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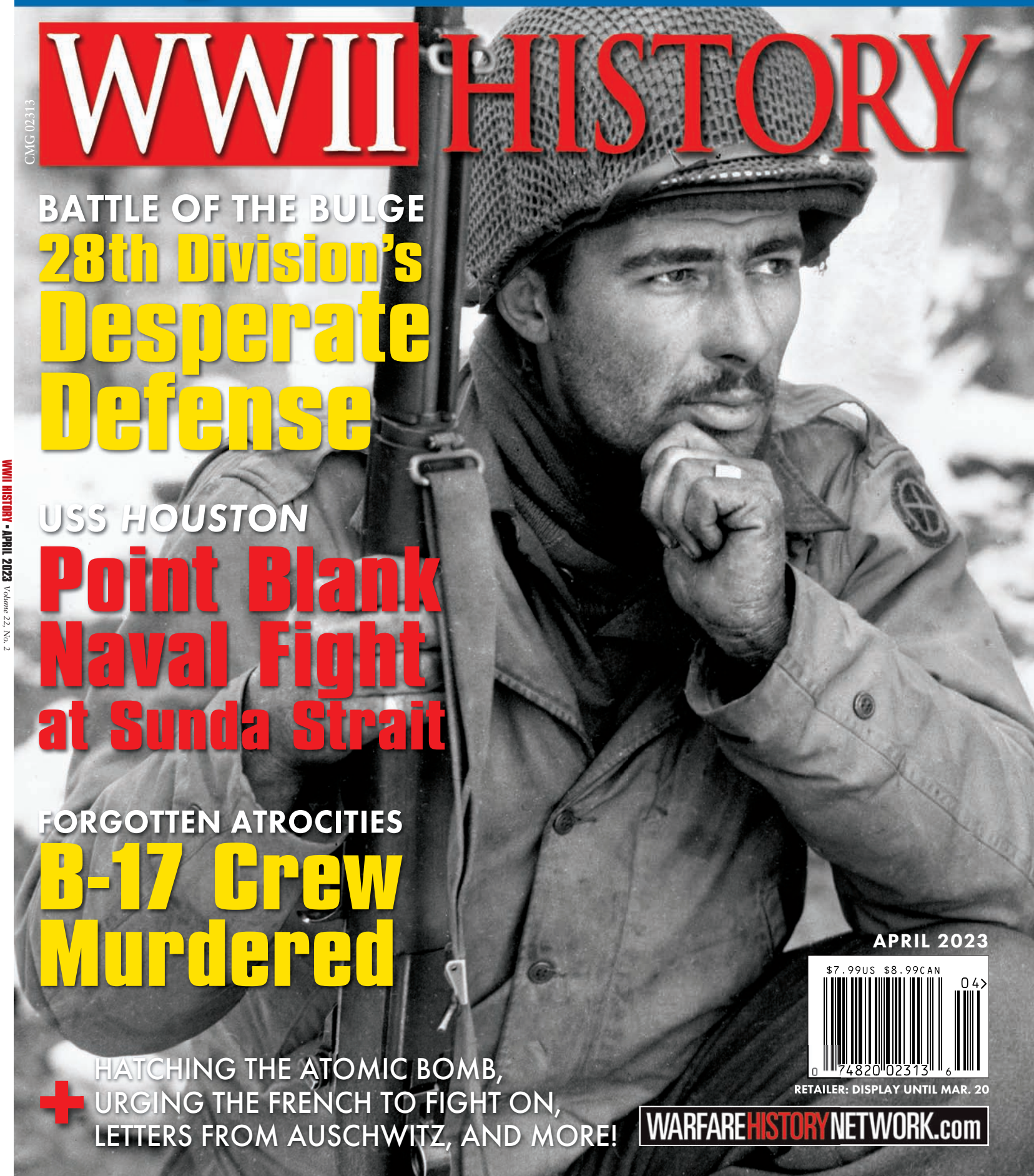

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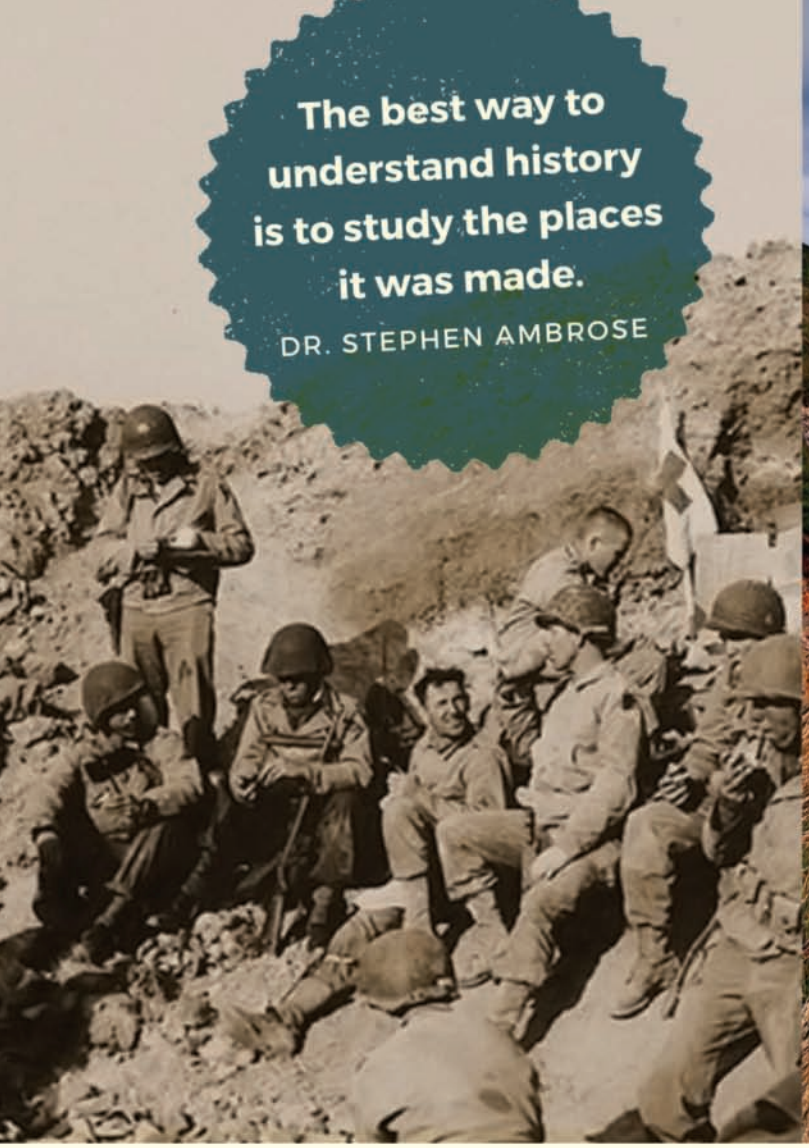

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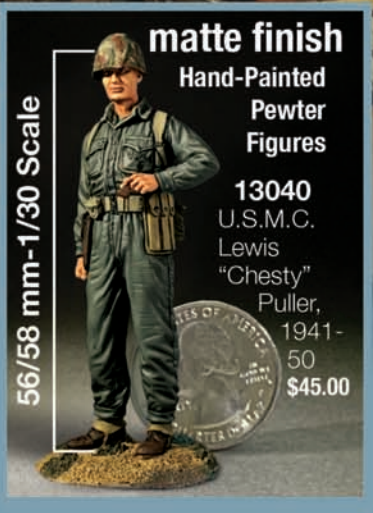

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Cover: Sergeant Herbert Liman, a member of the 134th Infantry Regiment, searches for a German sniper during the Battle of the Bulge. See story page 24. Photo: National Archives.

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Editorial

Conrad Veidt Lived Out His Anti-Nazi Commitment

THE 1942 FILM *CASABLANCA* REMAINS ONE OF THE MOST POPULAR Hollywood creations of all time, immortalizing the characters played by Humphrey Bogart (Rick Blaine) and Ingrid Bergman (Ilsa Lund).

Another prominent personage among the cast was German-born actor Conrad Veidt, who played the Nazi Major Heinrich Strasser. Veidt, incidentally, was the highest paid member of the cast despite his second billing. The reason, though, is apparent when considering his prior success on the silver screen in Germany, Great Britain, and the United States. Veidt, who died 80 years ago this month, appeared in more than 100 films from 1917 until his death of a heart attack at the age of 50.

Veidt was born in Berlin in 1893 and served in the German Army on the Eastern Front during World War I. Ill health brought about a discharge from military service, and his pursuit of an acting career blossomed. He found fame in silent films in Germany and emigrated to the United States in the 1920s. However, the advent of talking pictures curbed his marketability due to his German accent, and he returned to Germany just as the Nazis were solidifying their grip on power.

Veidt became vehemently opposed to the Nazis, and when Propaganda Minister Josef Goebbels began an extensive examination and purge of Jews and anti-Nazis in the German film industry, the actor looked at a "racial questionnaire" he had been obliged to complete. Just a week earlier, he had married a Jewish woman, Ilona Prager. The form required that Veidt declare his "race." He wrote boldly, "Jude." Although he was not Jewish, Veidt refused to forsake his wife. He also chose to stand with the persecuted Jews of Nazi Germany. Still, by making the declaration his life and those of his family members were in peril.

Veidt and Prager fled to Britain, and in 1939, after renouncing his German citizenship, the actor became a British subject. He continued to work in film while in Britain, performing in multiple leading roles, and soon the couple returned to the United States, settling again in Hollywood.

Even while pursuing his acting career in wartime, Veidt sympathized with those who suffered during the Luftwaffe onslaught against British cities during the Blitz. He had a particular soft spot for the children of London who sought safety from the Luftwaffe bombing by moving into the Underground tunnels of the urban transit system. During the difficult Christmas of 1940, he purchased 2,000 one-pound tins filled with candy, 2,000 packages of chocolate, and 1,000 envelopes that contained gifts of British pounds sterling. These were distributed to children whose families were in great need during the difficult holiday season.

One air raid shelter official wrote with gratitude to Veidt, "It is significant to note that, as far as is known to me, you are the only member of the Theatrical Profession who had the thought to send Christmas presents to the London children."

Veidt further did everything he could to help his ex-wife, Felizitas Radke, and their daughter to leave Nazi Germany for neutral Switzerland. He facilitated the move of his current in-laws from Austria to Switzerland as well. Interestingly, he was quite fond of Radke's mother and offered to help her escape the Fatherland for safety, but the old lady retorted that "no damned little Austrian Nazi corporal" could compel her to leave her native country. She reportedly survived the war, but Conrad Veidt never saw her again.

Meanwhile, Veidt completed his memorable performance in *Casablanca*, and it was the last of his work released during his lifetime. Well aware that he had inherited a heart condition from his mother, Veidt continued to be a chain smoker. He took nitroglycerine pills for chest pain but remained active.

On April 3, 1943, he was playing golf with his personal physician and popular singer Arthur Fields at the Riviera Country Club in Los Angeles and suffered a fatal heart attack while on the course. His final film, *Above Suspicion* (1943), was released after his death.

—Michael E. Haskew

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CARL A. GNAM, JR.
Editorial Director, Founder

MICHAEL E. HASKEW
Editor

KEVIN SEABROOKE
Managing Editor

SAMANTHA DETULLEO
Art Director

KEVIN M. HYMEL
Research Director

CONTRIBUTORS:
Patrick J. Chaisson, Jon Diamond, Michael E. Haskew, William R. Hogan, David H. Lippman, Joseph Luster, Christopher Miskimon, Eric Niderost, Nathan N. Prefer, Katrina Shawver

ADVERTISING OFFICE:

BEN BOYLES
Advertising Manager
(570) 322-7848, ext. 110
bboyles@sovmedia.com

LINDA GALLIHER
Ad Coordinator
(570) 322-7848, ext. 160
lgalliher@sovmedia.com

MARK HINTZ
Chief Executive Officer

ROBIN LEE
Bookkeeper

STEPHFANIE RUPP
Subscription Customer Service
stephfanie.rupp@psaemail.com
(570) 322-7848, ext. 140

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| By Eric Niderost |

Chicago History Museum

First Sustained Nuclear Reaction

The Atomic Age was born December 2, 1942, when Enrico Fermi set off the world's first sustained nuclear reaction beneath the stands of a disused football stadium on the campus of the University of Chicago.

ABOVE: Enrico Fermi, a renowned physicist and Nobel Prizer winner, escaped Fascist Italy and emigrated to the United States, where he made history in nuclear research. TOP: In this painting by artist Gary Sheahan titled "Birth of the Atomic Age," scientist Enrico Fermi and his colleagues anxiously proceed with the first sustained nuclear chain reaction in history at the University of Chicago.

National Archives

ENRICO FERMI'S FACE WAS A STUDY IN CONCENTRATION AS HIS FINGERS deftly moved across the well-worn surface of his slide rule. The Nobel-Prize winning physicist instinctively knew this was the moment that would mean the difference between triumphant success and bitter, heartbreaking failure in pursuit of the first sustained nuclear reaction. And yet the Italian-born scientist also exuded a confidence that was a soothing balm to at least some of the more nervous colleagues that clustered around him, peering over his shoulders or craning their necks to see his computations.

The group were perched on a high balcony overlooking C-1, or Chicago 1, a primitive early nuclear reactor that was a major step—if everything worked as planned—toward the development of an atom bomb. The immediate goal here was to create a self-sustaining chain reaction, where waves of neutrons split atoms, the very act of division creating more neutrons that would in turn collide with other atoms. But this atomic "domino" effect had a crucially important byproduct. The splitting of certain kinds of atoms, a process which scientists called "fission," released energy.

If that energy could be harnessed, contained, and safely controlled, the possibility of nuclear power would thrust humanity into a new age of peril and well as promise. But the year was 1942, World War II was raging on battle fronts across the globe, and the possibility that Hitler and the Nazis might develop an atom bomb before the Allies gave this scientific work a new and sobering reality. This was not just an academic exercise, of little interest to anyone outside a college campus or laboratory. The results that came from this crude Chicago reactor would determine the fate of the Allied cause.

All matter, inanimate or living, is made up of molecules. Molecules in turn are made up of smaller elements called atoms. Atoms are infinitely small, so tiny that one million of them could line up across the breadth of a human hair. By the 1920s, it was realized that each atom has a central core, or nucleus, that is made up of subatomic particles called protons. They have a positive charge. Each nucleus also has negatively charged particles, electrons, swirling around it, orbiting as if the nucleus was a "sun" and they were "planets."

But the path that led to the atomic bomb began in 1932, when British physicist James Chadwick discovered the nucleus also has particles he dubbed "neutrons." Opposites attract, so positive protons and negative electrons are

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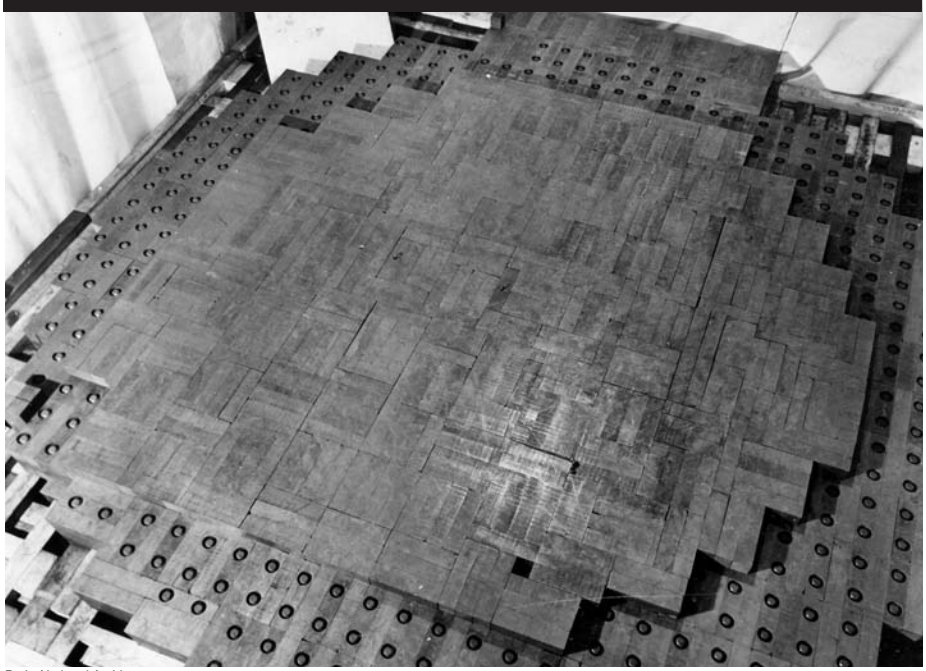
ABOVE: Scientist Enrico Fermi (left) and an assistant examine the venier control rod that would be slowly removed from the radioactive pile to increase the rate of nuclear fission in the historic chain reaction. BELOW: Chicago Pile-1, consisting of blocks of graphite containing uranium oxide, is shown under construction at the University of Chicago. Intended to help prevent the loss of neutrons, the Goodyear balloon cloth draping shown at left and to the rear proved unnecessary during the process that generated the historic nuclear chain reaction.



Both: National Archives

"glued" together in a seemingly unbreakable bond. But the neutron is the spoiler, has no charge at all, and so is not "forced" to remain with the other particles.

That fact was the key. Uranium is an unstable element and naturally throws off neutrons over time. If a neutron hit a uranium atom, that atom's nucleus would fission, or split, creating two smaller atoms, but also two or three more neutrons that would travel on to other uranium atoms to repeat the process. This is known as a chain reaction. But with each collision energy would be released, building and building until it reached an almost unimaged scale. If you fissioned roughly two pounds of uranium, you could create an explosion the equivalent of 20,000 pounds of TNT.

In December 1938, two German physicists, Otto Hahn and Fritz Strassman, working at the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute in Berlin, were puzzled about some test results they were getting. They consulted with fellow scientist Lise Meitner in Sweden. Meitner had been a colleague, but she was Jewish, and with anti-Semitism on the rise in Nazi Germany, wisely decided to emmigrate. It was Meitner who realized what had happened: Hahn and Strassman had achieved uranium fission.

The news spread through the international scientific community and came to the attention of Leo Szilard, a Hungarian who moved to the United States in the 1930s. Brilliant but eccentric, Szilard tried to write to American government officials but was ignored. Hitler was on the march; a few months earlier British and France had appeased the dictator by permitting a dismemberment of Czechoslovakia in the Munich Agreement. Szilard feared time was running out, and something had to be done before the Nazis developed an atom bomb.

Szilard enlisted the aid of a fellow Hungarian, Eugene Wigner, and together they travelled to Long Island to visit the most famous scientist in the world, Albert Einstein. Einstein was a pacifist, but he put aside his qualms, at least for the moment. The trio of scientists agreed they would cut through the red tape and go right to the top by sending a letter to President Franklin Roosevelt. The letter would be Einstein's officially, and he would sign it, but much of the actual text was composed by Szilard.

The letter, dated August 2, 1939, talked about uranium as a new power source, discussed recent events, then warned, "This new phenomenon would also lead to the construction of bombs." Einstein and the ghostwriting Szilard weren't too sure how these superbombs might be delivered to the target; perhaps they might be too heavy for airplanes. But the danger was still there. Einstein went on, "A single bomb, carried by boat, and exploded in a port, would destroy the whole port with some of the surrounding territory."

Roosevelt was prescient enough to recognize the truths outlined in the missive and ordered preliminary research initiated at once. But funds were lacking or diverted to other, more pressing concerns. The secret development of the atomic bomb, later called the Manhattan Project, didn't really get off the ground until the United States entered the war after Pearl Harbor. By July 1942, the project was given a new sense of purpose and a welcome boost in efficiency when it was placed under the control of The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. General Leslie R. Groves was tapped to administer every phase of the development work.

National Archives

The west end of Amos Alonzo Stagg Field at the University of Chicago is shown in this image. Chicago Pile-1 was constructed beneath the stands, and the football venue became famous as the site of the first sustained nuclear reaction in history.

Professor Arthur Compton, Nobel Prize winning physicist at the University of Chicago, gathered scientists who would be of use on building a reactor that could produce a sustained and controlled nuclear chain reaction. Enrico Fermi of Columbia University in New York would head this effort. Fermi was a political refugee who could not stomach the fascism of Italy's Benito Mussolini. Outwardly he was an ordinary looking man, with thick eyebrows and a receding hairline, but appearances were deceiving.

There was a brilliant mind underneath the bald pate, and he was renowned for his surprising physical strength and stamina. It was said even extremes of temperature could not faze him; he once challenged some younger scientists to a tennis match under a broiling, humid summer sun. After an hour or more, the younger men were wilting and ready to throw in the towel. Fermi, astonished, commented on their lack of vigor.

Whenever Fermi decided to accomplish something, he would never give up until his goal was achieved. He spoke English, but with a very heavy, almost stereotyped "just arrived" Italian accent. This linguistic state of affairs was unacceptable to him. One summer in Ann Arbor, Michigan, he insisted a younger colleague endlessly repeat a long sentence that included the dreaded "r" sound like "Rear Admiral." He also read all the Americana he could and devoured American comic strips, good sources for current lingo and contemporary slang. Alas, the Italian accent remained.

Originally the reactor, which was called a "pile" at the time, was scheduled to be built on a 1,025-acre government plot in the Argonne Forest near Chicago. But difficulties arose, including a labor dispute, so the location was quickly changed to the University of Chicago. Chicago Pile 1, or "CP-1" for short, found a home on the University of Chicago campus. Stagg Field was an abandoned football stadium, shut down when the university administration considered collegiate sports to be too disruptive to traditional academic pursuits.

The specific location was called "West Field," a curious spot that was part stadium bleacher/stands, part building that was done up in a medieval revival style. On one side, an ivy-covered "fortress" arose, complete with rounded turrets and saw-toothed, crenelated battlements. Yet the opposite side featured tier after tier of spectator stands, an uneasy amalgam of present and mock past.

Though the stadium itself had been abandoned and was ultimately demolished in 1957, in 1942 West Field housed a chamber 60 feet long, 30 feet wide, and 26 feet high that seemed custom built for a reactor. It was used as a squash court, a game reminiscent of racquetball, and also occasionally for handball. Ironically, Leona Woods, the youngest and only woman on Fermi's team, had played squash there in 1940 as a student. Since it was designed for vigorous exercise, the room was unheated.

Enrico Fermi organized his workers—the ones who were doing the physical labor—into two construction crews, so the work could continue around the clock. It was discovered that graphite, a crystalline form of carbon, could slow down the speed of neutrons and actually promote fission. The reactor "pile" was for the most part row after row of graphite "bricks" arranged in a particular pattern, until Fermi's precise calculations had deemed the ever-growing stack was high enough.

Eventually the Italian physicist's number crunching told him that a nuclear chain reaction would be achieved if the reactor stood between 56 and 57 layers tall. Accordingly, the work halted when the crews finished the 57th row. The outermost graphite bricks were solid chunks of graphite, but the ones nearing the center of the pile had holes drilled into them, and those cavities were filled with five-pound "slugs" of uranium. Altogether 18,000 uranium slugs were buried in the reactor, each lump capable of shooting neutrons in all directions.

These graphite bricks were cut and shaped by a team of skilled mechanics under a professional millwright named August Knuth. Their facility was also located at West Field, and altogether 45,000 bricks were made. A lathe was used to cut the holes for the control rods (explained later) and the pockets to hold the uranium. Graphite is the same substance used as "lead" in pencils, and can be dirty. Soon graphite dust filled the air and left a slippery film on the floor.

The work was so intense the laborers worked up a sweat, and some removed their shirts—to their later discomfort. Their heads and bodies became so encrusted with graphite they were blacker than coal miners, and even after showers graphite particles would emerge from every pore.

The Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company, known at the time for their association with lighter-than-air "zeppelins," got an order to make a rectangular cloth balloon for the project. Since the reactor was top secret, they were not given the reason why the government wanted such a strange, aerodynamically crazy thing, but they dutifully complied. This balloon was like a curtain draped on three sides but pulled back like an awning on the fourth side to allow Fermi and his team to do their work.

The CP-1 "pile" was finished on December 1, 1942. A wooden frame supported an elliptical, some said egg shaped, structure. The reactor was 20 feet high, six feet wide at the ends, and 25 feet wide at the middle. The top of the structure, with its rows of graphite bricks stacked in various heights, made it look like a Babylonian ziggurat of ancient times. The pile had holes drilled into it for control and safety rods. These rods were long wooden strips coated with sheets of cadmium, a neutron absorbing substance. Safety was paramount; if the projected chain reaction went wild and control rods failed, the pile might melt down and

flood the room with radiation.

When working with such materials, Fermi knew he had to expect the unexpected, and redundancy would boost the scientists' confidence. There were actually three sets of control rods. Rod one could be raised and lowered via a small electric motor connected to a switch on an instrument panel in the squash court balcony. When the test occurred, that was where the instrumentation as well as most of the scientists would be.

The second rod would be the emergency safety rod. When the time came, it would be suspended over the pile and tied by rope to the balcony. A second rope was tied to the other end of the rod, then strung through a hole bored through the reactor before being tied to some weights. A scientist named Norman Hilberry stood at the ready, axe in hand, to chop the first rope if a meltdown was imminent. Once released, gravity would do the rest, and the safety cadmium rod would plunge downward to absorb the raging neutrons and stop the threatening meltdown in its tracks.

The third rod was the main controlling rod, called the "vernier rod," which at the moment was buried deep within the dormant atomic pile. It was to be operated by physicist George Weil. It was called a vernier rod because it had markings, a bit like a huge "ruler," that showed the inches and feet still in the atomic pile.

This vernier rod was the 'dam" that, at least for the moment, held the neutron chain reaction in check. On Fermi's orders, based on precise measurements, Weil would withdraw the rod step by step and begin the chain reaction. The movement of the rod was like the opening of a dam's sluice gates, only instead of water it would be a flood of rampaging, atom-colliding neutrons.

Wednesday, December 2, 1942, was the date set for the make-or-break experiment. It was bitterly cold, with frigid winds coming off Lake Michigan, but even the adverse weather could not mar the scientists' growing sense of excitement. Altogether 48 individuals were present for this historic event, 47 men and one woman, Leona Woods. Most were assembled on that squash court viewing platform/balcony that overlooked the atomic pile.

At 9:45 a.m., Fermi ordered the withdrawal of the electrically operated control rod. A button was pushed, the rod's motor whirred, and all eyes were drawn to the panel where lights indicated the progress of the withdrawal. But more attention was soon given to a nearby instrument that measured the level of neutron activity. Its pen sprang to life, quivering and shaking as it recorded rising levels of neutron activity on a slowly scrolling piece of graph paper.

So far, so good. "Zip out!" Fermi declared, meaning the removal of the emergency control rod, and Walter Zinn promptly obeyed. Now, only the vernier rod was left still embedded in the atomic pile. Fermi, his eyes darting from instrument panel to instrument panel, called, "Pull it to 13 feet, George," and Weil promptly obeyed. The effect was dramatic, as the instruments showed the neutron activity was rising. Leona Woods was on hand to call and record instrument readings.

Many were encouraged, but Fermi was too busy making further computations to share the elation. His brilliant mind, helped by his handy slide rule and constant instrument readings, was drawing quite another conclusion. Addressing those clustered around him, he declared that the plot of neutron activity would rise, but only for a time, then level off. Fermi even pointed to the exact spot on the graph where this leveling off would take place. Sure enough, a few minutes later activity waned and the graph showed a leveling off of activity. It was the exact spot he had indicated.

The process was repeated several more times, with the rod being pulled out at various lengths, which kicked off rapid neutron activity, only to sputter out and level off once again. Yet Fermi was on top of things when the others could only speculate, worry, and wonder. He predicted each leveling off with unerring accuracy because he knew there would be a series of plateaus before the desired chain reaction would be achieved.

Suddenly, a very loud thump burst through the room, shattering the scientists' concentration and their nerves. The automatic safety rod had crashed down, but it was realized there was no real danger, at least not yet. It was supposed to intervene when the neutron count got dangerously high, shutting down the reactor and saving lives. It seemed the trigger point for activation was simply too low; it was adjusted.

Harold Lichtenberger, W. Nyer, and A.C. Graves stood on a platform over the pile, a group dubbed the "liquid control squad" but nicknamed the "suicide squad." Armed with buckets of cadmium-laced water, they would be the last-ditch safety measure if all the other safety controls failed. In such a crisis scenario, with an out-of-control chain reaction threatening to release large amounts of radiation into the room, these men would quench the nuclear "fire" by emptying their buckets directly onto the pile.

Fermi looked at the relieved faces of his assembled colleagues and rightly figured they needed a break. "I'm hungry," Fermi declared, "Let's have lunch!" Distance was always a fac-

tor when seeking out lunch—long walks through a cold and often snowy campus, or through the streets of Chicago, was an ordeal best left to the natives. There was only one nearby lunch counter, but one scientist recalled it was a gastronomic ordeal. The "old lady" behind the grill turned out hamburgers that were "tough as shoe leather."

The team returned to the squash court by 2 p.m. Once again George Weil manned the control rod. "All right, George," Fermi ordered, and the rod was withdrawn. At 2:50 the rod came out another foot, and the counters moved so fast they nearly jammed, and the clicking they produced sound like the staccato chatter of a machine gun.

Once again, Fermi was calm, the eye in a hurricane of rising expectations. The Italian physicist knew that they were not where he wanted them to be—at least not yet. But they were close. The rod was moved six inches more and then another foot. "This is going to do it," Fermi firmly declared. They had reached their goal—the pile could officially be called a reactor. "Now it will become self-sustaining," Fermi continued, "the trace will rise and continue to rise, and will not level off."

Fermi was carefully watching the rate of rise of neutron counts over a minute span. Once again, he did calculations on his slide rule. Leona Woods and another scientist named William Sturm were recording the data from instruments, with the counters clicking so rapidly individual clicks were beyond the range of the human ear. Suddenly, Fermi's serious, almost grim face broke out into a broad smile. It was done. At 3:53 p.m. on the afternoon of December 2, 1942, the atomic reactor—and now it could be called a reactor—achieved sustainability.

National Archives

After successfully creating a sustained nuclear reaction, a bottle of chianti was opened and poured into waiting paper cups. The bottle was signed by the attending scientists.

The reactor didn't shudder or glow, or do anything spectacular, but nevertheless at that moment the nuclear age was born. Fermi allowed the new reactor to run some 28 minutes, to make sure this was no fluke, but all was well. "OK, zip in!" he ordered and the emergency rod was inserted into the reactor. Immediately the graph pen slowed, then stopped, and the "click" sounds on other instruments were dramatically reduced. It was over.

Hungarian scientist Eugene Wigner produced a bottle of chianti and gave it to Fermi. The Italian uncorked the bottle and poured some wine into waiting paper cups. There was no toast, just sipping the wine in quiet contemplation. The actual atomic bomb would not be produced for another three years, but no doubt many of the assembled scientists were looking ahead, beyond the immediate concerns of the war. The nuclear "genie," full of danger and promise, had just been released, and the age of anxiety had begun. ■

Author Eric Niderost is a frequent contributor to WWII History *on a variety of topics. He resides in Union City, California, where he is also a college history professor.*

| By Jon Diamond |

Major General Edward L. Spears

> A soldier and diplomat, Spears found himself on 'assignment to catastrophe' as Churchill's liaison to France as the Nazis marched toward victory in the spring of 1940.

Imperial War Museum

ABOVE: Major General Edward L. Spears was a close friend of Winston Churchill and fellow Member of Parliament when appointed to his difficult role with the French government. TOP: A British Bren gun carrier passes a long line of French refugees fleeing the onslaught of the German Army in the spring of 1940. The British soldiers are headed toward the Belgian frontier in the forlorn attempt to stem the German tide.

Alamy

ON MAY 22, 1940, WITHIN A FORTNIGHT OF BEING APPOINTED BRITAIN'S prime minister, Winston S. Churchill was confronted with the British Expeditionary Force (BEF), under Lord Gort, retreating from Belgium. The Allied forces were reeling from the impact of the German Wehrmacht's onslaught.

Churchill summoned his close friend, Edward L. Spears, a fellow Member of Parliament (MP) and the Conservative Party, to his residence. The prime minister had decided to send Spears to Paris as his personal representative to French Premier Paul Reynaud, who was extremely unnerved by the Nazi onslaught and recent French defeat on the River Meuse.

Operation Dynamo, the evacuation from Dunkirk, was soon to begin. Since Spears had left the military in 1919, he had barely managed to cobble together an impromptu uniform fitting for a major general and, on May 25, a day before the Dunkirk evacuation commenced, he departed by plane for France, his native country, on an "assignment to catastrophe."

Edward Louis Spears (née Spiers) was born in Paris to British parents on August 7, 1886. He resided in France throughout his childhood, becoming fluent in French and English. In 1918, he changed his name to Spears, seemingly to prevent further mispronunciation of his name; however, rumors circulated that he wanted it to be "Anglicized" since he was believed of Jewish ancestry and many officers in both the French and British armies harbored anti-Semitic views.

In 1903, Spears joined the Kildare Militia of the 3rd Battalion, Royal Dutch Fusiliers. Three years later, he was commissioned as a subaltern in the 8th Royal Irish Hussars of the Regular Army. Due to his fluency with both English and French, Spears authored textbook translations in both languages from 1911-1914. In May 1914, before the outbreak of World War I, Spears was assigned to the French Ministry of War in Paris. When the Kaiser's invasion commenced later that summer, Spears was one of the first British soldiers at the front before the BEF could be shipped across the English Channel.

