in that tent. Outside, soldiers spat insults, calling the emperor a "timid little lad tied to his mother's apron strings." A tribune with a number of centurions burst into the tent. Cold blades flashed in their hands. Screams resounded and blood splashed on the ground. It was all over in an instant.

Severus, his mother, and their followers died because of the discontent born of his indecisive forays against the Persians and, most recently, his shameful offerings of gold to the Germanic Alemanni in exchange for peace. It was an unsettled time for the Roman Empire, with every province seemingly afflicted by barbarous invaders and military despots. Greatest among these barbarians were the Goths, who in a long trek from their Scandinavian and Pomeranian homelands had reached the shores of the Black Sea by the close of the second century. In AD 238, the Danube frontier was hit by the first major Goth raid. The Roman outpost at Histria was sacked. By that time, Severus's usurper, the towering veteran soldier and bodyguard Maximinus, commanded a Roman army that was exhausted from victorious wars against the Alemanni and the Carpi. Maximinus, who was himself of Goth and Alan blood, was the first of the so-called soldier-emperors. Nevertheless, he was forced to buy the Goths off with a tribute. Maximinus planned to use the time to reorganize his defenses, but the city of Aquilei revolted. Maximinus led his crack field army in a lengthy siege. Reduced to starvation, Maximinus's own legions murdered him and his son. His desecrated body was thrown to the dogs.

Maximinus was followed by many more usurpers and counter-emperors. The year of his death saw the brutal death of no less than four other emperors and caesars (secondary co-emperors). Fortunately for Rome, the capable general M. Tullius Menophilius managed to restore order along the frontier for three years. The Goth raids resumed when a renewed Persian conflict in AD 242 turned Rome's attention to the east. Under their war chief Argath, Goth attacks reached a high point in 244. That year, M. Julius Philippus, "Philip the Arab,"

LEFT: The third-century Great Ludovisi Sarcophagus in Rome shows Romans battling Goths. This detail depicts Hostilian, younger son of Emperor Decius. His other son, Herrenius, was killed in the battle. INSET: Coin featuring Emperor Decius Trajanus.

became emperor of Rome. Philip bought peace from the Persians and the Moors of North Africa. He then cancelled the tribute paid to the Goths and made war on them and the Carpi. In 248 he took the bombastic titles Carpicus Maximus and Germanicus Maximus. When Philip celebrated Rome's 1,000th birthday, 1,000 pairs of gladiators, 32 elephants, 10 tigers, 60 lions, 30 leopards, 10 hyenas, 60 wild asses, horses and zebras, six hippos, and one rhino were thrown at each other in an orgy of killing for the amusement of the blood-crazed Roman mob. The lavish festivities convinced Rome's plebeians—for a time—of the Empire's undiminished power.

In reality, provincial revolts in Syria were ongoing, and another major barbarian offensive was unleashed by the legendary king of the Goths, Ostrogotha. In AD 248, Ostrogotha's great warlords, Argath and Guntheric, led an army of Goths, reinforced by Germanic Taifali and Vandals,

SUDDENLY A WILD ROAR AND THE DRONE OF THE BULL BATTLE-HORN ERUPTED FROM THE HILLS.

Dacian Carpi, and Celtic Bastarne, into Moesia. The heterogeneous nature of the Goth army was reflected in the Goths themselves. Throughout their travels from Scandinavia and on the Black Sea, the Goths had assimilated various other tribal groups and were joined by like-minded barbarians. Their ranks were swelled by Sarmatian tribesmen, Germanic groups, Balkan peoples, Celts, and even Roman deserters. The Goths were more a barbarian coalition led by various warlords than a national entity.

The barbarian army rumbled across the land, a chaotic mass of marching footmen, horsemen, camp followers, livestock, and carts, joined en route by throngs of reinforcements. Hairy, bearded barbarians marched barefoot and bare chested; others were clad in ragged furs or tunics, bows slung over their shoulders, knives in their belts, and clubs hanging at their sides. Most warriors had at least some clothing and weapons looted from the Romans. Wild Alan horsemen draped the skins of fallen enemies over their horses. Sarmatian heavy horsemen in scale mail or "dragon" armor of cloven horse hoofs carried heavy, two-handed lances and deadly composite bows of horn, antler, bone, and sinew. Even their horses were armored. The Carpi footmen boasted the feared two-handed battle scythe that could cut through virtually any armor, and they slung spears over their shoulders, along with oval shields painted with floral motifs. Other barbarians carried wooden rectangular shields and axes.

The barbarian cavalry was usually the best equipped. Among them were the nobles, their bodyguards, and famed warriors. They boasted immaculate ring mail, helmets, axes, spears, and pattern-welded swords forged by master German smiths. They wore fine furs, brightly colored cloaks and tunics; and their weapons, armor, and jewelry gleamed with abstract animal designs of gold and garnets. Dragon and animal trumpets, flags, and standards bobbed over the multitude, who moved slowly but inexorably toward the western border of the Roman Empire.

The thinly spread Roman garrison troops of Moesia could do little but look on as motley Goth bands ravaged the hamlets of the bountiful countryside. Panicked locals abandoned their homes and sought refuge in ancient fortified hilltop shelters. Argath and Guntheric marched to the gates of the city of Marcianople, extorting a hefty tribute. The very size of the booty brought home by the Goths ignited the envy of another Germanic tribe, the Gepidae. Fastida, king of the Gepidae, consequently led his army against the Goths of the elderly Ostrogotha. Although loath to fight his people's kinsmen, Ostrogotha would not give up his lands without a fight. Savage battle ensued. At last the Gepidae were beaten, establishing the Goths as the dominant barbarian power in the Danube region.

Overstrained by the barbarian raids of AD 248, the Roman legions in the Danube rose up against Philip, who appointed Gaius Messius Decius, prefect of Rome, to bring the region back into order. The 48-year-old Decius was a native of Pannonia and a former governor of Moesia. The local legions killed their rebel leader before Decius's arrival at their outposts. Assuming command, Decius proceeded to restore order along the frontier. Impressed by Decius's leadership, his soldiers offered to make him their emperor—or else kill him. Decius reluctantly chose the purple and led his Danube veterans to victory against Philip's more numerous but less experienced Imperials at Verona in June 249. Philip died on the field of battle, and back in Rome the Praetorians murdered his son and heir. The Senate showed its approval by naming Decius Trajanus after the great second-century martial emperor. Decius soon got his chance to show if he was worthy of the lofty title.

The few soldiers left on the frontier nervously patrolled the forests or kept watch on the ramparts of their outposts. In ever greater numbers, the Goths were again prowling the border like hungry wolves. The legionaries and auxiliaries had more than themselves to worry about. Various settlements had grown up around the legionary fortresses, containing not only shops, taverns, and brothels but also the homes of the legionaries' wives (many of whom were former slaves) and their children. In AD 249, the fears of the Roman soldiers turned into reality. Ostrogotha's successor, King Cniva, broke into Roman Dacia with bands of Goths and Carpi. While the Carpi ravaged the villages and wheat fields of their Roman-occupied Dacian homeland, Cniva led his Goth horde across the Danube. Cniva's army pillaged through the Moesian countryside. Smoke billowed into the sky from villages put to the torch. Rather than risk their lives and those of their families, many Roman soldiers deserted to Cniva, swelling his ranks to 70,000 warriors. Meanwhile, a second group of Goths struck through the Dobrudja marshes, breaking into Thrace to besiege the great city of Philippopolis.

Cniva marched his army to the very gates of Novae but decided to break the siege when he heard that the governor of Moesia, C. Trebonianus Gallus, at the head of his troops, was approaching from the east. Cniva figured that the capture of Novae was not worth weakening his army in battle against Gallus's forces. Instead, he continued west along the Danube. Ahead of him, masses of locals fled toward Nicopolis, the so-called city of victory. Notably, Gallus made no effort to pursue the Goths. He retained his troops in the defense of Novae and Oescus. Even the approach of the emperor's youthful son and caesar, Herennius Etruscus, could not induce Gallus to stir. Herennius was bringing with him the Danube legions, which had remained in Italy ever since their battle against Philip's forces.

At the same time, Decius began the year 250 with yet another brutal persecution of the Christians, whom he blamed for the decline of the Roman virtues. He forced the Christians to pay tribute to Rome's pagan gods on pain of death. Martyrdoms and upheaval followed Decius's edicts. The Christians were given a much-needed respite when the worsening situation on the frontier demanded Decius's personal presence. Decius joined his son before the Roman

army closed in on Cniva at Nicopolis. This time Cniva did not run, and battle erupted. Decius inflicted heavy casualties on the Goths, but the outcome of the battle was indecisive and the Romans also suffered heavy casualties. Mass graves were dug for the rank and file, single graves for centurions, officers, and soldiers who had distinguished themselves in battle. Since the Goths were forced to retreat at Nicopolis, their dead remained behind unburied. Bodies of the slain Goths were looted by Roman soldiers and camp followers, and their carcasses left as food for dogs, wolves, crows, ravens, and eagles.

To the south of the battlefield, Cniva audaciously led his barbarians farther into the Empire. His goal was to unite with the second Goth army at Philippopolis. Decius, for his part, remained strong enough to press after the Goths. First the Goths, then the legions, trekked across Shinka Pass on the 4,000-foot-high Balkan plateau. The rough, sloped terrain wore down man and beast. Near Borroea, along the southern foot of the Balkans, the Roman soldiers set up leather tents as Decius stopped to rest his weary army. He guessed that the Goths were far ahead—he guessed wrong. Cniva and his Goths had doubled back to await the Romans. The well-rested Goths lurked in the hills above, watching the Romans for the right time to attack. Suddenly a wild roar and the drone of the bull battle-horn erupted from the hills. Streams of Goths poured down on the Roman encampment. Sentries cried out, trumpets blared, and exhausted soldiers snatched up helmets and spears, but it was too late. Having had no time to dig entrenchments or throw up a rampart, the legions were nearly overwhelmed by the barbarian tide. Decius barely managed to escape into the mountains and reach the safety of Novae with the remnants of his army.

With Decius suitably humbled, Cniva was free to join the second Goth army in the siege of Philippopolis. The city held out for a long time, but there appeared no sign of succor. The desperate Thracian garrison made an offer to the city governor, Titus Julius Priscus. They would proclaim him emperor if he could negotiate a peaceful surrender to the Goths. Priscus, who was the brother of the late Emperor Philip and had a reputation for brutality, was only too ready to turn against his brother's usurper. It was too late for bargaining, however. Cniva's barbarians overwhelmed the weakened garrison in a final, violent assault. Once the Goths breached the walls, chaos ensued. Some 100,000 citizens were said to have been massacred in an orgy of raping, looting, and killing. Cniva captured a number of nobles of senatorial rank, including Priscus. With the loot of Philippopolis now in Goth hands, Cniva decided to proclaim Priscus emperor after all. Further dissension among the Romans could only aid Cniva. Priscus did not survive his treachery for long. Soon afterward, he disappeared from the scene, probably killed by Cniva after another change of mind.

While Cniva wintered his army at Philippopolis, Decius joined Gallus's forces at Oescus. Too weak to march south and confront Cniva, Decius wisely used the time to reorganize his army, recruit new troops, and restore discipline. Decius did manage to intercept and defeat a number of Carpi venturing too far south. The Danube fortifications were also strengthened, and Gallus was sent to guard the crossing at the mouth of the Danube. Decius stood guard farther west with the main army, while proven officers were sent to picket the mountain passes and make sure no new reinforcements could reach Cniva.

Cniva began his trek home with the first green grass of 251. Unlike Decius, Cniva found his army in inferior shape from the previous year. The casualties suffered during the siege of Philippolis had not been replaced, and the countryside had proven incapable of sustaining the Goth army during the winter. Cniva tried to bargain with Decius, offering to surrender the spoils of Philippopolis and the captives in return for safe passage back north across the Danube. Decius, however, would only accept unconditional surrender. To the Goths this meant certain slavery. They had little choice but to fight their way out. Cniva marched his army back north, slowed by ranks of hapless captives and heaps of loot. His thoughts focused on the well-supplied Roman troops that awaited them north of the Balkans.

The Granger Collection, New York

The Roman army led by Varsus met an ignominious fate at the hands of Arminius's Goths in the Teutoburger Forest in AD 9.

The Roman pickets stationed at Shinka Pass warned Decius that the Goths were drawing near. Before he reached the Danube, Cniva was intercepted by Decius near the city of Forum Terebronii, called Abritta by the Goths. By this time, Decius's army had been reinforced by the bulk of Gallus's troops. Leaving nothing to chance, Decius also curried the favor of the gods by offering sacrifices. After scouts reported that Cniva's army had entered the nearby swamplands of the Dobrudja, Decius decided to follow them and finish them off.

The Granger Collection, New York

These Roman legionnaries are equipped with pilums, short swords, and shields.

What Decius did not consider was that Cniva might be drawing him into the swamp on purpose. Two centuries earlier, the Roman legions had sustained one of their worst defeats when they were ambushed by the Cherusci in the Teutoburger forest. Like the Cherusci, the Goths were familiar with fighting in the swampy wilderness, terrain that could negate the superior Roman discipline and equipment. Cniva divided his army into two bodies and a smaller reserve force. He planned to surround the Romans.

The Goth divisions watered their horses and bundled up rations as they prepared to cross the swampy ground separating them from Decius's army. Somehow their approach went unnoticed by the Romans. Goth archers strung their bows, notched their arrows, and drew back the strings. With a sudden swoosh, a cloud of missiles showered the Roman lines, thudding into wooden shields, glancing off iron helmets and mail, and penetrating flesh. One arrow pierced Herennius, who had recently been elevated to co-leadership by his father. His reign would be a short one. The Goths charged into the startled Romans, who frantically sought to form their lines. Barbarians poured over Herennius, plunging spears into his wounded body. The first shock wave nearly broke the disheartened Roman lines. Decius, seeing his soldiers falter at word of his son's death, cried, "Let no one mourn. The death of one soldier is not a great loss to the republic." Centurions in red officers' tunics rallied their men and held their ground. Roman swords and heavy javelins thrust from behind a wall of oval, brightly painted shields.

Despite his brave words, Decius was overcome with grief and anger. He would not rest until all the Goths were killed or he had joined his son in death. Decius led his legions into the Goths and ripped their ranks to pieces. Roman cavalry galloped through the marshy ground, hoofs flailing up clumps of dirt. Keen spears and long swords hacked down the barbarians. Here and there, lone Goths remained fighting against the Roman onslaught until the thunder of cavalry hoofs resounded over the swamp as the second Goth division entered the fray. Once more, hordes of wild barbarians hurled themselves against the Roman lines. Again the Romans repelled the attackers. The swamp was strewn with dead and dying barbarians.

The battle was won. Decius roused his battle-weary troops to pursue the third and smallest Goth division. Centurions bellowed orders as worn-out soldiers formed behind standards borne by the bearskin-draped aquilifers. The legionaries gritted their teeth. Robust and often around six feet in height, most of them hailed from provincial farming communities and were used to a life of hardship. Seventeen-year-old recruits took comfort in the resolute professionalism of veterans, some of whom had served beyond their required 26 years. The cohorts trudged deeper into the swamp, but with each mile there were more pools of water to wade through and deeper mud to sink into, draining strength from the heavily burdened Romans.

Barbarian survivors drifted into Cniva's camp, exclaiming that their first two divisions had been routed. Decius was coming after them, but he had lost his way and foolishly led his legions into a virtual quagmire. Cniva must have smiled; he would snatch victory from the jaws of defeat. Gathering the survivors of the first engagements, he led his last reserves against Decius. The legionaries cursed as they lifted one exhausted leg after another from the sucking mud. Sweat poured relentlessly into their eyes. Mosquitoes stung their skin, buzzing and crawling through their helmets' guards. The Romans' assortment of armor grew heavier and heavier. Suddenly, from all sides, throngs of barbarians ran to within javelin range. Volley after volley of missiles peppered the strung-out Roman ranks. Tired arms lifted shields to protect against the barrage. Most of the arrows and javelins sliced into the water, but many found their mark.

Wounded legionaries collapsed into the mud, gasping for air as they were swallowed by the morass. Overcome with anger, the Romans used their last reserves of energy to come to grips with their foes. They broke rank and charged after the barbarians. The Goths simply retreated into the wilderness, leading their pursuers into ever-deeper pools of water and separate ambushes. When the Roman army was worn down and fragmented by the relentless missile fire, the barbarians closed in. Spears stabbed through mail, fire-hardened clubs bashed in helmets, swords and axes split skulls and chopped off limbs. The waters ran crimson. No one was spared, not even the emperor. Decius's body was never found. He was the first—but not the last—Roman emperor to be slain by the Goths.

When news of the disaster spread to the troops to the north, they proclaimed Gallus the new emperor. The purple around his shoulders, however, did nothing to aid Gallus against the Goths.

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Roman Emperor Decius falls in battle after leading his men into a quagmire while pursuing Goth tribesmen in AD 251.

With the main Roman army destroyed, Cniva was now in a position of total power. The way was clear for barbarian reinforcements, eager to capitalize on Cniva's success, and more deserters flocked to Cniva's banner as well. Cniva no longer desired to return home. He turned instead to ravage Moesia, Thrace, and Illyria. The Roman troops left to Gallus were no match for the Goths. To rid Roman soil of the barbarian scourge, Gallus not only let the Goths keep their booty and captives but also promised to pay the Goths a sizable annual tribute in gold.

Back in Rome, Gallus's concessions proved unpopular with the citizens. That they had to pay the barbarians with gold was an outrage. Gold was all the more valuable since Roman coinage, the denarii, had become so devalued that some coins were little better than base metal with silver wash. As it turned out, loss of prestige was the least of Rome's worries. Usurpers, Persians, and barbarians caused the empire to loose control over vast territories. After the Battle of Abritta, Roman fortunes spiraled down. Gallus's successor, Publius Licinius Ignatius Gallienus, faced so many pretenders during his reign that it was exaggeratedly called "the Age of Thirty Tyrants" (actually there were only 19). In 260, one of these tyrants, Cassianus Latinius Postumus, set up his own independent Roman Gallic Empire and gained the allegiance of Britain and Spain.

