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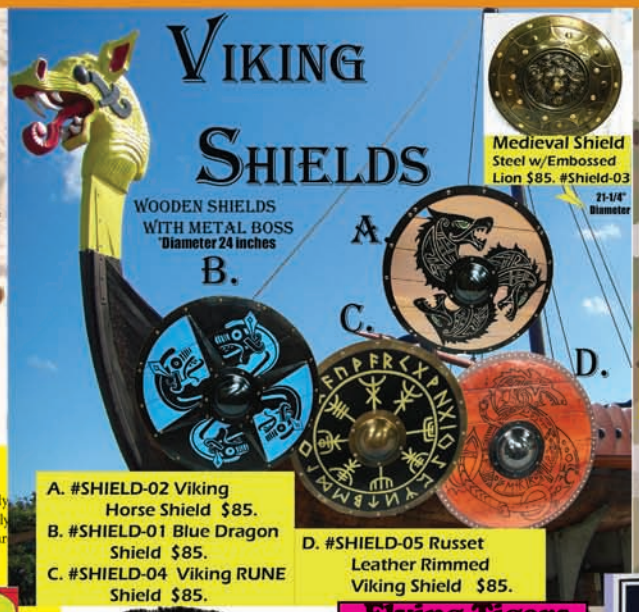

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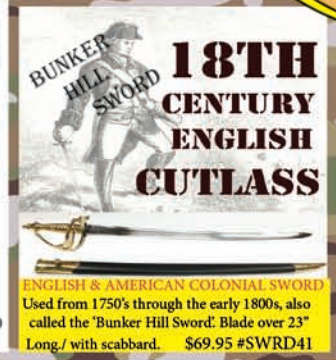

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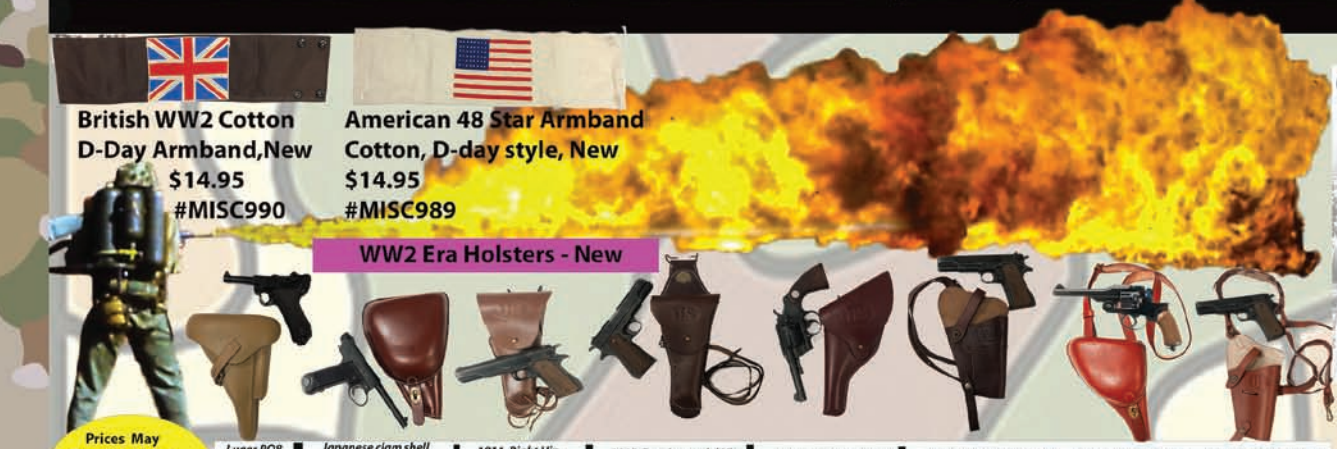

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Spring 2023

FEATURES

Cover: A Confederate drummer awaits the order to "fall in" for the coming battle in this painting by historical artist Don Troiani. See story page 54. Painting © 2023 Don Troiani; www.dontroiani.com

COLUMNS

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EDITORIAL

Jedediah Hotchkiss' map of the Shenandoah Valley gave Jackson the edge in the 1862 Valley Campaign.

AFTER HIS EXPLORATORY EXPEDITION TO THE SHENANDOAH Valley in 1716, Virginia Governor Alexander Spotswood encouraged Germans and Dutch farmers residing in eastern Pennsylvania to settle the region when he found Virginians in the Tidewater and Piedmont regions of his state initially reluctant to settle beyond the Blue Ridge Mountains.

Quakers from Pennsylvania settled in what became Winchester, and German and Dutch homesteaders founded New Mecklenburg and Staufferstadt, which were later renamed Shepherdstown and Strasburg, respectively. This in turn triggered the movement of Scotch-Irish settlers into the southern end of the Valley to found Harrisonburg, Staunton, and other towns. By the time of the Civil War the Valley boasted hundreds of farms and more than a dozen thriving market towns.

Understanding the region's topography was essential to the success of both Confederate and Union armies during the Civil War. The Shenandoah Valley is a 150-mile-long corridor that ranges in width from 20 to 35 miles. The Valley is enclosed on the west side by the towering Alleghany Mountains and on the east side by the Blue Ridge Mountains. Nine wind gaps afforded access to the Valley from Virginia's Piedmont Region.

Four miles east of Strasburg is the northern end of the 2,900-foot-high Massanutten Mountain that runs through the middle of the Valley and separates the north and south forks of the Shenandoah River. Because the Shenandoah River flows north, local residents called the northern half of the Shenandoah Valley the "Lower Valley," because it was downstream, and the southern half the "Upper Valley" because it was upstream.

Valley farmers grew wheat, corn, rye, barley, oats, and potatoes and raised livestock in the deep, fertile soil. Since the region produced nearly 20 percent of Antebellum Virginia's annual wheat crop, it became known as the "Breadbasket of the Confederacy."

The Virginia General Assembly chartered the Valley Pike, a 93-mile macadamized road of pulverized limestone, in 1834 that ran from Winchester to Staunton. It enabled Confederate forces operating in the Valley to rapidly move supply wagons and gun carriages up and down the Valley. By the time of the Civil War, the Valley had several railroads, but they were not connected with each other.

Having received his second star in October 1861 for his role in the Confederate victory at First Manassas, Maj. Gen. Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson returned to the Shenandoah Valley and established his headquarters in Winchester at the home of Lt. Col. Lewis Moore of the 4th Virginia the following month. As commander of the Valley District, he initially had just 4,540 troops and 20 artillery pieces. Intelligence reports indicated that 40,000 Federals stood prepared to invade the Lower Valley.

When his friend Alexander Boteler of Shepherdstown, a member of the Confederate Provisional Congress, paid him a visit in November, Jackson implored him to advise Confederate authorities in Richmond that it was imperative that the general receive reinforcements to defend the strategically important region. "If the Valley is lost, Virginia is lost," Jackson told him.

In addition to needing more troops, Jackson wanted a better understanding of the topography of the Shenandoah Valley and its road network. He tasked school teacher Jedediah Hotchkiss of Augusta County, a self-taught cartographer, to draw a detailed map of the Shenandoah Valley for use in the anticipated campaign against the Federals.

"I want you to make me a map of the Valley from Harpers Ferry to Lexington, showing all of the points of offense and defense between these points," Jackson said. The maps served him well in spring 1862 and enabled Jackson to march with great speed and stealth against the Union forces arrayed against him.

—William E. Welsh

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Tank driver Dwight Johnson awarded the Medal of Honor for defending his platoon during an ambush at Dak To in Vietnam.

By William E. Welsh

The U.S. military had 409,000 soldiers and Marines in South Vietnam organized into approximately 100 infantry and mechanized battalions at the start of 1968. North Vietnamese forces had infiltrated into the country through various points along the Ho Chi Minh Trail since 1965, one of which was the Central Highlands comprising Kontum, Pleiku, and Darlac provinces.

The Central Highlands were "are a run of erratic mountain ranges, gnarled valleys, jungled ravines and abrupt plains where Montagnard villages cluster, thin and disappear as the terrain steepens," wrote war correspondent Michael Herr, who had visited the region during the height of the conflict. They were "spooky beyond belief," Herr said.

General William Westmoreland, the top commander of U.S. forces in South Vietnam, had sought throughout 1967 to carry the war to opposing communist forces by striking North Vietnamese base camps and troop concentrations along the Cambodian and Laotian borders. A running battle had occurred in November 1967 as the U.S. 4th Infantry Division and the elite 173rd Airborne Brigade had battled two regiments of the enemy's corps-level B-3 Front at Dak To in Kontum Province. Although the North Vietnamese forces had been badly bloodied, they reorganized and replaced their losses inside Laos and continued to operate around Dak To.

Both: National Archives

ABOVE: Medal of Honor winner Specialist 5 Dwight Johnson of Detroit, Michigan was the driver of an M48A3 tank in Company B, 1st Battalion of the 69th Armor Brigade of the 4th Infantry Division. TOP: A M48A3 tank belonging to the 1st Battalion, 69th Armored, 25th Infantry Division moves through a destroyed Viet Cong camp which was located South of Pleiku, RVN. Other members of the unit grab a ride on the back of the tank.

Sail Aboard the Liberty Ship
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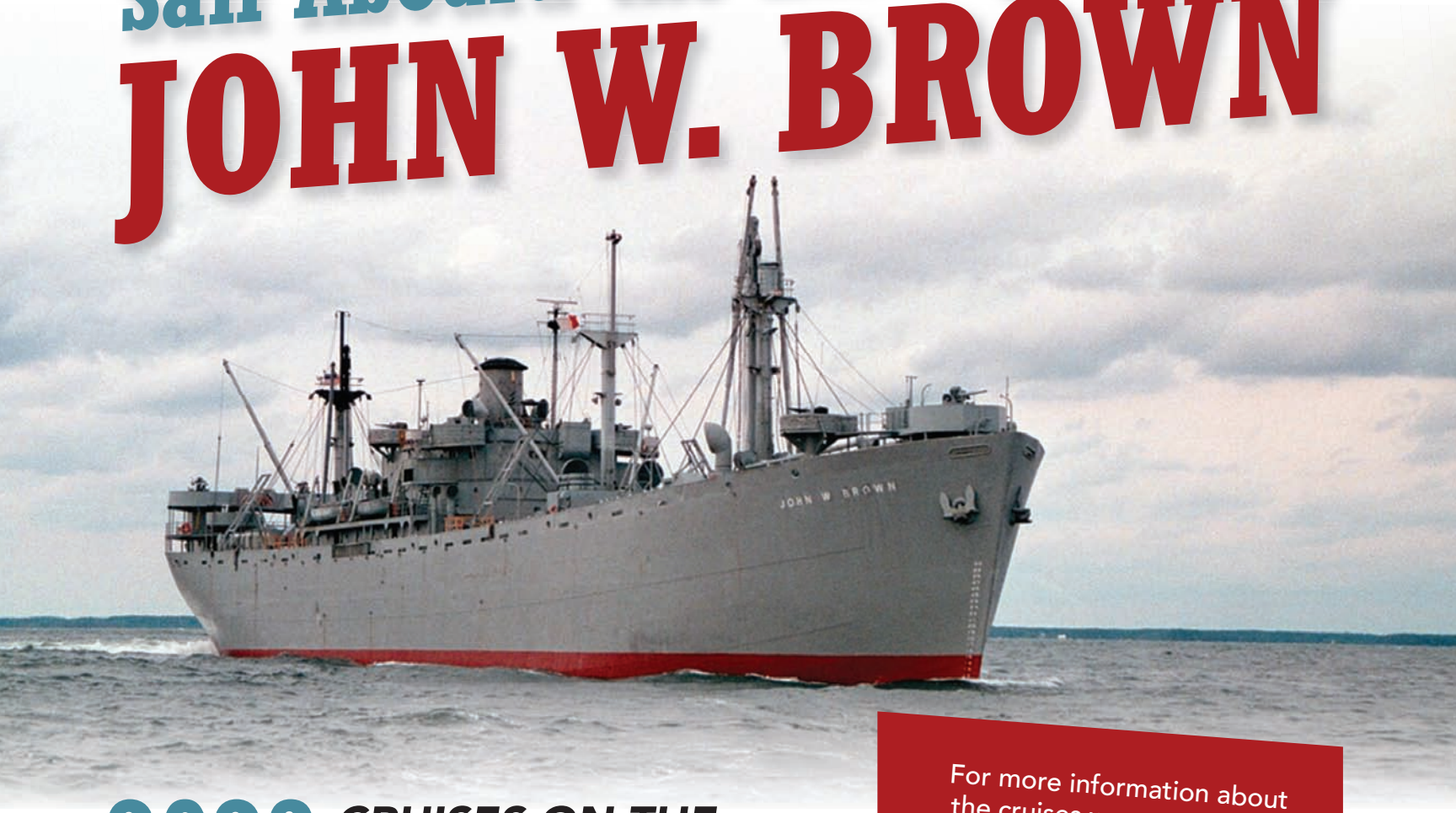

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National Archives

For what the U.S. Army called a "magnificent display of courage" while killing a dozen Vietnamese soldiers during a January, 1968, ambush in the Central Highlands of Vietnam, Johnson was recommended for, and received, the Congressional Medal of Honor the same year. He was the City of Detroit's only Vietnam War Medal of Honor winner and the first African American soldier from Michigan to recieve the nation's highest military honor.

Specialist 5 Dwight Johnson of Detroit, Michigan, was one of the many soldiers of the 4th U.S. Infantry Division that continued to defend the critical sector at the beginning of 1968. Johnson, who had been an above average student in high school, an Explorer Scout, and active in his local church, was drafted in July 1966 and underwent basic training at Fort Knox, Kentucky. He arrived in country as the driver of an M48A3 tank in Company B, 1st Battalion of the 69th Armor Brigade of the 4th Infantry Division.

He had remained unscathed throughout his tour of duty in 1967 as the war expanded and Westmoreland continued to build up his forces. On January 14, 1967, he was serving with his unit near Dak To when he received orders to join the crew of a different tank. With just eight days to go before he returned stateside, he thought the reassignment odd. He was given no explanation for it and was reluctant to depart from the crew with which he had longed served. Even so, he complied dutifully with the order.

His tank platoon moved out the following day to reinforce troops that were heavily engaged. The platoon, with just three of its four M48 Patton tanks serving in a so-called reaction force that day, quickly took fire from North Vietnamese forces armed with the deadly rocket-propelled grenades. Well-camouflaged communist troops in the forests along the road wielded the deadly anti-tank rocket propelled grenade launchers. They fired their weapons sending the shaped-charge warheads, which were capable of piercing armor, directly at the tanks.

As the fighting progressed, the other two tanks, including the one with his friends, suffered devastating direct hits from the shoulder-fired grenade launchers during the well-planned enemy ambush. The tank could easily penetrate the side and rear armor of an M48, and even penetrate its thicker frontal armor. Although Johnson's tank did not suffer a direct hit, it threw a track and became immobilized. Johnson, realizing he could do nothing more in his role as a tank driver, climbed out of the tank and engaged the enemy with his .45 caliber automatic pistol.

Having exhausted his pistol ammunition, Johnson braved enemy machine gun and automatic rifle fire to retrieve a submachine gun from his tank with which to continue battling the North Vietnamese troops. He engaged the enemy at extremely close range with the weapon. When he had exhausted his submachine gun ammunition, he used his weapon as a club and killed an enemy soldier with the stock of the gun.

He then made his way through a gauntlet of enemy fire to rescue the only surviving member of his platoon sergeant's burning tank from the vehicle. While still under fire he got the injured crewman out of the turret and to the safety of an armored personnel carrier just before the tank's ammunition exploded.

Johnson then returned to his immobilized tank and assisted in loading the M48's 90mm gun as he and his crew blasted enemy positions in a bid to drive off the ambushing force. As the fighting wore on, he again exposed himself to enemy fire to man the .50-caliber machine gun mounted next to the tank commander's hatch. He continued to spray the enemy forces with the machine gun until the enemy withdrew. He may have single-handedly killed as many as 20 enemy soldiers that day, according to reports of the action. "I don't know how many I killed," he said. "I wasn't thinking, I wasn't counting, I was just shooting."

He received the Medal of Honor "for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty," states the medal citation. During the ambush he showed "a magnificent display of courage," the document states.

Johnson received word from the Pentagon in October 1968 that he was to receive the Medal of Honor. President Lyndon B. Johnson presented the medal to Johnson and four other soldiers in a White House ceremony on November 19. After the war he served for a time as an Army recruiter.

Johnson was acutely aware that if he had not been reassigned to another tank he would have died during the ambush along with his friends, all of whom perished in the tank in which he had been serving. Back home in Detroit, he suffered from post-traumatic stress syndrome for which he received psychiatric treatment from the Veterans Administration.

Johnson was shot and killed while robbing a convenience store on April 29, 1971. Nevertheless, he received full military honors during a funeral at Arlington National Cemetery on May 6 where he was laid to rest. The Veterans Administration, through the Veterans Board of Appeals ruled in 1977 that Johnson was mentally incompetent at the time as a result of his military service. His widow recieved full benefits as if her husband had been killed in combat. Detroit psychiatrist Dr. Bruce Danto, familiar with Johnson's condition, speculated in his written testimony before the board that Johnson's criminal behavior that day "was an effort to get himself killed." ■

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UNIFORM

Soldier in the French Royal Regiment: War of the Spanish Succession (1701-1714)

By William E. Welsh
Artwork by Giuseppe Rava

HAT: Wide-brimmed, three-cornered black felt hat with a white cockade. The tricorns were decorated with faux silver lace.

BAYONET: The socket bayonet replaced the plug bayonet by the beginning of the 18th century, allowing soldiers to fire their muskets while the bayonet was fixed to the barrel. The three-sided blade was angled slightly away from the barrel, making it easier for the soldier to load is musket with the bayonet fixed.

MUSKET: The smoothbore, flintlock musket, called a fusil by the French, was lighter and easier to carry than antiquated matchlock firearms. The fusil loaded in much less time and misfired less frequently. Once loaded the weapon could be slung or stacked. They had an effective range of 50 to 100 yards.

WAIST BELT AND ACCOUTREMENTS: A leather cartridge pouch was affixed to the waist belt, along with a leather "frog" that carried a sword and the bayonet when returned to it's sheath. The infantry carried heavy swords for use in close-quarters fighting, or when the formation was overrun.

UNIFORM: The wool uniform consists of blue breeches and waistcoat with a full, grey-white coat with blue cuffs, called a justacorps. As many as five dozen brass or pewter buttons decorated the justacorps. Dark stockings or gaiters covered the lower legs.

French King Louis XIV first standardized uniforms in 1657 when the king gave the companies of Masion du Roy blue uniforms. The standardization of uniforms not only ensured the soldiers were sufficiently protected from the elements while campaigning, but also improved their appearance and deportment.

Louis XIV placed a strong emphasis on drill. "Many more battles are won by good bearing than by sword blows and musketry," he wrote. "This habit of marching well and of keeping order can be acquired by drill." He stipulated that infantry were to drill in their companies, and also drill in larger units, such as battalions and even brigades. To ensure that the drills occurred, he appointed an inspector general of infantry in 1667.

The French household regiments, known as the Maison du Roy, were numerous and large enough to constitute a small army. A French battalion at full-strength consisted of 800 men grouped into 12 to 16 companies. Opposing battalions deployed in linear fashion and blasted away at each other at close range. ■

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Graham Turner © Osprey Publishing

English mercenary captain John Hawkwood achieved immortality leading the armies of Italian city-states during the turbulent 14th century.

By William E. Welsh

Long columns of heavily armed soldiers streamed southeast along the left bank of the Adige River in the Veneto region of northern Italy on March 11, 1387. Most of the 9,000 English, German, and Italian troops under the command of English Condottiero John Hawkwood tramped on foot, while one-third traveled on horseback. A scorched-earth strategy by the Veronese army, which followed closely on their heels, had compelled Paduan captain-general Hawkwood to make a hasty retreat towards his supply base at Castelbaldo to feed his starving men and horses.

Despite the crisp weather, Hawkwood's men felt a deep sense of exhaustion. Their morale, however, remained high for they had tremendous confidence in their commander. Most of the men-at-arms wielded shortened lances as pikes, but others bore longbows and daggers. Some of the horsemen wore plated armor and carried lances, others got by with just padded jacks and swords. Hawkwood's crack English mercenaries exhibited a marked esprit de corps that made them the envy of the other soldiers.

Within just eight miles of his destination, Hawkwood made a bold decision. Instead of trying to get his entire army across a narrow bridge over the rain-swollen Adige, a near-impossible task given the nearness of a Veronese army that outnumbered his force three to one, he would make a stand near the village of Castagnaro. Having made the decision, he set about arraying his army in a manner that would allow him to successfully repulse his opponent's army.

Hawkwood was the second son of a tanner born on or around 1323 in the Essex village of Sible Hedingham, an old Roman outpost that was situated 60 miles northeast of London. Gilbert Hawkwood, his father, had a thriving tanning business from which he had amassed modest wealth.

This painting by Graham Turner depicts Sir John Hawkwood pulling the Veronese standard bearer Francesco Visconti from his saddle during the 1387 Battle of Castagnaro. Following closely are Hawkwood's own standard bearer and one of his captains, John Coe.

In the early 1340s Hawkwood joined the retinue of William De Bohun, Earl of Northampton, most likely as a longbowman. By that time England had been at war for several years with France. Hawkwood, like many other young men in England at the time, had a keen desire to increase his wealth and standing through military service. English men-at-arms and archers both shared in the plunder accrued while campaigning on French soil.

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Indirect evidence suggests that Hawkwood fought under Northampton at Morlaix in 1342 and Crecy in 1346, and later fought in the retinue of John De Vere, Earl of Oxford, at the Battle of Poitiers in 1356, in which Edward of Woodstock, the Black Prince, won a decisive victory over the French. Sources are conflicted as to whether Hawkwood was knighted immediately after Poitiers or later during his service in Italy.

Hawkwood joined the throngs of foreign auxiliaries who fought with either the English or French that drifted into the lawless region of southwestern France following the Treaty of Bretigny signed in 1360 that ushered in a nine-year truce in the Hundred Years' War. The French called the roving auxiliaries routiers. They banded together in so-called free companies for hire by regional lords.

As many as 100 companies of these armed brigands plundered towns and villages throughout France following the truce. Hawkwood joined German Albert Sterz's Great Company, a veritable army comprising many different free companies. They were "warriors from various lands who assailed other men with no right and no reason other than their own passions, iniquity, malice and hope of gain," wrote French chronicler Jean de Venette.

In a quest for plunder, the Great Company gravitated towards the papal enclave at Avignon on the Rhone River where the pope had resided since 1305. In a bid to rid France of the routiers, Pope Innocent VI subsequently arranged for the majority of the free companies to relocate to either Spain or Italy where they might find employment as mercenaries.

The pope, in concert with the Genoese, paid the Great Company to assist John II Palaeologus, the Marquis of Montferrat, in his war against the powerful Visconti Dynasty that ruled the Lordship of Milan. Hawkwood was one of 17 corporals commanding contingents that averaged between 150 and 200 mounted men-at-arms and archers that made up the Great Company. Mercenaries were keen to fight in northern Italy because the Italian city-states had grown extremely wealthy as

In command of the forces of Pisa, English mercenary Sir John Hawkwood was outnumbered three to one and defeated by the Flourentines in the Battle of Cascina on July 28, 1364. The heat greatly hampered his armored knights, mostly Englishmen and Germans not used to such weather. This oil painting "Capture of Cascina" (Giorgio Vasari, 1565) shows another battle between these perennial rivals on June 26, 1499. The Florentine general Paolo Vitelli, represented on horseback in the foreground, captured the city in 26 hours due mostly to the strength of the Flourentine cannons.

a result of commerce and trade.

Not long after entering Italy, the name White Company replaced Great Company. Although legend has it that the name was inspired by the highly polished, gleaming plate armor worn by its knights, it is more likely that its name came from the white surcoats that the English in particular wore over their armor.

The English and German marauders were willing to do whatever it took to receive a handsome sum of gold coins, observed Florentine chronicler Filippo Villani. "They were young, hot, and eager," he wrote, "and accustomed to homicides and robbery, current in the use of iron, having little personal cares." When they finally reached the outskirts of Milan in April 1363, the mercenaries of the White Company amassed 100,000 gold florins through plunder, extortion, and ransoms.

Over the course of the next 33 years Hawkwood would serve at different times as the commander of Pisan, Papal, Florentine, and Milanese armies. In each contract he inserted a provision stating that he would neither fight against other Englishmen nor take actions against the interests of the King of England.

Pisa and Florence went to war with each other in 1362. Florence, although landlocked, was the larger and more powerful of the two republics, and it sought to conquer Pisa in order to possess its ports on the Tyrrhenian Sea. Although Sterz was still the senior commander of the White Company, Hawkwood played a key role in the development and execution of the company's strategy on campaign. After burning and plundering its way through the Florentine countryside in summer 1363, the White Company won a decisive battle that autumn against the Florentine army at Incisa in Val d'Arno.

The members of the White Company elected Hawkwood that winter to serve as their commander, a move heartily approved by the Pisans. Hawkwood vowed to carry the war to the very gates of Florence. Although most medieval towns were too well defended to carry by storm, Hawkwood intended to burn crops, demolish the suburbs, and probe the city's defenses. He marched against Florence with a mounted force of 6,500 troops, as well as several companies of sappers.

Hawkwood's force moved through the outskirts of the city parallel to its walls burning its suburbs and launching periodic assaults on the city's defenses. The Florentines tried to bribe the English captain to stop the destruction, but he declined the money. Several of his lieutenants, however, accepted bribes and departed with their men. The desertions hollowed out the Pisan army and Hawkwood had no choice but to withdraw to the suburbs of Pisa.

Afterwards, Florentine Condottiero Galeotto Malatesta invaded Pisan territory with a large army. He established a fortified encampment at Cascina on the eastern outskirts of Pisa. Outnumbered by more than three to one, Hawkwood believed his only chance for victory was a surprise attack on the Florentine camp.

With an advance guard composed of his crack mercenaries, Hawkwood stormed the Florentine encampment on July 28, 1364. His dismounted men-at-arms fought their way through the camp's outer defenses, but were hurled back by waves of Florentine reinforcements. Hawkwood broke off the fight and holed up with his English mercenaries in the fortified Abbey of San Savino. The Florentines proceeded to slaughter the Pisan levies before they could reach the safety of Pisa's walls. The war concluded with Florence acquiring some additional territory, but the Florentine Republic would not succeed in conquering Pisa for another half century.

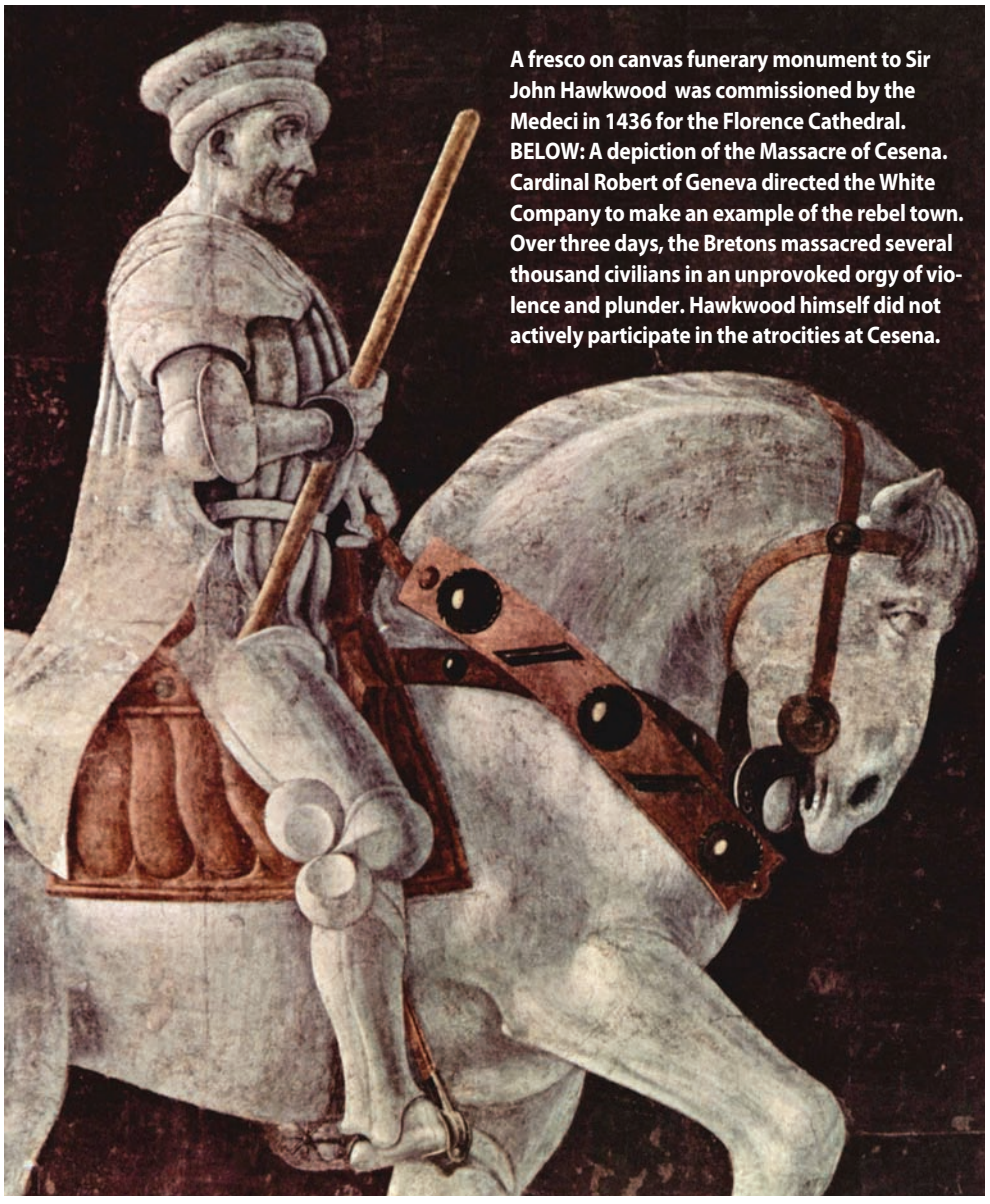
Pope Urban V, who preached a crusade against Lord Bernabo Visconti of Milan and who tried to return the Papacy from Avignon to Rome, became a target of Hawkwood when the English captain agreed to lead the Milanese army in 1368. Yet the pope's German mercenaries inflicted a sharp defeat on the White Company at Arezzo in which Hawkwood was captured. After he was freed for a sizeable ransom, Hawkwood led a column of 2,500 mounted men that harassed the pope by forcing him to repeatedly change his location.

The War of the Eight Saints, which pitted Pope Gregory XI against a coalition comprising the lordships of Milan, Florence, and Sienna, erupted in 1375. Gregory lured Hawkwood away from the Milanese. Hawkwood, though, refused to conduct offensive operations against either Milan or Florence. He had a close relationship with Bernabo Visconti in which he married his illegitimate daughter, and he accepted a bribe from the Florentines not to plunder their lands.

At the start of the conflict, Florentine agents incited rebellion in a number of key towns throughout the Papal States. Hawkwood was one of a number of mercenaries whose troops took an active role in suppressing these revolts.

Infuriated by the Florentines' success in this regard, Gregory ordered his right-hand man, Cardinal Robert of Geneva, to make an example of one of the rebel towns. Robert directed a company of Breton mercenaries, as well as the White Company, to make an example of Cesena, which was situated 55 miles southeast of Bologna.

Over the course of a three-day period beginning on February 3, 1377, the Bretons massacred several thousand civilians in an unprovoked orgy of violence and plunder. Hawkwood did not actively participate in the atrocities at Cesena, although many of his soldiers did join in the



A fresco on canvas funerary monument to Sir John Hawkwood was commissioned by the Medeci in 1436 for the Florence Cathedral. BELOW: A depiction of the Massacre of Cesena. Cardinal Robert of Geneva directed the White Company to make an example of the rebel town. Over three days, the Bretons massacred several thousand civilians in an unprovoked orgy of violence and plunder. Hawkwood himself did not actively participate in the atrocities at Cesena.

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slaughter. The following year the two sides signed a treaty in which the Florentines paid a substantial indemnity to the Papacy, and the Papacy lifted an interdict that had been placed on Florence.

Hawkwood's greatest battlefield victory came in the service of the Commune of Padua nearly a decade later. Francesco Carrara, Lord of Padua, hired Hawkwood in 1386 to lead his army against a much larger Veronese army financed by the Doge of Venice.

With Condottiero Giovanni Ordelaffi's much larger army in close pursuit, Hawkwood made a stand at Castagnaro on his retreat back to Paduan territory in March 1387. Hawkwood positioned his men-at-arms and longbowmen in the front ranks behind an irrigation ditch on the left bank of the Adige River.The English archers showered the enemy with their arrows.

The sustained missile fire goaded the Veronese into attacking prematurely, and in their haste the Veronese failed to bring their large complement of artillery to bear against the Paduans. As the battle developed, Ordelaffi found he could neither break the Paduan center nor turn its flanks.

Hawkwood previously had detailed a detachment to fill in dirt over the irrigation ditch near the river for a flanking maneuver. He sent a body of archers backed by most of his 2,400 horsemen across the dirt causeway to assail the enemy's left flank. Caught by surprise, Ordelaffi was unable to get the troops of his left wing to change front in time to check the assault. The Paduan horse charged the flank and rear of Ordelaffi's vanguard throwing it into confusion. As the Veronese front ranks crumbled under the assault, the Paduans in the center counterattacked.

At the cost of fewer than 500 casualties, Hawkwood's army killed or wounded 1,500 Veronese and captured an additional 5,000 troops. Ordelaffi was among those marched into captivity. The victory cemented Hawkwood's status as one of the great condottiero of the Late Middle Ages.

After his great victory at Castagnaro, Hawkwood left Paduan service to serve the Florentine Republic. But he could not make any headway against a superior Milanese army.

During the second half of his military career in Italy, Hawkwood also tried his hand at diplomacy by negotiating trade agreements for King Richard II of England with the Italian city-states.

Hawkwood died on March 17, 1394. During his long career in Italy, he had amassed considerable wealth and had purchased estates in both northern and central Italy. Richard II requested that the body of what he termed the "most magnificent captain" should be returned to England, but it is unknown whether his bones rest in his first home in England or his second home in Tuscany. ■

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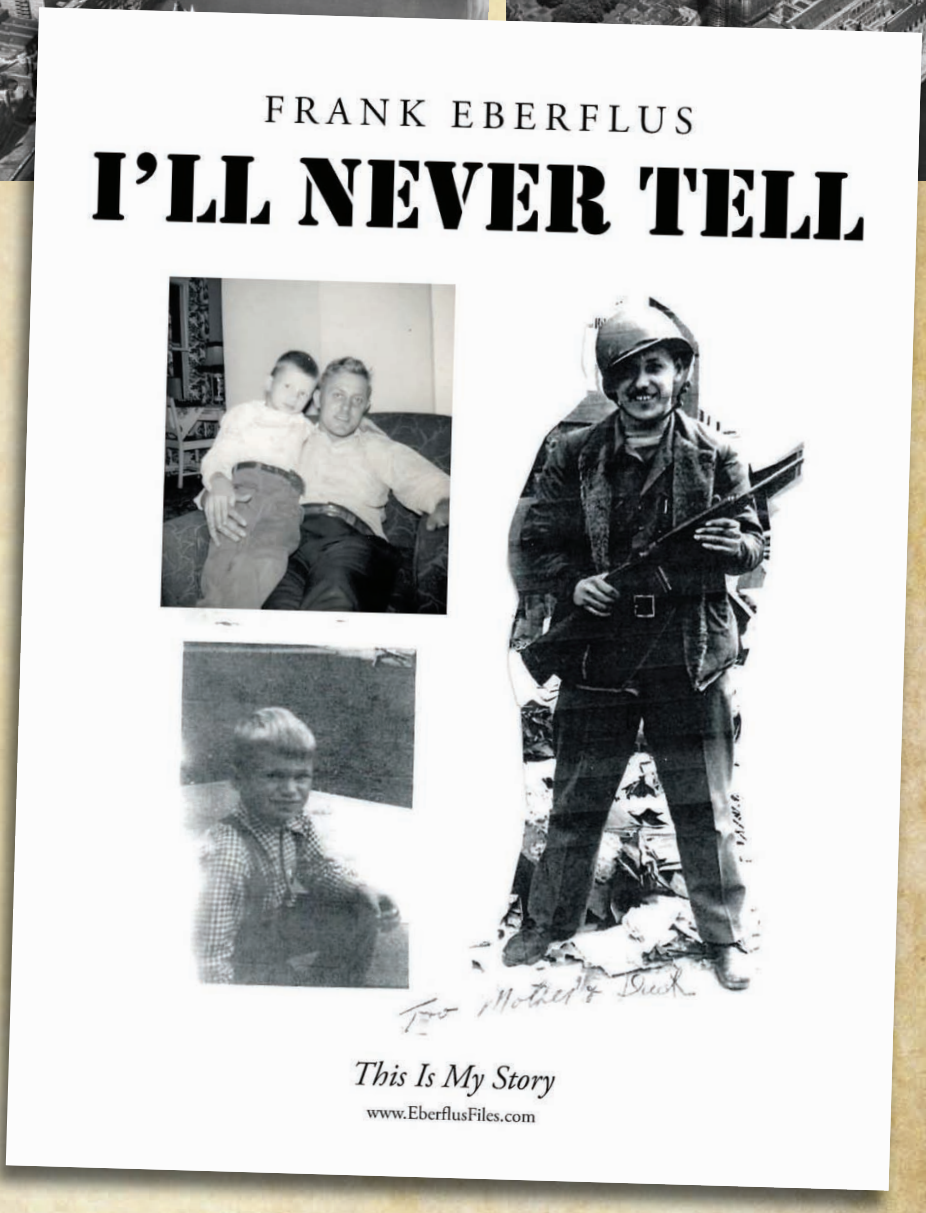

I'LL NEVER TELL

by Frank Eberflus

See World War II through the eyes of one of the United States' most secretive agencies.

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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The Jagdpanzer 38 (Hetzer) met Nazi Germany's need for a furtive, highly lethal tank destroyer in the final months of World War II.

By William E. Welsh

It became glaringly apparent to the German Wehrmacht in 1943 that it needed a solution to the threat of heavily armored British and Russian tanks whose armor proved too thick for German towed anti-tank guns. The Wehrmacht needed lethal self-propelled tank destroyers. As an interim solution while more sophisticated designs were contemplated, the German war machine fielded open-turreted panzerjagers equipped with powerful guns on obsolete and captured tank chasis. The first generation of these panzerjagers consisted of the Jagdpanzer I and the Marder series.

The Germans hurriedly rushed these interim designs into production. The resulting tank destroyers were ungainly and top-heavy, and their high silhouette enabled enemy tanks and artillery to easily target them in combat. On some occasions, enemy guns knocked them out before they could get into action. If an enemy shell exploded near one of these, its shrapnel could penetrate their thin armor.

Other efforts proved more successful. For example, improvements made in 1942 to the Sturmgeschutz III assault gun, which was designed to support infantry, enabled it to function well as a tank destroyer. The Ausf. F StugIII boasted the L43 75mm gun while the Ausf. F/8 and Ausf. G. boasted the longer L48 75mm gun. The StugIII fired armor-piercing shells capable of penetrating any Russian tank at the time. What is more, their low superstructure made it a difficult target for enemy armor and artillery.

Generaloberst Heinz Guderian, one of the pioneers of the blitzkrieg tactics the Germans used so effectively in France, Russia, and other theaters, strongly advocated the use of tank destroyers to offset the Allies' enormous number of tanks. Guderian had been dismissed from his post as commander of the Second Panzer Army on December 25, 1942, on the grounds that he failed to hold his forward position at Tula 110 miles south of Moscow during Operation Typhoon. After his dismissal, he searched for a new job in the Wehrmacht.

A Jagdpanzer 38(t) tank destroyer in Hungary, circa 1944. Nicknamed "Hetzer," baiter or agitator, this compact , powerful weapon was Hitler's response to British and Russian tanks that were too heavily armored for towed German anti-tank guns.

By late 1942 Germany's Heeres Waffenamt, or Army Ordnance Department, had become so dysfunctional when it came to producing the third generation of German tanks and purpose-driven tank destroyers that new leadership was required to reverse its downward spiral. Guderian was just the man for the job.