Spears served as an interpreter for several high-ranking commanders and a young British cabinet minister, Winston Churchill. In January 1915, Spears was wounded and sent home to England, having received the Military Cross. Upon recuperation, in April 1915, he accom-

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Following the defeat of the British Expeditionary Force in France, soldiers of the 51st Highland Division, cut off from the Dunkirk evacuation, receive instructions on how to proceed into captivity.

panied Churchill, then First Lord of the Admiralty, on an inspection of the front.

In December, after Churchill resigned from his position after the failed Dardanelles campaign, he sought out Spears, lobbying for an infantry command on the Western Front. The two officers cemented a strong friendship, and Churchill even wanted Spears to serve as his brigade major, but his liaison skills were too valuable to release him to the trenches.

In May 1917, Spears was promoted to major and general staff officer (GSO) 1st Grade and posted to the French Ministry of War. He introduced his friend Churchill, now Minister of Munitions, to the new French premier, Georges Clemenceau. Although he was promoted to lieutenant general in January 1918, animus among British commanders toward Spears interfered with further career advancement. In 1919, he retired from active military service.

Spears twice served as an MP, and as war clouds again loomed, he was, like Churchill, violently opposed to the Munich agreement of 1938. However, surprisingly another anti-appeaser, Duff Cooper said of him, "He's the most unpopular man in the House. Don't trust him: he'll let you down in the end."

Spears became a member of Anthony Eden's inner circle of anti-appeasement MPs. However, after Eden resigned as Foreign Secretary in the winter of 1938, Spears joined Churchill's group of MPs battling the Chamberlain government for swifter rearmament and a firmer stance toward the fascist dictators.

After the Nazi invasion of Poland and Britain's entry into World War II, Spears wanted to play an active part in the war effort, "particularly in my old post as liaison officer with the French."

On May 10, 1940, the Nazis invaded Belgium, Holland and Luxembourg. The "Phony War" was over. Later that day Spears learned from German sources that King George VI had asked Churchill to form a new government. He recalled, "The Berlin wireless announced that Mr. Chamberlain had resigned and was followed by Winston Churchill."

Shortly thereafter, as the BEF, under Gort, raced north from its positions in France into previously neutral Belgium, Spears noted something unsettling: "I felt slightly uncomfortable. Were our forces by any chance doing what the Germans had expected them to do?...My conclusion was that we were advancing as the Germans had known we would, and that they were not interfering with our doing so. A very distinct though small red light twinkled in the back of my head."

On May 14, Spears' worries became reality as the Germans crossed the Meuse at Sedan and Monthermé. By the next day, Spears' interpretation of French communiqués led him to believe that the Germans were also across the Meuse at Dinant and that "the truth was worse than anyone in London imagined." Spears was aghast at the bad liaison that existed between the French and British commands.

By May 20, when Spears broadcast to France via the BBC in his native tongue, his words could not exhort the French forces and government which had already just seen Arras and Amiens occupied.

The next day, upon exiting from the House of Commons chamber, Spears was met by Churchill's confidante, Brendan Bracken, who informed him, "Winston has an idea of making use of you. He has something important in mind. It is absurd that you should be doing nothing. You know the French better than anyone else…."

Bracken approached again on the 22nd and stated, "Winston expects you at 10:30 tonight at the Admiralty."

At this meeting with his old comrade, Churchill informed Spears, "I have decided to send you as my personal representative to Paul Reynaud [French Premier]. You will have the rank of a Major-General. See Pug [Ismay] tomorrow, he will brief you. The situation is very grave."

Spears knew that it was going to be difficult to get accurate information from all quarters back to Churchill, especially since he was designated to work with French Premier Paul Reynaud and transmit information from the French directly to Churchill or to Major General Hastings "Pug" Ismay, Churchill's chief military assistant. Liaison between the armies was completely out of the scope of Spears' mission. Ismay was attempting to create his own organization of British Army officers, which would report directly to Ismay. In addition, Spears would have to devise a method of working with the members of Britain's Foreign Office and the Ambassador

to France as to not alienate them with his instruction to liaise specifically with Reynaud.

On May 23, as Spears was getting his affairs in order to depart for France, he realized that this assignment might be objectionable to many of the concerned parties, either British or French.

In their first meeting on May 25, Reynaud told Spears that British generals always made for harbors. Spears tried to placate the French premier by telling him that "no responsible person in England would consider a withdrawal to the Channel except as a last resort, since the re-embarkation of so large a force with such inadequate harbour facilities, in the face of an enemy advancing with terrific speed and overwhelming force along the coast behind it, must be a desperate enterprise."

Yet, this is exactly what was occurring because the evacuation from Dunkirk's harbor moles and sand dunes was to commence the next day. Ignorant of what was truly occurring at Gort's front, Spears rather naively informed Reynaud, "I do know Gort's orders, and we all know Gort…he would strain every nerve and run every risk to carry out his instructions because he was that sort of man."

On May 26, Reynaud had gone to London to assess how far the British were prepared to go on with the war. As Spears sensed defeat within the French government, he recognized that his main task was "never to permit the thought to creep in for one moment that we would not fight on. As this was my conviction, it presented no great difficulty."

Also, on the 27th, Spears had very candid but sobering conversations with Reynaud. Spears was trying to imbue Reynaud with the will to fight on, and the French premier stated, "Your Government are withholding considerable air forces for the defense of Britain." Spears retorted, "We are sending every machine we can spare to France. Churchill has said so." Reynaud admitted at this meeting that although he was willing to "go on to the end…others who held different views, might replace him and treat with the Germans." Also contributing to the ubiquitous sense of defeatism throughout the French High Command was the Belgian capitulation on this same day. Spears showed Reynaud and Weygand a message from Churchill to Lord Gort urging him to fight on, but the French were wary of his move to the north and rightly knew that the British were in the process of evacuating their troops from Dunkirk.

May 29 was a frustrating day for Spears, since General Maxime Weygand, the French Commander-in-Chief, had reported, "…French divisions were falling back towards the coast,

National Archives

British liaison Edward Spears and Free French leader Charles de Gaulle watch as the combined Free French and British attempt to capture the Vichy-controlled port of Dakar, Senegal. The operation on the coast of West Africa was an embarrassing debacle.

but that their flanks were threatened owing to the precipitate retreat of the British." This statement demonstrated some of the inherent distrust that the French High Command harbored toward their ally. Spears "…begged Reynaud to believe Gort incapable of abandoning a comrade." He reiterated to the French premier, "Gort's orders are to get to Dunkirk, and he is obeying them. He cannot be blamed for that." Reynaud reminded Spears that it was essential that the French troops should have the same priority as the British in the Dunkirk evacuation. On May 30, Churchill cabled Reynaud, "We wish the French troops to share in the evacuation to the fullest possible extent…."

Unfortunately, the numbers did not support Churchill's goodwill. Out of 220,000 British troops, about 150,000 had been evacuated, whereas of 200,000 Frenchmen only 15,000 had been taken off. In order to explain this disparity, Churchill cited logistical issues and a belief shared by Lord Gort at Dunkirk that the French had not received direct orders to evacuate. Spears had wondered that Weygand, in fact, had "conceived of Dunkirk as a fortress that could be held for a long time, and had suddenly realized that was not so." The French order for evacuation was given the next day.

On May 31, Churchill flew to Paris along a circuitous route to avoid German fighters. Spears, upon meeting the prime minister and his entourage immediately observed, "The English team were business-like and precise. They gave the impression of men who had to deal rapidly with important affairs in a short time. No one seemed worried or showed fatigue… These people from home form a homogenous group animated with but one thought; they support each other, react on each other, each one contributing strength to the whole."

This was in stark contrast to the French, who at the moment were completely in the dark about what was happening in the north. Even Churchill noted that they appeared "so highly tired, undergoing so fearful an ordeal."

Reynaud was the solitary Frenchman who spoke of the British as a true ally, "the evacuation was a triumph for the British Navy and Air Force…The fight put up by the RAF against tremendous odds was nothing short of heroic." Spears knew, however, that Churchill "realized in his heart that the French were beaten, that they knew it, and were resigned to defeat."

The evacuation from Dunkirk was finally terminated in the early hours of June 4, 1940. The official tally shows 338,226 Allied troops brought out, 228,500 British and the rest mostly French.

On June 7, Spears left for London with a message from Reynaud. The French premier was requesting that British divisions and fighter squadrons be stationed again in France for the battle south of the Somme; however, the British had already made it clear that their troops had only rifles and no further squadrons could be sent to France for fear of depleting a suitable fighter force for the defence of Britain's skies.

Four days previously, Air Chief Marshal Hugh Dowding of Fighter Command attended a cabinet meeting and with ice-cold precision stated to Churchill and his fellow ministers that actual losses were "irrefutable facts and overcame contrary arguments." By the time the French sought an armistice with the Nazis later in June, the RAF had lost more than 900 aircraft in six weeks. About half were Dowding's precious Hurricane and Spitfire single-seat fighters, which he was trying to husband for what he correctly believed would be the decisive battle in the skies over southeastern England.

Spears noted in his memoirs, "Much to Reynaud's credit…in later years he wrote that Churchill would have committed the gravest of errors had he sacrificed the totality of Britain's air force in the battle of France…his responsibilities and anxieties [at the time].....as an explanation for having sponsored Weygand's requests and as an excuse for his constant pressure on Churchill for more help."

Two circumstances clouded Spears' meeting with Churchill on June 10, 1940, and it is ironic that both would have their ultimate outcomes realized in November 1942. First, the 51st (Highland) Division was cut off on the coast at St. Valéry, west of Dieppe, together with the French IX Corps. Ships would, it was hoped, evacuate many of the men, but the equipment would be lost. The operation was to take place the following night, but it was feared there might be fog. According to Spears, "Nature was to play us this grim joke as if to underline the crass stupidity that had landed these fine troops in such unnecessary jeopardy. The elements were joining in to make us pay for our blindness."

In fact, the entire division would be forced to surrender intact on June 12 and remain in captivity for the entire war. A newly reconstituted 51st (Highland) Division would ultimately be formed after the tragedy at St. Valéry and would be ready for action at El Alamein in November 1942 to exact revenge for the Highlanders in POW camps.

As to the second circumstance covered at this meeting, Churchill then asked Spears, "What will happen to the Navy if France drops out of the war?" Spears responded, "I have no idea. It will follow the Admirals, I suppose..." This event, too, would haunt Churchill since he would have to attack French battleships and cruisers at anchor in the North African port of Mers-el-Kébir in early July 1940, which was to further engender enmity between England and France.

At that meeting on June 10, Spears noted,

"Churchill was profoundly unhappy. For the first and only time in my experience I heard words akin to despair pass his lips…It was heart-breaking to me that this load should have been laid on the very man who had prophesied the calamity and worked with all his soul to avert it. I longed to help, but knew I could do nothing…My only prayer was that, if the invasion came, I should be there, to stand in front of him and shield him."

Spears returned to France with Churchill on June 11. A meeting of the Anglo-French Supreme War Council was held at Briare to accommodate Reynaud's forced departure from Paris. As vituperative comments were leveled at Britain's support for the Battle of France after the Dunkirk evacuation, Spears realized, "…the Battle of France was over and that no one believed in miracles…with the destinies of the two nations about to divide."

While Churchill departed for London the next day, Spears stayed on at Briare. While there, he learned from his discussions with Marshal Philippe Pétain that an armistice with Germany was now inevitable, largely because the British had abandoned France. On June 13, Churchill returned to France to meet with Reynaud again, at Tours. Spears also attended the British delegation, which included Lord Halifax, Lord Beaverbrook, Alexander Cadogan (Permanent Undersecretary of State at the Foreign Office) and Ismay. In a quite startling different tenor to their last encounter, Reynaud declared that unless the United States gave its immediate assurance of help to France, then the French government would have to give up the fight and conclude a separate peace with Hitler.

This was an anathema to Churchill, who was under the distinct belief that neither country would sue for peace separately. Yet, Reynaud was resolute and claimed that France would fight on from North Africa only if the United States entered the war against Germany. In essence, Reynaud was asking Britain to release France from her obligation not to conclude a separate peace with the Nazis. Both countries were to contact Roosevelt separately to seek the intervention of the United States and the conference ended. After a few days, the British government did release France from its bond to resist Germany.

Spears departed France on June 17. Colonel Charles de Gaulle, who had been in Reynaud's last government, went to the airfield with Spears ostensibly to see him off. However, de Gaulle (with his baggage and aide-de-camp) boarded the plane and departed for Britain with Spears since it was apparent that de Gaulle was

Continued on page 67

| By Patrick J. Chaisson |

National Archives

Codebreaking Sergeant Richard

After the accidental death of a colleague, Sergeant Joseph E. Richard worked overtime to break a key Japanese code, one of the war's greatest secret victories.

WEWAK CONVOY 21 WAS BEING ANNIHILATED, AND THE JAPANESE ARMY could do nothing to stop it.

The first vessel to die was *Yakumo Maru*. This 3,200-ton transport fell victim to two radar-equipped Consolidated B-24 Liberator bombers of the 62nd Bomb Squadron, Fifth U.S. Air Force, some 60 miles off the New Guinea coastline at 0230 hours on Sunday, March 19, 1944. Going to the bottom with *Yakumo Maru* were 62 crewmen and 48 soldier-passengers.

After sunrise, at least 80 American warplanes returned to finish the job. Swarming over their weakly-defended target, the attackers quickly sank another 3,200-tonner named *Taiei Maru* plus two escorting subchasers. For the price of a few Douglas A-20 Havoc light bombers lost to antiaircraft fire, Fifth Air Force flight crews entirely obliterated Convoy 21, including its desperately-needed cargo of supplies and replacement soldiers.

The appearance of U.S. aircraft at precisely the right time and place to intercept these enemy merchantmen was no accident. Allied officers had been tracking the progress of Wewak Convoy 21 for days, aided by an Imperial Japanese Army order requiring every supply ship under its control to broadcast a "noon report" indicating that vessel's position, speed, and heading as of 1200 hours daily.

In 1943, cryptanalysts stationed in Australia, India, and the United States cracked a super-secret enemy cipher known as the Japanese Army Water Transportation Code. Their stunning achievement generated a considerable amount of targeting data, all of which was promptly passed along to combat commanders. While many individuals contributed to this intelligence coup, one American sergeant deserves particular mention for his determination to do something positive during a time of great personal anguish.

Joseph E. Richard was born in Syracuse, Nebraska, on May 22, 1914, but moved out west with his family soon thereafter. After completing a three-year enlistment with the prewar California National Guard, Richard got a job at the Naval Supply Depot in downtown San Diego readying old destroyers for "Reverse-Lend-Lease" service with the British Royal Navy.

In April 1941, he received his draft notification. Scoring well enough on the Army General Classification Test to qualify for Signal Intelligence training, Richard reported to Fort Monmouth, New Jersey, where he eventually enrolled in the cryptographic (coding) school located there.

Joe enjoyed duty at Monmouth, and often spent his weekends in nearby New York City. That was where, on December 7, 1941, he learned that Japan had attacked Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. Together with a buddy, Private Richard stood at the entrance to the Holland Tunnel until a helpful cop flagged down someone willing to drive the soldiers back to base.

Caught in an attack by U.S. Army Air Forces bombers, a Japanese merchant ship takes hits off the coast of Dutch New Guinea during a June 1944 raid. Codebreaking work by cryptanalysts like Sergeant Joseph Richard helped detect enemy convoy movements.

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ABOVE: Intelligence analysts working with the U.S. Army Signals Intelligence Service comb through massive amounts of intelligence at Arlington Hall near Washington, D.C. BELOW: Sergeant Joseph E. Richard sits circled at far right in this photo of U.S. Signal Intelligence personnel at the Central Bureau headquarters in Brisbane, Australia. The other two individuals circled are Colonel Abraham Sinkov (left) and Lt. Col. Harry Clark.

In January 1942, he was transferred to the Army's Signals Intelligence Service (SIS). Richard recalled being sent "to Washington [D.C.] to work at the crypt office on the third floor of a wing of the temporary Munitions Building on Constitution Avenue." One of his first tasks was to help move code materials from the overcrowded Munitions Building to SIS's new home at a former girls' school in Arlington Hall, Virginia. He spent several months at Arlington Hall, examining Japanese military radio messages that were intercepted by listening stations in the Panama Canal Zone, California, the Philippines, and Hawaii.

A part of the Army's Signal Corps, SIS was organized in 1930 with William F. Friedman named as its first director. This brilliant scientist and his small team of analysts made cryptological history when they solved Japan's diplomatic cipher, termed the "PURPLE Code." Of note, it was SIS's codebreakers who discovered that Tokyo had ordered its ambassador in Washington to cease all negotiations with U.S. officials effective December 7, 1941.

The SIS's single-minded focus on PURPLE left little time for anything else. Consequently, the United States Army entered World War II almost totally ignorant of Imperial Japanese Army (IJA) radio communication codes. It took 18 months of mind-numbing toil before American cryptanalysts such as Joseph Richard began to make any progress against these sophisticated ciphers.

Japanese signal security officers responsible for safeguarding the IJA's high-level communications employed a cryptographic system that substituted random numbers for words and numerals. To begin the encryption process, a clerk would look up in the Army Code Book each word that he wished to conceal. Alongside that word was a four-digit number, which the soldier then wrote down.

Listed in a separate part of the Army Code Book was a "key register," another random four-digit number (changed regularly) which the clerk then added to each code number as a second form of security. When making his calculations, the Japanese soldier used "false" or non-carrying addition in a further attempt to confuse electronic eavesdroppers.

A typical encoding sequence might have started with the word "Shanghai." In his codebook, a clerk first matched "Shanghai" with its number-substitute—8127, for example. Next, he enciphered that number code using the current key register—say, 6982. The result—4009—was derived by adding both numbers together without carrying the tens.

To decrypt IJA messages, another soldier at the receiving station simply reversed the process using a codebook that was arranged numerically. Japanese commanders found it an awkward and labor-intensive system, but one they believed could not be breached.

It certainly seemed that way to the analysts at Arlington Hall, who spent the spring of 1942 in a futile attempt to figure out these number-codes. Joe Richard needed an occasional rest from his responsibilities, so in May he attended a servicemen's tea on the White House's South Lawn. A highlight of the event, he recalled, was when President Franklin D. Roosevelt came out to address the 500 enlisted soldiers, sailors, and Marines. Roosevelt's talk inspired Richard to seek an overseas posting, and before long he was on a slow boat to Australia together with eight other novice codebreakers.

Now wearing the three stripes of a Technician Fourth Class, Richard arrived in Melbourne for duty with the 837th Signal Service Detachment. The officer in command there was Major (later promoted to Colonel) Abraham Sinkov. In appearance, this balding, bespectacled 34-year-old resembled a high school math teacher—which, in fact, was Sinkov's occupation before William Friedman recruited him into the SIS.

Behind that unassuming façade, however, resided the mind of a cryptological genius. Abe Sinkov played a crucial role in defeating PURPLE, and in 1941 became one of the first Amer-

icans ever permitted to visit Britain's super-secret decoding center at Bletchley Park. By July 1942, Major Sinkov found himself in Melbourne assigned to a mysterious multinational signal intelligence organization known as the Central Bureau.

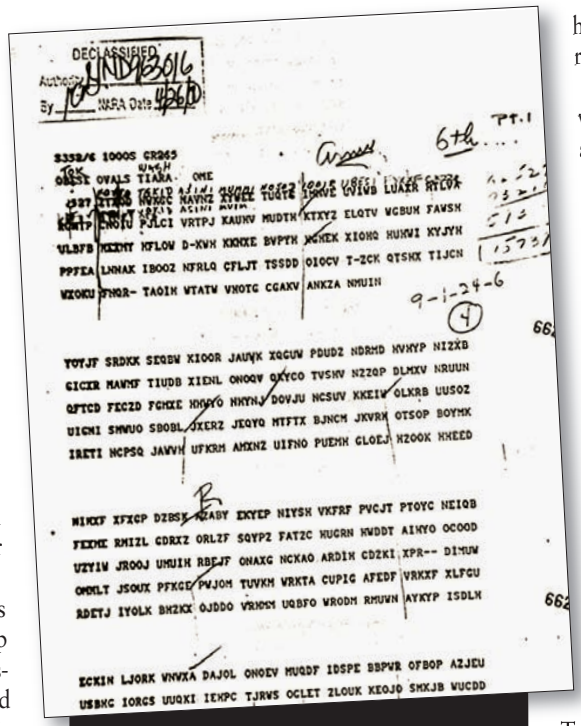
Central Bureau was the brainchild of General Douglas MacArthur, recently named as Supreme Commander of Allied Forces in the Southwest Pacific Area. Made up of British, Australian, and American codebreakers, its mission was to provide MacArthur with raw, unfiltered information on IJA activity throughout his area of responsibility. Naval intelligence came from a combined Royal Australian Navy/U.S. Navy fleet radio unit not under General MacArthur's direct command.

At first, the American cryptanalysts assigned to Central Bureau struggled to keep up with their combat-tested British and Australian colleagues. Joe Richard deemed Royal Australian Navy Commander Eric Nave "an indispensable person" for that officer's unparalleled skill in figuring out IJA air-ground communications codes. And veteran Commonwealth signals intercept technicians brought with them a technique called "traffic analysis" that could be used against the Japanese just as it had in the deserts of North Africa.

Traffic analysis involved the study of IJA radio networks in order to learn how the enemy was organized. Intelligence personnel scrutinized volumes of intercepted wireless communications, always alert for the presence of patterns in call signs, message priorities, and addresses. Experienced traffic analysts could reveal much about Japanese order of battle and even predict troop movements—all without decoding a single message.

By dint of much hard labor, signal intelligence specialists at Central Bureau began to part the veil of secrecy that cloaked IJA's communications. Using traffic analysis and other techniques, Allied experts unraveled the code used by Japanese signalmen to identify locations—they now knew that any message with "9834" in the address label, for instance, was intended for commanders on Rabaul.

Technicians also identified four major radio networks in use by enemy forces. Of these, the Japanese Army Shipping Command used a circuit designated as "2468" to control its vast fleet of merchantmen sailing in support of IJA formations stationed all across Asia and the Pacific. Rushed into service, this Water Transportation Code was a simplified version of the Army's number-substitution system intended



This page depicts a series of Japanese Purple code transmissions that have been perused by an American cryptanalyst.

National Archives

for use by poorly-trained shipboard radiomen. Similar to the mainline code but lacking many of its special security features, the 2468 discriminant would soon receive close attention from Central Bureau's team of Allied cryptanalysts.

In September, Australian "Diggers" began a counteroffensive against Japanese troops strung out along the Kokoda Track in New Guinea. To better support combat operations there, the staff of Central Bureau moved forward some 1,000 miles (1,600 km) from Melbourne to Brisbane that same month. Richard remembered partnering up with another American soldier for the journey, made in a vehicle loaded with photocopying equipment and file drawers. During the trip, he said, "One of us slept in the truck at night because the cabinets held classified material."

Central Bureau established its Brisbane headquarters in a large house at 21 Henry Street in the suburb of Ascot. Joe remembered the two-story residence had "verandas around each floor," which at some point were closed in "so our classified papers would not blow away."

At the time, T/4 Richard and his fellow G.I.s were all attempting to batter their way into some low-level IJA codes using a crude trial-and-error method. This "brute-force" attack demanded an extraordinary amount of effort for no apparent result and caused a great deal of frustration among those analysts forced to hand-sort page after page of unintelligible radio intercepts.

Richard was sifting data on the upstairs veranda one November day when he heard a gunshot from an adjoining room. He rushed in to find his friend, T/4 John Bartlett, on the floor gravely wounded. A young officer had been instructing other servicemen on how to disassemble and reassemble their .45 caliber pistols when his weapon accidentally discharged. The bullet struck Bartlett (who had come in to ask for a weekend pass) in the abdomen.

Sergeant Bartlett was rushed to Brisbane General Hospital, but did not recover. His death deeply affected Joe Richard, who was shocked by this senseless tragedy. "I secretly resolved to do extra work to make up for John," he recollected later.

Richard approached his boss, freshly-promoted Lt. Col. Sinkov, and volunteered to organize Japanese Army Water Transportation Code intercepts during his off-duty time. Telling Sinkov he "had a hunch that they would yield something worthwhile," the grieving soldier was immediately granted after-hours access to these so-called "2468" files.

"I started sorting one evening late in January 1943 under a weak droplight and with the blackout curtain closed," he wrote. "I continued this work almost every night for the next three months."

Joe soon discovered a common peculiarity among the Water Transportation Code messages he was handling. "By about the third night of sorting," he recalled, "I noticed that the first digit [in each four-number code group] was nonrandom." This revealed a flaw in the 2468 system, which by design should have eliminated all such patterns.

An elated T/4 Richard "notified Col. Sinkov that the 2468 indicator was not behaving randomly." Sinkov replied by telling the sergeant his discovery confirmed the findings of British cryptanalysts based at the Wireless Experimental Centre in Delhi, India. Codebreakers there regularly shared intelligence with Central Bureau and other Allied signals intelligence stations worldwide.

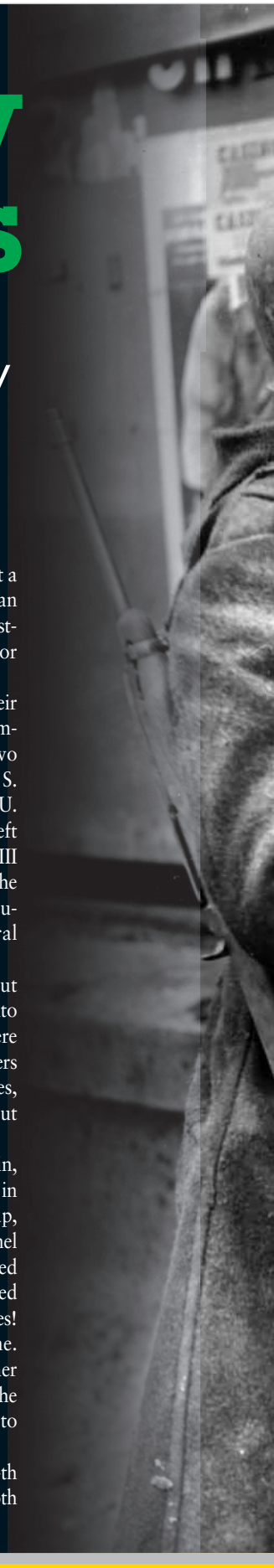
More information was required, so SIS and its powerful IBM tabulating machines joined the fight. Workers at Arlington Hall ran several months' worth of Water Transportation Code intercepts through their mechanical sorters but failed to uncover any nonrandom characteristics. Sinkov and Richard learned of SIS's disap-

Continued on page 69

The 28th Infantry Division Stands

Nicknamed the 'Bloody Bucket,' the 28th Infantry Division held firm against German attacks during the Battle of the Bulge.

BY NATHAN N. PREFER



ON September 16, 1944, Adolf Hitler revealed his master plan for reversing Germany's declining fortunes in the West during World War II. At a routine meeting with leading members of his military staff, including the head of his Armed Forces Command, General Wilhelm Keitel, and the chief of his planning staff, General Alfred Jodl, the Fuehrer pointed to a map of the Ardennes Forest in Belgium and announced, "I have just made a momentous decision. I shall go over to the counterattack, that is to say, here, out of the Ardennes, with the objective—Antwerp."

His staff stood in shocked surprise. After all that had happened to Germany in recent months, the defeat in Normandy, withdrawal from Southern France, retreating to the Westwall, Germany's last line of defense, withdrawal to northern Italy, and the series of defeats in the East, how was it possible for Germany to now suddenly turn and strike at its attackers? But Hitler knew that Germany's industry was still productive despite Allied bombing and that German morale was not only good, but improving as the Allies moved closer to the German heartland.

Armed with deceptive figures provided to him by his various sycophants, Hitler was convinced that his plan had merit. And it had worked before, in 1914 and again 1940, so why shouldn't it now? General Jodl immediately set out to develop the plan.

Most of the German military leaders felt the plan was far too ambitious. Alternatives were offered but quickly dismissed. The plan required the withdrawal of numerous divisions from active fronts to form the attack force. Thirty divisions and 1,500 aircraft, including some of the new jet planes, were promised. No allowance was made for an Allied response once the attack began. There were questions about the availability of resources, fuel, ammunition, equipment, for such a major undertaking. And the plan made no mention of what was to happen when, or if, the attack did in fact reach its ultimate goal, the Belgian port of Antwerp.

The officer selected to command the operation, Field Marshal Walther Model, remarked, "This damned thing hasn't a leg to stand on." But the order stood, and the generals began to do what they could to make it work. The attack date, postponed several times for various reasons, was now set for December 16, 1944.

Across the front line, the Americans were busy with their own plans for an offensive. General Omar N. Bradley, commander of 12th Army Group, was in fact preparing two attacks, one to the north of the Ardennes by his First U. S. Army, and a second south of the Ardennes by the Third U. S. Army. To man these offensives, he had deliberately left his center force, Major General Troy H. Middleton's VIII Corps, weak and stretched along a wide front covering the Ardennes. The risk was accepted, and even called a "calculated risk" by the Allied Supreme Commander, General Dwight D. Eisenhower.

The Allies were convinced that Germany was all but defeated and that these new offensives would bring them into the heart of Germany to ensure that defeat. Not that there weren't some warning voices when senior intelligence officers raised questions about the whereabouts of German reserves, and why captured prisoners' morale was still so high. But these few voices were largely ignored.

Not only was the American Ardennes front stretched thin, but the forces defending that front were themselves weak in one manner or another. Defending the critical Losheim Gap, through which the Germans under General Erwin Rommel had attacked in 1940, was only one cavalry squadron armed with light tanks and armored cars. There was the untested 106th Infantry Division, many of its soldiers still wearing ties! This division alone was defending 20 miles of front line. Another relatively new division, the 99th, manned another sector of this line. They would benefit, however, from the presence of the veteran 2nd Infantry Division preparing to launch General Bradley's northern attack.

To the south stood two veteran infantry divisions, the 4th and 28th. Both had been fighting since Normandy, and both

After making their way to the crossroads town of Bastogne when their position was overrun by the surprise German attack, Private Adam Davis and T/S Milford A. Sillars of the 110th Regiment, 28th Infantry Division's appear exhausted. The soldiers of the 28th Division largely held their ground against the German onslaught during the opening hours of the Battle of the Bulge.

National Archives

were there to rest and recuperate after costly and debilitating campaigns. In all, about 200,000 Germans were about to strike about 83,000 American troops holding a "quiet sector."

On the night of December 14, a civilian woman came into the lines of the 28th Infantry Division to report that the woods near Bitburg were jammed with hidden German equipment. Questioned by the division intelligence officer, her responses were so authentic that she was sent up to the VIII Corps headquarters for further interrogation. Again, she was believed and sent further up the chain of command to First Army headquarters, but by the time she arrived her story was being verified by German troops attacking out of the foggy night and snow of the Ardennes.

Both the 4th Infantry Division (Major General Raymond O. Barton) and the 28th Infantry Division (Major General Norman D. Cota) had recently distinguished themselves in the bloody battles of the Hürtgen Forest and were now training replacements for the 9,000 casualties they had suffered in those battles. The 28th Infantry Division in particular had suffered greatly in that forest, losing 6,184 casualties, more than the authorized rifleman strength of an American infantry division at the time.

One of every three officers had become a casualty in the forest. Here the division earned its nickname of the "Bloody Bucket" from its red keystone shoulder patch and the heavy casualties it had suffered. Since November 22, it had defended a line 25 miles long along the Luxembourg-German border. With such a long front to cover, the division had no choice but to resort to establishing individual strongpoints, mostly in local villages. Even then, things were made more difficult when one battalion was held in reserve. The division was aligned from north to south with the 112th Infantry Regiment (Colonel Gustin M. Nelson) to the north, the 110th Infantry (Colonel Hurley E. Fuller) in the center, and the 109th Infantry Regiment (Lieutenant Colonel James E. Rudder) on the south of the division's front.

The German force about to strike the "Bloody Bucket" was General Heinrich Luettwitz's XLVII Panzer Corps. Its mission was to cross the Our and Clerf Rivers, make a dash "over Bastogne," get to the Meuse River, force a crossing near Namur, and then strike for Brussels and Antwerp. Speed was essential, and flank protection was to be ignored. The Seventh Army would protect his southern flank and other German forces would be advancing to the north. He knew from intelligence reports he would be facing the 28th Infantry Division and that it was covering a wide front and was strung out. He also knew of its heavy losses in the Hürtgen Forest. With this information, General Luettwitz was not concerned about getting across the rivers; his main concern was how to best employ his armor over the narrow, twisting roads in his sector once he did.

That armor was included in the three divisions of the XLVII Panzer Corps. The veteran and re-equipped 26th Volksgrenadier Division (Major General Heinz Kokott), recently transferred from the Russian front. With 17,000 men, 5,000 horses and 42 antitank guns, the division was to cross the Our and Clerf rivers, hold the roads open for following armor, and then seize Bastogne, a key crossroads town in Belgium, with or without the armor support. The veteran 2nd Panzer Division (Colonel Meinrad von Lauchert), with new model Panther tanks and 48 armored assault guns, would also cross the Our River and move against Bastogne. Following that the Panzer Lehr Division (Lieutenant General Fritz Bayerlein), another veteran formation, would race to Bastogne and hold the vital crossroads town. Reinforced with armored tank destroyers and an assault gun brigade, the division was to assist the 26th Volksgrenadier Division in seizing the crossings over the rivers. In reserve General Luettwitz also had the heavily armored Fuehrer Begleit Brigade. The sector designated for the XLVII Corps breakthrough was held by the 110th Infantry Regiment, 28th Infantry Division.