Persia's King Shapur eagerly exploited Rome's weakness. Shapur found an excuse for war when his tribute was cancelled owing to the new tribute that Gallus had to pay to the Goths. Shapur assassinated the pro-Roman Armenian King Choreses, replaced him with one loyal to Persia, and rampaged through the Roman province of Syria, the bulwark of the Roman defense in the Near East. The Roman reprisal, led by Gallienus's father and co-leader, Publius Licinius Valarian, ended in a colossal Roman defeat in AD 260 on the Euphrates River. Valarian was killed and his body stuffed and put on display in a Persian temple.

Gallienus had no chance to avenge his father. Plague swept through the Roman Empire in 262, killing up to up to 5,000 people a day in Rome, and the Rhine and Danube frontiers were enflamed by warfare. Individually, the barbarian armies were not large, but there were many different people invading at many different points. In 258, the Alemanni drew so dangerously close to Rome that the Praetorians were unleashed to ward off the invaders. The pretender Postumus managed to restore Roman authority in Gaul, but six years after his death in 268, the Franks captured more than half the towns in Gaul. Rome's bitter enemy, the Marcomanni, also reappeared, conducting numerous forays into Pannonia and forcing Gallienus to cede part of the region to them.

Nothing compared with the threat of the Goths. Gallus's tribute only enticed the Goths' greed for more. Although little more was heard of Cniva, other warlords led Goth hordes on land and seaborne invasions. Rome still managed to win the occasional victory, but the Empire was unable to prevent the looting of its eastern territories. The Goth attacks threw Greece into such a panic that the walls of Athens, neglected for more than three centuries, were rebuilt. The same year, the Sarmatian Borani, allies of the Goths, forced a Roman vassal, the Kingdom of Bosporus, to surrender its fleet and crews. On flat-bottomed timber barks, with only a shelving roof for cover, the Borani sailed to the city of Pityus on the western slopes of the Caucasus. Pityus's Roman garrison hurled back the invaders from its stout walls and chased them off. A year later the Borani were back, together with the Goths. This time they seized Pityus, whose valorous garrison was recalled to Rome.

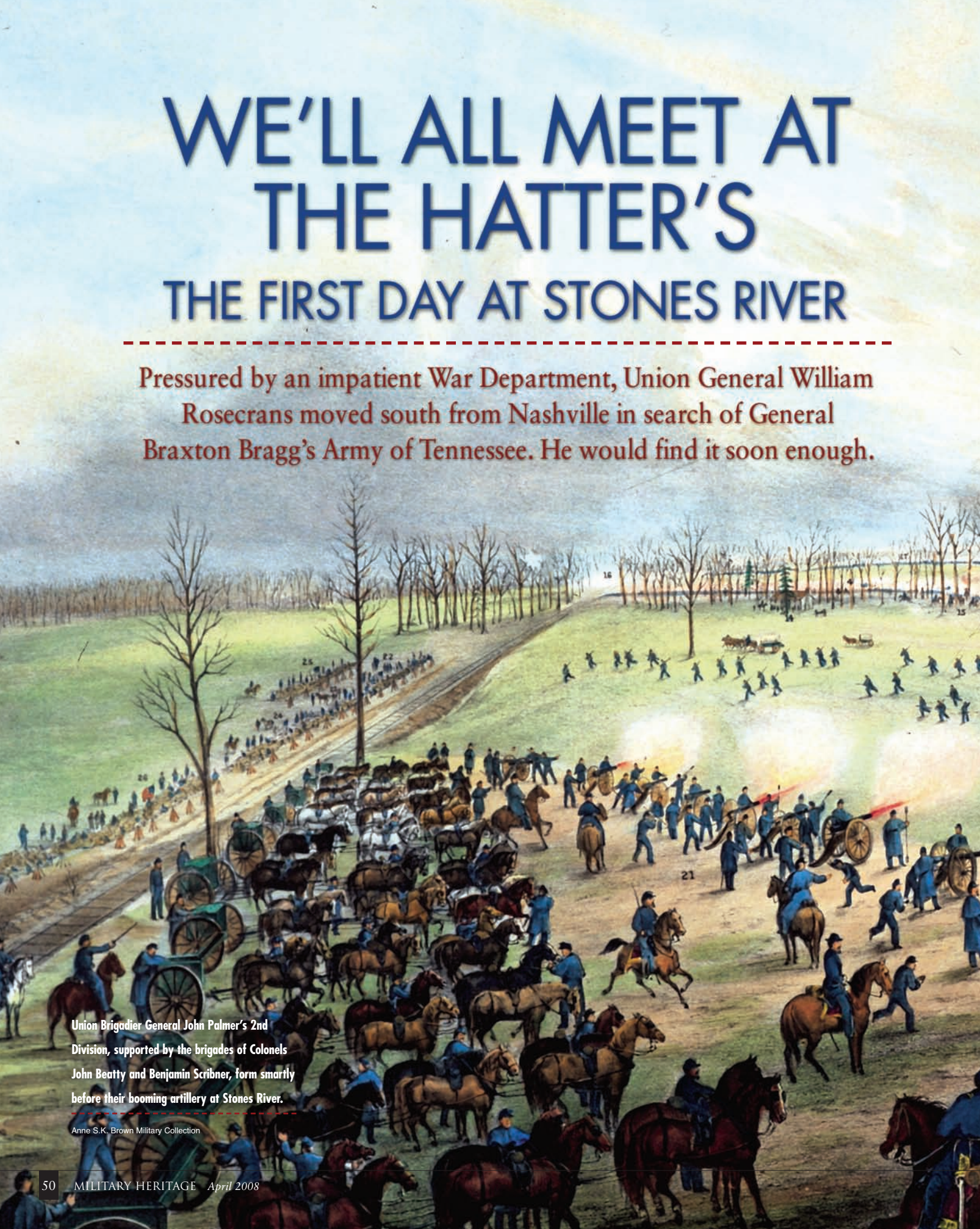
The Goths next appeared below the double walls of the opulent city of Trapezus. The city

Continued on page 74

WE'LL ALL MEET AT THE HATTER'S

THE FIRST DAY AT STONES RIVER

Pressured by an impatient War Department, Union General William Rosecrans moved south from Nashville in search of General Braxton Bragg's Army of Tennessee. He would find it soon enough.



Union Brigadier General John Palmer's 2nd Division, supported by the brigades of Colonels John Beatty and Benjamin Scribner, form smartly before their booming artillery at Stones River.

Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

For weeks, Maj. Gen. William Rosecrans had been hearing increased grumblings from Washington about how he should move his army out of Nashville and strike General Braxton Bragg's Confederate forces 30 miles away in Murfreesboro. So far, however, Rosecrans had failed to budge, and he gave no intention of doing so until he was good and ready. Newly appointed to his command in late October 1862, Rosecrans had replaced Maj. Gen. Don Carlos Buell, whom President Abraham Lincoln had sacked for his perceived poor handling of the just-concluded Kentucky campaign. Unlike Buell, who was not well liked by his men, the cigar-chomping, energetic, and optimistic Rosecrans was popular with both his officers and soldiers. "We were glad to be delivered of Buell," wrote one sergeant in the 51st Indiana Regiment. "However good a military man General Buell may have been," added Robert Stewart of the 15th Ohio, "he never won the love, and entirely lost the confidence of the army he commanded."

A West Point graduate and a devout Catholic, Rosecrans had enjoyed a relatively successful military career thus far in the war, having commanded Union forces in western Virginia and later served under Maj. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant during the successful Corinth campaign. Taking command on October 30, Rosecrans found the Army of the Cumberland in a bad state. Thousands had deserted, troops had not been paid in six months, and supply lines were in constant jeopardy from fearless Confederate raiders such as John Hunt Morgan and Nathan Bedford Forrest. Rosecrans quickly moved his army from Bowling Green, Kentucky, to Nashville to counter a rumored Confederate threat against the Tennessee capital. At Nashville, he began to reshape the army, enforcing discipline and regulating camp life, which in turn led to an improvement in morale. "You don't know how pleased everybody is at the change of Buell for him," wrote Colonel Hans Christian Heg of the 15th Wisconsin. "I have just been up to Rosecrans's headquarters and had a shake of the old fellow's hand."

BY MIKE PHIFER

Getting supplies into Nashville remained a problem. The Cumberland River was too shallow for navigation, and the Louisville & Nashville Railroad was being regularly ripped up by Confederate raiders. Rosecrans would not move until his supply problems were brought under control, even when he was threatened with removal. "The President is very impatient at your long stay in Nashville," warned General-in-Chief Henry Halleck on December 4. "The favorable season for your campaign will soon be over. You give Bragg time to supply himself by

plundering country your army should have occupied. If you remain one more week at Nashville, I cannot prevent your removal."

For the time being, neither the Army of the Cumberland nor Rosecrans went anywhere. A defiant Rosecrans fired back to Halleck: "I need no other stimulus to make me do my duty than the knowledge of what it is. To threats of removal or the like I must be permitted to say that I am insensible." Halleck toned down his rhetoric, but he continued to urge Rosecrans to act by informing him of the president's concern for both Middle Tennessee and the reconvening of the British parliament, where it was feared that southern sympathizers would prod the government into recognizing Confederate independence. "Should the enemy be left in possession of Middle Tennessee," wrote Halleck, "it will be said that they have gained on us."

By Christmas, with the Cumberland River rising, the railroad reopened, and five weeks' worth of supplies built up at Nashville, Rosecrans at last was ready to move. It seemed an opportune time to strike—reports indicated that a division from the Army of Tennessee had been dispatched elsewhere and the bulk of the Confederate cavalry under Morgan and Forrest was off raiding in western Tennessee. Meeting with his corps commanders on Christmas Day, Rosecrans spelled out his marching orders for the army. Slamming down his mug of toddy on the wooden tabletop, Rosecrans exclaimed: "We move tomorrow, gentlemen! We shall begin to skirmish, probably as soon as we pass the outposts. Press them hard! Drive them out of their nests! Make them fight or run! Strike hard and fast! Give them no rest! Fight them! Fight them! Fight, I say!"

Thirty miles southeast of Nashville, the Confederate Army of Tennessee occupied a crescent-shaped defensive position, with the town of Murfreesboro in the center. From there, the Confederates could watch Rosecrans at Nashville and defend Middle Tennessee at the same time. When the bulk of weary Confederate soldiers had reached Murfreesboro in late November, they were in desperate need of rest and provisions. Desertion and disease haunted the army after Bragg led them in retreat from the unsuccessful Kentucky campaign. At Murfreesboro, much-needed food,

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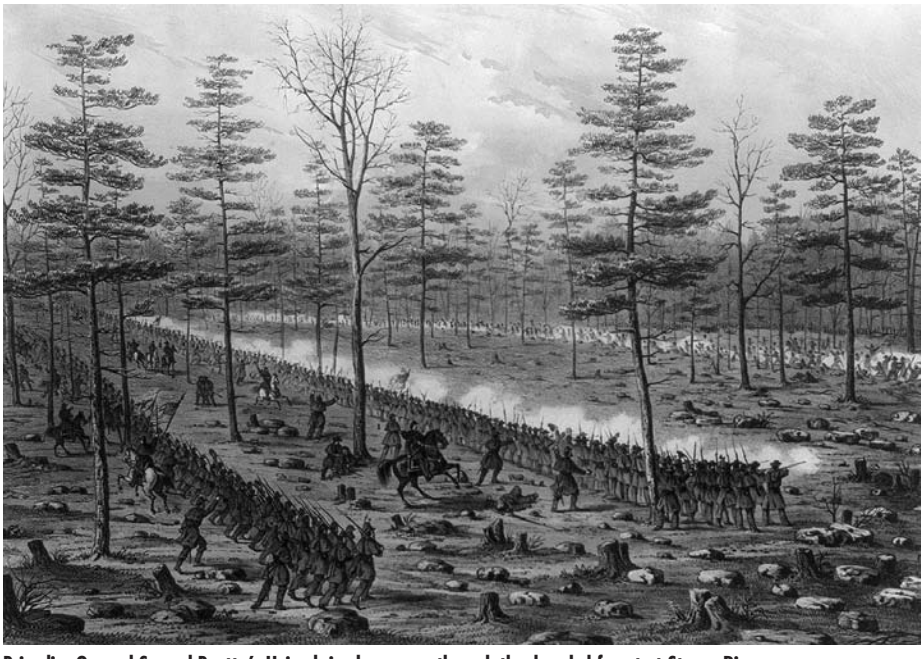


Brigadier General Samuel Beatty's Union brigade sweeps through the denuded forest at Stones River.

clothing, and ammunition began to restore the soldiers' health and confidence. Log cabins and snug shelters were built as the army settled in for the winter. Along with the approaching holidays, the gala wedding of John Hunt Morgan brought a festive spirit to the camp. Visits from family members of many Tennessee and Kentucky soldiers lifted spirits as well. "We lived like lords," Gervis Grainger of the 6th Kentucky Infantry would recall.

Not all was well, however. Two soldiers were executed for desertion, increasing the bitterness burning in the men against their stolid, dour commander. Braxton Bragg, himself a graduate of West Point and a decorated veteran of the Mexican War, was intensely disliked by the bulk of his men and officers. Often hampered by illness—real or imagined—Bragg was a strict disciplinarian who excelled at administrative duties, but he lacked ability as a battlefield tactician. In mid-December, Confederate President Jefferson Davis arrived at Murfreesboro to inspire the army, review the troops, and confer with his old friend Bragg, who had visited him a month earlier to discuss the calls for his removal. Bragg defended his conduct of the Kentucky campaign, where he had lost the Battle of Perryville to the since-deposed Buell. After the Richmond conference, Davis had placed General Joseph E. Johnston in overall command of the western theater, which would encompass Bragg's command as well as that of Lt. Gen. John Pemberton in Mississippi.

Concerned over the defense of Vicksburg and the Mississippi River valley, Davis, despite Johnston's earlier suggestion that troops be sent from Arkansas, weakened Bragg's army by ordering 7,500 troops under Maj. Gen. Carter Stevenson to join Pemberton. Bragg opposed the move, assuring Davis that Forrest's cavalry raids in western Tennessee would do more to slow down the Federal advance on Vicksburg than sending away part of his army with a large Federal force sitting only 30 miles away in Nashville. Davis, however, was insistent, not believing that Rosecrans would stir from Nashville before next spring at the earliest. If he did, Davis told Bragg somewhat unhelpfully, "Fight if you can and fall back beyond the Tennessee."

Rosecrans soon proved Davis wrong, although his advance got off to an inauspicious start. A cold, dreary day greeted the Army of the Cumberland as it marched out of Nashville on December 26. Rosecrans had divided the army into three corps. The right wing of the army, consisting of around 16,000 men, was commanded by Maj. Gen. Alexander McDowell McCook. He was to move due south down the Nolensville Pike. The 13,500-man center corps, under the command of Maj. Gen. George Thomas, was to proceed down the Franklin Road to Brentwood, then cut east behind McCook and take up position in the center of the army. The 14,500 men in the left wing, commanded by Maj. Gen. Thomas Crittenden, would advance along the Nashville-Murfreesboro Turnpike.

With the three columns well positioned to support each other if needed, the bluecoats trudged south down muddy roads while being pelted by driving rain. Union cavalry commander Brig. Gen. David Stanley had divided his command into three screening forces to accompany the infantry columns. Skirmishing quickly broke out as the Federal columns bumped into Confederate cavalry. Brig. Gen. John Wharton's gray-clad troopers fought a delaying action against McCook's column. Farther east, Con-

federate troopers under the command of Brig. Gen. Joseph Wheeler, who commanded Bragg's cavalry, slowed down the advance of Crittenden's men. Nightfall brought an end to the first day's sparring.

The Federal columns were back on the move the following day. Confederate cavalry again fought a rearguard action to slow the Union advance and give Bragg time to concentrate his exposed forces. The 28th saw the Army of Tennessee move into position to meet Rosecrans's advance, which had halted for the Sabbath to allow the weary soldiers to rest. Bragg had divided his 38,000-man army into two corps. The left wing was under the command of Lt. Gen. Leonidas Polk, a West Pointer who years earlier had resigned from the army to become an Episcopal bishop. Polk was critical of Bragg's leadership and had said as much to Jefferson Davis when he visited the president after the Kentucky campaign, and he urged Davis to replace Bragg with Johnston. Polk's corps was positioned west of Murfreesboro, separated from the town by the meandering Stones River, which was at his back. Maj. Gen. Jones Withers's division was in the front line of Polk's position, with Maj. Gen. Benjamin Franklin Cheatham's division 500 yards behind him in reserve.

Across the river was Lt. Gen. William Hardee's corps, the right wing of the Army of Tennessee. Hardee, another West Pointer, had seen action in the Seminole and Mexican Wars and had authored the famous military manual, *Hardee's Rifle and Light Infantry Tactics*. One division under former U.S. vice-president Maj. Gen. John Breckinridge was positioned east of Stones River on the Lebanon Pike. Eight hundred yards behind Breckinridge, Maj. Gen. Patrick Cleburne deployed his hard-fighting division. Maj. Gen. John P. McCown's division of Hardee's corps was placed in reserve on the east side of the river.

Like Polk, Hardee was also critical of Bragg's command. Hardee was troubled by the terrain Bragg chose to defend and would later write in his after-action report, "The field of battle offered no peculiar advantage for defense." He was concerned that the open fields skirted by cedar brakes would give cover to the enemy soldiers. "The country on every side is entirely open and accessible to the enemy," he complained. Large boulders, deep crevices, and heavily wooded areas broken by farm fields made it difficult terrain for cavalry or artillery to operate. Stones River was another potential danger—Bragg's army was split on either side of it. Although it could be forded anywhere, a heavy rainstorm might raise the river enough to cut off the two corps from one another.

Library of Congress

Union Colonel Moses B. Walker's 1st Brigade counterattacked the Confederates on the second day of the battle, driving them back with heavy losses on the enemy right.