Hitler appointed Generaloberst Heinz Guderian on March 1, 1943, to the newly established position of Inspector General of the Panzer

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A restored Jagdpanzer 38 (t) Hetzer in the collection of the Collings Foundation at the American Heritage Museum in Hudson, Massachussetts, during the annual "Battle for the Airfield" living history reenactment.

Troops. In this capacity Guderian would be responsible for overseeing the training and improvement of German panzer forces. He quickly established a good working relationship with Reich Minister of Armaments and War Production Albert Speer.

Guderian attempted to take control of planning and production of the Wehrmacht's Sturmgeschutz assault guns, but he failed in this effort. This was because the General der Artillerie controlled production of the assault gun designated primarily for infantry support. Guderian cast about for other ways to field purpose-built tank destroyers.

An unforseen development led to Guderian getting the new tank destroyer he so desparately wanted. On November 26, 1943, the Royal Air Force dispatched 450 bombers against Berlin. They dropped 1,400 tons of high-explosive and incendiary bombs inflicting a staggering amount of damage on the industrial suburb of Reinickendorf. The Alkett factory where highly trained workers assembled the Sturmgeschutz suffered considerable damage, thereby ruling out that factory for production of a light tank destroyer similar to the Stug III, but controlled by the Inspector General of Panzer Troops.

The Oberkommando der Wehrmacht decided to switch production to the BMM factory in Prague, Czechoslovakia. When the staff of the high command learned, though, that it did not have the lifting capacity to produce the 24-ton Sturmgeschutz, Hitler and his ministers decided to embark on a plan to produce a light panzerjager. This project became known as the "light panzerjager auf 38(t)."

Guderian won the struggle with the Wehrmacht's General der Artillerie for control of the new fighting vehicle by designating it as a tank destroyer rather than an assault gun. The official name of the vehicle eventually became the Jagdpanzer 38.

The initial concept submitted on December 17, 1943, was for a 13-ton, low-silhouette vehicle mounting a 75mm Pak 39 with a top speed of 35 miles per hour. Although only the front of the vehicle would have substantial armor protection, all four sides would be angled inward to deflect enemy shells. Since all of the components already had been tested and proven on the battlefield, there was no need for a prototype.

The Jagdpanzer 38 used the same engine, suspension, and running gear as that made for the Czech-made Panzer 38(t) light tank. As for the main gun, it was the same as the one used on the Jagdpanzer IV built on the Panzer IV chasis. The Jagdpanzer IV was a turretless tank destroyer that went into production in December 1943. Guderian vehemently opposed the Jagdpanzer IV because it used the Panzer IV chasis needed for continued tank production.

It is not known exactly how the nickname "Hetzer," meaning baiter or agitator, became associated with the JagdPanzer38. An Ulm-based firm had used the name Hetzer for an alternate design it introduced for a light tank destroyer as part of the Third Reich's Entwicklung initiative, which called for a standardized series of tank designs. The nickname made its way to the panzer troops, and they began using it for the Jagdpanzer 38. This is evident from strength reports filed by the Wehrmacht units equipped with the vehicle, which they referred to in their reports as the Hetzer.

Hitler decided to make the production of the Panzer 38(t) panzerjager a top priority for mid-to-late 1944. An inspector with the Heeres Waffenamt signed off on the first three vehicles in early April. Those involved in mapping out the production of the vehicle intended to begin by producing 20 the first month in April 1944 and increase production to 50 in May. The BMM plant would then increase production steadily with a goal of producing 1,000 per month by March 1945. These were extremely ambitious production plans given that the BMM plant had never produced more than 150 armored vehicles in one month. But BMM would not have to do it alone for the German high command issued orders in summer 1944 for the Skoda plant in Pilsen, Czechoslovakia, to begin producing it as well.

In all respects the Jagdpanther 38 was a compact tank destroyer that presented a very small tar-

get to the enemy. In addition to its powerful main gun, it also had a roof-mounted, remote-controlled Rundumfeuer machine gun offered protection against enemy infantry. In addition, there was a port for a submachine gun to the right of the driver's visor.

The commander had a forward-facing SF 14Z scissors periscope, as well as a rear-facing periscope. The driver had twin periscopes, the gunner had a periscopic sight for the main gun, and the loader had a fixed periscope. There also was a periscopic sight for the remote-controlled machine gun.

The vehicle was 20 feet long, 8 feet wide, and 6 feet and 10 inches tall. The 60mm frontal armor sloped 60 degrees, while the lower frontal armor sloped at a 40-degree angle. The side armor, however, only furnished protection against machine gun and small arms fire.

The speed originally intended proved unobtainable. The same held true for the weight, which turned out to be 16 tons. The final version had a maximum speed of 25 miles per hour and an operational range of 110 miles. The Hetzer carried 41 rounds of ammunition for the main gun, one-third of which was armor-piercing shells and the other two-thirds high-explosive shells.

Unlike most German tanks and tank destroyers, the Jagdpanzer 38's main gun was positioned on the right side of the fighting compartment. This meant that the gun could only traverse 11 degrees to the right and five to the left. On the left side of the fighting compartment sat the driver in the front, the gunner in the middle, and the loader/radio operator in the rear. The commander sat at the right rear behind the gun.

The interior layout, which resulted in cramped quarters for the crew, had several significant drawbacks. The driver had difficulty exiting the vehicle in an emergency, the loader had trouble accessing the ammunition racks and loading the gun from their right side, and the crew could not see what was happening to the right of the vehicle when the hatches were closed.

Like other panzerjagers, the Hetzer performed best on the defensive lying in wait on the flanks of advancing enemy armored formations. This typically meant scouting before a battle to find strong protected positions behind terrain or man-made features, including rivers, marshes, and minefields. In defending infantry to which they were attached, they augmented the fire of fixed anti-tank guns.

A bulletin of the German panzer troops published in October 1944 contained glowing accounts of the performance of the Hetzers in battle. Crews praised its effective weapons, well-sloped armor, and low silhouette. These attributes made it "fully adaptable to both its main role in combating enemy tanks and in supporting infantry in both attack and defense," stated one report. Jagdpanzer 38 companies compiled impressive battle statistics at little or no cost in their own strength. "In a short period, one company destroyed 20 tanks without a single loss," stated another report.

Bundesarchiv Bild 146-1995-078-03A; Photo: Unknown

ABOVE: The compact Jagdpanzer, just under 7 feet tall, was most effective firing its armor-piercing and high-explosive shells at the flanks of enemy armored formations from hidden positions. BELOW: Jagdpanzer 38 assembly line in Böhmisch-Mährische Maschinenfabrik AG plant, June 19 1944. Škoda along with B.M.M. assembled about 2,827 Jagdpanzer 38(t).

Yet another report described the advantages the crews of the Jagdpanzer 38 could reap from its low silhouette and off-road maneuverability. "In combat against enemy tanks, the low profile allowed the [Hetzer] to quickly open heavy fire in direct sight of the enemy and also to quickly

Continued on page 90

Savage Struggle *for* Peleliu

Amphibious landing craft carrying U.S. Marines plunged through heavy surf toward the beaches of Peleliu Island, a formerly inconspicuous tropical paradise in the Palau Islands.

Colonel Lewis B. Puller, affectionately known as "Chesty" to the men of the 1st Marine Regiment, was aboard an Amtrac in the first wave of troops that would hit the beach on the morning of September 15, 1944. A highly decorated veteran who had been in the Corps for a quarter century, Puller was renowned as a front-line commander who led by example.

But as his Amtrac struck the beach, even Puller was aghast at what his men faced. A hurricane of enemy machine gun fire rent the air, crashing into the Amtrac and bowling over Marines up and down the landing zone. "I went 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 recalled.

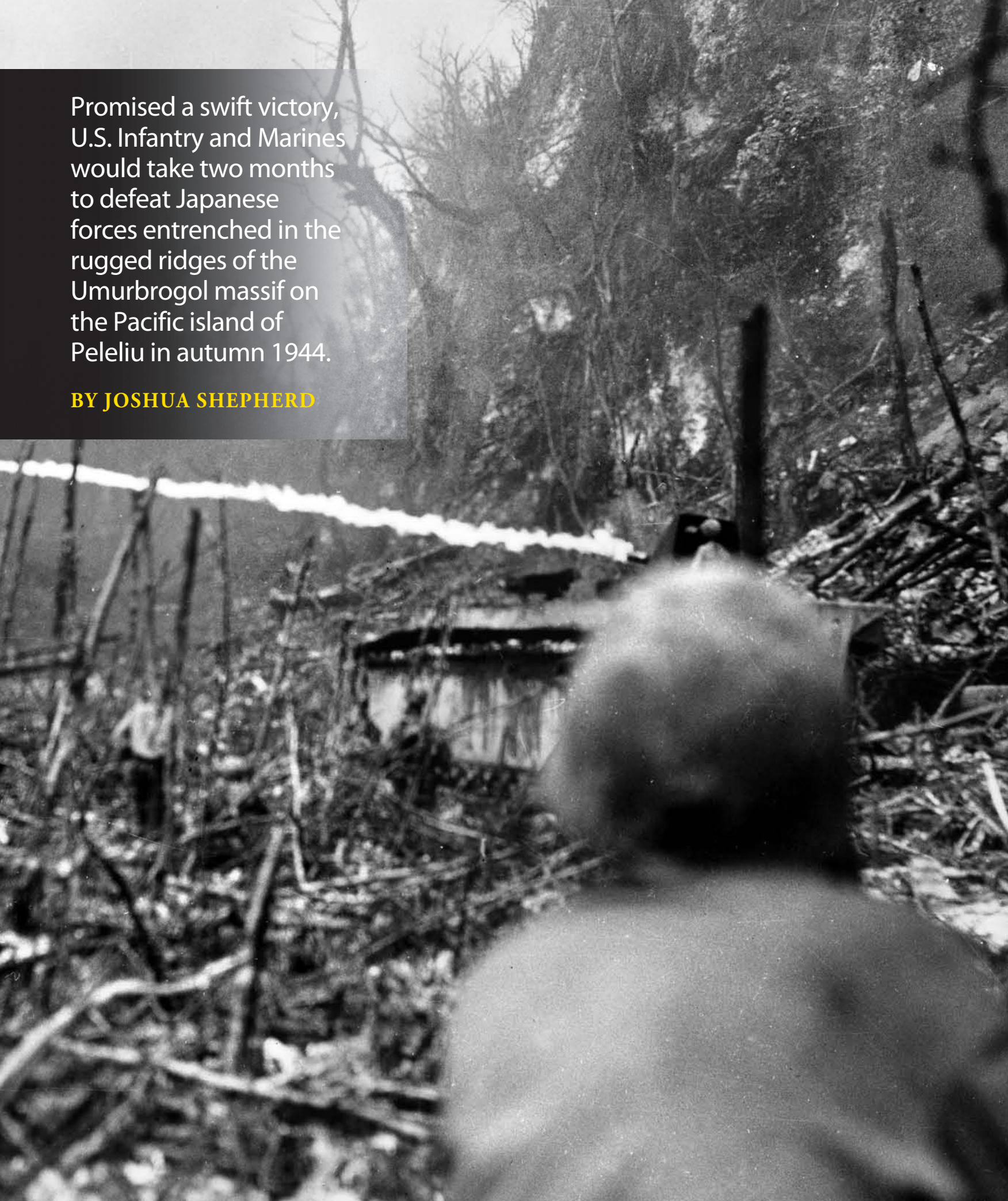
Puller had never seen hotter fire in his life. Glancing over his shoulder, he watched in horror as the Amtrac he had just left was hit by a shell and obliterated in an orange fireball. As his men fell around him, it was apparent to Puller that the Marines had entered what he described as a "whirlwind of machine gun and antitank fire."

The grueling battle that would unfold at Peleliu had ironically been borne of American success. By summer 1944, the tide of the war in the Pacific had clearly turned against the once-vaunted Japanese Empire. On New Britain and New Guinea, Japanese forces were on their heels in the wake of successful Allied campaigns. In February the Americans had largely neutralized the vital Japanese naval base at Truk in the Caroline Islands. During the summer American forces had seized the Mariana Islands, affording the Army an ideal base from which to launch strikes with B-29 Superfortress heavy bombers directly on the Japanese homeland.

The stage had been set for a knockout blow against the Japanese home islands, but the precise route toward that final objective remained in dispute. General Douglas MacArthur, who had been forced to evacuate Corregidor Island in 1942, not surprisingly favored an invasion of the Philippines, followed by the seizure of

Marines watch as a flame-throwing amphibious tractor fires at caves in the mountainous areas used by the Japanese during the fight for the Pacific island of Peleliu. The lowlands and the airport were quickly captured, but the Umurbrogol massif—a series of limestone and choral ridges rising as high as 300 feet took much longer. A moonscape of sinkholes, canyons and cliffs further fortified by Japanese engineers, the "Umurbrogal Pocket," and the island, was finally declared secure 73 days after the Marines had landed.

National Archives



Promised a swift victory, U.S. Infantry and Marines would take two months to defeat Japanese forces entrenched in the rugged ridges of the Umurbrogol massif on the Pacific island of Peleliu in autumn 1944.

BY JOSHUA SHEPHERD

Okinawa. For his part, Admiral Chester Nimitz considered the Philippines as a nonessential target, and advocated for an invasion of Formosa and Okinawa in preparation for a direct attack on Japan. The final decision was made by President Franklin Roosevelt, who approved MacArthur's preferred route.

But as Allied planners plotted the course toward the Philippines, they knew they would have to clear and capture the Japanese-held Palau Islands. Situated to the north of MacArthur's proposed naval route, it was feared that Japanese aircraft operating from the Palau Islands could wreak havoc on American shipping bound for the Philippines.

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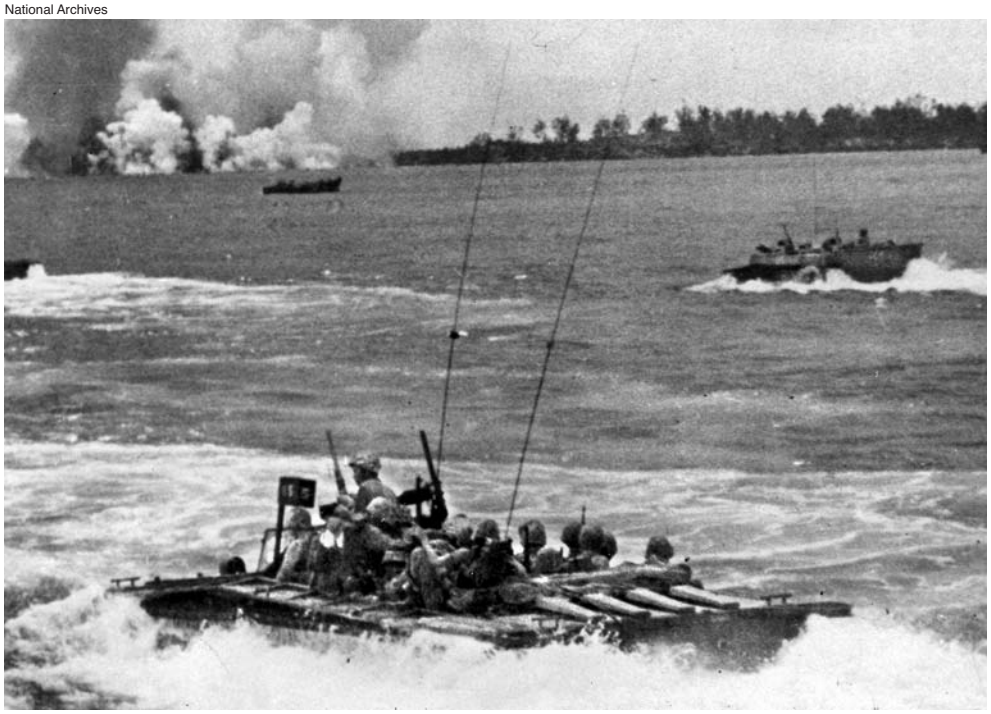

ABOVE: U.S. Marines in "Amtrac" amphibious troop transports came under heavy fire from fortified Japanese positions as they made their way toward the beaches of Peleliu on the morning of September 15, 1944. OPPOSITE: Members of the 1st, 5th and 7th Marine regiments continued to endure withering machine gun, mortar and artillery fire after storming the beach.

Initial plans consequently called for a massive strike to eliminate the Japanese hold on the island chain. The northern islands of Babelthaup, Yap, and Ulithi were to be seized by U.S. Army Maj. Gen. John Hodges' XXIV Corps consisting of the 7th and 96th infantry divisions. The two southern Palau islands of Peleliu and Anguar were assigned to Maj. Gen. Roy Geiger's III Amphibious Corps, which comprised the 1st Marine Division and the Army's 81st Infantry Division. The operation to reduce the islands was slated for mid-September 1944.

From the outset, however, the American top brass disagreed over the necessity of the entire operation. Admiral William "Bull" Halsey, commander of the 3rd Fleet, felt that the islands posed little threat to the advance on the Philippines. Fearful that the infantry would be thrown into a costly fight unnecessarily, Halsey argued that the Palaus should be bypassed entirely.

By the middle of the month, Halsey pushed hard for the entire operation to be scrapped. American aircraft had launched an offensive in a wide arc from the Palaus to the Philippines and had experienced great success in wrecking enemy airfields and aircraft. With American air superiority firmly established in the area, the need for any amphibious assault on the Palaus was increasingly in question.

Nimitz had to make one of the most difficult, and ultimately controversial, decisions of the war in the Pacific. The admiral was persuaded that the entire island chain posed little threat, and accordingly canceled the proposed landings on Babelthaup, Yap, and Ulithi. The troops scheduled to assault the southern Palaus, however, would receive no such reprieve. Anxious to seize the Japanese airfield on Peleliu and neutralize any danger to MacArthur's right flank, Nimitz ordered the landings to proceed.

Aside from their military value, the southern Palaus were isolated and seemingly insignificant. The smaller island of Anguar, situated six miles southwest of Peleliu, was lightly defended. Peleliu, believed to be held by 11,000 Japanese troops, would be a far more difficult assignment for the leathernecks of the 1st Marine Division. The division, which had seen action at Guadalcanal and Cape Gloucester, had a solid core of veterans in its three regiments, which were the 1st, 5th, and 7th Marine Regiments.

The island, which some observers thought resembled an ominously open crab claw, was surrounded by coral reef. The center of the island was dominated by forbiddingly rugged hill country, in particular the peaks and ravines of Umurbrogol Mountain. The southern half of the island was relatively flat terrain, and was occupied by a Japanese airfield. The soil of the entire island was little more than coral and limestone. For the infantrymen who would struggle for the island, digging in would be nearly impossible.

The basic plan for the attack on Peleliu, unpropitiously codenamed Stalemate II, had been honed during repeated amphibious landings across the South Pacific. Subsequent to a massive aerial and naval bombardment intended to soften up enemy positions, the division would hit the beaches in a three-regiment-wide front. To the left, the 1st Marines would come ashore just south of a rocky crag known as "The Point." Storming up the center, and hopefully across the island toward the airfield, would be the 5th Marines. On the south, the 7th Marines would cut across the island, mop up any Japanese cut off during the assault, and secure the division's right flank before wheeling north.

While briefing his senior officers on the coming operation, Maj. Gen. William Rupertus, commander of the 1st Marine Division, was sanguine over the prospects of success. Although he acknowledged that the division would undoubtedly suffer heavy casualties, he assured his officers that the campaign would proceed rapidly. "This is going to be a short one, a quickie, rough but fast," Rupertus said. "We'll be through in three days. It might take only two."

The Japanese commander on Peleliu entertained other ideas. Direct defenses on the island were under the command of Colonel Kunio Nakagawa. The core of Nakagawa's force was the 2nd Infantry Regiment, a crack outfit that had seen extensive service in China. Japanese defenses on the island were impressive. Nakagawa had busied his soldiers for months in constructing a forbidding mix of defensive positions, and the island's interior was studded with a maze of concrete bunkers, pillboxes, and a labyrinth of underground tunnels. Artillery pieces, dug into the island's coral cliffs, were well-concealed and protected by heavy steel blast doors.

Beginning on September 6, Peleliu was attacked from the air by 600 planes launched from the carriers of the American Task Force 38. For three days, the planes bombed supply dumps,

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warehouses, and barracks. With no Japanese planes to oppose them, the American aircraft operated with impunity. On September 10, the American planes were at it again, hitting antiaircraft emplacements and beach defenses for an additional three days.

On September 12 the U.S. Navy opened up with her big guns, unleashing a devastating bombardment intent on softening up Japanese positions. A line of battleships, including the Pennsylvania, *Maryland*, *Tennessee*, *Mississippi*, and *Idaho*, rocked the island with fire from massive 14-inch and 16-inch guns. American cruisers lent their weight to the attack, battering island defenses for two hours in a massive display of firepower.

With its bark-less trees and incinerated vegetation blanketed by black smoke, Peleliu resembled a surreal moonscape after three days of bombardment. But Japanese troops, holed up in tunnels, caves, and pillboxes, had suffered relatively light casualties. Shocked by the bombardment but retaining remarkable cohesion, the island's defenders were itching for a fight.

They would not have long to wait. On the morning of September 15, Marines in Higgins boats began forming up among the big ships of the American fleet, waiting to be ferried to the shallow-draft, tracked Amtracs that would then take them over the reef and across the lagoon to the beaches.

On the left, the 1st Marines under Puller's command would assault White Beaches 1 and 2. In the center, the 5th Marines of Colonel Harold "Bucky" Harris would target Orange Beaches 1 and 2. On the right, Colonel Herman Hanneken's 7th Marines would assault a narrow strip of beach named Orange 3.

As the Amtracs plunged through the surf, an immense naval bombardment continued overhead, seemingly ripping the island apart. Inexperienced Marines who witnessed the heavy cannonade thought that the impressive gunfire would render an infantry assault a cakewalk, but veterans knew better.

From the clouds of black smoke engulfing the island, Japanese gunfire and mortar rounds began striking the lagoon. As the landing craft were slowed down crawling over the reef, pre-registered Japanese guns opened up on the vulnerable Americans.

Enemy mortar and artillery fire soon whipped the lagoon to a froth, knocking out a number of Amtracs before they could reach the sand. For Marines aboard the Amtracs, helplessly exposed to enemy fire, the approach to the island seemed an eternity. Amid a deafening storm of artillery fire and the sharp ping of machine gun fire striking the landing craft, terrified men could do little but steel their nerves for the inevitable and pray. At 8:30 a.m. the first amtracs crawled ashore at Peleliu.

Once they landed, Marines scrambled over the sides of the Amtracs before they drew fire from the island defenders. But the beach was no better than the lagoon as mortars and artillery churned the white sand, leaving it pockmarked with craters and reddened with the blood of stricken Marines. Men entering combat for the first time witnessed surreal horrors they would never forget. Struggling forward through blinding smoke, geysers of sand, and a storm of fire, they could hear little above the roar of artillery and the screams of the wounded.

On the left, the hard-pressed leathernecks of the 1st Marines were bogged down from the outset. Machine guns with interlocking fields of fire rendered the beach a veritable killing zone. As he struggled to get his men moving and make room for successive waves of troops, Puller faced the jagged, coral-encrusted Point that had been heavily fortified by the Japanese. Machine gun and mortar fire from the Point flailed Puller's left flank, halting his forward momentum and leaving his troops dangerously pinned down.

On the right flank, the 7th Marines were being chewed up on Orange Beach 3. The narrow beach, just 550 yards wide, forced Hanneken to

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ABOVE: Marine Corporal Edward E. Brooks of Washington, standing atop a Japanese tank he put out of action, looks at the bodies of Japanese tankmen scattered around near the captured Japanese airfield. TOP LEFT: Lieutenant Colonel "Chesty" Puller, shirtless, discusses the the situation in the rugged and fortified highlands with Admiral Edward Cochrane on Peleliu. BOTTOM LEFT: Maj. Gen. Roy S. Geiger (left), Col. "Bucky Harris (center), and Maj. Gen. William H. Rupertus (right), carefully study a map during operations planning for the Battle of Peleliu.

land just one battalion, reducing his initial landing strength. Terrified Marines lay paralyzed in the sand, easy targets for Japanese mortar crews. Amid the confusion, a lone officer coolly stalked up and down the beach shouting orders. This officer was Major Arthur Parker, Jr., the executive officer of the 3rd Amphibious Tractor Battalion. "Get the hell off this beach, or I'll shoot your ass!" Parker thundered at the Marines.

Struggling forward, the regiment found welcome cover in the form of a six-foot-deep Japanese anti-tank ditch. Marines piled into the ditch, ecstatic that they had found a bit of safety, and officers corralled their disorganized men, regrouping them for a renewed push inland.

The 5th Marines landing on the center beaches had fared only slightly better. Although their flanks were secure, heavy fire poured in from directly in front of them from fortified concrete bunkers. The steady rattle of Japanese machine gun fire had also transformed this pristine white beach into a surreal killing field.

The regiment's officers succeeded in herding their men forward, assaulting Japanese machine gun nests hidden in coconut groves just east of the beaches. It was a harrowing job. Heavily camouflaged Japanese positions were nearly invisible, and Marine riflemen were forced to flush out enemy troops with grenades and small arms. The brief fight in the trees yielded dozens of wounded Marines, but cleared a path for the rest of the regiment. By afternoon, elements of the 5th Marines had pressed inland and taken up strong defensive positions on the west and south sides of the airfield.

The Japanese, however, had no intention of surrendering the airfield without a fight. At 5:15 p.m., Marines watched in amazement as Japanese troops on the far side of the airfield emerged from cover and moved forward in a counterattack aimed at driving the Americans back to the beaches. The airfield constituted the only flat terrain on the island, a fact that the Japanese hoped to capitalize on by utilizing armor. Veterans would later disagree over precise numbers, but out in front of the enemy infantry were about 15 Type 95 Ha-Go light tanks.

As their lines surged forward, Japanese artillery shelled the Marine positions, but to little effect. The 5th Marines were, in fact, dug in and heavily armed. In anticipation of a potential armored attack at the airfield, Harris had ensured that his men were more than ready. The airfield was ringed with bazooka teams, 37mm guns, and multiple machine-gun pits.

The ensuing battle was furious but one-sided. The lightly-armored Japanese tanks sped across the runway, easy targets for American guns. Some of the tanks made it to the American lines, turning wildly in the Marine positions. Most were knocked out by hand grenades or bazookas, while those that escaped were attacked by Sherman tanks that pitched into the fight. The airfield was swept by machine guns, mortars, and naval gunfire that were called up in support. Surviving Japanese infantry, completely exposed without armored support, retreated in confusion.

To the north, Puller's 1st Marines was experiencing far worse luck. Enemy fire from the Point continued to play havoc on the Marines, but rooting out the position's Japanese defenders would be a bloody task. A maze of spider holes, bunkers, and pillboxes, the Point was defended by 500 Japanese. In addition to small arms, mortars, and machine guns, the 30-foot-high hill was defended by a 47mm anti-boat gun and four

rapid-firing 20mm cannons.

The job of reducing the Point was assigned to K Company of the 1st Marine's 3rd Battalion, commanded by Captain George P. Hunt. Hunt attacked with two platoons consisting of 102 men. Rather than attack the hill directly, Hunt swung east of the Point, endeavoring to assault the hill from the rear.

In spite of the maneuver, finding a weak spot in the Japanese defenses proved elusive. Hunt's Marines fought their way up the Point under heavy fire, and paid a heavy price for the ground. Dedicated Japanese troops stubbornly defended every spider hole and pillbox, and blanketed the hillside with machine gun fire. His command steadily dwindling due to mounting casualties, Hunt nonetheless pushed his company uphill, slowly knocking out enemy fighting positions one by one.

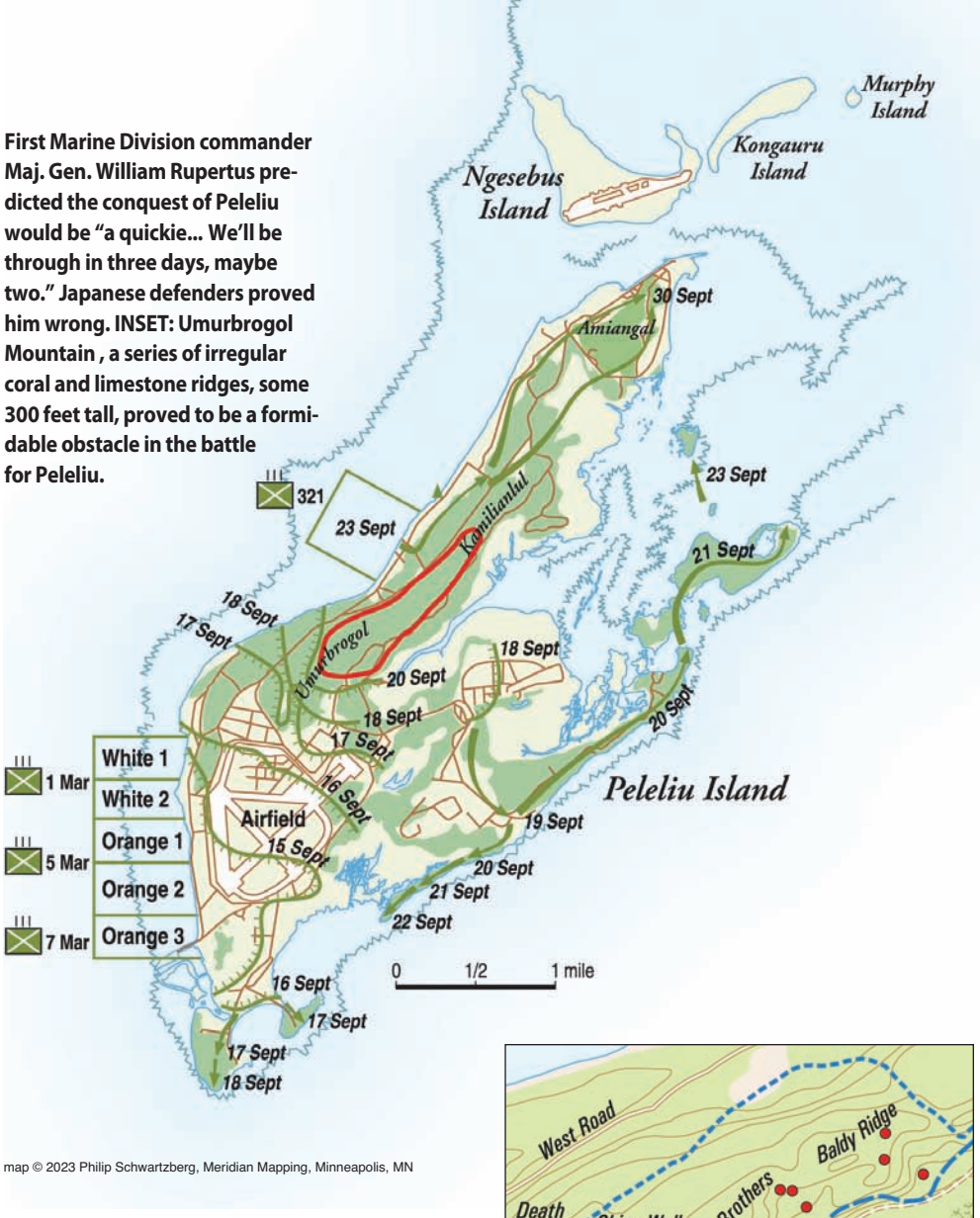
The assault on the pillbox containing the 47mm gun was led by Lieutenant William Willis. While his riflemen kept up a steady covering fire, Willis dashed to the top of the pillbox and tossed a smoke grenade in front of the aperture to blind the Japanese defenders. Another Marine scored a direct hit with a rifle grenade which detonated inside the pillbox, starting a massive explosion and fire within the structure. Set afire by the blast, the last Japanese survivors darted from the pillbox but were cut down by the Marines. The Point had been neutralized, but at a terrible cost; two-thirds of Hunt's company had been killed or wounded during the assault.

Far from resigning themselves to the American gains, the Japanese struck back. Aiming to isolate Hunt's men, the Japanese counterattacked against a dangerous gap that had opened between the Point and the landing beaches. They succeeded in driving a wedge in the American line, occupying a strong position on Chavetal Ridge. Puller ordered a counterattack against the ridge, but it was repulsed amid well-directed machine gun fire. For the time being, Hunt's men on the Point were on their own.

That night, the Japanese launched small-scale diversionary attacks in an attempt to infiltrate American lines and break up the tenuous toehold the Marines had established on Peleliu. In horrific scenes of night fighting up and down the beachhead, Marines fought off enemy attacks, often at close quarters when Japanese infiltrators leapt into foxholes. For young men on both sides, it was a nightmarish ordeal that would be repeated in the coming weeks.

The following morning, the Marines pushed hard for the airfield. The entire 5th Marines, bolstered by Puller's 2nd Battalion, unleashed a massive attack at 8 a.m. All told, 4,500 men started forward at a walk, and were immediately taken

First Marine Division commander Maj. Gen. William Rupertus predicted the conquest of Peleliu would be "a quickie... We'll be through in three days, maybe two." Japanese defenders proved him wrong. INSET: Umurbrogol Mountain , a series of irregular coral and limestone ridges, some 300 feet tall, proved to be a formidable obstacle in the battle for Peleliu.

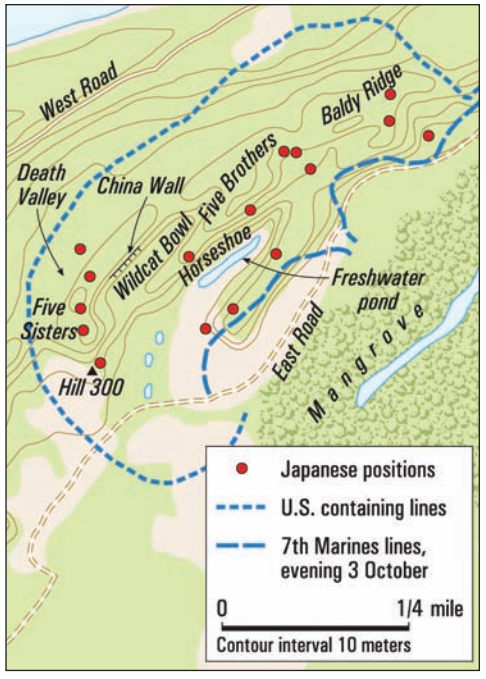


map © 2023 Philip Schwartzberg, Meridian Mapping, Minneapolis, MN

under fire by Japanese mortars. Completely exposed on the flat expanse of the airfield, Marines broke into a run and plunged forward through a roaring tempest of artillery.

Despite the terrifying barrage, the advance of the 5th Marines couldn't be stopped. Sprinting across the runways through smoke and shellfire, the Marines then poured into the tree line east of the airfield, clearing Japanese infantry out of rifle pits and machine gun nests. It had been a grand assault reminiscent of a 19th-century battle, and cost the Marines dearly. By the time they had captured the airfield, the regiment suffered an additional 300 casualties.

Skirting along the northern edge of the airfield, Puller's 2nd Battalion ran into stiff enemy resistance amid the rubble of aircraft hangars and storage buildings. Making use of the ruins as improvised fighting positions, the Japanese fought stubbornly and slowed the Marine advance. The battalion fought into the afternoon before it cleared the ruins, then took up new positions on the island's main thoroughfare, the East Road.



The 7th Marines continued its drive toward the island's eastern shore. The attack progressed well until Hanneken's Leathernecks ran into a 40-foot-diameter concrete blockhouse possessing four-foot-thick walls. The structure was bristling with machine guns and 20mm cannons, and it was the

strongest defensive work on the entire island.

The immense structure was immune to both flamethrowers and 75mm tank guns, and Marine infantry suffered badly during repeated fruitless attacks. Engineers finally breached the blockhouse with a hefty charge of plastic explosives, and vengeful riflemen gunned down the stunned Japanese that stumbled out of the structure. After neutralizing the blockhouse, the 7th Marines succeeded in reaching Peleliu's eastern coast, cutting off the remaining Japanese on the southern tip of the island.

Worse trials awaited Puller's 1st Marines. On the morning of September 17, finally ready to push into the island's central highlands, they began probing the forbidding and barren ridges northeast of the Point. The regiment's battle for the Umurbrogol would be one of the bloodiest in the history of the Marine Corps.

The first troops to assail the tangled swath of limestone and coral were the 2nd Battalion, under the command of Lt. Col. Russell Honsowetz. Working their way to the East Road, the Marines then swung north but took fire from a craggy rise known simply as Hill 200. Honsowetz, under considerable pressure from Puller, directed an assault on the hill but found that he had committed his men to a meat grinder.

The entire hill was a maze of interconnected tunnels and caves, and as soon as it seemed that the Marines had gained ground, Japanese troops would emerge from subterranean positions and attack the Americans from the rear. It was a frustratingly slow fight, and casualties mounted.

Matters were only worsened by the tropical heat. The daytime temperature routinely soared to more than 110 degrees Fahrenheit, accompanied by unbearably high humidity. Heat exhaustion alone felled hundreds of Marines during the course of the campaign, and support units could rarely supply enough potable water to keep the Marines hydrated. Amid the blistering heat of the Umurbrogol, the Marines would experience the incomparable horrors of war.

After hours of brutal uphill fighting, Honsowetz's Marines seized the narrow crest of Hill 200. They had suffered heavy casualties, particularly among officers. Although fired on from higher ground on the surrounding ridges, the Marines did their best to dig in for the night. Of the 400 men who had fought for the position,

A Maze of Japanese Tunnels and Caves Slowed the Marines' Advance at Peleliu.

The Marines who fought on Peleliu in the Palau Islands in 1944 faced a formidable enemy who had learned hard lessons after fighting the Americans for three years. Although the Japanese military was steeped in centuries of tradition, it also was a nimble fighting force that recognized past mistakes and adapted to a rapidly changing strategic landscape. By summer 1944, senior commanders of the Imperial Japanese Army had increasingly come to realize that it could never secure a conventional victory over the Unites States.

At Peleliu the Japanese high command implemented new tactics for confronting American amphibious assaults. At the outset of the war in the Pacific Theater, a Japanese focus on aggressive fighting spirit had led directly to a string of crushing defeats. Japanese field commanders and enlisted men had been encouraged to throw overwhelming force against American troops and attempt to repel enemy attacks on the beaches in order to prevent the enemy from establishing a firm foothold. Mass frontal assaults, the famous banzai charge of legend, were bloody and ultimately futile attempts to halt the American tide.

The new Imperial Japanese Army had experimented with its new measured defense approach at Biak in New Guinea in May 1944. In the wake of the fighting at Biak, the Imperial General Headquarters released new guidelines titled "Defense Guidance on Islands." In order to negate the overwhelming advantage that the Americans enjoyed in manpower, materiel, and firepower, the Japanese developed an intricate and highly coordinated defense-in-depth. Rather than squander their limited manpower reserves in futile banzai attacks, the Japanese would fight a war of attrition and exact a grim toll of blood for every inch of ground.

Although abandoning the strategic initiative was a radical departure from long-standing Japanese military doctrine, the core of the new approach involved the concept of "fukkaku," meaning multiple defensive lines. The approach embodied a heavy focus on fighting from prepared defensive positions. Skilled Japanese engineers supervised the construction at Peleliu of a dizzying maze of tunnels and caves that honeycombed key positions on the island.

The underground defensive works offered Japanese troops a good measure of protection from heavy American bombardment, and were mutually supporting in case one position came under attack. Subterranean chambers held vast stockpiles of food, water, and ammunition that would enable Japanese defenders to fight for weeks without resupply. The massive tunnel system likewise contained nearly any facility needed by a modern army, including sleeping quarters, command and control centers, and field hospitals.

Japan's newly developed tactics were the Imperial Japanese Army's best hope of inflicting unsustainable casualties on the American military and forcing the Roosevelt Administration to the negotiating table. The Japanese would implement the same strategy to grim effect at later battles in the Pacific Theater, such as Iwo Jima and Okinawa.

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A view of the rear entrance of a camouflaged Japanese concrete antitank position. Note that the bunker was not scathed by the prelanding bombardment. It had to be taken by infantrymen with bayonet and rifle.

Colonel Tokuchi Tado, chief of staff for the 14th Infantry Division, summed up the necessity of the new tactical approach. The war with the Americans, he explained, "closely resembled a contest between a large man armed with a long spear and a small man armed with a short sword," he said. "The man with the short sword must crowd in close to the large man so that his spear is useless."

—Joshua Shepherd

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Marine riflemen and tanks in the Horseshoe Ridge area of Peleliu's Umurbrogol massif pass the island's only source of fresh water. The rugged terrain and fortified tunnels meant that the fight for the Umurbrogol Pocket, taken over by the 7th Marines and the Army's 81st Division, would last more than two months.

only half were still on their feet.