Colonel Fuller's regiment was in the center of the division front line, holding a series of vil-

Both: National Archives

ABOVE: American soldiers of the 110th Regiment, 28th infantry Division dig foxholes and remain in the line during the Battle of the Bulge. In the foreground, the body of a fellow GI killed in action lies in the snow. OPPOSITE: German infantrymen, on foot and riding in a halftrack, proceed through a village their forces have recently occupied. At left, German soldiers inspect an abandoned American M3 halftrack.

lages with one or two infantry companies each along its 10-mile front. These villages were usually along a north-south highway known to the Americans as "Skyline Drive." This ridgeline ran within a mile or two of the Our. The 2nd Battalion, 110th Regiment, was held in division reserve at Donnage.

The Our was about 40 feet wide and easily fordable, but it was the roads leading to and from it that presented a problem. They were narrow, circuitous, and steep in places, making it difficult for large vehicles or tanks. The Americans had blocked the four main roads leading into their sector with their village strongpoints, including one road that led directly to Bastogne. Although the Americans regularly patrolled across the river each night, they knew of only the presence of the 26th Volksgrenadier Division. And it was that unit which almost gave the game away.

General Kokott's 78th Volksgrenadier Regiment was in the habit of also pushing patrols across the Our River during the night, withdrawing them at dawn. But on the evening of December 15 these patrols did not withdraw. Instead, German assault engineers continued to cross the river in rubber assault boats, soon followed by the assault companies and heavy infantry weapons. These forces then moved to their line of departure, in some cases very close to the American-held villages. The 77th Volksgrenadier Regiment followed while the 39th Volksgrenadier Regiment circled in some woods prepared to move across country to seize bridges over the Clerf River near Drauffelt. General Kokott had only the first day to cross both rivers, according to plan. To do this, the 110th Infantry would have to be quickly eliminated as a threat to his advance.

Holding the critical access to the Dasburg-Bastogne Highway was Lieutenant Colonel Donald Paul's 1st Battalion, 110th Infantry. Company B and a platoon of the 630th Tank Destroyer Battalion held Marnach, a key access point. To the south Company C and the regimental cannon company held Munshausen, guarding a side road. Company A at Heinerscheid was on the left, but outside the immediate assault sector of the XLVII Corps. So was Company D at Grindhausen.

Major Harold F. Milton's 3rd Battalion was on the regimental right. It had its own Company K, and Company B, 103rd Engineer Combat Battalion, at Hosingen, a village overlooking two of the four roads the Germans intended to use to capture Bastogne. Company I held a village to the south while the 110th Antitank Company held the village of Hoscheid. Both were, unknown to the Americans, on the boundary between the XLVII Corps and its neighbor, the LXXXV Corps. Company L, Company M, and the battalion headquarters company barred an approach to a Clerf River crossing at Consthum. Lieutenant Colonel Ross C. Henbest's 2nd Battalion was west of the Clerf River near the regimental command post at the town of Clerf. None of these positions offered mutual support to any of the others.

The opening barrage began at 5:30 a.m. on December 16. Colonel Fuller lost all telephone communications with his battalions to German artillery fire, but his own artillery radios continued to function. Further, the Germans' limited ammunition supply left their advancing infantry without immediate covering fire while they struggled across the Our River, still short of the American defenses. At 6:15 that morning, Colonel Fuller received the first word that his regiment was under attack. Company L, along Skyline Ridge at Holzthum, reported shadowy figures in the half-light of dawn. Whether they were friend or enemy, they could not tell. Colonel Fuller notified division headquarters about the possible enemy activity.

The figures seen by Company L were in fact Germans of the 39th Volksgrenadier Regiment, who had infiltrated across the Our River during the night and were moving to attack Holzthum. For the 26th Volksgrenadier Division, at least,

AKG Images

the decision to move across the river during the hours of darkness and get into position early proved beneficial. Others were striking at Hosingen, along Skyline Drive.

Hosingen was a small village of about 550 people. It lay on Luxembourg's main north-south highway, Skyline Drive, about four miles west of the Our River. Here Company K, 110th Infantry, was responsible for about two miles of the regimental 10-mile front line, a length normally held by a battalion. With little choice, Company K opted to defend Hosingen, thus blocking the road to the west. The defenders had no armored support, and so the company was placed with the 2nd Platoon and one heavy machine gun team from Company M holding the southern end of the town, 1st Platoon and the Weapons Platoon holding the north end of town, and 3rd Platoon with another Company M machine gun squad two miles south of town.

Company K's 60mm mortars, reinforced with some 81mm mortars from Company M, were behind buildings in the center of town. Automatic weapons covered likely approaches to the town, while the mortars, in theory, covered dead spots. Defensive fire from supporting artillery had been plotted and registered, but an ammunition shortage restricted the use of these guns unless and until an actual enemy had been identified.

Captain Jarret's Company B, 103rd Engineer Combat Battalion, whose mission it was to maintain the roadway, was also in Hosingen. Responsible for about 15 miles of Skyline Drive, they also maintained a secondary road that ran west of the town. The engineers were not included in the defensive arrangements for Hosingen, but the heavy and light machine guns mounted on many of their vehicles could be used in defending the village if the need arose.

About 5:30 a.m. on December 16, the observation post in the water tower above the town reported "pinpoints of light" coming from the German lines. These soon turned into enemy artillery firing at the American lines. All wire communications immediately ceased to function. After constant shelling for about 30 minutes, several buildings within the town were afire. The GIs manned their defensive positions immediately, and the officers went out to check that they were manned and ready. Soon enemy troops (77th Volksgrenadier Regiment) could be heard bypassing the town just to the north, but nothing could be seen until dawn at about 7:30 a.m. As soon as it was light enough to see, Company K's machine guns opened fire, causing casualties among the German infantry and disrupting their advance. Fighting continued for several hours.

By mid-afternoon 1st Lieutenant Robert A. Payne of Company A, 707th Tank Battalion, received orders to attack south along Skyline Drive from Marnach to Hosingen. The attack met strong opposition from enemy infantry, but the five tanks reached Hosingen in less than an hour. Their arrival cheered the men of Company K, but disappointed them when it was learned that they did not bring the ammunition promised by battalion headquarters. In fact, the tankers were surprised that Company K was still in Hosingen and had not been told of any ammunition needs by the infantry. That evening the tanks merged into the infantry's defenses around the town. Three of them moved to some high ground southwest along a ridge and harassed the continuing German movement to the west beyond Hosingen. Company K, meanwhile, notified Major Milton that the tanks had arrived but without any ammunition for the infantry. The request for ammunition was renewed with urgency, as the Germans were still attacking.

The Germans were also having their problems. Panzer Pioneer Battalion 130 had the job of bridging the Our River by noon the first day of the offensive, but first it had to bridge the Irsen River east of the Our, just to get to the latter. Both bridges were of the 60-ton type which required special hauling capacity. At the Our an unusually swift current delayed matters further. It took until mid-afternoon before two bridges could be put into place. This changed the face of the battle for Hosingen.

With the bridges in place, two Panther tanks crossed over and engaged Lieutenant Payne's tanks. These forced the American tanks to seek shelter within the town. The infantrymen were also forced back. To speed his lagging assault, General Kokott now brought up more assault troops, sending Replacement Training Battalion 26 into the battle. With these he made one more effort to drive the Americans out of Hosingen. The effort managed to get some German infantry into the northern fringes of the town, but there they were halted by a fierce American defense.

With their intended path to Bastogne blocked, the Germans now tried a new route through some woods southeast of town, but this was still in view of the Americans, who fired on them. U.S. machine gunners picked off individual Germans as they attempted to dash across the road from the woods. This action continued all night, as the men of Company K felt the Germans moving closer and enemy fire increasing. Their position in Hosingen blocked all approaches to the crossroads at Bastogne from the east, north and south.

Supported by Battery C, 109th Field Artillery Battalion and Lieutenant Payne's tank platoon, the defenders of Hosingen blocked the 77th Volksgrenadier Regiment's attempt to cross the Clerf River. Not only that, but the 39th Volksgrenadier Regiment, which was supposed to have bypassed resistance, was somehow drawn into the battle and was making no headway either. Once again, more help was called for by the attacking force. Hosingen had to be taken quickly or the German timetable would be irretrievably disrupted.

A call went out to the Armored Reconnaissance Battalion of Panzer Lehr. Stalled by the obstacle at Hosingen, the exploitation forces could not move and remained bogged down in the mud and winding roads of the Ardennes. German artillery fire renewed its pounding the next morning, knocking out several engineer trucks. A renewed attack was again beaten off, with the American tanks firing directly into the ranks of the German infantry. But the Germans were not to be denied. They had by now surrounded the town on three sides and attacked from them all.

Bundesarchive Bild 183-J28646; Photo: Schulz

ABOVE: Advancing toward the defensive positions of the 28th Infantry Division, PzKpfw. V Panther tanks of the German Panzer Lehr Division roll through Luxembourg. OPPOSITE: American soldiers hitch a ride on a pair of armored vehicles, one of them an M4 Sherman tank, during the Battle of the Bulge. On the afternoon of the first day of the German offensive, the American 707th Tank Battalion received orders to attack south along Skyline Drive and reached the village of Hosingen to bolster the defenders of Company K, 110th Infantry Regiment.

After a two-hour battle, the Americans were forced into the northern part of town amid burning trucks and houses. By dark on December 17, ammunition was running low and artillery support could no longer be employed. Although the Sherman tanks kept the German armor from entering the town, the ammunition supply became critical. Major Milton was advised of the situation, "Town completely surrounded with enemy tanks and infantry. Running low on ammunition. Awaiting further orders."

Major Milton had earlier been advised by General Cota that reinforcements were on the way to Hosingen. General Cota insisted that the town be held even as late as the morning of December 18, but he then realized that there was no way the reinforcements could break through the German ring surrounding Hosingen. Major Milton had originally hoped that the garrison could break up into small groups and evade capture, but by December 18 that was no longer possible. He contacted Captain Feiker of Company K and left the final decision up to him. The reply was, "We can't get out, but these Krauts are going to pay a stiff price if they try to get in."

Over the next few hours the Company K perimeter grew smaller and smaller in house-to-house fighting. A final radio message came late that day stating, "We've blown up everything there is to blow up except the radio and it goes next. I don't mind dying and I don't mind taking a beating, but I'll be damned if we will give up to these bastards." Nothing further was heard from the defenders of Hosingen. Losses were later tabulated at seven killed, 10 wounded, and one missing. Eight officers and 300 men were marched into captivity.

The 1st Battalion, 110th Infantry, had its main defenses at Marncah, which blocked the road to Clerf and Bastogne. The German High Command had designated this road as the main thrust for the vital crossroads town. The 2nd Panzer Division was to push the defenders aside and race to Bastogne. The 28th Panzer Engineer Battalion and the 2nd Battalion, 304th Panzergrenadier Regiment, crossed the Our River in rubber boats before dawn on December 16. Behind them, engineers rushed to complete bridges across the river for the armor to follow. An American minefield delayed the advance for a moment, but by early morning the Germans were approaching Marnach. There they met with resistance from Company B, 110th Infantry, and a reconnaissance platoon of the 630th Tank Destroyer Battalion. Despite being

under fire from the attacking infantry and their supporting artillery across the Our River, the defenders gave the Germans a warm reception.

Soon Marnach was surrounded by an estimated 300 German soldiers. Lieutenant Carson, commanding Company B, called down artillery fire on these approaching enemy troops. When Lieutenant Carson was wounded, Colonel Paul sent his own battalion executive officer, Captain J. H. Burns, to take command in Marnach. Meanwhile, Colonel Paul's repeated efforts to send reinforcements to the surrounded infantrymen in Marnach were foiled time after time by German units advancing past the besieged town.

Colonel Fuller then dispatched two platoons of Company A, 707th Tank Battalion to the rescue, along with Companies A and C of the 1st Battalion, 110th Infantry. A series of confusing moves and firefights ensued with little change in the situation. So confused was the battle that in one instance an M16 halftrack of the 447th Antiaircraft Artillery (Automatic Weapons) Battalion was guarding a crossroads when a column of Germans marched toward it. Upon seeing the vehicle, the German column paused. A fast-thinking GI waved the Germans forward. When they resumed their march, the heavy .50-caliber machine guns killed over 100 of the enemy.

At division headquarters, General Cota was trying to aid the hard pressed 110th Infantry. His reserves were limited to the 2nd Battalion, 110th Infantry, and most of the 707th Tank Battalion. Aware by now that the entire VIII Corps was under a major attack, he knew that his 28th Infantry Division was on its own for the foreseeable future. The worst situation was clearly the front of Colonel Fuller's command, and so he ordered Companies A and B of the 707th Tank Battalion to reinforce the 110th Infantry. These units were sent to Hosingen and Marnach with mixed success. Despite Colonel Fuller's pleas for the return of his 2nd Battalion, General Cota refused at this time.

But time and German aggressiveness were against the "Bloody Bucket." Ammunition supplies were rapidly becoming exhausted, and the short winter days promised to allow the Germans to use the cover of night to surround the individual American strongpoints along the front line. Soon the bridges the German engineers were struggling with across the Our River would be completed, and then the situation would get much worse. One tank platoon did reach Marnach, but only after missing in the confusion Company C, which they were supposed to escort into that besieged town. At Marnach, the Germans soon had tank support which struck at the town just before darkness fell. The last message from Colonel Paul was, "German tanks are just going on to enter Marnach."

At his regimental headquarters in the Clerf Hotel, Colonel Fuller prepared for a last-ditch defense of that critical town. The town happened to be a rest center for the division, and with General Cota's permission Colonel Fuller rounded up about 300 officers and men, armed them with rifles, carbines and grenades and organized them into provisional platoons under Lieutenant Johnston of the 110th Infantry. These men were placed in defensive positions blocking the Clervaux-Marnach Road to the east of Clerf. In support was a platoon of heavy machine guns from Company D and a 2nd Battalion platoon of antitank guns. Cooks, clerks, Special Service men and other administrative personnel were sent into the local castle with orders to turn it into a strongpoint. Soon, German artillery shells were falling on Clerf with alarming regularity.

That evening General Cota advised Colonel Fuller that he was returning his 2nd Battalion to him. He also ordered all his regimental commanders, including Colonel Fuller, to "Hold at all costs." Colonel Fuller replied that he would use the 2nd Battalion to counterattack to regain possession of Marnach. If that attack was successful, he would continue it to recover all the lost strongpoints along Skyline Drive. General Cota approved of his plan and released the 2nd Battalion, 110th Infantry, to Colonel Fuller, less Company G, which he retained for his own headquarters defense at the town of Wiltz. Colonel Fuller planned for his 2nd Battalion, less Company G, and Company D (light tanks) of the 707th Tank Battalion to attack in the morning along Skyline Drive toward Marnach. He also ordered the 1st Platoon of Company A, 707th Tank Battalion, and his own Company

ABOVE: 28th Division soldiers who avoided capture as their positions were overrun congregate in Bastogne. One of the soldiers is carrying a Browning Automatic Rifle (BAR), while others shoulder the M1, and M1 carbine Garand rifle. BELOW: The hulks of a knocked-out German Sturmgeschutz III self-propelled assault gun and an American M4 Sherman tank from the 707th Tank Battalion bear mute testimony to the ferocity of the fighting adjacent to a cemetery on the outskirts of the town of Clervaux, Luxembourg. OPPOSITE: The German Offensive struck American positions in a thinly held sector of the Western Front on December 16, 1944. Elements of the 28th Infantry Division slowed the German advance, buying time for a coordinated Allied response to the threat.

Both: National Archives

C, to attack that objective at the same time.

Colonel Fuller's plans were offset by the German's success in finally bridging the Our River. Tanks, assault guns and heavy weapons finally began to reach the advanced infantry formations facing the American strongpoints along Skyline Drive and elsewhere. Contact had been made with the German 5th Parachute Division, which had been busy separating the 109th and 110th Infantry Regiments from each other

The opening day of the offensive had not gone as planned for the Germans. The American infantry had held their ground, using excellent defensive positions and their artillery to block German advances where they did not have infantry coverage. Despite overwhelming odds in many cases, the GIs had not yielded to enemy pressure and held their positions until forced back by casualties and lack of ammunition. When pushed back, they had destroyed everything of value to the Germans, blocking roads, laying minefields, and delaying the enemy far longer than was expected. Nowhere had the Germans gained their objectives. General Luettwitz was not pleased with the day's results.

Like General Cota, Major General Troy H. Middleton, commanding VIII Corps, also issued a hold fast order to all his commands. Under no conditions were any of his troops to withdraw until their positions were "completely untenable." No one was to retreat beyond a specified line issued by VIII Corps. In the case of the 110th Infantry, this line had already been breached by the 2nd Panzer Division at Marnach.

At Clerf things began to go wrong early in the morning hours of December 17. As German artillery quieted down, infiltrators with automatic weapons began to appear on the outskirts of town. Soon they were engaged with the administrative troops in the castle. With dawn came a single tank or self-propelled gun firing into the town. More enemy infantry appeared and joined the battle. Then with full daylight came two platoons of German Mark IV tanks and 30 half-tracks carrying infantry. The 2nd Platoon, Company A, 707th Tank Battalion, moved out of Clerf to engage the enemy tanks. Four enemy tanks were destroyed against three American losses. Company A's 1st Platoon also moved up along with some infantry and reinforced Clerf. Enemy tanks engaged them but ceased when the American tanks knocked out the German lead vehicle. Other German tanks stood off on nearby ridges and pounded the town with their heavy guns.

About this time, General Middleton sent some assistance from Combat Command Reserve (CCR) of the 9th Armored Division. Originally intended to back up the 28th Infantry Division's center, General Cota appropriated Company B, 2nd Tank Battalion to directly support the 110th Infantry. When the 19 tanks arrived at Clerf, Colonel Fuller sent one platoon to clear the Germans out of the south end of town, another to help the 2nd Battalion's attack, and the third to Heinerscheid where the light tanks of the 707th tank Battalion had been smashed the day before.

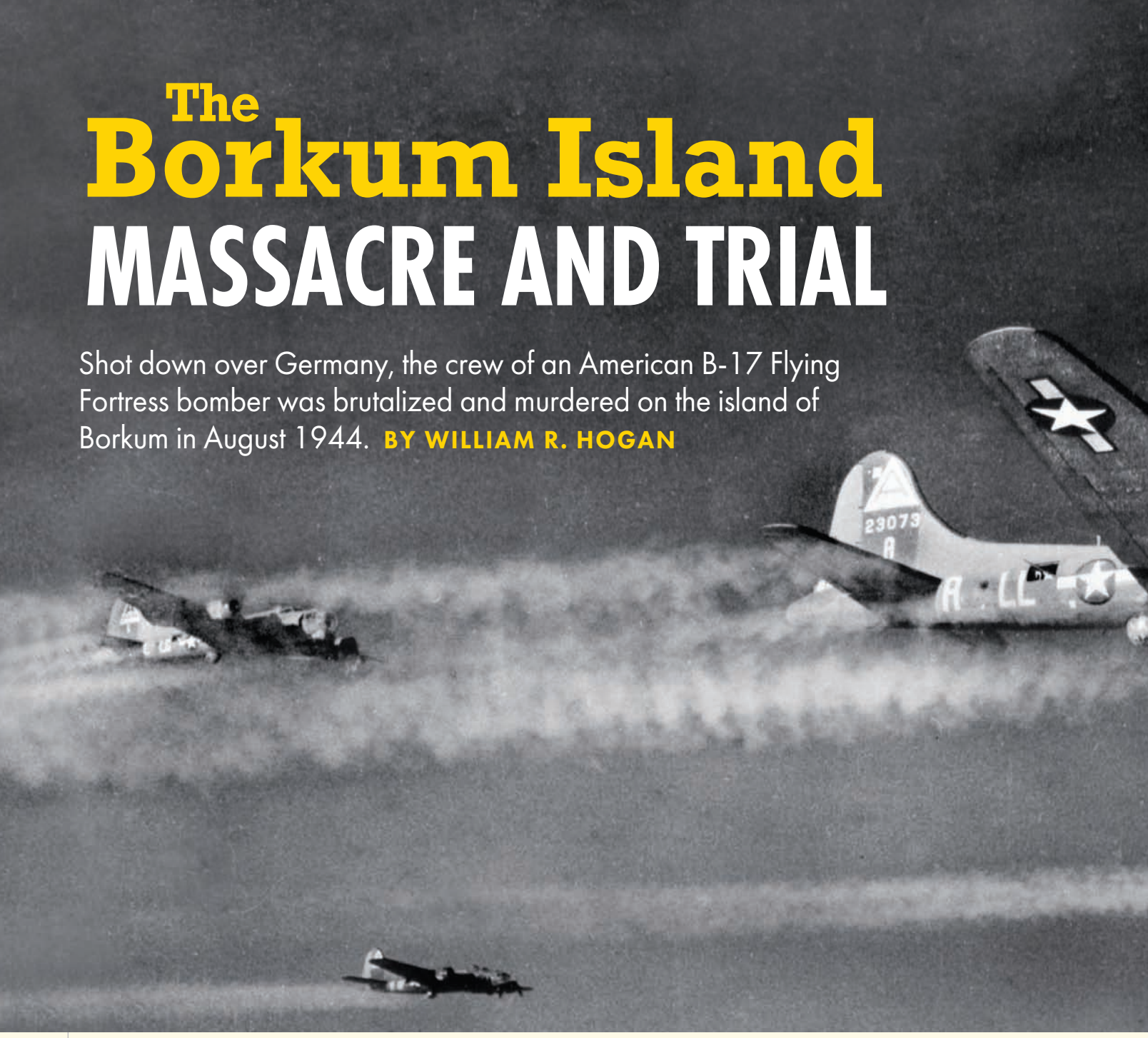
Despite this help, the 2nd Battalion's attack was pushed back by more and more German armor. The newly arrived armored force was being steadily eroded by this increasingly strong enemy attack. Company B, 630th Tank Destroyer Battalion, was down to its last remaining vehicles. Pushed back to regimental headquarters, Companies E and F dug in on a ridge just ahead of Clerf to defend that town. With the ongoing losses, the battalion's flanks were soon uncovered, and a small column of German tanks entered Clerf from the south.

At 6:25 that evening, Colonel Fuller advised

Continued on page 68

The Borkum Island MASSACRE AND TRIAL

Shot down over Germany, the crew of an American B-17 Flying Fortress bomber was brutalized and murdered on the island of Borkum in August 1944. **BY WILLIAM R. HOGAN**



ON August 4, 1944, a Boeing B-17G Flying Fortress heavy bomber, tail number 43-37909, so new that it did not have a nickname or nose art yet, took off from England on a bombing run over Germany that would end in a crash landing on Borkum Island in the North Sea.

After taking ground fire, the pilot and co-pilot, Lieutenants Harvey Walthall of Virginia and William Meyers of Pennsylvania, heroically recovered their stricken aircraft to safely land on a pebble beach on the German island of Borkum. A mob of locals roused by nearby Nazi officials beat and abused the prisoners of war on what turned out to be a death march.

It was a balmy morning in Sudbury, England, and the sun peeked over heather fields of gold and stone gray manor houses of the Salisbury plain. The crews of the 486th Bombardment Group (Heavy) plodded through their mission briefing while crews fed guns heavy belts of .50-caliber ammunition, checked hydraulics and finished loading bombs.

It was only this B-17G crew's third mission together. The 486th Bombardment Group's primary target that day was the Ernst Schliemann oil refinery in Hamburg. Its 5,000-ton per month capacity was vital to the Wehrmacht's mechanized armies.

In the nose below the flight deck sat Lieutenant Quentin Ingerson, navigator. He checked the routes on maps, reviewing air assembly areas and the dreaded red fans of expected Luftwaffe fighter coverage. He was the youngest member of the crew at only 19.

Immediately behind the pilots was Sergeant Kazmer Rachak, 22. When the war started, he dreamed of becoming a pilot but failed the flight physical because of color blindness. He requested to serve in the Air Corps and was trained as the flight engineer/gunner. His job was to fix anything that went mechanically

All Photos National Archives except where noted

Photo: Quentin Ingerson

wrong in flight.

A long hop over the bomb bay into the middle fuselage reached radio operator Sergeant Ken Faber's station, where the 26-year-old New Yorker ran checks on the four radios and internal communications suite under his charge. A sheet metal worker before the war, Faber was devoted to wife Justine, waiting for him back home in Eerie, New York.

The ball turret aft of Faber's position housed Sergeant James W. Danno, 21, from Washington. This was the former theology student's first combat mission.

Sergeant William Dold sat astride the two large windows, each with a swiveling .50-caliber machine gun facing port and starboard on the B-17's "waist." He was attending the University of Notre Dame when the war geared up and volunteered to get a chance at being a pilot. An Army physical put an end to his dream of piloting due to "unsteady hands."

The last man to clamber aboard was Sergeant William Lambertus, 25. The tall blonde-haired William grew up in Newark, New Jersey. His job was to protect the B-17's six o'clock position. For this task he manned dual .50-caliber machine guns poking menacingly through an armored glass bubble in the plane's tail.

Harvey Walthall called out, "Left engine starter on!" The first of four powerful radial engines coughed to life, propellers spinning. Bill Meyers followed with the second as the pilots sequentially engaged Left 1, Left 2, Right 3 and Right 4 engines from the rack of throttles crammed between them. English heather still newly grown swayed low against the hurricane force winds of 20 B-17s cranking their engines.

Facing the runway at full throttle, Harvey nodded at Bill as the brakes were released and their Flying Fortress rolled down the tarmac at 100 mph. The bomber picked up maximum speed, and the pilots felt the heavy burden of 4,800 pounds of high explosive bombs shift from the pneumatic tires and ease up to the wings as lift took over.

At 5,000 feet, according to plan, they reached the assembly altitude at 9:40 a.m., where the rest of the wing was waiting. At 12,000 feet, the second wing of 20 planes of the 486th Bombardment Group completed the 40-plane for-

U.S. Army Air Forces Boeing B-17 bombers fly in formation en route to a target in Germany. Enemy fighters and antiaircraft fire took a heavy toll on the airmen aboard. INSET: The crew of Harvey Walthall's B-17 bomber is shown in a photo probably taken prior to deploying overseas. Standing left to right are Quentin Ingerson, Walthall, William Meyers, and Howard Graham. Kneeling left to right are Kazmar Rachak, J. Hesser, Kenneth Faber, James Danno, William Lambertus, and William Dold.

mation, moving purposefully northeastward like a metallic storm cloud.

At 12:45, Walthall called out over the internal communications: "Fighter escort is on station." Five minutes later: "Enemy coastline crossed." The formation continued, hugging the Dutch coast further over the North Sea toward Germany. Occasional radio transmissions broke the monotony.

Forty minutes later, they entered the most dangerous portion of the flight as the bomber formation took a straight course, no longer zigzagging. The statistically safest bet, the pilots were told, was the shortest, most direct route through flak barrages. This also kept the formation tight to protect from enemy fighters and helped ensure accurate bombs on target.

Black pluffs of exploding flak bloomed ahead. Bomber 909 in the rear of the formation trudged on. The explosions and turbulence grew closer and shook the plane's frame as well as the crew's nerves.

A dozen tense minutes of bumpy flight passed. Pilot and copilot began to think they would all make it through to the bombing run when they felt a shudder and strong surge through the yoke.

A burst of flak had detonated directly below the bomber, sending a compressed wave of hot air through the fuselage and into the hydraulic system that operated the moving parts of the wings. The bomber rose 200 feet within two seconds, dangerously close to the bomber above, number 145.

Rachak saw it all from his cupola on top of the fuselage. Number 145 approached fast toward their starboard wing. Its tail section drifted down toward 909's No. 3 and 4 engines. The propellers of 909 cut into the empennage of 145 between the waist and tail guns with a sickening roar and crunch. Debris shot out at all angles, hitting the fuselage with a force like shrapnel exploding within 50 meters of the aircraft. Then, the horizontal stabilizer came down on the top turret.

Kazmer was knocked to the flight deck as the turret dome crumpled and shattered. Freezing air shot in, adding to the noise inside the cabin. Off to 909's right, the tail of 145 held tight in spite of the deep gashes that threatened to cause the ship to come apart. Pulling out of the formation, 145's pilot, Lt. William Dale, kept her level but her bombing run was finished. It would be all Dale and the crew could do to get themselves safely back to friendly territory.

In the cockpit of 909, Meyers and Walthall saw that the engines ran but with damaged blades. The big bomber dropped heavily to the right with a moan of creaking metal. Alarms sounded in stressed out, mechanical whines. The bomber drifted right in an "S" turn that threatened to invert them. Inside the cockpit, the altitude gauge spun as the aircraft fell. Walthall scrambled to take control of the plane and get it out of its backward death spin. He issued crisp orders to the navigator to mark their position and send a May-Day on the squadron net.

Next, he added power to engines 3 and 4, then pulled on the yoke to keep the stricken bomber from a complete stall. The aircraft continued to dive into a bank of clouds. Crews in aircraft above lost sight as their undamaged machines continued on at 500 mph.

Behind the pilots, Kazmer thought he heard the order to bail out over the terrible wind noise. He checked his parachute harness, then looked toward the main access door. Ingerson also thought he heard the bail out order. According to procedure, Kazmer would be the first one out followed by the navigator. Kazmar unstrapped his bulked up body from his seat then rapidly waddled to the already open door. A couple more steps and Kazmer was sucked out violently from the waist access door. His body was tossed about in the rough air like a leaf in a wind gust until a bone-jerking stop let him know his parachute had opened. Ingerson followed close behind from his own access door, greeting the open sky and blooming parachute canopy a few seconds later.

Both crewmen drifted slowly away through the low bank of clouds as their brothers remained at their stations, unaware that the two had bailed out. Any thought of the remaining crew bailing out was impossible due to the falling plane's G forces.

Back inside the cockpit, Walthall and Meyers' calm efforts to increase power to the stricken engines paid off. At 10,000 feet both could feel the familiar and comforting pressure on their palms and feet pushing back from the pedals and yoke as 909 generated enough lift on her right side to stop the spinning elevation dial and regain a horizontal attitude.

Once out of the bank of clouds, the pilots realized they would not be making it back to England or even France. They had lost a lot of altitude, and the engines could not generate enough power to stop their descent. The crippled bomber whined and shook in a steady descent that appeared to clear them from the

narrow channel between the mainland and a large island offshore.

That ground surged toward them. There was a lighthouse and small town on the far side of the strip of land. Walthall saw what looked like a naval base and the menacing skyward pointing barrels of an antiaircraft battery.

Then 909 gave its last effort, its frame shaking roughly, smoke pouring out of the No. 3 engine. "Crew: Brace for Impact." At 20 feet above the ground there was a split second of quiet as Meyers cut the long-suffering engines. Then a sickening crunch and impossibly loud grinding of rock on aluminum were heard. The shock jolted the crew in the mid-section.

After 30 long seconds, the bomber stopped; an 800-foot gash cut the beach behind it. Everyone let out a sigh of relief and sat back to collect their thoughts. Meyers and Walthall had pulled off an impossible save of their bomber and crew. But their ordeal was just beginning.

As they exited their aircraft in relief, the seven flyers saw armed German naval personnel rush forward, rifles at port arms. Shouts of "Hande hoch!" preceded prods with rifle barrel or butt. The seven airmen staggered outside their stricken aircraft. The Germans shoved them along until the Americans stood in line, dazed and panting.

Finally, an English-speaking man in German naval uniform marched up and quieted down the others. He introduced himself as Navy Lieutenant Erich Wentzel and informed the fliers that they were now German prisoners of war.

Wentzel conducted a rude interrogation of each U.S. flyer, writing down notes as he went down the line one by one. He then assigned two sergeants, Schmitz and Wittmaack, to march the prisoners through the center of the island. The route of march took them past Reich Labor Service (RAD) men clearly visible turning shovels down the road.

The disheveled, exhausted airmen trudged forward toward the end of the gray, dark beach, the rhythmic crunch of boots on gravel, heavy breathing, and grunts from the guards the only sounds for the next 10 minutes.

Ahead was the RAD work gang, eight men in gray overalls, assorted hats and sleeves rolled up showing sinewy arms that folded spades over their shoulders. The workers assembled into lines on each side of the gravel road.

The U.S. flyers began running the gauntlet of shovel wielding RAD diggers. Blows with shovel, fist or foot greeted the prisoners. German shouts melded with grunts and exhalations of pain from the fliers. Howard Graham shuffled in, his heavy pants slowing him despite the pushing from behind and the sides. The RAD workers tired themselves swinging spades and reverted to throwing punches in the close quarters of the 16-man scrum.

The Americans in front turned around to help the others. Sergeant Schmitz rudely pushed them on. The fliers could not catch their breath; the guards prodded on, making them hold their trembling, bruised arms over their heads. They had another 6.5 miles to go to the port in the building heat of midday.

Meanwhile, the naval commander, Captain Kurt Goebbel, rang Borkum's mayor, Jan Akkerman, informing him that the giant bomber that everyone in town saw and heard as it careened overhead had crash landed on the empty northern beach and that seven "Ami" prisoners were to be marched to the southern pier. The naval officer added ominously: "This is a purely military matter and I hope civilian authorities will not intervene as you may have read in Reich Propaganda Minister Goebbels' treatise on dealing with these war criminals."

Akkerman was a virulent Nazi, a member of the party since 1934, and continued to believe in the false promise of that ideology. He was familiar with Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels' pronouncement that Allied aviators were war criminals and deserved the most savage treatment possible.