Rosecrans expected the Rebels to attempt to defend Stewart's Creek, 10 miles northwest from Murfreesboro. But when Crittenden's corps waded through the bone-chilling creek water on December 29, all it found was an enemy cavalry picket. McCook, meanwhile, moved down the Franklin Pike toward Murfreesboro. Wheeler's troopers desperately tried to slow down the Federals, but they were heavily outnumbered and forced back into Murfreesboro.

At 3 PM, Brig. Gens. Patrick Wood's and John Palmer's divisions of Crittenden's corps caught sight of Breckinridge's division on the east side of Stones River. When Crittenden rode up to join Palmer and Wood around 5 PM, orders came from Rosecrans to push on to Murfreesboro. With darkness now blanketing the countryside, Crittenden obediently ordered an advance, despite the protests of his two division commanders, who urged him not to advance. Finally, Crittenden halted his force and decided to try and find Rosecrans, who had just arrived. Rosecrans immediately canceled the order.

The cancellation came too late for Colonel Charles Harker's brigade in Wood's division, which already had moved across the river. After driving in Confederate pickets and pushing them up Wayne's Hill, where a battery was set up, the 51st Indiana of the 3rd Brigade almost took both the battery and the hill. Only the arrival of the 9th Kentucky and 41st Alabama regiments saved the guns and forced the 51st Indiana to fall back. Harker's brigade withdrew across the river at 10 PM.

Two hours later, more troops were on the offensive, but this time they were Confederates. Wheeler and his men rode out of camp, crossed Stones River and disappeared into the darkness and rain. Headed up the Lebanon Pike, Wheeler planned to strike the Union rear. Five miles up the pike, the troopers reined their mounts west and smashed into a Federal wagon train at dawn, torching 20 wagons. For the rest of the day Wheeler's troopers spread havoc, burning hundreds of wagons and taking numerous prisoners. By nightfall, Wheeler had seriously damaged the Federal supply line and captured enough weapons to arm an entire brigade, besides remounting his men with fresh horses. Wheeler rejoined Bragg the following day.

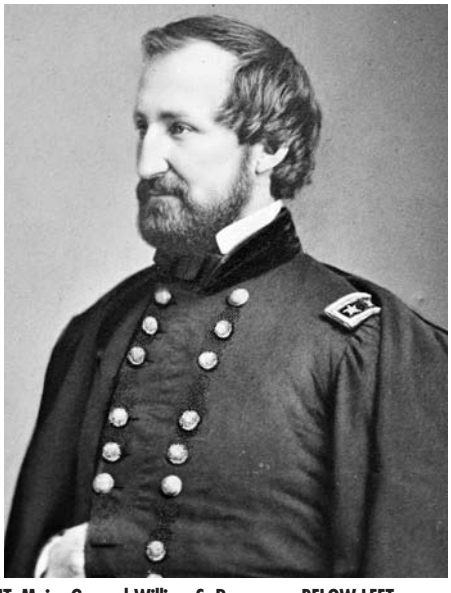
While Wheeler was causing grief in his army's rear, Rosecrans spent most of the 30th moving his men into position for the coming battle. Crittenden's corps, with Stones River on one side, extended across the Nashville Turnpike. Maj. Gen. Lovell Rousseau's division, from Thomas's center, was placed in reserve, while Brig. Gen. James Negley's division took up position with Crittenden on its left and the Wilkinson Pike and McCook on its right. Rosecrans's plan for the coming day was to send Crittenden across Stones River, break through Breckinridge's division, and drive the Rebels into Murfreesboro. While this was taking place, Thomas, along with Palmer's division, was to move across the river and push toward Murfreesboro. McCook on the right flank was to take up a defensive position if attacked. If not, he was to conduct a holding attack against the Confederate forces facing him. Concerned about his right wing, Rosecrans ordered McCook to extend his campfires beyond his right flank to give the Rebels the impression that there was a much larger force on their left.

Bragg, for his part, was worried that his left flank, which did not extend beyond the Franklin Road, might be turned by McCook. To counter this threat, Bragg ordered McCown's division to

advance past the road. Cleburne's division was dispatched to the left flank as well to support McCown, with Hardee going along to accompany his two divisions. Breckinridge remained where he was. Bragg's plan of battle for the next day was similar to Rosecrans's. He intended to hit the enemy's left flank. Believing that McCook would launch the major assault, Bragg informed Hardee and Polk of his intention of striking the Federals first along the Nashville Turnpike. Polk, however, had another idea. With the Confederate left flank extended, Hardee's two divisions could attack the Federal right. Then Polk's command would perform a "constant wheel to the right" and drive the Federals to the river. Wharton's cavalry, meanwhile, would hit the Federals in the rear, cutting off their supply line to Nashville. Bragg agreed to the change in plans.

That night, as the armies bedded down in anticipation of the next day's battle, a battle of another sort broke out. Blue and gray bands began to play their favorite tunes, "Yankee Doodle" and "Dixie." The two sides exchanged other tunes before the bands joined in to play the nostalgic "Home Sweet Home." When the music died away for the night, it would not be long before the killing began.

> "Everything was perfect confusion, men and horses running in every direction and Rebels after us, firing upon us and yelling like Indians."



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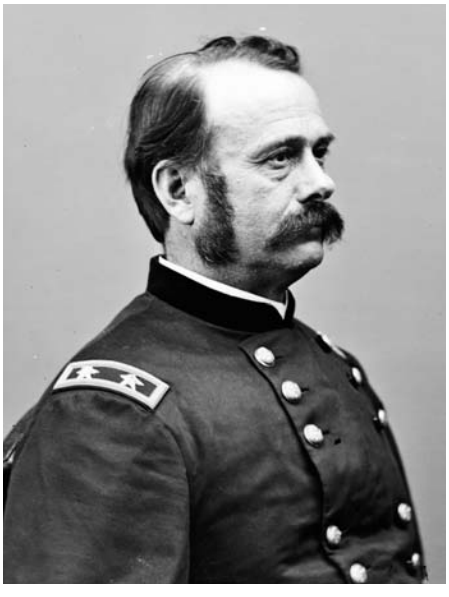
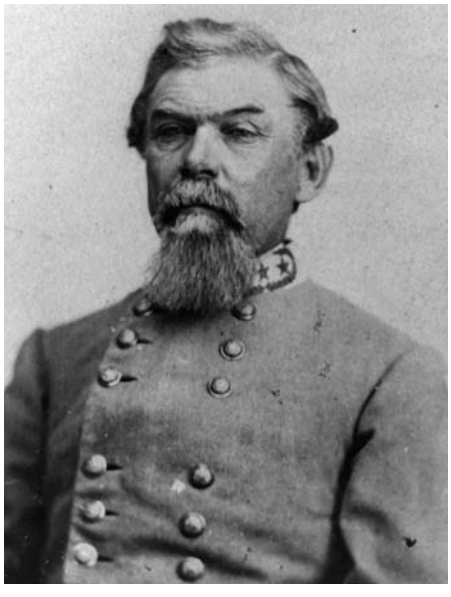
ABOVE LEFT: Major General John C. Breckinridge. ABOVE RIGHT: Major General William S. Rosecrans. BELOW LEFT: Major General Lovell H. Rousseau. BELOW RIGHT: Lieutenant General William Hardee.





At 2 AM, Brig. Gen. Philip Sheridan, commanding the 3rd Division in McCook's corps, was wakened by one of his brigade commanders, Brig. Gen. Joshua Sill. Across the fields that separated the opposing armies, the sound of moving infantry and artillery could be heard resonating from the Confederate lines. Sill informed Sheridan of his fears that the Rebels might be massing for an attack on the Union right. Sheridan and Sill hurried to McCook's headquarters to inform the wing commander of the threat. McCook was not overly concerned, confident that the morning attack by Crittenden would stall any Rebel attack on his wing.

Sheridan and Sill did not share McCook's confidence. They returned to division headquarters, where Sheridan ordered the 15th Missouri and 44th Illinois Regiments from Colonel Frederick Schaefer's brigade to reinforce Sill. Sheridan made sure that all his men were under arms and ready for daylight. Unfortunately for the rest of the Union right wing, Brig. Gens. Richard Johnson and Jefferson C. Davis were not as diligent in readying their divisions. They too had received a warning from McCook to have their men prepared for a possible Confederate attack in the morning, but they had simply passed the order down to their brigade commanders, and little more was done about it. One of Johnson's brigade commanders, Brig. Gen. August Willich, sent out a company to scout out the woods beyond the picket line to see what the enemy was doing. They reported back that they saw nothing suspicious.

A cold gray mist enveloped the countryside on the morning of December 31. The men of Willich's brigade, holding the far right of McCook's wing, began to make breakfast fires and heat their coffee. Half the horses from Captain Warren Edgarton's 1st Ohio Battery E were led away to be watered. With Brig. Gen. Edward Kirk's brigade positioned to the left of Willich and more pickets out on patrol, worries about a Rebel assault lessened as the morning advanced. The still-sleepy soldiers relaxed.

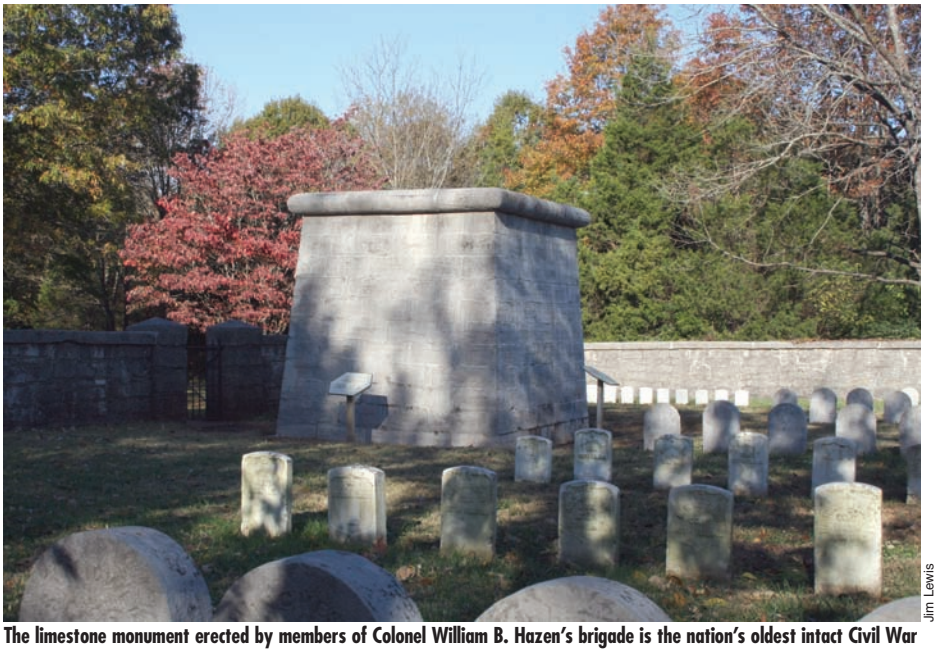
Then, at 6:22 AM, thousands of Confederates in a double line, with skirmishers out in front, charged. McCown's division led the way, with Cleburne's division 500 yards behind it. "We could see the enemy advancing over the open country for half a mile in front of our lines," Kirk reported. "Their left extended far beyond our right, so as to completely flank us." Brav-

ing canister fire from Edgarton's guns, McCown's graybacks pushed hard for Kirk's brigade at the junction of Gresham Lane. To buy time for Edgarton's battery, whose horses had yet not returned, Kirk ordered the 34th Illinois to counterattack. Fire from the 10th Texas stopped the 34th in its tracks and forced it back on Edgarton's guns. The onrushing Confederates quickly drove off the infantry and overran the battery. Kirk went down with a bullet in his thigh. Willich's brigade was next. Most of the regiments in the brigade faced south, while the Rebels were coming fast from the southeast. Willich was away from his post, having ridden over to division headquarters. Kirk's panic-stricken men tumbled through Willich's lines, stumbling for the rear. Willich's men broke as well. "A complete panic prevailed. Teams, ambulances, horsemen, footmen and attaches of the army, black and white, mounted on horses and mules, were rushing to the rear in the wildest confusion," wrote Colonel William Gibson, who was commanding the brigade in Willich's absence.

Willich returned to take command and unknowingly began shouting orders at Confederate troops he thought were his own. He soon discovered his mistake when his horse was shot from under him and he was taken prisoner. The Federal right was in shambles. Two brigades had broken, suffering over 900 casualties and another 1,000 captured, along with losing eight guns. The very confusion, however, caused the Confederate plan to go astray. McCown's division continued after the retreating bluecoats in a northwestward direction, instead of swinging to the right as planned. Cleburne, unaware of McCown's pursuit, swung his division to the north and soon discovered that he was no longer acting in support of McCown, but was on his own and taking heavy fire.

Cleburne's division soon ran into Davis's division, which was now on the extreme right flank of the Union army. Hearing firing on his right, Davis had ordered Colonel Sidney Post's brigade to move from its original position to Gersham Lane and face south toward Franklin Road. There, some of the regiments found cover behind a rail fence.

Brigadier General Bushrod Johnson's brigade of Cleburne's division came under Federal artillery fire as it moved out of the woods on either side of Gersham Lane and advanced toward Post's bluecoats. The intense fire forced Johnson's Tennesseans to give ground and begin firing back. Johnson ordered up artillery, which quieted the Yankee guns. The Tennesseans now jumped to their feet and charged the enemy guns, which were in the process of limbering up. Horses and men went down as the Federals desperately tried to save the guns by dragging them off by hand. They were just in time. Johnson's brigade soon overran Post's position. The 74th and 75th Illinois held off the attacking Confederates briefly before they too were forced to fall back.



Jim Lewis

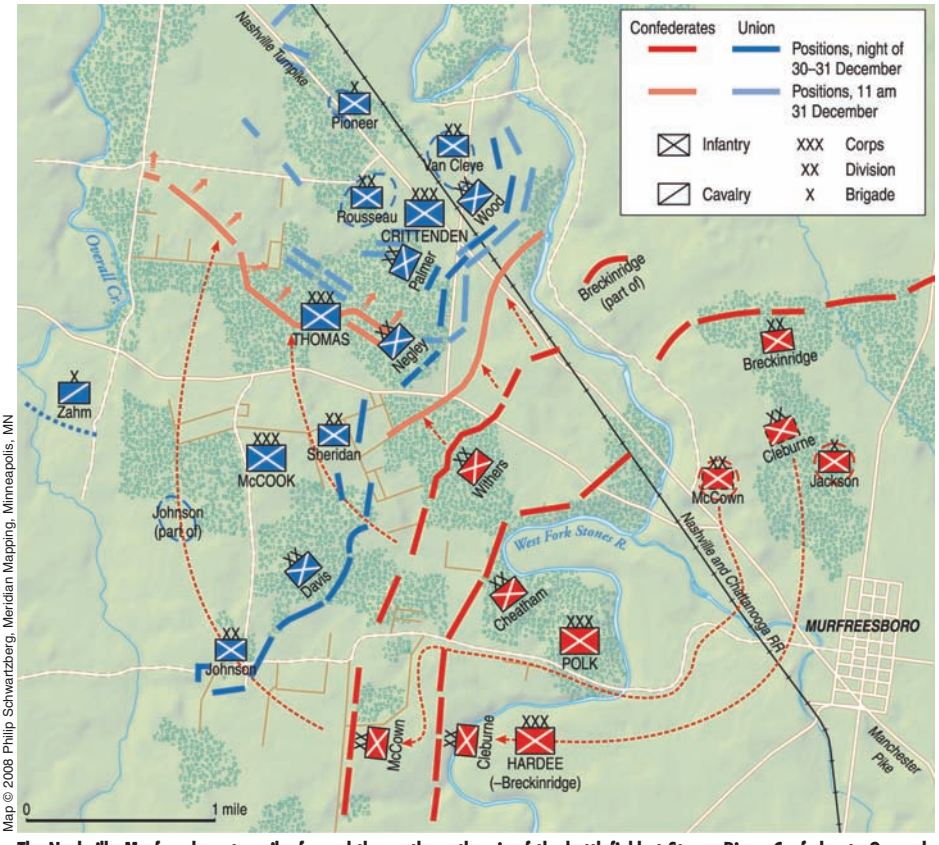
The limestone monument erected by members of Colonel William B. Hazen's brigade is the nation's oldest intact Civil War monument.

To the left of Bushrod Johnson, Brig. Gen. St. John Liddell's brigade, which had become separated from the rest of Cleburne's brigades, linked up with Brig. Gen. Evander McNair from McCown's division. Together, they prepared to attack the Federals positioned behind the rail fences on Gersham Lane. Liddell's brigade charged forward, coming under heavy fire. McNair, who was ill, was slow in moving out, leaving Liddell unsupported in his attack. Liddell's men, undaunted, surged forward and forced Colonel Philemon Baldwin's brigade to retreat.

Cleburne's other two brigades, commanded by Brig. Gens. Lucius Polk and S.A.M. Wood, struggled through the thick cedar woods east of Gersham Lane and came under fire from soldiers in Colonel William Carlin's brigade. Carlin attempted to withdraw his command in good order, but he was wounded and the retreat of the 101st Ohio and 21st Illinois quickly turned into a rout. "Everything was perfect confusion," wrote Union Private Jay Butler, "men and horses running in every direction and Rebels after us, firing upon us and yelling like Indians." The 15th Wisconsin, under Heg, fought a brief rearguard action, buying enough time for the brigade and artillery to get away.

While Rosecrans's right was being shattered, Wharton and his cavalry galloped behind Federal lines. Pushing Colonel Lewis Zahm's cavalry brigade out of the way, Wharton's men captured hundreds of prisoners, including the mortally wounded Kirk, who was being taken to the rear. Polk's assault to the right of Cleburne was not going as well. The night before the attack, Polk had decided to reorganize his corps because of the rough country that lay before them. Instead of having Withers's division lead the attack with Cheatham's division following as originally planned, Polk ordered Cheatham to take command of the two left brigades in Withers's front line, along with the two left brigades in his own division. At 7 AM, Cheatham ordered Colonel J.Q. Loomis to lead his Alabama brigade across 300 yards of cornfields and open woods against Colonel William Woodruff's brigade of Davis's division positioned on a ridge. To the left of Woodruff was Sill's brigade, which held Sheridan's right flank. This was only one of many piecemeal attacks ordered by Cheatham that morning, causing some to accuse him afterward of being drunk during the battle.