During the fight for Hill 200, Puller's 1st Battalion had likewise been busy, first assaulting a Japanese blockhouse before turning into the Umurbrogol to attack Hill 160. Lt. Col. Ray Davis directed his men into some of the most difficult terrain in the area, and they were stopped cold by intense fire from a 6-inch naval gun and a 70mm mountain gun. An intrepid bazooka team knocked out the naval gun crew, but the 70mm gun proved a frustratingly difficult target.

Mounted on a rail track, the gun would emerge from a protected cave, fire, and then roll back into the cave for reloading. After the gun was fired on repeatedly, and unsuccessfully, a Sherman tank crew took up position just 100 yards from the gun, waited for it to reemerge, and then scored a direct hit that obliterated the target and its crew.

With the big gun out of commission, Davis' Marines pushed into the Umurbrogol, clawing their way up the first set of ridges and seizing the summit of Hill 160. The sheer number of casualties was shocking even to veterans, and constituted an overwhelming task for burial details. Sergeant Jack Ainsworth, C Company, 1/1, recorded the tragic results of the first day's fighting for the Umurbrogol. "There were many dead Marines, but we have no time to bury them," wrote Ainsworth. "Mortar and artillery fire leaves its victims in horrible grotesque positions, partially decapitated, minus limbs."

While the 1st Marines slugged it out in the Umurborgol, fighting continued elsewhere. During several days of fierce combat, the 7th Marines mopped up remaining Japanese resistance south of the landing beaches, and then captured two small islands situated off the coast. In the meantime, the Army's 81st Division executed an amphibious landing on the island of Anguar on September 17. Making good progress after landing on the island's eastern shore, the rookie troops of the 81st fought their way through heavy jungle and boxed in the Japanese on Romauldo Hill, the island's best defensive terrain. Although the island was declared secure on September 20, it would take another month of tough fighting for the infantry to eliminate the last Japanese resistance.

Harris, the 5th Marines commander, personally accompanied a reconnaissance flight over the Umurbrogol on September 18. He was appalled by what he witnessed. The landscape was clearly a nightmare for infantry, with "sheer coral walls, with caves everywhere, box canyons, crevices, rock-strewn cliffs, and all defended by well-hidden Japs," he recalled.

Following the flight, Harris met with Rupertus and Puller, insisting that the Umurbrogol should be approached not from the south, where the Japanese expected it, but from the north. Both Rupertus and Puller, aggressive as ever, dismissed the idea and opted for a direct attack from the south. Disgusted by the prospect of seeing his men needlessly slaughtered, Harris decided to rely as much as possible on overwhelming firepower, or as he put it, "to be lavish with ordnance and stingy with men's lives."

By September 19, Puller was grimly determined to throw his Marines into the heart of the Umurbrogol and break the back of Japanese defenses. The prime target would be an imposing hill mass identified as the Five Sisters, which commanded an enclosed valley nicknamed the Horseshoe. The key Japanese position had to be reduced, but it had a maze of tunnels. The Five Sisters could not be rightly called hills, but rather jagged pinnacles with sheer rock faces. Nearly impassable canyons lay between the Five Sisters.

Preparatory to an assault on the Five Sisters, Lt. Col. Spencer Berger's 2nd Battalion of the 7th attacked Hill 300 early on the morning of September 19. Berger was shocked by the terrain, and horrified by the punishing casualties suffered by his battalion. Japanese fire poured down from the heights nearly uninterrupted, and after a day of bloody fighting, his men had gained just 300 yards of ground.

While Berger's Marines slogged up the slopes of Hill 300, Honsowetz led the exhausted 2/1 into the heart of the Five Sisters. Working their way between the pinnacles, the Marines were subjected to intense Machine gun and mortar fire. Completely commanded by the heights, Honsowetz's lead companies were hopelessly pinned down. Artillery fire was called in to break the Japanese stronghold, but proved useless against the sheer rock walls of the Five Sisters.

His blood clearly up, Puller thundered for more aggression from his subordinates. Erroneously convinced that the Japanese resistance was on the verge of breaking, he ordered more men forward. Weakened and understrength Marine companies were thrown piecemeal into the Umurbrogol hills, with predictable results. Aid stations were overwhelmed with casualties, and the regiment made negligible gains.

On September 21, Geiger, overall commander of the III Amphibious Corps, had had enough. Geiger had regularly visited the front lines to encourage his men, and grew increasingly frustrated with the costly bull-headed tactics employed by Rupertus and Puller. After privately conferring with Puller, Geiger announced his decision. The 1st Marine Division, which was little more than a broken shell after less than a week in combat, would be pulled from the line.

The fight in the Umurbrogol Pocket would be taken over by the 7th Marines and the Army's 81st Division. The first army troops to arrive on the island, the 321st Infantry Regiment, came ashore on September 23. The next day, rather than be thrown directly into the mountains, the regiment, accompanied by the 3rd Battalion of the 7th Marines, began moving up the island's West Road in order to skirt around the western edge of the Umurbrogol and completely encircle the Japanese position. Two days later, after tough fighting for a commanding enemy position known as Hill B, the bulk of Nakagawa's troops were now completely isolated in the Umurbrogol Pocket.

Harris' 5th Marines were ordered to the island's northern sector, with the aim of eliminating remaining Japanese troops north of the Umurbrogol and capturing the smaller island of Ngesebus. After watching the 1st Division's mauling during repeated frontal attacks, Harris was as determined as ever to implement a more measured combined-arms approach to the battle, bringing overwhelming firepower to bear with the aid of artillery, naval guns, and extensive air support.

With the Umurbrogol Pocket completely surrounded, the Americans continued the attacks against the enemy stronghold. A greater implementation of heavy firepower, including the use of tanks and flamethrowers, greatly helped to reduce the number of infantry casualties. The fight for the rugged terrain of the Umurborgol, however, would inevitably remain an infantryman's fight. Remarkably, Peleliu was declared officially secure on September 27, but the horrors of combat would continue unabated as the Japanese were slowly forced into an ever-shrinking perimeter.

During the first week of October, the leathernecks of the 5th Marines were ordered into Umurbrogol Pocket. While Rupertus clamored for faster results, Harris stuck to a slower approach, trying to provide heavy firepower to his infantry. Bulldozers pushed open narrow tracks, allowing for

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ABOVE: Soldiers of the Army's 81st Infantry Division climb up rough terrain on the northern part of Peleliu. The 81st and the 7th Marines took over the fight for Umurbrogol Mountain—a rugged series of limestone ridges honey-combed with tunnels—that lasted from Sept. 17 to Nov. 27, 1944. OPPOSITE: A Marine flame thrower LVT Amtrac in action on Peleliu, in the Palau Islands, September,1944. It would take Army and Marine forces until nearly the end of November to declare the island secure. Even so, 26 Japanese soldiers and sailors remained in the warren of tunnels on the island until April, 1947.

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tanks and flame-throwing Amtracs to reach deeper into the hill mass. Artillery pieces were transported to firing positions in the pocket in order to batter enemy positions from close range.

The Japanese, in fact, had likewise suffered horrendous casualties. On October 12, Nakagawa was down to just 1,150 men, armed with a shrinking stockpile of weapons and ammunition. They had been pushed into a shrinking perimeter centered on the Five Sisters and the two rugged valleys of the Horseshoe and Wildcat Bowl. Few were under any illusions that they would survive. Nakagawa and his men would fight to the death.

On October 14, the Marines tightened the noose on the remaining Japanese. While the 7th Marines attacked from the south, the 5th drove down from the north. As they advanced, the Marines enjoyed support from F4U Corsair fighters dropping napalm on Japanese positions. The napalm proved highly effective, forcing Japanese troops further into the tunnels in order to escape the inferno.

Two days later, much to the consternation of Rupertus, the Marines were pulled out of the line and replaced with the 81st Infantry Division, which would take over the final fight to eliminate the last Japanese. The remaining Marine regiments were little more than battered shells; the 5th Marines had suffered over 40 percent casualties during its one-month ordeal on Peleliu.

Implementing the combined-arms approach that Colonel Harris had long advocated, Army troops continued to gain ground, slowly eliminating Nakagawa's troops and driving the last remaining Japanese diehards into a tunnel complex situated in the aptly-named Death Valley north of the Five Sisters. Nakagawa's command post was deep in a jagged cliff face nicknamed China Wall.

Army engineers succeeded in building a ramp up the steep face of China Wall, allowing tanks and flame throwing Amtracs to close in on the last Japanese stronghold. A prisoner later revealed that on November 24, the Japanese 2nd Infantry Regiment's flag was burned rather than fall into enemy hands. Nakagawa had committed suicide, denying the Americans a final triumph over the mastermind of the Japanese defense of Peleliu.

Far from culminating in a final, decisive action, the fight for Peleliu would painfully linger as little more than a grinding battle of attrition. Although major action ceased, isolated Japanese holdouts were hunted down for the succeeding months. In terms of lives lost and men injured, it was a costly experience to the bitter end. In that regard, Peleliu was a success for the Imperial Japanese Army. The first large-scale implementation of the new defense-in-depth tactics known as "fukkaku" had made the Marine Corps pay a painfully high cost for victory.

Ironically, the epic fight for Peleliu, one of the worst combat experiences in American military history, was barely covered by American newspapers. Overshadowed by more momentous events including the liberation of the Philippines and Operation Market Garden in The Netherlands, the seizure of an insignificant island in the Pacific was regarded as a minor affair.

With the benefit of hindsight, it became apparent that the entire campaign had been strategically unnecessary. As much as Halsey had feared prior to the invasion, the Japanese garrison on Peleliu posed no substantive threat to Macarthur's landings in the Philippines. Including manpower losses on Anguar and the surrounding islands, the Japanese lost a staggering 14,000 men. Due to the Japanese penchant to scorn surrender in favor of death for the Emperor, the Americans captured just 400.

For the men who had struggled in the indescribable hell that was Peleliu, the battle left indelible memories. The vaunted 1st Marine Division had been wrecked as of spring 1945. For the seizure of Peleliu and Anguar, the Americans had suffered 2,336 killed and 8,450 wounded.

Perhaps the most fitting description of the Battle of Peleliu was later penned by Private First Class Eugene Sledge, whose K Company, 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines had endured horrific combat on the beaches, the airfield, and then the central highlands.

Umurbrogol was "a netherworld of horror from which escape seemed less and less likely as casualties mounted and the fighting dragged on and on," recalled Sledge. "Time had no meaning; life had no meaning. The fierce struggle made savages of us all."■

The short, bloody Battle of Kings Mountain pitted American Patriots against American Loyalists, altering the course of the Revolution in the southern colonies.

BY MIKE PHIFER

Kings Mountain was a battle of militia–American Patriots against American Loyalists. Short and intense, it was the last desperate stand of British Major Patrick Ferguson and a turning point in the American Revolution.

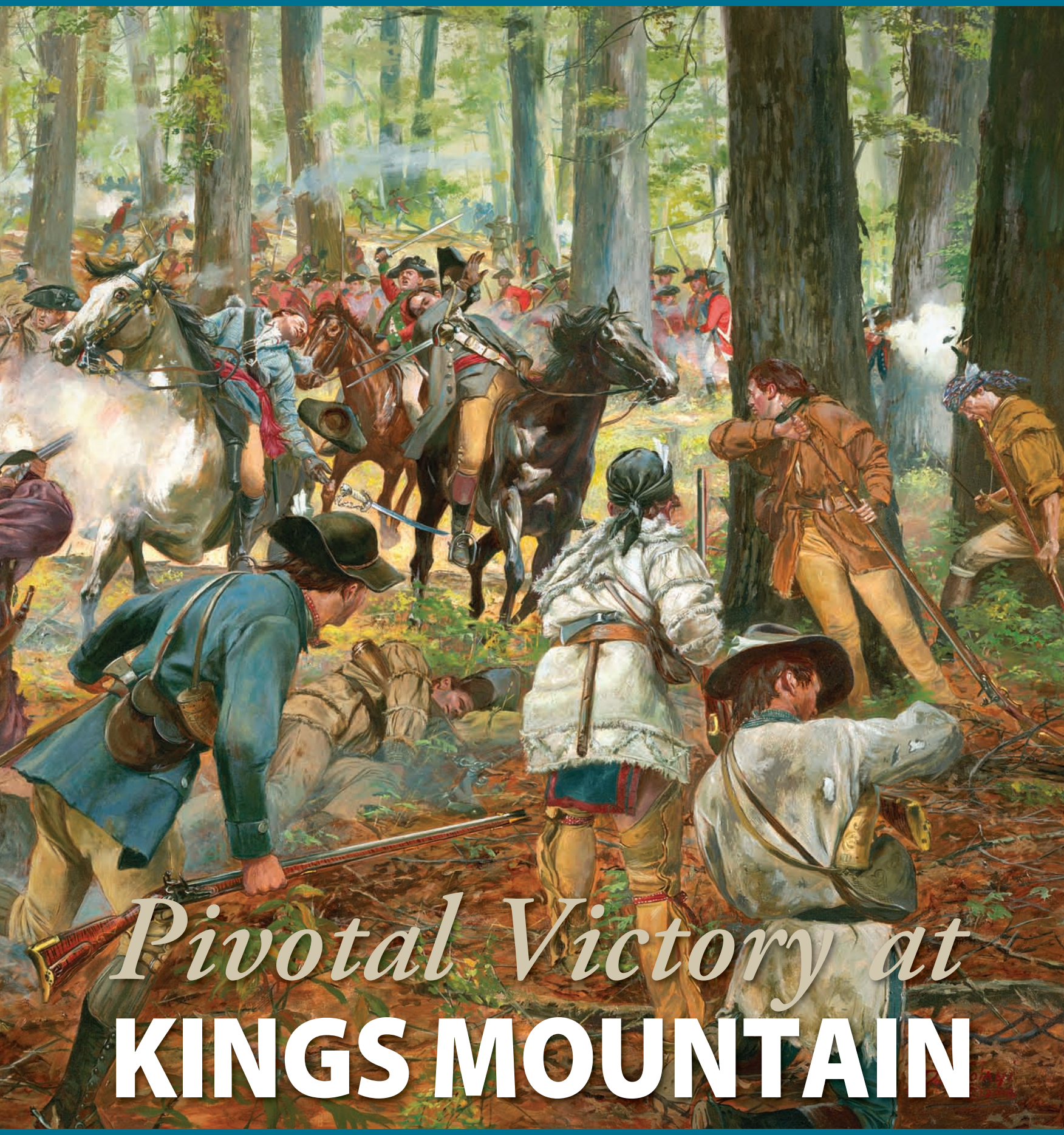
After a summer of stirring up the proverbial hornets' nest in the west of the Carolinas, Ferguson was on the run. Angry American Patriots were gaining on him and his force of 1,125 Loyalist militia as they retreated toward Charlotte, North Carolina, and the safety of British General LordCornwallis' larger army.

On Oct. 6, 1780, Ferguson ordered the supply wagons circled atop a low rocky ridge called Kings Mountain about 30 miles from Charlotte. He was certain it could be defended against the Patriot irregulars pursuing him, but he wrote a letter–his last–to Cornwallis requesting reinforcements that would never come.

The surrender of Charleston on May 12, 1780, had been a devastating blow to the Patriots in the South as 5,700 troops—about half of whom were Continentals—became British prisoners, along with 1,000 sailors. For the British, it was a much-needed victory.

Unable to decisively defeat General George Washington's Continental army in New England and the Middle Colonies, the British had turned their attention to the Southern Colonies in December 1778. Late that year Lord George Germain, the British Secretary of State for the Colonies, directed Lt. Gen. Henry Clinton, commander-in-chief of the British forces in North America, to invade and subjugate the sparsely populated and heavily divided colony of Georgia. Germain hoped that the invasion of Georgia and the Caroli-

Militiamen from the Carolina Colonies, most armed with rifles, fire on Loyalist American troops under the command of British Major Patrick Ferguson at the top of Kings Mountain, South Carolina. The hour-long battle on Oct. 7, 1780, was a victory for the Patriots and a turning point in the Revolutionary War. This painting by Don Troiami depicts the moment Major Ferguson, center left, was shot from his horse as he charged. Hit multiple times, Ferguson fell from his mount and was dragged by a foot caught in the stirrup. The Loyalists surrendered shortly after his death.



Pivotal Victory at KINGS MOUNTAIN

Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

nas, together with diversionary attacks in Virginia and Maryland, might bring about the capitulation of the colonies south of the Susquehanna River.

After Clinton captured Georgia, his orders were to turn north and capture South Carolina. Influenced by the former governors of Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina, as well as leading Loyalists, Germain believed the majority of colonists in the Southern Colonies were loyal to the crown. But they needed British regulars to support them in their struggle against the Patriots. Clinton, however, was not as optimistic at the prospect, writing that "to bring those poor people forward only exposed them to the resentment and malice of their enemies." He believed safe havens would have to be secured first, before the Loyalists in the South could be called up.

The British desperately needed the support of Loyalists as the war progressed. France had entered the war in support of the Americans in 1778. This transformed what had been a rebellion in the American colonies into a global conflict. Britain was forced to to transfer troops serving in America to other locations, such as the economically important Caribbean islands. The resulting shortage of troops in North America meant that the British had to rely more heavily on loyal American subjects. Over the course of the long war, thousands of Americans served in military units. They formed 150 Loyalist units, 26 of which were raised in the South.

During the first three years of the war, Tories and Patriots in the Southern Colonies had been engaged in an uninterrupted guerilla war. Clinton dispatched Lt. Col. Archibald Campbell with 3,100 troops, including four Loyalist units, to Georgia in November 1778. They were to join forces with a British and Loyalist force in St. Augustine under Brig. Gen. Augustine Prevost. The first objective of the combined force was to capture Savannah. Campbell landed near Savannah on December 23, but he did not wait for Prevost. He moved quickly against the city and captured it six days later. Prevost then took command and secured the British hold on Georgia, threatening Charleston in May 1779. A force of 5,000 French and Patriot troops under Maj. Gen. Benjamin Lincoln and Vice-Admiral Comte D'Estaing arrived in Charleston in September, posing a serious threat to Prevost's 3,200 troops garrisoning Savannah.

A 7,600-strong Franco-American army co-commanded by D'Estaing and Lincoln besieged Savannah that same month. When the French bombardment failed to produce results, D'Estaing tried to take the city by storm. While Lincoln's Patriots moved into a blocking position to prevent British overland reinforcements from

Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

ABOVE: Another American disaster occurred at Camden, South Carolina when Cornwallis, although outnumbered, routed the American army commanded by General Horation Gates. LEFT: British troops fire cannon from behind earthworks during their seige of Charleston, South Carolina, in April 1780. The Americans defending the city, including most of the Continental Army in the south, surrendered on May 12, a serious setback for the American's cause.

Florida, D'Estaing landed his French infantry. To D'Estaing's disappointment, the French assault was repulsed with heavy losses on October 9. Lincoln then withdrew to Charleston and D'Estaing sailed for the West Indies to attack British colonies in the Caribbean.

Clinton was elated at Prevost's successful defense of Savannah. Having withdrawn British troops from Newport, Rhode Island, Clinton sailed from New York on December 26 with 8,700 troops to attack Charleston. Sailing aboard one of the vessels was Ferguson, a Scottish officer in the 71st (Highland) Regiment of Foot. Ferguson was a capable and inventive officer. With the rank of captain, Ferguson arrived in the Thirteen Colonies in 1777 to command 100 riflemen who were armed with an experimental rifle he had designed. Ferguson suffered a severe wound from a musket ball that shattered his right elbow at the Battle of Brandywine on September 11, 1777.

With Ferguson out of action, his experimental rifle unit was disbanded. Ferguson eventually recovered from his wound, although he no longer had the use of his right arm. He received a promotion to major in 1779 and assumed command of a detatchment of Loyalist troops raised in New York as the King's American Regiment, and outfitted like British regulars. Ferguson's detatchment soon sailed south with their commander.

After a storm-tossed voyage, the bulk of Clinton's battered ships arrived in Georgia in late January 1780. Over the course of the next 45 days, more scattered ships rejoined the fleet. With British forces swelling to 14,000 troops in the area, Clinton marched against Charleston. His forces moved into positions around the city in March. Clinton had surrounded the city by April 11. His troops then began to construct siege works while British guns shelled the city.

After the surrender of Charleston, on May 12, 1780, Clinton ordered his second-in-command, Lt. Gen. Charles Cornwallis, to pacify the interior of South Carolina. Detachments made mostly of Loyalist troops quickly occupied key towns and posts, one of which was the fort at Ninety Six, located 175 miles northwest of Charleston. Meanwhile, Lt. Col. Banastre Tarleton set off in pursuit of a small force of Virginia Continentals that was retreating towards North Carolina.

With mounted infantry and dragoons from his British Legion, a Loyalist unit, and a detachment of the 17th Light Dragoons, Tarleton rode hard after the Patriots. He caught up with the 340 soldiers of Colonel Abraham Buford's 3rd Virginia Detachment of the Continental Army at Waxhaws on May 29 and charged into their single line of troops. The Continentals got off one volley before many of them were hacked down by sabres or bayoneted. Suffering 260 killed and wounded the Patriots called the battle a massacre as a number of their casualties were inflicted after the cry for quarter was given. "Tarleton's Quarter" and "Buford's Quarter" became a rallying cry for many to join the Patriot militia in the coming months.

For the time being however, many men were signing an oath of loyalty to the king. Before the capture of Charleston, Clinton had avoided raising local Loyalist militia until the city was in his hands. He issued a handbill calling up the militia and by the end of May hundreds of men had showed up at Charleston and enlisted. Other areas such as Ninety Six had Loyalists flocking there as well. To install a measure of discipline in the Loyalist militia, Clinton appointed Ferguson inspector of the militia. He also dispatched Ferguson to Ninety Six with his American Volunteers to organize the militia there. At the same time, Clinton made plans to return to New York leaving Cornwallis in charge in the Southern Colonies with

6,400 troops.

Another disaster befell the Patriots in the meantime. American Maj. Gen. Horatio Gates advanced with 3,000 troops on the British base at Camden, South Carolina, defended by Loyalist troops under Colonel Francis Rawdon. Cornwallis rushed north with British regulars and Loyalist militia from Charleston. The two armies met in battle on August 16, and Cornwallis with 2,100 troops inflicted a decisive defeat on Gates, who withdrew with the battered remnants of his army to Hillsboro, North Carolina.

Cornwallis had his eyes on North Carolina and throughout the summer had been preparing to march north once cooler weather arrived. He was quickly to discover, however, that his control over South Carolina was not as strong as he believed. Patriot guerillas under Colonel Thomas Sumter, Colonel Francis Marion, and others conducted swift raids on British supply trains and other targets. To Cornwallis, the region between the Peedee and Santee rivers seemed alive with Rebel partisans.

Unable to crush these partisan bands, Cornwallis believed that the uprisings in South Carolina could only be extinguished by the conquest of North Carolina. If he could not subjugate North Carolina, he believed he would have to give up both South Carolina and Georgia and retire within the walls of Charleston. Cornwallis marched from Camden on September 8 toward Charlotte, North Carolina, his progress slowed by the poor health of many of his troops.

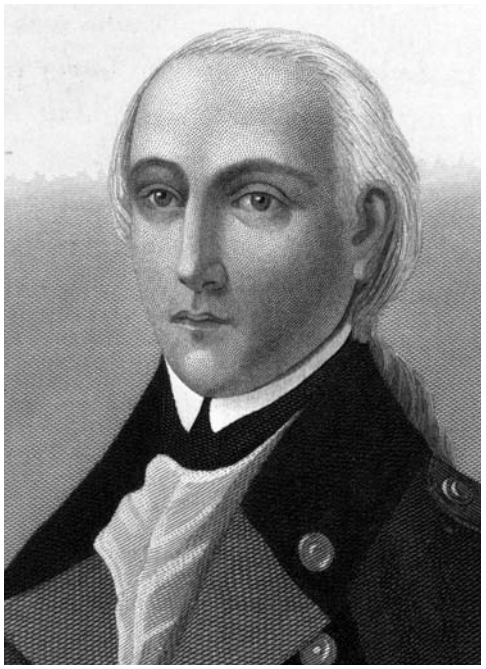
Meanwhile, Ferguson had raised 4,000 men organized into seven militia regiments in the region around Ninety Six. His force included the men of the King's American Regiment who assisted in training the militia. Throughout the summer Ferguson dispatched detachments that harassed the Patriots, plundering cattle, horses, and food from them while attempting to encourage the Loyalists. At the same time they also battled forces under Patriot militia commanders Isaac Shelby, John Sevier, and Charles McDowell. Shelby and Sevier eventually would take their men back to their settlements over the Blue Ridge Mountains in what is now East Tennessee.

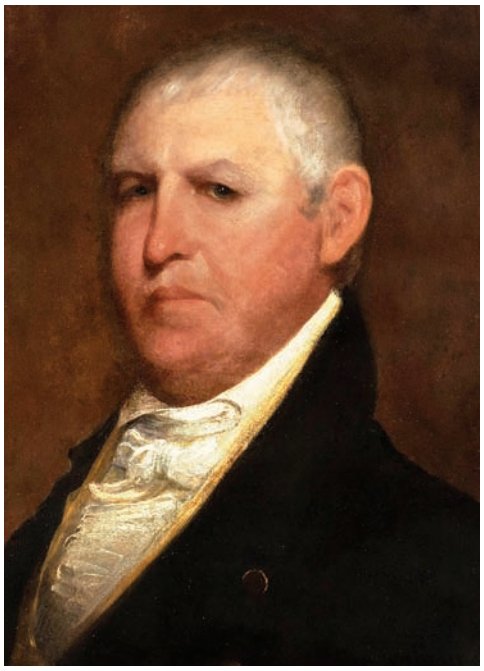
Ferguson had a keen desire to carry the war to the enemy. Lt. Col. Nisbet Balfour, who briefly commanded at Ninety Six, wrote to Cornwallis in June expressing concerns about Ferguson's rashness. "I find it impossible to trust him out of my sight," he wrote. "He seems to me to want to carry the war into North Carolina himself at once." Cornwallis agreed. "I am afraid of his getting to the frontier of North Carolina and playing us some cussed trick," Cornwallis replied in July.

Despite Cornwallis' fears, he ordered Ferguson to cover his left flank on his advance to Charlotte. He specifically told Ferguson to make a wide sweep along the western frontier of North Carolina, and continue to recruit militia and suppress the Patriots. Ferguson assured the British commander that his militia were good fighters and

Tennessee State Museum

Both: Wikimedia





ABOVE LEFT: Abraham de Peyster, the Loyalist commander of the Kings American Regiment, served as Major Ferguson's second in command. ABOVE RIGHT: Issac Shelby was 30 at the time of the battle and led 240 North Carolina militiamen. He later served two terms as governor of Kentucky. LEFT: Gathering of Overmountain Men, Backcountry Militia and others at Sycamore Shoals, Tennessee, west of the Blue Ridge mountains. Led by Patriot militia commanders Isaac Shelby, John Sevier, and Charles McDowell, the group set out to find British Major Patrick Ferguson after he had threatened them and told them to stay home. The Patriots travelled over 100 miles before surrounding Ferguson and his Loyalists at Kings Mountain.

could be depended upon to do their duty. Even so, Cornwallis and many of his subordinate commanders still had serious reservations about Ferguson's abilities.

Ferguson rejoined his command on September 1 after a meeting with Cornwallis at Camden. Not everyone was pleased with Cornwallis' orders. "[We received the] disagreeable news that we were to be separated from the army, and act on the frontiers with the militia," Lieutenant Anthony Allaire of the American Regiment wrote in his journal.

Ferguson advanced northwest the next day. Despite his assurances to the locals that he had not come to make war on women and children, Ferguson's foragers took horses, cattle and provisions from the local population. Ferguson arrived at Gilbert Town, 55 miles west of Charlotte, on September 7 where he established his base of operations.

He then dispatched Samuel Phillips, a Patriot that had been a British prisoner, across the Blue Ridge Mountains with a message to the Overmountain Men. They were American frontiersmen living west of the Appalachian Mountains. They lived along the Watauga, Nolachucky, and Holstein rivers in what is now the northeastern corner of Tennessee. Given that they lived west of the mountains, they were squatters on Cherokee land and in violation of the Proclamation Line of 1763 by which the British sought to keep white settlers off Indian lands. Ferguson warned that if they did not desist from their opposition to the British arms and take protection under his standard, "he would march his army over the mountains, hang their leaders, and lay their country waste with fire and sword."

Ferguson made a sweep northward. As he did so, his troops skirmished with McDowell's partisans before returning to Gilbert Town on September 23. Five hundred Loyalists arrived as reinforcements. For the time being, McDowell and his North Carolina militia retreated westward across the mountains.

After receiving the message from Ferguson, Shelby and Sevier decided to march with all the men they could muster and launch a surprise attack on Ferguson's camp. Shelby previously had contacted Colonel William Campbell, a militia commander in Washington County, Virginia, who arrived with 400 men to assist in the attack.

The Patriot force on the frontier began to assemble on September 25 at Sycamore Shoals on the Watauga River. The number of volunteers who turned out, though, was so great that men had to be left behind to protect the settlements from Indian troubles.

The Overmountain Men consisted of Campbell's 400 men, Shelby's 240 men from Sullivan County, North Carolina, Sevier's 240 men from the Washington District of North Carolina, and McDowell's 140 men from Burke County, North Carolina. A short time earlier, McDowell had ridden back across the mountain to gather intelligence on Ferguson and hurry along 350 troops drawn from the counties of Wilkes and Surry in North Carolina.

These frontiersmen rode toward the mountains on September 26 intending to strike Ferguson first. As they crossed the high mountains, they ran into snow. The men bivouacked by a clear spring and made a startling discovery: two of Sevier's men had deserted, and the frontiersmen feared the pair would warn Ferguson of the Patriots approach. To avoid the risk of being intercepted by the enemy, the Patriots would need to take a different trail to Quaker's Meadow where they planned to rendezvous with Colonel Benjamin Cleveland and his Wilkes County militia.

Four days later the frontiersmen reached Quaker's Meadow having journeyed nearly 100 miles. Cleveland joined the growing army increasing their numbers to 1,400 men. A heavy rain poured over the next day halting the advance of the Overmountain Men and Back Country militia toward Gilbert Town. About this time the senior officers decided they needed an overall commander to lead them. McDowell set off to meet with Gates at his headquarters in Hillsborough with a message requesting ammunition and a capable commander. He left his brother, Joseph McDowell, in charge of his men.

With no word from Gates forthcoming, Shelby proposed Campbell take command. A veteran Continental officer and a judge in his county, Campbell was considered to be good choice as he was a Virginian and less likely to cause resentment among the North Carolinian commanders.

The Patriots arrived at Gilbert Town on October 4 to find Ferguson gone, having earlier moved south and east in an unsuccessful attempt to intercept Lt. Col. Elijah Clarke and his Georgia militia. They did learn that the two deserters had informed Ferguson that the Overmountain Men and Back Country militia were hunting him.

Ferguson had issued a proclamation on October 1 at Denard's Ford on the Broad River in a desperate attempt to rally support. "Unless you wish to be eat up by an inundation of barbarians, grasp your arms in a moment and run to camp," he announced. He also sent a dispatch to Lt. Col. John Harris Cruger, the new commander at Ninety Six, requesting reinforcements. As it turned out, Cruger could not spare any men.

Ferguson pushed north of the Broad River with his army, which included a small wagon train, and slowly marched eastward halting on October 3 at a large farm where he remained for two days. He sent a letter two days later to Cornwallis at Charlotte. "I am on my march towards you, by a road leading from Cherokee Ford, north of King's Mountain," Ferguson wrote. "Three or four hundred good soldiers, part dragoons, would finish this business." In the same letter Ferguson implored Cornwallis not to replace him with a superior officer.

Ferguson broke camp on October 6 and moved his men south, marching crosscountry towards Charlotte 36 miles away. Reaching a series of rocky ridges, Ferguson encamped on King's Mountain, which was a long, narrow hilltop located a mile south of the North Carolina border. The 600-yard-long ridge, which was shaped like a human foot, rose 75 feet above the surrounding area. The width of the ridge ranged from 60 yards at the narrower southwestern end to 200 yards at the wider northeastern end.

Ferguson ordered men to form their 17 supply wagons into a semicircle at the northeast end of the ridge and pitch their tents there as well. "I have arrived today at King Mountain and have taken post where I do not think I can be forced by a stronger enemy than that against us," wrote Ferguson to Cornwallis. He was still anxiously awaiting reinforcements, but Cornwallis did not receive his request in time to furnish any.

As for Campbell's force, it was still attempting to determine Ferguson's exact location. With their horses and men wearing out, the Patriot leaders on October 5 selected 700 of the best men. They pushed on to Cowpens, South Carolina, which they reached the following day. The Patriot officers had instructed the rest of their men to follow as fast as they could. Four hundred additional partisans joined Campbell's picked force at Cowpens.

Selecting a fast-marching force of 910 men on the best horses, the Patriots set out again in the rain on the evening of October 6. Riding through the rain, Campbell's combined force of Overmountain Men and Back Country militia reached the swift-flowing waters of the Broad River by sunrise. After fording the river, some of the leaders believed it best to rest the men and horses, but Shelby would not hear of it. "I will not stop until night, if I follow Ferguson into Cornwallis' lines," he said.

By early afternoon the rain had stopped as the frontier Patriots closed in on Ferguson. From Tories they encountered along their route, Campbell and his commanders began to receive information on Ferguson's position on Kings Mountain. A 14-year-old boy captured carrying a dispatch from Ferguson for Cornwallis revealed the enemy's position and the fact that Ferguson was wearing a checkered shirt over his uniform. "Mark him with your rifles," Lt. Col. Frederick Hambright told his men.

Campbell and the other leaders now planned their attack. It was decided they would split into two divisions with one commanded by Shelby and the other Campbell. Shelby's command would surround the ridge from the north, while Campbell would surround it from the south. Then with their men spread out, an Indian warwhoop would signal them to attack up the steep wooded slopes.

Before setting out, Campbell spoke to each of the units offering any man who was afraid to fight the opportunity to go home. Campbell said he did not want any man who would not fight, but as for himself he "was determined to fight the enemy a week, if need be, to gain the victory."

"Every man must consider himself an officer, and act from his own judgement," Cleveland said. "Fire as quick as you can. When you can do no better, get behind trees, or retreat; but I beg you not to run quite off."

As Campbell's men were not wearing a regular uniform, many of the Patriots placed a white piece of paper or cloth in their hat to distinguish themselves from many of the Loyalist militia who were not wearing uniforms either. The Loyalists in turn wore green sprigs in their hats.

NPS, Harpers Ferry Center, Commissioned Art Collection, artist Archil Pichkhadze

The Patriots began moving into position to surround Ferguson's command. Major Joseph Winston and his detachment rode out first intending to circle around the southwest end of the ridge. He was then to double back up the east side of the ridge to block a possible retreat of the Tories to Charlotte.

Ahead of the columns, scouts slipped out moving quietly over rain-soaked fallen leaves to silence Ferguson's sentries. As the first of these scouts dispatched a sentry, it seemed they would catch Ferguson's force by surprise. Ferguson had 1,125 men, the bulk consisting of Carolina militia organized into six regiments. Eighty of his 100 American Volunteers were on foot, and the other 20

American Patriot militia gain the crest of Kings Mountain where Loyalist troops, including the King's American Regiment wearing red coats, had circled their supply wagons for a defensive stand. The Loyalists, armed with muskets and bayonets, drove off several Patriot advances by charging with their bayonets, a weapon the Patriots lacked. Many of the Overmountain Men and Back Country militia carried rifles, which proved superior on the rocky, wooded slope.

were mounted dragoons.

Winston and his men believed they had reached their objective. They had dismounted and begun slowly heading up the heights at 2:45 p.m. when they realized they were on the wrong mountain. Winston quickly ordered his men back to their horses and they rode hard to reach their assigned position.

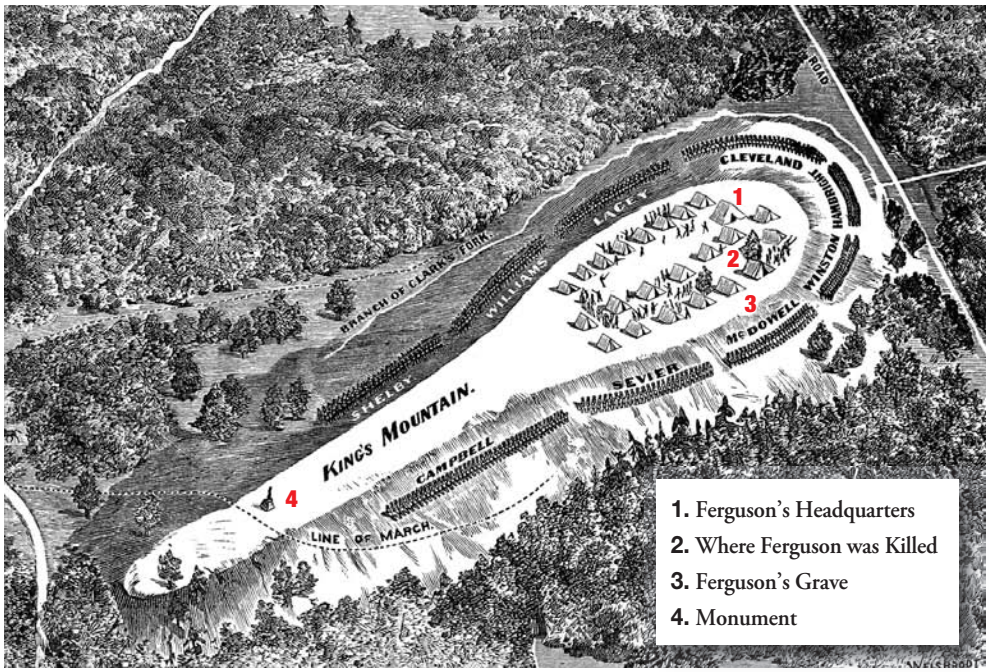
The rest of the Patriots' advance on King's Mountain was also running into snags. Shelby's command was divided into two columns with one under him and the other under Cleveland. The latter's column began to bog down on the north side of the mountain in marshy terrain a few hundred yards from their objective. Shelby's column, on the other hand, made better time advancing toward their attack position. Elsewhere Campbell's command, which included his column, followed by Sevier and McDowell's column, were still moving into position.

Captain Alexander Chesney, Ferguson's adjutant, reported to his commander just before 3 p.m. that there was no sign of the enemy and that he had posted pickets on the ridge. The words had barely left his lips when the sound of firing could be heard coming from the pickets. They had spotted Shelby's column and now any chance of a surprise Patriot attack was gone. Drums began to beat in Ferguson's camp as his men began to fall in. Ferguson also blew on a silver whistle which he used to call his men.

One of Campbell's men, meanwhile, stumbled onto a Loyalist picket and was forced to shoot him. The crack of his rifle now alerted Ferguson to Campbell's position. Campbell now decided to attack, even though not all the various Patriot units were in position yet or the mountain completely surrounded. Campbell ordered Captain Andrew Colville's mounted detachment to lead the attack.

"Here they are my brave boys, shout like hell and fight like devils!" Campbell shouted to his men. Unleashing a piercing war cry the Overmountain Men surged up the mountain. Captain Abraham De Peyster, Ferguson's second-in-command, was reminded that he clashed with some of these men in August. "These are the damn yelling boys," De Peyster told Ferguson.

Colville's attack was repulsed and his bloodied



ABOVE: This "Diagram of the Battle of King's Mountain," shows the 1,000-ft. ridge where Major Patrick Ferguson and his Loyalists were attacked by Patriot riflemen from the wooded slopes. This map was published in 1881 in *King's Mountain and Its Heroes: History of the Battle of King's Mountain*, by Lyman Copeland Draper. OPPOSITE: The only British regular in the Battle of Kings Mountain, Major Ferguson was hit by as many as eight bullets while rallying his troops. The 36-year-old Scotsman fell from his horse and was dragged across the battlefieldfell by a stirrup. His body was buried in a cairn at the site.

men retreated back down the heights. Campbell's dismounted main force pushed on. Sevier's column was behind Campbell and part of it continued to their assigned position on Campbell's right. A fair number joined the fight on Campbell's left. Some of McDowell's men following behind joined Campbell, while others continued onto their assigned position. "The men of my column, of Campbell's column, and a great part of Sevier's, were mingled together in the confusion of the battle," recalled Shelby.

As Campbell's men almost reached the mountain's crest they were greeted by the American Volunteers with glittering bayonets, backed by militia from the region around Ninety Six. The Overmountain Men were sent reeling downhill as the Loyalists charged into them. At the bottom of the hill, Campbell and his officers quickly rallied their men and tried again. They surged back up the heights only to be driven back again by the bayonet. The Patriots then ascended the ridge a third time.