He looked out his window on the second floor of the town hall toward the small main square. People were milling about as word had already spread that the bomber's crew were in German hands and would likely march through town to get to the naval pier. Akkerman hung up the phone, bent on revenge.

The seven crewmen and guards marched for 30 minutes. It was a warm day, and the bomber crew breathed heavily out of parched, dry mouths. The road changed from narrow gravel to an improved two-lane asphalt avenue headed straight to a jumble of small buildings in the island's town.

Graham's guard, Karl Geyer, called out to Wentzel to stop the column so that the young flyer could adjust his heavy trousers. Wentzel sharply denied the guard's request, then threatened to punish Geyer if he allowed his American prisoner to drop his hands again.

Ahead, the small town was now in view with streets leading to a row of two- and three- story brick buildings centered around a cobblestoned open area. At the center stood an imposing five-story brick building crowned by steeples and a spire. Several dozen people assembled in two

ABOVE: After the mid-air collision, Walthall's B-17 began to plummet earthward in a backward spin similar to the attitude of the bomber in this photo at lower right. The stricken Flying Fortress quickly descended into a bank of clouds. OPPOSITE: B-17 bombers encounter heavy flak over Germany. Walthall's plane was lifted 200 feet when a shell burst beneath the heavy bomber, causing its propellers to strike the B-17 flying in formation above.

masses on each side of the street.

Another guard, a young Austrian named Johann Pointner, called a halt. Shouldn't the column turn on Victoria Street and avoid the mob ahead? It was the shorter way to the port. Wentzel, mounted on a bicycle, pulled up to the group and ordered the formation on through the center of town and the angry mob.

In front of the Borkum City Hall, Mayor Akkerman riled up the townspeople. After his phone call, he strode flamboyantly out of his office to address the crowd. Adopting his best Hitleresque gesticulation complete with rabidly escalating speech, Akkerman enjoined, "The bomber you saw crash land on the beach north of here has yielded seven prisoners, seven war criminals! They are marching here at this moment. Now is the time to pay them back for their terror raids upon our people."

Initially curious, the crowd quickly turned into a mob as people began to incite violence.

"Beat the dogs, the murderers!" shouted Akkerman, his face contorted with rage.

Slowly, inexorably, the seven were pushed and prodded toward the waiting mob. They entered the town square, and chaos ensued.

Some civilians attacked the prisoners, while other egged on shouting: "Knock them down, kill them, they kill our wives, brothers and children." A flurry of insults and spittle followed. A fist flew in, connecting with an eye socket. Slaps to the back of the head echoed with dull thuds.

As the aviators stumbled on through the corridor of angry villagers, an air raid policeman, Gustav Mammenga, rushed up, delivering a brutal blow to Graham's head. Graham collapsed in a heap. The column slowed under the attack.

Suddenly, out of nowhere, German Army Private Erich Langer sprang forward after making his way out of the crowd. The crazed soldier was on leave after his entire family had succumbed weeks earlier to an Allied bombing raid over Hamburg. "You damned swine! You murdered my wife and four children!" he bellowed.

Langer drew a pistol from a black leather holster, fiery hate in his eyes, and shot the supine Graham. The loud bang hushed and froze the crowd. The convoy of prisoners halted briefly, then Schmitz and Wittmaack ordered them on. Several civilians ran away from the mob, not wanting any part in what was sure to follow.

Graham lay on the ground on his side convulsing as blood poured from his chest. Several villagers ran to him, not to abuse him but to move him into a nearby office to try and stop the bleeding. Graham was fading. A wild-eyed Langer burst into the office, waving his pistol and offering a "mercy shot." A German secretary yelled at Langer to get out, but Graham soon died. Langer followed the prisoners down the cobblestone street leading out of Borkum.

The surviving Americans yelled and cursed at their guards. Schmitz and Wittmaack, fearing they were losing control, ordered the guards to use their rifle butts on the prisoners. The march continued to the outskirts of town and back to the countryside. The ground began to slope to the coastline. The group was getting close to the seaport where a waiting ferry promised deliverance.

Behind the formation came the angry shouting of murderous Erich Langer. He caught up to the shuffling formation and began yelling in staccato German at Schmitz and Wittmaack. The arguing went on for several minutes.

The Germans could not leave any witnesses to Graham's murder. They lined up the exhausted prisoners next to a tree line. The damp smell of salt and sea reminding them they were close to the seaport. But there was nowhere to run.

Langer, Schmitz, and Wittmaack walked down the line firing their weapons. The thud of a falling body followed each bang. For Harvey Walthall, William Meyers, William Dold, William Lambertus, and James Danno, the war ended on the soggy ground of Borkum Island in a blinding pistol shot.

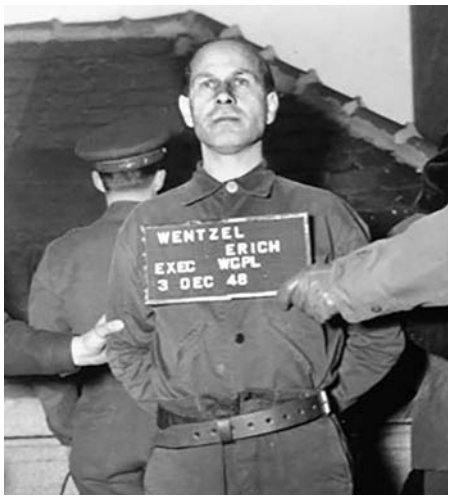
The war roared on for almost another year. Finally, in the late summer of 1945 the war crime on Borkum surged out of the shadows. After VE-Day, the British occupied the northern islands, including Borkum. Villagers informed the British that the seven rough-hewn wooden crosses poking out of the ground in the Borkum Presbyterian Cemetery belonged to a bomber crew that landed uninjured. Chatter from formerly imprisoned French, Polish and Russian workers building fortifications on Borkum Island during the war reached Allied ears.

A U.S. naval liaison to the British Admiral in charge of the northern sector referred the report to U.S. Military Intelligence. A preliminary inquiry in June 1945, was followed by a substantive investigation that pointed an accusatory finger at 22 Germans. Allied authorities apprehended 15 during the latter half of 1945. The remaining seven did not survive the war.

The principal assassin, Erich Langer, who fired the first bullet at Howard Graham as he struggled to make his way through the hostile crowd, died fighting the Russians. A bitter man, raging with revenge, Langer escaped earthly judgment for his crimes.

The investigation found enough evidence to

An Army Air Forces officer took photos in preparation for the trial that occurred in 1946. They depict, at left, the road along which the captured airmen were assaulted by at least 100 German workers, and at right, the corner at Borkum City Hall where Howard Graham was murdered by Erich Langer.



ABOVE: In February 1946, defendants leave the court room during the war crimes trial held at Borkum Island. The accused were convicted and some had their sentences reduced. LEFT: Eric Wentzel, the officer in charge of the column of prisoners, was executed on December 3, 1948.

recommend a trial. On October 31, 1945, Major General Lucius D. Clay, Commanding General, 7th Army and Military Governor of the Western District, signed the order creating the Borkum Island War Crimes Tribunal, known to history as U.S. versus Kurt Goebbel et al.

The tribunal, presided over by Chief Judge Colonel Edward B. Jackson with prosecution led by Major Joseph D. Bryan and the defense by Lieutenant Colonel Samuel M. Hogan (a combat veteran with no formal legal training) would decide the fate of the German defendants. Inside the splendid throne room of the Ludwigsburg Palace, the tribunal attempted to settle several legal questions while providing closure for the families of the American flyers.

With Erich Langer dead, the prosecution needed to build a conspiracy case. Could the prosecution prove that the defendants planned and carried out a conspiracy to assault and murder the flyers? If so, all 15 would hang.

Further moral and legal questions hovered over the courtroom. Could a court composed of U.S. military officers trying their former enemies for the deaths of other U.S. military officers truly operate without bias? Did Allied unrestricted bombing of civilian cities justify reprisals by the German forces on Allied aircrews? International law was ambiguous as to the justification for Allied bombing of civilian targets. Still, the law was clear on the duty of nations to protect prisoners of war.

The tribunal: judges, defense, and prosecution, got into a routine after the December 4, 1945, opening session. Through dozens of examinations and cross-examinations, the trial proceeded. The defense cast doubt on the conspiracy charges, noting that Goebell telephoned the mainland that seven prisoners would be ferried across and to be prepared for their intake. This clearly showed that the accused did not intend for the seven prisoners of war to perish that day.

As to the defendants, the main responsible parties were Goebbel, the senior military commander on the island and the man setting the brutal tone of the guard detail toward the prisoners, Erich Wentzel for failing to protect the prisoners as the senior officer accompanying the march, and Jan Akkermann, the senior government official on the island, heard repeatedly inciting the crowd of 20-30 villagers.

The remaining defendants, enlisted guards Johann Josef Schmitz, Johann Pointner, Karl Geyer, Heinz Witzke, and Jacob Wittmaack held varying degrees of culpability or inaction as witnesses to human rights violations. Pointner and Geyer mitigated their guilt as they attempted to render first aid to Howard Graham and at times were seen pushing away members of the civilian mob as they tried to slap or kick the prisoners.

Among the non-military defendants, air raid police chief Karl Weber tried to do the same, while policeman Gustav Mammenga clearly failed to arrest Langer after the first murder occurred, citing "lack of jurisdiction."

Through January and February, U.S. vs. Goebbel became a back and forth sparring match. As the defense showed that the officers' actions precluded a conspiracy, the prosecution punched back detailing the cover-up that followed the killings. Kurt Goebbel directed the falsification of official reports and sworn statements by the guards. In false statements to German authorities on the mainland, the accused had claimed that the prisoners died after beatings by a mob despite their efforts to protect them.

By midnight on March 23, 1946, the exhausted members of the tribunal awaited the verdict. Colonel Jackson read the names of the guilty in a clear, deliberate monotone: Kurt Goebbel (ranking officer on Borkum Island); Jacob Seiler (Goebbel's second-in-command); Erich Wentzel (officer in charge of the column of prisoners); Johann Schmitz and Jacob Wittmaack (sergeants of the guard of the prisoners); and Jan Akkerman (Borkum mayor).

Colonel Jackson's gavel ended the Borkum Island War Crimes Tribunal, and Schmitz, Wittmaack, and Akkermann were executed in 1948. In ensuing years, Germany went from being an enemy to defeated supplicant, then friend and ally. The political winds touched off years of appeals, resulting in reduced sentences for most of the German defendants. Kurt Goebbel had his sentence reduced on appeal, eventually receiving parole in February 1956.

On August 4, 2003, the two surviving members of 909's aircrew, Quentin Ingerson and Kazmer Rachak, made the long journey from the United States to Borkum Island. There, in the presence of the local townspeople and surviving family members, they laid a plaque commemorating the lives of their seven fellow crewmen that did not return from that fateful flight over northern Germany on that balmy summer day long ago. ■

William R. Hogan is the youngest son of Colonel (Ret.) Samuel M. Hogan, and a fourth generation U.S. Army officer who has served across the world. He currently resides in Paris, serving as an exchange officer on the French Army Staff.

A paratrooper with the 2nd Parachute Battalion takes part in combat training. Paras conducted the Bruneval Raid to seize components of a new German radar system from a post in the coast of France.

OPERATION BITING: 'The Bruneval Raid'

In 'Operation Biting,' British Commandos raided the coast of Nazi-occupied France at Bruneval to snatch equipment related to a new radar apparatus. BY NATHAN N. PREFER

By January 1942, Britain was still in the fight of her life. Germany had occupied all western Europe, controlled the Mediterranean, and was threatening British colonies in North Africa. German submarines all but controlled the North Atlantic, threatening to starve Britain into submission.

German battleships now positioned at Brest, France, threatened to make a final cut of Britain's lifeline to its dominions. The only bright spot was the fact that the Japanese attack at Pearl Harbor had brought the United States into the conflict on the side of the British. That, and the successful defense of Britain itself by the Royal Air force, had kept Britain in the war.

One of the few advantages Britain's armed forces had enjoyed in the early days of the war had been radar, which allowed them to see the enemy before they were seen by that enemy. This had been a major advantage during the Battle of Britain, in the hunt for the German battleship *Bismarck*, and other early battles. But this January, British scientific intelligence had reported that there were indications that the Germans were now deploying new radar stations and adding radar to their ships and aircraft.

Radar stands for "radio detection and ranging." It is a system of bouncing radio waves against an object and measuring its rate of travel to determine targeting information. Before the war, development of this new detection method had been underway in Britain, the United States, and Germany. But it was the British who first put it into use during World War II, in 1939. They had first developed the "Chain Home Early Warning System" by establishing land-based stations that had proven crucial to the success of the aerial defense of Great Britain in 1940-1941. Within a few years it would be used on land, sea, and in the air.

Early radar sets were large, cumbersome, and unwieldly, preventing their use on ships and aircraft. But the British devoted considerable resources to continuing development of radar and would eventually produce radar sets for all manner of ships, aircraft, and land stations. Known at this stage of development as Radio Direction Finding (RDF), the British did not believe that the Germans had their own RDF sets. Radar was eventually fitted to night fighters, enabling Britain to counteract the German night bombers over their cities. Shipborne radar was also a reality early in the war for the British, and later the Americans. Allied aircraft fitted with radar would soon make a significant impact against the German submarine menace, finding enemy submarines even when the naked eye could not see them. Soon warships would have their guns controlled by radar, ensuring greater accuracy and more successful kills.

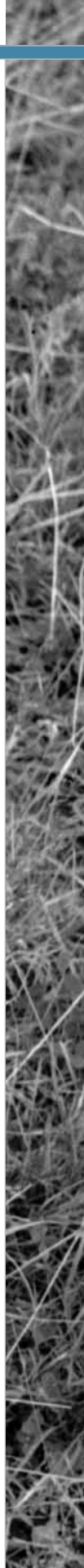
It was known in Britain that the Germans were developing radar and that some of their larger warships had been equipped with it. It was known to the Germans as *Dezimeter Telegraphie*, or "D/T." But in January 1942, evidence that the Germans were installing a new type of radar along the French coast caused a stir in the highest levels of British military circles. If the Germans successfully developed a defense against the nightly raids of Bomber Command, then Britain would have no offensive power against a still aggressive Germany. Indeed, at this time Britain's only means of striking back at Germany were the nightly bomber raids launched from England against German targets on the continent. These, and the occasional commando raid, were all that Britain could do at this stage of the war.

At this point in the war Britain was losing, on average, four bombers for every 100 bombers sent out each night. This was a significant loss factor for a nation with limited resources, and any increase would threaten Britain's chances of continuing to harass Germany until a major offensive could be developed. In the interim, much of British war production was being channeled into Bomber Command, and any threat to the bomber offensive also threatened British war production.

The British had already targeted the early German radar units, known as the "Freya." After much study they could locate it, listen to it, and when they wished, jam it. At times, they could even feed it false information, making it work for them. But recently there had been evidence of a new German radar, unknown to the British, that had the capability to locate a bomber, lock onto it, and lead German night fighters and/or antiaircraft guns to it. This was a new threat that needed to be addressed. It appeared to be small and apparently easy to manufacture. But little else was known about it.

Two leading scientists researching German radar capability, Professor Frederick Alexander Lindemann of Oxford University and Dr. Reginald Victor Jones who was working on the Royal Air Force Air Staff, both proposed that something be done to acquire one of these new radar devices for study by the Telecommunications Research Establishment (TRE). To achieve this goal, Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten, the recently appointed head of Combined Operations, the British Commando organization, proposed a raid into occupied France to capture a new German radar set.

Initial reaction to the proposal was disappointing. Although Air Marshal Henry Portal,



Imperial War Museum

the chief of the Royal Air Force, expressed interest, neither the Royal Navy nor the British Army were excited by the proposal, as it was felt that the benefit would mostly fall to the Royal Air Force. However, when the proposal reached the ears of Prime Minister Winston Churchill, who favored it, things changed.

The first step was to choose a target. Due to the skill of the Photographic Reconnaissance Unit of the Royal Air Force, one of the new sets was identified and photographed in detail atop a cliff on the French coast at the small village of Bruneval, 12 miles north of Le Havre. Dr. Jones and his staff at TRE were anxious to get a look at the insides of the new German radar. They turned to Admiral Mountbatten.

Admiral Mountbatten kept the operation simple. He decided that only a minimal force should be dispatched to seize the vital parts of the new radar, so as not to draw too much attention to the operation by the enemy. He decided on using one company of the Parachute Regiment, a squad of Royal Engineers, some radar mechanics from the Royal Air Force, and a squadron of Whitley bombers to drop the parachutists. Light naval forces would take the raiders back to England when the job was done.

Planners had learned that Bruneval was in a ravine which ended in a cliff-encircled beach which in turn was guarded by several pillboxes. This indicated that an evacuation by sea was feasible. Using both the photos taken by the Photographic Reconnaissance Unit and information coming from the Free French underground a plan was developed. Now they needed to find the men to do the job.

The first step was to get the paratroopers. Major General F. A. M. "Boy" Browning, the leader of Britain's airborne forces, assigned the newly formed 2nd Parachute Battalion, to the mission. In turn, the battalion commander assigned his adjutant, Major John Frost, to command the parachute portion of the raid. The battalion, newly formed and still training, consisted of three companies. Of these, it was considered that Company C was the most efficient. Major Philip Teichman commanded the company, but because he was an Englishman, and the company was filled with Scottish soldiers, it was decided that if Major Frost could complete his required number of parachute jumps in time, he would command the company on the raid. Major Frost, himself a Scot, was more than willing. If, for any reason, Major Frost became unavailable, then Major Teichman would command the company on the raid.

There was some trepidation about this raid within the airborne community. There had been one prior raid using airborne troops. Some

Bundesarchiv Bild 101I-594-0266-30A; Photo: Genzler

German Luftwaffe troops operate a Wurzburg radar apparatus. The Wurzburg radar was the target of the British airborne raiders.

weeks earlier a group of parachutists had been dropped into southern Italy to destroy an aqueduct. None of them had been heard from since. It was hoped that they had been captured and were enjoying German hospitality in some prisoner of war camp, but no one knew for sure what had happened to them. The aqueduct had not been destroyed.

With only hours to spare, Major Frost completed his required jumps to qualify as a British parachutist, much to Major Teichman's disgust. Frost joined Company C, which was then sent to a camp in the south of England. Here they were inspected by General Browning, whom Frost knew from the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst. Major Frost was somewhat concerned about his men's appearance. "At that stage of the war clothing and equipment were scarce, and for a few months we had been concentrating on toughness and on weapons and parachute training. We'd had little time for drill, and still less for making ourselves look glamorous, or even clean. After a prolonged and uncomfortable railway journey, the Jocks had found time to work the dreadful Tilshead mud deep into the fabric of their uniforms. They looked horrible."

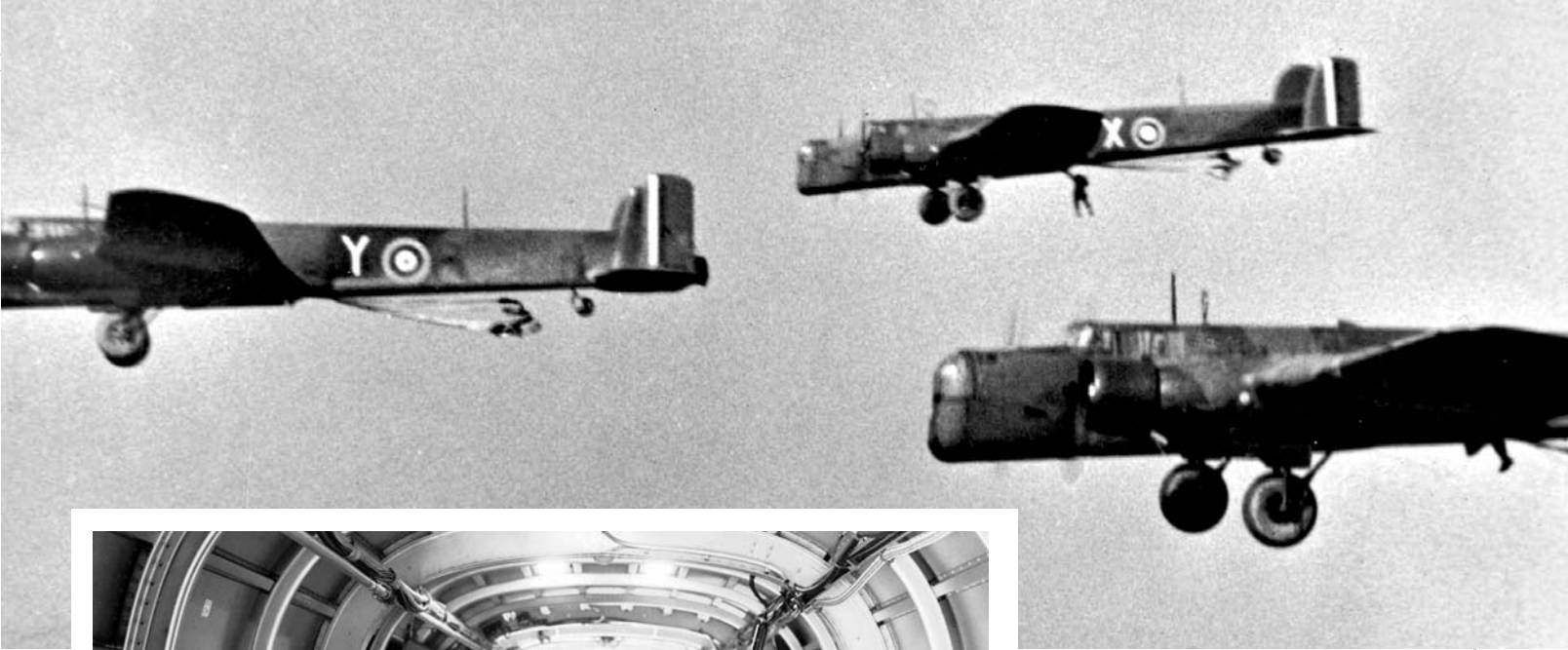
But General Browning, instead of admonishing Major Frost, ordered him to give the General's adjutant a list of new uniforms and other gear needed by the company, which was soon provided. Another problem arose when Prime Minister Churchill learned that the raid was to be carried out by parachutists. He had always favored seaborne raids. To convince him of the practicality of an airborne raid, Company C put on a demonstration on the Isle of Wright.

Company C of the 2nd Parachute Battalion was to simulate a raid on enemy positions. This was to take place in front of the Prime Minister and the War Cabinet. They were to parachute onto the Isle of Wright, then seize the objective before being evacuated by sea. Soon thereafter, Major Frost was told to get his men in the best shape possible and that they had a secret mission planned for some time in February, but which he could not be told of at this time. Major Frost immediately objected to not being able to plan the operation with his own battalion staff. But secrecy prevailed, and despite feeling "blackmailed," Major Frost agreed to accept a plan in which neither he nor his officers had any part in developing. Even then, other than the basic outlines of the operation, he was told nothing, particularly that the target was a German radar installation.

That target was one of the new German "Würzburg" radar sets. Development began in 1936, and by 1942 the set proved more accurate than the earlier Freya type. Further, it could follow any fast-moving target, such as a bomber, was simple to handle, and was far more reliable. It was tough, durable and could be mounted on four wheels which retracted when it was put into action. When it was first introduced to the German hierarchy, Reichsmarschall Hermann Göring had been the one most interested in it, for it promised a far more accurate antiaircraft defense for Germany, one that he had promised would never be challenged by any enemy bomber.

But precisely because of his promise, the Reichsmarschall never ensured that the radar set would be mass produced. Neglect and production problems delayed the development and distribution of the new radar, and as a result it was not a decisive weapon for the Germans. Not until later in the war did it show its value when it was paired with German night fighters to locate and attack night bombers over Germany.

On February 1, 1942, Sergeant C. W. H. Cox was employed as a radar mechanic. His hobby of ham radio had qualified him for the job, and by this point he was considered one of the best radar mechanics in Britain. On this date he was given a special pass and ordered to report to the Air Ministry. Upon arrival he was directed to the office of Air Commodore V. H. Tait. There he was told that he had volunteered for a dangerous job. Stunned, Sergeant Cox replied that he "never volunteered for anything." Unpleasantly surprised by Sergeant Cox's reaction, Commodore Tait responded with, "But



Both: Imperial War Museum

TOP: Whitworth Whitley bombers of the Royal Air Force, modified as transport for paras, practice flight operations prior to the Bruneval raid. A para is seen exiting one of the planes in the distance. ABOVE: British commandos sit aboard a Whitworth Whitley aircraft during exercises.

now you're here, Sergeant, will you volunteer?"

When Sergeant Cox asked what he would be volunteering for, he was told it was top secret and that he could not be told what the mission was just yet. Despite not getting an answer to his logical question, he volunteered. Promoted to flight sergeant, he was sent out again, this time to Manchester, and told to report to a training school at nearby Ringway. When he learned that this was the Parachute Training School, Flight Sergeant Cox's immediate reaction was, "Let me out of here." But instead he spent the next 12 days learning how to parachute.

Given yet a third pass to report to the 2nd Parachute Battalion training area, he first met Major Frost and his second-in-command, Captain John Ross. Now this "volunteer" found himself undergoing physical training, marching, weapons training, knife fighting and scaling barbed wire. Slowly it began to dawn on Flight Sergeant Cox that these paratroopers were preparing for some sort of a raid and that he was destined to accompany them.

As if to confirm his thoughts, he soon learned that he would be attached to a squad of Royal Engineers under the command of Lieutenant Dennis Vernon. What his personal role was to be was soon made clear to him when he was told to use a loaned British radar set and instruct the Royal Engineers what it was and how it worked. As more of the plan became known to the participants, Flight Sergeant Cox learned that he and another radar technician were to land by parachute somewhere in France, along with the paratroopers and Royal Engineers, and then dismantle a German radar set.

The second radar technician had been injured during the parachute training phase, and rather than waiting for another volunteer, Flight Sergeant Cox suggested that Lieutenant Vernon be the second radar expert, since he had been especially adept at the radar training. This suggestion was acceptable. In the final plan, four Royal Engineers would adopt an anti-tank role, while the other six, plus Lieutenant Vernon and Flight Sergeant Cox would dismantle the German radar set. Lieutenant Vernon, who had some experience, would also be the mission's photographer, taking photos of the German set.

Meanwhile, the paratroopers of Company C were enjoying their celebrity status. In a period when getting any supplies or equipment was difficult, they were given anything they asked for, and more. When the supply sergeant requested nine Bren guns for the company, 18 were received. New uniforms, boots, binoculars, pistols, flashlights, and other items were quickly made available to the company. They were among the first to receive the new British automatic weapon, the Sten gun. Radios were provided for each platoon, and two extra sets were provided "for contact with the Navy."

As the preparations neared their end, a new member of Company C was introduced by higher headquarters. This man was introduced only as "Private Newman" and was put on the book of Company C as one of their members. Described as a translator, he spoke perfect German and English. He seemed to have been a world traveler, having lived in Paris, Berlin, Vienna, Budapest, New York, and London. For a while, Major Frost had his doubts about "Private Newman," believing him to be some sort of a fifth columnist. Private Newman's arrival brought Company C up to a strength of 120,

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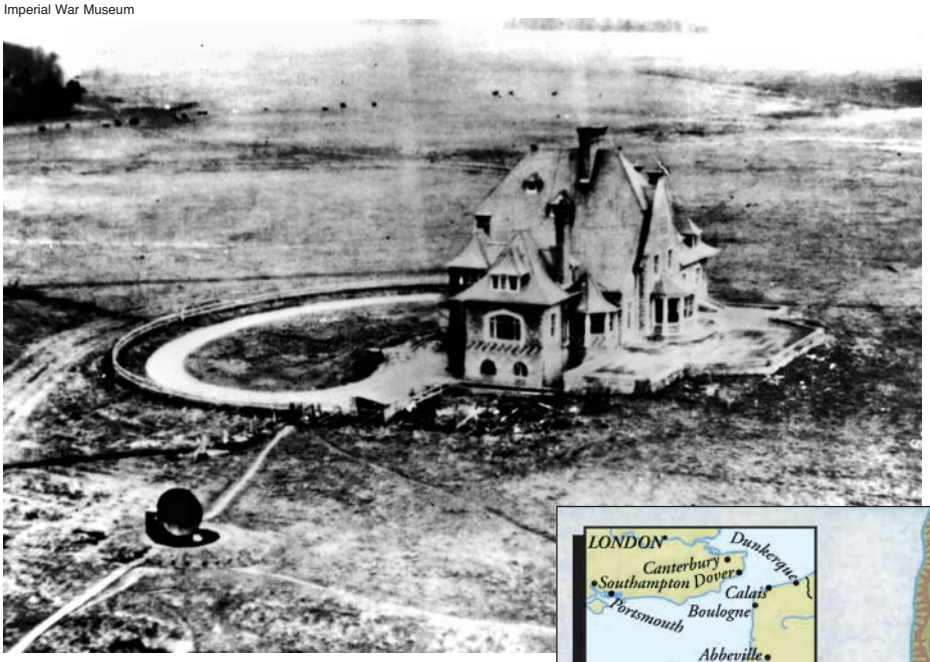


ABOVE: The Bruneval area was photographed by an RAF reconnaissance plane in December 1941. The large Wurzburg radar dish is visible at lower left. RIGHT: The raid was executed with an airdrop and seaborne insertion initially, and the raiders were recovered by sea prior to their return to Britain.

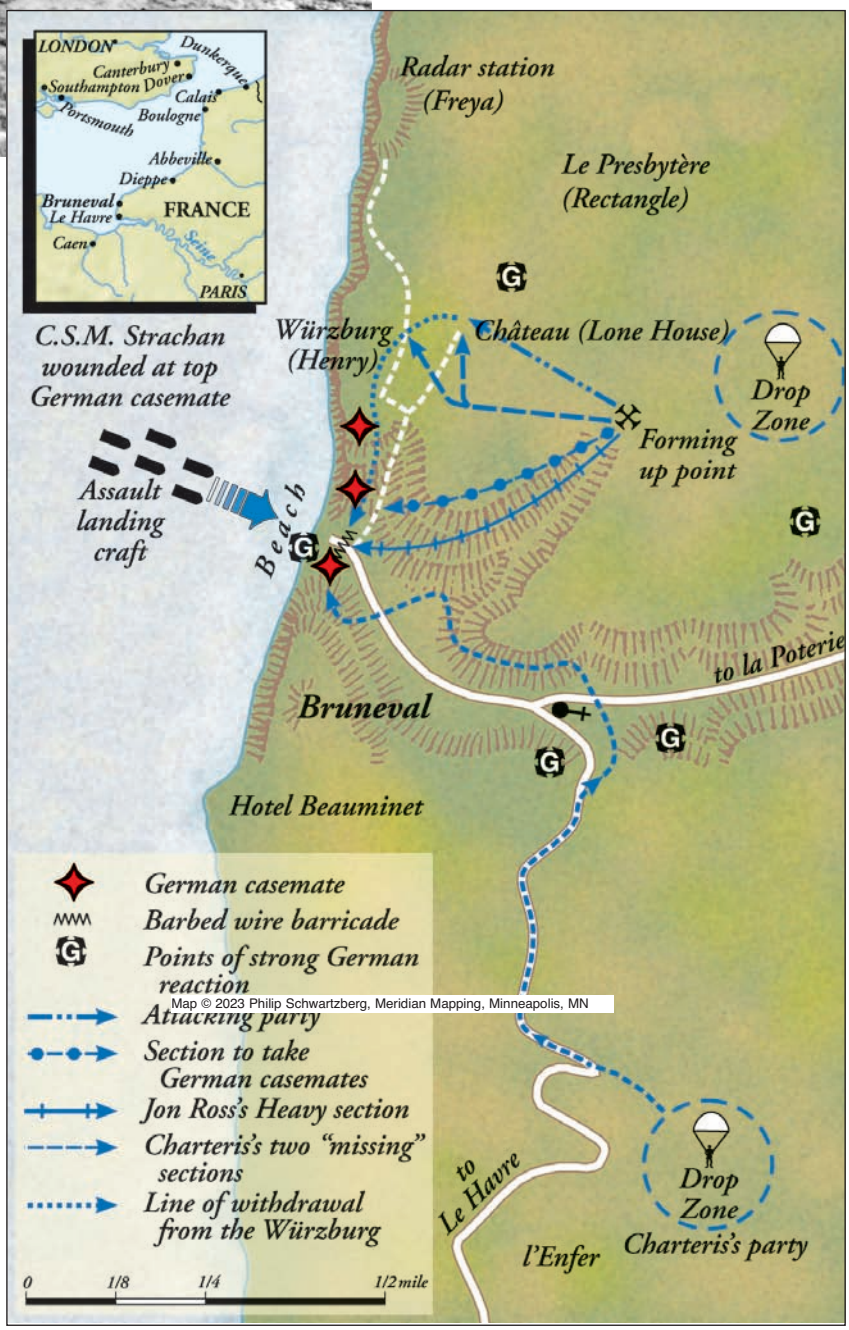
including the engineers and Flight Sergeant Cox. It was time to move.

The raiders next went to Scotland. Here they boarded the Royal Navy's transport HMS *Prinz Albert*, a ship originally of the Belgian government. They practiced getting aboard from a rock-strewn coast, which was far more difficult than first expected. In bad weather, it was near impossible. After some days, Admiral Mountbatten came to see their progress and discuss plans with the leading officers. It was only then that the Royal Navy learned that their "guests" were parachutists who would soon be boarding their ship from the shores of occupied France, if all went well.