The Confederates managed to capture part of the rail fence held by some of the Federal regiments. For half an hour, both sides pummeled each other until Union enfilading artillery fire finally drove back Loomis's depleted brigade. In the fierce fighting, Sill took a bullet to the head, killing him almost instantly. As the Alabamians staggered back to Confederate lines, they were



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

The Nashville-Murfreesboro turnpike formed the north-south axis of the battlefield at Stones River. Confederate General Braxton Bragg intended to strike the Union right, then wheel sharply to the right and drive the Federals into the river.

heckled by the Tennessee and Texas soldiers from Colonel A.J. Vaughan's brigade of Polk's division. "You'll soon find it the hottest place you ever struck!" countered an angry Alabamian. He was right, as Vaughan's soldiers were soon to realize to their own discomfort.

Vaughan's men smashed into the Federal lines, sending two enemy regiments back before they rallied. Then the Federals counterattacked, recapturing the fence line, and drove off the Rebels in their turn. Not all the southerners retreated. The 9th Texas continued to fight on, enduring a deadly crossfire before driving off the Illinois troops with a wild charge. At the same time, the rest of Vaughan's brigade and Loomis's brigade, now under the command of Colonel J.G. Coltart after Loomis was wounded by a limb knocked from a tree, charged a second time. Woodruff's men were driven back to the Wilkinson Pike, covered by the 8th Wisconsin battery.

At 8 AM, Colonel A.M. Maginault's brigade from Withers's division moved forward to attack to the right of Vaughan and Coltart. They were late in launching their attack and soon came under artillery fire. Then infantry fire from the 88th Illinois of Sill's brigade, now under the command of Colonel Nicholas Greusel, turned them back. Half an hour later, Maginault was back, this time supported by Brig. Gen. George Maney's brigade of Cheatham's division. By now Sheridan had reformed his lines, pulling back his regiments on the right flank to the north side of a narrow lane at the Harding farm, while two other regiments short on ammunition were withdrawn behind a battery. The 4th Indiana Battery under Captain Asahel Bush set up near the Harding farm while the 1st Illinois Battery under Captain Charles Houghtaling unlimbered 600 yards northeast of the farm. Maginault's brigade was torn apart by artillery fire, and a charge by Colonel George Roberts's brigade of Sheridan's division sent the rapidly tiring Confederates reeling back. Maginault consulted with Maney, and they decided that the Federal batteries spewing havoc among their men had to be taken out. Each brigade would go after a battery.

Maney's brigade moved forward to take out Bush's guns and supporting infantry near the Harding house. Moving over a ridge, they came under devastating artillery fire from Houghtaling's guns—Maginault hadn't captured them yet. Maney and his officers believed they were taking friendly fire. Lieutenant R.F. James of the 1st and 27th Tennessee Consolidated galloped forward to investigate. Fifty yards from the Federal position, he was shot down. Still, Maney was not convinced the guns were in Yankee hands. Even after a second officer barely escaped with his life after getting within 40 yards of the battery, some Confederate officers harbored doubts. A color-bearer from the 4th Tennessee marched forward and waved his flag for 10 minutes to draw enemy fire, and a second color-bearer planted his Rebel banner on a feed crib, which the Federal guns promptly fired on, before the officers were convinced the guns were in enemy hands. Tennessee Private Sam Watkins, on the skirmish line that day, was disgusted. "John Barleycorn was general in chief," he wrote after the war. "Our generals, and colonels and captains, had kissed John a little too often. They couldn't see straight. They couldn't tell our own men from the Yankees."

Four guns from Smith's battery commanded by Lieutenant William Turner were quickly brought up by the Confederates and opened fire on Houghtaling. An artillery duel ensued. At the same time, Vaughan's brigade moved up behind Maney's left and took shelter on the far side of the ridge to await further orders. More Confederate brigades would soon join the mix. The situation looked grim for Sheridan. A quick investigation of his right revealed that Davis's division was in full retreat. Sheridan was now the right flank of the army. He would have to pull back his own right to save his division. Sheridan ordered Greusel and Schaefer to fall back from Wilkinson's Pike into the thick cedar woods to the rear.

Bloody fighting soon broke out in the rock-strewn cedar woods, which were dotted with caverns. Polk's brigade engaged in a fierce firefight with Schaefer's men. To the south, Magin-

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The Union right is swept from the battlefield by the surprise daylight attack of Generals Patrick Cleburne and John C. McCown.

ault's brigade was attempting to capture the guns of Bush and a 1st Missouri battery under Captain Henry Hescock which had taken up position on a knoll near the junction of McFadden's Lane and Wilkinson's Pike. Roberts's supporting infantry, holding the apex of Sheridan's line, threw back the attack. Another attempt was launched, this time with the aid of two regiments from Brig. Gen. J. Patton Anderson's brigade of Withers's division. The Confederates took a terrific hammering from the Federal guns, which threw back the attack with heavy losses. More attacks failed. Roberts continued to the hold his position, but not for long. Sheridan's outnumbered men had fought brilliantly, throwing back attack after attack and inflicting heavy losses on their adversaries, but now things looked desperate for them. Their cartridge boxes were just about empty.

Rosecrans, meanwhile, had heard distant musketry fire on his right flank, but he assumed that it was McCook holding the Rebels in check. He was more concerned with the three divisions crossing Stones River in preparation for an assault on Bragg's right flank. Word reached the Union commander that his right wing was broken, but a courier from McCook reported only that the right wing was under attack and needed reinforcements. Rosecrans still believed everything was going as planned. The sound of battle moving to the north and the rear hinted that perhaps this was not true. Another officer from the broken right confirmed the worst. Rosecrans erupted in a frenzy of manic activity, dashing off orders to brigades, regiments, companies—any body of men he could find. "He failed to produce an impression as one who grasped the whole momentous situation with the hand of a master," the official historian of the 41st Ohio would judge drily.

The planned attack on the Confederate right was canceled, and Crittenden was ordered to send one of his divisions back across the river. Wood was ordered to take two brigades from his division and move to the right immediately. "We'll all meet at the hatter's, as one coon said to another when the dogs were after them!" hollered Wood to Rosecrans as he rode away.

Rousseau was ordered to take up position to the right rear of Sheridan's tenuous hold on the cedar woods at 9:30 AM. Rosecrans rode on to shore up his defenses, ordering units here and there, rallying his men. When Lt. Col. Julius P. Garesche, Rosecrans's chief of staff, begged him to be more cautious in exposing himself to enemy fire, Rosecrans retorted: "Never mind me. Make the sign of the cross and go in. This battle must be won." Later that day, Garesche would be beheaded by a Confederate cannonball that spattered his brains over Rosecrans's overcoat.

Brigadier General Alexander Stewart of Cheatham's division led his brigade forward in another attack on Roberts. Roberts was killed and Houghtaling was wounded. Sheridan quickly gave the order to withdraw when he arrived on the scene. "There was no sign of faltering with the men, the only cry being for more ammunition, which unfortunately could not be supplied," Sheridan wrote afterward. Cheatham, seeing the Federals withdrawing, led Maginault's and Maney's brigades after them. Sheridan's other shot-up brigades—Schaefer's and Greusel's—were withdrawing as well.

Rousseau's bluecoats were not in position long before they too came under attack from McCown's division. The Federals began falling back to reform on the Nashville Pike, a position that had to be held at all costs. Colonel John Beatty's brigade held in the thickets, not knowing that the rest of the division had fallen back, and continued to blunt the Confederate attacks. Rousseau had told him earlier to hold "until hell freezes over." Finally realizing how exposed he was, Beatty ordered a retreat just about the same time that Lucius Polk's brigade hit him again. "I conclude that the contingency to which General Rousseau referred—that is to say, that hell has frozen over" had occurred, Beatty recalled. He and his men broke for the rear.

When Roberts's apex was forced back, Colonel Timothy Stanley's brigade of Brig. Gen. James Negley's division, which was holding to the left, found itself in trouble as well. Nailed by Confederate artillery and assaulted by Anderson and Stewart, Stanley's men broke. Another of Negley's brigades, commanded by Colonel John Miller, was hit next. They were soon forced back as well.

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Commanding General William Rosecrans, far right, scans the Confederate artillery firing at a Federal battery in the middle distance.

The Confederates pushing up the Nashville Pike under Brig. Gen. James Chalmers struck Brig. Gen. Charles Cruft's brigade of Palmer's division west of Cowan's Farm. Chalmers's poorly armed Mississippians (some carrying only sticks) surged forward with a Rebel yell, crossing cotton and wheat fields. Stopping 50 yards from Cruft's men, they began trading fire with the Federals. For half an hour the two sides blasted away at each other, with the Confederates taking heavy casualties, including Chalmers, who was knocked unconscious by a piece of shrapnel to the forehead. Finally, the Confederates began to fall back.

Brigadier General Daniel Donelson's brigade of Cheatham's division struck next. Rushing out of their rifle pits, Donelson's men split into two streams when they reached Cowan's Farm and Chalmers's men failed to get out of the way. Two and half regiments moved toward Cruft, while the other two and a half regiments pushed northward toward the so-called Round Forest, a key bit of real estate that would be soon become known by a more graphic and descriptive name, Hell's Half Acre. It was held by Colonel William Hazen's brigade of Palmer's division. Cruft sent out the 1st Kentucky to meet the Rebels in the cotton fields in front of their position. The Confederates quickly pushed them back. Then Stewart's men struck one of Cruft's regiments in the rear. Outflanked and with Donelson's Tennesseans breaking through his first line, Cruft was forced to withdraw.

"Shepherd, take your brigade there and stop the Rebels," Maj. Gen. George Thomas ordered Lt. Col. Oliver Shepherd of Rousseau's division. Shepherd's men were well-trained regulars, and he quickly led them into the fray. The fighting was bloody, with 400 Federals going down and the rest finally forced to retire. But Stewart's brigade was hurting too, and the Confederates held up at the edge of the cedars. The 8th and 16th Tennessee of Donelson's brigade had suffered 500 casualties of their own.

Part of Donelson's brigade pushed on toward the Round Forest. The Federals meanwhile quickly reinforced the key position, which was formed into a V-shape protecting the railroad and the Nashville Pike—the army's crucial supply line. The Round Forest was the apex of the V. Brig. Gen. Milo Hascall knew the importance of the forest to the Rebels; he would later report: "If they [the Confederates] succeeded in carrying this they would have turned our left, and a total rout of our forces could not then have been avoided."

Donelson's men never reached the Round Forest as they came under heavy fire from the Federals. The 2nd Missouri from Schaefer's brigade was ordered into the fight, and the added firepower helped stop the new Confederate advance. The fighting temporarily died out in the forest, but it was raging elsewhere as Cleburne and McCown were driving for the Nashville Pike from the west. Brig. Gen.

Mathew Ector's brigade was fighting it out with Colonel Samuel Beatty's brigade of Brig. Gen. Horatio Van Cleve's division. The Confederates got the worst of the fight and were forced into retreat, with Beatty in close pursuit. Near the Asbury Church, Colonel James Fyffe's brigade joined Beatty, as did Colonel Charles Harker of Wood's division.

The Federals had barely arrived when they were hit hard by Cleburne's division and sent reeling. Rosecrans desperately rallied the troops and formed a line as best he could to protect the Nashville Pike and the rear of his army from Cleburne. "Men do you know how to be safe?" he called to the hard-pressed soldiers in the Round Forest. "Shoot low! But to be safest of all, give them a blizzard, and then charge with cold steel!" It was good advice, as far as it went. At any rate, the Confederate attack was beginning to run out of steam. Being so close to success, Cleburne's men began to fall back. It was 3 PM, and Cleburne's men had been fighting all day with little rest. They badly needed ammunition and reinforcements.

Cleburne was not the only one needing reinforcements. Polk needed them too as he prepared to storm the Round Forest. East of the Stones River sat Breckinridge's well-rested division, which was sorely needed on the west side of the river. Around 10 AM, Bragg had sent Breckinridge a verbal order to reinforce Hardee, an order that Breckinridge would deny he ever received. Instead, for the next several hours Breckinridge remained on the east side of the river, obeying an earlier order from Bragg to engage a phantom Union force reportedly moving toward him. Eventually, word reached Bragg that the enemy on the east side was a mere a handful of sharpshooters. He was furious. "These unfortunate misapprehensions on that part of the field withheld from active operations three fine brigades until the enemy had succeeded in checking our progress," Bragg wrote. He ordered Breckinridge to send reinforcements across the river.

Around 1 PM, Breckinridge's brigades began to cross Stones River. Brig. Gens. Dan Adams's and John Jackson's brigades were the first to arrive, reaching Polk an hour later. Polk had been ordered to attack the Round Forest and smash the Federal center. At the very least, Bragg hoped that by concentrating on the Round Forest, it might draw off units holding Rosecrans's right, enabling Hardee to push on to the Nashville Pike. Instead of waiting for more brigades from Breckinridge's division to arrive, Polk ordered Adams and Jackson to attack the Round Forest immediately. Federal batteries played havoc with the advancing Rebels once they moved past Cowan Farm. Still they kept coming. Infantry fire poured into their ranks. After a half hour of this hell, Adams ordered a withdrawal. He left behind 426 dead or wounded on the field.

Now it was Jackson's turn. His men charged the Federal stronghold without hesitation. "On they came in steady column, notwithstanding the murderous fire," Indiana Private Gilbert Stormont observed with grudging admiration. "We could see their men falling like leaves, but the broken ranks were filled, and they held their ground with a heroism worthy of a better cause." It was for naught. The Union line held and Jackson's brigade added another 291 casualties to the day's tab. After one last, futile assault by Breckinridge's reinforcements, the fighting ended for the day.

As darkness settled in, thousands of wounded and dead on both sides littered the fields and cedar woods. The cries of the wounded pierced the darkness. It had been a bloody day. For Bragg it seemed that victory was imminent—his men had driven the Union Army back three miles on their right. He telegraphed Richmond with the uncharacteristically upbeat news that "God has granted us a Happy New Year." Bragg was sure that Rosecrans would retreat to Nashville. Wagons had already been spotted heading that way. Unknown to Bragg, the wagons were merely carrying off the wounded. Rosecrans, for his part, wasn't planning on going anywhere.

At the headquarters of the battered Army of the Cumberland, Rosecrans conferred with his generals on their next course of action. Should they hold their ground or retreat? Accounts vary about the conference, with some giving Thomas credit for encouraging Rosecrans to stay put with this fatalistic observation: "General, I know of no better place to die than right here." Others give credit to Sheridan for backing Thomas in the advice. At any rate, it was up to Rosecrans to make the final decision. He would later report: "After careful examination and free consultation with corps commanders, followed by a personal examination of the ground, it was determined to await the enemy's attack in that position; should not the enemy attack, offensive operations should be assumed."

"Bragg's army? He's got none; he shot half of them in Kentucky, and the other got killed up at Murfreesboro."

Torches seen flickering along Overall Creek induced Rosecrans to believe the Rebels were forming in his rear. In actuality, it was only Federal cavalrymen lighting fires to warm up the infantry. Possibly this led Rosecrans to decide to stay and fight. Whatever the reasons, the Federals did stay, and over the next two days they would deny Bragg his prematurely claimed victory. By the time the fighting was over, Bragg had lost 9,239 killed or wounded, while Rosecrans had suffered 9,532 casualties. During the subsequent Confederate retreat, Bragg confronted a straggling soldier and asked him if he belonged to Bragg's army. "Bragg's army?" said the soldier. "He's got none; he shot half of them in Kentucky, and the other got killed up at Murfreesboro." Bragg had no response—there was nothing else to say. □

BY WILLIAM E. WELSH

CASTILLON

LAST BATTLE OF THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR

The English bet everything on a surprise attack to disrupt the French advance into Gascony in the final days of the Hundred Years' War. But this time, the French held all the advantages.

England's long downward slide to defeat in the Hundred Years' War began with the failed siege of Orleans in 1428. For the next 25 years, the English clung to their dwindling possessions in France like a parent to an only child, while French King Charles VII of the Valois dynasty slowly chipped away at them, one piece at a time. By 1440, the French had driven the English completely from the valley of the Loire, and the English retained only Normandy in the north and Gascony in the south. The Truce of Tours in 1444 gave the French a much-needed respite, during which time Charles completed some necessary military reforms and prepared for the final grinding campaigns in a conflict that had begun more than a century earlier—well before anyone's living memory.

Soon, the war started up again. Under the weak kingship of Henry VI, England seemed powerless to stop the French offensive of 1449 to recapture Normandy. A three-pronged thrust led by John, Count of Dunois, better known as the "Bastard of Orleans," vanquished the English from the duchy within a year's time. Emboldened by his success in retaking Normandy so quickly, Charles immediately began plotting the conquest of Gascony. It promised to be more difficult than the Normandy campaign. The English had occupied Normandy for only three decades, but they had controlled the province of Gascony since the middle of the 12th century, when Eleanor of Aquitaine wed Henry, Count of Anjou, who subsequently became England's King Henry II. Despite the capture by the Capetian dynasty of much of the Duchy of Aquitaine in the early 13th century, Gascony remained solidly under the rule of the English Plantagenets.

Using the same strategy that worked so well in Normandy, Charles mobilized three armies in 1450 to invade Gascony and bring about the final end of English rule in France. During the years immediately following the Truce of Tours, the French king had undertaken a major reform of his military forces. First and foremost, Charles forbade anyone other than himself to recruit French forces, a move designed to eradicate the bands of uncontrolled brigands that roamed the countryside during the frequent lulls in the conflict. He then formed a professional army that included infantry, cavalry, and artillery. The existing cavalry was combined into 20 *compagnies d'ordonnance,* each of which contained 100 "lances." Each lance comprised one mounted man-at-arms and five more lightly armed auxiliaries. As for infantry, Charles required each parish to maintain and equip one archer, and he exempted all volunteers from any form of taxation. The professional horse and foot soldiers were augmented by the best artillerymen of the era, organized into a permanent force under the expert leadership of the king's masters of artillery, Jean and Gaspard Bureau.