The Loyalists again drove the Overmountain Men back down the hill. De Peyster believed they could have routed the Patriots, but Ferguson already had signalled a retreat. Ferguson was "afraid that then enemy would get possession of the heights from the other side," De Peyster wrote.

Shelby and his men were also being driven back by Loyalist bayonets. Rallying his men at the bottom of the mountain Shelby shouted, "Now boys, quickly reload your rifles, and let's advance upon them, and give them another hell of fire!" They were again driven back, but yet again headed back up the hill.

As the fighting raged on, the Patriots were losing formation as small groups of men or individuals pressed uphill. This swarming effect made it hard for the Loyalists to react to the Overmountain Men's advancing rifle fire.

Leaving the Loyalist militia to deal with the Overmountain Men, De Peyster and the American Volunteers were ordered by Ferguson to move to the northeast end of the plateau. Major Winston and Major William Chronicle finally got their Patriot militiamen in the right position on the northeastern end of the ridge for an attack. At the same time, Cleveland pressed his attack from the north. "We were soon in motion, every man throwing four or five balls in his mouth to prevent thirst, also to be in readiness to reload quick," wrote James Collins of Chronicle's detachment.

The Back Country militia struggled up the craggy slopes under enemy fire at 3:30 p.m. but Chronicle was killed by a Loyalist volley. As the Patriots continued to struggle up the heights, the Loyalists launched a bayonet charge at Lt. Col. Hambright's men on the northeast slope. Staggering under accurate rifle fire, the determined Loyalists drove Hambright's Back Country militia back down the hill.

Unfazed by the bayonet charge, Hambright's men were soon moving back up the mountain again. The gritty Patriots now surrounding Ferguson's command continued to press forward as the fighting intensified. After having a few horses shot out from beneath him, Cleveland fought on foot, urging his men forward.

At the same time, Campbell, Shelby, and Sevier also were encouraging their exhausted Overmountain Men over the summit and to finish the bloody business. "Boys, remember your liberty!" cried Campbell. The Patriots soon reached the crest of the ridge and opened a deadly fire on the Loyalists. The Patriots "took post and opened an irregular but destructive fire from behind trees and cover," wrote Chesney.

The situation was growing increasingly desperate for Ferguson as the Patriots drove his force into the northeast corner of the ridge. Ferguson's best troops, the American Volunteers, continued to fight with grim determination. The mounted dragoons launched a desperate charge in an attempt to keep the Patriots at bay, but suffered heavy casualties from Patriot rifle fire. All told, the American Volunteers suffered heavy casualties in the battle.

The Loyalist militia was suffering, too, as they were running dangerously low on ammunition. With his men becoming increasingly unhinged, their commander was running out of options. Ferguson, astride his white charger, attempted to break out of the Patriot encirclement with a small of group of Loyalist officers. Several of Sevier's men shot him at close range. He slipped from his saddle, but his foot became caught in his stirrup. His horse dragged him around the ridge until some of his officers caught it and lowered their commander's body to the ground. Some sources say that while on the ground Ferguson attempted to shoot an attacker with his pistol, but was himself shot again and killed.

Command of the Loyalists devolved to De Peyster. He ordered his men to charge, but they informed him they were out of ammunition. The Dutch-American commander raised a flag to surrender in the hope of sparing the lives of the remaining Loyalist troops. A Loyalist officer took the flag and raised it high enough to be seen by the Patriot forces. Yet the killing continued for some time afterwards.

"Our men, who had been scattered in the battle were continually coming up, and continued to fire, without comprehending, in the heat of the moment, what had happened," wrote Evan Shelby, the younger brother of Colonel Shelby. Knowing that the Loyalists were attempting to surrender, other Patriots shouted references to Buford's Massacre at Waxhaws five months earlier. "Give them Buford's Play!" they shouted.

With the Patriots still firing, the Loyalists resumed their fire in the belief that the enemy was not inclined to give them quarter. Shelby put himself in harm's way by riding between the lines. "If you want quarter, throw down you arms!" he shouted to the Loyalists. Campbell also attempted to stop the carnage by yelling at one of his men taking a bead on the enemy. "It is murder to kill them now, for they have raised a flag," he shouted.

At the cost of 29 killed and 58 wounded, the Patriots had achieved a decisive victory. The Loyalists suffered losses of 244 killed, 163 wounded, and 700 captured. The tendency of troops on higher ground to overshoot those below them contributed to the difference in casualties. Ferguson's body was buried on the mountain with his mistress, Virginia Sal, who was killed in the fighting.

A scene of melancholy and distress unfolded the day after the battle. "The wives and children of the poor Tories came in, in great numbers," wrote Collins. "Their husbands, fathers and brothers lay dead in heaps, while others lay wounded or dying, a melancholy sight indeed." The dead were poorly buried; as a result, wolves, vultures, and hogs feasted on them in the days to come.

With hundreds of prisoners under his control and the threat of Cornwallis sending Tarleton after them, Campbell desired to depart from Kings Mountain as quickly as possible. After torching the captured wagons, he led his troops north on October 8. "We marched at a rapid rate toward Gilbert's Town between double lines of mounted Americans," Chesney wrote.

Cornwallis had no idea of the disaster. He dispatched Tarleton to assist Ferguson on October 10, but by then it was too late. Some of the Loyalists escaped while they were being marched north, while others were slain by their captors.

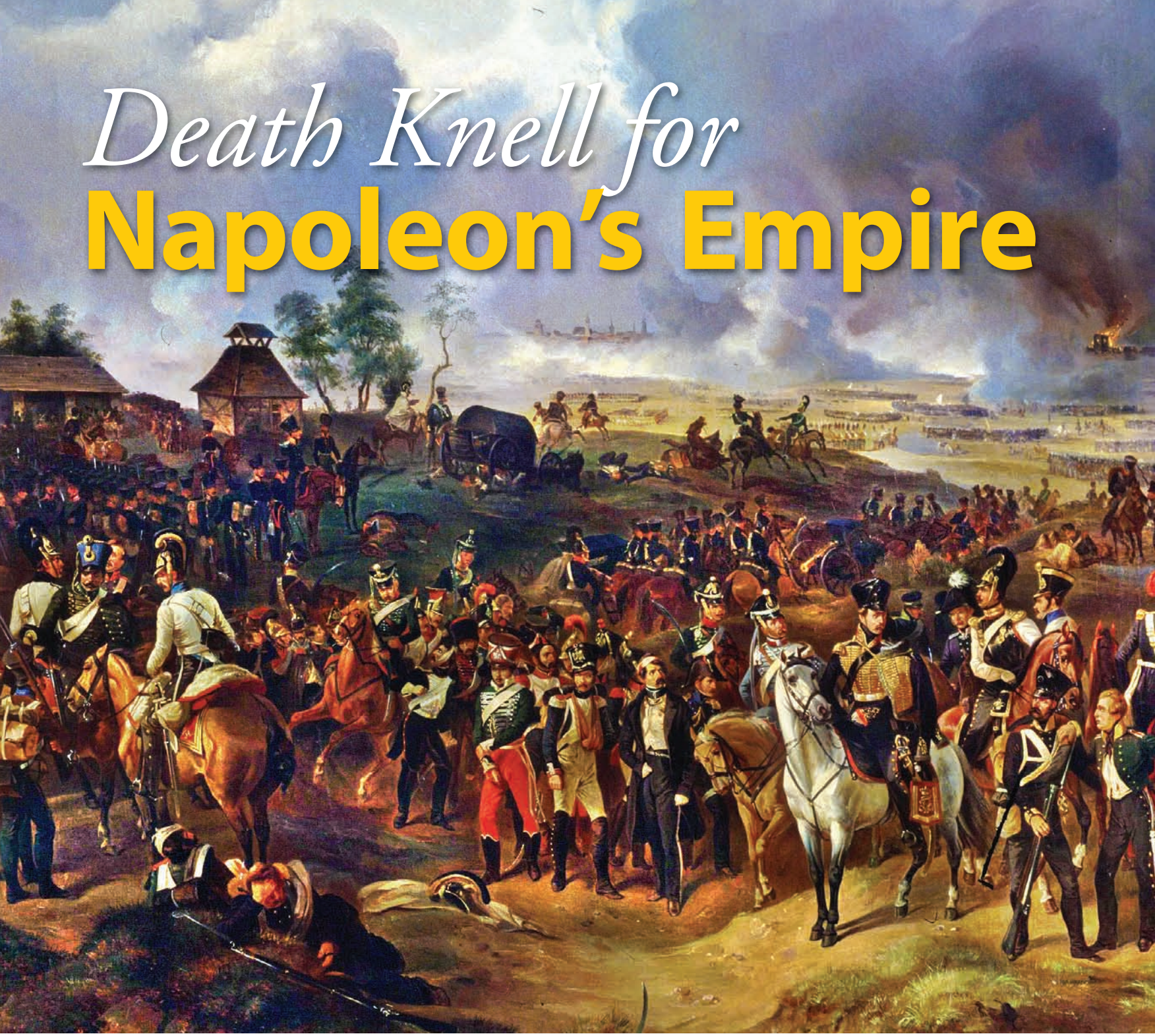
Campbell became increasingly concerned over these actions. For that reason, he issued an order the following day instructing his men to curtail their cruelty. "I must request the officers of all ranks in the army to endeavor to restrain the disorderly manners of slaughtering and disturbing the prisoners," the order stated. Despite this, 36 Loyalists were tried at what Chesney deemed a mock trial two days later in which the Patriots hanged nine Loyalists.

After crossing the flooded Catawba River on October 16, the Overmountain Men and Back Country militia dispersed to their homes. Campbell sent the remaining prisoners to the Continental Army garrison at Hillsborough. When he learned of Ferguson's defeat, Cornwallis withdrew from Charlotte to the relative safety of South Carolina. He shelved his planned invasion of North Carolina for the time being.

The Loyalist cause in the South suffered a major blow at Kings Mountain. "As a consequence of Major Ferguson's disaster and Lord Cornwallis's sudden retreat from Charlotte, a general panic and despondency appears to have immediately seized the militia and almost every other loyalist in the province," wrote Clinton. The British commander-in-chief in North America asserted that Ferguson's defeat "proved the first link in a chain of events that followed each other in regular succession until they at last ended in the total loss of America." As such, the Patriot victory at King's Mountain was a major milestone on the road to the British defeat in the American colonies. ■

Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

Death Knell for Napoleon's Empire



Although the Battle of Waterloo is often regarded as the end of Napoleon's empire, the momentous clash at Leipzig in 1813 actually signaled the end of French hegemony in Central Europe.

BY VICTOR KAMENIR

French Marshal Michel Ney found himself outmatched in a clash of arms with a Swedish-Prussian army at Dennewitz 40 miles southwest of Berlin on September 6, 1813. Four days earlier French Emperor Napoleon I had sent Ney with 58,000 troops in three corps to capture Berlin and knock Prussia out of the War of the Sixth Coalition. Ney fell into a trap and found himself fighting the combined strength of former French Marshal Jean-Baptiste Bernadotte, by then Sweden's Crown Prince, and Lt. Gen. Friedrich Wilhelm Freiherr von Bulow.

The battle began when French General Henri Bertrand's IV Corps struck the Prussian vanguard consisting of Lt. Gen. Bogislav von Tauentzien's corps in the late morning. Bulow arrived 90 minutes later

Although Napoleon took up a strong position at Leipzig, he found his Grande Armée greatly outnumbered. The titanic clash involved upwards of 500,000 combatants.

with the main force and launched a sledgehammer attack on the French left flank. When General Jean Reynier's VII Corps came up, Ney counterattacked. Bulow committed the rest of his troops, and the French fell back. The tide of battle favored the French when Marshal Nicolas Oudinot's XII Corps, the third and last of the French corps, arrived on the field.

Instead of remaining behind his lines to direct his forces, the impetuous Ney joined the battle once all of his troops were up. Not appreciating the danger to his left flank, Ney mistakenly ordered Oudinot to shift his corps from the French left to the French right. Both wings of the French army fell back in the face of furious attacks by the Prussians, and when Bernadotte's vanguard arrived after a 15-mile forced march, its 36 cannon shattered the French left flank. Ney lost 24,000 men and 50 guns. "The spirit of [our] generals and officers is shattered and our foreign allies will desert at the first opportunity," he wrote to Napoleon after the defeat. The unflappable Napoleon received the news stoically, but in private he fumed over Ney's incompetence.

The battle at Dennewitz was part of a strategic plan put in place by the Allies after they suffered a series of defeats in summer 1813 at the hands of Napoleon. The Trachenberg Plan, an amalgamation of existing Austrian, Russian, and Swedish strategies hammered out by the Allied monarchs and senior generals at a meeting at Trachenberg Castle in Silesia in July 1813, called for deliberately avoiding battle with Napoleon while actively seeking battle with his marshals, such as Ney at Dennewitz, entrusted with independent command. In the mean-

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time, the Allies planned to consolidate their various armies in eastern Germany to give themselves overwhelming power and strength for such a time when they decided to take on Napoleon again in a set-piece battle.

The situation in central Europe had changed dramatically in just a year's time. In June 1812 French Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte had led the 500,000 troops of his Grande Armée into Russia. Lt. Gen. Mikhail Kutusov's Russian army withdrew in the face of his bold advance; and as they did so, they conducted a scorched-earth strategy designed to deprive the Grande Armée of the food and forage necessary to sustain its campaign. After the inconclusive clash at Borodino that resulted in staggering losses for both armies, Napoleon entered a nearly deserted Moscow that hardly could be regarded as a strategic victory. Fires destroyed the city in September, and the starving French army began its tragic retreat on October 19. When the worn out soldiers of the Grande Armée stumbled back across the Berezina River in late November, just 35,000 remained in the French ranks. Turning over command to Marshal Joachim Murat, Napoleon left his troops on December 5 and hurried to Paris in order to raise a new army.

From that point on, Russian Emperor Alexander I, who had declined Napoleon's offer of peace while his troops were on Russian soil, became his implacable enemy. After a brief halt at the border to rest and receive reinforcements, the Russian army crossed into East Prussia on December 30. Alexander, who had once been Napoleon's ally, accompanied his troops as they entered Prussia. With the myth of Napoleon's invincibility shattered, Prussia rose up against Napoleon. Prussian General Ludwig Yorck von Wartenburg, who commanded a Prussian auxiliary force sent to fight with the Russians, signed a truce with the Russians on December 30, 1812, and the two powers soon signed a military alliance. Prussian King Frederick William III then declared war on France on March 7, 1813.

Napoleon's new army comprised survivors from the Russian campaign, veteran troops from Spain, National Guard troops, and the conscripts of the class of 1813. By mid-April 1813, the French emperor had scraped together an army of 225,000 men. The army, however, bore no resemblance to the veteran army that had invaded Russia. Tens of thousands of teenage recruits, nicknamed "Marie Louises" after their teenage empress, lacked combat experience and suffered from low morale. Battalions had been cobbled together into provisional regiments. These regiments lacked unit cohesion; that is, the soldiers lacked the bond that came from serving together in the field, had no sense of commitment to the unit, and did not have a shared sense of mission and purpose. As for the Grande Armée's cavalry, catastrophic loss of horses during the Russian campaign prevented Napoleon from completely rebuilding that branch of service. This would severely restrict the ability of Napoleon and his marshals to conduct reconnaissance operations and pursuits in the coming campaign.

The princes of the small German states welded by Napoleon into the Confederation of the Rhine in 1806 remained loyal, albeit apprehensive, and fielded contingents from Baden, Berg, Hesse-Darmstadt, Westphalia, and Wurttemberg. King Frederick Augustus I of Saxony placed a division of infantry and division of cavalry under Napoleon's command. Napoleon also received from his allies an Italian division and a Polish

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TOP ROW: French Marshals Joachim Murat; Michel Ney; Étienne MacDonald; and Claude Victor. BOTTOM ROW: Allied commanders Crown Prince Charles John; Prince Barclay de Tolly; Prince Eugene of Wurttemberg; Prince Karl Philip of Schwarzenberg.

Wikimedia

corps under Lt. Gen. Josef Poniatowski.

In the first two major battles of the 1813 campaign, Napoleon defeated combined Russo-Prussian armies in Saxony at Lutzen on May 2 and at Bautzen on May 21. Both sides needed a breather. Napoleon proposed an armistice, which was welcomed by his adversaries, and the two parties concluded the agreement on June 4.

The cease-fire ended on August 11 when Austria and Sweden declared war on Napoleon. The Sixth Coalition arrayed against Napoleon included Russia, Prussia, Austria, Sweden, Great Britain, Portugal, Spain, and a number of small German states. With Great Britain, Spain, and Portugal engaged against the French forces in Spain, it fell to the Russian, Prussian, Austrian, and Swedish armies to go to war against Napoleon's newly raised Grande Armée in Central Europe.

The Trachenberg Plan called for organizing the Allied forces into three independent armies converging from several directions to entrap Napoleon and ultimately force him into a decisive battle where he would be crushed under the weight of their superior numbers. Whereas Napoleon would be lucky to field 160,000 troops, the Allies could assemble twice that number.

The childless Swedish King Charles XIII had adopted Bernadotte as his heir in 1810. As the Swedish Crown Prince Charles John, Bernadotte commanded the Army of the North made up of Russians, Prussians, and Swedes. Prussian Field Marshal Gebhard Leberecht von Blücher led the Russo-Prussian Army of Silesia situated between the Army of the North and the Army of Bohemia.

The Army of Bohemia, which was the largest of the three armies, comprised Austrians, Russians and Prussians. Austrian Field Marshal Karl Philip, the Prince of Schwarzenberg, not only commanded the Army of Bohemia but also had overall command of the three armies. The three rulers, Russian Emperor Alexander I, Austrian Emperor Francis II, and Prussian King Frederick William III, accompanied Schwarzenberg and established their headquarters at Rotha.

General Levin August von Bennigsen, the German-born commander of Russia's Army of Poland had received orders to march as rapidly as possible to reinforce the three armies on the front. General Hieronymus von Colloredo-Mansfeld, who commanded an Austrian corps, also had orders to conduct a forced march to the battlefront as part of the Allies' quest to bring all available manpower to bear against Napoleon's restored Grande Armée.

Napoleon's plan was to defend the line of the Elbe River. He considered the overall situation as favorable to him. He could operate on shorter lines of communications than the Allied armies, which would need at least six days to concentrate their forces. Having established his base at the fortified Saxon capital of Dresden, the French emperor intended to defeat Allied armies piecemeal.

Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

Prussian Field Marshal Gebhard von Blücher checked Marshal Michel Ney's advance on Berlin at Dennewitz.

Adhering to the Trachenberg Plan, the Allies defeated French marshals at Grossbeeren, Katzbach, and Kulm over a two-week period from August 23 to September 6. Yet when Schwarzenberg's Army of Bohemia found itself assailed by Napoleon at Dresden on August 26-27, it suffered a sharp defeat. Napoleon did his very best to rush with the main army to the support of threatened outlying corps, only to find the Allies would withdraw when he approached. The constant marching and countermarching quickly wore out the raw recruits in the French army.

With the Allied ring tightening around him, Napoleon withdrew in the direction of Leipzig, where Marshal Joachim Murat's independent command had taken up a position south of the city. Aware that Schwarzenberg's Army of Bohemia was the closest Allied army to Leipzig, Napoleon planned to defeat Schwarzenberg first. After he accomplished that objective, Napoleon intended to remain in the Leipzig area and turn to face Blücher and Bernadotte, whose armies were moving south. Although Napoleon was aware that Blücher and Bernadotte were marching separately, his meager cavalry resources prevented him from conducting thorough reconnaissance. For that reason, he was unaware just how close Blücher was to Leipzig.

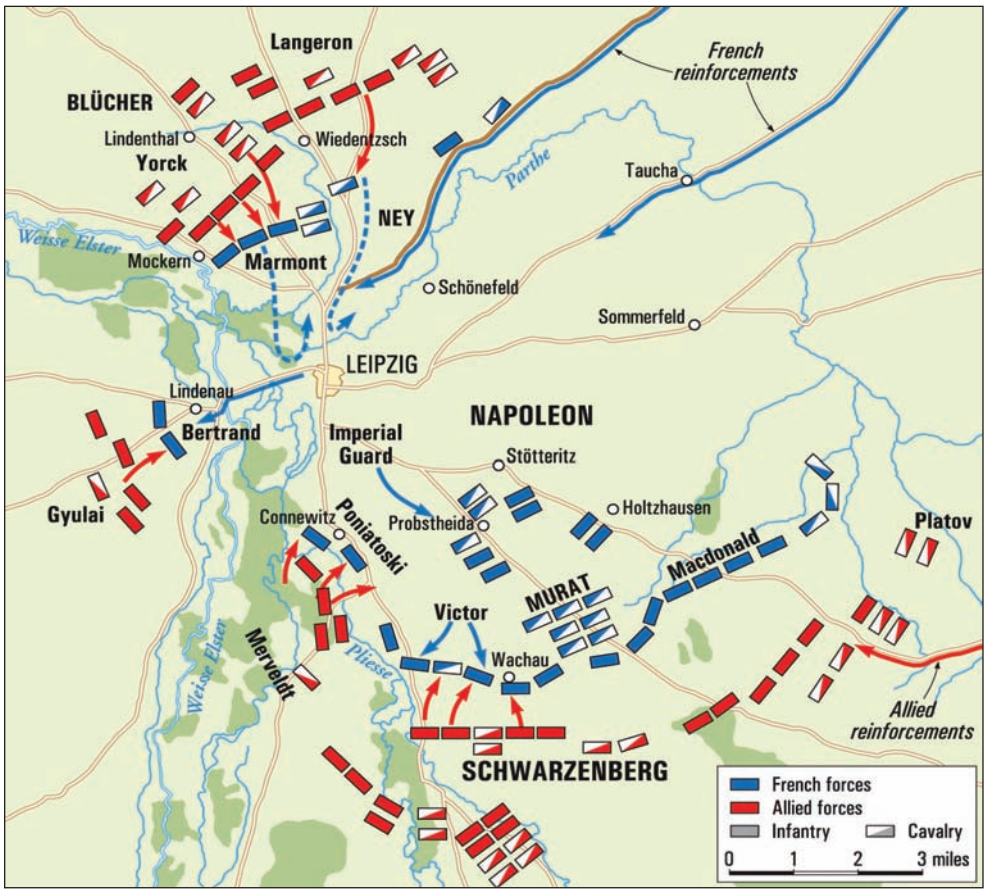
Napoleon arrived at Leipzig at midday on October 14. Situated 75 miles west of Dresden, Leipzig occupied a position at the confluence of the Elster and Pleisse rivers. From a geographical standpoint, the Elster and Pleisse, combined with the Elster tributaries, the Luppe and Parthe, divided the surrounding country into four sectors corresponding to the four points of the compass.

The countryside consisted of scattered villages and hamlets with stone houses, churches, and chateaus that served as ready-made fortified positions. Although the ground in the immediate vicinity of the rivers was marshy, there were wide stretches of open ground to the south and east that were well-suited for cavalry operations. Even so, the area between the Elster and Pleisse was particularly swampy, and the Elster was only passable over the causeway at Lindenau.

As Napoleon entered Leipzig, he heard the crash of musketry to the south, where Murat had become hotly engaged against a reconnaissance in force by Schwarzenberg's Army of Bohemia. After a day of heavy fighting around Liebertwolkwitz on October 14, where one of the largest cavalry clashes of the Napoleonic Wars took place, Murat held fast to his positions.

After concentrating all of his immediately available forces, at the end of October 14, Napoleon had 177,000 men and 690 guns at Leipzig, with 13,000 men in Reynier's VII Corps and 4,200 men in General Antoine Guillaume Delmas' division of Marshal Joseph Souham's III Corps on

MAP: Four columns of Russians and Austrians advanced against Napoleon's Grande Armée from three directions on the first day of the battle. The attacks, though, were poorly coordinated. RIGHT: Russian grenadiers spearheaded a powerful attack against Marshal Claude Victor's II Corps at Wachau. Although the village changed hands several times, the French held onto it.



Map © 2023 Philip Schwartzberg, Meridian Mapping, Minneapolis, MN

the way. In contrast, the Allies had a total of 334,000 and 1,500 guns, the combined total of the three armies that would be on hand for the battle. Schwarzenberg's Army of Bohemia, which was already in the Leipzig area, numbered 203,000 men. Blücher's 64,000-strong Army of Silesia was fast approaching and was expected to be on hand soon. Last but not least, the 67,000 troops of Bernadotte's Army of the North followed Blücher's army.

Both sides spent October 15 deploying their forces and making plans for the anticipated battle the next day. After completing his dispositions, Napoleon put Murat in overall command of the southern sector. Marshal Claude Victor's II Corps and General Jacques Lauriston's V Corps were situated between the villages of Wachau and Liebertwolkwitz.

In reserve behind Lauriston were 2nd Old Guard Division under General Philibert Curial, I Young Guard Corps under Marshal Nicolas Oudinot, II Young Guard Corps under Marshal Edouard Mortier, and Guard Artillery under General Antoine Drouot. The IX Corps under Marshal Charles-Pierre Augereau, the 1st Old Guard Division under General Louis Friant, the Guard Cavalry under General Etienne Nansouty, and the I Cavalry Corps under General Victor Latour-Maubourg were stationed further back at the village of Probstheida.

In the sector between Connewitz and Markkleeberg were the VIII (Polish) Corps under Jozef Poniatowski and IV (Polish) Cavalry Corps. In the southeastern sector near Holzhausen were the XI Corps under Marshal Etienne MacDonald and General Horace Sebastiani's II Cavalry Corps.

Marshal Michel Ney had overall command of the northern sector of the French army at Leipzig. His forces consisted of Souham's III Corps, Marshal Auguste de Marmont VI Corps, General Henri Bertrand's IV Corps, and General Jean-Toussaint Arrighi's III Cavalry Corps. The 27th Polish Infantry Division under General Jan Henryk Dabrowski, which was detached from the VIII Corps, was deployed at Weideritzsch.

Napoleon had established a line of outposts to the east and northeast to furnish advance warning of the arrival of any Allied forces and to watch for the arrival of Reynier VII Corps and Delmas' division that were escorting supply and artillery trains from Duben.

Napoleon intended to take the initiative and attack the Allies. He first intended to pin Schwarzenberg in the southern sector between the Pleisse and Parthe rivers. Once this was done, he would dispatch MacDonald's and Sebastiani's corps to envelop Schwarzenberg's right flank. If needed, further troops from the north sector would be brought up to reinforce MacDonald and Sebastiani to deliver the final blow.

If forced to retreat, Napoleon intended to withdraw northeast towards Torgau in order to link up with Reynier and Delmas. With that in mind, he placed his supply trains and artillery parks to the northwest of Leipzig. As a forethought, Napoleon placed cavalry pickets from Arrighi's III Cavalry Corps to guard the causeway at Lindenau on the west bank of the Elster River at the head of the causeway in case the army needed to withdraw southwest toward Weissenfels on the Saale River.

The Allied plans for October 16 called for the main attack to be delivered along the right bank of the Pleisse River against the line of Markkleeberg, Wachau, and Liebertwolkowitz. Schwarzenberg gave the task to Russian General Barclay de Tolly with the bulk of the Army of Bohemia's troops.

Barclay's forces consisted of Austrian IV Corps

Museum of the Patriotic War of 1812, Moscow

under General Johann Klenau, nine Cossack regiments under General Matvei Platov, and a combat group under Russian General Peter Wittgenstein. The Russian combat group was made up of General Mikhail Gorchakov's I Corps, General Prince Eugene of Wurttemberg's II Corps, General Friedrich Kleist von Nollendorf's Prussian II Corps, and General Paul Pahlen's Russian Cavalry Corps.

Stationed at Rotha were reserves under Russian Grand Duke Konstantin, Alexander I's brother. These reserve forces consisted of the Russian III (Grenadier) Corps under General Nikolay Rayevski, Russian-Prussian V (Guard) Corps under General Aleksey Yermolov, and Russian Cuirassier/Guard Cavalry Corps under General Dmitry Golitzin.

In the center, between the Pleisse and Elster rivers, General Maximilian Merveldt's Austrian II Corps would advance between the Pleisse and Elster rivers against Connewitz. Austrian III Corps under Field Marshal Ferenc Gyulai was to advance along the west bank of Elster to Lindenau. Separated by two rivers, the three Allied forces were to operate largely independent of each other.

On the morning of October 16, on the assumption that Blücher was still some distance away, Napoleon ordered Ney at 7 a.m. to send Marmont's VI Corps from his position in the northern sector to a location between Leipzig and Liebertwolkwitz. This move would place Marmont in position to support either the attack by MacDonald's and Sebastiani's corps against the Allied right flank or support Gyulai's corps at Lindenau should it come under Allied attack.

After the fog dissipated, the action began with Barclay pushing forward along the right bank of the Pleisse. On Barclay's right flank, Klenau's Austrian IV Corps captured lightly defended Kolmberg Heights to the northeast of Liebertwolkwitz and on the left Prussian II Corps under Kleist fought its way into Markkleeberg, only to be thrown back by a determined French counterattack.

The Russian I Corps under Gorchakov attacked Liebertwolkwitz defended by Lauriston and the Russian II Corps under Prince Eugene of Wurttemberg attacked Wachau, defended by Victor. The fighting for Wachau was brutal. The destroyed village changed hands several times, but by the end of the day the French still possessed Wachau. Gorchakov's columns, shattered by massed artillery fire from Lauriston's corps, fell back. Doing so, they lost contact with Prince Eugene.

Napoleon moved reserves forward to support the front line. Augereau took up positions behind Poniatowski, Oudinot deployed behind Victor and Mortier behind Lauriston. Napoleon shifted the Old Guard and Murat's three cavalry corps to a central position behind Markkleeberg and Liebertwolkwitz.

On the Allied left Merveldt's Austrian II Corps splashed through the swampy ground between the Elster and the Pleisse heading for the French right flank at Connewitz and Dolitz with the aim of enveloping Markkleeberg. Merveldt's lead elements captured a small chateau at Dolitz, but were stopped by Poniatowski.

At 10 a.m., just as Marmont began moving south, Blücher's leading elements began engaging the French outposts. Ney immediately halted Marmont with orders to take up new positions at Mockern. Aware that Napoleon wanted troops shifted to the south, Ney dispatched Bertrand in Marmont's place. As Bertrand began to move a half hour later, Gyulai's corps attacked toward Lindenau. The Austrians drove in Arrighi's cavalry pickets. Arrighi sent to Ney for help.

Ney responded by redirecting Bertrand over the causeway in time to repulse Gyulai's advance on Lindenau. Next, Ney dispatched Souham's understrength III Corps consisting of two of its three divisions, to the south. This left Ney only with Marmont's corps and Dabrowski's division in the north.

After three hours of fighting, the Allies still had not made any inroads anywhere. At that point, the momentum of the Allied attack began to

wane. Barclay's infantry could not advance in the face of punishing fire from French artillery and began to edge back. Seeing Allied pressure reduced, Napoleon judged the time right for a counterattack. He ordered the corps of Lauriston, Victor, and Augereau to fix Barclay from the front while two cavalry corps attacked the vulnerable Allied center. At the same time, MacDonald and Sebastiani would envelop the Allied right flank, keeping Barclay pinned against the marshy banks of the Pleisse River.

Seeing French columns begin to gather between Wachau and Liebertwolkwitz, Barclay brought up Rayevski's Grenadier Corps and Alexander ordered the Russian and Prussian Guards to back up Rayevski. Meanwhile, Schwarzenberg received a request to send Austrian reinforcements to the right bank of the Pleisse. Pulling an Austrian division from the reserve, he sent it on its way.

The French attack began at midday. After two hours, the unrelenting pounding from French artillery severely damaged the Allied front line. Especially serious casualties were in Prince Eugene of Wurttemberg's Russian II Corps, where some battalions were reduced to company size. Under Murat's orders Latour-Maubourg personally led forward General Etienne Bordesoulle's heavy cavalry division. Leading the charge, six French and two Saxon cuirassier regiments punched a hole in Prince Eugene's line. Sabering gunners as they cut a swath through the Austrian line, the French cuirassiers came dangerously close to Alexander's command post.

All along the length of Barclay's front line, the Russian and Prussian units fell back under heavy pressure. Following the I Cavalry Corps, French Guard Cavalry shattered Kleist's corps. Only Rayevski's grenadiers, formed into squares, held steady. Flowing around the Russian squares while taking volleys from all sides, Bordesoulle's cuirassiers rode on. As they did so, they disordered the Russian Guard Light Cavalry which was just coming up and had not yet deployed for battle. The French seemed on the verge of victory. "The world still turns for us!" Napoleon shouted to his secretary Agathon Fain.

Barclay moved his heavy cavalry to plug the gap torn in his line by French cavalry. He brought up fast-moving horse artillery to bolster his position. After quickly coming on line, the guns opened a punishing fire on the French horsemen. With saddles emptying around him, a cannonball shattered Latour-Maubourg's leg. "What are you crying about?" he remarked to his tearful valet when it had to be amputated. "You have one less boot to polish."

Elsewhere on the battlefield, General Orlov-Denisov led the Life-Guard Cossack Regiment to relieve pressure on Guard Light Cavalry. The Guards rallied, and together with Russian and Prussian cavalry from the Allied reserve, pushed the French horsemen back.

At the same time heavy fighting wore on around Wachau with the French troops of Victor and Oudinot clashing with Rayevski's spirited grenadiers. The fighting see-sawed back and forth in the village, but the French prevailed. On the far Allied right, the enveloping maneuver by three French corps (MacDonald XI Corps, Lauriston's V Corps, and Sebastiani's II Cavalry Corps) failed to dislodge Gorchakov and Klenau, who benefited from the timely support of Pahlen's cavalry.

Austrian General Frederick Bianchi, who led two infantry and a cavalry corps, counterattacked the Allied left at 4 p.m. His troops flung back the French under Augereau and Victor, forcing them to withdraw behind Markkleeberg. The dangerous situation on the French right was salvaged by the arrival of a division of the Old Guard, followed by the arrival of one division from Souham's III Corps. The fresh French troops drove back Bianchi's troops. In addition, they ejected Merveldt's troops from Dolitz and pushed them back across the Pleisse. In a reverse of Austrian arms, Merveldt was captured. After infantry and cavalry on both sides pulled back in the center, sporadic artillery exchange continued from maximum ranges before dying down.

While heavy fighting continued in the south,

Military History Institute, Hungary

ABOVE: White-uniformed Hungarians assault a French position in a wooded tract. OPPOSITE: Swedish troops attack French positions at one of Leipzig's town gates. As the battle wore on, the Allies improved the coordination of their attacks.

Blücher went into action in the north. Advancing at 2 p.m. from Schkeuditz, he intended to strike Marmont's right flank. At the same time, General Ludwig Yorck's I Prussian Corps began its advance on Mockern. A powerful force under Russian General Louis Alexander Langeron, composed of three Russian infantry and one cavalry corps, attacked Dabrowski's Polish division at Wiederitzsch. Expecting additional French forces to arrive from the direction of Duben, Blücher left General Fabian Sacken's Russian XI Corps in reserve.

At that point, Ney recalled one of the divisions of Souham's III Corps that was moving toward Wachau and sent it back to support Marmont. Souham's other division commanded by Delmas continued south where it eventually reached Dolitz in time to assist in repulsing Merveldt's attack.

As Dabrowski was falling back under the weight of superior numbers, Delmas' French division, the third division of Souham's III Corps, appeared on the Duben road. In the mistaken belief that a large French force was advancing against him, Langeron halted his troops. This afforded Delmas an opportunity to get his troops across the Parthe River unopposed and continue toward Leipzig. Delmas, though, abandoned most of the wagons in the supply train that he was escorting.

Yorck's I Prussian Corps held Mockern, which was situated 75 miles north of Leipzig. The Prussian general repeatedly attacked the positions of Marmont's VI Corps. Prussian infantrymen reached the outskirts of the village several times. With fixed bayonets, they charged repeatedly against French soldiers defending the houses in the village. Eventually after three hours of heavy fighting, Yorck's infantry fell back in disorder.

Ney ordered a Wurttemberg cavalry brigade to charge at 5 p.m., but the stubborn Wurttembergers refused. This forced Marmont to attack with only infantry. Yorck countered with a cavalry charge that compelled Marmont's foot soldiers to call off their attack and retreat.

The Prussians soon captured Mockern. The approach of night prevented Sacken's XI corps from exploiting the attack and Marmont rallied his corps south of the village, leaving Mockern in Prussian hands.

The Prussians, realizing they had considerable momentum, pitched into Dabrowski's Poles and drove them back toward Eutritzsch. The Poles subsequently linked up with Marmont's troops. Arrighi's cavalry moved into position behind the Poles to support them. One of Souham's divisions, which spent the day marching and countermarching around Leipzig, arrived too late to participate in the fighting. Both sides fighting in the northern sector suffered heavily, with Yorck's corps bearing the brunt of fighting and casualties.

The Allies suffered 30,000 casualties at Leipzig, while the French lost 25,000 men. If Napoleon remained in position to fight a second day, he knew that his reinforcements consisted of just the 14,000 troops of Reynier's VII Corps to bolster his strength, while the Allies expected significant reserves in the form of Bernadotte's Army of the North, Bennigsen's Army of Poland, and Colloredo's Austrian I Corps.

Napoleon could not admit the possibility of defeat which meant giving up control of Germany and abandoning 100,000 French troops garrisoning fortresses on the Elbe, Oder, and Vistula rivers. While waiting for Reynier's corps to arrive, Napoleon decided to send his high-ranking prisoner, Austrian General Merveldt, to Emperor Francis II with an offer of an armistice as a ploy to buy more time. Sensing Napoleon's weakness, the Allied monarch ignored the offer.

There was little action on October 17. Blücher initially advanced against Marmont and Dabrowski, pushing them further, but halted after receiving word from Allied headquarters about the general offensive set for the next day.

Even the arrival of Reynier's VII Corps did not make up for the French losses suffered the previous day. By that time in the battle, Napoleon could field no more than 165,000 men and 740 guns. The French emperor spent the day in inactivity, awaiting a response to his offer of armistice, which never came. Although he still believed he could beat the Allies, Napoleon took some precautions in case of retreat to the west. He ordered additional bridges built at Lindenau, but they were not completed in time. At the same time, Bertrand prepared to move toward Weissenfels to secure bridges over the Saale River at Weissenfels.

Pulling his forces closer to Leipzig during the night, Napoleon deployed them in a semicircle between the Pleisse and Parthe. The left flank was anchored on the Parthe at Schonefeld, and the right on the Pleisse at Connewitz. The key to the position was Probstheida located in the center. Napoleon left small forward detachments at Dolitz, Wachau, Liebertwolkwitz, and Holtzhousen to delay the anticipated Allied attack.

Bennigsen and Colloredo reached the battlefield that day and went into position on the extreme right of the Allied line. Bernadotte also arrived and deployed to the left of Blücher. As the fog began to dissipate at 7 a.m. on October 18, Allied guns opened fire all along the line, signaling the advance as Schwarzenberg, Barclay, and Bennigsen pushed their deep columns forward. The French forward detachments put up a spirited fight, but were slowly falling back to the main French line.

Barclay, deployed in the center, took Wachau and Liebertwolkwitz and after approaching Probstheida halted, waiting for Bennigsen to come up on line with him. Bennigsen, attempting to envelop the French left flank defended by MacDonald and Reynier, was held up for a time, before capturing Holzhausen and several nearby hamlets. On Bennigsen's right flank, Platov's Cossacks attacked two Wurttemberg cavalry regiments in front of them, both of which went over to the Russian side.

In the late morning, Bennigsen came up on the line with Barclay and the main battle began in earnest. On Barclay's orders, Wittgenstein advanced against Probstheida, the key position in the center, defended by Victor and Lauriston. The village was flanked by 50 French guns on each side and the Old Guard was ready in reserve. Wittgenstein advanced in three lines, with Kleist's Prussians leading the way, with Gorchakov and Prince Eugene's Russians in support.

Horace Vernet

ABOVE: Napoleon promoted General Jozef Poniatowski to marshal during the battle, but a badly wounded Poniatowski drowned on October 19 in the White Elster River. OPPOSITE: General Jean Reynier's VII Corps fought a rearguard action to cover the French withdrawal, but the premature detonation of explosives on a bridge left 20,000 French forces trapped with no escape.