The following day the parachutists and the Navy parted, each going their own way. The airborne returned to their training camp while the HMS *Prinz Albert* sailed for Portsmouth. One more training display, this time for General Browning, was conducted. Major Frost had reservations about jumping from bombers, for they had neither experience nor training for such an operation, but the display went perfectly, without error or jump casualties.

It was then that the Germans put a scare into the raiders and their planners. The large German battlecruisers *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* along with the heavy cruiser *Prinz Eugen* executed Operation Cerberus, their "Channel Dash" from Brest on the French coast up the English Channel to Germany. This clearly indicated a tenuous British control over the English Channel, which the raiders would have to cross to return to England with the captured radar set. Then the final exercise went badly. The drop was wide, with many equipment containers landing away from the paratroopers. The folding trolley, designed to carry the radar set from the cliffs to the beach, was also dropped in the wrong place. Finally, the boats waiting to evacuate the raiders waited at the wrong beach. Major Frost was concerned.

There were only two days left before the scheduled raid. Tide and moon conditions required that it be conducted between February 23-27. With the bad display of the exercise before them, the naval authorities insisted on one more trial run before executing the actual raid. Bad weather cost them one day, and on February 22, despite foul weather, the evacua-



In this painting by artist Richard Eurich, British commandos parachute into the Bruneval area (upper right) and come ashore on the beach during Operation Biting. The parachutes were made of dark green and blue fabric to make them harder to see at night.

Imperial War Museum

tion exercise went reasonably well.

Major Frost was under orders to "Capture various parts of HENRY and bring them down to the boats. To capture prisoners who have been in charge of HENRY. And to obtain all possible information about HENRY, and any documents referring to him which may be in LONE House." Henry, of course, was the actual radar set, while the lone house was a chateau just behind the radar site used by the Germans as a headquarters and billet. Over Major Frost's objections, the planners had divided his team into three assault groups of equal size. These were to drop on Bruneval at five-minute intervals starting just after midnight.

The first group, codenamed "Nelson," was to drop first and move to the beach. When given the signal by Major Frost from above, they were to attack the German defenses on the beach, securing the raiders' line of retreat. "Nelson" was commanded by Lieutenant E.C.B. Charteris, joined by a heavy weapons section under Captain Ross. Again, Major Frost was concerned. They had no idea how many Germans manned the beach defenses, what weapons they were armed with, nor if any reinforcements were nearby.

The second group, codenamed "Drake," was to split into four sections. Twenty men under Lieutenant Peter Naumoff were to move against a big farmhouse at Le Presbytére and block any German attempts to attack from that area. "Hardy," a group of five men under Major Frost, would surround the chateau. Another party of 10 men, "Jellicoe," under the command of Lieutenant Peter Young, would surround the radar itself. Lieutenant Vernon and his Royal Engineers, with Flight Sergeant Cox, would then enter the radar installation after Lieutenant Young's men had cleared it of the enemy. A final group, "Rodney," of 40 men under Lieutenant John Timothy, would drop last and guard the entire operation from the landward side, acting as a reserve and rear guard when the time came. All these groups were to get into position as quickly as possible and then await Major Frost's signal, four blasts on a whistle, to attack.

There was also supposed to be one other landing. This was "Noah," a civilian radar specialist whose real name was D. H. Priest, who was to land from the boats and rush up the beach to help with obtaining the radar and documents about it. If he did indeed arrive as planned, it would mean that the evacuation boats were ready and waiting.

The raiders moved out of their camp late on Monday, February 23 and packed their equipment containers, ready to leave for the airfield. But as they did, a message came from headquarters. Weather conditions had cancelled the operation for today. It was postponed until the next day. But on Tuesday it happened again. And on Wednesday. And on Thursday.

One observer wrote, "We are all thoroughly miserable. Each morning we brace ourselves for the venture, and each night, after a further postponement, we have time to think of all the things that can go wrong, and to reflect that if we don't go on Thursday we shall have to wait for a whole month to pass before conditions may be suitable. After all, the weather in the English Channel in February and March is not inclined to be 'suitable.'"

By Friday, although the weather had improved slightly, Major Frost expected orders to go on leave until the next opportune weather arrived. But a consultation between the services involved had resulted in an agreement to wait and see what this day might bring out in the channel. After four days of rising expectations, most of the raiders were disappointed. But Major Frost seemed excited, expecting some sort of action. And soon General Browning appeared to announce that the raid was on. The Royal Navy issued its own orders to the HMS *Prinz Albert*, "Carry Out Operation Biting Tonight 27 February."

Reluctant volunteer Flight Sergeant Cox, described the preparations. "We were put in

Imperial War Museum

blacked out Nissen huts. Inside it was warm and the light was yellow. Parachutes were laid out in rows on the swept floor and we each picked one, hoping that the dear girl who'd packed it had had her mind on the job. These were dark 'chutes, camouflaged in greens and blacks. Until then I'd only used white or yellow ones. They pressed bully [beef] sandwiches on us, real slabs, and mugs of tea or cocoa laced with rum. We checked each other's straps, and wandered about wide-legged, like Michelin men."

Led by a Scottish piper playing various Scottish regimental marches, the men moved out in "sticks" of 10 to the aircraft. The dozen Whitley bombers were waiting for them. The paratroopers boarded the aircraft and awaited takeoff. "We put on our silk gloves and crawled into sleeping bags for warmth. The Whitley's ribbed aluminum floor was fiendishly uncomfortable. Ahead we could hear a kite [plane] revving prior to take-off and then it was away. Others followed until it was our turn. The whole machine throbbed and bumped and dragged itself off the ground as though it had great big heavy sloppy feet. Nobody slept in that dim-lit metal cigar," recalled one participant.

In the English Channel the HMS *Prinz Albert* had dropped her landing craft and was headed back at best speed to Portsmouth. Escorted by motor gunboats (MTBs), the landing craft headed for the beach below Bruneval under their own power. The weather so far was good, with light wind, good visibility, a bright moon, and some haze.

Above them the dozen bombers flew over the English Channel. Crew members opened the hatch, a hole in the floor of the bomber, and a blast of cold air entered the planes. Major Frost sat on the edge of his hatch with his feet dangling into the air. Antiaircraft fire sparked the air below and around them as they flew into French airspace. Then came the command, "Go!"

Major Frost jumped, and his parachute opened immediately. He was pleased to look around and recognize many of the landmarks he had been briefed to expect. The sudden quiet also struck him, after the noise of the flight. Then he was in the snow on the soil of France. It was time to get on with the raid.

Flight Sergeant Cox had also come down as briefed and was even more pleasantly surprised to see two objects land near him. One was an equipment container and the other the handtrolley without which they would have great difficulty in moving the radar. Neither had been damaged by the drop.

Major Frost took one look at the paratroopers following his group and knew instantly that any chance of surprise had been lost. They were clearly outlined in their parachutes by the bright moon. He also assumed that the radar that was their target had tracked them inbound and knew they were coming. The only surprise left was how, when and where the attack would come. But then things began to go wrong.

Captain Ross reported that two whole sections of the men assigned to clear the evacuation beach had not arrived. Twenty men were missing. Had the planes been shot down? Were the men misdropped elsewhere? Major Frost directed Captain Ross to wait a few moments longer for the arrival of the missing Lieutenant Charteris and his men. If they did not arrive soon, then it would be up to Captain Ross and his heavy weapons unit to clear the beach on their own.

Major Frost then concentrated on his main targets, the radar set and the chateau. After all groups, except Lieutenant Charteris's men, had arrived and formed up, each was sent off on its assignment. Lieutenant Young made for the Würzburg, Major Frost and Private Newman for the chateau, and the protection group for the interior. Following Lieutenant Young were Flight Sergeant Cox, Lieutenant Vernon, and his engineers pulling the trolley behind them.

Major Frost's arrival at the chateau was greeted with an open door. The interior was dirty, empty and without any furniture. Behind him Major Frost could see that Lieutenant Young's party was surrounding the radar, and he blew the four whistle blasts signaling the opening of the attack. As soon as the fourth blast went out, Major Frost and his small group entered the house. The first floor was empty, but shots came from above. They charged up the stairs and found one lone German firing at them. He was killed, and they searched the rest of the building. It was empty.

Lieutenant Young's group attacked the radar

installation, quickly dispersing a few Germans who were located there. One ran for the cliff, and Lieutenant Young ordered his men not to shoot since they had yet to take a prisoner, a part of their assignment. The escaping German soldier fell over the cliff edge but managed to grab a hold and stop his descent. He was rescued by the paratroopers and captured.

Lieutenant Vernon had gone ahead of his group to reconnoiter the radar installation after the Germans had dispersed. He called forward his group, and they easily jumped over a low barbed wire entanglement protecting the site. As Flight Sergeant Cox and the engineers inspected the radar equipment, Major Frost appeared with Private Newman who immediately began to question the prisoner. Firing was suddenly heard from the direction of Lieutenant Naumoff's group. More firing broke out from the direction of Lieutenant Timothy's "Rodney" group protecting the raiders from German reinforcements coming from inland.

Private Newman learned from the prisoner that he was a member of the Luftwaffe communications regiment and that there were 100 others in the immediate area. Most of these were billeted at Le Presbytére, where the firing was now coming from. These men were heavily armed and assigned to the defense of the Würzburg. They had mortars, but being mainly communications experts, they had rarely fired them. Further questioning revealed that the radar set had indeed been tracking the incoming raiders, and when it appeared that they were heading directly for the radar site the Germans had shut it down and departed.

While Private Newman and Major Frost were questioning the prisoner, Lieutenant Vernon was busy taking photographs of the radar itself. Flight Sergeant Cox made diagrams and sketches of the mechanics of the set. Soon incoming German fire forced the cessation of taking flash pictures of the set, since it attracted enemy gunfire. Cox went then to writing up a detailed report of the set, how it was set up, how the wheels were used, how the radar beam was adjusted, and a host of other technical details. The men then prepared to remove it.

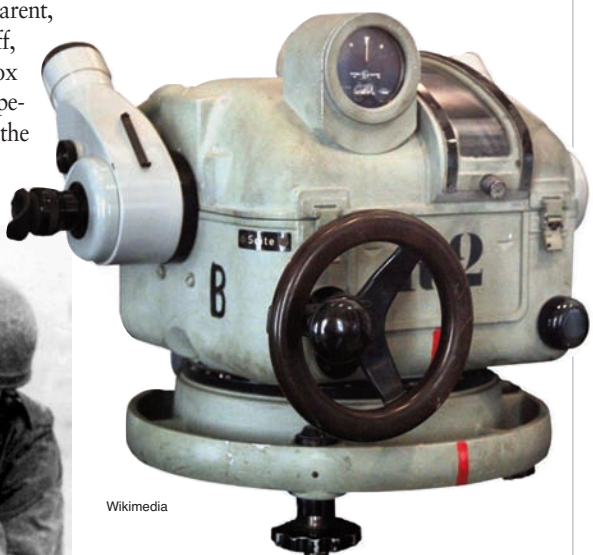
The aerial proved an immediate problem. When no way to remove it seemed apparent, Lieutenant Vernon ordered it sawed off, which was quickly done. Although Cox and the engineers had brought along specialized tools, there were still parts of the radar that could not be removed properly. Instead, when such a problem was encountered, brute force was used to disassemble those parts, as carefully as possible. Cox later determined that they had had, "A stroke of luck. When the equipment was examined later it was found that the frame which we in that somewhat hasty moment regarded as no more than an encumbrance, something we had not the time to detach from the transmitter, contained the aerial switching unit that allowed both the transmitter and receiver to use the one aerial, a vital part of the design of any radar set."

As the engineers struggled with dismantling the radar, enemy fire increased using the engineers' flashlights as a target. One of the paratroopers was killed defending the chateau. But the radar was finally loaded onto the trolley, much to Major Frost's relief. Now all that remained was to get away safely with the booty.

Firing was coming from every direction, and the situation was confused. Major Frost was particularly concerned that German flares were being fired from the beach, possibly meaning that Captain Ross and his men had failed to secure the escape route. Lieutenant Timothy had reported that things were under control on his front, but what about the rest? With the trolley loaded, Major Frost gave orders to withdraw. Lieutenant Naumoff was called in and told to lead the way to the beach.

On the beach Captain Ross and his small

Continued on page 70



Wikimedia

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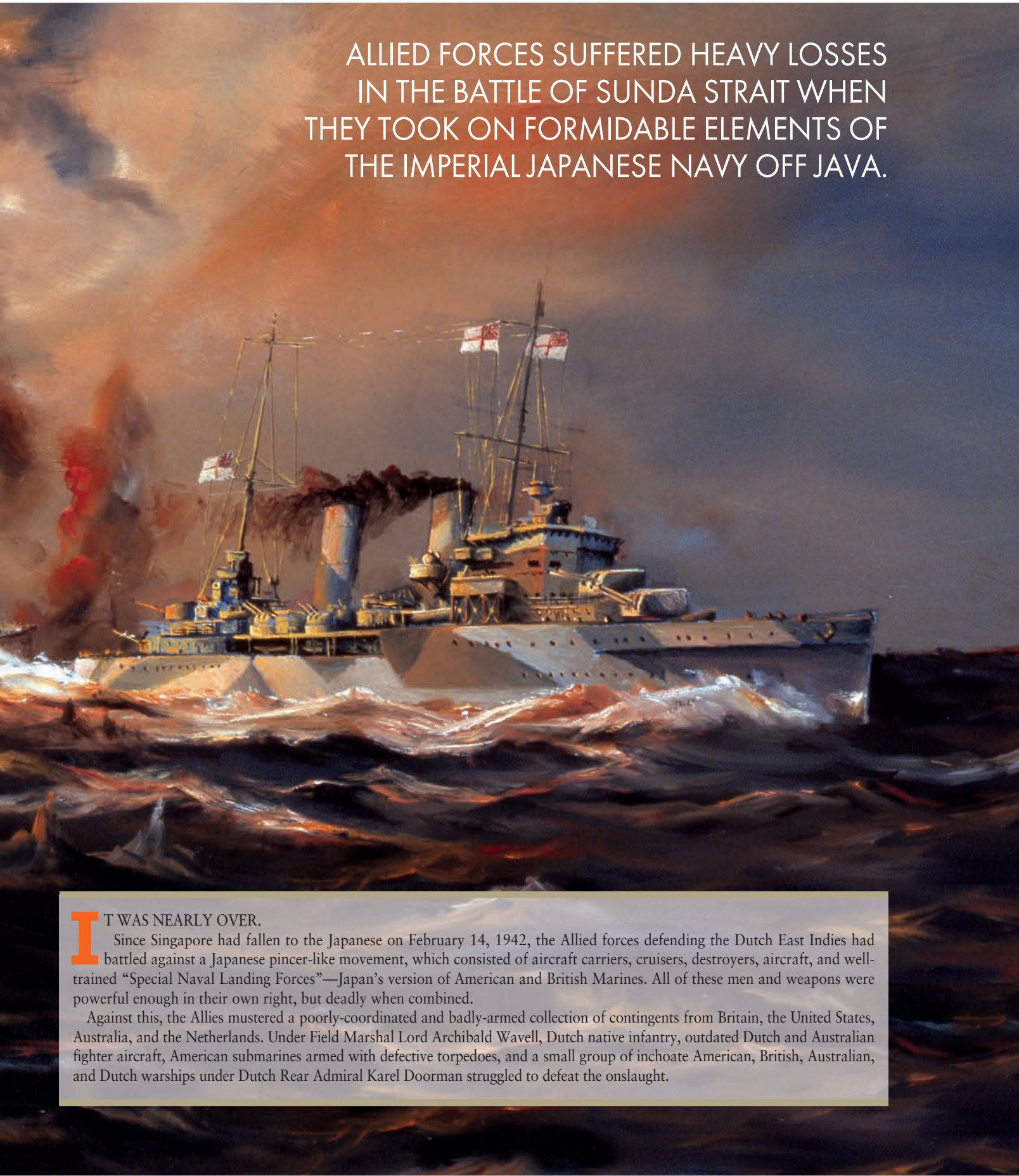
ABOVE: This German flak pointing system was captured during the Bruneval raid and is now on display at the Musée del'Armée in Paris. LEFT: During the return to Britain after the raid, a captured German infantryman and a Luftwaffe soldier are searched. This was considered a critical part of the raid's success. OPPOSITE: British troops of the covering force for the Bruneval raid practice along with paratroopers for the withdrawal of the raiders by sea following their seizure of German prisoners and radar equipment.

This painting of the nocturnal Battle of the Java Sea shows the torpedoed Dutch light cruiser *De Ruyter* burning as the cruiser HMAS *Perth* turns to avoid a collision on February 27, 1942. One night later, the *Perth*, along with the USS *Houston* would go down in the Battle of the Sunda Strait.

Slaughter *in the* Sunda Strait

BY DAVID H. LIPPMAN



ALLIED FORCES SUFFERED HEAVY LOSSES IN THE BATTLE OF SUNDA STRAIT WHEN THEY TOOK ON FORMIDABLE ELEMENTS OF THE IMPERIAL JAPANESE NAVY OFF JAVA.

IT WAS NEARLY OVER.

Since Singapore had fallen to the Japanese on February 14, 1942, the Allied forces defending the Dutch East Indies had battled against a Japanese pincer-like movement, which consisted of aircraft carriers, cruisers, destroyers, aircraft, and well-trained "Special Naval Landing Forces"—Japan's version of American and British Marines. All of these men and weapons were powerful enough in their own right, but deadly when combined.

Against this, the Allies mustered a poorly-coordinated and badly-armed collection of contingents from Britain, the United States, Australia, and the Netherlands. Under Field Marshal Lord Archibald Wavell, Dutch native infantry, outdated Dutch and Australian fighter aircraft, American submarines armed with defective torpedoes, and a small group of inchoate American, British, Australian, and Dutch warships under Dutch Rear Admiral Karel Doorman struggled to defeat the onslaught.

Naval History and Heritage Command

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ABOVE: The starboard 5/25 anti-aircraft gun crews of the cruiser USS *Houston* swing into action during anti-aircraft drills off the coast of China. The *Houston* crew fought bravely against superior Japanese forces in the East Indies. BELOW: The cruiser HMAS *Perth* is shown at anchor during peacetime.

Now it was proving impossible. Determination and valor were not enough. Doorman was killed when his flagship was sunk in the Battle of the Java Sea on February 27, along with another light cruiser and four destroyers. With the two heavy cruisers, HMS *Exeter* and USS *Houston*, damaged as well, there was nothing to stop the huge Japanese force from landing in Java. Lord Wavell had no choice but to dissolve his multi-national command.

Facing defeat, the senior British and American admirals informed their Dutch hosts and nominal superiors that they were pulling their ships out, too.

Doing so would not be easy for the heavy cruisers. *Exeter's* engines suffered severe damage at Java Sea. *Houston* had taken a bomb hit earlier that had burned out its No. 3 after 8-inch gun turret, leaving the gunhouse in position, but the shell elevator and handling rooms a blackened hole. *Houston's* passageways were filled with wreckage, clothing, shattered glass, scattered clothing, and bric-a-brac from the concussion of its own guns. Hoses and pipes leaked into passages. Even all-important searchlight lenses had been blasted to fragments. The guns needed replacement. Ammunition in all categories was short. The long-service crewmen despaired at seeing the condition of a warship that had once carried President Franklin D. Roosevelt on his fishing vacations.

Worse, those crewmen were exhausted. Nobody, including Capt. Albert H. Rooks, had slept in 30 hours or changed clothes in three days, constantly answering the General Quarters bugle to fend off air and sea attacks. As *Houston* tied up at Tandjung Priok after the disastrous battle, there was still no rest, as sailors man-hauled heavy 8-inch shells from the crippled lockers of turret 3 to the forward guns, and others fueled the ship.

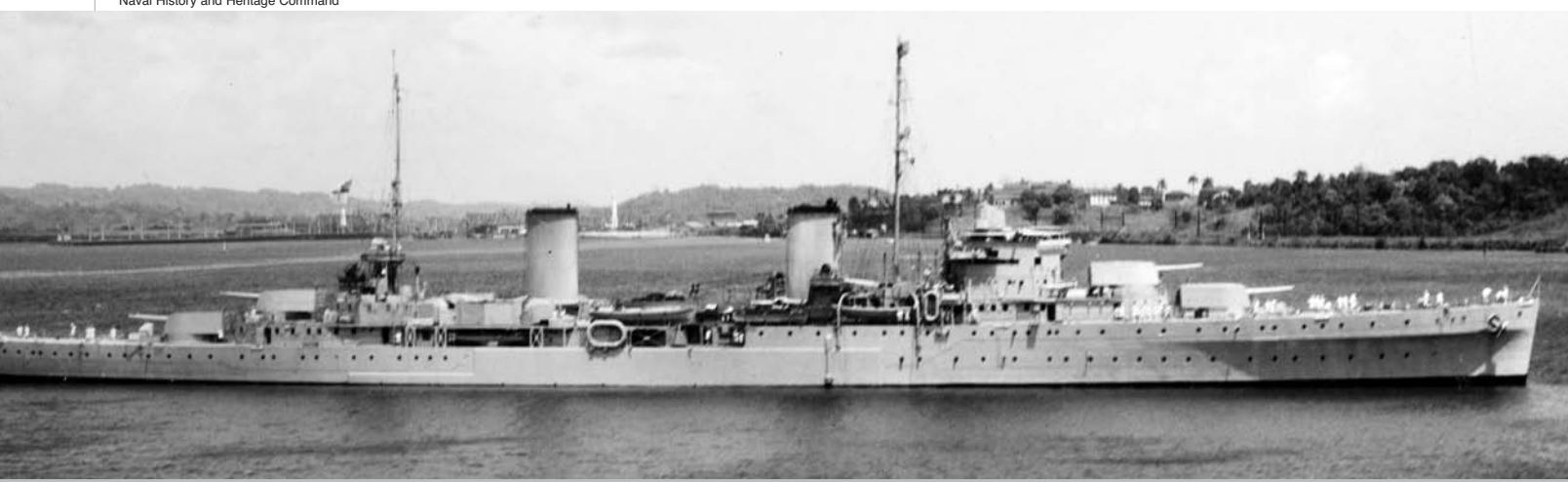
Conditions were much the same on HMAS *Perth*, a light cruiser that had seen action under her tough skipper, Captain Hector "Hec" Waller, from the war's outbreak in 1939. Her sailors were now veterans from battles in the Mediterranean, and the ship was undamaged, but like *Houston*, was short on fuel and ammunition. To make matters worse, Waller was suffering from gall bladder trouble.

Now both ships had to flee Java before Japanese invaders came ashore. Their ultimate destination would be Australia. However, supplies were short. Even though the Dutch East Indies were a major oil producer, Java's tanks were in the mountains, and the native workers had fled their posts. Dutch naval base workers were more interested in using explosives to deny the use of their facilities to the Japanese than servicing the Allied ships.

Worse, the Dutch Navy only offered limited supplies from their shore tanks. *Perth* fueled 300 tons, half her capacity, while *Houston*, as a larger ship, had enough fuel to reach Australia if she was careful on consumption.

Problems continued. Javanese fuel was high-quality even though unrefined, but not up to the standards of the U.S. and Royal Navies—it easily jammed in tanks. Both ships needed everything from ammunition to life rafts to toilet paper. The first they found: wooden and

Naval History and Heritage Command



copper life rafts. *Perth* alone took 24 on board. Crewmen raided a canteen and found vast supplies of whiskey and cigarettes in boxes marked "Victualling Officer, Singapore." The Japanese had taken Singapore, so the sailors took them.

However, Players cigarettes could not be fired at Japanese warships and aircraft. There were no 8-inch shells on hand for *Houston* or 6-inch rounds for *Perth*. *Houston* had fewer than 50 rounds left for each of her working guns. *Perth* had 20 for each of hers. The two ships would have to go with what they had.

Commodore John Collins of the Royal Australian Navy, the senior Anglo-American officer on the scene, told Waller and Rooks their best way out of the closing trap was to head west for the Sunda Strait and go through it by night, fueling at Tjilatjap on Java's south shore. From there, they could make a high-speed run to Australia. They had a good chance as the Japanese lacked radar.

The crew members of the two ships, battered by omnipresent battle, fatigue, and death, were delighted to hear they were going to withdraw to Australia. "Our spirits were high. We thought we were going home," said *Houston* Marine Private Lloyd Willey later. Lieutenant Leon Rogers, who commanded an anti-aircraft gun said, "Thank God, we're going to get out of this Java Sea." *Houston*'s Chief Engineer Lt. Cdr. Richard Gingras said, "You know, I had no hope that we would ever get away from all this, but now I think we've got it made."

However, sailors can be superstitious, and there were plenty of bad omens. On *Perth*, the portrait of the Duchess of Kent, who had renamed the cruiser into Australian service in 1939, fell to a splintering crash from the wardroom bulkhead to the deck. The ship embarked a second chaplain, which was considered "lethal" by the Bluejackets. Red Lead, *Perth's* mascot cat, tried to jump ship three times. *Houston's* tried only once.

Naval History and Heritage Command

The USS *Houston* is seen in port at Tjilatjap, Java, on February 6, 1942. In the photo taken from the deck of the cruiser USS *Marblehead*, the flag of the *Houston* flies at half-mast for two crewmen killed when a Japanese bomb struck near an eight-inch gun turret in earlier action.

Nor were some officers as optimistic. Rooks briefed his senior officers, saying "We're getting out of the bottleneck," telling them that the latest intelligence had the Japanese 10 hours away from the strait. Senior aviator Lieutenant Thomas Payne said otherwise. He had flown his SOC Seagull biplane on a recce mission over that presumed route and seen a Japanese cruiser.

Payne was right. Dutch PBY Catalina seaplanes had seen the same Japanese ships, but because of the poorly-coordinated and disintegrating ABDA command structure, that information never reached Rooks or Waller.

Lieutenant Walter Winslow, *Houston's* junior aviator, lacking a plane to fly, wrote, "Perhaps it was best that none of us knew the awful truth."

The Australians were less optimistic. Waller told his navigator, Lt. Cdr. J.A. Harper, that it looked as though the Japanese would land east of Batavia that very night. Harper called it unlikely that the convoy's escorts would detach themselves from their charges to attack *Perth* or *Houston*. Waller agreed.

Promptly at 6:30 p.m. on February 28, the two cruisers shifted colors and steamed slowly out of the harbor entrance to avoid Dutch mines. Once past them, the warships cranked up to an economical 22 knots and headed west to the strait.

Waller announced over *Perth's* tannoy (1MC to Americans): "We are sailing the Sunda Strait for Tjilatjap on the south coast of Java. Shortly, we will close up to the second degree of readiness. Air reconnaissance reports the strait is free of enemy shipping, but I have a report that a large enemy convoy is about 50 miles northeast of Batavia, moving east. I do not expect, however, to meet enemy forces."

Waller's words left his crew with forebod-

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Both: Naval History and Heritage Command

ing and unspoken fears. Engineer Lieutenant Frank Gillan believed his ship had hit a dividing line between present and future and a decision had been made affecting his life and both ships' crews.

With that done, Waller lay down on the deck. He told his Officer of the Watch, "Kick me if anything happens," and fell asleep. Everyone loved and respected the unpretentious and courageous pipe-smoking skipper.

The exhausted crews of both ships manned their stations, steaming into the gathering dusk under clear skies and a full moon. Nobody noticed a small ship following them.

The small ship was the Japanese destroyer *Fubuki*, the world's oldest tin can, right now one of many such tin cans escorting a convoy of 56 transports headed for west Java's Bantam Bay. There were more: four heavy cruisers of Cruiser Division 7 (Crudiv 7), *Kumano*, *Suzuya*, *Mogami*, and *Mikuma*, all larger than the two Allied cruisers and armed with deadly "Long Lance" torpedoes, which outranged those on *Perth*. *Houston* lacked any torpedoes.

The Japanese ships were manned by crews well trained in night fighting. They were backed up by the small light cruiser *Natori*, also armed with Long Lance torpedoes. The overall boss was Rear Admiral Takeo Kurita, and his mission was clear: land Lt. Gen. Hitoshi Inamura's 16th Army at Bantam Bay to conquer Java. This massive Japanese force, like an octopus, would scatter its arms to conquer key points in the Dutch East Indies.

And neither force knew about the presence of the other.

The Allies were the first to find out when

ABOVE: Captain Albert Rooks, commander of the cruiser USS *Houston*, received a posthumous Medal of Honor after Sunda Strait. TOP: In this photo taken in harbor at Darwin, Australia, *Houston* is anchored near the destroyer USS *Peary* (left). *Houston* was sunk 10 days later.

Waller woke up from his power nap. *Perth* led *Houston* by 900 yards as the skippers followed their plan to cross the mouth of Bantam Bay and make for St. Nicholaas Point, the northern entrance to the strait. The bay, however, gave enemy ships somewhere to hide at night. "They could hide a battleship out there and we'd never see it until attacked," said *Houston* Marine Standish.

Waller cranked up *Perth* to 28 knots. St. Nicholaas Point was five miles away. As the cruisers approached, a *Perth* lookout shouted, "Ship, sir, bearing green oh-vie." Everyone on the bridge swung to look. Waller figured it was one of the remaining Dutch patrol boats on station. He had been told to be on the lookout for them.

"Very good," Waller said. "Make the challenge," he said. *Perth* flashed it on their Aldis Lamp, while Rooks and his bridge crew, looked on.

The unknown ship answered two green lamps. The signalmen said that was "UB," which was not the Allied Night Recognition Signal. Former signalman Waller was always annoyed when proper procedure was not followed and ordered "Challenge again." While he did, *Houston's* turrets trained on the intruder.

The mystery ship heeled away, making smoke, showing full silhouette. It didn't take recognition books to identify it as the Japanese destroyer *Harukaze*, escorting the transports. She raced into the bay, launching a red flare to warn her flock.

"Jap destroyer," Waller yelled. "Sound rattles!"

Houston's alarm bells summoned its crew to General Quarters, including Lieutenant Winslow, who was sleeping the sleep of exhaustion when they went off. Dazed and lacking an action station because his plane had been destroyed earlier, he dressed and sprinted for the bridge, figuring that his rank might be useful there. "We were desperately short of those 8-inch bricks," he wrote later, "and I knew they were not being wasted on mirages."

As the fugitive Allied cruisers passed Babi Island, firing off star shells, everybody discov-

ered that they were in the middle of a gigantic convoy, surrounded by 27 transports, the heavy cruisers *Mogami* and *Mikuma* on distant cover, light cruiser *Natori*, and seven destroyers on immediate convoy cover. This detachment of the invasion force was commanded by Rear Admiral Kenzaburo Hara. It was an overwhelming collection of warships.

Incredibly, the Imperial Japanese Navy now committed one of its most inept performances of a war that was filled with such catastrophes.

First, despite the Japanese knowing the Allies were going to have their remaining heavy ships flee Java, they had not prepared for a night attack on their transports. Hara thought the two fugitive cruisers were fleeing Java in the opposite direction, to the east. The only ship between Batavia and Bantam Bay to head off the refugees was *Fubuki*. The remaining combatants were grouped in two columns to catch the Allied ships heading into Sunda Strait, not to guard the 27 transports, which should have been their primary mission.

Perth and *Houston* slipped by *Fubuki*, which sent out a warning, saying, "Two mysterious ships entering the bay."

Another Japanese mistake—Hara and his staff thought the opponents were light or civilian vessels. Kurita, showing the weak battle instincts that defeated him at Leyte in 1944, held back his own cruisers and destroyers, leaving the battle to Hara. It was a "scramble of chaos and confusion," as Japanese destroyer skipper Tameichi Hara (not related to the admiral or present at the battle) wrote later.

Into this careless situation *Houston* and *Perth* steamed, both ships' officers finding 27 hapless transports open to destruction. If Doorman and his whole fleet had been there, with more ships and full ammunition loadouts, a great Allied victory could have resulted.

Instead, two battered Allied cruisers, deathly short on ammunition, manned by exhausted crews, were engaged. As U.S. historian Samuel Eliot Morison wrote: "They had run into an enemy amphibious force at its most vulnerable moment. But alas, they were so few and the time was so late."

In the best traditions of their two navies, *Houston* and *Perth* attacked. "It looks like a trap," Waller said. *Houston* could not shell *Fubuki*—she was in range of her useless No. 3 turret. At 11:14 p.m. *Fubuki* launched torpedoes that missed, then fled behind a smoke screen.

The two cruisers steamed past the merchant ships, still intent on escaping through Sunda Strait, Waller leading them on a starboard turn to unmask all batteries against the transports. The cruisers hurled ordnance at the parked freighters and landing ships.

Hara ordered his ships to head to the sound of the guns, but in no formation, his destroyers arriving in ones and twos. *Houston* logged: "Fight developed into a melee—*Houston* guns engaged on all sides, range never greater than 5,000 yards."

The battle now descended into a fully-lit barroom brawl under the full moon, with Japanese destroyers attacking the Allied cruisers from their port sides.

Both sides were blasted. *Harukaze* took hits in her bridge, engine room, and rudder, killing three and wounding 15. A 5-inch shell blasted *Perth's* forward funnel, rupturing a steam pipe.

As more Japanese destroyers attacked in groups of three, Waller turned *Perth* to the south, then looped back northeast, salvo-chasing. He told his gunner to fire at local control, at any available targets they could choose. Rooks did the same, finding doing so was impossible for his larger guns—he went back to main battery director.