Charles would employ essentially the same strategy in loosening the English grip on Gascony that he had used to retake Normandy. Rather than invading with one army, Charles ordered his three small armies to advance on the region from different directions. In this way, he hoped to bait the English into fighting in the open rather than allowing the conflict to drag out into a series of costly sieges. Preparations were made throughout the first half of 1450, and the armies were ready to take the field by the end of the summer.

Following the king's plan, the Count of Foix began the invasion with an advance up the Adour River toward Bayonne, while the Count of Penthievre led a Breton force along the Dordogne River valley. The Bretons reached Bergerac in Perigord in October and continued west to Bordeaux on the Gironde River. As the English seat of government in Gascony, Bordeaux was the most important objective of the French forces. The French laid siege to the city before the onset of winter. In the spring of 1451, Dunois marched south with a third army and joined the forces encamped around Bordeaux. A combined fleet consisting of French, Breton, and Spanish ships closed the mouth of Gironde,

A 19th-century painting by Charles de Lariviere shows the fatal wounding of white-haired Lord Talbot, the Earl of Shrewsbury, at the climax of the Battle of Castillon.

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making it impossible for the English to resupply their beleaguered port.

Upon his arrival, Dunois demanded that the English garrison surrender at once. The garrison's commander at the time, the Captal de Buch, whose ancestor John de Grailly had fought with the "Black Prince" Edward at Poitiers in 1356, told Dunois that he would surrender the city if no aid arrived from England by June 14. As the English were unprepared at the time to send a relief force, the garrison was left with no choice but to let the French enter the city, which they did on June 30. Less than two months later, Bayonne fell to Foix. It was the first time the French had controlled Gascony in almost three centuries.

By retaking Gascony, it appeared that the French had finally managed to end the Hundred Years' War. But it was not yet so. The pro-English population resisted Valois rule, using both overt and covert methods. On their region's behalf, a number of Gascon exiles living in England pleaded with Henry VI to send an invasion force to liberate their homeland. Henry acquiesced and turned to veteran commander John Talbot, the Earl of Shrewsbury, to raise a relief force and transport it to southern France.

Lord Talbot, at age 65, was a veteran with more than three decades of experience fighting the French on the Continent. In his youth, Talbot had been well schooled in the art of warfare by his family elders, seeing action first at the age of 16 at the bitter Battle of Shrewsbury and helping suppress the Welsh rebellion begun by Owen Glendower in the first decade of the 15th century. In 1414, King Henry V appointed Talbot to serve as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. No stranger to partisan warfare by that time, Talbot became known for a method of fighting that involved rapid marches to surprise his enemies and keep them off balance. It was an age that required a strong measure of ruthlessness if a commander were to succeed in getting the better of his enemies, and

NEITHER HIS DEFEAT AT PATAY NOR HIS TIME AS A PRISONER OF THE FRENCH DID ANYTHING TO DIMINISH TALBOT'S FIERCE REPUTATION.

Talbot took well to the task. One Irish nationalist said of Talbot that "from the time of Herod there came not anyone so wicked."

Talbot joined the English war effort in France in 1419 and participated in a series of military actions in the Ile de France, the region surrounding Paris. He fought valiantly under John, Duke of Bedford, in the Battle of Verneuil in 1424. Throughout his service in France, Talbot's role was that of a captain serving under the king's lieutenant in France, the person charged with waging war on Henry VI's behalf. Talbot excelled in raids that required stealth, but he was less successful in open battle. Following the English withdrawal from Orleans in May 1429, Talbot's army was overrun by the French at the Battle of Patay. Talbot was captured during the rout and subsequently spent four years in captivity. He was captured again during the Normandy campaign of 1449-1450, when the French laid siege to Rouen in the first year of the campaign. Eventually Talbot and seven other English hostages were released in July 1450.

Neither his defeat at Patay nor his time as a prisoner of the French did anything to diminish Talbot's fierce reputation. Indeed, his reputation as an enemy commander worth fearing remained intact even after the English lost their hold on Normandy. It was said that French mothers frightened their children into obedience by telling them that if they didn't behave, "Le Tal-bote" would get them.

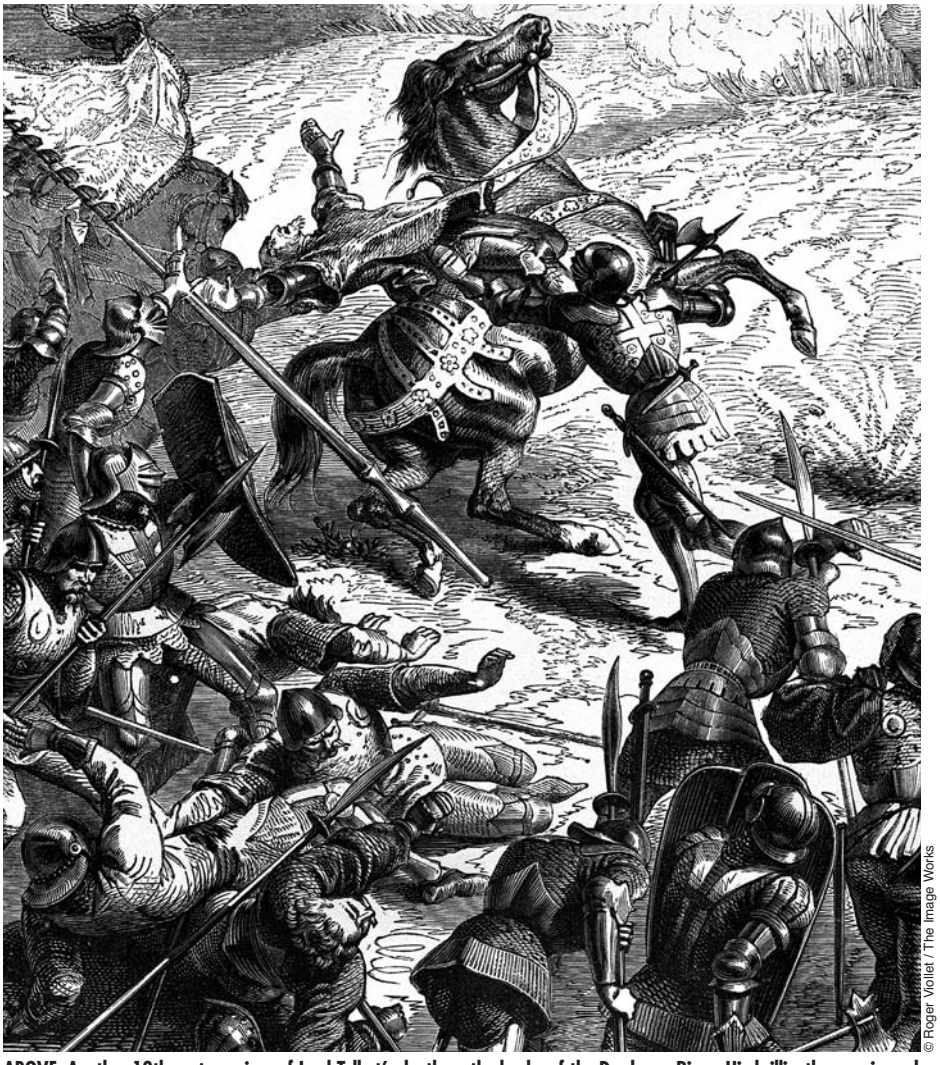
Talbot set sail in September 1452 for Gascony with an expeditionary force of about 3,000 men, many of whom he had recruited from his own estates at Whitchurch, Sheffield, and Painswick. Although looking somewhat askance at the "hedge-born swain" he was bringing with him from England, Talbot could count on such grizzled veterans as John Montfort, John Sterky, Thomas Dowe, John Hensacre, John Le Prince, Robert Stafford, and Richard Bannes to lead the troops into combat

when the time came. On October 17, Talbot's force waded ashore in the Medoc section of Gascony, northwest of Bordeaux. Talbot's landing caught the French by surprise, as they expected the English to try first to recapture Normandy. The Gascons, who welcomed Talbot's arrival, opened the gates of Bordeaux to the English on the night of October 22. Talbot spent the following weeks working with the Gascons to expel French garrisons scattered in fortified towns and castles throughout the region. By pushing into the Dordogne valley and retaking Libourne and Castillon, he set up a buffer zone against an expected French counterattack on Bordeaux.

By Christmas 1452, most of Gascony was once again under English rule. Some of the Gascons may have regretted the ease with which they allowed the English to resume control, as Talbot established a tax on the local population to pay for the cost of fielding his army. During the winter months, Talbot's fourth son, Viscount Lisle, assembled about 2,300 reinforcements and sailed to Gascony to join the elder Talbot.

Determined to drive the English from Gascony, Charles VII devoted the winter of 1452-1453 to building up a force that would be large enough to defeat Talbot—"the English Achilles"—in open combat. The French king assigned overall command for the 1453 campaign to the Lord of Clermont. Jean Bureau would command the artillery within Clermont's army, while the Count of Penthievre would lead the mounted lancers, or *gens d'ordonnance*. Once again the French split into three groups as they approached Gascony. This time, however, all three armies would slowly converge on Talbot's position in Bordeaux, capturing strongholds occupied by English or Gascon forces as they advanced. Even as the French closed in on his army, Talbot launched a swift raid on Fronsac on the Isle River, a tributary to the Dordogne, but just as quickly fell back to the safety of Bordeaux. By early summer, Clermont had slipped past Talbot and was encamped in the Medoc section of Gascony.

On June 21, Talbot sent a verbal challenge to Clermont and the other French commanders to march out and meet him in open battle at Martignas. The French, however, were not ready to give battle, and for once they resisted the time-tested English tactic of baiting them into a headlong attack. Talbot determined that he was substantially outnumbered and returned to Bordeaux. The likelihood of a major clash between the two sides was inevitable, and the English veteran saw that his only hope of victory, in the face of an enemy twice his size, was to fall on the smallest French column first and



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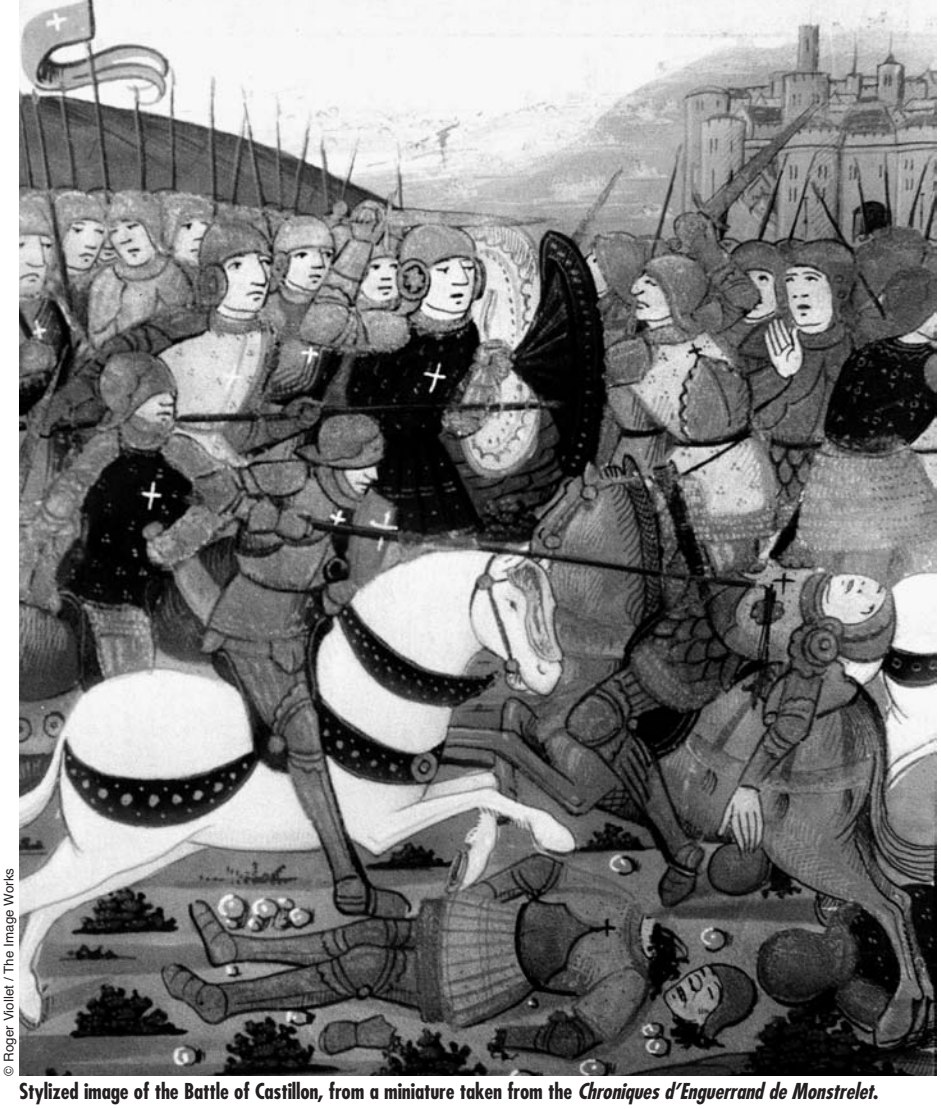
ABOVE: Another 19th-century view of Lord Talbot's death on the banks of the Dordogne River. His brilliantly caparisoned horse made him a sitting target. OPPOSITE: In happier days, King Henry VI invests John Talbot with the sword of office as constable of France in 1436. From an illuminated manuscript of the era.

defeat it quickly before it could be reinforced. Once again, it seemed that the French would oblige him. In early July, Bureau's army marched down the Dordogne River and prepared to lay siege to Castillon, a small wine-trading town on the north bank of the river, 30 miles east of Bordeaux.

While Clermont remained in the Medoc, Bureau's army advanced along the Dordogne like a dagger pointed straight at Bordeaux. His forces included the main French artillery train. While as many as a half dozen captains saw to the archers and the *gens d'ordonnance,* Bureau had complete authority over the siege operations necessary to reduce enemy strongholds. The powerful force reached Castillon on July 13 and immediately went into camp east of the city. A detachment of archers was dispatched to occupy the St. Laurent Priory north of the city, a position from which it could alert the main body to the arrival of an English relief force.

Bureau's decision to establish his main force in an artillery park east of the city was a cautious move. By doing so, he hoped to avoid being trapped between a relief force led by Talbot, approaching from the west, and the town's pro-English inhabitants. In keeping with the tactics of the day, Bureau's artillery park would allow the French to develop a siege slowly and methodically without exposing their own forces to enemy attack in the process. Once the artillery park was established, the French could go about building trenches and moving up guns, knowing that they could retreat to the safety of the artillery park if the enemy attacked in force.

From the safety of Bordeaux, Talbot waited for an opportunity to strike and defeat the smaller French armies maneuvering toward the city. Once they were defeated, he planned to turn his attention to Clermont's main army. As soon as the French arrived at Castillon, the townspeople sent a



Stylized image of the Battle of Castillon, from a miniature taken from the *Chroniques d'Enguerrand de Monstrelet*.

request to Talbot imploring him to come to their aid and drive off the besieging army before the town could be surrounded. The burgesses in Bordeaux joined a growing chorus of Gascon voices urging Talbot to drive the French from Castillon. Talbot explained his strategy at length to the burgesses of both towns, but they did not accept his rationale. Instead, the authorities in Bordeaux openly disdained Talbot for his inaction. Talbot took the rebuff badly, and after a few days he agreed to march to the aid of Castillon, even though it was against his better judgment.

Seven hundred French pioneers toiled around the clock for four days to construct Bureau's fortified artillery park east of Castillon. The park was roughly 700 yards long and 200 yards wide. The forces were tightly packed within its 30-acre interior. The site Bureau chose paralleled the Dordogne, which flowed less than a mile to the south and was anchored on the smaller Lidoire, a tributary of the Dordogne. On the north side, the Lidoire's relatively steep banks served as a natural moat and wall against any attack from that direction. The pioneers dug a deep ditch for the other three sides of the rectangular artillery park. Behind the ditch they erected an undulating wall with a number of strongpoints to provide interlocking fields of fire. The pioneers also built a strong palisade, using excavated dirt and felled trees, behind the ditch to protect the men and guns. They put the main gate in the south wall opposite the Dordogne. By sundown on July 16, the fortification was complete and the French position secure.

The French had 6,000 to 7,000 troops inside the artillery park. Another 1,000 Breton *gens d'ordonnance* were stationed on forested ground about 1 1/2 miles to the north, on the opposite side of the Lidoire. All told, the French had nearly 300 guns of all sizes within the park, massed wheel to wheel. The ordnance included culverins, serpentines, arbalests, and projectile launchers (crude, hand-held forerunners of the musket). The most effective were the culverins, lightweight cannons capable of firing .30-caliber balls through their five-inch bronze barrels. Smaller hand and swivel guns were mounted along the wall, while the larger guns were concentrated in strongpoints. When the English finally arrived, they would find the earthen walls literally bristling with guns.

Bureau had designed the fort in such a way that an attacking force would find it hard to develop a successful attack. For one thing, an attacker would find it almost impossible to launch a frontal attack across the natural barrier of the Lidoire. Another poor proposition was an attack against the west wall's extremely narrow front of less than 200 yards. And any attack from the south would mean that the attackers would have the Dordogne at their back. All three approaches carried high risks and seemed to offer little chance of success.

At dawn on July 16 Talbot marched his entire army through the gates of Bordeaux and east toward Castillon. Behind him was a combined force of 5,300 English and 3,000 Gascons. Talbot rode with a hand-picked vanguard of 500 men-at-arms and 800 mounted archers. Behind them trudged the dismounted troops and a smattering of artillery, panting to keep up. In the humid summer weather the English advanced along the north bank of the Dordogne, arriving at Libourne at sundown. After a brief rest, Talbot's vanguard continued east on a forested path to Castillon.