Weathering the storm of artillery fire, the Prussians broke into Probstheida. The French, however, drove them out. Gorchakov came up to support Kleist and together the Russians and Prussians fought into Probstheida again, only to be ejected by the counterattack of the Old Guard. Barclay halted waiting for developments in the north and on the left.

On the left, Austrian reserve corps under Prince Louis William of Hesse-Homburg crossed the Pleisse, captured Dolitz and continued against Poniatowski and Augereau at Connewitz. A timely counterattack by Oudinot's Young Guard corps stopped the Austrian attack and temporarily retook Dolitz. Hesse-Homburg occupied Dolitz again, but was wounded by French fire while leading the attack. Command of his troops devolved to Colloredo. The French attack threatened the Allied left flank and Schwarzenberg ordered Gyulai to move from his position at Grunau, where he was watching Lindenau and the road to Weissenfels, to cross the Pleisse to support Colloredo.

With additional forces Schwarzenberg secured the left flank and ordered Gyulai, whose troops were still on their way, to turn around and return to Grunau. With Gyulai no longer blocking the road to the southeast, Bertrand moved through Markranstadt to Weissenfels to secure bridges over the Salle River. Two divisions of Young Guard took over Bertrand's positions at Lindenau.

In the north, Blücher and Bernadotte advanced at 8 a.m. when cannon fire was already heard from the south. Driving on Mockau from the northwest, Blücher sent Yorck's and Sacken's corps against Dabrowski's Polish division at Mockau. Even though severely outnumbered, the brave Poles, who were supported by Arrighi's cavalry, fell back to the northern suburbs of Leipzig in good order. Nevertheless, the situation on their right flank at Schonefeld was growing increasingly desperate.

Langeron joined forces with Bernadotte with his three infantry and one cavalry corps and advanced on Mockau from the northeast. He forced a crossing over the Parthe at Mockau in the face of French guns and fought to the edge of Schonefeld, which was occupied by Marmont with Souham's lone division in reserve. The French turned Schonefeld, with its stone houses and walls, into a formidable defensive position.

After the initial frontal attack was repelled, the Russians brought up artillery and commenced firing on the enemy at point-blank range. After scouring the stone walls with grapeshot and blasting the houses, the Russians broke into the village, only to be checked when Ney sent Souham to reinforce Marmont. Bernadotte reinforced

Langeron with Russian and Swedish batteries and the British rocket battery under Captain Richard Bogue, the only British unit among the Allied armies. In an ensuing artillery duel, Bogue was killed. The fighting was brutal. The village changed hands several times, but by evening Schonefeld was in Langeron's hands.

Screened by Langeron, Bernadotte finally made a slow crossing over the Parthe River at Taucha around noon. He stayed there until mid-afternoon when he finally began moving toward Leipzig on Langeron's left. This move placed him in direct contact with Bennigsen on the extreme right flank of the Allied line. Allied forces had taken up positions on three sides of Leipzig. The only escape route from the city was through its western suburbs.

After a quick in-person meeting, Bernadotte sent Marshal Friedrich Wilhelm Freiherr von Bulow's corps to support Bennigsen and they advanced together on Sellerhausen, an eastern suburb of Leipzig, defended by Reynier. As the Russian columns were forming up, a Saxon infantry division, along with a cavalry brigade and artillery, defected to the Allies, creating a gap in Reynier's lines. The Saxons' move to the Allies was so rapid that the French, believing that the Saxons were attacking, cheered them.

The defection of the Saxons left Reynier with half of this corps. Bennigsen and Bulow quickly rushed forward to exploit the gap. Ney sent Reynier a division pulled from fighting around Schonefeld. Napoleon rushed Nansouty's cavalry corps to the threatened sector accompanied by Guard artillery. The emperor followed this force. Arriving at the threatened sector, Napoleon found the gap reoccupied by the division sent by Ney and Nansouty's corps.

Preferring to let the Russians and Prussians do the bulk of fighting, Bernadotte held back his Swedish troops. Upon the insistence of his senior Swedish officers, Napoleon committed Marshal Curt von Stedingk's Swedish corps to the fight at mid-afternoon. After heavy fighting, Bennigsen and Bulow took Sellerhausen just before nightfall.

Encroaching darkness put an end to the fighting. With his men exhausted and ammunition dwindling, Napoleon finally gave orders to retreat. Shortly after nightfall Napoleon sent the trains, artillery parks, and part of his cavalry over the Lindenau causeway. The Old Guard was to march next, followed by the Young Guard, then Augereau's IX Corps and Victor's II Corps, and lastly the three cavalry corps. Napoleon designated MacDonald's, Poniatowski's, and Reynier's corps to serve as the rearguard. For his bravery and faithful service, Napoleon promoted Poniatowski to marshal, presenting him with the marshal's baton on the battlefield.

Before dawn on October 19 the French began cautious withdrawal. Allied pickets reported the sounds of their movement, but it was not until two hours after sunrise that the Allied command realized that a full-scale French withdrawal was under way. By 10 a.m. the Allied forces renewed the attack on Leipzig.

The French rearguard corps began a fighting retreat, inching back under the weight of Allied numbers. The villages which were fought over the last three days were smoking ruins, all the environs were scattered with corpses and moaning wounded, dismantled cannons, horse carcasses, and dropped muskets. Jubilant Allied soldiers, who sensed that victory was near, broke into suburbs. They fought hand-to-hand, and house-to-house against the French infantry. Blücher's troops in the north penetrated deep into the French positions moving rapidly along the east bank of the Elster.

With sounds of fighting intensifying behind them, French troops filed quickly through Leipzig. In their haste, they broke ranks. This created a substantial jam as troops tried to press their way through the only defile at Lindenau. Napoleon and his entourage crossed over to Lindenau at 11 a.m. amid increasing disorder, while Prussian King

Continued on page 89

Stadtgeschichtliches Museum Leipzig

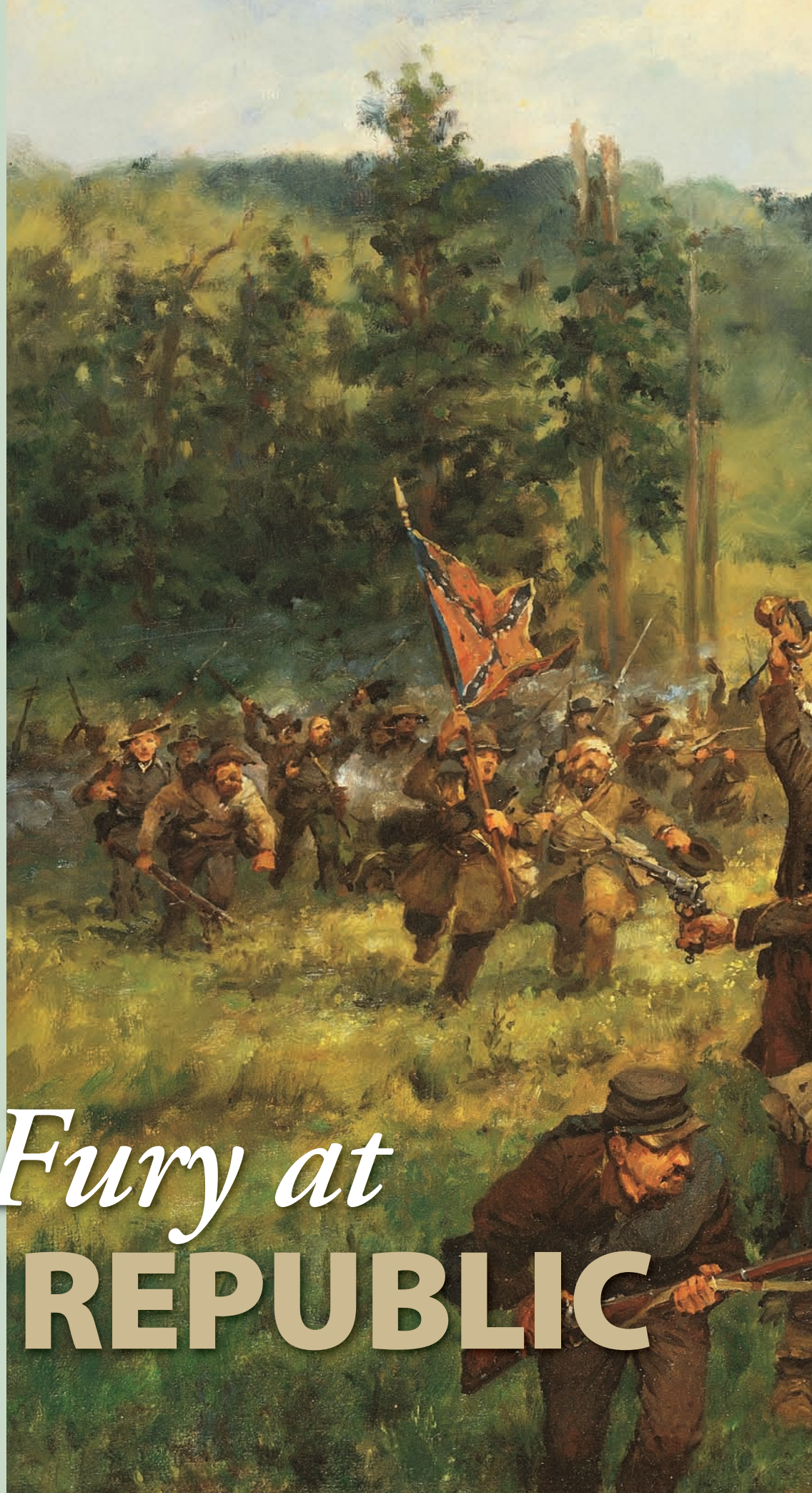
Confederate infantry on the northeastern outskirts of Port Republic in the Shenandoah Valley charged up the slopes of a ravine on June 9, 1862, against Union artillery that had been ravaging their ranks all morning. The Union cannoneers fired canister at the advancing Confederates, but they kept coming.

Federal infantry protecting the battery fought back desperately. With no time to reload, the opposing infantry fought with bayonets, clubbed muskets, and fists. The Union artillerists used their rammers and extractors as bludgeons. Not even the horses escaped the bloodbath as the Confederates shot them to prevent the Union artillery from limbering their guns. The action was the turning point in two days of hard fighting in the broad expanse of the valley south of the southern terminus of the Massanutten Mountain.

In spring 1862 Maj. Gen. Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson, who had won fame for his determined stand with his brigade of Virginians atop Henry Hill at First Manassas in July 1861, had returned after the battle to the Union section of the Shenandoah Valley. Jackson suffered a tactical defeat at Kernstown on March 23 against Brig. Gen. James Shields' Division, which at the time was part of Maj. Gen. Nathaniel Banks' army of the Union Department of the Shenandoah. Shields had been wounded in the arm by an artillery fragment the previous day, and had turned over command of his division to Colonel Nathan Kimball, who had led his troops in a well-executed assault against Jackson's line.

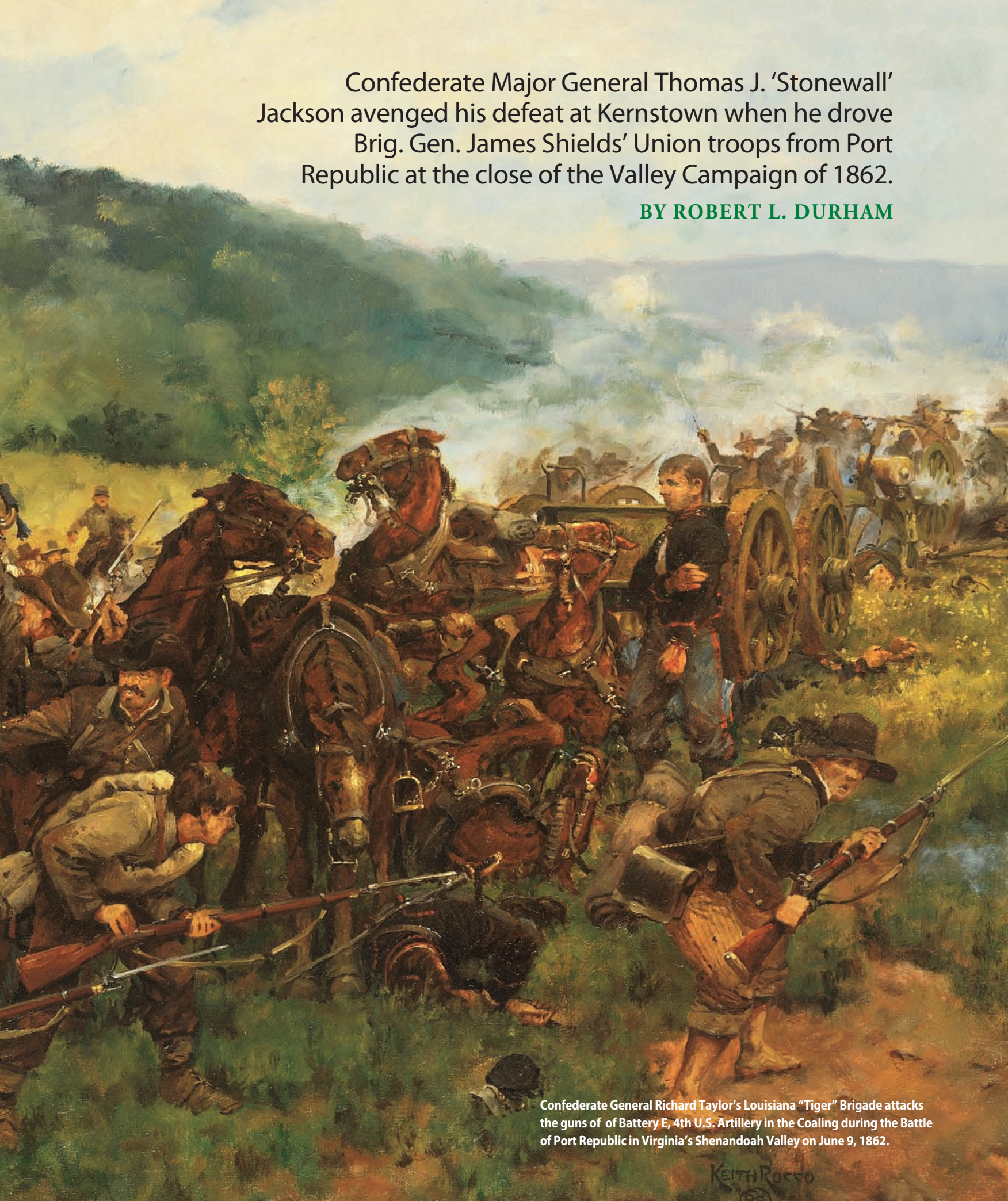
Kernstown, however, proved to be the only Union victory over Jackson over the course of the next six weeks. With his intimate knowledge of the geography and terrain in the Shenandoah Valley, Jackson marched his "foot cavalry," as his fast-moving infantry was known, up and down the Valley fighting off three different Union commands.

Rebel Fury at PORT REPUBLIC

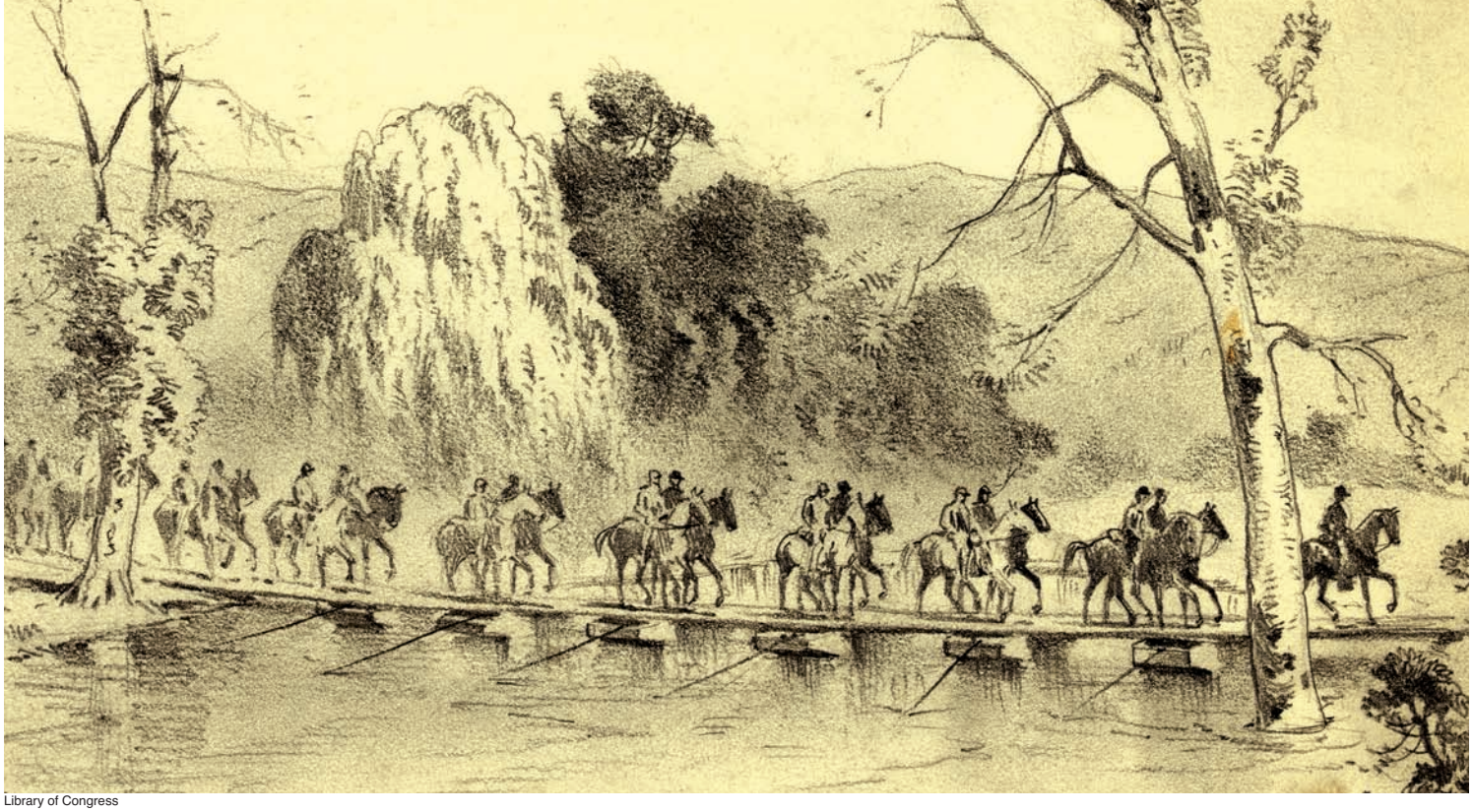


Confederate Major General Thomas J. 'Stonewall' Jackson avenged his defeat at Kernstown when he drove Brig. Gen. James Shields' Union troops from Port Republic at the close of the Valley Campaign of 1862.

BY ROBERT L. DURHAM



Confederate General Richard Taylor's Louisiana "Tiger" Brigade attacks the guns of of Battery E, 4th U.S. Artillery in the Coaling during the Battle of Port Republic in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley on June 9, 1862.



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ABOVE: "The army of General Fremont crossing the north fork of the Shenandoah at Mt. Jackson—Pursuit of Stonewall Jackson" by Edwin Forbes, June 5, 1862. OPPOSITE: General Jackson, center, in camp near Port Republic, Virginia. Exhausted after a long march, Jackson had hoped to attend a sermon on Sunday, June 8, with his Stonewall Brigade. But that morning, Jackson learned that Union troops under James Shields were near the town and the resulting clash would become the Battle of Cross Keys.

Just two weeks after Kernstown, Jackson joined forces on May 8 with Maj. Gen. Edward "Allegheny" Johnson's division and repulsed two Federal brigades of Maj. Gen. John C. Fremont's forces of the Union Army's Mountain Department at McDowell, Virginia. Fremont's vanguard, which had been trying to invade the Shenandoah Valley by way of the Staunton Turnpike, retreated north in search of another way into the Shenandoah Valley.

After his victory at McDowell, Jackson countermarched north to strike on May 23 Colonel John Kenly's brigade of Banks' army defending Front Royal, Virginia. Banks, who was with the rest of his troops at Strasburg, retreated north. Jackson routed Banks' troops two days later at Winchester. Banks, completely unnerved by the ordeal, withdrew 30 miles north across the Potomac River.

In the days that followed, Jackson withdrew south along the Valley Pike to Harrisonburg. Passing through the town on June 5 he led his army southeast to high ground north of Port Republic. By that time, Fremont had entered the main part of the Shenandoah Valley. He pursued Jackson on the west side of Massanutten Mountain, while Shields' division advanced south on the east side through the narrower Page Valley.

The town of Port Republic lay on the east side of the South Fork of the Shenandoah River. Port Republic was situated at the confluence of the North River and South River, which were tributaries of the South Fork. A long covered bridge spanned the North River on the west side of the town, but there was no bridge over the South River on the east side of town. There were, however, two fords that ran high from late spring rains.

Fremont's army, which comprised Brig. Gen. Louis Blenker's Division and three independent brigades, reached Harrisonburg on June 6. Meanwhile, the lead elements of Shields' division, which were commanded by Brig. Gen. Erastus Tyler, pushed south through Conrad's Store bound for Port Republic.

The two divisions of Jackson's Army, his own division and one commanded by Maj. Gen. Richard S. Ewell, had bivouacked on commanding heights between Cross Keys and Port Republic. The Federal plan called for the two Union columns, Fremont's command approaching Jackson's position from the northwest and Shields' command moving in from the northeast, to overwhelm Jackson's much smaller force. Jackson ordered Ewell on June 7 to position his 5,000 troops organized into four brigades to contest Fremont's advance. Fremont's command, which numbered 10,500 troops, seemed to have a considerable advantage over Ewell, but the veteran Confederate division commander had the advantage of fighting on the defensive ground of his choosing.

Exhausted from the rigors of the campaign, Jackson and his soldiers had an unpleasant surprise on the morning of Sunday, June 8. Old Jack anticipated a peaceful Sabbath that day. He planned to tour the army's position on the bluffs on the north bank of the South Fork of the Shenandoah, and afterwards attend a sermon by Major Robert Dabney, who was his chief of staff and also a Presbyterian minister. Dabney asked Jackson after dawn whether he should proceed with a sermon in light of the possibility of a battle that day. "I hope you will preach to the Stonewall Brigade, and I shall attend myself; that is, if we are not disturbed by the enemy," Jackson replied.

Six days earlier, Shields had established a strike force under Colonel Samuel S. Carroll that consisted of 150 mounted troopers, Battery L of the 1st Ohio Light Artillery, and some infantry. Shields instructed Carroll to burn the South Fork bridge at Conrad's Store to deny its use to Jackson should he try to exit the valley by marching east to cross the Blue Ridge Mountains via Brown's Gap or Swift Run Gap to rejoin Lee's army.

Finding the bridge at Conrad's Store already burned, Carroll decided to continue to Port Republic to burn the long covered bridge over the North River tributary of the South Fork. At midmorning on June 8 Carroll's cavalry splashed through the lower ford of the South River tributary of the South Fork of the Shenandoah River, accompanied by a section of artillery, which unlimbered and began firing at the Confederates.

Jackson, who had established his headquarters at the house of Dr. George W. Kemper in Port Republic, and the members of his staff with him scrambled to avoid capture. Jackson mounted his horse, Little Sorrel, and galloped across the covered bridge to safety. Reaching his troops on the north bank of the North Fork, he not only ordered Captain William T. Poague's Rockbridge Artillery to fire on the Federals in the north section of Port Republic, but also grabbed the nearest regiment, which was Colonel Samuel Fulkerson's 37th Virginia, and ordered it at the double-quick into Port Republic. "Charge right through, colonel, charge right through," Jackson said, waving his cap above his head. He then issued orders for three of his brigades to march south to expel the Union troops from the town.

Meanwhile, Confederate pickets in Port Republic, with the support of some Confederate artillery, made a stand in the southern half of Port Republic. Caught in converging fire, the Union troops in Port Republic withdrew from the town. Almost as soon as the skirmishing in Port Republic was over, Fremont's artillery to the northwest opened fire on Ewell's Division deployed on a ridgeline south of the crossroads of Cross Keys.

Fremont began his attack on June 8 with a heavy artillery bombardment that wounded two of Ewell's brigade commanders. Fremont's infantry assault consisted of sending Brig. Gen. Louis Blenker's brigade of German immigrants forward against the Confederate line. Brig. Gen. Isaac Trimble's Confederate Brigade, positioned to the east, fired into Blenker's flank, which unnerved the inexperienced Union troops. Jackson reinforced Ewell with two brigades, which was sufficient to contain another advance by the Union infantry against the Confederate left. In the halfhearted Union attack, the Union lost 684 troops compared to the Confederate loss of 288 men.

At Port Republic, on the night of June 8-9, Jackson held conferences with his subordinates. He also ordered the construction of a foot bridge over the South River because high water from recent rains precluded the crossing of infantry through the upper and lower fords on the east side of Port Republic. Jackson's troops positioned wagons, turned upside down, in the river and placed boards across their running gear. During the crossing of the river the next day, however, the boards slipped out of position. Despite their best efforts, the Confederates moving into position to contest Shields' advance would have to cross single file.

As Jackson prepared for the pending battle against Shields at Port Republic, he ordered Ewell to march all of his troops, except for Colonel John Patton's brigade, to reinforce Jackson's division. Patton would serve as the Confederate rearguard at Cross Keys.

Tyler ordered his troops to bivouac that night on the grounds of Lewiston, the Lewis family farm two miles northeast of Port Republic. For the coming battle, Tyler would have two infantry brigades, a cavalry regiment, and three artillery batteries.

The morning of June 9 dawned cool with clear skies. Jackson ordered Brig. Gen. William B. Taliaferro, the commander of the Third Brigade in his division, to recross the covered bridge over the North Fork and take up a position on the bluffs on the west bank. Jackson decided to use his First Brigade, also known as the Stonewall Brigade, to open the attack on Shields' infantry. It took them considerable time, however, to cross the makeshift bridge over the South River.

Tyler had 3,000 infantrymen under his command that day. He began by deploying the 1,600 troops, most of whom were from his brigade, in a battle line on the open ground on the east side of the South Fork of the Shenandoah River that ran from the Lewis Mill on the South Fork to Lewiston situated alongside the main road into Port Republic.

From left to right (main road to river) the Union infantry regiments were the 1st (West) Virginia, 5th Ohio, 7th Ohio, 29th Ohio, and 7th Indiana. To the left of the Union line, on a prominent knoll where the Lewis family made charcoal, which was aptly named "the Coaling,"

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the Federal artillery unlimbered. Three batteries took up a position at the Coaling, which was on a western spur of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

Tyler's three artillery batteries were deployed side by side on the Coaling. Captain Joseph Clark's Battery E of the 4th U.S. Artillery held a position on the extreme left of the Union army, Captain Lucius Robinson's Battery L of the 1st Ohio Artillery was in the center, and Captain James Huntington's Battery H of the 1st Ohio Artillery on the right side.

Because of a bottleneck in crossing the footbridge, the five regiments of the Stonewall Brigade did not arrive on the open ground on the east side of the South Fork at the same time. The 5th Virginia and the 27th Virginia regiments were the first to arrive. They advanced past the Baugher farm lane and went into line of battle in a field of mature wheat. The Rockbridge Artillery, led by Captain William T. Poague, moved into position to support the two infantry regiments. Poague had two rifled cannon and four smoothbore cannon. He placed his Parrott rifles between the two infantry regiments and stationed the smoothbores, which had too short a range to reach the Coaling, in a depression in the ground in the rear where they would remain until they were needed.

Union artillery at the Coaling thundered away at the Virginia infantry and artillery, hitting with lethal precision. Poague found counter battery fire to be ineffective as the smoke from the Union guns obscured their elevation and most of the Confederate artillery passed overhead.

Private Ned Moore of the Rockbridge Artillery served on the artillery crew of one of the 10-pounder Parrott guns. "We were hotly engaged [with] shells bursting around and pelting us with soft dirt as they struck the ground," wrote Moore. Captain Joseph Carpenter, commanding the Allegheny Artillery, had four guns in his battery. He placed a two-gun section to the right of the 27th Virginia.

The Union artillery ignored the Confederate guns. The Union gunners maintained a punishing and relentless fire against the Confederate infantry. For nearly an hour, the Southern foot soldiers clung to the ground in the wheatfield, a helpless target for the Union guns. Brig. Gen. Charles S. Winder, commanding the Stonewall Brigade, ordered his two lead regiments, the 5th Virginia and 27th Virginia, to advance to a fence halfway between the opposing lines where they could exchange fire with the Union infantry arrayed against them.

When the 2nd Virginia and 4th Virginia regiments of the Stonewall Brigade arrived from Port Republic, Winder ordered these two regiments, together with another two-gun section of Carpenter's Battery, to move through the thick woods to outflank the Federal artillery at the Coaling.

The men handling the section of artillery, however, could not force their way through the thick underbrush. They returned to the flat ground and joined the other guns of the Alleghany and Rockbridge artillery batteries in the center of the Confederate line. As the two companies of Virginia infantry drew close to their objective, Colonel James W. Allen of the 2nd Virginia ordered his two left companies, as they approached a ravine, to fire on the Union gunners. He intended the close-range fire to drive them away from their guns. The tactic failed, though, because the Union infantry guarding the guns returned the fire. The covering fire enabled the cannoneers to continue working their rifled guns.

Some of the Union gunners turned their artillery pieces towards the flanking force and fired canister at them. The deadly canister fire routed the 2nd Virginia, which fled into the woods. Allen ordered both regiments to remain in the dense thickets for the time being.

Meanwhile, the Rockbridge Artillery and the Allegheny Artillery continued to oppose courageously but fruitlessly against the Federal artillery at the Coaling. Several times enemy shells "passed between the wheels and under the axle of our gun, bursting at the trail," wrote Moore. Carpenter's

battery had much the same experience. The crew of one of its guns eventually stopped firing altogether because they ran out of ammunition. In the face of the considerable strength of the Federal infantry, Winder ordered the 5th Virginia and 27th Virginia Infantry to fall back to Baugher lane to regroup.

In the first hour of the battle, Jackson had not gained any tactical advantage over Tyler. He knew that he must silence the Union guns on the Coaling to prevent them from shattering his line of battle. About that time, Brig. Gen. Richard Taylor's Louisiana Tiger Brigade had arrived at the battlefront. Jackson ordered Taylor to resume the effort to outflank the Union guns at the Coaling. Jackson instructed Taylor to approach the guns on a wider arc. In this way, the Confederates just might be able to conceal their movement until they reached the ravine on the south side of the Coaling.

Because Taylor did not know the route, Jackson assigned Jedediah Hotchkiss, his topographical engineer, to serve as guide. "Jackson promptly ordered Hotchkiss to lead that command around through the forest, turn the Federal left and capture the battery on the coal hearth," recalled Hotchkiss.

Jackson detached Colonel Harry Hays' 7th Louisiana Infantry from Taylor's brigade and ordered Hays to reinforce the Virginia regiments engaged against Tyler's Union troops. Hays inserted his Louisianans between the two Virginia regiments. Another regiment, Lt. Col. Thomas S. Garnett's 48th Virginia of Patton's Brigade arrived on the field and Jackson placed it in reserve on the Baugher farm lane.

Union soldiers observed Taylor's Louisianans enter the dense woods at the base of the Blue Ridge Mountains to try again to capture the guns at the Coaling. Although the gunners fired their rifled artillery at the Louisianans, the shells could not penetrate the woods

To cover Taylor's flanking maneuver, Winder decided to charge the Union infantry, even though he was greatly outnumbered. The Confederates "moved forward with a cheer," recalled Winder. As they advanced, though, they came under heavy fire not only from the Union infantry to their front, but also from the Union artillery firing obliquely from the Coaling.

The Confederates halted at the same post and rail fence where they had sheltered before. "The enemy opened a terrific fire upon us," wrote Lt. Col. John Funk of the 5th Virginia, "We returned it and were exposed to a murderous cross-fire." This crossfire came from the 7th Indiana, to their immediate front, as well as the 29th Ohio deployed in the wheatfield to their right. "My men stood firmly and poured death into their ranks with all the rapidity and good will that the position would admit," Funk wrote.

The volleys from the 5th Virginia took a toll on the Federal troops, who soon ran out of ammunition but remained staunchly in their ranks. The 29th Ohio to the left of the 7th Indiana also suffered severely. Meanwhile, the 7th Ohio received fire from the right companies of the 7th Louisiana and the left companies of the 27th Virginia.

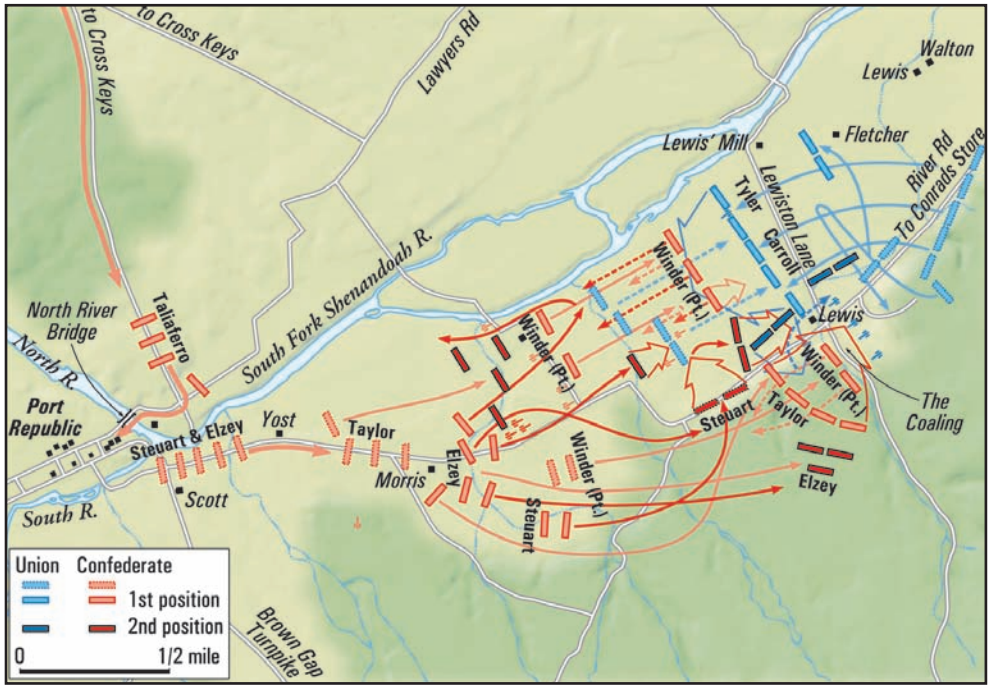
Hays' 7th Louisiana moved forward on the right of the 5th Virginia. They advanced to the fence in the middle of the wheatfield. Some of the more aggressive soldiers climbed over the fence. They were met every step of the way by stinging volleys from the Union infantry. The Louisianians also suffered from the artillery at the Coaling.

Colonel Andrew J. Grigsby's 27th Virginia aimed for the same fence as the other two regiments, closing on the right of the 7th Louisiana. Shells from the Coaling immediately found their marks in the regiment. "The ranks were considerably thinned," wrote Grigsby. The Virginians advanced past the fence with little opposition from the Union infantry, which concentrated most of its fire on the two left regiments of the Confederate battle line.

Some of the 27th's men took up positions behind the outbuildings and in the orchard at Lewiston. Grigsby ordered the rest to drop back on a line with the 7th Louisiana along the fence. They remained at that location for a while where they came "under a perfect shower of balls," wrote Grigsby.

Winder pushed Confederate artillery forward to support the three Confederate regiments behind the fence that were hotly engaged with the Union forces in front of them. A section of Carpenter's Battery unlimbered 30 yards behind the 27th Virginia, on a small knoll. In addition, a section of guns from Captain Charles Raines' Lee Battery of Ewell's Division arrived on the field and Winder integrated the guns into his line.

At the same time, Winder instructed Poague to advance one of his rifled guns and put it into action near Carpenter's guns. Poague directed his fire at the Union artillery at the Coaling. Meanwhile, Winder brought up Poague's four smoothbore guns, but they soon had to retire when they ran out of ammunition.



ABOVE: The commanding position of the Union artillery up on "The Coaling" was the key to the Battle of Port Republic. General Jackson knew that if Wheat's Battalion of Louisiana Tigers could capture those guns, the Union attack would crumble. OPPOSITE: The Battle of Cross Keys, a strategic Confederate victory for General "Stonewall" Jackson took place the day before the Battle of Port Republic. The scene was captured in a pencil drawing by American landscape painter Edwin Forbes.

The three Confederate infantry regiments held their advanced position at the midfield fence for as long as they could. Though some of the men, having had enough of the fight against superior numbers of Union infantry, began to creep towards the rear. Soon after, the entire line gave way. It had become demoralized and would have to be rallied before it could return to the fight. Of the 400 men of the 7th Louisiana that entered the battle, 162 were either killed or wounded. The

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Jackson used his redoubtable Louisiana Tigers as shock troops in the Valley Campaign.

The Louisiana Tiger Brigade took the name "Tigers" from a company in Major Chatham Roberdeau Wheat's 1st Special Battalion of the Louisiana Infantry. Wheat had raised the Tiger Rifles on the levee and in the alleys of New Orleans. Wheat soon raised additional companies, enough to make a battalion, which took the name Tigers from Wheat's initial company. "So villainous was the reputation of this battalion that every commander desired to be rid of it," said Brig. Gen. Richard Taylor, who would command the Louisiana brigade in the Valley Campaign.

After the Battle of First Manassas in July 1861, Wheat's Battalion was brigaded with the 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th Louisiana Infantry regiments. Like Wheat's Battalion, the entire brigade became known as the Louisiana Tiger Brigade. In autumn 1862 when another brigade of Louisianians formed, they became the Second Louisiana Brigade, and the original brigade had the distinction of being the First Louisiana Brigade.

Confederate President Jefferson Davis promoted Taylor to brigadier general in October 1861, just three months after he had arrived in Virginia with the 9th Lousiana. Taylor's brigade became part of Maj. Gen. Richard Ewell's division of four brigades. Ewell's division marched into the Shenandoah Valley in April 1862 to reinforce Maj. Gen. Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson's division already operating in the valley.

At the Battle of First Winchester on May 25, 1862, Taylor's Louisianans made a frontal attack in which they swept away the opposing Federal infantry. Afterwards, Old Jack habitually used the Tigers as shock troops by sending them into battle against parts of the Union line where he knew hard fighting would occur.

After the Battle of Port Republic, Jackson left the Shenandoah Valley to fight under General Robert E. Lee in the Peninsula Campaign. At the Battle of Gaines Mill on June 27, Wheat was killed and his battalion suffered heavy casualties. Taylor, believing that only Wheat could control the battalion, disbanded it and distributed its members among the other Louisiana regiments in his brigade.

After the Peninsula Campaign, Davis transferred Taylor to the Trans-Mississippi Department. He replaced Taylor with Brig. Gen. Harry T. Hays of the 7th Louisiana, who became the brigade's new commander.

The Tigers continued to distinguish themselves. At Antietam on September 17, 1862, they fought in farmer D.R. Miller's cornfield helping defend the Confederate left wing fighting against elements of Maj. Gen. Joseph "Fighting Joe" Hooker's Union I Corps. During the Battle of Gettysburg at dusk on July 2, Hays' Brigade stormed East Cemetery Hill and captured several Union artillery pieces before being driven from the position.

During the Confederate defeat at Rappahannock Station on November 7, 1863, more than half of the brigade was captured by Maj. Gen. George Meade's victorious Union troops. Most of the Tigers, though, returned to the Army of Northern Virginia as a result of prisoner exchanges in time to fight in the 1864 Overland Campaign. Hays lost one-third of his troops during the Battle of Wilderness on May 5, and he was severely wounded five days later during the clash at Spotsylvania Court House.

Lee reorganized his army later that month and merged the two Louisiana brigades. The consolidated brigade fought with Lt. Gen. Jubal Early's Army of the Valley in summer 1864 and eventually rejoined Lee's army in the trenches at Petersburg, Virginia. The brigade had just 373 men in its ranks when Lee surrendered at Appomattox Court House on April 9, 1865.

—Robert L. Durham

Members of Major Chatham Roberdeau Wheat's Louisiana Tigers parade in New Orleans in 1861. The enlisted men wear Zouave uniforms while officers at right wear more typical military dress.

5th Virginia on the left of the line retired next, but Funk rallied his men behind the Baugher farm lane.

The 27th Virginia was the last to abandon its forward position. When the Union infantry saw the Confederates abandoning the fence, they counterattacked. "The order was given, and with a yell the entire line poured its leaden hail into the gray-clad columns," wrote Private Secheverell of the 29th Ohio Infantry, "producing fearful slaughter, and following with a charge so impetuous that they were forced to retire from their secure position behind the fence."