National Archives

The Japanese destroyer *Fubuki* participated in the Battle of Sunda Strait, demonstrating Japanese naval prowess in the use of torpedoes. *Fubuki* was sunk at Cape Esperance in 1943.

Hara ordered his tin cans to use Japan's best weapon—the night torpedo attack. Hatsuyuki fired nine fish at 11:40 p.m. at a range of 4,000 yards. They missed. Asakaze launched six torpedoes three minutes later. They missed. Winslow swore he saw the Japanese fish race under *Houston's* hull. Apparently, the Japanese believed they were engaging battleships, so they set their torpedoes on lower depth.

A disgusted Hara ordered his destroyers to form up on his flagship, *Natori*, and sent in his heavy cruisers to take care of business with their ten 8-inch guns and 12 torpedo tubes each.

At 11:46 p.m., the immense cruisers—overweight by Washington Treaty standards—steamed into action with *Mikuma's* Capt. Shakao Sakanami in charge. He decided that the best move was to sail parallel to the Allied ships and give them a full broadside of torpedoes and shells. One shell hit *Perth's* hull near the waterline and started flooding. However, the six torpedoes launched at 11:49 all missed.

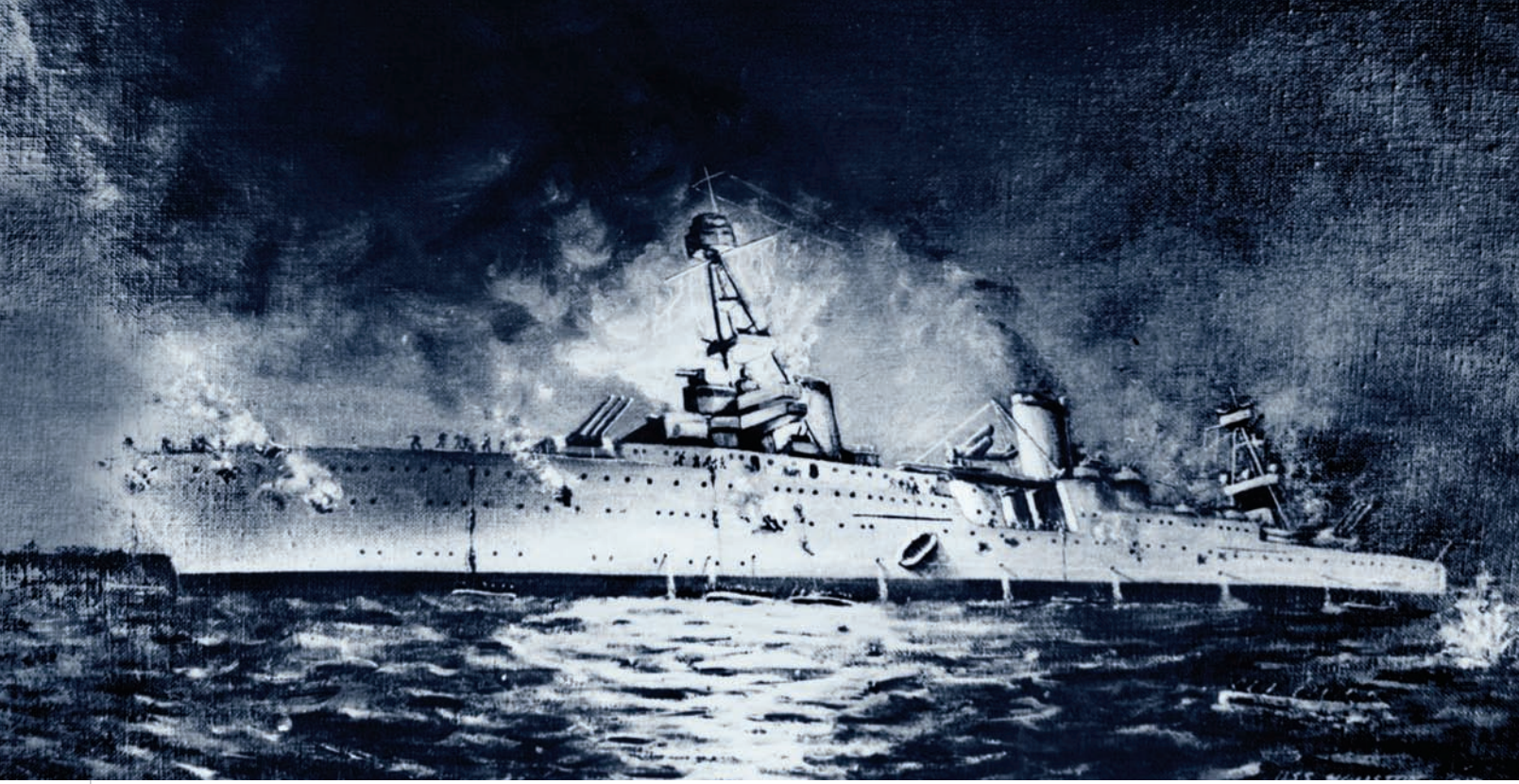
Dead ahead of the Japanese cruisers was Babi Island, and Sakanami nimbly turned his ships in a countermove to keep up with the enemy. Unable to find them, Sakanami's ships lit up their searchlights—and caught each other in their beams.

Meanwhile, *Houston*, now desperately short of 8-inch shells, scored a near-miss on *Mikuma* at 11:55 that tripped the cruiser's circuit breakers—she would have a luckless war—and knocking out her lights and main battery for five minutes.

Now the Japanese destroyers, having reloaded their torpedoes, raced in and Allied guns battered destroyer *Shikinami*.

The battle was a "fire-away Flanagan." *Houston* took a blast to the forecastle that set the forward paint locker ablaze, providing the Japanese with an easy target.

The two Allied cruisers were now surrounded, without escape, and had no more ammunition. Gunnery Officer P.S.F. Hancox told Waller his men were firing using practice rounds. "Very good," was all Waller could say, as he calmly issued orders. *Perth* fired star shells as well. With



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those gone, somebody asked what to do. A veteran sailor said, "Raid the potato locker."

Waller made a looping port turn back to the southwest at full speed, hoping to outrace the attackers; *Houston* followed him. Though unorganized, the Japanese had more ships and ammunition, and soon surrounded the fugitives.

At 11:57 p.m., *Mogami* launched six torpedoes from her portside tubes at 10,000 yards. They missed. Instead, they hit the 8,160-ton transport ship *Ryujo Maru*, Inamura's headquarters ship, where he and his staff had been watching the engagement with increasing annoyance. At 12:05 a.m. on March 1, *Ryujo Maru* suffered an underwater explosion that hurled Inamura and the 18th Army's senior officers into Bantam Bay. Other ships sunk by *Mogami's* misfired torpedoes were three transports and a minesweeper, which keeled over into the bottom of Bantam Bay, destroying tanks, automobiles, freight, and tons of equipment while drowning scores of Japanese troops. Not one of the hits came from an Allied ship. A later Japanese investigation could not determine which ship was responsible, as three of the destroyers added to the "friendly fire."

Meanwhile, *Houston* damaged the tin cans *Shizakumo* and *Harukaze*. Japanese destroyers were now locked onto the Allied ships. Waller yelled, "For God's sake, shoot that bloody light out!" An Australian machine-gunner did so, but the fugitives remained illuminated by Japanese flares and searchlights from *Mogami* and *Mikuma*.

It was a last stand now—a naval Thermopylae—with all chance of escape gone. Yet the exhausted crews kept on fighting. At 12:05 a.m., a destroyer torpedo hit *Perth's* starboard side in her forward engine room and boiler room A. *Perth* lost speed and became sluggish.

"Christ, that's torn it," Waller said on the bridge. "Prepare to abandon ship."

"Prepare to abandon ship?" asked Hancox.

"No. Abandon ship."

As damage reports came in, Waller stayed calm—two more torpedo hits, one near the forward magazine for A turret, another under X turret. Waller's officers urged him to leave, but he refused.

Hands clamped to the bridge railing, looking over his silent gun turrets, Waller ordered his officers off the bridge. He was never seen again, one of Australia's finest fighting officers going down with his command.

Sailors took advantage of the extra copper and wood life rafts on deck to leap into the increasingly oily water. Japanese ships nudged toward *Perth*, firing shells at her as she "steamed out" into the deep, her "Battle Duster" snapping, fully illuminated by searchlights. *Perth* went down 9.5 miles northeast of St. Nicholaas Point at 12:25 a.m., taking 45 officers, 631 sailors, and four Chinese canteen staff, with her. There were 320 men floating in the water, staring at the sinking ship.

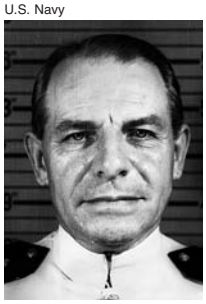
From astern, *Houston's* sailors watched the scene in horror. Rooks gave up his plan to force his way around Toppers Island and turned to make the Japanese pay. "When Captain Rooks realized *Perth* was finished and escape was impossible, he turned the *Houston* back toward the transports, determined to sell his ship dearly," Winslow wrote later.

What happened next was best described as "one of the most gallant (fights) in American naval annals," by Samuel Eliot Morison. "Unfortunately no word of it, except the mere fact of her loss, was revealed until the war was over."

Covered in searchlight beams, *Houston* used every weapon she had left to silence them—one Marine shot out a searchlight with his Springfield rifle.

Once again Sakiyama took a parallel course

U.S. Navy



Australian War Memorial

LEFT: Commander George Rentz, the chaplain aboard *Houston*, gave his life jacket to a sailor and received a posthumous Medal of Honor. RIGHT: Captain "Her" Waller of the cruiser HMAS *Perth* smelled a trap as Allied warships engaged the Japanese at Sunda Strait. TOP: The USS *Houston* begins to list after repeatedly being hit by Japanese shells and torpedoes during the battle. OPPOSITE: In this Japanese artist's rendering of the battle, Japanese sailors prepare to fire a torpedo at the cruiser USS *Houston*, seen in the distance.

to the enemy ship and opened fire with his 8-inch guns and torpedoes. The ordnance was effective. *Houston* was hit in the aft engine room and the wardroom. The latter ruptured steam lines and killed everyone inside—the compartment was being used as a dressing station for wounded men. Another shell hit the No. 2 turret's face plate just as powder was exposed for this ship's 28th salvo. The hit was a dud, but sparks cooked off the powder, which forced Rooks to flood his forward magazines to prevent an explosion. Now both forward turrets were silent. All Rooks had left were his secondary 5-inchers, with both sides firing at point-blank range.

A Japanese torpedo hit *Houston* on the starboard side underneath the bridge. That did it. Up in the armored conning tower, Rooks summoned Marine Field Music (Bugler) Jack Lee, and said, "Bugler, sound Abandon Ship." Lee did so, perfectly, into the 1MC.

Marine Private Lloyd Willey later recalled, "He never missed one beat on that bugle. It would have been absolutely beautiful if it had been anywhere else but that time."

Winslow shook hands with Rooks and climbed down a ladder to the deck below, where he saw a shell hit where he had just been standing with his skipper. Rooks was hit by shrapnel in the head and upper torso. Ensign Charles D. Smith jabbed Rooks with two tubes of morphine, but it was too late. Rooks died in a minute. Smith covered him with a blanket.

The captain's Chinese cook, Ah Fong, hired in Singapore, known to all as "Buda," cradled Rooks in his arms and said, "Captain die, *Houston* die, Buda die, too."

Commander David W. Roberts, the executive officer, took command of the burning, blackened, heeling ship. Even though *Houston* was headed for the bottom, the Japanese did not want to wait, firing torpedoes at her as late as 12:29.

Houston continued her roll to starboard, her bow dipping beneath the waves. Fearing that not all of *Houston's* crew had gotten the word to abandon ship, Roberts ordered Signalman 2nd Class William Stafford to sound the bugle call again. He stood on his ship's careening fantail blowing "Abandon Ship" as *Houston* went down.

All around were 368 survivors of the sinking, including Commander George Rentz, aged 59, the ship's chaplain. A year short of retirement, he jumped off his raft, gave his life jacket to a shipmate, and said, "You men are young, with your lives in front of you. I am old and have had my fun." He offered a prayer for his shipmates, swam off, was never seen again, and earned a posthumous Medal of Honor for his sacrifice.

Another survivor floating in the water was General Inamura, who spent 20 minutes on a piece of wood before being picked up by a boat and three more hours making his way to Bantam Bay. Once ashore, soaked from head to foot, he sat down on a pile of bamboo, exhausted.

Inamura's aide, equally covered in oil and water, came up to his general to offer some of the humor often desperately needed in war. "Congratulations on the successful landing," the aide said.

A Japanese Navy officer apologized to Inamura for sinking his ships. "Let *Houston* have the credit," Inamura said, offering some of the chivalry also desperately needed in war.

Out at sea, all eyes were on the slowly sinking *Houston*, caught in the beams of Japanese searchlights. She was about to provide everyone watching with some of the defiance also often desperately needed in war.

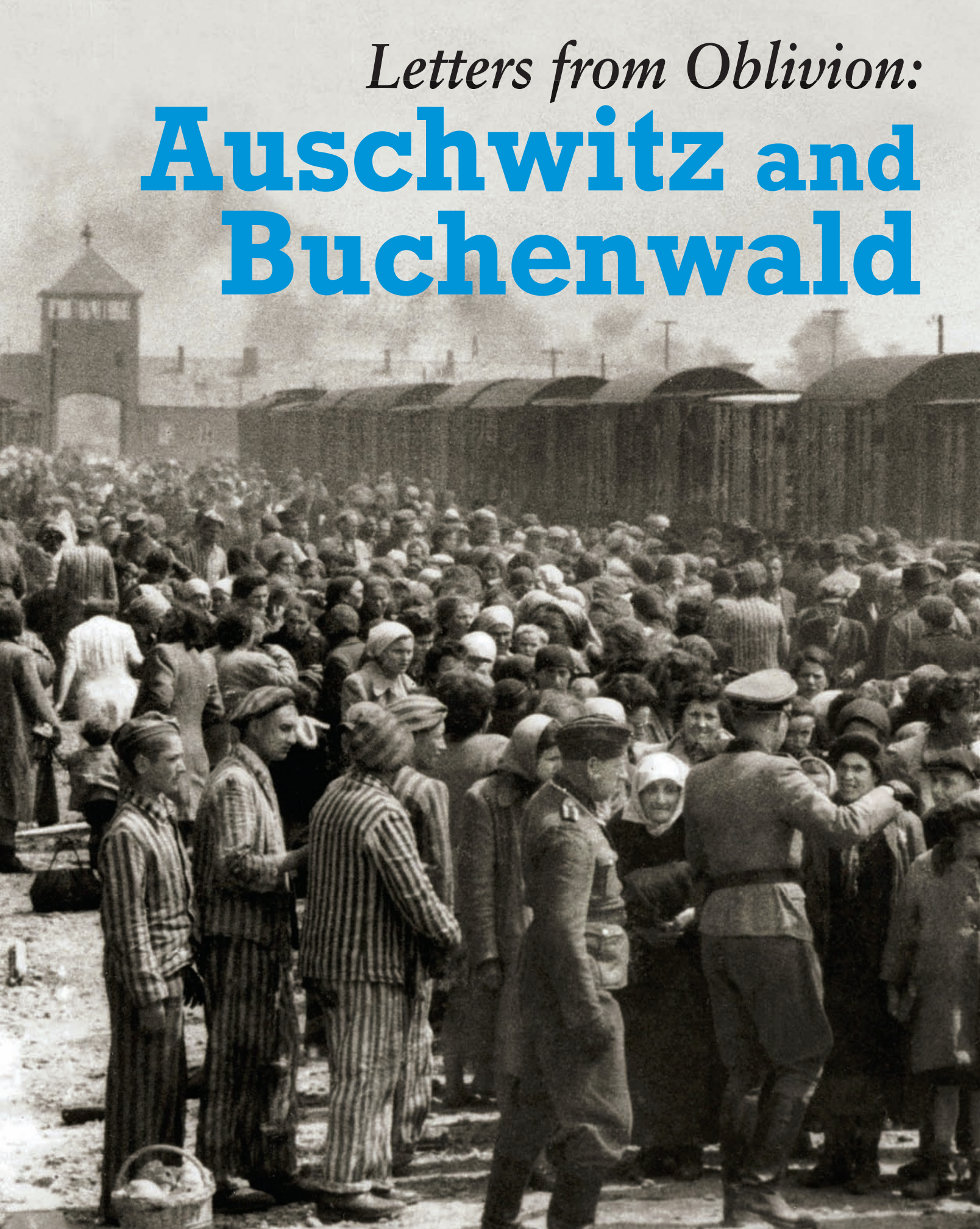
Winslow described the scene perfectly: "After having been subjected to so much punishment, she should have capsized instantly. Instead, the *Houston* wearily rolled back on an even keel. With decks awash, the proud ship paused majestically, while a sudden breeze picked up the Stars and Stripes, still firmly two-blocked on her mainmast and waved them in one last defiant gesture. Then, with a tired shudder, 'The Ghost of the Java Coast,' our magnificent USS *Houston*, vanished beneath the sea." ■

Author David Lippman resides in New Jersey and writes frequently on a variety of topics for WWII History.

National Archives

Letters from Oblivion:

Auschwitz and Buchenwald



Mail, packages and money were welcomed by concentration camp prisoners at Auschwitz and Buchenwald, and a prisoner's letters express gratitude along with a glimpse of life in the camps.

BY KATRINA SHAWVER

Henry Zguda, a Polish Catholic, spent three and a half years interned at Auschwitz and Buchenwald as a political prisoner. During a series of interviews held with Zguda in 2003, he shared his camp experiences, including a discussion of his camp letters. A study and translation of all his letters from both camps in combination with first-person interviews, offer an intriguing lens into prisoner mail, incoming packages and money practices in German concentration camps.

A postal station existed at every concentration camp, and each ran with surprising efficiency given the harsh conditions and intended short life span of all prisoners. Restrictions evolved as to who could send mail and what paper and envelopes could be used, especially in the first camps such as Dachau (1933). In the earlier years of Buchenwald a very few groups—primarily the privileged Dutch hostages—were permitted to receive packages from home in addition to letters. Camps subsequently developed standardized stationery that included pre-printed rules and limited the number of

Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, Oświęcim, Poland.

ABOVE: This Auschwitz prisoner photo of Henry Zguda was taken when he arrived at the camp in June 1942. Non-Jewish prisoners were identified by various colored triangles on their prison clothing. TOP: A postcard mailed by an Auschwitz inmate is marked as passed by a censor and typical of the mail traffic in and out of the extermination camp. LEFT: A German officer appears to be separating new arrivals at the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp complex. Some were designated for work details, and others were sent directly to the gas chambers and murdered. The famed gate is visible in the distance.

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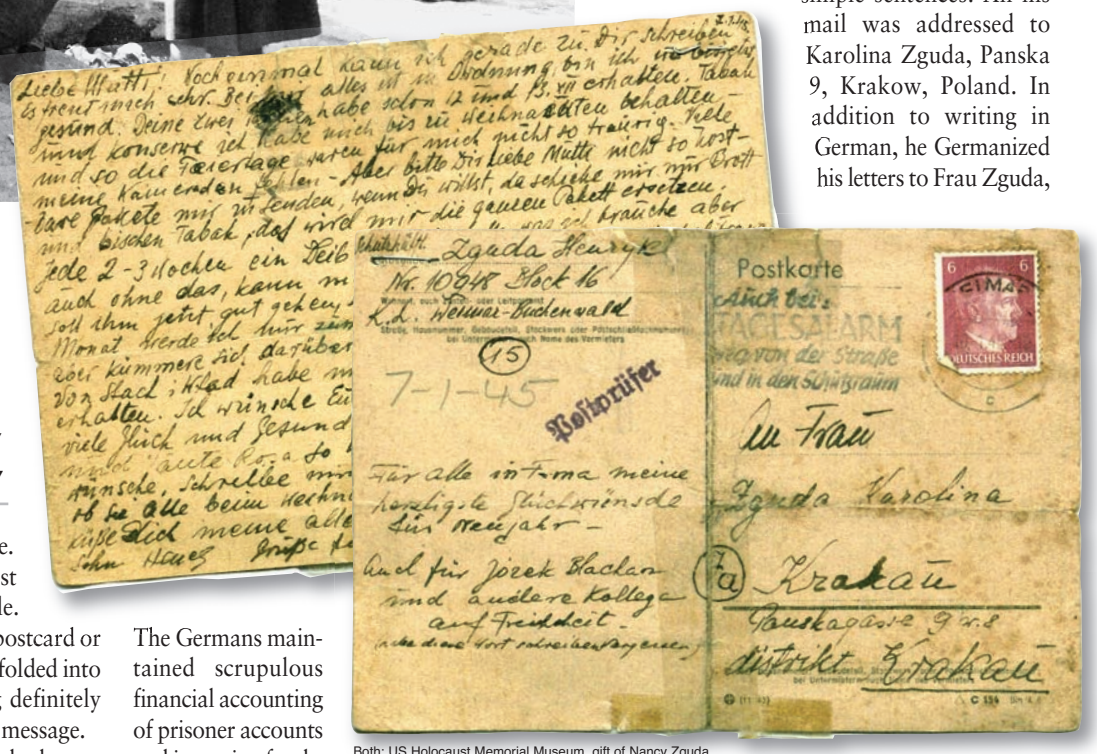


Both: US Holocaust Memorial Museum, gift of Nancy Zguda.

ABOVE: Terror is reflected in the eyes of these Polish Jews and other civilians as they are rounded up by German soldiers and destined for a concentration camp. Henry Zguda became a political prisoner of the Nazis and spent months in captivity. RIGHT: Henry Zguda's postcard from the Buchenwald concentration camp is dated January 7, 1945. Its handwritten message, censored by the Germans, reads in part, 'Everything is okay with me. I am healthy.'

lines and space prisoners had to write.

The rules from Dachau, as the first camp, became the primary example. The stationery consisted of either a postcard or a single piece of paper that could be folded into a self-envelope. Small handwriting definitely ensured being able to send a longer message.

Jews and Soviet POWs occupied the lowest prisoner status in all camps and were rarely granted mail privileges. When Germans did grant mail privileges, especially for Jews, they weren't being totally altruistic. The letters constituted a minor ruse for relatives that prisoners were merely at a "protective custody" camp and were treated better than they were. Camp commandants imposed varying rules on what had to be included or omitted. In Auschwitz, every letter had to include "I am healthy." In Buchenwald, prisoners could never mention they were hungry. Then consider this phrase that appeared in the printed rules: "The sending of money is permitted."

Families were encouraged to send funds as money orders on behalf of their family members. The Germans maintained scrupulous financial accounting of prisoner accounts and incoming funds, as demonstrated by multiple documents that record incoming deposits and disbursements. Among other financial needs, prisoners had to pay for the stamp on each letter. Even without money privileges, stamps were one of the few things permitted as an enclosure with incoming prisoner mail.

Prisoners were required to register a single address; all mail would hence be sent to that one individual. In some instances registering an address posed a serious dilemma. If prisoners had no family left at home, who did they address their mail to? Plus, prisoners didn't know how much danger they risked in supplying a family member's name and address to the Germans. Would that person be arrested?

All correspondence had to be written legibly in German and pass through camp censors. Each censor had his own numbered stamp; once the letters were marked approved with the red Geprüft stamp they were mailed. The "official" frequency of mail permitted varied from twice a month to every six weeks, or randomly at the whim of the Germans.

With mail, as in many other aspects of camp life, prisoners who spoke German were at a distinct advantage. They understood the block leaders' orders, could get better work assignments, and had a chance to earn a precious piece of extra bread from non-German speaking prisoners in exchange for writing their letters. Because Zguda studied German in school for six years, he was able to communicate in simple sentences. All his mail was addressed to Karolina Zguda, Panska 9, Krakow, Poland. In addition to writing in German, he Germanized his letters to Frau Zguda, Panska Strasse, and General Government instead of Poland. He signed his letters Heinrich instead of his Polish name Henryk. Subsequently, some camp records read "Heinrich," some read "Henryk."

Zguda arrived at Konzentrations Lager (K.L.) Auschwitz on June 15, 1942, on a transport of 130 Poles from Montelupich Prison in Krakow. The 25-year-old athlete was registered, shaved, disinfected, and thrown a suit of blue-and-white striped clothes and a pair of crude wooden shoes. Next came three quick photos with his head shoved against a nail for positioning. A glance at the three-way photo shows an upside-down triangle with the letter "P" in the middle for Polish. Just as Jews were

required to wear a yellow Star of David, the camps devised a quick identification system of colored triangles for different categories of prisoners. Henry wore red for "political prisoner." Sadly, few who came on that transport with Zguda would survive the war.

On a Sunday afternoon shortly after arrival, Zguda found himself in a large room of tables he sarcastically described as full of "300 guys and 10 pencils." Since his arrest in Krakow on May 30, 1942, he had endured two weeks of interrogation and torture, lost several teeth and broken a finger. Additionally, he had recently received a series of hits on the buttocks splayed naked on a wooden stand built specifically for whipping prisoners.

He described the roughly scrawled letter he wrote that day as "total b.s." All he could say was "I am healthy" and "I feel fine." In reality, he wasn't sure he would live to the next day. That first letter cost the already-starving Zguda a piece of bread to another prisoner for the red postage stamp emblazoned with the image of Hitler. In turn, his mother, who had little means of support, had to pay a translator for each letter she received. But thankfully, she knew he was alive and where he was, at least on the date the letter was written.

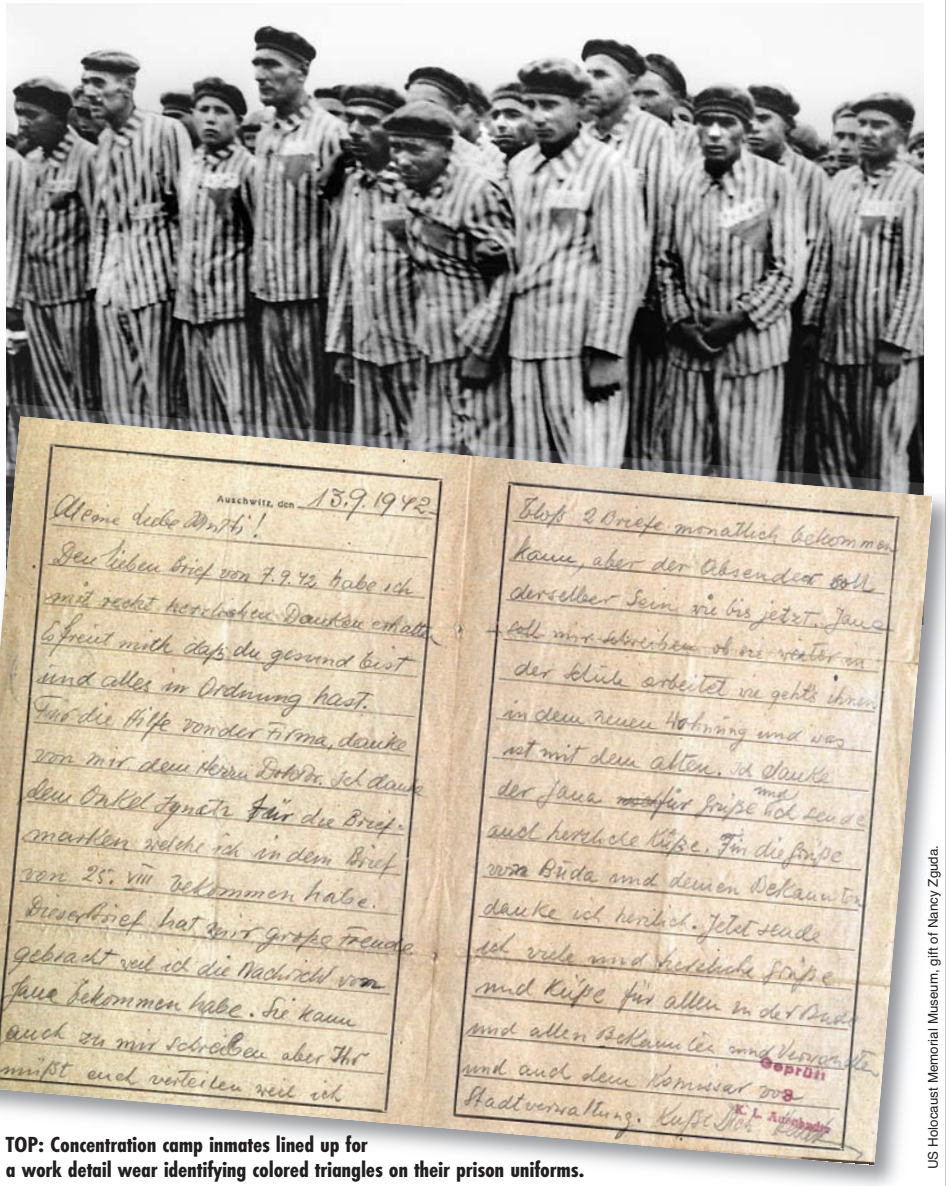
Auschwitz, June 28, 1942:
My dear mother!

Since June 10th I have been at the concentration camp at Auschwitz. I am notifying you that I am healthy. I hope that you are healthy as well. You should not worry yourself and cry but take care of yourself. I hope that you have enough money and food. If that's not the case you can take from the money that is owed to me (undecipherable) like from Micia and (undecipherable.) My suit may be picked up from the tailor. (page is ripped). He lives on Zwierzynieckastrasse 7 or 8, his name is Wojtas. When you write pay attention to the instructions on the first page. Lastly I kiss you with love my dear mother, and also Ms. Jana. Kindest regards to all acquaintances and relatives and for all in Bude where I worked.

Heinrich

If prisoners were allowed to send mail, then it begs the question, could they receive mail? Yes. Of course, due to extremely harsh conditions any letter that a prisoner received in camp would be extremely rare. Today, a few exist in curated collections. In Zguda's case, we have a good idea what he received, because in his subsequent letters he sent messages of thanks to multiple relatives for their letters and gifts.

National Archives



US Holocaust Memorial Museum, gift of Nancy Zguda.

TOP: Concentration camp inmates lined up for a work detail wear identifying colored triangles on their prison uniforms. The triangles were used as a means of identifying each inmate's category of prisoner. ABOVE: A German censor has reviewed and stamped this letter from Henry at Auschwitz dated September 13, 1942. Letters and packages to concentration camp inmates were carefully screened.

While outgoing mail was restricted to one address, Zguda regularly thanked multiple relatives for their incoming letters.

We know Henry's mother received the first letter because in Henry's second letter home, dated July 26, 1942, he wrote in part:

"My dear mother, I received your dear letter with many thanks. I am healthy and wish you the same from all my heart. I'm pleased that you took care of my things. I thank Uncle Ignatz for the postal stamps that I received and also Uncle Franz for the money he sent."

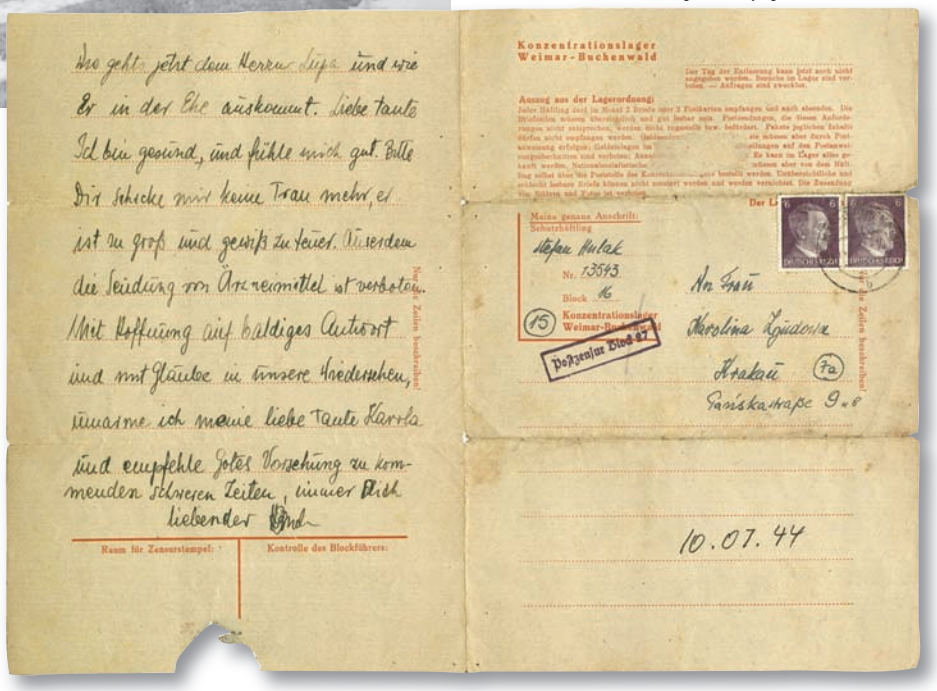
The letter, continuing in a conversational tone, does not reflect Henry's reality of sheer misery. During interviews he described himself as near death when he wrote this second letter. Any modern interpretation of camp correspondence needs to consider the standard censorship that prevented communicating real circumstances.

Based on Henry's letters we know relatives sent funds to his account on multiple occasions. One Einzahlungsliste (deposit list) from Auschwitz for October 23, 1942, shows Heinrich Zguda receiving 10 Reichsmarks. Zguda's letters indicate other receipts of money, but only this list remains.