After a 12-mile ride, the English reached Castillon just as the sun rose over the horizon. Under cover of darkness, the English had been fortunate not to encounter a single enemy picket on their march. Stationed within the buildings and on the grounds of the St. Laurent Priory, the 1,000 French archers were oblivious to the enemy's approach. The only pickets they had posted were on the main road south toward Castillon.

On Talbot's order, the English swooped down on the sleeping priory, catching many of the French archers still in their bedrolls. In a furious melee that ended almost as quickly as it began, the English overwhelmed the enemy detachment. The enemy archers who were not slaughtered on the spot fled to the artillery park a mile away. Talbot's raid on the priory was a complete success. Bureau and the French captains in the artillery park made no effort to retake the priory. It had served its purpose as a forward observation post, even if it had fallen to the English in the process. Spirits soared among the English as they cleared the priory and secured the grounds for the rest of the troops, who were just then departing from Libourne at the time of the attack.

After marching more than 30 miles from Bordeaux to Castillon, Talbot decided to rest the vanguard and await the arrival of the main body of troops. He allowed his men to help themselves to the dead Frenchmen's food, and even ordered

up a celebratory cask of wine for the men. Meanwhile, he sent a scouting party under Sir Thomas Everingham to reconnoiter the French position west of Castillon. The famished Englishmen were just beginning to consume their meal when Everingham returned to report that the main French force at Castillon was well protected behind a strong rampart.

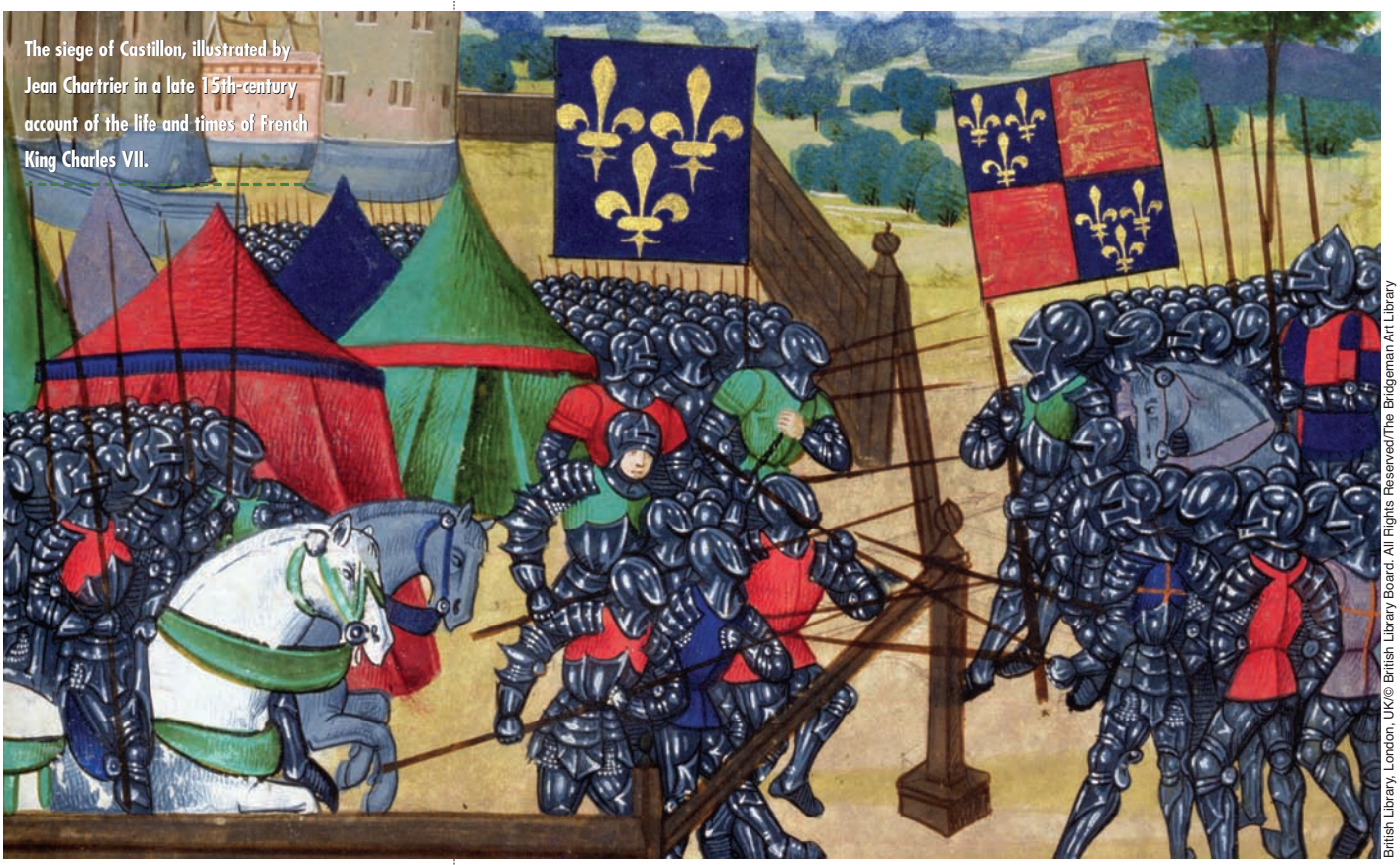
A small number of burgesses and messengers made their way from Castillon to the priory as soon as it became apparent that the English had driven off the French archers. One messenger carried word to Talbot that a number of the townspeople had observed large clouds of dust to the east, from which they inferred that the French were withdrawing. In fact, what they were seeing was the attendants inside the artillery park moving their horses to another location to make room for the archers who had fled the priory.

Talbot heard the report just as his personal chaplain was preparing to say prayers before the meal. He had to decide whether to continue to press the attack before his men had finished their meal, or wait for the rest of his infantry to arrive. Everingham urged him to wait for reinforcements, but Talbot already had made up his mind. He ordered his subordinates to reform the vanguard for a fresh attack. He was taking a considerable gamble. If the French were indeed withdrawing, the English would probably be able to inflict considerable damage to their army. But if the information brought by the messenger was incorrect, Talbot would face the entire French army with only a fraction of his own command. He told his chaplain to delay saying mass—he would worship after he had beaten the French once and for all.

Talbot formed the English vanguard and led it east. The vanguard splashed through a ford of the Lidoire and rode onto the open plain between the artillery park and the Dordogne. The English men-at-arms and archers dismounted for a foot assault. As for Talbot, he remained mounted to control the deployment of his men. As one of the conditions of his release from French captivity, Talbot had agreed never to wear armor or take up arms again against the king of France. In keeping with this pledge, Talbot refrained from wearing any armor or carrying a sword into battle at Castillon. Astride a white horse, Talbot was one of the most conspicuous soldiers on either side of the battlefield. His shoulder-length white hair streamed from under a purple velvet cap, and he wore a crimson cloak to signify his rank and privilege. He was observing the letter, if not necessarily the intent, of his parole.

Talbot was shocked when he saw that the French had not fled, but were calmly awaiting his approach. Despite the fact that the enemy camp was bristling with cannons and men-at-arms, Talbot believed the sheer fury of his assault would either breach the fort or convince the French to retire. Against the renewed advice of Everingham to wait for the rest of the infantry to arrive, Talbot ordered his captains to organize the men into two equal-sized groups. Once the attack started, the men-at-arms would advance while the archers fired over their heads from a distance. Obediently, the vanguard advanced in two groups toward the palisade. The men stepped off briskly, shouting, "For Talbot and St. George!" They leaped into the wide ditch and scrambled up the steep dirt walls. One of the English formations slammed into the west side of the artillery park nearest Castillon, while the other charged the east side.

As the English advanced, the French unleashed a withering blast of cannonfire from their large and small guns, raking the enemy ranks and producing heavy casualties. Despite the accuracy of the nearly point-blank fire, the English closed ranks and pressed on. Those who managed to live through the first blistering fire from the culverins and swivel dove for temporary protection into



The siege of Castillon, illustrated by Jean Chartrier in a late 15th-century account of the life and times of French King Charles VII.

the dry moat at the base of the palisade. The English rose again with a shout and scaled the rampart. Hand-to-hand fighting with swords and battle-axes broke out all along the wall. The French met the attackers with swords and primitive handguns.

One of the first attackers to reach the rampart was Everingham, who was serving as Talbot's standard-bearer. Amid the swirling melee, he and a small knot of soldiers ascended the palisade, and Everingham plunged his banner into a section of the rampart nearest the fort's entrance. He was killed almost immediately by a gunshot. The reinforcements he had urged Talbot to wait for before attacking arrived on the field in dribs and drabs and dashed pell-mell into the fray. French artillery raked the field, bowling over as many as six Englishmen at a time.

The French had deployed their guns along the irregular wall in a way that created interlocking fields of fire to break up attacking forces. They turned some of their bombards away from the walls of Castillon and toward the attackers. The larger pieces tore great swaths in the English ranks. "The artillery caused grievous harm to the English," wrote a French participant, "for each shot knocked down five or six men, killing them." The fallen lay wounded on the field, pleading for help as the dead piled up around them on the killing ground between the two armies.

By flinging his men against the French without any artillery of his own, Talbot had recklessly squandered the elite of his army. As more reinforcements arrived, Talbot waved them into battle. By the end of the fighting, Talbot probably committed 4,000 men—almost half of his entire army—to the ill-planned assault. His artillery, which was at the back of the army, did not arrive in time for the battle. The fire from the French guns continued to take a devastating toll on the English ranks as the battle wore on. The initial assault in which Everingham participated may have been the closest the English got to fighting their way into Bureau's artillery park.

The battle had been going on for about 90 minutes when the French *gens d'ordonnance* suddenly appeared on the English right flank. Before the battle, the mounted Breton men-at-arms had camped atop high ground in the forest directly north of the artillery park. Unseen, the French cavalry forded the Lidoire east of the artillery park and reformed for a charge on the exposed English right flank. The French heavy cavalry easily rolled up the exhausted enemy flank in front of them. Talbot dispatched a body of soldiers to guard his unanchored flank, but they were forced to give ground to the cavalry. As the Bretons rolled up the English flank, men and banners alike were trampled under the horses' hooves. The English broke and fled toward the Dordogne.

As soon as French inside the artillery park saw the flank attack was a success, they leaped over the parapet and advanced on the English. Talbot's attack fell apart, and the English found themselves on the defensive. The French cavalry, assisted by the French archers now fighting hand-to-hand with the English, drove the English back toward the Dordogne. The French archers dispatched any wounded Englishmen unworthy of ransom with a knife to the throat.

Seeing at a glance that his army had no chance for success once the mounted Bretons arrived, Talbot began looking for a way out of his predicament. The French were driving the English south toward the river, which would make it difficult to withdraw west across the Lidoire, the route by which they had arrived on the battlefield. He and his captains searched frantically for a shallow section of the Dordogne that would allow them a chance to get away. Meanwhile, Lisle tried desperately to organize a rear guard to protect the crossing.

While the English were reorganizing, the French gunners continued shelling their ranks.

JEAN BUREAU, Master Gunner of France

No single Frenchman was more responsible for the rapid victories in Normandy and Gascony that drove the English once and for all from France than Jean Bureau. Raised in the Champagne region, Bureau traveled to Paris to study law, after which he became a legal officer under the Lancastrian administration in Normandy established by English King Henry V. During that time he also served as a gunner under John, Duke of Bedford, who led the English forces in France after Henry V's death in 1422.

For reasons that remain unclear, Bureau left Paris in 1434 to take a post as an administrator for the French King Charles VII, who had been crowned five years before in Reims. Bureau immersed himself in the study of artillery. Thanks to his sharp mind and good education, he easily grasped the revolutionary developments in gunpowder and gun manufacture and the implications they held for land warfare.

Bureau first showed an aptitude for siege warfare during the capture of the English strongholds at Montreau in 1437, Meux in 1439, and Pontoise in 1441. When Charles VII established a separate branch of service for the artillery as part of his sweeping military reforms of the 1440s, he entrusted Bureau and his brother, Gaspard, to supervise the royal artillery. Without wasting any time, the Bureau brothers updated and enlarged the number of siege and field guns in the king's army. As a prerequisite to the campaigns to retake Normandy and Gascony, the brothers established a number of arsenals and magazines that would support the planned offensives.

The Bureau brothers took advantage of the offensive firepower their siege guns had over the outdated fortifications of the period. Virtually all of the towns and castles still had high walls designed for protection against infantry assault rather than artillery bombardment. They were easily battered into submission by the French bombards. By reducing enemy fortresses in a matter of days or weeks instead of months or years, the Bureaus enabled the Normandy offensive to proceed at a surprisingly rapid pace. Altogether, the French royal artillery under Bureau's direction played a crucial role in about 60 sieges, both large and small, during the campaign.

By January 1450, the French had forced the English back to the coast of Normandy. Determined to keep a foothold in Normandy, the English fought on. They still controlled Caen, Bayeux, Falaise, and the entire Cotentin peninsula. To help retain these possessions, English reinforcements led by Sir Thomas Kyriell arrived in Cherbourg under orders to reinforce Caen, the second-largest city in Lancastrian Normandy. To counter this force, the Count of Clermont led a French army, which included a number of culverins under Bureau's direction, to contest the English advance.

The two sides clashed at Formigny on April 15, 1450. Jean placed guns on each of the French flanks opposite the English longbows. To the consternation of the English, the enemy guns had greater range than the longbows, and the French shelled the longbows with impunity. The English were left with no other way to silence the guns than to charge them. Although they managed to capture the enemy guns, a fierce counterattack by the French cavalry regained the guns and cut up Kyriell's army in the process. From that point on, it was only a matter of using the French artillery to reduce England's last few fortresses in the region.

One of the shells struck Talbot's horse. Horse and rider toppled over, and Talbot found himself pinned beneath his mount. By that time, French archers and men-at-arms had infiltrated the English ranks. Talbot's aides scrambled to reach their commander and take him to safety. An alert French archer named Michel Perunin also saw the English leader go down and rushed to the spot where the dreaded "Tal-bote" lay. Perunin reached Talbot first, dismounted, and casually dashed out the old man's brains with a battle-axe. "Such was the end of this famous and renowned English leader, who for so long had been one of the most formidable thorns in the side of the French, who regarded him with terror and dismay," wrote the contemporary French chronicler, Matthew d'Escoucy.

Cut off from their route of advance and with the river behind them, the English found it almost impossible to extricate themselves from the fight. The *gens d'ordonnance* surrounded any knot of resistance on the banks of the Dordogne. Those Englishmen who were still alive continued searching for a way across the Dordogne. A significant number drowned while attempting to swim or wade across the river. In the thick of the action, Talbot's son, Lord Lisle, also became a target for the French lancers. He was cut down just as some of the English troops

"SUCH WAS THE END OF THIS FAMOUS AND RENOWNED ENGLISH LEADER, WHO FOR SO LONG HAD BEEN ONE OF THE MOST FORMIDABLE THORNS IN THE SIDE OF THE FRENCH …"

found a crossing known as the Pas de Rozan a short distance upstream. A small number of the English managed to cross to safety, but Talbot's army was no longer in any condition to fight. The remainder of his defeated army, including those who had not joined the main battle before it was over, streamed west and did not stop until they reached the safety of Bordeaux. Part of the French army at Castillon pursued the English as far as Saint-Emilion before stopping to regroup.

One member of the English army stayed behind. The following day, Talbot's herald received permission from the French to search the field for Talbot's body. Although the body was badly disfigured, the herald was able to identify it by a missing tooth. That same day, the town of Castillon surrendered to the French and was spared the sword. Talbot's body was returned to his family in Shropshire for burial. On the spot where he died, French noblemen erected a small stone chapel in his memory. It survived until the French Revolution 300 years later, when nationalist zealots tore it down. A new monument erected at the crossroads north of the battlefield gives a brief but pungent account of the battle: "On 17 July 1453," it reads, "Gascony was delivered from the yoke of England." In his own dramatic account of the battle, *Henry VI, Part One,* William Shakespeare adjudged it "a dismal fight/Betwixt the stout Lord Talbot and the French."

During the following week, the French arrived in force on the outskirts of Bordeaux and laid siege to the city, where a garrison of 3,000 English and Gascon troops had taken shelter after the disaster at Castillon. They held out for three more months before agreeing to an unconditional surrender on October 19. Having lost all patience with the Gascons, Charles VII fined the city 100,000 gold crowns for resisting his authority. He also banished the nobles who supported the English. For his service to the crown, Charles appointed Jean Bureau as Bordeaux's mayor for life. The Hundred Years' War, once and for all, was over. □

Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris/Giraudon/The Bridgeman Art Library

Mounted knights confront long-bow archers in this 15th-century illuminated manuscript. The archers have the upper hand.

The mere appearance of the dreaded French bombards outside Bayeux was enough to force the English garrison to surrender on May 16, 1450. The following month, the French besieged Caen. For almost three weeks, Bureau's artillery train, which included 17 enormous bombards, pounded the city's walls. Inside those walls, Edmund, Duke of Somerset, commanded a garrison that refused to surrender. When a cannonball crashed through the nursery where Somerset's children and wife were located, the duke finally called a halt to the resistance and surrendered.

Perhaps Bureau's finest hour occurred during the subsequent siege of Cherbourg. Thomas Gower commanded an English garrison there that numbered about 1,000 men. They faced a French army that may have numbered 20,000. In surveying the city from its outskirts, Bureau wished aloud that he could fire on the town from the seaside. Not willing to dismiss the idea as impractical, he devised a way to place a number of his guns on the beach. To do so, he instructed his gunners to cover the guns in tallow and hides to protect them from salt water during high tide. The technique worked like a charm, and French gunners were able to shell the city from that position when the tide went back out to sea. "The town received such a heavy battering from cannons and bombards that the like had never been seen before," wrote an anonymous French chronicler. Cherbourg's surrender on August 12 marked the end of nearly three decades of English rule in Normandy.