When the Federals reached the midfield fence, their officers told them to lie down behind it and await the replenishment of their ammunition. The regimental commanders dispatched details of soldiers to go to the rear and find additional cartridges. Most of the 29th Ohio also stopped at the fence, though a few of its soldiers went a short distance past it. Private Allen Mason of Company C of the 29th Ohio captured the 7th Louisiana's flag.

The 5th Ohio and 7th Ohio charged beyond the fence into the wheatfield. The 1st (West) Virginia advanced from Lewiston, leaving the Confederates holding the outbuildings and orchard behind them. The advancing Union troops followed on the left of the 5th Ohio taking full advantage of its success against the Confederates. Casualties on both sides grew as the Union soldiers fired on the retreating Confederates who paused in their withdrawal to fire back. Tyler noted in his battle report that the Confederates "suffered severely." They were not alone, though, for the Federal soldiers also endured their fair share of casualties. A steady stream of wounded Union troops shuffled to the rear as the battle wore on.

Six fresh Confederate regiments, the equivalent of more than a brigade, arrived at this stage of the battle. Ewell led them forward with the confidence of a seasoned commander. The 44th, 52nd, and 58th Virginia of Brig. Gen. George H. Steuart's Second Brigade of Ewell's Division came up first. They were commanded by Colonel William C. Scott since Steuart had been severely wounded in the shoulder by an artillery fragment at Cross Keys.

Brigadier General Arnold Elzey, commander of the Fourth brigade of Ewell's Division, had also been wounded at Cross Keys, so Colonel James Walker of the 13th Virginia Infantry had taken over command of the brigade. Walker led the 13th Virginia, 25th Virginia, and 31st Virginia forward into the action.

The soldiers of the 52nd Virginia arrived first. When they reached the Baugher farm lane they encountered the frontline units, consisting of the two regiments of Winder's Stonewall Brigade and the 7th Louisiana, retiring in confusion. Skinner took his men into action on the Confederate left flank. The 52nd surged forward through the field where the Union fire was "cutting off the heads of the wheat," Skinner recalled.

A group of Union troops had taken cover in a thicket along the banks of a stream known as Little Deep Run that crossed the Baugher farm to empty into the South Fork of the Shenandoah River. The unexpected enemy fire from a concealed position disrupted the advance of the 52nd Virginia, and they fell back to the Baugher lane to regroup having suffered 84 casualties. Ewell personally led the rest of Steuart's Brigade, the 44th and 58th Virginia, into the woods south of the Coaling.

Walker sent the 31st Virginia into action against the Union infantry on the plain, and then led the 13th Virginia and 25th Virginia off to the right in an effort to reinforce Taylor in his attack on the Coaling. His Virginians, however, got bogged down in the tangled underbrush of the woods south of the Coaling and never went into action against the Union guns.

The 25th and 31st Virginia advanced to aid Winder. Colonel John S. Hoffman, who commanded the 31st regiment, led his men into position on Winder's right. At the time, Winder was

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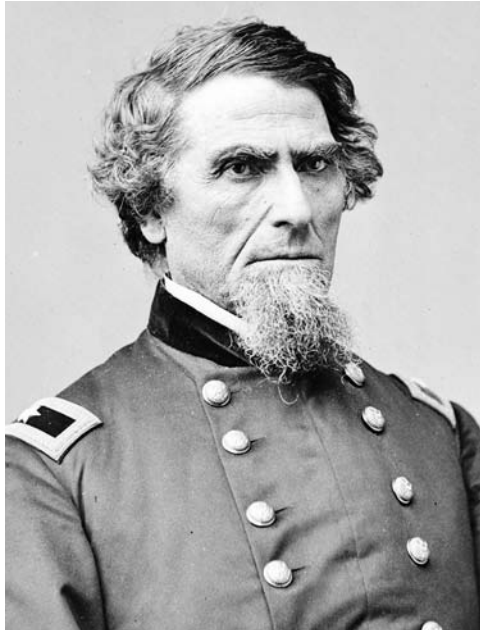
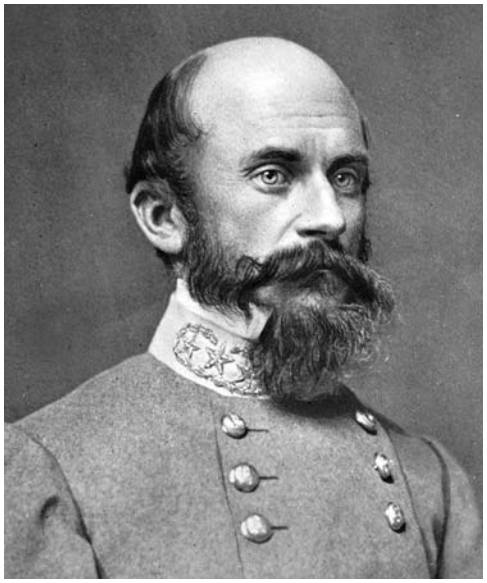
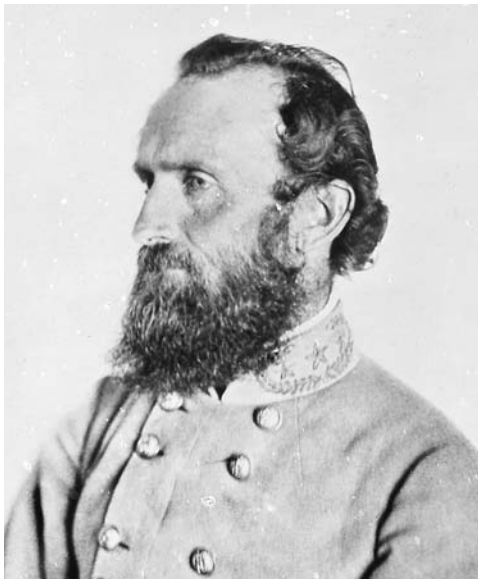


CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Confederate Private Peter Kurtz, 5th Virginia Infantry; Confederate Private William Ott, 4th Virginia Infantry; Union Lt. Herbert Guthrie, 1st Ohio Artillery, Battery L; Union Col. Benjamin Franklin Kelly commanded the 1st (West) Virginia Infantry when it was formed.





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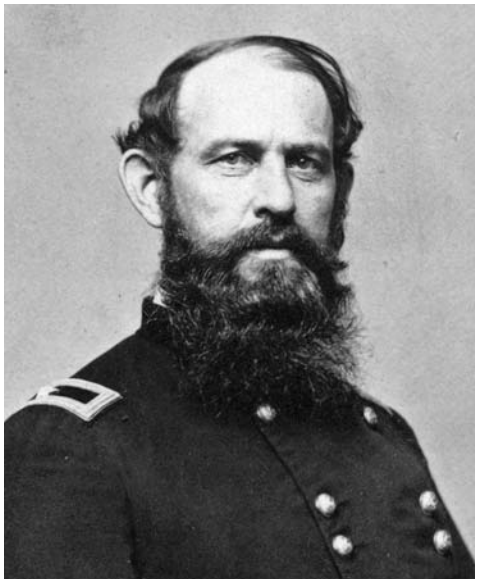
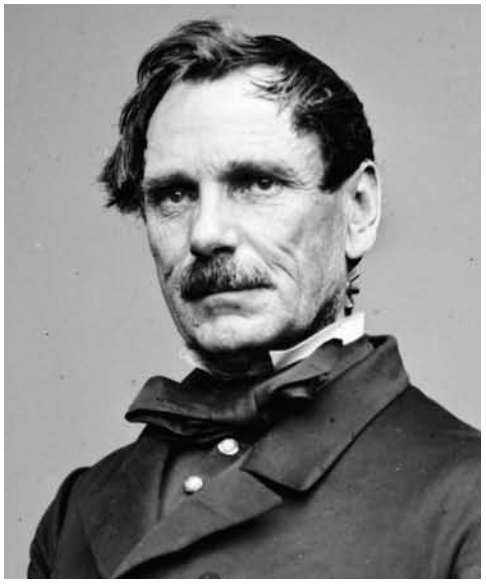




CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Confederate Gen. Richard Ewell; Confederate Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson; Union Gen. James Shields; Union Gen. Erastus Tyler.

trying desperately to rally his troops. As they came on line, the soldiers of the 31st Virginia had to endure the same blistering enemy fire that had dislodged the Stonewall Brigade.

When Hoffman's men entered the wheatfield, they found themselves alone. They wriggled forward on their stomachs, rising to shoot, and then dropping again to load and continue to move forward. Five color bearers went down, and their lieutenant told his men to let the colors lie.

Their advance bogged down under a Union counterattack. They suffered a destructive fire both from the front and from the side. They sprawled on the ground in the wheatfield as the minie balls sliced through the grain. The 31st Virginia suffered 34 killed and 83 wounded in the battle. The number of killed was more than any other Confederate regiment at Port Republic.

The storm of Union musket fire drove them all of the way back to the Baugher farm lane.

The short-lived stand by the soldiers of the 31st Virginia, which was aided by the advance of the 25th and 52nd Virginia regiments, gave time for Winder to rally his regiments. It also bought more time for Taylor's Louisianans to reach the Coaling.

Ewell watched as Federal forces pursued the Confederates across the flatland. He decided to strike the Union troops in their exposed left flank, which he hoped would stop their advance. His troops followed a road into a wood on the Union left that would put them in position to strike the Coaling. He formed the two regiments into a line of battle perpendicular to the Union line with the 58th Virginia on the left and the 44th Virginia on the right.

Ewell ordered the fences on both sides of the road torn down, but he purposely left a third fence nearby in the cultivated fields standing in order that his men could take shelter behind it. He then ordered his troops forward. They advanced screaming the ear-splitting Rebel Yell. "[Our men were] yelling more to keep our courage up than to frighten the enemy," wrote Adjutant C.C. Wight of the 58th Virginia.

When the Union gunners atop the Coaling observed the new threat, they turned their guns on Ewell's soldiers. When the Confederates reached the fence they were intended to take up a position behind, they kept on going in the direction of the left flank of the 5th Ohio and 7th Ohio. When they drew close to the enemy, the 48th Virginia and 58th Virginia fired a crashing volley at the Buckeyes. The Buckeyes recoiled from the heavy fire.

The Virginians' ranks had become disordered from crossing the fence. When the momentum of their charge dissipated, they halted in the field under a murderous hail of return fire from the Federal infantry, as well as artillery fire from Union guns in the Coaling. The Virginians could not withstand the punishment, however, and eventually returned to the shelter of the woods.

Confederate artillery aided greatly in Winder's defense at the plain. Most of the artillery directed their fire at the Federal infantry because it was useless to fire at the Coaling. They had been fighting since the beginning of the battle and one of the pieces of the Rockbridge Artillery ran out of ammunition. All four of Captain Poague's smoothbores went into action on Winder's orders. When the Southern line collapsed, three of the smoothbores withdrew. The other smoothbore, which was commanded by Lieutenant James Cole Davis, was being swept back with the rest when Winder ordered him to halt and fire on an advancing Union column.

At that very moment, Ewell led his attack from the woods. Davis stopped his retreat and turned his gun on the enemy and fired on them. The artillery fire, coupled with the simultaneous attack of Ewell's Virginians on the Federal flank, temporarily stopped the Union advance. "No act of a subordinate that I have seen during the Valley campaign has so excited my admiration for its coolness, judgment and bravery." Ewell wrote in his battle report. Even though he could not identify the artillery lieutenant by name, he nevertheless acknowledged his courage on the field of battle.

Davis suffered for his bravery, however, as he was severely wounded in his side. The 5th Ohio, which was the regiment whose advance was checked by Davis, captured the piece. The Confederate gun crew had to abandon their piece

Confederate Major General Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson, on horseback, surveys the "Coaling" after the battle. Major Chatham Roberdeau Wheat, center, is surrounded by Louisiana Tiger casualities, including several in their colorful Zouave uniforms.

when Union infantry swarmed around it. Private John Gray of the 5th Ohio quickly gathered a team of unwounded horses and dragged the cannon to the rear.

Ewell's charge and the Confederate artillery fire had curbed the Union advance. Their valorous action gave Winder time to stitch together a new line anchored on the 7th Louisiana and 5th Virginia. The 27th Virginia had become too disrupted to rally.

The Federal infantry advance never resumed. The Confederates battling on the flatland believed at that point that the battle was lost. The men of the 4th Virginia, peering out of the densely wooded ground on the hillside, shared this feeling. Some even believed that their beloved commander Jackson had once again met his match against Shields' command, as it had at Kernstown.

The best chance for a Confederate victory lay in silencing the Union guns at the Coaling. The 1,700 troops of Taylor's Louisiana Tiger Brigade had reached the Deep Run ravine that separated the Coaling from the woods to the south. He planned a flanking movement on the Coaling, but had to change his plans when a dispatch arrived from Winder requesting an immediate attack to relieve pressure on the Virginians engaged against Tyler's Midwesterners. Winder sent Taylor a message urging him to make an immediate attack upon the Federal position and the battery across the ravine.

The Louisianans knew the outcome of the battle lay in their hands. They greatly outnumbered the defenders at the Coaling, but they would have to endure canister fire at close range to capture the commanding ground. Through much difficulty, the Tigers formed a line of battle in the woods. From left to right Taylor's line of battle was the 6th Louisiana, Major Chatham Roberdeau Wheat's Battalion, the 9th Louisiana, and the 8th Louisiana.

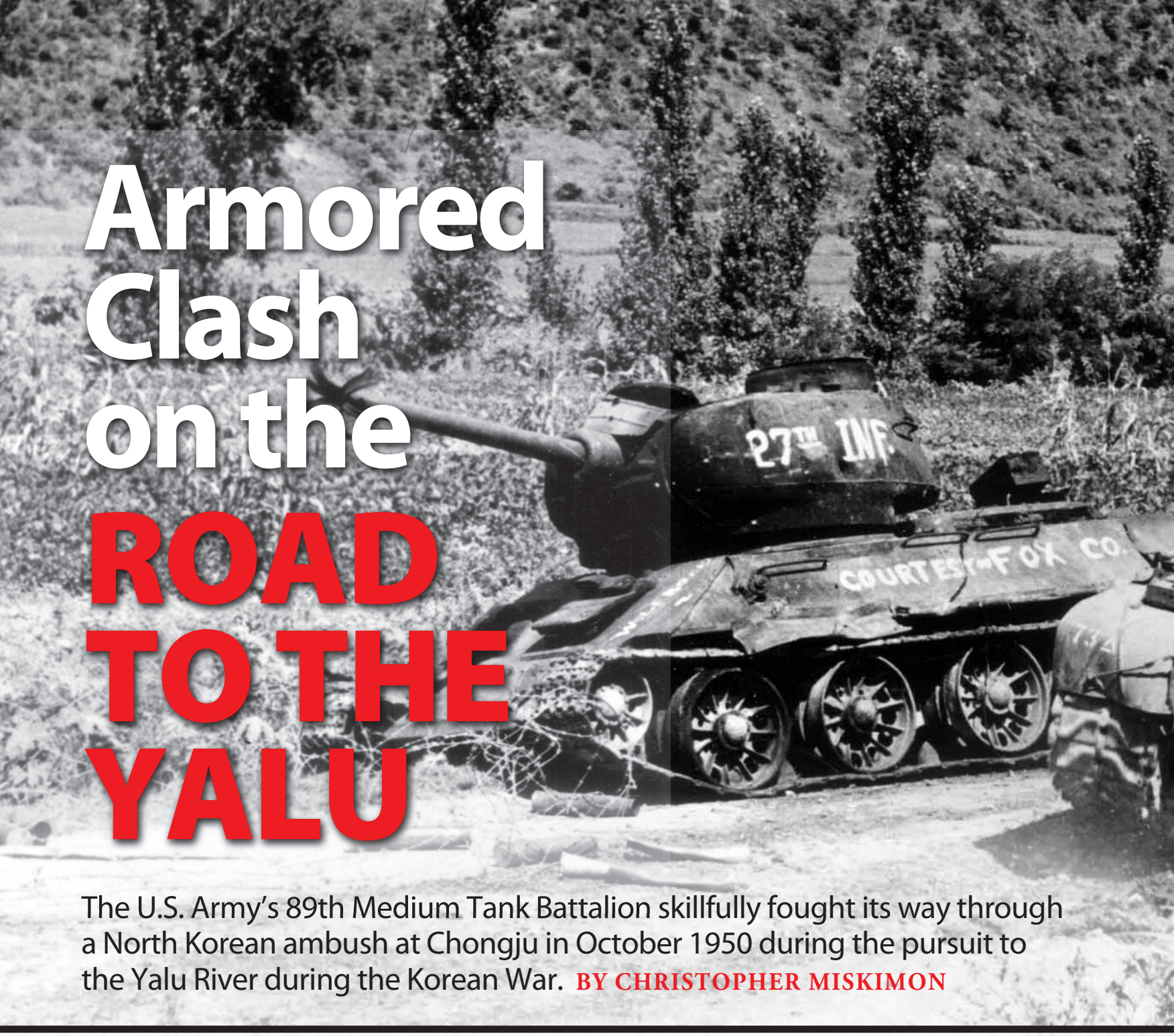
The Louisianans plunged down the steep slope into the ravine and up the other side. They swarmed over the Union guns. The Union artillerists milled around their guns in a disorganized fashion. Some of the cannoneers got off a final round of canister at point-blank range, and the Union infantry supporting the guns fired a final volley. The fighting then became hand-to-hand. The Union gunners no longer had any opportunity to load and fire their smoking guns. While bayonets were rarely used in battle during the conflict, witnesses recalled bayonet fighting. "Many fell from bayonet wounds," wrote Taylor.

Artillerists used their rammers and extractors as clubs. Even Union musicians joined the fray using their instruments to bash Confederates. The men of the 66th Ohio, who were supporting the Union artillery, fell back under the vicious Confederate assault. Taylor's Louisianans overlapped the Unions on both flanks. Unless Tyler rushed reinforcements to the position immediately, it was unlikely that it could be held.

Confederate officers ordered their men to kill the horses of the artillery battery so that the guns could not be limbered or dragged from the field. Major Chatham Roberdeau Wheat, the commander of Wheat's Battalion of Louisiana Tigers, fired

Continued on page 90

Armored Clash on the ROAD TO THE YALU



The U.S. Army's 89th Medium Tank Battalion skillfully fought its way through a North Korean ambush at Chongju in October 1950 during the pursuit to the Yalu River during the Korean War. BY CHRISTOPHER MISKIMON

The chase was on in early autumn 1950. The North Korean People's Army, after its invasion of South Korea, fell back north with United Nations' forces in close pursuit following the Battle of Inchon the previous month. The United Nations forces, mostly American and South Korean but with a sizable contingent from the British Commonwealth and other member nations, kept moving north in an attempt to destroy remnants of the NKPA and put an end to the war. As summer gave way to autumn on the Korean peninsula, it appeared this operation would end in a swift victory after the initial setbacks experienced during the war's first several months. Still, the NKPA was not entirely out of action.

The Korean War caught the United States by surprise. American troops occupied South Korea after World War II, but President Harry S. Truman had withdrawn most of the troops by 1949. By that point, only about 300 advisors remained in country where they continued training the fledgling South Korean Army.

North Korean Premier Kim Il-sung and his advisors wanted to invade South Korea, but they were restrained by the Soviet Union, which wanted to avoid a war that was sure to draw the United States into the conflict. In January 1950 U.S. Secretary of State Dean Acheson stated that South Korea sat outside the United States' defensive perimeter in the Pacific Theatre. This allayed the fears of both the Soviet Union and North Korea, and by April 1950 Soviet Premier Joseph Stalin approved an invasion. The Soviets, who had been liberally supplying the NKPA with weapons and equipment for their ground forces, had given North Korea's army

hundreds of T-34/85 tanks and SU-76 assault guns.

For the American occupation force in Japan, Korea was a low priority and not considered a good assignment. Lt. Gen. John R. Hodge, commanding U.S. forces in Korea and the XXIV Corps, summed up this attitude in an apt if crude statement. "There are only three things the troops in Japan are afraid of," he said. "They are gonorrhea, diarrhea, and Korea." Other Western leaders made similar comments. "Korea is not worth the bones of a single British grenadier," wrote a member of the Far Eastern Department of Great Britain's Foreign Office. When the invasion began the West scrambled to find troops and equipment for South Korea's Republic of Korea Army, but the drawdown of U.S. military forces after World War II left the U.S. Army denuded of men, weapons, and vehicles.

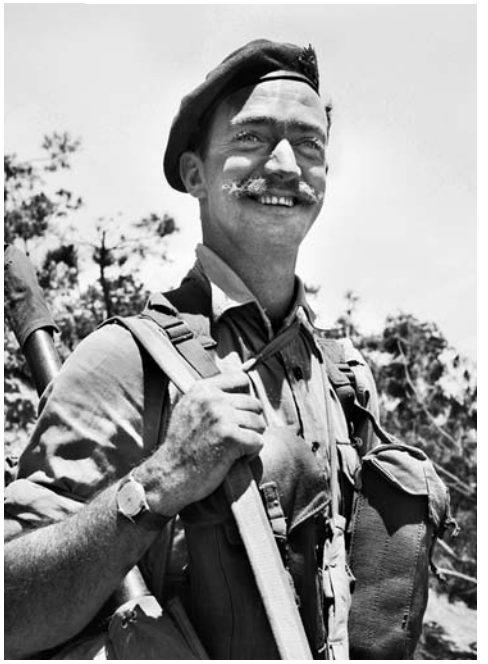
An American M-26 Pershing tank of the 89th Medium Tank Battalion passes a Russian-made North Korean tank destroyed by Fox Company of the U.S. Army's 27th Infantry Division during the retreat of North Korean forces in August 1950. United Nations forces composed of American, South Korean, British Commonwealth and other member nations, were in close pursuit of the North Korean People's Army following the Battle of Inchon the previous month. Soviet Premier Joseph Stalin had approved of North Korea's invasion of South Korea and the Soviets supplied the NKPA with weapons and equipment for their ground forces, including hundreds of T-34/85 tanks and SU-76 assault guns.

National Archives

National Archives

LEFT: American troops accompanied by M4 Sherman tanks advance against the North Korean forces near Chongju, South Korea in September 1950. The United Nations forces kept pushing north hoping to destroy remnants of the North Korean People's Army and put an end to the war. BELOW: An unidentified soldier from the 3rd Battalion Royal Australian Regiment, part of the U.K.'s 27 Commonwealth Brigade in Korea. The U.S. Army's 89th Medium Tank Battalion, part of 72nd Combat Engineer Battalion of the 90th Field Artillery Battalion, was attached in support to the Commonwealth Brigade.

AWM



The NKPA invasion nearly succeeded, but United Nations Command troops managed to hold in the Pusan Perimeter in the southeast corner of the peninsula. A risky but successful amphibious landing at Inchon in September 1950 defeated the North Koreans and facilitated a breakout by the United Nations forces bottled up in the Pusan Perimeter. By October the forces from the Pusan Perimeter had captured the North Korean capital of Pyongyang. Afterwards, they began a steady advance north toward the Yalu River, which marked the border between North Korea and China.

One of the United Nations units pushing north was the United Kingdom's 27th Commonwealth Brigade. This formation acted as the left flank of Eighth Army, the main United Nations force in Korea. The infantry brigade comprised the Third Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment; the First Battalion of the Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders; and the First Battalion of the Middlesex Regiment.

These infantry battalions were among the first British and Australian units to enter the Korean War. Due to their hasty arrival, they were not accompanied by their support elements. To remedy the situation, the Eighth Army attached American combat engineers from the 72nd Combat Engineer Battalion of the 90th Field Artillery Battalion to the brigade. These troops came equipped with 155mm howitzers, as well as a tank battalion. This made the 27 Commonwealth Brigade similar to a U.S. regimental combat team in size and organization.

The American armored unit was the 89th Tank Battalion. This unit began life as the 8072nd Medium Tank battalion formed in Japan during the frantic days just after the North Korean invasion. Lt. Col. Welborn G. Dolvin, the commander of the battalion, was at Fort Benning, Georgia, at the time awaiting orders transferring him to a new assignment in Austria. Dolvin was playing golf on July 12, 1950, when a messenger arrived with new orders instructing him to go to Japan to take command of the tank battalion.

He arrived a week later to find his command in a woeful state. It consisted of six officers and 65 enlisted men from Eighth Army and nine officers and 146 enlisted men from the 2nd Armored Division from Fort Hood, Texas. Some of them had been working in the Post Exchange. Dolvin previously commanded the 191st Tank Battalion during World War II, which served in Italy and Europe, and he finished the war in the Seventh Army supporting the 45th Infantry Division. Knowing his unit would enter battle in a matter of days, he set about preparing his men.

Three medium tank companies formed the battalion's primary striking power. One was equipped with the M26 Pershing, a tank which had entered service in the final months of World War II. It boasted a 90mm gun and four inches of frontal armor. The U.S. Army had sent the Pershings from the Hawaii National Guard. The other three companies—due to an organizational quirk, the battalion actually had four companies instead of three—used the venerable M4A3E8 Sherman, which had a 76mm gun and three inches of frontal armor. The so-called Easy 8 was an upgraded version of the standard Sherman and served during the last six months of World War II.

The tank battalion also received support armored vehicles, such as the M45 105mm howitzer tank, halftrack mortar carriers, and the M39 armored utility vehicle. The latter was a modified version of the obsolete M18 Hellcat tank destroyer used as an ambulance, ammunition carrier, or troop transport. One company was in Pusan with the rest in Japan where they were scrambling to

prepare to ship out for South Korea.

Circumstances forced the battalion to enter combat despite the need for more training and preparation. On August 4, 1950, the unit assembled in Pusan. Three days later the U.S. Army redesignated it as the 89th Medium Tank Battalion. Before the breakout from the Pusan Perimeter, Dolvin rotated his companies from the line to rear areas for maintenance and rest. This was when Dolvin learned about organizational mixup on the number of his battalions. He hid the presence of his fourth company, D Company, by keeping it out of combat. This gave him time to train the company's men. They entered action on September 15, 1950. Dolvin also had a core of combat-experienced officers and non-commissioned officers to strengthen the formation.

The breakout and the Inchon landings quickly overwhelmed the NKPA. By mid-October the 27 Commonwealth Brigade was in Pyongyang. Brig. Gen. Basil Coad of the British Army commanded the brigade, which was under the operational control of the 1st Cavalry Division. Some distance separated the brigade from the division, however, so the brigade operated largely on its own. The unit advanced north out of Pyongyang on October 22, 1950. The infantry rode in trucks or on the backs of the American tanks. The column stretched for 2.5 miles. A platoon of tanks led the way to deal with any sudden appearance of the enemy.

This was necessary because the NKPA, although it had suffered some casualties, was not entirely defeated and still had some T-34/85 tanks and SU-76 assault guns. This particular Russian tank model had an 85mm cannon while the SU-76 used a smaller 76mm artillery field gun which could still knock out the Sherman with a solid hit. The T-34/85 generally was on par with the M4A3E8 Sherman but was outclassed by the M-26 Pershing. The Sherman had an advantage in its high-velocity, armor-piercing ammunition, developed at the end of World War II.

The brigade encountered the enemy almost immediately. As it drew near to Yongju, Coad ordered forward the Australians for their first combat action as a unit. The brigade's mission was to assist the U.S. 187th Airborne Regiment. The American paratroopers had dropped into an area 25 miles north of Pyongyang to cut off retreating NKPA units. The North Koreans managed to avoid this trap, occupy some high ground and engage the paratroopers. The Australians received orders from above to break through and relieve the 187th Airborne.

The 3RAR arrived in the area of an apple orchard, where they began to receive sniper fire from some North Korean troops. Lt. Col. Charlie Green, the battalion commander, ordered an infantry attack. He chose not to use the supporting American tanks or artillery, since they did not know exactly where the friendly paratroopers were. The attack took the main North Korean force by surprise, given that they were focused on the U.S. paratroopers. Captain Archer P. Denness, who led C Company and whose troops had nicknamed "Armor-Piercing Archie," directed an attack that destroyed the NKPA troops in a three-hour battle.

"The young soldiers were, if anything, over eager to get into their first fight, but the apple trees were in full leaf and visibility was a real problem," recalled Lieutenant David Butler of the

Australian War Memorial

Australians Lieutenant Colonel Charles Green, left, and Brigadier General Basil Coad return from a reconnaissance where they encountered North Korean troops a half mile east of Chongju, North Korea, on the morning of Oct. 29, 1950. The U.N. forces would take Chongju from the retreating NKPA two days later. That evening, an incoming artillery shell mortally wounded Green, who died on November 1. The U.S. Army posthumously awarded him a Silver Star.

The U.S. Army had to scramble to find enough battle-ready tanks at the start of the Korean War.

This U.S. Army tank, identified as an M46 Patton, advances past the village of Kumko in September 1950. The M46 was an improved version of the M26 Pershing and began arriving in South Korea in August 1950.

When the Korean War began, the unprepared U.S. military desperately searched for armored vehicles to send to the units entering the fight. American tank production stopped after World War II ended, and the vehicle research budget averaged only $5 million per year from 1945 to 1950. In comparison, Chrysler Corporation spent $25 million annually during the same period. Most tank units were eliminated within the remaining divisions and even those remaining used the M24 Chaffee light tank, which proved ineffective against the NKPA's T34/85s. Any tanks sent to Eighth Army in Korea had to come from existing supplies.

The army had a new tank, the M46, an improved M26 Pershing, and the army planned to convert 800 Pershings to the new M46. None were available when the war started, so the army began a crash tank program, including finishing the planned conversions, assembling another 300 M46s from vehicles in storage and converting 183 M45s—a fire support version of the M26 carrying a 105mm howitzer—to M46s. This would take time to complete, so the U.S. Army made even more hurried decisions.

Three broken-down M26s were found in a warehouse in Japan, quickly repaired, and formed into a provisional tank platoon. This platoon arrived in South Korea and went into action in late July 1950. The tanks suffered from overheating problems and bad fan belts. All three were lost on July 31, unable to escape the advancing North Koreans due to a destroyed bridge. During the same period, Lt. Col. Welborn G. Dolvin's battalion was hurriedly formed and deployed.

The U.S. Army formed several tank battalions for fast transfer to South Korea. Several of them, such as the 89th Tank Battalion, had to mix tank models. It had a company of M26s and two companies of M4A3E8 Shermans, which had been pulled from storage and quickly refurbished.

One company in the 70th Tank Battalion used M26s pulled from around Fort Knox, including tanks sitting on concrete pedestals as monuments. The poor state of repair of these tanks meant lots of mechanical breakdowns during both their brief training period and in action in the Korean Peninsula. The U.S. Army stripped other tanks from National Guard units.

The Marine Corps managed to fill its tank companies with M26s, but had Shermans with dozer blades and recovery vehicles as well. Both services had shortages of trained tank mechanics able to service the different types of engines in the various vehicles.

As a result, just 11.5 percent of American tank losses from July 1950 to January 1951 were due to enemy action. Another 11 percent were knocked out by mines, while 60 percent had mechanical failures. When the M46 finally started arriving in theatre, their crews also experienced mechanical difficulties due to the initial design. One battalion lost 35 of its 58 M46s owing to faulty engine oil cooler fans.

American tank crews were still using mostly World War II-era tanks as late as October 1952. They enjoyed considerable success in the Korean War despite the quality of their tanks.

—Christopher Miskimon

Third Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment. "Control was difficult and the worst outcome of the first engagement would have been that a man was shot by one of his mates. The NCOs and the senior soldiers were absolutely splendid and quickly got the neophytes through the momentary confusion which all soldiers experience in their first battle."

The Australians broke through to the 187th Airborne. They inflicted 500 casualties on the enemy at the cost of just seven men. Denness received the Australian Military Cross for his bravery and leadership, and the U.S. Army awarded Butler a Silver Star. The action, known to the Australians as the "Battle of the Apple Orchard," blooded their inexperienced soldiers and prepared them for the fighting to come.

After relieving the 187th Airborne at Yongju, the brigade continued north. It encountered little resistance until October 25 when the lead elements reached Kujin on the Taeryong River. At that location they found one span of the 300-meter-long bridge collapsed and lying in the water. The 3RAR sent a few squad-sized elements across the bridge on foot using ladders to cross the missing span. Once across, 50 North Korean soldiers surrendered to them, but another group of enemy soldiers fired at both the Australians and the North Koreans trying to surrender. The Australians returned to the other side of the river bringing with them 10 prisoners.

Australian War Memorial

Paratroopers in helmets stand by as, from left, Australian commander Brigadier General Basil Coad, Lieutenant Colonel Andrew Mann, Middlesex Regiment, and Lieutenant Colonel Charles Green, 3rd RAR, pore over maps shortly after the Battle of the Apple Orchard where the 3rd RAR relieved the U.S. 187th.

An American LT-6G Mosquito reconnaissance aircraft, which was scouting the far bank, reported two entrenched NKPA companies. Green immediately ordered an air strike. A flight of U.S. Air Force F-80 Shooting Stars soon appeared overhead. Equipped with six 12.7mm machine guns, they strafed the NKPA positions before sunset.

Meanwhile, the reconnaissance aircraft located another bridge, but it required reinforcement before it could handle tanks. The attached American engineers went to work. To create a bridgehead, Green sent A and B companies of the 3RAR across the river to entrench on both sides of the road. D Company went to the nearby town of Pakchon to secure it, while C Company stayed in reserve. The NKPA began shelling the Australians on the north side of the bridge with mortars and artillery at 7:30 p.m. As the shells crashed down on the entrenched Australians, the North Koreans also opened up with small arms fire.

Three hours later the small arms fire increased, so C Company crossed the bridge as reinforcements. The NKPA infantry had T-34/85 tanks in support. The fighting grew more serious, and before dawn on October 26 an NKPA unit moved into the road near some well-hidden Australian troops. A tank and a North Korean colonel in a jeep accompanied them. The Australians opened fire with machine guns, grenades, and mortars from only a few yards away. The decimated North Koreans retreated with their T-34/85. This ended the fighting for the night. The deceased enemy colonel had a map showing the various locations of units of the NKPA 17th Tank Regiment. This revealed to the Australians who they were fighting. It also indicated that the NKPA still had some armor in action.

This was the stiffest resistance the brigade had seen since Pyongyang. Coad believed the NKPA was getting its balance back after their long retreat. The advance resumed the next day, but it was more cautious, proceeding slowly as the brigade carefully checked likely enemy positions before moving past them. The reconnaissance aircraft preceded the formation as well, alert for enemy concentrations. The column's next objective was Chongju, which was situated west of Pakchon on the north side of Taeryong River. Although the column had advanced just 15 miles on October 28, it had managed to avoid enemy ambushes.

The next morning the column resumed the advance, heading west toward Chongju. The 3RAR again led the way, with D Company of the 89th Tank Battalion in the vanguard. The infantry rode atop the tanks but dismounted each time they had to check a suspicious piece of high ground on the column's flanks along the road. A liaison plane flew overhead, piloted by Lieutenant James T. Dickson. He scouted well ahead of the column, reporting any enemy sightings, which were engaged by roving fighters. If Dickson spotted anything of immediate concern, he would either radio the column or fly over the tanks and drop a message.

The morning passed uneventfully but about noon, as the column reached a hilltop, Dickson observed a substantial NKPA force of approximately 300 infantry with T-34/85 tanks entrenched and camouflaged on both sides of the road 2.5 miles ahead of the column. The enemy armor was clustered atop a ridge around a narrow pass where the road cut through a hill. Some paddy fields sat between the two forces.

Dolvin and Green came forward to plan their attack, but Dickson soon signalled them again. He had spotted what he thought was another camouflaged T-34/85 just over the next ridgeline, entrenched on the reverse slope, where any attacker would be silhouetted by the skyline. All fighter planes were engaged elsewhere, so Dickson requested that the 89th Tank Battalion place indirect fire on the location.

The second tank platoon in the column was D Company's 1st Platoon, led by Lt. Francis G.

Nordstrom. D Company used the M4A3E8. Its 76mm cannon had a less effective high-explosive shell than the M26 Pershings farther back in the column, but they were within range. Nordstrom did not think his platoon would hit the target, since they could not see it, but fired anyway. Dickson adjusted the fire. The M26 fired 10 rounds. The result was that thick, dark smoke, similar to that caused by burning gasoline, billowed skyward from beyond the ridgeline. Dickson told the tankers to cease fire.

While Nordstrom's platoon engaged the enemy armored vehicle, Dolvin and Green decided on an attack by the American tanks supported by the Australian infantry. It was a mutually beneficial plan given that tanks require infantry to protect them from the enemy's antitank teams. In return, the Australian infantry would benefit from the support that the American tank would provide for them. Nordstrom liked to be in front, where he felt he could control the action, his platoon would lead the way.

The next platoon, commanded by Lieutenant Gerald Van Der Leest, received orders to follow 500 yards behind until it reached a point 1,000 yards from the pass. There the infantry would dismount and take the high ground in parallel to the road on the right. Green ordered A Company to seize that ground. Lieutenant Alonzo Cook's tank platoon would do the same thing to the left flank with 3RAR's D Company. Both trailing tank platoons were to move to the sides of the road to support the infantry. D Company was to secure the south side of the road and then support A Company while it made its assault.

The attack rolled out with Nordstrom's tank in the lead. When his Sherman arrived within 100 yards of the road cut, he spotted NKPA troops climbing a hill to his left. The lieutenant ordered a machine gunner to fire at them. Within moments he saw another group of North Koreans to his right, moving a machine gun toward the pass. He ordered his gunner to traverse the turret toward this group and place cannon fire on them. The 76mm gun sent a high-explosive round slamming into the ground right next to the enemy machine gunners. The blast tore away some nearby foliage, exposing a dug in T-34/85 on the forward slope of the ridge.

The enemy tank fired its main gun as soon as its position was revealed. The 85mm round, indicated by a green tracer, passed between Nordstrom's head and the open hatch lid. The American officer ordered his gunner to fire armor-piercing rounds, in the stress of the moment dispensing with the usual fire order. The loader shoved an armor-piercing round into the cannon's chamber and the gunner depressed the foot pedal which acted as the weapon's trigger. With a loud crack, the supersonic round flew from the muzzle amid a flash of flaming propellant. The projectile struck the front of the T-34/85 less than 100 yards away. The gunner quickly fired two more rounds. The third caused a large explosion of fuel and ammunition. The explosion produced a cloud of black smoke to the northeast that obscured the high ground to the right side of the road.

Concerned about what lay beyond the smoke, Nordstrom ordered the rear tank in his platoon's column to fire its machine gun and cannon through the smoke and into the high ground beyond it. The tank's commander, Sergeant William Morrison, complied with the order. The other tank crews in the platoon spotted more North Koreans to the column's left and opened fire as well. Nordstrom decided not to advance into the narrow pass because he believed the enemy would have it covered with an antitank weapon. If his tank were hit in the pass, it would block the road and be impossible to move until the North Koreans on the high ground were defeated or driven off. He therefore decided to stay about 70 yards short of the pass itself.

As the platoon's tanks fired on the enemy to their left, a round blew the camouflage off another T-34/85 dug in almost opposite of the one Nordstrom's gunner had just destroyed. Choosing not to wait for orders, the gunner traversed the turret onto the new target and fired at point-blank range. With another armor-piercing round loaded, he depressed the foot pedal again and sent it crashing into the T-34/85. His second round caused a large explosion, meaning it likely struck the enemy tank's ammunition cache, which sent part of the T-3/85's turret flying 50 feet into the air.

The North Korean T-34/85 tank had a flaw in its turret design where an internal explosion would break the weld on the tank's turret roof. There are many photographs of T-34/85s with

Both: National Archives

ABOVE: During the drive into North Korea in September 1950, Lieutenant Colonel W.G. Dolvin, commander of the U.S. 89th Tank Battalion and Lt. John Hooks, commander of B Company, 89th TB, discuss the tactical situation as U.N. forces pushed to destroy the North Korean People's Army, which was near defeat until the Republic of China entered the war on October 19, sending hundreds of thousands of troops onto the Korean Peninsula. The war eventually turned into a stalemate with a ceasefire on July 27, 1953. OPPOSITE: American tanks from the 89th Tank Battalion fire on enemy targets while troops from the British 62st Middlesex Regiment advance against the North Koreans.

the roof of their turret blown off when the ammunition inside the vehicle detonated. This is probably what the Americans saw rising into the air. Subsequent U.S. Army evaluations of captured T-34/85s indicated that the turret's roof was a weak point on the tank, even though the vehicle overall was considered of high quality.