In their haste to evacuate Auschwitz in January 1945, the Nazis destroyed records so that remaining records and photos constitute only a partial set. No actual currency was ever given to prisoners; the amount was deducted from their accounts for items such as stamps and stationery. Germans were notorious for pilfering money and goods from incoming prisoners and

Collection of the Buchenwald Memorial

US Holocaust Memorial Museum, gift of Nancy Zguda.



ABOVE: This side view of the bordello building at the Buchenwald concentration camp reveals curtains in each window. This photo was taken at the camp in 1943. RIGHT: Henry's letter from Buchenwald is dated July 10, 1944, and relates a personal message of thanks to family members for food and money that had been previously received.

Jews; whether the 10 Reichsmarks is actually what was sent is unknown.

In Henry Zguda's third letter home, dated August 16, 1942, he wrote in part:

"My dear Mother, I thankfully received your letter from August 11th. I worry about you and your health. I already asked you to not worry because I am very healthy. Only thoughts of you cause me pain."

Later in the letter he advised his mother to collect on his debts and sell his things so an uncle could send the funds to his account. Apparently Henry said something wrong, as the censor crossed out two lines before approving this letter. Other letters from Auschwitz dated August through November 1942, all contain similar messages written as light conversation.

In November 1942, Auschwitz began allowing prisoners to receive packages from home. The printed text includes the words, "Packages may not be sent" and some historians incorrectly state that was the case. But if the Germans made the rules, the Germans could change the rules. Receiving a food parcel from home greatly increased the prisoners' ability and will to survive. Packages generally included foodstuffs and other precious commodities that could be used to barter for bread or bribe a guard.

Henry described a Christmas package from his mother as having Christmas cookies and a pair of thick knitted socks, complete with a small ball of yarn and darning needle for repairs. Food and a pair of warm socks in a bitter Polish winter would have been like receiving gold. Henry always shared what he received with his friends, even if it meant only handing over the wrapping from the cookies so someone could lick the crumbs. In Henry's last letter from Auschwitz he thanked five different people for their packages at Christmas.

Auschwitz, January 10, 1943
My dear mother!
I already received your letter from December 8. Every message from you makes me really happy. It saddens me that you still have to work so hard, and have great sympathy for M. Różycka. I'm healthy and also feel well. Heartfelt thanks for the sent packages, but I don't know whether sending them is burdensome to you (all) and maybe they don't send those packages so often. The first package was from Uncle Ignatz, then from Mrs. Zosia, then from Aunt Antonia, from Uncle Franz and from you, dear mother. Before Uncle Franz sent me a postcard for which I give heartfelt thanks. I send you (all) best wishes for New Years. I also send for all in Buda kind regards. I kiss you a thousand times my dear mother and all relatives and acquaintances.

Your loving son, Heinrich

If reference materials communicate the facts and rules of receiving a package from home, personal accounts and memoirs convey the raw circumstances and value. John Wiernicki, another Polish political prisoner, No. 150302 in Auschwitz II-Birkenau, describes receiving packages from home in his memoir *War in the Shadow of Auschwitz, Memoirs of a Polish Resistance Fighter and Survivor of the Death Camps*.

"I learned from Toni that twice a month, non-Jewish prisoners were allowed to write letters home…the mandatory sentence in German I am well and happy…The first parcel arrived four weeks later. In a brown cardboard box, opened previously by the censors, I found bread, fat, sausage, and a small cake. Food from home was a ray of hope, a sign of independence…One could buy everything from underwear to gold watches for a small portion of homemade bread."

Wiernicki later obtained warm underwear in exchange for his grandmother's butter. When he became ill, he gained admission to the infir-

mary with a bribe of one pound of his grandmother's bacon. He took his valuable, bulky brown parcel of food with him to the infirmary and hung on to it for dear life, keeping it under his pillow at night. He later bought the right to his own bed for a half pound of butter.

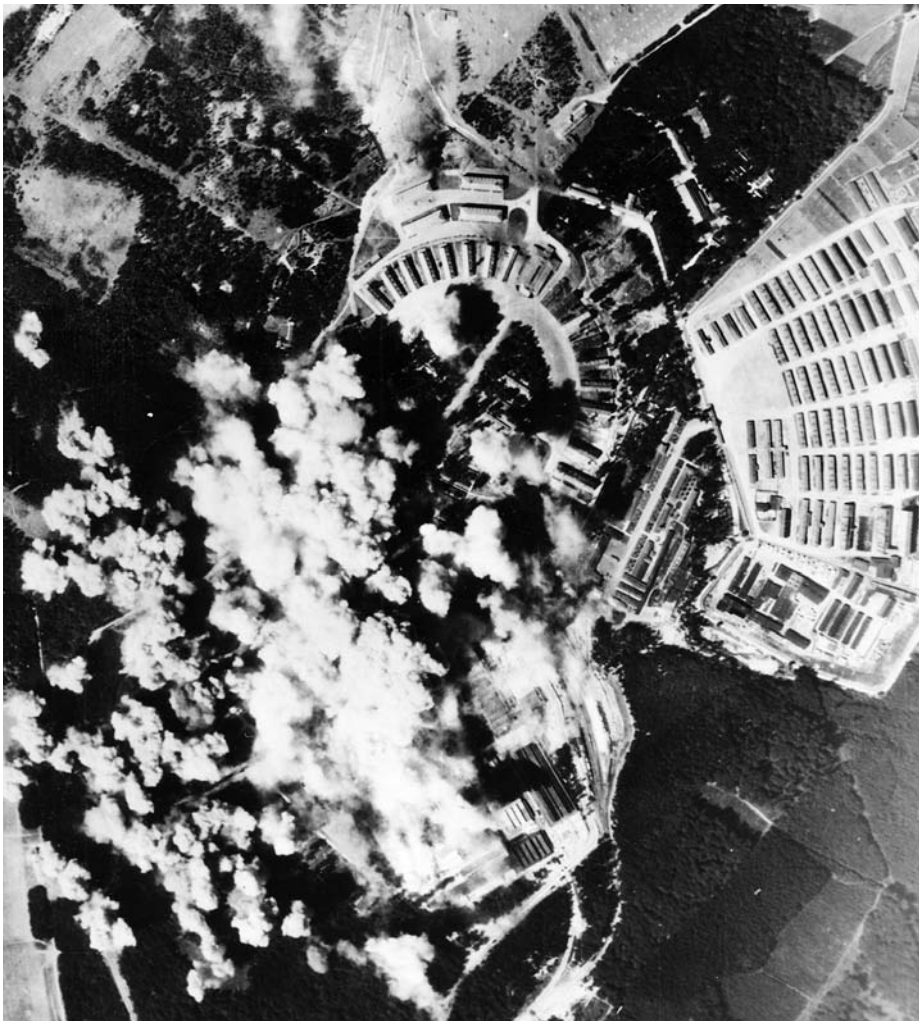
Just as outgoing mail was censored, incoming mail packages were opened and searched. Germans kept the best items for themselves and their families. There are countless stories of Germans sending home large packages filled with items stolen from incoming Jews and prisoner packages.

Auschwitz I was the site of a Polish army camp 30 minutes outside Krakow, and initially used as a "protective custody" camp for Polish political prisoners beginning in May 1940. Few people realize that Catholic Poles, priests and the Polish intelligentsia were the first and majority of prisoners held there for the first two years of the camp's existence. As an example, before Auschwitz opened, on November 6, 1939, the Nazis called a meeting of professors at Jagiellonian University in Krakow. All 183 present were arrested and sent to K.L. Sachsenhausen, where they perished in the bitterly cold winter. The first mass Jewish transport did not arrive until February 15, 1942. Two social realities resulted: the two primary languages spoken in camp were Polish and German, and Poles rose quickly in camp hierarchy as they were there first and filled needed positions. They then subsequently helped their fellow Poles rise through the ranks and attain better jobs. A significant Polish underground developed to help whomever they could.

In 1943, orders came down for most of the Poles in Auschwitz to be transported to other camps in Germany. The orders accomplished two things. First, after high-ranking German officials met on January 20, 1942, in the Berlin suburb of Wannsee, and devised a plan to exterminate all the Jews in Europe, Auschwitz had been designated the primary killing center for European Jewry. The Germans needed room for more incoming Jews. Equally important, the Germans were aware of a strong Polish underground. They used the opportunity to disperse large groups of Poles to different camps such as Buchenwald, Mauthausen, Neuengamme, and Dachau deep in Germany.

On March 10, 1943, a transport of 1,000 Poles left Auschwitz headed west. Henry described the smell of the slop bucket in the dank corner swishing and overflowing and how prisoners peered out the high train windows to try and determine the train's destination. A turn south meant Dachau or Mauthausen; a turn north meant Sachsenhausen or Neuengamme,

National Archives



The explosions of bombs dropped by U.S. Army Air Forces planes on a weapons factory near Buchenwald concentration camp on August 24, 1944, demonstrate the precision capabilities of the bombardiers. This may have caused the Germans to suspend mail privileges.

directly west meant Buchenwald. Of the possible camps, Buchenwald was by far the "preferred" camp for political prisoners, if such a thing could be said about a concentration camp. Through underground connections, Henry's name landed on the Buchenwald transport list.

In many ways, the camp could be considered an SS suburb of Weimar, so close were the connections with townspeople. Once prisoners arrived at the Weimar train station they were marched past townspeople and forced to run uphill amid shouting guards and snapping dogs. Today the road is known as Blutstrasse, or "Blood Road," both for the number of prisoners who died building the road and for the brutal trip up the hill. It remains the only road to the camp.

Presuming all 1,000 Poles in Zguda's transport were registered with the same paperwork as Henry, there was a lot of information to enter both by hand and typewriter. Instead of a folder, the camp used a Buchenwald Individual Documents envelope to hold and file various prisoner records. Henry's envelope included a prisoner registration card, a personal effects card, an office card, two prisoner questionnaires, a medical registration card, an employment card, a prisoner number card and a postal control card. The copy of Zguda's postal control card is undated, but documents incoming mail on August 6 and September 29, and outgoing mail on August 15 and September 26. This mail could be for either 1943 or 1944, based on his camp dates.

Two other pages revealed a surprising discovery. Funds in prisoner accounts followed prisoners from one camp to another. With classic German efficiency, one list documented the transfer of 25 Reichsmarks; a second list documented the transfer of 275 Polish zlotys. Both are dated the same date as transport, March 10, 1943, and are listed in order of Auschwitz prisoner number 39551 with his new Buchenwald number 10948 notated next to his name.

Both: National Archives

ABOVE: After liberating the camp, General Eisenhower ordered American soldiers to enter Buchenwald to observe for themselves the evidence of Nazi atrocities committed by the guards and administrators. BELOW: Rows of corpses lie unburied at Buchenwald shortly after Allied military forces liberated the camp. Many of the dead were slave laborers who worked on V-2 rocket assembly at a nearby facility.

Henry said, "Buchenwald was a paradise compared to Auschwitz." History, facts and staff at Buchenwald support his statement; the term "paradise" of course being compared to the hell of Auschwitz, not normal life. Buchenwald was the only concentration camp where the original political prisoners, in this case the communists, had so much power delegated to them. The German communists were there first in 1937; some had been in "protective custody" since 1933. They rose to high positions and kept their people in line.

When Henry arrived in Buchenwald, he recognized a friend from Krakow. This friend introduced Henry to the right camp leaders; as a friend of the communists he stayed relatively safe. Through these connections he was able to attain a better work command, which also kept him in good standing for mail privileges and packages.

Henry had saved more letters for his nine months in Auschwitz, than for his two and a half years in Buchenwald. The fragile documents exist because Henry's mother kept them, and he subsequently saved them for his entire life. There exist only two letters and two postcards for his time in Buchenwald; two date from 1944, one from January 1945, and one in very poor condition dated June 27 with the year missing. Whether it was sent on June 27, 1943 or 1944, it is the first letter of record from Henry. I don't know if it's because that's all he sent, or if that's all that survived. Based on their content and other dates noted on his postal card, I believe there were more.

The letters that were saved indicated quite a few incoming packages for an unknown time span. On one postcard, a stamp read: ich darf alle 6 wochen elne; Karte Schreiben und empfangen: "I may write and receive every six weeks." In one letter to his mother, Henry instructed her, "…you can send one package a month." As with any rules, Germans could suspend mail privileges or capriciously change the amount of mail allowed. Interestingly, the Buchenwald letters are more legible because they appear to be written in ink. The Auschwitz letters were written in pencil, as were letters from many other camps. Logically, after decades pencil script is far more faded than ink.

Like the Auschwitz letters, the Buchenwald letters mentioned receiving letters and the contents of various packages. Items in huge demand included cigarettes, bacon or fat, tea, and chocolate. Henry also asked for and received toothpaste and shoe polish. When I asked him quizzically about the shoe polish, his answer was simple. "The Germans like it clean. The cleaner you are the longer you live." Shoe polish could be traded with those in higher positions for food and other valuable commodities. Like all prisoners, survival remained the ultimate goal for Henry.

Buchenwald, June 26
Dear mother!
I am (XX) healthy X always XXX as long as I receive no news from you. Last? letter ha?? I received May 24 and the packages with X shoes and medicines. I'm happy X X that you think of me, that was a nice surprise. On May 23 I received a package with bread, June 12 one with cigarettes, June 8 one with onions and today I got a package with slippers, fat, and medicines, but still no letter. Dear mother, you surely must have trouble getting groceries, you can send one package a month. That would be good too. Now you have to think more about yourself. Many thanks for the greetings from the firm and I hope that finally one of my colleagues from the firm writes to me, or Rach-

niowski. Greetings for uncle in Sosnowitz, all relatives and acquaintances. Well I kiss you dearly dear mother.

Your X loving son Heinrich

The Buchenwald letter dated July 10, 1944 is addressed, "Dear Aunt!" and was sent from Stefan Hulak, prisoner no. 13543, also of Block 16. Zguda explained that by that day he had used his quota of letters for the month. Hulak, a fellow prisoner in Block 16, agreed to write a letter for him. I recognize the names as Henry's friends and relatives, so Zguda clearly dictated it to Hulak.

Buchenwald, July 10th, 1944
Dear Aunt!
I've thankfully received your letter on July 1. I'm happy that everything is well with you all and also that Ryska wrote. I was anxious to know what is going on with her. I am writing this letter in hopes for a better future and that you survive all difficulties. July 9th I received two packages from Wróblik and Rozwad. From Wróblik butter and cake. Write to Rozwad that I received 10 marks. I ask them to package the products better, because everything was mixed together. I thank them for everything dearly. Great thanks to Uncle Franz for the two packages and for Janka, 20 Rmk have already been deposited in my account. I received everything from you in good order, cod liver oil (I've already drank it) and marmalades (2 of them) didn't leak. Thank you for the socks, but I don't need any more socks and underwear, don't send those anymore. The slippers brought me much joy, they fit really well. But also don't buy such expensive things in the future. For Mrs. Genia many thanks from me, and apologies for the worries. How is Mr. Lupa now and how is wedded-life for him. Dear aunt I am healthy and feel well. I ask you to not send any more cod-liver oil, it's too big and certainly too expensive. Regardless, the sending of medicines is prohibited. With hopes for a quick reply and with belief that we'll see each other, I embrace you my dear aunt Karola and ask for God's providence in the nearing difficult times,

Your eternally loving, (scribble)

In the fall of 1943, the SS introduced special scrip, intended as work bonuses to motivate prisoners for higher production. Multiple documents with Zguda's name record daily work statistics for each commando. All indications are that the plan failed miserably. Very little that came out of the armaments factory at Buchenwald ever functioned. Money was handed out in scrip form that could be used at the puffhaus (bordello) or in the camp canteen where prisoners could purchase stamps, stationery, and mostly rotten food.

National Archives

After liberation has finally come, Polish inmates celebrate their freedom, having survived the horrific conditions of a concentration camp run by sadistic Nazis.

In Buchenwald prisoners could pay to see movies shown in a large "cinema barrack" where sports events, theater performances and band concerts also took place. Movies, of course, were always in German. Zguda specifically remembered one movie he saw at Buchenwald, "Stern von Rio."

When the Americans bombed Buchenwald on August 24, 1944, they targeted the Administration building, the SS living quarters, and the armaments factory where prisoners worked. There was an unconfirmed report that at one point in the summer of 1944 mail privileges were suspended around the time of the bombing. A letter dated January 10, 1945, remains Henry's last known correspondence from Buchenwald. In it Zguda thanks relatives for their packages.

Buchenwald, January 7, 1945
My dear mother,
Once again, I can write to you now. It brings me joy. All is in order here…and I am healthy. I received your two packages on December 12 and 13. The tobacco and conserves I kept until Christmas and so the holidays were not as sad. Many of my comrades are missing—But please, dear Mother, don't send me such expensive packages. If you want, send bread and a little tobacco. Every 2-3 weeks a loaf of bread is all I need but I can live without that as well. (What is going on with Uncle Franz, I hear he is doing well). Maybe next month I will be able to write Uncle Franz. But don't worry about that. I gratefully received your postcard and XX. I wish you all much luck and health for the New Year. Write me, dear Mother, about what is new and if all were together Christmas Eve. Kissing you my dearest Mother, Your forever loving son. Heinrich.

Greetings for all acquaintances.

By late spring, as the Americans drew closer, Reichsführer SS Heinrich Himmler, head of the dreaded SS, gave the order to evacuate Buchenwald. In April, approximately 28,000 inmates were ordered on death marches out of Buchenwald. Zguda had to decide: Go? Or hide in camp and stay? Henry talked with his friends and he chose to "go be liberated." He left the camp on April 10, for what would become a two-week death march. An estimated 12,000 people died on those marches. The first two American tanks reached Buchenwald on April 11.

Henry reached Dachau on April 27, practically dead from typhus and malnutrition. Two days later, as he lay dehydrated on a bunk his friends had dragged him to, he looked out his

Continued on page 68

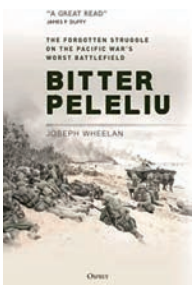
| By Christopher Miskimon |

National Archives

Perilous Fight For Peleliu

The battle for the rugged island of Peleliu, fortified by Japanese defenders, was costly, and the necessity of the operation is still debated today.

THE CACOPHONY OF NAVAL GUNFIRE PROVED SO THUNDEROUS IT LEFT some marines in a stupor. Dark smoke roiled thousands of feet in the air from the bombardment of Peleliu, a small island in the Palau Islands. It was September 15, 1944. Marines in amtracs and Higgins Boats moved steadily toward the landing zones on the island's southwest side. BAR man Pfc. Sterling Price watched a flight of Hellcats roar overhead, their machine guns chattering. Once they were close enough, the water around the landing raft churned from the impacts of bullets and shrapnel. The shellfire had not killed all the defenders; the Marines were in for a fight.



The amtracs struck a coral reef hard enough to knock most of the Marines off their feet before the tracks found purchase and ground their way over them. Corporal James Young saw a boat take a direct hit from a shell. "Marines were spinning around in the air just like in slow motion, flopping back into the water." Men in the later assault waves recalled seeing dead Marines all around the coral reef. The survivors went grimly forward; there was nowhere else to go.

Even the famed Colonel Lewis B. "Chesty" Puller, a veteran of Guadalcanal and Cape Gloucester, found the landing a harrowing experience. He got out of his amtrac "up and over that side as fast as I could scramble and ran like hell at least twenty-five yards before I hit the beach flat down," he later stated. To his left sat a large promontory, soon to be known as "The Point," which seemed so far untouched by gunfire or aerial bombs. Atop this position sat five reinforced concrete pillboxes armed with machine guns and 47mm cannon, which the Japanese used to great effect on the beaches below.

Puller sprinted across the beach as shrapnel and coral splinters flew through the air. Looking back, he saw the amtrac which had brought him to shore explode, killing most of its crew. "Crossing the beach was like running between raindrops," Pfc. Joe Clapper recalled, "You just got the hell off the beach." So many Marines lay wounded that the cries for corpsmen filled the air between explosions of mortar bombs and grenades. Soon Japanese soldiers began to cry "Corpsman!" as well, hoping to lure the lifesavers into the sights of a sniper or machine gun team. As bad as it all was, the first wave made it to shore with relatively few casualties. Japanese fire increased afterward against the following waves, causing even more death and injury among the Marines struggling to reach shore.

The Pacific War is notable for the horrible, unrelenting combat which occurred across scores of islands during the myriad landing operations. Peleliu stands out even among them as an example of how difficult, terrifying, and deadly the island-hopping campaign in the Pacific could be. Even so, it is less well-known than Guadalcanal, Iwo Jima, Okinawa, and other battles which were equally bad. *Bitter Peleliu: The Forgotten Struggle on the Pacific War's Worst Battlefield* (Joseph Wheelan, Osprey Books, Oxford, UK, 2022, 336 pp., maps, photographs, notes, bibliography, index, $30, hardcover) sheds light on an action which deserves to be as heralded for the sacrifice and courage of the Marines and soldiers who fought there.

A Marine shares his water with a badly wounded fellow Marine during the fight for Peleliu. Although less well known than Guadalcanal, Iwo Jima, and Okinawa, the battle was no less brutal.

The author examines the reasons for Peleliu's relative obscurity, including Allied intelligence failures, strategic miscalculations and a shift in Japanese tactics designed to bloody any invader. Aside from

Always looking for the nearest rest stop?

New Prostate Discovery Helps Men Avoid "Extreme Bathroom Planning"

Men across the U.S. are praising a revolutionary prostate pill that's 1000% more absorbable. Now the visionary MD who designed it is pulling out all the stops to keep up with surging demand…

Among the all-too-familiar, occasional problems like sleepless nights, frequent urination, late-night wake ups, a bladder that's never quite empty, and constant, extreme planning for rest stops and bathroom breaks.

These are the common signs of inconvenient urinary issues. But men nationwide are now reporting they've found help these occasional problems thanks to a major breakthrough in nutrient technology.

Prosta-Vive LS is the new prostate pill sweeping the nation. Men say they feel they're now having strong, complete, effortless urine flow they enjoyed in their 20s and 30s.

The key to its success is a new nutrient technology that makes the key ingredient 1000% more absorbable, according to a study by endocrinologists at Washington University in St. Louis.

Nick Summers is the spokesman for Primal Force Inc., the firm in Royal Palm Beach, Fla. that makes **Prosta-Vive LS**. He reports demand is surging due to word-of-mouth and social-media.

"We knew **Prosta-Vive** really worked to 'support healthy, stronger urine flow," Summers stated. "But no one could have predicted the tens of thousands of men looking for a truly supportive prostate pill."

NEW PROSTATE FORMULA DRAWS 5-STAR REVIEWS

It's not the first time Dr. Al Sears, the Florida-based MD who designed the breakthrough formula, has shaken up the status quo in men's health.

A nationally recognized men's health pioneer and the founder of the Sears Institute for Anti-Aging Medicine in Royal Palm Beach, Fla., Dr. Sears has been featured on ABC, CNN, and ESPN.

He's authored more than 500 books, reports, and scientific articles, many focusing on prostate issues that may affect virtually all men sooner or later.

"By age 60, I find about half of my male patients feel the need for prostate support," Dr. Sears explains. "By the time they reach age 80, it's over 90 percent."

Prosta-Vive LS has reportedly made a life-changing difference for these men. One appreciative thank-you letter came from Jim R, a patient.

"I had immediate results," Jim R. wrote in his thank-you note. "I slept through the night without going to the bathroom.

"Last night was the most amazing of all," he added. "I slept for 10 hours without going to the toilet."

Results like these explain the flood of phone calls the company's customer service department is handling from men who want to know how the new formula works...

PROSTATE PILL BACKED BY CLINICAL RESULTS

Prosta-Vive LS's extraordinary success is being attributed to advanced innovations in nutrient technology.

Most prostate pills rely on either outdated saw palmetto … or the prostate-soothing compound Beta-Sitosterol.

But Dr. Sears cites growing evidence that saw palmetto and Beta-Sitosterol work much better together than either does on its own.

In fact, a recent clinical trial involving 66 men taking a combination of saw palmetto and Beta-Sitosterol reported "significant" improvement across the board.

Among the results: Fewer of those occasional late-night wake ups, a stronger stream, less starting and stopping, and complete emptying of the bladder.

That's why **Prosta-Vive LS** includes both saw palmetto and Beta-Sitosterol, to ensure men get the extra prostate support they need. Frustrated men say it's giving them tremendous support.

But there's another key reason **Prosta-Vive LS** is helping men get back control in the bathroom.

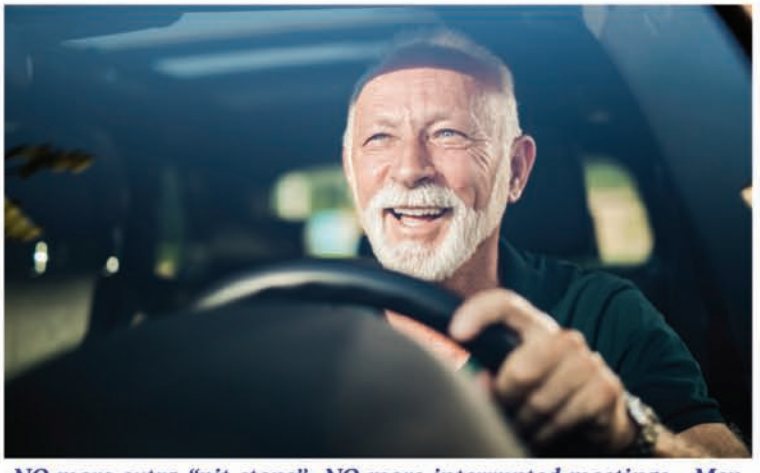
YOUR PROSTATE IS HUNGRY FOR HEALTHY FAT

The other key innovation in **Prosta-Vive LS** is its addition of healthy omega-3 fatty acids.

"It turns out what's good for your heart is also good for your prostate," says Dr. Sears. "That's why I put heart-healthy omega-3s in a prostate pill."

Researchers have long known Beta-Sitosterol has a great potential to support healthy prostate function.

But Beta-Sitosterols are "hydro-phobic" -- they don't mix well with water. And that can make them much harder for the body to absorb.



NO more extra "pit stops", NO more interrupted meetings - Men are free of bathroom woes and feel RELIEF.

That's where long-chain omega-3s come in. The latest research shows they boost Beta-Sitosterol absorption by 1000%.

Dr. Sears explains, "Most people only get trace amounts of Beta-Sitosterol because it can be hard to absorb. In this respect, the long-chain fatty acids in **Prosta-Vive LS** are a real game-changer. They supercharge the absorption."

This improved absorption is proving to be a revolutionary advance. **Prosta-Vive LS** is changing men's lives, quickly becoming the No. 1 support supplement for supporting men's prostate health nationwide.

Now, grateful men are calling almost every day to thank **Prosta-Vive LS** for supporting a renewed sense of empowerment over their own lives.

One patient, Ari L., wrote, "I used to get up on occasion at night to go to the bathroom. Now I only get up once… and I feel it has supported my prostate, keeping my PSA levels in the normal range."

Patients report they have more energy, sleep better, and no longer feel embarrassed by that occasional sudden need to use the restroom.

Thanks to **Prosta-Vive LS**, thousands of men feel more confident about their urinary health and are no longer being held hostage to pee problems and feel more confident about their urinary health.

They say they're getting great sleep and finally feel back in charge of their own lives.

HOW TO GET PROSTA-VIVE LS

Right now, the only way to get this powerful, unique nutrient technology that effectively relieves the urge to go is with Dr. Sears' breakthrough **Prosta-Vive** formula.

To secure a supply of **Prosta-Vive**, men need to contact the Sears Health Hotline directly at **1-800-341-6533**.

"It's not available in retail stores yet," says Dr. Sears. "The Hotline allows us to ship directly to the customer and we're racing to keep up with demand."

Dr. Sears feels so strongly about **Prosta-Vive's** effectiveness that all orders are backed by a 100% money-back guarantee. "Just send me back the bottle and any unused product within 90 days from purchase date, and I'll send you your money back," he says.

Given the intense recent demand, the Hotline will only be taking orders for the next 48 hours. After that, the phone number may be shut down to allow for restocking. If you are not able to get through due to extremely high call volume, please try again!

Call **1-800-341-6533** NOW to secure your limited supply of **Prosta-Vive** at a significant discount. To take advantage of this exclusive offer use Promo Code: **WWHPV123** when you call.

an insightful analysis of the higher-level planning and decision making, the book also delves into the experiences of the men on both sides who struggled on this island for well over two months, where 38.5 percent of the Americans engaged became casualties. The writing is well constructed and the narrative equally well crafted. This book is a good choice for those who wish to know more about Peleliu, why and how it was chosen for invasion and how the men who fought there struggle through to a hard-won victory.

Captain Chaos: Navy Cross Recipient Warner V. Tyler, Carrier Air Group Nineteen, and the Battle for Leyte Gulf (Steven E. Maffeo, Focsle Press, Annapolis MD, 2022, 318 pp., maps, photographs, appendices, bibliography, $25, softcover)

The Battle of Leyte Gulf was the largest naval battle of World War II, and by most measures the largest in history. It involved 200,000 people, 280 ships and 1,800 aircraft. Among all those ships and men, Ensign Warner Tyler, later to bear the sobriquet "Captain Chaos," flew a Grumman TBM-1C Avenger torpedo bomber through heavy enemy fire to launch his torpedo at the Japanese hybrid battleship/carrier Ise. For this, he earned the Navy Cross, the service's second highest award for valor, while his enlisted radioman and gunner each received the Distinguished Flying Cross. Though their part in Leyte Gulf was but one small piece of a massive, concerted effort by the U.S. Navy, it contributed to the aggregate and overarching goal of defeating the Imperial Japanese Navy.

The story of Ensign, later Captain, Tyler and his fellow naval aviators aboard the USS Lexington is well-told in this new work. The author is a retired naval officer who served with Tyler postwar, allowing him to gather accurate information on his subjects. However, this is not a simple collection of the pilot's war stories. The book is well researched with pilot's narratives woven into a coherent whole using credible source material.

Gavin at War: The World War II Diary of Lieutenant General James. M. Gavin (Edited and annotated by Lewis Sorley, Casemate Books, Havertown, PA, 2022, maps, photographs, appendices, index, $34.95, hardcover)

James Gavin began his wartime service as the commander of the 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment during the Sicily operation, before assuming command of the entire 82nd Airborne Division for the remainder of the war. He was the first out the door on four combat jumps, earning two Distinguished Service Crosses, two Silver Stars and the Purple Heart for his courage. Neither enemy fire nor weather

New and Noteworthy

Alarmstart South and Final Defeat (Patrick G. Erikson, Amberley Press, 2022, $35, hardcover) The third book in a trilogy on German fighter pilots of World War II, this volume focuses on the Mediterranean from 1941-44 and Western Europe in 1944-45.

Churchill's Arctic Convoys: Strength Triumphs over Adversity (William Smith, Pen and Sword, 2022, $42.95, hardcover) The convoys which supplied the Soviet Union experienced extreme hardship fulfilling their duties. This work examines the political, naval, and logistic aspects of the convoys.

Red Army Weapons of the Second World War (Michael Green, Pen and Sword, 2022, $34.95, hardcover) The Soviet military used a wide variety of weapons, from Great War relics to the most modern designs. The book covers small arms, armored vehicles, and artillery.

12th SS Panzer Division Hitlerjugend: From Formation to the Battle of Caen (Massimiliano Afiero, Casemate Books, 2022, $28.95, softcover) The infamous "Hitler Youth" Division fought viciously at Normandy but eventually suffered defeat. This book describes the unit's creation and combat action.

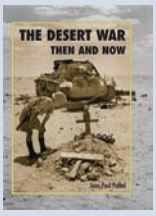
The Fleet Air Arm and the War in Europe 1939–1945 (David Hobbs, Seaforth Publishing, 2022, $68, hardcover) The Royal Navy's air force had an impact which far outweighed its size. Its operations during the war in Europe spanned the entire length of the conflict.

The U-Boat War: A Global History 1939-45 (Lawrence Paterson, Osprey Books, 2022, $35, hardcover) The author shows how the war against the German submarine force was a wide-ranging campaign intertwined with the rest of the war's events.

Dünkirchen 1940: The German View of Dunkirk (Robert Kershaw, Osprey Books, 2022, $30, hardcover) This new work makes clear the various German tactical and operational errors which allowed the Dunkirk evacuation to succeed as well as it did. The author's assertions are clear and well supported.

Foreign Panthers (M.P. Robinson and Thomas Seignon, Osprey Books, 2022, $19, softcover) This new title examines the use of the German Panther tank by the British, Soviet, French and other armies both during and after World War II. The book presents a number of interesting case studies.

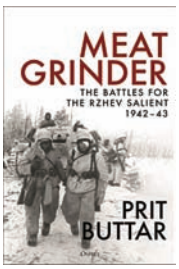
F6F Hellcat: Philippines 1944 (Edward M. Young, Osprey Books, 2022, $22, softcover) Part of Osprey's new Dogfight series, this book looks at the tactics used by Grumman Hellcat pilots to win the fight in the skies over the Philippine Islands in 1944.



The Desert War Then and Now (AJean Paul Pallud, After the Battle, 2022, $100, hardcover) A photo essay book, this new edition shows photographs from the war in North Africa contrasted with images of what the depicted area looks like in modern times.

kept him from visiting his troops in the front lines, so they always knew he was with them. If need be, he crawled from one foxhole to another to check on his soldiers. He carried an M1 Rifle instead of the pistol or carbine most officers toted, and he was known to have used it in action alongside his men.