Bureau participated in both the first offensive into Gascony in 1450 and the second one to counter Lord Talbot in 1453. The idea of constructing an artillery park at Castillon to protect the men and guns from counterattack was not a new one to the French. They had used the concept for about a decade, notably at Dax in 1442, Mauleon in 1449, and Guissen in 1449. An impulsive assault on the French position without artillery support proved to be Talbot's undoing.

The Bureau brothers' legacy has remained intact over time. Their skill and ingenuity in developing, maintaining, and using effectively a large artillery train gave the French kings an upper hand against their foes well into the 16th century. □

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and flashed its red stamped notice with the word 'Secret' conspicuously emblazoned in the margin. 'Can't let you read this,' he mumbled, implying far more textual content than there was, 'but it's my letter of authority from the Great Man himself." While President Roosevelt's communiqué was certainly impressive, Couffer also knew that with the war under way and his 18th birthday approaching, he would soon be receiving another communication from the government—this time, from his draft board. Why not contribute to the war effort by participating in a covert government project? Couffer reasoned. He signed up for the project immediately.

Adams's workers plunged headfirst into their research, tackling a tricky series of challenges on their way to constructing a functional bat bomb. The bats would need to be chilled to force them into hibernation while they were transported by airplane to the target area, then awakened just in time to swoop down into the enemy cities before their time-triggered bombs detonated. Basic questions begged for answers: How far? How fast? How cold? And what kind of miniature bomb would fit on a bat?

At first glance, attaching tiny incendiary devices to unoffending bats might seem abusive to current sensibilities. But in the climate of the time, sacrifice was paramount, and the bats were needed for the war effort. "The idea of killing a million bats wouldn't fly very far today," acknowledged Couffer, "and it wouldn't have flown very far back then, except for those extraordinary circumstances. It was a time when the war meant everything, and everyone was involved in it one way or another." Adams's research team felt the potential loss of bat lives more acutely than anyone else, Couffer added, but they rationalized that "a million bat bombs could save a million lives."

After rigorously testing several species, Adams and his crew settled on the Mexican free-tailed bat to carry their incendiaries. Largely concentrated in New Mexico and Texas, the free-tailed bat population numbered variously from 50 to 100 million. Nearly nine million of them were thought to reside in Carlsbad Caverns in New Mexico, the original inspiration for Adams's bat bomb concept. Since the caverns were located in territory overseen by the United States Park Service, Adams had to receive special permission to venture into the caves and harvest large batches of the creatures.

Back at the team's laboratory, Fieser replaced the original incendiary, white phosphorus, with his own invention, napalm. Both were highly volatile. White phosphorus sparked into flame upon contact with oxygen. Napalm, a jellied gasoline, was safer to handle and burned more coolly than white phosphorus. Tests demonstrated that the half-ounce bats could each carry a payload of between 15 and 18 grams. Using Adams's initial notes, Fieser fashioned a napalm-filled cellulose capsule that he called the H-2 unit. "The incendiary was little, about as big as my forefinger to the second joint," noted Couffer.

Collection of Jack Couffer

ABOVE: Group photo of the colorful team behind Project X-Ray. OPPOSITE: Project X-Ray leader Lytle "Doc" Adams loads a bat bomb carrier.

Next came an altogether different question: how would each bat wear its bomb? After experimenting with different options, the team settled on a simple tactic: an adhesive was used to glue the incendiaries to the bats' breasts. The bomb carrier, a five-foot-long sheet metal tube, held 1,040 bats in 26 round trays, each approximately 30 inches in diameter. As Couffer recalled, "We then loaded what we called the 'armed bats' into the bomb carrier, which was like putting eggs into an egg crate and closing it up." During bomb drops, the bomb carrier would plummet to an altitude of 4,000 feet and drop a parachute, slowing its descent as the sides blew apart and the bats fluttered out to descend on the unsuspecting enemy city below.

Theorizing was all well and good, but the military wanted hard results. Fieser penned a report that ballparked how real-world bat bombing missions would fare. According to Fieser, while standard incendiaries might produce up to 400 ground fires on a single mission, bat bombs could ignite nearly 4,800—a 12-fold increase in destructive power. Unfortunately, progress in the bat bomb project was marred by less-than-spectacular trial demonstrations at Muroc Lake, California. Over 6,000 bats participated in the Army-sponsored assessments. During simulations involving the use of nonflammable dummy bombs, some of the bats failed to wake from hibernation and simply fell to earth; others chose to fly away into the sunset, never to be seen again. Even worse, at the brand-new Carlsbad auxiliary airfield, the accidental release of six live-loaded bats burned the base to the ground. Adams's team had better luck during a later test, as bomb-laden bats successfully destroyed a simulated Japanese village. All things considered, even accidental detonations proved the effectiveness of the bat bomb in destroying targets. Now the team needed to prove that the bats could be effectively controlled.

Unsure of the bat bomb's value and stymied by bureaucratic nitpicking, the Air Force washed its hands of the project in 1943. An undaunted Adams forged ahead, chatting up everyone within earshot, desperate to keep his project going. At the urging of a Marine Corps officer who observed the tests, the U.S. Navy picked up the venture, labeling it with the sinister codename, Project X-Ray, and assigning it to the Marines for further research. That December, Adams's team watched as their bats ignited multiple simulated fires at the Dugway Proving Ground outside of Salt Lake City, Utah. More testing was planned, followed by a production start date in May 1944, when one million incendiary devices would be created. After two years and $2 million in research costs, the bat bombs at last would be ready for war.

Behind the scenes, another military experiment was about to speed right past the bat bomb project. After a trip to Washington, D.C.,

Collection of Jack Couffer

a baffled Adams remarked to his team: "Some general I met regarding appropriations confused our secret project with another secret project that's apparently going on somewhere. It's the silliest nonsense you ever heard of." That "nonsense" was the atomic bomb research then under way at Los Alamos, New Mexico. Years later, Couffer mused that "there was no point in fiddling with bats when they had something like the atomic bomb." The Navy cancelled Project X-Ray in late 1944.

As the war progressed, the notion of using incendiaries to torch enemy cities continued, but in different form. American forces kicked off a series of firebombing raids on the Japanese mainland in March 1945. In his book *Laboratory Warriors,* Tom Shachtman paints a dramatic picture of the effects of an Allied firebombing raid on the Japanese mainland: "Three hundred bombers dropped 2000 'jellied gasoline' incendiaries on Tokyo on March 9, 1945, specifically targeting the densely populated area of Shitamachi, with its lath-and-clapboard buildings and small 'shadow factories' that performed subcontract work for Japanese armaments firms. The resultant firestorm was larger than Dresden, consuming 16 square miles and killing more than 100,000."

Following the war, the members of Adams's team—research assistants, gangsters, lobster fishermen, weightlifters, and the rest—went their separate ways. Couffer, the high school student swept into Project X-Ray, became a successful Hollywood cinematographer, while Adams continued to pursue his lifelong efforts to invent contraptions to benefit the general public. In 1946, with the backing of the government, Adams jumped in an airplane and scattered synthetic grass-growing pellets over the Papago Indian Reservation in southern Arizona. His goal was to reseed and reforest tired or burned-out areas. Wrote *Time* magazine, "[Adams] looks forward to the time when his man-made bird-pellets will be used to reseed all Western rangelands every ten years." It wasn't as crazy or exotic an idea as the bat bomb—but then, what could be? □

cesspool

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operations. On June 21, organized resistance came to an end in the 6th Marine Division's operational zone, which encompassed the southern shore of the island. The 1st Marine Division mounted its final attacks of the campaign, also on June 21, and by nightfall reported that all its objectives had been secured. Units of XXIV Corps made similar announcements, and Geiger declared Okinawa secure on July 2 after an 82-day campaign, although mopping-up operations continued, netting an additional 9,000 enemy dead and 3,800 captured. The last official flag-raising ceremony on a Pacific island battlefield took place at Tenth Army headquarters at 10 AM on June 22. Earlier that morning, with 7th Infantry Division troops closing in on their headquarters, Ushijima and Cho, just promoted to lieutenant general, committed ritual suicide; Ushijima had ordered Yahara to escape to Japan and make a final report on the campaign. Just before Cho killed himself, he wrote a note: "Our strategy, tactics, and techniques were all used to the utmost. We fought valiantly, but it was as nothing before the material strength of the enemy." Yahara, who was captured but eventually returned to Tokyo, later conceded, "The fact was that we never had a chance of victory on Okinawa."

Weeks before the firing stopped, American construction battalions and engineers, following close on the heels of the ground forces, were hard at work transforming the island into a major base for the projected invasion of the Japanese home islands. Repeated meat-grinder frontal assaults on Okinawa made it the costliest battle of the Pacific War: 34 Allied ships and craft of all types were sunk, most by suicide attackers, and 368 ships and craft were damaged. In addition, the Allied fleet had lost 763 aircraft. Total American casualties in the operation numbered more than 12,000 killed, including 5,000 Navy dead and almost 8,000 Marine and Army dead, and 36,000 wounded. The U.S. Navy suffered the greatest casualties of any operation in its entire history.

Combat stress accounted for large numbers of psychiatric casualties, taking a huge toll on the Americans' frontline strength. In all, there were more than 26,000 nonbattle (sickness or combat fatigue) casualties. At Okinawa, the rate of combat losses caused by battle stress, expressed as a percentage of those caused by combat wounds, was a staggering 48 percent. By contrast, in the Korean War, fought in the worst terrain conditions American soldiers had yet experienced, the overall rate would be between 20 and 25 percent. American losses were so heavy that several congressional leaders called for an investigation into the conduct of the military commanders. Incredibly, 35 percent of all American combatants who fought at Okinawa became casualties. The horrific cost of taking Okinawa and the specter of repeating the ordeal on an even greater scale by attacking the Japanese mainland weighed heavily in the American decision to use atomic weapons against Japan six weeks later.

Japanese losses were enormous: approximately 100,000 soldiers were officially killed in action and another 23,764 were believed buried by the Japanese themselves. Only 10,755 were captured or surrendered. Many residents of Okinawa fled to mountainous caves where they subsequently were entombed, and the precise number of civilian casualties will never be known. Historians have put the total number of Okinawans killed at close to 100,000, or one-fourth of the total population. Caught between two massive armies, the unfortunate Okinawans perished in a number of ways—from artillery fire, air attacks, starvation, fighting with the Japanese garrisons (either by coercion or by choice), being entombed in the vast number of caves that dotted the island, committing suicide before approaching American soldiers could reach them, or being shot by fanatical Japanese soldiers.

The Japanese lost a total of 7,830 aircraft and 16 combat ships as well as an estimated 2,000 pilots in kamikaze attacks. Altogether, the combined suicide campaign sank 11 American destroyers, one minesweeper, and assorted auxiliary craft and damaged four fleet carriers, three light carriers, 10 battleships, five cruisers, 61 destroyers, and countless support ships. All told, nearly a quarter of a million people were killed or wounded on Okinawa—almost 3,000 per day for every day of the three-month ordeal.

E.B. Sledge, a 1st Marine Division veteran of the battle, left behind a vivid description of the battle's horrors. "The mud was knee deep in some places for several feet around every corpse, maggots crawled about in the muck and then were washed away by the runoff of the rain," he wrote. "There wasn't a tree or bush left. The scene was nothing but mud; shell fire, flooded craters with their silent, pathetic, rotting occupants; knocked-out tanks and amtracs; and discarded equipment—utter desolation. We were in the depths of the abyss, the ultimate horror of war. In the mud and driving rain before Shuri, we were surrounded by maggots and decay. Men struggled and fought and bled in an environment so degrading I believed we had been flung into hell's own cesspool."□

By Al Hemingway

The Battle of the Crater was an unalloyed disaster. Commanding general Ulysses S. Grant quickly distanced himself from the travesty.

LIEUTENANT COLONEL HENRY PLEASANTS OF THE 48TH PENNSYLVANIA Infantry was a melancholy man prior to his involvement in the Civil War. He had lost his wife to a debilitating fever, and her untimely death "had, in the span of a single day, drained all meaning from his life." But that was all about to change for the morose officer. Pleasants's unit was comprised of burly, hard-drinking miners from the coal region of Pennsylvania. They were a part of Maj. Gen. Ambrose Burnside's IX Corps of the Army of the Potomac. The Union Army had fought its way to the very outskirts of Petersburg, Virginia, in 1864, but now was bogged down in a long siege after it had failed to seize the city in mid-June.

Pleasants had overheard one of his men talk about digging a tunnel to the Confederate lines at the shortest point between the two armies at Elliott's Salient and blowing a gap in their defenses. The idea intrigued him and filled him with a new purpose in life. He soon brought it to Burnside for consideration. The ultimate outcome, however, would be one of the worst debacles of the entire conflict.

In his new book ***The Horrid Pit: The Battle of the Crater, The Civil War's Cruelest Mission*** (Carroll & Graf, New York, New York, 2007, 284 pp., photographs, maps, index, $26.95, hardcover), author Alan Axelrod gives an in-depth look at the personalities involved in the planning, construction, and unfortunate outcome in what would be dubbed the Battle of the Crater.

Burnside was enthusiastic about Pleasants's scheme and quickly informed Maj. Gen. George Meade, commander of the Army of the Potomac, and Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant, overall commander of the Union Army. Although Burnside envisioned the plan as a way to break the long siege, he also knew that if it was successful, it would help restore his reputation after the ill-fated "mud march" following the Battle of Fredericksburg in December 1862 and his lackluster performance at Spotsylvania Court House earlier in the year.

Neither Meade nor Grant was keen on digging a 500-foot tunnel toward the Rebel perimeter and igniting it, but they saw it as a way to keep the men occupied and out of the stifling heat of the Virginia sun. Both reluctantly gave the go-ahead but remained, as Axelrod points out, ambiguous in their orders to Burnside. For his part, Burnside drew up an elaborate attack plan that called for Brig. Gen. Edward Ferrero's 4th Division, which consisted of nine regiments of United States Colored Troops (USCT), to be the vanguard for the assault. They would reach the breach in the Confederate lines, fan out, and enlarge the opening, while

Union soldiers advance into the Crater after the explosion. Mounds of dirt thrown up by the blast can be seen in the middle distance.

Library of Congress

several other divisions would follow and protect Ferrero's flanks and drive toward Petersburg.

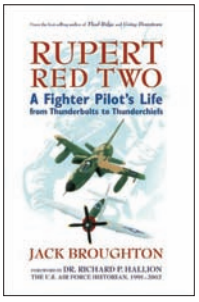
Meade and Grant were particularly wary of using black soldiers in combat. Until then, Ferrero's men had been performing menial duties in the rear. Burnside pointed out, however, that his white troops were literally spent. Long, arduous months of combat had taken their toll and they were tired and in need of rest. Meade interceded and, backed by Grant, ordered a white division to lead the charge instead. Both men feared political repercussions from Washington if black soldiers were slaughtered indiscriminately.

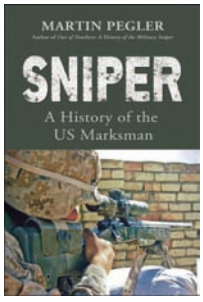
Burnside had his remaining divisions draw straws to determine who would lead the attack. Brig. Gen. James H. Ledlie's 1st Division drew the short straw and was chosen. Ledlie, a coward and drunk, would later be relieved of command after it was discovered that he spent the entire battle in the rear with a bottle of rum for company while his troops were being massacred a few miles away.

In the predawn hours of July 30, after several attempts at igniting the fuses, explosives placed inside the mine were detonated. What followed would never be forgotten by eyewitnesses that day. "The air was filled with earth, cannon, caissons, sand-bags and living men, and with everything else within the exploded fort," wrote one Union soldier. Ledlie's division raced across toward the gap but, instead of moving around the massive crater, they took up positions within the depression, giving the Confederates time to regroup and counterattack. In the end, over 5,000 Union soldiers lost their lives, many of them USCT who were thrown into the fray after Ledlie's men had become stalled at the crater.

Axelrod uses telegrams and actual excerpts from a court of inquiry that convened to investigate the action. Although Burnside, Ferrero, and Ledlie were censured, Meade escaped any imputation of wrongdoing for his part in interfering with Burnside. The USCT troops had trained prior to the battle and were eager to fight, while Ledlie's troops were not familiar with their part in the initial assault. If they had kept advancing, the battle might have had a different outcome.

The Horrid Pit is a fascinating account of what transpired that sultry summer day in Petersburg in 1864, when a breakthrough Union victory might have been achieved. As Axelrod notes, "Instead of appreciating the power of moral hope, Grant and Meade recognized only the hazard of moral liability. The black men might win their freedom. But they might also lose their lives. That the men of the Fourth Division were willing to post their lives as collateral against the winning of their freedom counted for nothing. For the white commanders were not willing to let them make this bargain. They were guilty of a cowardice no military tribunal could prosecute, a terrible absence of faith and hope. And in this grievous lapse, a glorious victory was lost, cast away, with so many lives, into the horrid pit."





North American Indians in the Great War by Susan Applegate Krouse, University of Nebraska Press, Norman, OK, 2007, 250 pp., photographs, $45.00, index, hardcover.

Inspired by the tireless work of Joseph K. Dixon, long an advocate for Native American rights, anthropologist Susan Krouse has compiled numerous firsthand accounts of Native Americans who served in World War I. These interviews were conducted by Dixon immediately following the conflict and offer the reader a glimpse into their service during that period. Dixon talked to an astonishing 25 percent of Native Americans who fought in the Great War and documented their stories. Sadly, he was never able to finish his work because of his death in 1926. Of the 12,000 Indians who joined the military, Dixon amassed over 2,800 questionnaires to document their service.

Dixon not only wanted to present an accurate portrait of the Indians' participation during the war and their return to their homes, but his research also had an ulterior motive. He wanted to assist Native Americans in gaining citizenship, which, until that time, was not successful among the various tribes.