As Nordstrom's platoon dealt with the enemy to their front, the Australian infantry attacked along the high ground south of the road. D Company, on the left, came under heavy fire from NKPA positions but had good support from Cook's platoon of Shermans, which managed to follow them up the hillside. They would fight for the next two hours to secure the high ground south of the road. The 155mm howitzers of the 90th Field Artillery Battalion and the 3-inch mortars of 3RAR's Support Company also fired on the NKPA positions.

Back on the road, the main guns on the two lead tanks in Nordstrom's platoon went out of action due to faulty rounds. As the crews struggled to clear the jammed rounds an enemy shell flashed past Nordstrom's tank from its left front, another eerie green tracer revealing its trajectory. Nordstrom radioed his platoon sergeant, Master Sergeant Jasper W. Lee, and told him to fire in that direction. Jasper did not have a good view of the enemy, so he placed a general fire on the area. A few minutes later the crews of the lead tanks cleared their cannon. Nordstrom's vehicle had the best field of fire on the area the incoming fire came from, and he suspected an enemy armored vehicle. He had his gunner place an armor-piercing round every five yards along the top of the ridge, since there was no other logical place to hide a tank or self-propelled gun. When the sixth round hit the ridgeline, there was a flash followed by an explosion which lit the nearby trees and bushes on fire.

A few minutes later another enemy round flew in, this time from the right front. It soared past Nordstrom, about a foot above the turret, passing between the radio antenna and the .50-caliber machine gun. There was no time for relief at the near miss, however, for the round went on to strike a tank in Cook's platoon, seriously wounding four men.

Nordstrom could not spot the enemy vehicle through the smoke, so he had his crew start firing at the top of the ridge to their right front. He hoped the incoming fire would make the North Koreans think they had been spotted so they would move. It is a common tactic in battle for any armored vehicle crew to fire one or two rounds from a position and then move to avoid return fire. If the enemy moved, however, Nordstrom hoped to spot that movement even through the haze.

Another enemy round soon flew past. Nordstrom responded by having his crew fire faster and ordering the rest of his platoon to fire at the same area. After a short time, there was no response, so he ordered his platoon to cease fire to conserve ammunition. The area to the front suddenly became quiet, with no enemy fire incoming. Shooting could still be heard along the ridges to the flanks, where the other two platoons were supporting the Australian infantry.

Cook went over to his damaged Sherman on the left of the ridgeline and examined the penetration made by the enemy round. Grabbing a pencil, he placed it along the bottom of the shell hole and sighted back along it to determine the direction it came from. Cook used this technique to determine the approximate location of the enemy gun. He communicated this by radio to Nordstrom, who had had three tanks fire along the top of the ridgeline in that area. When no apparent hits registered, he gave the cease fire order again. With no better target, he decided to fire at the first T-34/85 they destroyed at the beginning of the engagement. It seemed unlikely this vehicle

Both: National Archives

ABOVE: A North Korean tank, mostly likely one of the hundreds of T-34/85s supplied by the Soviet Union, burns by the side of the road, knocked out by the 89th Tank Battalion in the fall of 1950. Though U.N. forces led by the U.S. Eighth Army all but defeated the North Korean People's Army, the arrival of hundreds of thousands of Chinese troops in October turned the tide of the conflict in the brutal winter of 1950-51. OPPOSITE: An M4 Sherman of the 89th Medium Tank Battalion accompaning the 61st Middlesex fires on North Korean targets. Though most of the North Korean armor was destroyed by air, the Soviet T-34/85 tanks used by the NKPA were no match for the American Sherman and Pershing tanks.

would still be in action but there was no other target visible. When the third round struck, there was another explosion, and once again, black smoke billowed from a new gasoline fire.

As Nordstrom's platoon continued the fight from the road, D Company, 3RAR kept up the attack along the ridgeline on the left flank. During the fight several T-34s and SU-76s appeared, but most were knocked out by the American tanks. A few also fell to Australian antitank teams using the new 3.5-inch bazooka. This weapon was newly arrived in Korea, a hasty replacement for the World War II era 2.36-inch weapon. Earlier in the Korean fighting, the smaller bazooka had proven almost completely ineffective against North Korean T-34/85s. Fortunately for the U.N. forces, the larger 3.5-inch rocket launcher was under development when the war broke out. The U.S. Army quickly finished testing the design and put it into crash production to equip infantry on the Korean peninsula.

Another Australian soldier managed to knock out a T-34/85 in a most unconventional way. A veteran of World War II, Private John Stafford had joined the Australian Army in 1940 at 16 years old. Assigned to the artillery, his unit arrived in the Middle East before it was discovered he was underage. Stafford was transferred to a depot battalion, but later served as a signaller in the Pacific Theatre. He reenlisted to serve in the Korean War and went to Korea with 3RAR. During the fight on October 29, Stafford's platoon encountered intense NKPA fire and was pinned down on the ridgeline.

Despite the heavy fire aimed against Stafford and his fellow soldiers, he began to move around the right flank of his platoon, carrying his Bren gun, a light machine gun firing the standard British .303-caliber bullet from a 30-round magazine. He single-handedly knocked out an enemy machine gun nest. Unfortunately, another NKPA machine gun crew spotted him and opened fire. Stafford returned fire, suppressing the enemy weapon enough to allow his platoon mates to move up and join the action. With their fire helping him, Stafford advanced again, firing his Bren from the hip and enabling his fellows to take the entire position.

While his platoon reorganized, Stafford decided to move ahead and clear any other positions he could find. Coming upon what looked like a camouflaged bunker, he fired a burst into it. The structure burst into flame. Stafford had actually found a concealed T-34/85 with some spare ammunition strapped to its side. This fire forced the crew to abandon the vehicle. Another account states his bullets ignited the spare fuel tanks on the back of the tank. Soviet tanks of the Korean War-era frequently carried spare fuel drums behind the tank's rear deck. Either way, Stafford knocked out a tank with a Bren gun. The U.S. Army awarded him a Silver Star for his actions that day.

Once D Company secured its ridgeline, A Company advanced on the north side of the road and soon had the ridge under control. With his troops having secured ridges on both sides of the road, Coad decided it was too late in the day to advance further. He ordered the brigade to form a defensive perimeter for the night.

The two infantry companies stayed on the ridges with the tanks in support, while Nordstrom's platoon stayed along the road. The smoke from the burning North Korean tanks gradually dissipated, revealing a knocked out SU-76 sitting next to the first T-34/85 that had been destroyed in the battle. The crew apparently joined the battle partway through, using the smoke to cover its approach.

The North Koreans returned after dark and

attacked the Australian D Company after an artillery preparation. One Australian platoon held its fire until the NKPA troops were just 40 feet away, causing heavy casualties at point blank range. The fight wore on for two hours with some enemy troops infiltrating the Australian perimeter.

At 9:30 p.m. the fighting ended, but another attack hit A Company on the other ridge. This attack was stopped by heavy artillery and mortar fire, much of it fired at so-called danger close range; that is, anything less than 500 yards from friendly troops. The U.N. troops found hundreds of NKPA dead in and around the Australian perimeter the next morning.

The American tankers also had a stiff fight that night. NKPA infantry attacked Nordstrom's platoon at 9 p.m. The North Koreans were seemingly intent on destroying as many tanks as they could manage. The U.S. platoon was still about 100 yards east of the narrow defile but off the road. At one point there were so many North Koreans spread out around the platoon Nordstrom ordered his crews to turn on their headlights to help find them all. The American tank crews fired their machine guns at any North Korean they spotted. The crews also fired their pistols and hurled hand grenades at any enemy soldiers who succeeded in getting close to them.

For the next few hours the area around the American platoon was alive with the staccato chatter of machine guns, the low explosions of grenades sending metal fragments sailing through the air, and the booming of .45-caliber Colt automatic pistols aimed at shadowy figures in the dark. The next morning the American platoon found as many as 30 dead North Koreans within their perimeter. Some were only a few feet away from a tank.

That morning the 27 Commonwealth Brigade resumed its advance on Chongju, nearing the town in the late morning. A few skirmishes occurred but by late afternoon Chongju, abandoned by the NKPA, was in the hands of U.N. forces. Tragically, that evening, an incoming artillery shell exploded near Lt. Col. Green, inflicting him with a severe abdominal wound. He died on November 1, 1950, and the U.S. Army posthumously awarded him a Silver Star.

Tank battles were relatively rare during the Korean War and most occurred in the first months of the conflict. The 89th's experiences were typical, with the North Korean tankers generally losing to the better supplied and equipped United Nations troops, despite the training shortcomings the Americans had at the war's beginning. Most NKPA tanks were lost to U.N. aircraft, with some to mines and mechanical failure. When the two sides met in a tank engagement, however, even the relatively effective T-34/85 proved unable to defeat the American's Pershings and Shermans.

The 89th Medium Tank Battalion served for the rest of the war. Afterwards, it remained as part of the 25th Infantry Division, until it was deactivated in February 1957. Dolvin remained in the U.S. Army until 1975. He eventually became a lieutenant general. He had fought in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam, and is one of America's 50 most decorated soldiers. He died in May 1991 and is buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

Since the NKPA was near defeat by that time in the conflict, the armed forces of the People's Republic of China entered the war on October 19, 1950. China sent hundreds of thousands of troops streaming across the Yalu River and into the Korean Peninsula. The Chinese steadily pushed back the U.N. forces during the harsh winter of 1950-1951. The war eventually turned into a stalemate, and the opposing sides negotiated a ceasefire on July 27, 1953. Neither side wanted to risk broadening or intensifying the conflict for fear of starting World War III. That ceasefire remains in place to this day. The Korean War has not yet officially ended. ■

Easily mobilized and self-supporting, the Huns could strike fast and hard. This engraving depicts them setting fire to a village in Germany before moving on. When Attila became sole leader in 445 AD, the power of the Huns reached all time highs—his vast tribal empire encompassed the tribes north from the Danube to the Baltic and east towards the Caucasus and the Caspian Sea.

The whirlwind force of mounted warriors from the Steppes of Central Asia overran all opposition until Atilla the Hun suffered his first and only defeat at the hands of a Roman-Visigothic army in northeastern Gaul in 451 AD.

FOR NEARLY A CENTURY THE

Nomadic Huns Dominated Much of Europe

BY LUDWIG H. DYCK

"A hitherto unknown race of men had appeared from some remote corner of the earth, uprooting and destroying everything in its path like a whirlwind descending from high mountains" wrote Ammianus Marcellinus, a 4th century AD Roman officer and historian. Armed with powerful composite bows, striking swiftly on their small but sturdy ponies, the Huns skewered their opponents from afar. The Huns "made their violent way amid the rapine and slaughter of the neighboring peoples as far as the Halani [the Alans]" he wrote.

In 370 AD alarming rumors from the great steppes of the Black Sea reached the tribes north of the lower Danube River and the Roman garrisons on the southern bank. South of the Don and north of the Caucasus, a major shift in tribal power had occurred. The Alans had been overwhelmed by the Huns. Some clans of Alans knuckled under their new overlords, while others fled west. The Alans would be the first ripple of a tidal wave of tribes fleeing from the Huns. The great diaspora known as the Wandering of the Nations had begun.

An illiterate people who spoke a Ural-Altaic language, the Huns were closely related to the latter-day Mongols and Turks. The origin of the Huns remains a matter of debate. The most enduring theory is that of the 18th-century French Sinologist Joseph de Guignes who linked the Huns to the Xiongnu. At the end of the third century BC, the pastoral Xiongnu forged an empire based out of the Mongolian Steppe. Although China's first emperor, Qin Shi Huang, built the Great Wall to separate his civilization and protect his territory from northern nomadic invaders, trade flourished and Xiongnu and Chinese nobility intermarried.

From the first and into the second century AD, dynastic disputes fractured the Xiongnu Empire. The southern Xiongnu were absorbed into Han China. The northern Xiongnu were driven into the Altai region by the Xianbei from Manchuria. The onset of colder temperatures during the mid-fourth century, alongside renewed tribal upheaval, prompted the Altai Xiongnu to trek into the Kazakh Steppe. According to adherents of the de Guignes theory these Xiongnu were the Huns. Some of the Huns struck towards Europe while others, known as the Chionites, Kidarites, Alkhans and Hephthalites,

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menaced eastern Persia and northwestern India.

Evidence equating Hun culture with the Xiongnu remains tenuous, however. The Xiongnu Empire was ethnically diverse and it is unclear how close, if at all, the Huns were related to the Xiongnu or to one of the other nomadic groups the Xiongnu conquered. Etymological and cultural similarities as well as scarce historical anecdotes from contemporary literate civilizations lend themselves to conflicting interpretations. Inner and East Asian sources may well have referred to Huns-Xiongnu as a generalized term for all steppe nomads.

The Huns migrated between seasonal pastures around the Aral and Caspian seas. The Hun cavalry guarded the wagons and livestock, mostly flocks of sheep and herds of horses. Their rumbling wagons carried the women, children and the old. Typical of nomadic pastoral cultures, the Huns lived an existence on the edge. The daily diet consisted of mutton, horse meat and milk, sheep cheese, and whatever herbs could be foraged and what game could be hunted. The Huns slept in tents made of sheepskin or felt from sheep wool. Their possessions were meager. Even wood, required for their tents and wagons, was hard to obtain on the open grasslands.

The Huns had little to trade for the luxuries of the sedentary civilizations. The easiest way to get what they wanted was by force. In this they excelled, not by an advantage in numbers but in their inherent martial qualities. Inured to hardships, the Huns were easily mobilized, self-supporting and could strike fast and hard.

Crossing the Volga River, the Huns consolidated their hold over the Alan realm. The unrest and fighting spread west, into the lands of the Ermanaric, king of the Greuthingi. One of the major Gothic tribes, the Greuthingi are commonly known by their later name of Ostrogoths. Between the Don and the Dniester, Ermanaric lorded over a plethora of tribes. Old and weak and unable to stem the Hun tide, Ermanaric took his own life in despair. In a symbolic union of Goths and Huns, the prominent Hun chief Balamber married a Gothic princess. Various tribal factions sought to secure their positions under the Huns while others fled, including the Greuthingi who crossed the Dniester River.

Between the Dniester and the Danube, the Tervingi, later known as the Visigoths, held sway. Their leader, Athanaric, was outmaneuvered by the Huns, who forded the Dniester at night and struck at the Tervingi from behind. Athanaric made a second unsuccessful stand on River Prut. For over a decade, chaos and war raged between the Don and Danube. "The Huns fell upon the Alans, the Alans upon the Goths, and the Goths upon the Taifali and Sarmatians," wrote Ambrose, the late 4th century Bishop of Milan.

The turmoil spilled over into Roman Thrace in 376 AD when Tervingi refugees crossed the Danube. Abused by corrupt Roman officials, the Tervingi looted Thrace and were joined by bands of Greuthingi, Huns, and Alans. Under their leader Fritigern, the Gothic coalition annihilated the eastern Roman army and killed its emperor, Valens, at the landmark battle of Adrianople in 378.

Valen's successor, Theodosius the Great, made peace with the marauding barbarians in 382. They became federates, receiving a large stipend and were given land grants. Although his barbarian allies were prone to looting, Theodosius used Huns and Alans to fight the Juthungi who invaded Raetia, and Goths and Huns to smash the usurpers Maximus and Eugenius. When Theodosius died on January 17, 395, the empire was partitioned between his sons. The 18-year-old Arcadius ruled the east, while 11-year-old Honorius presided over the west.

In 395 both the Middle East and the Balkans

were subjected to Hun raids. A Hun horde led by Basich and Kursich rode down from the Caucasus, looting its way through Armenia and terrorizing Roman Syria. Jerome, scholar and future saint, fled from Bethlehem in the Judaean Hills to the coast. "The wolves...of the north were let loose upon us from the far-off rocks of the Caucasus, and in a little while overran great provinces," he wrote. "How many monasteries were captured, how many streams were reddened with human blood. They filled the whole earth with slaughter and panic as they flitted hither and thither on their swift horses. They were at hand everywhere before they were expected...by their speed they outdistanced rumor."

The Huns then turned east towards Mesopotamia, laying waste to the villages of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers up to the gates of the Sassanid capital of Ctesiphon. But the Hun horses and bows, so lethal on the open plains, were impotent against the city walls. When a Sassanid army advanced against them, the Huns retreated back north. Slowed by captives and by pillaging, the disorderly horde was caught by the Sassanids. Holding the higher ground, the Persian archers wreaked havoc on the Huns. Most of the Huns were slain and they lost their loot and captives.

During winter 395, smaller groups of Huns crossed the frozen Danube and raided into Dalmatia and Thrace. Their depredations, however, were minor compared to the mayhem unleashed by the Goths settled within the empire. The inability of the two halves of the empire to cooperate enabled the new leader of the Visigoths, Alaric, to run amok in Thrace and Greece. Alaric stopped the carnage when he was made master of soldiers of Illyricum in 397, but in the years thereafter he would repeatedly invade Italy.

The fifth century opened with a massacre of Goths at Constantinople. Their leader, Gainas, had briefly held the reins of power in the city. Gainas and his Goths fled back to their homelands north of the Danube. However, these were now ruled by the Hun lord Uldin. Flinging his army against the Goths, Uldin suffered several defeats before emerging victorious. Gainas' head was sent as a gift to Arcadius who concluded a treaty with Uldin.

Nevertheless, in the winter of 404-405 AD, Uldin probed into Thrace. In 406 he was back helping the Romans; albeit those of the western empire. Uldin came to the aid of Stilicho, the master of both services (supreme commander) of the west, who besieged the Gothic leader Radagaisus at Faesulae (Fiesole, Italy).

In summer 408 the Danube garrisons were left in a weakened state. With Roman troops off to fight the Sassanids, Uldin seized the city of Castra Martis (Kula, Serbia) through treachery and pillaged Thrace. Efforts by the prefect of Thrace to negotiate did not impress Uldin. The Hun lord boasted that all the rising sun touches could be his, but what he wanted was more coins not lands. Many of the Hun leaders with Uldin, however, were satisfied with the Roman offers. Those that remained loyal to Uldin were rounded up by the Roman forces, chained and put on a cart to Constantinople. The wily Uldin escaped back north across the Danube where his debacle caused some of the Huns to branch off on their own. One group joined Alaric's Goths who were advancing on Rome, and others joined the ranks of the Romans defending the eternal city.

In August 408 the half Vandal, half Roman, Stilicho was beheaded at Ravenna. In a purge of foreign troops, Roman troops in Italy massacred barbarian families. The next year Honorius attempted to hire 10,000 Huns to fight the Goths but substantial Hun reinforcements did not arrive until 411. By that time it was too late. In 410 Alaric became the first foreign conqueror to sack Rome in 800 years. Alaric died in the same year; his successor, Ataulf, led the Visigoths to Gaul and Spain.

Fortunately, Honorius found an able general in Constantius. Possibly aided by the belated Hun reinforcements, Constantius took to the offensive

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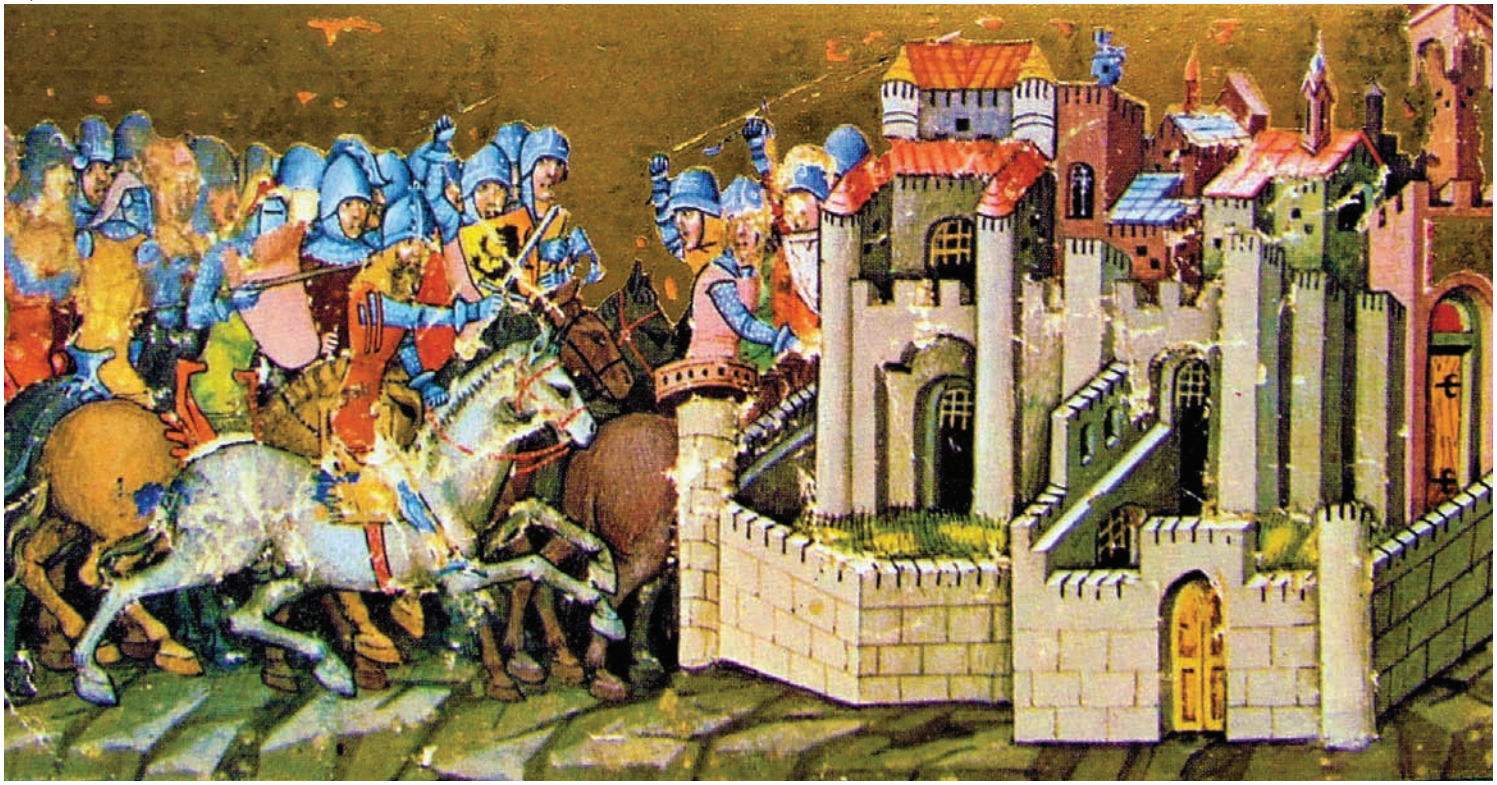

The ancient Roman city of Aquileia was besieged by Alaric and the Visigoths in 401, and again in 408. In 452, Attila attacked and utterly destroyed the city. The fall of Aquileia was the first of Attila's incursions into Roman territory. OPPOSITE: This painting by Georges-Antoine Rochegrosse (1859-1938) depicts a party of Huns ransacking a Roman villa in Gaul. Raids and tributes from the Roman Empire were the largest source of income for the Hunnic confederation under Attila.

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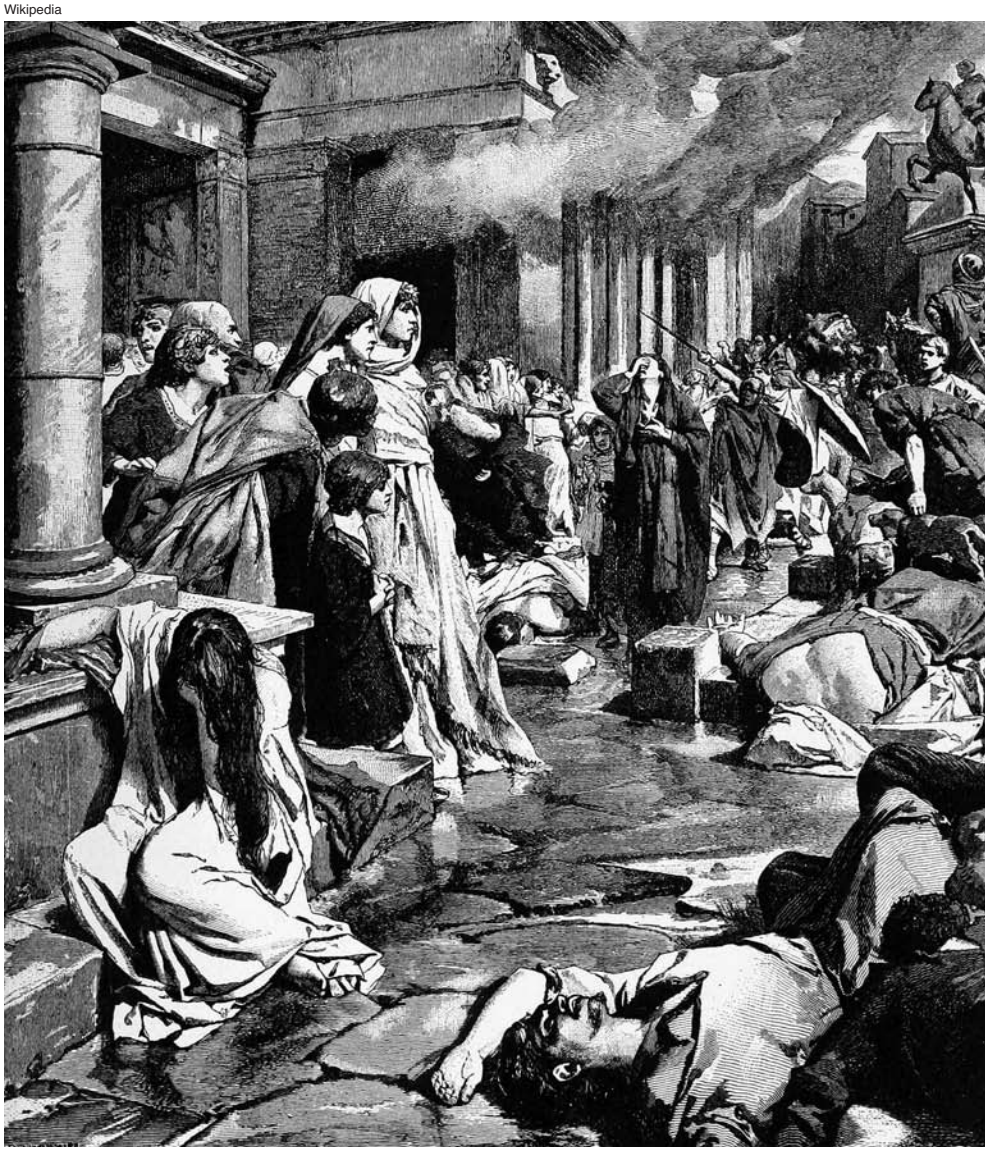

ABOVE: In 447 Attila ravaged south through Thrace, and Macedonia into Greece as far as Thermopylae. OPPOSITE: Fierce, swift and nomadic, the Huns would contribute to the fall of the Roman Empire as their invasions forced the movement of other peoples such as the Alans, Goths, and Vandals. The Great Migration (376-476 AD) of these groups and the ensuing raids and insurrections weakened the empire.

and set out to restore order in war ravaged Gaul. Vandals with Suebi and Alans had broken through the Rhine River defenses and from there moved on to Spain. The Franks were in Belgium, and the Burgundians had established a kingdom based in Worms, a city situated on the west bank of the Upper Rhine.

Little is known of Charaton, the prominent Hun leader of this time, other than that he was visited by the Roman envoy Olympiodorus. Notably, the Danube fleet was strengthened in January of 412. Work was also begun on Constantinople's redoubtable new landward walls, named after Arcadius' successor, Theodosius II.

The Huns raided the Eastern Roman Empire in 422 at a time when it was again at war with the Sassanids. The next year Honorius died, whereupon his sister, the redoubtable Galla Placidia, demanded the western throne for her four-year-old son Valentinian. Placidia was at Constantinople where she was backed by Theodosius II. The court in Ravenna, however, instead crowned John, a non-family official. For the next two years, there was civil war.

John hoped that his general Flavius Aetius would procure the help of the Huns. Aetius knew the Huns well. About the same year as the Gothic sack of Rome, Aetius had been given to the Huns as hostage. A formidable warrior and skilled diplomat, Aetius became known as "the last of the Romans." In 424 Aetius brought chests of gold to Rua and Octar, the joint kings of the Huns. The kings sent a strong detachment of Huns to Ravenna. By the time they arrived, the civil war had already been brought to an end and John had been executed. The Huns attacked Theodosius' army, which had advanced towards the city, regardless. Aetius pacified his rapacious allies with land grants in Pannonia and Valeria. The child-emperor Valentinian III was crowned at Rome in August 425 with Placidia ruling as regent.

Octar laid waste to Burgundian lands on the Rhine in 430. The Burgundian kingdom petitioned Rome for help but all they got was a bishop who converted them two years later. Nevertheless, instilled with renewed determination and favored by fortune, the Burgundians attacked the Huns just after Octar had died following a night of excessive festivities. The 3,000 outnumbered Burgundians slew 10,000 Huns, wrote Socrates of Constantinople in his Ecclestiastica.

Placidia, meanwhile, had never forgiven Aetius for having sided with the usurper John. In 432, she stripped Aetius off his command as Master of Both Services. Aetius fled to his friend Rua, who outfitted Aetius with a band of mercenaries. Returning to Italy with his Hun allies in 434, Aetius regained his old position.

Rua's attention was focused on the Danube frontier, where subjugated tribes continued to flee into the Eastern Roman Empire. Rua exacted a tribute of 350 pounds of gold from Constantinople and threatened war if Rome did not hand over the refugees. When his demands were not met, Rua ravaged Thrace in either 434 or 435 where he was killed by lightning during a thunderstorm.

Attila and Bleda (Buda) became the new leaders of the Huns. Both were sons of Mundzuk (Mundiuch), another brother of Rua and Octar. In 435 Attila and Bleda met Constantinople's ambassador at Margus (Pozarevac, Serbia). The two parties met to discuss terms the Hun way, which was on horseback in contrast to the Roman tradition of sitting. The Huns would keep the peace if refugees were returned, if compensation was paid for escaped Roman captives and if the annual tribute was doubled to 700 pounds of gold.

In the Western Roman Empire, Aetius was preoccupied with the Visigoths and Burgundians in Gaul. Aetius was forced to bequeath Rome's North African territories to Gaiseric, the Vandal King. Aetius turned to the Huns in 437 for help against the Burgundians. Avenging their previous defeat, the Huns slew 20,000 Burgundians, including King Gundahar, in what was immortalized in the German medieval epic, the Nibelungenlied.

For several years after the Treaty of Margus, Attila and Bleda secured their realm by suppressing unruly tribes and by conquering new ones along the periphery. Hun soldiers were also employed by the western empire against the Visig-

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oths. Litorius, the Master of Soldiers in Gaul, used Huns in 439 against the Visigoths of King Theodoric. Hunic soothsayers used scapulimancy, the practice of divination using the shoulder blades of sacrificial animals, to foretell the future. Their auspices, however, did not prevent Litorius' defeat outside the Visigoth capital of Toulouse. The Visigoths captured Litorius, and he either died of his wounds while imprisoned or was executed.

In the East, relations between the Roman Empire and Attila deteriorated. Tribute had not been paid, refugees not returned and the bishop of Margus had plundered Scythian tombs in Hun territory. At the 440 trade fair in Constantia, the Roman outpost on the Danube's northern bank, Huns killed Roman merchants and soldiers. Attila, however, waited until the Danube garrisons were stripped of troops to aid the west against the Vandals. When the Imperial fleet sailed for Sicily in the spring of 441, Attila struck.

Between 441 and 443, and then again in 447, the Huns repeatedly raided into the Eastern Roman Empire. Constantia was probably the first to fall in 441, followed by its sister city of Margus across the river. The terrified bishop of Margus betrayed the city, having secretly reached an agreement with the Huns to spare his life. The bishop lured the city defenders into an ambush, and then opened the gates to the Huns. In what was likely the same campaign, the Huns sacked Viminacium (Kostolac, Serbia), Singidunum (Belgrade, Serbia) and Sirmium (Sremksa Mitrovica, Serbia).

In either 442 or 443, the Huns devastated Ratiara (Archar, Bulgaria), the base of the Roman Danube fleet. From there the Huns likely moved on Naissus on the River Nisava. The Huns crossed a pontoon bridge then brought forth siege towers on wheels. The Huns topped their towers with a platform screened with intertwined willow and rawhide. Enemy missiles stuck in or bounced off the towers. The Hun archers returned fire through arrow slots; however, their siege towers were not high enough to allow the Huns to storm the lofty city ramparts.

The Huns then brought up battering rams. The rams swung from chains fixed to four beams that formed a pyramid-like shape. Wicker and leather screens protected the Huns who heaved the rams back and forth. The massive iron ram heads splintered wood and cracked stone. The defenders countered by dropping huge boulders down from walls. The end came after the Huns clambered up scaling ladders. The Eastern Roman scribe Priscus of Panion (Thrace) wrote years later that bones still lay scattered along the riverbank.

On other occasions, the Huns pressed within 20 miles of Constantinople. "There was so much killing and blood-letting that no one could remember the dead," wrote Callinicus, a monk from Chalcedon. "They pillaged churches and monasteries...Thrace will never rise again." In 447 Attila ravaged south into Greece up to Thermopylae.

During the chaotic 440s, treaties were twice agreed upon in an effort to end the warfare. A one-time payment of 6,000 pounds of gold was to be paid to the Huns as well as an annual tribute of 2,100 pounds of gold. The Huns were also ceded a huge swath of land south of the Danube, from Pannonia to Novae (Svishtov, Bulgaria). Constantinople levied heavy taxes to pay for the Hun demands. Forced to sell even their furniture and their wives' jewels, some citizens were so ruined that they took their own lives. Still, Attila's extortion was far less than the 9,000 pounds of gold given to Alaric in 408. The Eastern Roman Empire alone had an annual revenue estimated to be 270,000 pounds of gold. Paying the Huns cost less than carrying out a major military campaign against them.

Wikipedia

Attila murdered his brother Bleda in or around 445. Under the sole rule of Attila the power of the Huns reached all time highs. His vast tribal empire encompassed the tribes north from the Danube to the Baltic and east towards the Caucasus and the Caspian Sea. Attila's "picked men," known as logades, ensured food and tribute were collected; however, the tribes were poor and had little to give. Not only this, many of them were so far away that Attila's ability to enforce his rule was limited by the vast distances involved. The real wealth was always in the Roman Empire.

So far the Huns had concentrated their raids largely against the Eastern Roman Empire. Constantinople plotted to assassinate Attila in 449 but the plot failed when the assassin lost his nerve. The whole affair ended up with more gold being given to placate Attila. In contrast, thanks to Aetius' friendship with the Huns, relations with the west remained amiable. A dispute over some loot from Sirmium in 449 seems to have been smoothed over as well. As fate would have it, though, things were about to change.

Honoria, emperor Valentinian's ambitious sister, desired to be empress herself. This meant she had to marry someone who would overthrow her brother. Honoria's schemes with a palace steward ended in the steward's execution in 449. Honoria was betrothed to a dependable senator. Seething with anger, Honoria sought the help of Attila. She secretly sent the Hun king a sum of money and a ring, requesting that Attila prevent her marriage. Attila interpreted Honoria's ring as a wedding proposal and claimed half of Valentinian's realm as her dowry. Valentinian was furious. Further demands from Attila were rebuffed.

Theodosius broke his neck on July 28, 450, in a riding accident. The new Eastern Roman Emperor, Theodosius' brother-in-law, Marcian, was not one to grovel before the Huns. Marcian canceled the tribute paid to Attila and taunted the Hun king. Let Attila try to come and steal more; if he did so, Marcian would meet him with larger forces than Attila could muster. Perhaps it was Marcian's show of bravado, which further convinced Attila to keep focused on the west. Attila kept his potential adversaries in the west guessing as to his true intentions. Changing his tune towards Valentinian, Attila sent the message that he would be striking at Rome's old foes, the Goths. In contrast, Attila reminded Theodoric that their mutual enemy was Rome.

Early in 451 Attila's army set off on its march towards Gaul. In its ranks there were Gepids under Ardaric from Transylvania, Rugians from the upper Tisza, Scirians from Galicia and Longobards (the future Lombards) from the Elbe. Ostrogoths under Valamir had come from their settlements south of the Danube and Herulians, Alans and Akatziri from the Black Sea steppes.

A medieval illustrated manuscript (c. 1350) depicting the siege of Orleans by the Huns while, at right, Anianus, Bishop of Orleans prays for General Flavius Aetius to hasten to the city. Accounts differ on when Aetius and Visigoth King Theodoric I arrived at Orleans, before or after Attila, but though the city surrendered on June 14, the Huns never took possession of it. Attila was pursued and suffered his first and only defeat, at the Battle of the Catalaunian Plains, in one of the last major military operations of the Western Roman Empire.

Altogether Attila's army was probably several tens-of-thousands strong, exaggerated by chroniclers into a fantastic half a million men.

Attila felled trees in the nearby forest to construct boats for crossing the Rhine. Burdened with siege and supply wagons, the Hun army rumbled along at about 12 miles a day. Villagers fled for their lives and abandoned the countryside. On April 7 the Hun rams battered the gates of Metz. The next day the city fell to Attila. Buildings and people were consumed by flames, blood spurted from slit throats. Other cities to feel the wrath of the Huns were Strasbourg, Worms, Trier, and Rheims. At Rheims the Huns allegedly cut off the head of the prelate Saint Nicasius whilst he was singing Psalm 119. A detachment of Attila's army ravaged Belgium as Attila took sides in a dynastic dispute among the Ripuarian Franks. Attila bypassed Paris, which was too small to merit his concern. His eyes focused on prosperous Orleans.

From his seat at Arles, Aetius hurriedly mustered his allies. The Franks, Burgundians, and Celts of Armorica furnished help, but it was not enough. Aetius needed the Visigoths of Aquitaine. "Bravest of nations, it would be prudent of you to combine against Rome's oppressor, who wishes to enslave the whole world," Jordanes recounted that the Goth-friendly senator Avitus told Theodoric. "Romans, you shall have what you desire," Theodoric replied. "You have made Attila our foe as well."

Attila arrived at Orleans in early May. What happened next is unclear. Ecclesiastical tradition accredits Anianus, the bishop of Orleans, for saving the city. According to the hagiography of Anianus (Saint Aignan), Anianus had implored Aetius to hasten to Orleans' relief before June 14, otherwise "the cruel beast shall tear it to pieces." Anianus boosted the morale of the besieged city by carrying holy relics around the battlements. A storm blew up and delayed Attila's final assault for three days. Still no help arrived. Despite all the prayers, the end seemed assured. Orleans surrendered unconditionally on June 14 and opened its gates.

The Huns were entering in triumph when a dust cloud appeared in the distance. Roman eagle standards were seen gleaming in the sun, at their side the embroidered banners of the Goths. Aetius and Theodoric had arrived in the nick of time. Anianus' cry "It is the aid of God" was taken up by the populace. As written in the Vita Aniani, the Huns were "driven from street to street, beaten down by the stones hurled at them by the inhabitants from the roofs of houses." In contrast, the account of Gregory, Bishop of Tours, describes the Romans and Goths arriving just before the Huns breached the walls. In Jordanes' account, Aetius and his allies arrived at Orleans before Attila, where they joined Sangiban, leader of a band of Alans who resided in the woods near the city. Seeing the city thus defended, Attila retreated.

What is certain is that Attila was unable to take Orleans. Attila fell back towards Troyes, where he allegedly told its Bishop, (Saint) Lupus, that he, Attila, was the Scourge of God. More likely this was a Christian invention, which viewed Attila as an instrument of God's punishment for the sins of mankind. Attila spared Troyes but took Lupus hostage. With Aeitus and Theodoric in pursuit, Attila prepared for the decisive showdown north of Troyes on the Catalaunian Plains.

On June 19 the Gepids of Attila's rearguard engaged the Franks of Aetius' vanguard. Fierce fighting lasted until nightfall. With the rising of the sun on June 20, the armies formed up for the main battle. Attila consulted his shamans, who not only foretold the doom of the Huns, but also that one of the enemy leaders would die. Attila was sure that leader was Aetius. He therefore avoided battle until the middle of the afternoon. Attila reckoned that, in the event of the prophesied defeat, the impending darkness would allow his army to escape.

Attila and his Huns held the central position of his battle line. Ardaric and his Gepids made up

the right wing, Valamir and his Ostrogoths the left. The wagon laager was positioned behind with its back to a river. Facing Attila across the gently undulating plain, Aetius commanded the left wing, Theodoric with his son Thorismund the right, and Sangiban the center.