Gavin kept a journal during the war, which he kept secret even from his family, who discovered it after his death in 1990. Here it has been edited and annotated for the reader, giving insight into Gavin's views on his operations, fellow senior leaders, and his own life. There are two inserts of well-chosen photographs accompanying the text.



Meat Grinder: The Battles for the Rzhev Salient 1942-43 (Prit Buttar, Osprey Books, Oxford, UK, 2022, 463 pp., maps, photographs, notes, bibliography, index, $35, softcover)

Few in the West know about the Rzhev Salient. The fighting around Moscow and Stalingrad come quickly to mind, but this little-known salient near the town of Rzhev, roughly 100 miles west of Moscow, was so terrible it was nicknamed the "Meat Grinder." The area could have been a launching point for a new German attack on the capital, so pushing the Nazis back seemed paramount. Repeated attacks against the strong German defensive positions proved fruitless, however, resulting in heavy casualties. Millions of soldiers fought there and some two million became casualties during a series of four major Soviet offensives from early 1942 until circumstances forced a German withdrawal in March 1943.

The author is one of the foremost authorities on the Eastern Front during both world wars, and this latest work is a continuance of his high standards of research and writing. The book is comprehensive, including accounts from high-level officers down to soldiers in the trenches, tanks, and foxholes. Beyond merely retelling the horrors of the fighting, the author also studies how the Soviets learned from their failures at Rzhev and used that knowledge in their later offensives in 1944.

Ace in a Day: The Memoir of an Eighth Air Force Fighter Pilot in World War II (Lt. Col. Wayne K. Blickenstaff, Edited by Graham Cross, Casemate Books, Havertown, PA, 2022, 340 pp., photographs, appendices, index, $39.95, hardcover)

Lieutenant Wayne Blickenstaff saw a group of German Messerschmitt Me-109 fighters disperse after making a run at some American bombers. He chased one, following it as it rolled and dove. His heavy Republic P-47 Thunderbolt fighter accelerated so quickly he worried his plane would go into a state of compressibility and crash. This term described airflow over the wings approaching supersonic velocity; it could lock the plane's elevators and cause a crash. He broke off, feeling guilty for not chasing the enemy plane. Later, he confessed his "screw-up" to a friend. That friend told Blickenstaff his mission was to escort the bombers, not paint little German swastikas on the side of his cockpit. Since that Me-109 didn't get back to the bombers, the mission was accomplished. It was Blickenstaff's first aerial combat; much more lay ahead of him.

This memoir is a vivid look at the lives of American fighter pilots in the European theater. The author asserts that life or death in the air was often a matter of luck and shows this through vignettes about his experiences and those of his fellow flyers. The book is well-illustrated with many of the author's photographs, and a set of detailed appendices provides extensive background information.

Leyte Gulf 1944 (2): Surigao Strait and Cape Engano (Mark Stille, Osprey Books, Oxford, UK, 2022, 96 pp., maps, photographs, bibliography, index, $24, softcover)

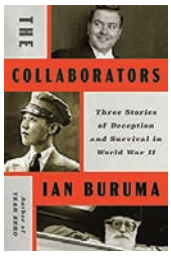
The Battle of Leyte Gulf, while the largest naval battle in history, was composed of four major actions occurring over two days. The Imperial Japanese Navy staked its hopes on the outcome of the war on this fight, marshalling the bulk of its remaining strength in an attempt to defeat the U.S. Navy and prevent the loss of the Philippines, without which the war could not be won. In fact, the Japanese entered the fight with no real hope of success but felt they had to try. At Cape Engano, the Japanese succeeded in luring the main American force north, away from the landing sites on Leyte, but suffered terrible losses for their effort. At Surigao Strait, the opposing forces fought the last battleship action in history.

The author is an acknowledged expert on the Pacific War and the World War II U.S. and Japanese navies. His depth of knowledge and insight figure prominently in this new work, the second in a compact yet thorough account of Leyte Gulf. As is standard with Osprey's Campaign series, this book is liberally illustrated with photographs and original artwork.

The Soviet Baltic Offensive, 1944-45: German Defense of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania (Ian Baxter, Casemate Books, Havertown, PA, 2022, 128 pp., maps, photographs, bibliography, index, $28.95, softcover)

The overwhelming Soviet offensives in the summer of 1944 threw the German army back. Much of the German Army Group North drew back into the Baltic States of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. Hitler issued another of his disastrous "no retreat" orders, essentially trapping his troops, who struggled first to defend the capital cities of each of the small coastal states. Soon they were pushed into small pockets surrounding ports through which they hoped to be withdrawn. In all, some two million Germans, three-quarters of them civilians, were evacuated. The remaining forces fought until destruction, except for those in the Courland Pocket, which held out until May 1945. They were among the last German units to surrender in World War II, and 140,000 troops from there went into Soviet captivity.

The Casemate Illustrated series is relatively new, but the publisher's ability to create compact yet detailed and well-illustrated volumes is shown in this latest edition covering the Baltic fighting. The photographs are excellent, as are the maps and artwork. There is also extensive information on unit organization and leadership. The work gives the reader a complete look at one of the lesser understood campaigns of the Eastern Front.

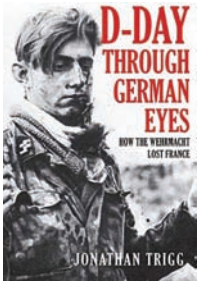


The Collaborators: Three Stories of Deception and Survival in World War II (Ian Buruma, Penguin Press, New York, NY, 2023, 320 pp., photographs, notes, bibliography, index, $30, hardcover)

Felix Kersten acted as Heinrich Himmler's personal masseur and did the job so well Himmler nicknamed the outgoing, heavy set Kersten the "Magic Buddha." Aisin Gyoro Xianyu, also known as Jin Buhui or Dongzen, or her Japanese name Kawashima Yoshiko, was the daughter of a deposed Manchu prince. She favored men's clothing and spied for the

Japanese secret police in China. Friedrich "Freek" Weinreb, a Hasidic Jewish immigrant to the Netherlands, took money from his fellow Jews, claiming he would save them from transportation to the death camps. Instead, he betrayed many of them to the German authorities. Both Kawashima and Weinreb were brought to trial after the war, but Kersten, a Finnish citizen, was not technically guilty of any crime and so went free.

These three tales of collaboration are well-told in this new book. The narrative is smooth and transitions easily between each figure, revealing to the reader how they navigated the circumstances of their respective situations. The detail on each person's activities is deep and informative, but the author does not forget he is telling a story of misdeeds at the least and murderous crimes as worst. This is an interesting tale of three strange and amoral people among the event of the 1930s and 1940s.



D-Day Through German Eyes: How the Wehrmacht Lost France (Jonathan Trigg, Amberley Press, Gloucestershire, UK, 2022, maps, photographs, appendix, notes, bibliography, index, $16.95, softcover)

The German Army had extensive combat experience, some of the best weapons and equipment, and in June 1944 was holding its own in Italy and on the Eastern Front. The Wehrmacht knew a cross-Channel invasion was coming sooner or later and had been preparing for years to meet it. When that invasion finally fell upon the Normandy coastline and into the hedgerows and towns beyond, the German forces managed to hold for 10 weeks and in a few instances came close to defeating the largest amphibious assault force ever assembled. Despite the leadership of commanders such as field marshals Gerd von Rundstedt and Erwin Rommel, it was really a fight led by division and regimental commanders. These soldiers bore the brunt of the fighting and suffered the most in its outcome through death, injury, or capture.

This book is an in-depth look at the Normandy Campaign from the German point of view. The author examines how the Germans viewed the fighting, how they prepared for it, their force composition, and whether they could have done more to defeat the landings. Extensive use is made of veteran accounts to provide an authentic look at the

Simulation Gaming

BY JOSEPH LUSTER

WORLD WAR II BATTLES HEAD TO NEW DEPTHS WITH THE SUBMARINE-FOCUSED *WOLFPACK*.

WOLFPACK

PUBLISHER SUBSIM • **GENRE** SIMULATION • **SYSTEM** PC

Some World War II games give you control over an entire battlefield, or offer you an abundance of vehicular options that you can easily swap between at any given moment. Others maintain a more precise focus, and that's one of the key aspects that makes a game like *Wolfpack* so special. Developed by Usurpator AB and published by SUBSIM, *Wolfpack* is a pure submarine maintenance and combat simulation that's currently in Early Access on Steam, and it's worth diving into if you appreciate the more granular side of combat.

Wolfpack places players within the confines of a German type VII U-boat during World War II, allowing you and your crew to intercept and sink enemy ships, all while escaping without being detected by the enemy. This can be handled in single player mode, with one player manning multiple tasks and managing the entirety of the u-boat on their own. Where *Wolfpack* really shines, though, is in its cooperative multiplayer capabilities.

You'll undoubtedly get the most out of this one when you team up with friends (or strangers, if you fancy) online. Up to five players can make up the larger crew, with each one handling a specific responsibility on the sub. There's the captain, of course, as well as the radio man, who is in charge of operating the hydrophone, radio, radio direction finder, and Enigma machine. The helmsman ust control the heading, speed, and torpedo data computer operation, while the dive officer uses dive planes, ballast, and negative tanks to control the depth and serves as lookout and gunner for the deck gun and anti-aircraft gun. The crew wouldn't be complete without the navigator, who calculates the unit's position and plots the best course for intercepting enemies.

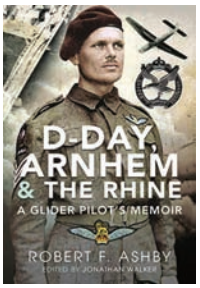
Unlike some sim titles, *Wolfpack* actually has each player interacting with their unique management stations manually, turning valves, pulling levers and handling various instruments to get the job done. The coordination involved—both between the player and the task at hand and interpersonally—makes this a special experience in multiplayer. While you can certainly derive some satisfaction from *Wolfpack* solo, finding friends to play with will lead to the most rewarding outcome. At the time of this writing, Usurpator AB's game is still in Early Access on Steam, so further changes will likely be implemented in the near future. If you'd rather keep a close eye on it until the full version is out, the end results should be worth the wait.

VANGUARD: NORMANDY 1944

PUBLISHER PATHFINDER GAMES • **GENRE** SHOOTER • **SYSTEM** PC

If you're looking for a historically-accurate World War II shooter, the team at Pathfinder Games has your back with *Vanguard: Normandy 1944*. This squad-based outing has been kicking it in Early Access since 2019, and all that time in the oven continues to pay off on a regular basis. The CRYENGINE underneath the hood does a spectacular job of meticulously recreating the weapons, equipment, and uniforms of the period, resulting in

German perspective. The book is thoroughly researched with a clear and logical narrative for smooth reading.



D-Day, Arnhem and the Rhine: A Glider Pilot's Memoir (Robert F. Ashby, edited by Jonathan Walker, Pen and Sword Books, South Yorkshire, UK, 2022, 177 pp., maps, photographs, notes, bibliography, index, $34.95, hardcover)

Glider Pilots occupied a perilous position in British airborne divisions. It took skill and determination to pilot a glider. These pilots could expect to land under difficult conditions while being shot at by the enemy. In the back could be over two dozen soldiers, a vehicle and artillery piece, or vital supplies. Once on the ground, glider pilots had no way to withdraw and so became foot soldiers, expected to fight and serve alongside the infantry, medics, and other troops battling behind enemy lines. Robert Ashby, a librarian before the war, volunteered for flight duties and became pilot of a Horsa glider. He took part in assault landings at D-Day and Arnhem during 1944 and the airborne operations over the Rhine in March 1945. Often, he carried a Sten submachine gun and a PIAT anti-tank launcher, common for glider men.

This memoir is full of the small, personal details which make it such a pleasure to read. This book does not fail to deliver on the interesting vignettes which commonly fail to appear in more general histories. It is well written, and the editing keeps the narrative flowing and coherent. This work provides insight into the three major British airborne operations in the European theater. ■

a grim but unforgettable window into the horrors of D-Day.

Vanguard: Normandy 1944 offers a couple key options: You can tackle objectives as members of the elite Airborne Division or step into the boots of the German Wehrmacht. Either way you'll be engaging in up-close-and-personal infantry combat in the main game mode, Raid, which has you either playing the role of defender or attacking and advancing as the aggressor. Rounds of Raid mode are typically short and intense, making it ideal for fitting in a bunch of play sessions and finding new ways to hold your own no matter what side you may fall on in any given match.

While a single bullet could easily put an end to your time on the battlefield, that makes it all the more exciting whenever you manage to properly coordinate with your online squadmates and emerge victorious. This is a true team-based affair, but the bite-sized sessions make it much more palatable as something you can hop into at your leisure without having to commit an obscene amount of time at once. Sure, you can connect with friends for the aforementioned lengthy sessions, but you can also easily fit it into even the busiest of schedules, which is good news for folks that might find it increasingly difficult to budget the appropriate amount of time for online wargaming.

One of the most promising aspects of *Vanguard: Normandy 1944*—especially considering the fact that we're dealing with an Early Access game that remains technically unfinished—is the amount of community support. The devs regularly run Sunday Skirmish community play events, giving players a chance to jump on at the same time and offer focused feedback on the ever-evolving experience. It's a show of good faith and the developer's belief in what is by most indications a very promising title, so stay tuned to see what happens next with this one. ■

Profile

Continued from page 19

held in low esteem among those seeking an armistice and would likely be arrested.

At the end of June, Spears was appointed to head the British government's mission to de Gaulle. In late September 1940, Spears was present with de Gaulle at the Free French attempt to seize Dakar, during Operation Menace, and get Vichy French troops to join his London-based cause. The attack was repulsed by the Vichy French with losses to the Royal Navy. Spears bore much of the blame for this endeavor, and John Colville, Churchill's private secretary, wrote on October 27, 1940, "It is true that Spears' emphatic telegrams persuaded the Cabinet to revert to the Dakar scheme after it had, on the advice of the Chiefs of Staff, been abandoned. Even de Gaulle chastised his liaison to Churchill saying that Spears was 'intelligent but egotistical and hampering because of his unpopularity with the War Office.'"

In March 1941, Spears was still acting as Churchill's personal representative to the Free French. He left England with de Gaulle for Cairo, where he met with General Archibald Wavell, who was reluctant to further stretch his limited forces in a fight with the Vichy French over Syria and Lebanon. However, later that month German aircraft landed in Syria in support of the Iraqi rebel Rashid Ali, who had just been ejected from Iraq by Wavell's ad hoc forces which relieved RAF installations and secured the oil refineries and pipelines there.

On June 8, 1941, Operation Exporter commenced with a combined Commonwealth and Free French force of 30,000 troops under Wavell. Fierce fighting raged, but Wavell's troops secured the Levant for the Allied cause and prevented Luftwaffe bases being set up in Syria within range of the Suez Canal and other vital British installations in the Middle East. To coordinate liaison between all Commonwealth forces in the Middle East with the British embassy in Cairo, the Middle East Defence Council was established, which would later include Spears as a member.

In January 1942, Spears was appointed the first British minister to Syria and Lebanon. He also received his title of Knight Commander of the British Empire (KBE). Spears was created a baronet in June 1953, and he died on January 27, 1974, at the age of 87. ■

Jon Diamond practices medicine and resides in Hershey, Pennsylvania. He is a frequent contributor to WWII History *and has written several books on the great conflict.*

28th Infantry Division

Continued from page 31

division headquarters that his command post was under direct German fire and that enemy tanks were roaming through the town. Colonel Fuller and his staff escaped, hoping to join Company G, recently released by General Cota, and reportedly approaching Clerf from the west. But Colonel Fuller was soon captured and his staff dispersed.

The battle for Clerf did not end with Colonel Fuller's capture, however. In the castle, or chateau, manned by the administrative men of the regiment and other units, the battle continued. The 3rd Panzer Regiment had assembled in the town, and for some hours they ignored the Americans in the chateau. Maybe they were busy looting the American supply depots or just getting some rest. Yet, as late as 5:30 on the morning of December 18 the little group made radio contact with the 28th Infantry Division and reported themselves still in position, holding off German probing attacks. But this was not to last.

At dawn on December 18 the Panther Battalion of the 3rd Panzer Regiment rolled into Clerf. They, too, ignored the annoying Americans in the castle. Their bullets and grenades were harmless to the big tanks, but they did serious damage to their own German infantry as they passed through town, causing yet more delays. Clearly, they would have to be eliminated. German engineers and self-propelled 88mm guns were brought up for direct assaults on the castle, which was holed repeatedly. After several hours of fierce combat, the surviving Americans were forced to surrender. What was left of the 110th Infantry was then finally withdrawn for rest and reorganization.

The last recorded fighting by the 110th Infantry occurred at the village of Consthum, where the regiment's executive officer, Lieutenant Colonel Daniel Strickler, and portions of the 3rd Battalion, with three tanks and a few vehicles of the 447th Antiaircraft (AAA) Battalion, held out until the afternoon of December 18 before a heavy fog allowed the Germans to enter the town. But that same fog and smoke from the battle allowed the battalion to evacuate the town and eventually, after several additional adventures, reach safety.

The cost of holding the Ardennes to the 110th Infantry has never been officially calculated. The best estimate by the Army's historian of the battle gives casualties at 2,750 officers and enlisted men. The survivors, mostly Company G, Company C, and the 3rd Battalion, with many stragglers of other units of the regiment, withdrew behind the lines of the 9th Armored Division.

On December 16, 1944, the 110th Infantry Regiment held a front line 20 miles long on the direct route from Germany's Westwall defenses to Bastogne. It was there recovering from massive losses from the earlier battle in the Hürtgen Forest. Without warning from intelligence sources, it became the focus of the major thrust of the massive German winter counteroffensive intended to reach Antwerp. With too few troops to form any kind of defense in depth, the "Bloody Bucket" division was forced by circumstances to resort to a strongpoint defense in local villages along their front. Fortunately, this system of all-around defense proved successful when the division was struck by five German divisions and fought for three days (December 16-18) in villages, towns, buildings, roads and crossroads to hold back this attack,in accordance with their orders to hold at all costs.

The costs were high, resulting in an estimated loss of two-thirds of the 110th Infantry Regiment in those three days. The other regiments suffered equally, but together the 28th Infantry Division disrupted the German timetable while the American high command gathered reserves, garrisoned Bastogne, and formed a counteroffensive of its own.

The 110th's effort was recognized even by the enemy commander, General Hasso von Manteuffel, who wrote, "The Clerf was not reached at any point. The enemy [28th Infantry Division] was unquestionably surprised by the attack. He offered, however, in many places tenacious and brave resistance in delaying by skillfully fought combat tactics…the tenacious resistance of the enemy, together with the road blocks placed…were the most essential reasons for the slowing of the attack whose time was not going according to plan."

For its gallant stand along Skyline Drive and elsewhere those cold December days, the 28th Infantry Division received no recognition from its own government. The government of Luxembourg awarded it the Croix de Guerre, and the 112th Infantry Regiment received a Presidential Unit Citation, but that was the extent of the official recognition. But perhaps that was all that was needed, for the men of the "Bloody Bucket" know what they did, what it cost, and how important it was. ■

Nathan Prefer is the author of numerous books and articles on World War II. He received his Ph.D. in military history from the City University of New York and is a former Marine Corps reservist. Dr. Prefer is now retired and resides in Fort Myers, Florida.

Camp Letters

Continued from page 61

window and saw the Americans approaching. His last letter home is dated May 3, 1945. For the first time in three and a half years, he could write in Polish and say what he chose.

Dachau, May 3, 1945
Beloved mother,
Finally the bell of freedom tolls for me. After sufferings that cannot be described on April 29 at 5 o'clock we were liberated by the US Army. Our joy cannot be put into words.

We marched by foot from Buchenwald to Flossenbürg near Weiden (Bayerische Ostmark) from April 10 to April 15. From there after 5 days we kept walking further, under the guns of bandits dressed as SS, till we reached Dachau. It was truly a march of death; thousands died. The rest of us got to Dachau, where after a couple of days of uncertainty the freedom had come.

I am extremely exhausted and ill, but happy. My feet are completely swollen but the life, which is coming back to normal in the camp, gives the hope for a happy ending. At this point I am writing to you only that, to my surprise, I am alive and I am waiting to see what happens next (what fate has reserved for me.)

We will be staying here for the next 3-4 weeks, after that we will go either home or to France. Thus don't worry about me, beloved mother, we should see each other soon. [You] May have already heard from the radio about Dachau and its liberation. There are thousands of us here, and the food is getting better and better. I am feeling terrible, exhausted, my stomach is sick with diarrhea from dirty water, but day after day I am doing better. I am so happy that is over, if Doctor K or Genia could help through the Red Cross to pull me out of here earlier, I would be very grateful, maybe through someone from France or America.

Look up and down and ask people about this. Big hug, dearest mother.

Your son, Henry

The letters written by Henry express his hopefulness for a day of liberation, which, in fact, did come. They offer a glimpse of life as a political prisoner of the Nazis. Meanwhile, it is remarkable in itself that Henry survived. So many perished at the hands of their brutal captors during the Nazi era. ■

Katrina Shawver is a legal assistant and blogger in Phoenix Arizona. She has visited both Auschwitz and Buchenwald.

Continued from page 23

pointing conclusions shortly thereafter.

This troubled Joe Richard until he "remembered that the [key register] changed about every four weeks." He concluded that "Arlington Hall must have mixed up two or three months' traffic." Richard mentioned this to Sinkov, and the tests were run again with messages carefully organized by date.

The rapid sorting made possible by SIS's IBM pre-computers revealed additional patterns hidden within each Water Transport Code message. Analysts in Brisbane and Arlington Hall began to see relationships forming between many of 2468's four-digit code groups, and pushed themselves in a friendly competition to finish the puzzle first.

Armed with reams of newly-processed data, Richard sat down after lunch on April 6, 1943, to organize these nonrandom numbers into s an enciphering square. He labored far into the night to complete this arithmetical problem but couldn't quite make it add up.

"The solution kept slipping away from me," Joe admitted, "as I was sleepy." A supervisor, Captain (later promoted to Lt. colonel) Larry Clark, then stopped by to check on progress and helped talk Richard through his mental block. Together, the two cryptanalysts located the last pieces of information needed to finish their enciphering square. This time it worked perfectly.

Richard's square provided a purely mathematical means of stripping off the key register, that additive number set used by enemy radiomen to disguise their four-digit codes for places, ships, time, and cargo description. Traffic analysis had already filled in some of the blanks; with its key register defeated, the Japanese Army Water Transportation Codebook now became a secret weapon in Allied hands.

Joe Richard went to bed that night happy his three-month task was finally over. While he slept, Central Bureau sent copies of his encipherment square to the other signals analysis stations whose cooperation made it all possible. "That afternoon," Joe remembered, "we were somewhat deflated to receive a message from Arlington Hall saying that they [also] had the square." Both agencies, 10,000 miles apart, had almost simultaneously arrived at a solution.

The trickle of information that Central Bureau was able to extract from Code 2468 now became a torrent. Before long, the three Japanese linguists on staff were so busy interpreting decrypted message traffic that extra translators had to be borrowed from the Navy's fleet radio unit in Melbourne.

By August 1944, writes historian Edward J. Drea, U.S. Army cryptanalysts had deciphered 75,000 Water Transportation Code messages. Many of these intercepts contained such actionable intelligence as routes, sailing times, and freight lists—data that soon found its way into the hands of Allied naval and air commanders all across the Pacific Theater of Operations. As a result, hundreds of merchantmen and their valuable cargoes were destroyed, further diminishing Japan's ability to hold onto its far-flung empire.

The conquest of Code 2468 did not entitle T/4 Richard to a long rest, though. He immediately began applying his knowledge of IJA's Water Transportation Code to other ciphers, thus aiding the Allies' effort to penetrate their enemy's most secure mainline communications networks. Douglas MacArthur's daring "leapfrog" campaign across the northern coast of New Guinea could never have succeeded without a thorough knowledge of Japanese strength and intentions derived from Central Bureau's analysis of high-level radio intercepts.

These achievements did not go unnoticed. MacArthur's Chief of Staff, Lt. Gen. Richard K. Sutherland, later claimed this ability to read Japan's secret codes "chopped two years off the war in the Pacific."

In the summer of 1944, Joe Richard received both a Legion of Merit and promotion to the rank of Warrant Officer for his work on IJA ciphers. Leaving the military in 1946, he took a civilian position with the Army Security Agency at Arlington Hall, Virginia, before joining the National Security Agency in 1952. Richard's postwar career spanned 27 years, including duty as Assistant Chief of Station in the NSA's Australia office. He retired in 1973.

In recognition of his exceptional contributions to the field of cryptography, Chief Warrant Officer Joseph E. Richard was inducted into the U.S. Army Military Intelligence Hall of Fame in 1993. He died April 8, 2005, and is buried at Arlington National Cemetery.

The inspiration for this article came from a visit to the US Army Military Intelligence Museum in Fort Huachuca, Arizona, during January of 2020. There on display was a small but important exhibition of T/4 Joe Richard's cryptological victory over the Japanese Army Water Transportation Code in 1942-43. ■

Patrick J. Chaisson is a retired military officer from Scotia, New York. He gratefully acknowledges the assistance of Mrs. Lori S. Stewart, US Army Military Intelligence Corps Historian, in the preparation of this article.

Bruneval

Continued from page 45

detachment had encountered Germans at a guard house. These had fired the flares that had worried Major Frost, and they had opened fire on the British with machine guns. Using rifles and Bren guns, the British replied but were pinned down. Lieutenant Naumoff and his group got down to the beach unobserved, but when the party pushing the trolley appeared on the cliff edge, the Germans on the beach fired at them with machine guns, seriously wounded Company Sergeant Major Strachan.

Captain Ross pulled him to safety and treated his many wounds. Then Major Frost received a message from Lieutenant Timothy that the Germans were pressing him and that they had recaptured the chateau. Major Frost gathered every man he could, including the engineers, signalers, and some of Lieutenant Timothy's men and attacked the guard house. "Fortunately," he later wrote, "the threat did not amount to much. The enemy was confused and did not know what he was up against. They hesitated and withdrew."

Even as the attack materialized, a sudden shout behind the Germans gave notice that Lieutenant Charteris and his lost group had arrived! The Germans abandoned their machine gun and withdrew. Leaving Lieutenant Timothy to man the rear guard, Major Frost went down to the beach.

Lieutenant Charteris and his group had been dropped well south of their landing zone. Undaunted, they gathered their containers and began a difficult trek to reach Bruneval. At one point they marched through the town of Bruneval among several German soldiers who must have mistaken them for some of their own. One German made the mistake of joining the column, only to be silently killed before he could give a warning. Later they had to fight their way along, confusing both Major Frost who heard the firing and the Germans who did not know who was whom in the dark.

At the beach, the radio sets failed. A portable radio beacon was tried to no avail. Finally, green flares were fired. Lieutenant Timothy reported German vehicles approaching. Major Frost ordered his platoon commanders to prepare a last-ditch defense of the beach in case they were not evacuated. Offshore, the landing craft had been delayed by weather and the approach of German destroyers, which apparently never saw them in the darkness. They had approached the beach, ironically, after seeing the white flares fired by the Germans on the beach, and only then saw Captain Ross's green flares.

As the boats approached, they opened fire on the paratroopers! Enraged, Major Frost and Captain Ross raced out into the water, shouting, cursing, and waving their arms for the fire to stop. When it did the raiders began to board the landing craft. The German radar was loaded aboard. Two men had been killed, and six others were missing. Two of the missing later contacted Major Frost aboard an MTB, but it was too late. They would have to evade through Spain or Switzerland.

Later German reports revealed just how fortunate Major Frost and his men had been. According to these, the German 685th Infantry Regiment was quartered in the area and several platoons of this unit were on exercises that night. Those platoons had been dispatched to attack the raiders as soon as they landed. It was some of these troops that pressed Lieutenant Timothy's men. Their attack was credited by the Germans with capturing two raiders on the beach and another raider who was wounded in the fighting.

The German report concluded, "The operation of the British commandos was well planned and was executed with great daring. During the operation the British displayed exemplary discipline when under fire. Although attacked by German soldiers they concentrated entirely on their primary task. For a full thirty minutes one group did not fire a shot then suddenly at the sound of a whistle they went into action." The report listed five killed, two wounded and five German military personnel missing. Four British troopers were captured.

Even before the party reached Britain, Mr. Priest had inspected the captured set and pronounced it in perfect condition. It was also found to be behind British radar development, much to the scientists' relief. Company C, 2nd Parachute Battalion, went back to its training cycle. Major Frost would go on to lead the battalion at the battle of Arnhem, where they would win deserved fame at the "Bridge Too Far." The mysterious Private Newman, most likely a German national that fled Nazi-Germany and a member of Number 10 (Interallied) Commando, disappeared. Flight Sergeant Cox returned to his family, and then to his earlier duties as a radar mechanic.The raid at Bruneval, one of the most successful British raids of the war, was soon overtaken by more spectacular events. ■

Nathan Prefer is the author of numerous books and articles on World War II. He received his Ph.D. in military history from the City University of New York and is a former Marine Corps reservist. Dr. Prefer is now retired and resides in Fort Myers, Florida.

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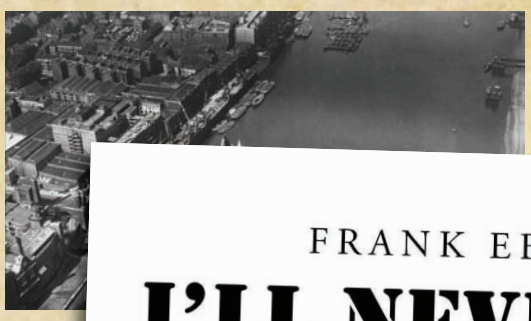

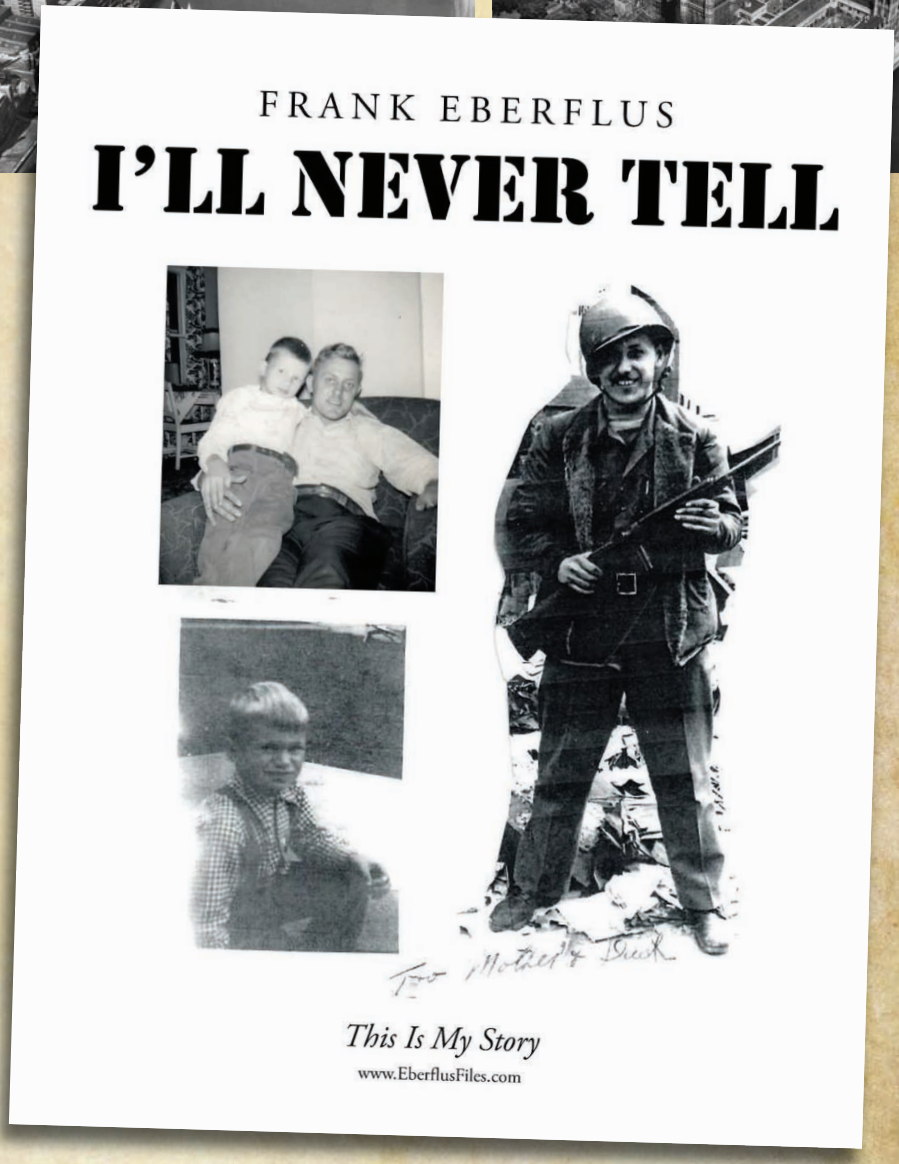

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In 1941, Frank Eberflus enlisted in the United States Army. After his training and serving with the Strategic SV Unit in the United States, he was assigned as a field photographer for the Office of Strategic Services (O.S.S.)-European Theater of Operations.

Frank rarely spoke about his time in the service. Only on occasions would he talk about being strapped to the wing of a plane while taking photographs. After Frank's passing in May of 1982, his son, Frank. J. Eberflus, inherited the trunk where these amazing photographs had been stored for over sixty years. The photographs taken were classified until recently and now are able to be shared with the public.

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