Native Americans performed admirably and at times heroically during World War I. Dixon noted that they wanted to "demonstrate their loyalty to the United States, as well as to their family traditions." While both these reasons were true, Dixon's fervent wish was that by demonstrating the Indians' willingness to serve and even die for their country, it would bring about greater justice for their people.

Arthur Elm, an Oneida Indian from Wisconsin, served with the 1st Machine Gun Company, 127th Infantry, 32nd Division and saw extensive combat during the war. He told Dixon, "As I came into the port of New York on the 'Antigone,' a guy on the boat called out, 'Who wants to re-enlist?' He meant it as an insult to the Army. I felt it was a pretty dirty remark. He didn't appreciate the kind of country he is living in, or the kind of country we have been fighting for."

Dixon had planned to write a book entitled *From Tepees to Trenches* chronicling the sacrifices made by Native Americans in World War I. He wrote to a friend in 1920: "I want to place before the American people—in the form of a book—a complete story of the North American Indian in the War." Although Dixon's work would never come to fruition, Susan Applegate Krouse has done an admirable job of taking his monumental work and writing a wonderful account of Indian warriors in the Great War.

Rupert Red Two: A Fighter Pilot's Life From Thunderbolts to Thunderchiefs by Jack Broughton, Zenith Press, St. Paul, MN, 2008, 352 pp., photos, index, $26.95, hardcover.

Colonel Jack Broughton compiled an incredible service during his three decades with the U.S. Air Force. He started his career after World War II and flew the last of the propeller-driven aircraft and witnessed the United States enter the jet age in the early 1950s. He saw extensive combat in the skies over Korea and Vietnam, flying hundreds of missions during both conflicts. He was awarded the Air Force Cross, two Silver Stars, four Distinguished Flying Crosses, and a host of other medals and decorations.

It wasn't, however, until his retirement that Broughton began his career as a writer, relating personal experiences during his 30-year career, especially his time in Vietnam. Disgusted by the policies initiated by the Johnson administration, Broughton penned his first book, *Thud Ridge,* in 1969 in protest of the rules of engagement levied on him and his fellow pilots. He followed that book with *Going Downtown* about his experiences flying combat missions over North Vietnam.

An outspoken critic of politicians who needlessly place their armed forces in harm's way, Broughton delivers his newest book in the same gutsy style as his previous two. As former Air Force Historian Richard P. Hallion writes, "Sit back and strap in—tight. You're joining the U.S.

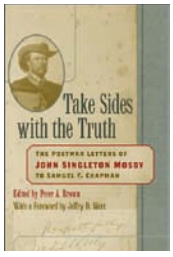
Army Air Force at the end of the Big One. You'll be passing from the era of the propeller-driven airplane to the era of the supersonic jet—You'll love it!"

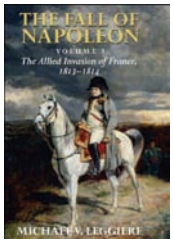
Sniper: A History of the U.S. Marksman by Martin Pegler, Osprey Publishing, New York, New York, 2007, 280 pp., photos, index, $24.95, hardcover.

"It is a curious anomaly that the apogee of the 18th-century rifleman, the modern military sniper, has in very recent times suddenly emerged into the limelight from the outer fringes of warfare," writes historian Martin Pegler in the introduction to his new book, *Sniper.* "The recent conflicts in the Gulf and Iraq have been called, with good reason, snipers' wars and the snipers themselves have changed from being nobody's children to the most sought after military specialists on the battlefield."

Pegler's statement is a far cry from the image of the skulking sniper, often thought of as a demented killer with a thirst for human blood. In reality, snipers are a dedicated, hard-working lot who undergo extensive training to become professionals at their trade. And work hard they must—one wrong move in combat could mean the difference between life and death.

Tracing the evolution of American snipers from the early colonial period to today's recent conflicts in the Middle East, Pegler paints a new picture of the sniper. "None of us did it to be heroes or to get medals—a sniper with that attitude isn't going to live long—we did it to make a difference," writes Chuck Mawhinney, a USMC sniper during the Vietnam War. "I hope everybody reading this book will understand that, because it is a story that deserves to be told."





Take Sides with the Truth: The Postwar Letters of John Singleton Mosby to Samuel F. Chapman edited by Peter A. Brown, University Press of Kentucky, Lexington, KY, 2007, 166 pp., index, $40.00, hardcover.

Dubbed the "Gray Ghost," John Singleton Mosby was a guerrilla fighter for the Confederacy during the Civil War. His lightning raids, often behind enemy lines, inflicted great damage on the Union forces. Although a brilliant leader, Mosby could prove to be a disturbing companion because of his obstinate attitude. Because of this, he had few close friends.

One individual did manage to get close to the moody Mosby, Samuel Chapman, a Baptist minister who served with him during the Civil War. After the conflict, Mosby and Chapman corresponded for years. From 1880 until 1916, the two former Rebels wrote numerous letters to each other; Mosby still referred to Chapman as "Captain."

The letters offer an insight into Mosby's character and honesty. He became an ardent Republican in a time when almost everyone in the South was a Democrat. He paid a high price for his political apostasy. His home was destroyed by fire and an attempt was made on his life. Despite this, Mosby remained adamant in his support of the Republican Party.

Mosby's correspondence is interesting as history, and reveals another side to the man such as his surprising fear of being awakened in the night. He was always candid about his feelings toward others. He held great disdain for Union General Philip Sheridan, writing, "The truth is the records prove that Phil was a great liar or, according to his own statement, a murderer. I give him the benefit of the doubt & so he was a great liar." *Take Sides with the Truth* should be on every Civil War buff's bookshelf.

The Fall of Napoleon: Volume I, The Allied Invasion of France, 1813-1814 by Michael V. Leggiere, Cambridge University Press, New York, New York, 2007, 690 pp., maps, index, $40.00, hardcover.

There has been a plethora of books on Napoleon Bonaparte. The strategies he employed are still taught at the top military institutions throughout the world, and his campaigns are studied by military historians and scholars alike. This rendition of the end of Napoleon's career illustrates the massive allied effort to cross the Rhine River in the winter of 1813-1814 in an

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SIMULATION GAMING *By Eric T. Baker*

Queen Boudicca exacts her revenge against the Romans in a new *Rome at War* game.

The Roman conquest of Briton in AD 43 is modeled in the new board game from Avalanche Press, **Rome at War: Queen of the Celts.** This is the third game in the *Rome at War* series and in nine scenarios it portrays the major events of the Romans' 40-year campaign that gave them rule of all of Briton and Wales and parts of Scotland. The scale is that of Roman cohorts and British warbands, and most of scenarios can be fought in under two hours.

Although the game models the highlights of the whole campaign, it is the subject of the seventh scenario that gives the game its name. Boudicca became the queen of the Iceni (who lived in what today is East Anglia) when the Roman-imposed king, who may have been her husband, died. The kingdom was left to Rome in the king's will; when Boudicca objected, the local Roman officials whipped her and then forced her to watch her daughters' rape. The officals made the mistake of leaving her alive, however, and Boudicca bided her time until the main Roman force was sent to campaign in Wales.

Boudicca's rebellion drew more British tribes as it went along. Her army sacked several Roman towns and killed thousands of people. They defeated one Legion, and by the time the governor, Suetonius, returned from Wales, he was reduced to retreating before Boudicca's superior numbers. Only when he was finally convinced that he could get no reinforcements did Suetonius make a stand, and it is this final battle that the game models. In the real world, it was a rout by the Romans, but in the game, players don't have to repeat the Britons' mistakes.

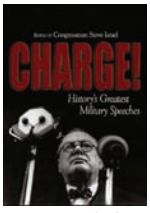
All of the battles depicted have similarly deep stories. There are three maps, two rule books (one for the base *Rome at War* rules and one for these scenarios), 88 oversized counters, and 154 square ones. There are counters for all the unit types needed, including chariots and even druids. Game play is focused on the leaders since they give the armies their initiative and action points. Unlike many ancients games where two lines simply move forward and clash, there is quite a bit of maneuver in *Queen of the Celts,* particularly as units take damage and commanders try to rally them. Not a hardcore simulation, but an entertaining one.

attempt to crush the French Army and force the "Little Corporal" to capitulate once and for all.

Leggiere does a masterful job at telling the story. Napoleon wanted his generals to defend the Rhine at all costs despite the weakened condition of their forces. His marshals did not agree with the emperor's plan and sought to "trade land for time." The combination of military and political intrigue ultimately would cause Napoleon's downfall and his exile to Elba.

The author has done exhaustive research in writing the first volume of his proposed multi-volume work, and Napoleon aficionados are eagerly awaiting the next book in the set.

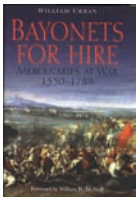
Charge! History's Greatest Military Speeches edited by Congressman Steve Israel, Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, MD, 2007, photos, index, $32.95, hardcover.



There is no doubt that throughout history leaders have inspired their troops or countrymen with speeches that motivated them to winning a battle or even a war. In this latest book from the Naval Institute Press, New York Congressman Steve Israel has collected some of the most famous speeches and illustrates how they have inspired him as well.

From ancient times to present-day leaders, Israel has compiled the speeches in chronological order for the reader. Perhaps one of the most celebrated is British Prime Minister Winston Churchill's message to the country on June 4, 1940, urging its citizens to persevere: "Whatever the cost may be, we shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender." Churchill and his nation made good on that promise.

Bayonets for Hire: Mercenaries at War 1550-1789 by William Urban, Greenhill Books, St. Paul, MN, 2007, 304 pp., photos, index, $39.95, hardcover.



Since the beginning of recorded history, men have been enticed to join the army to fight for money, land, and other possessions. Given the name of mercenaries, these individuals have contributed much to victories on the battlefield since that time. But mercenaries have had a soiled reputation. Those fighting for mere materialistic gain, instead of their freedom or home, are considered by many unpatriotic. Yet without such men, battles and war cannot be won. The British Army during the American Revolution employed German-born Hessians, and some of those who defended the Alamo during the Texas War of Independence were lured to the Lone Star State with promises of land.

"I conclude that the age-old divergence of interest between civilian paymasters and professional fighting men, that gave mercenaries such a bad reputation, is still safely hidden, but may flare again into angry confrontation in time to come" writes William H. McNeill, professor of history emeritus at the University of Chicago. "For the age of mercenaries is not a thing of the past. It is instead a growing reality among us, not solely in the United States, but around the world."

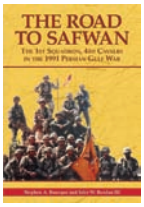
Rule Number Two: Lessons I Learned in a Combat Hospital by Dr. Heidi Squier Kraft, Little, Boston, MA, 2007, 243 pp., $23.99, hardcover.

One of the greatest tragedies of war is the fate of those who suffer long-lasting mental anguish from their participation in battle. In the Civil War, they named it the "soldier's sickness"; in World War I it was dubbed "shell shock"; World War II saw it called "combat fatigue," and Vietnam had the new phrase: "post-traumatic stress disorder."

Whatever term is used, mental strain resulting from strenuous combat can cause severe depression that must be treated. Also, survivor's guilt is another malady that can prove disastrous to servicemen. They often ask the question, "Why did I survive and my buddy get killed?"

Dr. Heidi Squier Kraft served for seven months with a U.S. Navy Surgical Team in 2004 to assist those suffering from such mental disorders. What makes her story even more heart-wrenching is the fact she had to leave her twin boy and girl behind during her stint in the Middle East. Since then she has left the Navy and works with the Combat Stress Control Program as its deputy coordinator. She still helps those who cannot forget the horrors of war.

The Road to Safwan: The 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry in the 1991 Persian Gulf War by Stephen A. Bourque and John W. Burdan III, University of North Texas Press, Denton, TX, 2007, 312 pp., photos, maps, index, $27.95, hardcover.



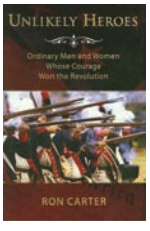
Safwan is a city situated along the notorious "Highway of Death," where coalition aircraft destroyed hundreds of Iraqi vehicles and armor during the first

Persian Gulf War in 1991. General Norman Schwarzkopf, commanding general of the Coalition Forces, accepted the Iraqi surrender in Safwan.

The authors give a detailed account of the day-to-day combat by the 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry of the 1st Infantry Division. The "Big Red One" fought pitched battles with the elite Iraqi Republican Guard and helped pave the way for the surrender. The troopers also participated in Operation Norfolk, severing the Basra Highway and ultimately seizing Safwan Airfield.

This book is a tribute to the esprit de corps within the ranks of the unit. Despite the contention that the 1991 Gulf War was primarily a high-tech conflict, this account dispels that myth by relating the common soldiers' story and their personal part in the sometimes horrific fighting.

Unlikely Heroes: Ordinary Men and Women Whose Courage Won the Revolution by Ron Carter, Shadow Mountain, Salt Lake City, UT, 2007, 254 pp., $21.95, hardcover.



Everyone knows the story of teacher Nathan Hale from Connecticut, a spy for the Americans during the Revolutionary War. He was caught by the British and eventually executed, but not before he uttered his famous last words: "I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my country." There were, however, many other brave colonists, both male and female, who put their lives on the line to defend the emerging nation. In his new book, author Ron Carter profiles some of these lesser known personalities of that period in American history.

For example, Lydia Darragh, a Quaker woman who resided in Philadelphia when the British occupied the city in 1777, saved George Washington's forces from certain destruction. She was fortunate to have a cousin was serving on the staff of British General William Howe, and this allowed her to remain in her home, with Howe merely requesting to occasionally hold meetings in her library.

It was during one of these meetings that Darragh hid in a linen closet and overheard them plan to ambush Washington as he moved his army from Whitemarsh to another location. Slipping away the next morning, she told an officer of the Continental Army, who quickly told Washington of the Redcoats' plan. He changed routes accordingly. His army had been saved from annihilation by one brave and resourceful woman. □

blenheim

Continued from page 35

defensive. There followed further allied victories at Ramilles and Oudenarde in the Spanish Netherlands. During the bitter winter of 1708-1709, France seemed on the brink of defeat, but Louis again rallied his people. A new army under General Claude-Louis-Hector Villars met Marlborough and Eugene at Malplaquet on September 11, 1709. The French lost 17,000 men, and estimates of allied casualties ranged from 8,000 to 18,000, the latter figure being more likely. The allies held the field, but the French retreated in good order, resulting in a virtual stalemate between the two sides. At length, Louis made private overtures for peace. The English signed the Treaty of Utrecht with France in 1713.

The treaty brought large colonial gains for England, while the Dutch gained the fortifications along the French border, and the Austrians obtained Naples, Sardinia, and Milan. Brandenburg-Prussia officially became a kingdom, and Savoy got control of Sicily. Louis ruled a war-weary France until his health broke in 1715. Suffering from fever and gangrene, he mustered enough strength to say, "I depart, France remains," before dying on September 1, 1715, at Versailles. Louis XIV's grandson retained the throne of Spain, but that nation was shorn of its European possessions. The greatest winners were the British, who had cemented their position as a great continental land power. The treaty left France and England as the two most vigorous nations of Europe.

In 1933, Marlborough's direct descendant, Winston Churchill, wrote with pardonable pride: "The triumph of the France of Louis XIV would have warped and restricted the development of the freedom we now enjoy, even more than the domination of Napoleon or of the German Kaiser. Marlborough commanded the armies of Europe against France for ten campaigns. He fought four great battles and many important actions. It is the common boast of his champions that he never fought a battle that he did not win, nor besieged a fortress he did not take. Amid all the chances and baffling accidents of war he produced victory with almost mechanical certainty. He quitted war invincible; and no sooner was his guiding hand withdrawn than disaster overtook the armies he had led. Successive generations have not ceased to name him with Hannibal and Caesar. Until the advent of Napoleon no commander wielded such widespread power in Europe. Upon his person centered the union of nearly 20 confederate states. He held the Grand Alliance together no less by his diplomacy than by his victories." □

mourn

Continued from page 49

boasted a garrison reinforced by 10,000 men, most of whom unfortunately spent the nights in drunken festivities. No one noticed the Goths, who stealthily climbed the walls at night, using trees they had felled for the purpose. The shocked population awoke to the terror of barbarians killing, raping, burning, and looting through the streets. The cowardly garrison soldiers managed to flee out an opposite gate. The spoils of Trapezus were immense. Its holy temples were stripped bare, and endless throngs of captives marched to the Goth and Borani fleet. Chained to the oars, they rowed their conquerors back to Bosporus. Their appetite for loot not yet stilled, the Goths returned to loot the cities of Bithynia's western coast. Only the fall equinox, after which the Black Sea turned treacherous, recalled the sea raiders to their northern homes.

For 10 years the Goths stirred little as they lived off the rich spoils of their plunder until their old Scandinavian neighbors, the Heruli, appeared on the Black Sea. In 267, together with the Heruli, who were expert seamen, the Goths broke through the Dardanelles and sailed into the Aegean and the Mediterranean seas for the first time. Their way south open, Goths and Heruli landed near Thessalonica, ravaged Attica, and looted the hinterland of Asia Minor. Their naval spearheads reached as far as Rhodes and Cyprus. Swarms of barbarians roamed through the luxuriant theaters, temples, and baths of the Empire's cities, taking what they wished, burning and looting what they could not take. Their greatest prize was the destruction of the famous temple of Diana at Ephesus, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world.

The Goth triumph at Ephesus proved to be the high-water mark of their third-century invasions. Emperor Marcus Aurelius Valerius Claudius struck back with a spirited naval and land counteroffensive that was so complete that it eliminated any major Goth threat for the next 100 years, earning Claudius the victorious name Gothicus. Claudius and other able soldier-emperors restored the security of the Empire, although Dacia was permanently lost to the Goths. By the time of Diocletian and Constantine the Great, Rome seemed destined for a new Golden Age. But if the Goths were temporarily cowed, other barbarians were not. When the Goths did return, in the latter half of the 4th century, they carried all before them. Finally in 410, Rome, unconquered for 800 years, fell to their spears, heralding the final dissolution of the Roman Empire. □

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