"On then to the fray! Let courage rise and fury explode!" Attila called to his troops, wrote Jordanes. At the onset of the battle, each side sought to gain possession of a small strategic hill. Thorismund's cavalry got there first and sent the Huns reeling back. The Hun archers failed to arrest the advance of the enemy, which pushed Attila's formations towards the wagon laager. A shallow stream across the plain ran red with blood. King Theodoric was thrown off his horse. He was either trampled or slain by the spear of Andag the Ostrogoth, although many doubted Andag's claim.

Dusk fell upon the land as Thorismund fought his way towards Attila's guard. A blow on the head toppled Thorismund from his steed and he too nearly perished, if not for the timely rescue of one of his men. Night put an end to the fighting. Men from both sides wandered over the corpse-littered battlefield, looking for missing friends and comrades. Each side probably lost a third of its fighting strength.

Daybreak found Attila pacing back and forth like a wounded lion. His troops blew their trumpets and clashed their arms. Weary of what their enemy was still capable of, the Romans and Visigoths kept up a missile barrage from their fortified lines. Attila thought his end was near and had a funeral pyre prepared for himself. But it was Theodoric who got the hero's funeral, carried in a procession by his sons and buried with ritual laments.

Thorismund wanted to finish Attila off, but Aetius feared that without Attila the Goths would become too powerful. He convinced Thorismund to swiftly return to Toulouse to secure the Visigoth throne. Attila withdrew his army back towards Hungary. Traditionally considered one of the decisive battles in European history, Attila's defeat on the Catalaunian Plains was his first, last, and only one. Attila was determined to renew his attack on the Western Roman Empire.

By late June 452 the Huns were back on the offensive and at the walls of Aquileia on Italy's northeastern frontier. The siege dragged on into August when Attila smashed his way into the city

Emperor Theodosius II's chamberlain conspired to assassinate Attila, but the would-be assassins lost their nerve.

Attila the Hun's envoys were awestruck by the numerous chambers and lofty halls, the gold-leaf ceiling, intricate mosaics, and rarest of marble of the Great Palace at Constantinople.

The year was 449 and Attila's envoys Edika and Orestes had come to present Attila's demands to Eastern Roman Emperor Theodosius II. Edika was a renowned leader of the Skirians, Orestes was a rich Roman from the Danube's southern bank. After their lands were subjugated by the Huns, both had joined Attila's retinue. Orestes recited Attila's dictation, which was translated by Vigilas, the court interpreter.

Attila demanded that fugitives from the Huns and escaped Roman captives were to be handed over or ransomed, respectively. The leader of the Huns offered to meet Theodosius' envoys south of the Danube River. The imperial confidant Maximinus was chosen as ambassador of the delegation that would accompany Edika and Orestes back to Attila. Also joining the delegation was Priscus the scribe. Neither Maximinus nor Priscus were privy to an assassination plot concocted by Theodosius' chamberlain, the eunuch Chrysaphius. With Vigilas again translating, Chrysaphius bribed Edika into murdering Attila.

A Byzantine Gold Coin depicting Emperor Theodosius II.

The imperial delegates met up with Attila in northern Serbia. Losing his nerve Edika secretly divulged the whole assassination plot to Attila. At the meeting with Maximinus, Attila said nothing of the plot but angrily insisted that Vigilas return to Constantinople and bring the fugitives. Still playing the part of the conspirator, Edika told Vigilas to also bring gold to bribe the guards. The rest of the delegation accompanied Attila to his chief stronghold on the southern part of the Great Hungarian Plain.

At Attila's stronghold wooden houses and yurts were clustered around palisades that enclosed the more important buildings. Theodosius' envoys were not the only ones visiting Attila's compound. Attila threatened war with the Western Rome Empire over booty from Sirmium. Against Attila's wishes, one of his own men had sold a pair of golden bowls to a banker in Rome. Attila already had crucified the official, but now he wanted the bowls back.

Priscus' account of the meeting with Attila has survived in the writings of Jordanes, a 6th-century Gothic historian, and gives a unique eyewitness description of the Hun king and his court. "[Attila] was a lover of war but knew how to restrain himself, wrote Priscus. "He was excellent in council, gracious to those received into his protection. He was short of stature, broad-chested, with a large head, small eyes, thin beard flecked with gray, snub nose."

In Attila's dining hall, guests drank wine from golden and silver cups and ate from silver plates. Not so Attila, who kept to his simple nomad roots, drinking out of a wooden cup and eating nothing but meat on his wooden plate. Bards sang of Attila's victories. When it came time for laughs, the Romans were dumbfounded by the crude humor of the Huns. A favorite performer was Zercon, a hunchbacked Black dwarf, who performed antics that elicited raucous laughter. Attila hardly flinched.

Maximinus' delegation returned to Constantinople, but Vigilas was placed under arrest when he returned to Attila. Caving in under threats, Vigilas spilled the details of the plot. Attila kept Vigilas as a hostage, keeping the gold for the assassination and demanding the same amount, 50 pounds, as ransom. Attila also demanded that the emperor hand over Chrysaphius. Following more negotiations, not only was the scheming eunuch spared and Vigilas returned, but Attila also overlooked the missing refugees and even withdrew from the lands south of the Danube. All it took was much more gold for Attila.

— Ludwig H. Dyck

Wikipedia

Pope Leo I meets with Attlia the Hun possibly somewhere near Mantua in this Vatican fresco by Raphael. That the Pope was successful in persuading the Huns to spare Italy in this 452 AD meeting may have been because of the logistical difficulties involved in invading the Italian peninsula. Later, Rome would have to pay tribute to forestall invasion.

with stone throwing slings, giant scorpion crossbows and battering rams. Sacking Aquileia, Attila bypassed Ravenna and went on to ravage the cities of the northern Po valley. In Milan the Huns were so busy with the looting that the population had time to flee. Attila's shamans warned Attila that he would share Alaric's fate.

A delegation headed by Pope Leo I arrived to reason with Attila on the shore of Lake Garda. "[Attila] was so flattered by the presence of the highest priest" that he promised peace and returned home," wrote the chronicler Prosper. In reality, Attila's compliance was a pragmatic one. Attila invaded northern Italy at a time of a failed harvest. His famished and weakened men fell victim to outbreaks of diarrhea and dysentery, exacerbated by the summer heat. News arrived from the East that Marcian was raiding into the poorly defended Hun lands. Marcian had also sent reinforcements to the western empire, enabling Aetius to mount counterattacks.

In 453 Attila, who was in his mid-50s, married Hildegunde, a young Germanic princess. Heavy with drink and food, Attila collapsed into sleep after the wedding feast. Suffering a hemorrhage, Attila suffocated while in drunken stupor. The great Hun king was buried with iron, silver, and gold, which symbolized his weapons and loot. Attila had numerous wives and sons, but he had left no provisions for his succession. Attila's sons, Ellac, Dengizich, and Ernakh, divided the empire. The Hun vassals saw Attila's death as an opportunity to rid themselves of their overlords. Led by Ardaric the Gepid, the Gepids and Goths shattered the Hun supremacy in an epic battle by the Nedao (Nedava) River in 454 or 455. Thirty thousand of the Hun army were claimed to have fallen, including Ellac who fought with honor.

For a while, the Huns retained a foothold on the Black Sea coast and on the Serbian-Bulgarian border. The latter enclave suffered another defeat at the hands of the Goths. Dengizich crossed the frozen Danube in 467 in an attempt to settle his famished people among a community of Goths. Dengizich desperately appealed to the local imperial commander, Anagastes.

Although the Emperor Leo I replied favorably to the Huns, Anagastes ended up siding with the Goths who turned on the hapless Huns. The fighting lingered on until 469, when Dengizich was killed and his head delivered to Constantinople. The remaining Huns merged with other tribes, particularly those of the Bulghars.

Arising from their shrouded Xiongnu origin out of the eastern steppes, the Huns' advance into Europe set in motion the Wandering of the Nations and hastened the downfall of the Western Roman Empire. While they were still nomads, the deadly horse-archery and mobility of the Huns enabled them to win spectacular victories against other tribal peoples.

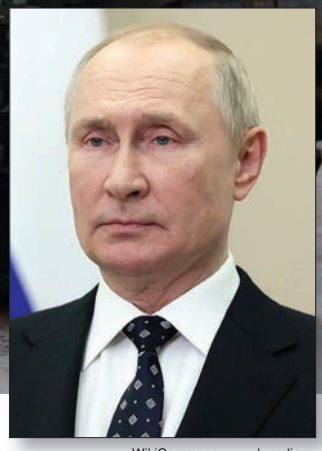
Attila became the greatest barbarian king of his age; however, unlike the Goths, Vandals, Franks, and others, the Huns never succeeded in establishing a significant foothold in the empire. Neither did the Huns ever inflict a decisive defeat on a major Roman army, nor did they ever sack Rome.

After their settlement in Hungary, the Hun's reliance on vassal troops eroded their advantage against their opponents. They failed to win over subjected populations and refugees continued to flee into the Roman Empire. When the Hun leadership fractured after Attila's iron rule, the conquered turned on their oppressors and annihilated them without mercy. The greatest legacy of the Huns remains the terror they spread, but their histories were written by their enemies and in retrospect, they were no more terrible than other so-called barbarian tribes or the Romans themselves. ■

The Russian Army has experienced extensive action—and challenges—in the last three decades.

By Christopher Miskimon

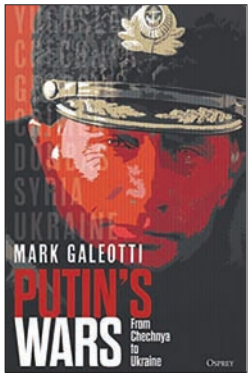
WikiCommons, Dmitry Terekhov from Odintsovo, Russian Federation



WikiCommons, www.kremlin.ru

Officially adopted in 1992, the T-90 is Russia's most modern main battle tank. It has been used in conflicts in Syria and Ukraine, including the Russian invasion of 2022 during which a number of T-90s were lost . INSET: Russian President Vladimir Putin.

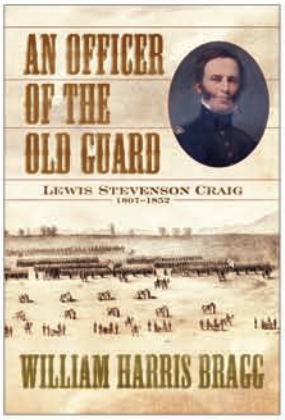
The Wagner Group is Russia's main Private Military Contractor (PMC), a new term for the age-old concept of mercenary bands. Wagner had thousands on its payroll, sending them wherever Vladimir Putin, Russia's leader wanted them. Many of its members had prior service in Russia's elite forces, such as Spetsnaz or the airborne forces. Often, they supplied shock troops and reserve exploitation forces for operations. Wagner troops are often paid two or three times more than regular Russian soldiers, giving rise to envy and disdain among those they are present to support. When Russia deployed forces to Syria in 2015, Wagner mercenaries went along.



At their peak, Wagner maintained a substantial force in Syria with about 2,500 personnel. They organized into four battalion sized units, with three companies each. Within this ad hoc brigade were support units including a tank company equipped with T-72s, a reconnaissance company and an artillery battalion along with logistics units. Such a large force proved expensive to support, but in the first years of the deployment there was money to be made. For a time, the Wagner unit occupied pride of place in the Russian forces in Syria.

The Battle of Khasham of February 7, 2018, proved how much this situation had changed by then. A group of Wagner mercenaries, leading a mixed force of Syrian soldiers and Iranian trained militiamen, advanced on a Syrian Defense Force (SDF) outpost near the town of Khasham. The SDF had reclaimed this area from ISIS the year before and there was a substantial force of US Special Forces at the outpost. American reconnaissance assets had spotted the 500-strong Wagner group assembling days earlier and monitored them since. The Americans contacted the Russian military through a deconfliction line set up to avoid any direct combat between US and Russian forces. They asked if the approaching forces were Russian.

The Americans received a reply: the Syrian group had nothing to do with the Russians. Given this assurance, the US command decided to make an example of this force, which was by now shelling the outpost with artillery. In response, the Americans demonstrated the firepower they could muster. Aircraft including B-52 bombers and F-15E Strike Eagles pounded the Wagner-led force from the air. Rocket artillery from HiMARS rocket launchers added to the maelstrom while AH64 Apache helicopter gunships



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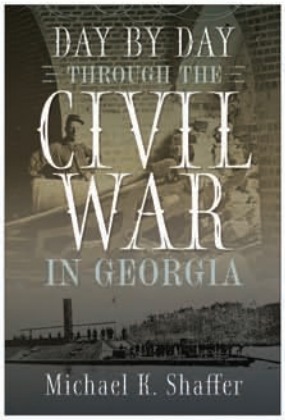

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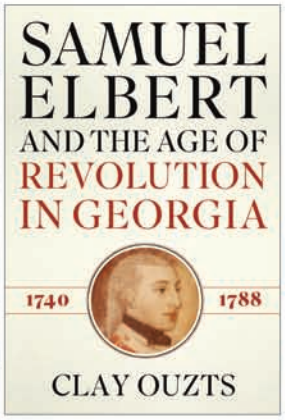

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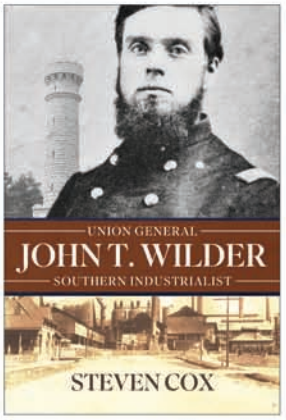

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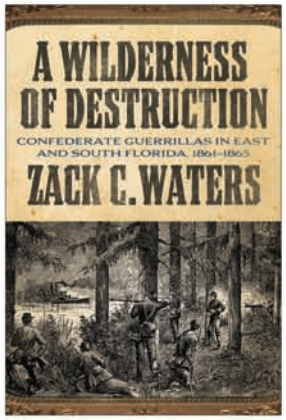

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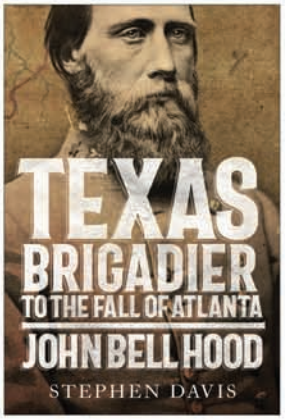

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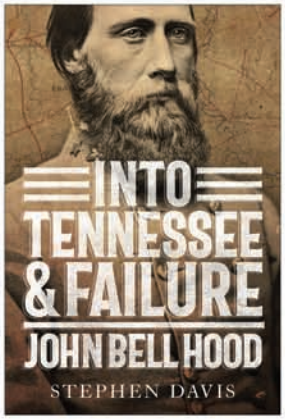

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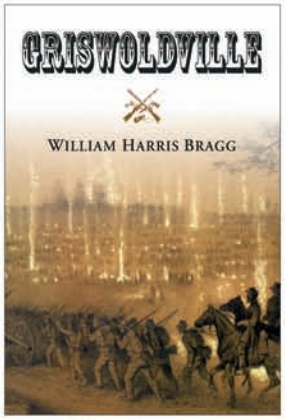

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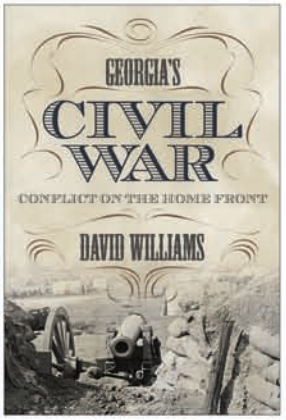

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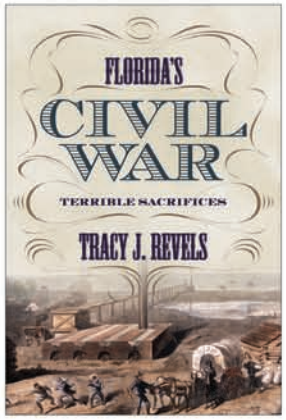

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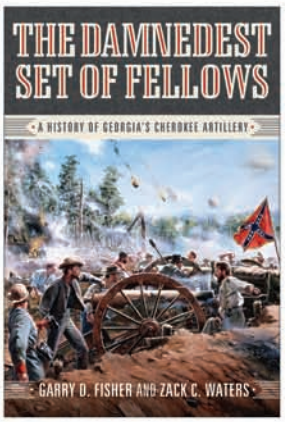

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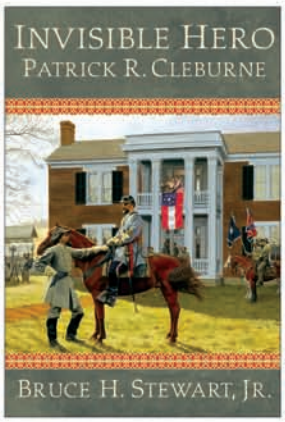

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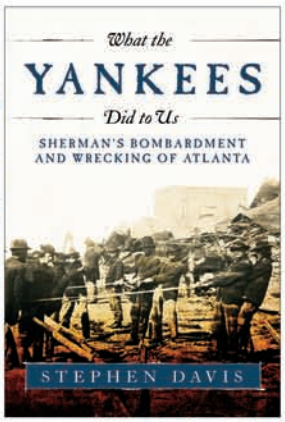

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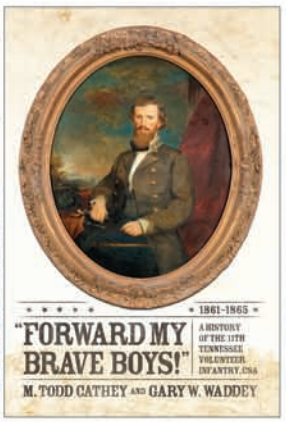

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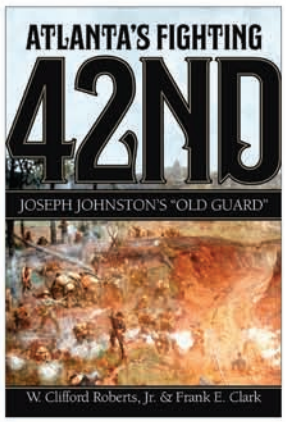

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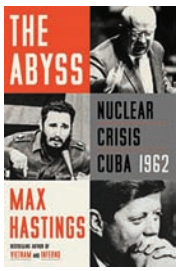
used their 30mm cannon and Hellfire missiles. These attacks went on for four hours, until the battered and broken Russian/Syrian force retreated. They suffered two hundred casualties in the fighting, including perhaps a couple of dozen Wagner mercenaries. The SDF had one man wounded with no Americans hurt or killed.

How had the Russians not known about their own mercenary's location and actions? It may have been a simple error on the part of the Russian staff. It may have been due to resentment by the Russian regulars against the cocky and expensive Wagner troops, who by 2107 were less needed in Syria. Also, by 2018 the money had started to dry up, and one of the Wagner group's reported owners, Yevgeny Prigozhin, had recently struck a deal with the Syrian Energy Ministry for 25% of the oil and gas revenues for areas Wagner recaptured for the government. Khasham was on the route to such an energy-rich area.

The rise and use of the Wagner Group is but one facet of Russian military operations since the end of the Cold War. Russian troops have been active in numerous conflicts since Vladimir Putin assumed leadership, including Chechnya, Georgia, Syria, and Ukraine. The history of these conflicts is covered in detail in ***Putin's Wars: From Chechnya to Ukraine*** (Mark Galeotti, Osprey Publishing, Oxford UK, 2022, 384 pp., maps, photographs, bibliography, index, $35, hardcover). It highlights Russia's ongoing attempts to prove its military might on the world stage and thus its relevance as a world power.

The book's prime focus is on conflicts waged since Putin assumed the Presidency of Russia in 2012, but there is extensive historical information on the years since the Soviet Union dissolved and their effect on the current Russian situation. The author is an acknowledged expert on Russian military affairs and has traveled extensively in the country. This allowed him to gather details from a wide variety of sources within the country. The narrative also provides information on how and why Putin has used his military resources to try and regain Russia's place among the major powers of the world. Its successes and failures are instructive to readers trying to make sense of the Russian military and how it is operating in the current day.



The Abyss: Nuclear Crisis Cuba 1962 (Max Hastings, Harper Collins Publishing, New York NY, 2022, 544 pp., maps, photographs, notes, bibliography, index, $35, hardcover)

The Cuban Missile Crisis is the closest humanity has come to nuclear war, despite the fact neither side wanted it to happen. When the United States discovered the Soviets had placed nuclear weapons on the island of Cuba, able to threaten most of the eastern coast, it was an intolerable situation. The ensuing blockade, named a quarantine to make it less an act of war against Cuba, created tense situations which brought the US and Soviet Union to the brink of open conflict. Plans were drawn up for an invasion of Cuba, despite the presence of 43,000 Soviet troops. When the Soviets agreed to remove their missiles and bombers from Cuba, the blockade was lifted, and the tensions slowly eased. The episode had long-lasting ramifications for both nations, however, lasting until the dissolution of the Soviet Union three decades later.

A political, military and social history of the Cuban Missile Crisis by an acknowledged authority on the subject, the book is broader in scope than many previous histories of this topic, as the author ties in the parts played by other events and personalities not usually considered.

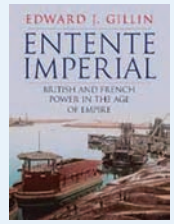
The Chinese Civil War 1945-49 (Michael Lynch, Osprey Publishing, Oxford UK, 2022, 144 pp., maps, photographs, bibliography, index, $20, softcover)

The years between the end of World War II

SHORT BURSTS

Baghdad Blues (Paul M. Kendel, Casemate Books, 2022, $24.95, softcover) A U.S. Army veteran wrote this novel. It tells the story of a sergeant serving in southwest Baghdad and dealing with the stresses of service there.

The Origins of Surface to Air Missile Technology (James Mills, Casemate Books, 2022, $34.95, hardcover) Both the Allies and Germans studied anti-aircraft missiles during World War II. Afterwards the Allies transferred German knowledge to their custody and put it to use.

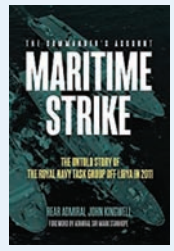


Entente Imperial: British and French Power in the Age of Empire (Edward J. Guinn, Amberley Books, 2022, $30, hardcover) This book details how Britain and France cooperated to expand their empires during the mid-19th Century, but drifted apart in the following decades, to their detriment.

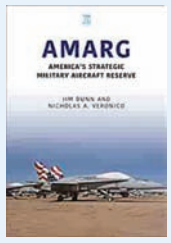
Bomber Command: Men, Missions and Machines 1936-68 (Gordon A. A. Wilson, Amberley Books, 2022, $30, hardcover) This is a history of the RAF Bomber Command from its inception in 1936 through to its end during the Cold War. There is detailed information on organization, aircraft, and impact.

The Hawk Air Defense Missile System (Marc Romanych & Jacqueline Scott, Osprey Books, 2022, $19, softcover) The Homing All the Way Killer (HAWK) was the world's first mobile anti-aircraft missile system. This book highlights its development and service.

Tanks at the Iron Curtain 1960-75 (Steven J. Zaloga, Osprey Books, 2022, $19, softcover) A new generation of tanks entered service during the 1960s. New advances in the tanks and the missiles designed to destroy them caused changes on the battlefield.



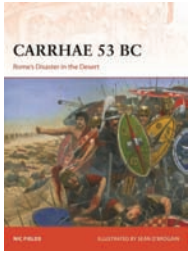
Maritime Strike: The Untold Story of the Royal Navy Task Group off Libya in 2011 (Rear Admiral John Kingwell, Casemate Books, 2022, $37.95, hardcover) The author commanded this British task group off the coast of Libya during the Arab Spring. The book is an interesting look at a modern naval force on an operation.



AMARG: America's Strategic Military Aircraft Reserve (Jim Dunn and Nicholas S. Veronico, Key Books, 2021, $24.95, softcover) Over 3,000 aircraft are stored at the "Boneyard" in Arizona. This new book reveals how these planes are preserved, and sometimes rebuilt for new service.

and the start of the Korean War were relatively quiet years for the United States, but across the Pacific Ocean one of the most significant conflicts in modern history took place, setting the stage for events right up to the present day. With the Japanese enemy gone, the Nationalists and Communists in China finally culminated their long conflict in an intense and hard-fought civil war. Millions of soldiers, equipped with a mix of leftover wartime and indigenously produced weapons struggled for control of a struggling nation with immense latent power. Neither side could claim the moral upper hand; brutality and hardship marked the war years for both soldier and civilian. In the end the Communists succeeded in pushing the nationalists off the Chinese mainland and onto the small island of Taiwan, where their descendants remain to this day. The war cost five million lives and enabled Communist China to evolve into the powerhouse it is today.

Newly revised and updated, this beautifully illustrated edition of Osprey's classic work on the Chinese Civil War is a must for those seeking to understand modern China, its attitudes and many of its current actions.



Carrhae 53BC: Rome's Disaster in the Desert (Nic Fields, Osprey Publishing, Oxford UK, 2022, 96 pp., maps, photographs, bibliography, index, $24, softcover)

When the Roman Legions marched into the dry desert sands of northern Mesopotamia, the Parthian General Surena was ready for them. Despite being heavily outnumbered, the Parthian horsemen used excellent tactics to draw their enemy out and punish them with clouds of arrows, using their superior mobility to keep from becoming decisively engaged with the legionaries. Eventually the Romans were weakened and overrun, losing almost their entire army along with their commander, Marcus Licinius Crassus, killed during negotiations. His son died earlier in the battle, his head placed on a spear and paraded in front of the trapped Romans.

Little known today despite enduring interest in ancient Rome, Carrhae was one of its worst defeats. The author deftly explains the campaign and the final battles. There is extensive text on the tactics and techniques of the Parthian cavalry and its horse archers. Both Roman and Parthian weapons and equipment are also examined. A final chapter also delves into the aftermath of the battle and the effects it had on the Romans.

By Joseph Luster

THE WESTERN FRONT OF WORLD WAR I TAKES THE STAGE AND GRAND STRATEGY GOES MEDIEVAL

The Great War: Western Front

Genre: Strategy • Platform: PC
Publisher: Frontier Foundry • Available: 2023

It's time to travel back to the era of World War I once again in *The Great War: Western Front*, which puts you in control of the battlefield in a unique dual role system. The team at Petroglyph (*Command & Conquer: Remastered, Star Wars: Empire at War*) has been working to deliver a robust mix of turn-based and real-time strategy that tasks players with both managing their units on the battlefield and zooming out to control the war at large and bolster their nation's will as they claw their way to victory.

The roles with which you will primarily be concerned are Field Commander and Theatre Commander. As the titles imply, the former involves taking real-time control of the battlefield. As for Theatre Commander, this role gives you a more all-encompassing view of the campaign, allowing you to manage the Western Front from a grand strategy viewpoint. It's in this role that you will be researching new technologies, bolstering the defensive and offensive capabilities of specific regions and attempting to turn the overall tide of war in your favor.

There's more than just the tangible loss of life and equipment to deal with in the battles that lie ahead. Each faction's National Will is impacted by victories and losses, and if this stat is reduced to zero it will decide the outcome of the conflict. Taking charge with unique strategies and seizing opportunities like territorial claims and the capture of essential defensive positions could completely redefine the conclusion of The Great War as we know it. The encounters that take place in each region also affect the region itself, leaving the mark of combat in the form of retained trench networks and the consistent degradation of the battlefield. This creates an authentically persistent world that can be used to your advantage if you return to previous sites of battle for future encounters.

Petroglyph teamed up with Imperial War Museums to help create the most authentic historical strategy game possible. We'll have to wait until *The Great War: Western Front*'s PC launch in 2023 to find out how they fared, but what we've seen so far certainly looks like a promising effort.

Knights of Honor II: Sovereign

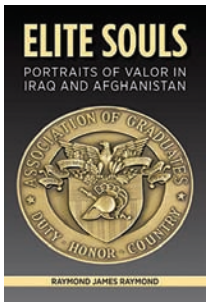
Genre: Strategy • Platform: PC
Publisher: THQ Nordic • Available: Now

If your particular flavor of strategy falls on the grand side of the spectrum, you might want to dive into the recently-released *Knights of Honor II: Sovereign*, which arrives courtesy of developer Black Sea Games and publisher THQ Nordic. This doesn't just apply to those who have spent decades immersed in the genre, because even though there's a lot of complexity and depth to the proceedings here, *Knights of Honor II* is also clearly hoping to be somewhat of a gateway for those who are just now starting to dip their toes.

If you are among those unfamiliar with this type of game, consider the world your oyster at a miniature scale as you attempt to become King and take full control of Europe. Over 200 kingdoms across Europe, North Africa and parts of Asia are available to select, and defending your land or taking the battle straight to the opposition plays out in the form of real-time strategy combat.

Just as important as leading your armies is the act of carefully choosing your royal court. You can appoint everyone from Marshalls and Clerics to Diplomats, Merchants and Spies to assist in spreading your influence, and the path you choose will ultimately reflect the path your greater kingdom takes over the course of your reign. All of this can be done on your own or against friends via multiplayer, so there are plenty of different ways to approach your stint on the throne.

The key to making all of those moving parts manageable is minimizing confusion. *Knights of Honor II: Sovereign* is in some ways smaller, faster and more direct than competition like *Crusader Kings* and *Total War*. In addition to offering more immediate replayability, this means that newcomers can experience full battles, and even get used to some of those inevitable bitter defeats, without investing a huge chunk of time in the process. Rewards come fast and often, so you're likely to get more out of the experience if you go in with the proper expectations. If you're new to grand strategy, this might just end up being your entry point! ■



Elite Souls: Portraits of Valor in Iraq and Afghanistan (Raymond James Raymond, Naval Institute Press, Annapolis MD, 2022, 392 pp., notes, bibliography, index, $49.95, hardcover)

Lieutenant Nick Eslinger's entry into Iraq was conventional, almost banal. A contracted airliner flew him and other soldiers of the 101st Airborne Division to Kuwait in 2008. Next, he spent a week undergoing mandatory training. Finally, he was flown to Tikrit, Iraq, where he found a small convoy heading to his unit at Samarra. A few days at headquarters, he was sent to Patrol Base Olson, home to his company, some Special Forces operators and a few support troops. He quickly integrated with his infantry platoon and got to know his NCOs. On a night patrol three months later, he saw a shadowy hand throw something over a wall. Realizing it was a grenade, he dove towards it, grabbed it the tried to hurl it away from his men. It exploded just after he threw it, but miraculously no one was hurt in the explosion. Eslinger ordered a squad to look for the attacker, but they escaped.

Lieutenant Eslinger's first experience of combat occurred quickly, full of confusion and chaos. This book tells the story of five officers, all graduates of West Point, from their childhood to their education, military training and service overseas. All had unique experiences, but each was flavored with the themes of their service common to all soldiers. The author captures those themes and relays them effectively to the reader. The book is an interesting look at the lives of young officers in the U.S. Army.

America's Forgotten Wars, From Lord Dunmore to the Philippines (Ian Hernon, Amberley Publishing, Gloucestershire UK, 2022, 337 pp., photographs, notes, bibliography, index, $32.95, hardcover)

Daniel Shays spent his life as a landless farm laborer, enthusiastic for the occasional militia training days. After the American Revolution began, he rose to captain in the 5th Massachusetts Regiment. Shays fought in the Battles of Lexington, Bunker Hill and Saratoga, proving himself a brave and clever officer in action. Unfortunately, he suffered wounds and had to leave military service in 1780, with the fledgling United States owing him much back pay. Upon his return home, he received a court summons for his unpaid debts; Shays even had to sell an ornamental sword given to him by General Lafayette to pay the worst bills. This created a sense of dissatisfaction and resentment toward the government. When Shays realized many of his fellow veterans and local farmers had the same problem, he got involved in the growing protests, which soon evolved into an uprising. Taking a position of leadership, Shays led an unsuccessful foray against a federal armory but was soon on the run, indicted for treason. Eventually, however, cooler heads prevailed, and he was pardoned in 1788. His failed rebellion was soon forgotten.

Shays' Rebellion is but one of the obscured, little known American conflicts covered in this new book. It covers some twenty of the small conflicts which dot American history from its founding until the dawn of the 20th Century. It is well-researched and written, revealing some popular misconceptions about each conflict which survive to the modern day

Target Saigon 1973-75 Volume 3: Disaster at Da Nang 1975 (Nic Fields, Osprey Publishing, Oxford UK, 2022, 96 pp., maps, photographs, bibliography, index, $24, softcover)

Few Americans know about the end of the Vietnam War because the United States was not there to see it. The limited American aid that had seen South Vietnam through the 1972 communist invasion was no longer available in 1975. Promises of logistical support lay unfulfilled; in 1974 the South Vietnamese had to disband ten squadrons of aircraft due to budget cuts. North Vietnam planned to invade the south in 1975-76. They wanted to move more quickly but were discouraged by their Soviet and Chinese benefactors and over concerns about the lingering capabilities of the South's military. Fear of an American return were allayed when a regional capital fell in January 1975 without any seeming notice by the U.S. This prompted the North to embark on the final campaign of the war, one which ended with a T-54 tank crashing through the gate of the Presidential palace in Saigon.

The third volume in the Target Saigon series focuses on the beginning of the end for South Vietnam. It details the evacuations of Hue and Da Nang along with the delaying actions fought along the central coast as sizable portions of the country were left undefended by the government. The book is detailed and contains a plethora of original photographs from both sides of the conflict. There are also color line drawings of major armored vehicles and aircraft. ■

Leipzig

Continued from page 53

Frederick William III became trapped in Leipzig as ecstatic civilians poured into the streets.

Napoleon issued orders to Dulauloy of the Guard Artillery to destroy the bridge once the rearguard crossed over the structure. Dulauloy in turn delegated the task to a Colonel Montfort, who passed the responsibility down the line. The enormous task fell to one Corporal Lafontaine.

With their resistance collapsing at 1 p.m., French soldiers from the three rearguard corps began streaming over the Lindenau Bridge with Allied bayonets at their backs. Seeing the Allied soldiers in close pursuit, Lafontaine panicked and blew the bridge with French soldiers still on it. The destruction of the bridge trapped 20,000 French soldiers on the far side of the Elster. Hundreds of men flung themselves in the river in an attempt to swim across. Marshals Oudinot and Poniatowski attempted to swim the river by hanging on to their horses. Oudinot safely made it to the other bank, but Poniatowski, who was in a weakened state as a result of two wounds received in battle that day, drowned just 12 hours after receiving his marshal's baton from the French emperor.

Napoleon led the remnants of his army west by forced marches. Demoralized by heavy casualties, exhaustion, and lack of food, the Grande Armée melted away through desertions and straggling. The Allied commanders decided not to pursue the retreating French units.

The Grande Armée suffered 43,000 killed and wounded and 38,000 captured. Additionally, 6,100 German troops defected during the battle. Among the French casualties were Polish Marshal Poniatowski and 11 generals killed or mortally wounded, 12 wounded generals, and 36 generals captured. Reynier and Lauriston were among those captured. The Allies also captured Frederick Augustus of Saxony and Prince Emil of Hesse-Darmstadt. The Allies took possession of 325 French cannons and most of Napoleon's supply train. Allied losses amounted to 54,000 men. The Russians and Prussian suffered the bulk of casualties. The Swedes, carefully shepherded through the battle by Bernadotte, lost less than 200 men.

The Battle of Leipzig, known as the "Battle of Nations," was one of the largest and most decisive battles of the Napoleonic and Revolutionary wars. With the loss at Leipzig, Napoleon's rule east of the Rhine River came to an abrupt end on November 2. The defeated French emperor retreated across the Rhine into France. The Confederation of the Rhine soon collapsed. The Allies invaded France in January 1814, and Napoleon abdicated three months later. The end of the Napoleonic era drew near, but it was not over yet. ■

Weapons

Continued from page 23

change positions and ambush the enemy with concentrated fire from effective ranges."

During its service in the final 10 months of World War II, the crews of Jagdpanzer 38 found that they could knock out nearly all types of enemy tanks they encountered while presenting a target so extremely difficult to spot as to be nearly invisible on the battlefield. The commanders of German front-line units were so pleased with the performance of the Jagdpanzer 38 that they saturated headquarters with requests for additional Hetzers. In response, the German high command in late 1944 designated that all Panzer 38(t) production was to be redirected towards the Hetzer.

The Wehrmacht distributed the first Hetzers produced in spring 1944 to the Ordnance Department for test firing and automotive trials, and also to training divisions. The first delivery to a front-line unit occurred in July 1944 when both Heeres Panzer Jager Abteilung 731 of Army Group North on the Eastern Front and Heeres Panzer Jager Abteilung 733 of Army Group Center both received an initial shipment of 45 Hetzers.

These panzerjager battalions in turn established three companies each with 14 Hetzers. Three other independent Heeres Panzer Jager Abteilungs—561st, 741st, and 744th—also eventually received Hetzers. The majority of the Hetzers went into action on the Eastern Front, although some were shipped to the Western Front and Italy. For example, two companies of the 741st were shipped by rail to the Arnhem sector in September 1944.

German regular infantry, panzergrenadier, and Volksgrenadier formations all eventually received Hetzers. The Hetzers assigned to Wehrmacht infantry divisions supported infantry attacks and helped contain penetrations of their forward lines by enemy armor.

For the Ardennes offensive that began in mid-December 1944, the Germans massed 295 Hetzers in 21 panzerjager companies. In January 1945, the German high command established Panzer Jager Brigade 104 that consisted of a mix of Hetzers and halftracks. The brigade, which also had reconnaissance vehicles, was tasked with seeking and destroying Russian armored units on the Eastern Front.

The last surviving strength report produced by the Germans dated April 10, 1945, reported 489 operational Hetzers on the Eastern Front, 79 operational on the Western Front, and 64 operational in Italy. By the end of the war, Germany had produced a total of 1,577 Hetzers. With its superb attributes as a tank destroyer, it remains one of the most renowned and unique German fighting vehicles of the late war period. ■

Port Republic

Continued from page 63

his pistol at some of the horses. After he had exhausted his ammunition, he drew his Bowie knife and began slashing the throats of some of the horses. The Confederates emerged victorious from the seesaw fighting for the Federal guns atop the Coaling. Their victory turned the tide of battle in favor of Jackson's army.

The broken Federal infantry reformed and countercharged the Confederates in a bid to retake the Coaling. The 5th and 7th Ohio advanced across the flatland meeting resistance on the way from Confederates in protected positions on the grounds of Lewiston. When the Union reinforcements arrived, some of the Louisianans tried to fight back, but the majority retreated across the ravine to the edge of the woods. Union artilleryman Captain James Huntington of Battery H, 1st Ohio Artillery, saved his right gun, leaving the limber and caisson behind.

Taylor's Louisianans were not idle. They laid down a blistering fire with their rifled-muskets to prevent the Union army from strengthening its hold on the key position. The fighting on the flatland along the river paused as every eye on both sides of the field turned toward the Coaling to observe the struggle for the guns. Winder directed his troops to direct volleys of fire uphill towards the Federals struggling to defend the Coaling.

Taylor rallied his Louisianans once again. They swept down into the ravine and uphill towards the Coaling yet again. When some Union infantry poured a fire into their right flank, Taylor directed two of his right companies to eliminate the threat. They climbed up to a higher elevation and poured a hot fire into the Union infantry forcing them to withdraw.

The Louisianans returned with their usual fury. "They reach the guns again, and again men shoot, stab, cut, hack," Taylor wrote. The Louisianans forced the Union soldiers back a second time and retook the Coaling. This second attack cost the Tigers as many men as the first. The slow destruction of Taylor's officer corps brought down the cohesion and combat effectiveness of the enlisted men. The men fought individually, and some turned the captured guns against the Union soldiers.

The Union troops guarding the guns were not finished yet, though. They reformed in the woods north of the Coaling and in the plains below to launch another counterattack. The Federals drove the Confederates from the Coaling a second time after which point there was brief lull in the struggle for the guns.

Jackson ordered Taylor to assault the guns a third time. At that point, Ewell arrived on the field with reinforcements just in time to lend much needed strength to the Confederates' fresh attack on the Union guns at the Coaling. The Louisianans once again came on screeching the Rebel Yell. They surged across the ravine and captured the guns for good.

The third assault "was a desperate rally," wrote Taylor, against what he described as an overwhelming enemy force. Even the Southern drummer boys took part in the attack. The Confederates took possession of a field of carnage with dead and dying horses and soldiers, as well as many badly wounded soldiers. Federals and Confederates alike lay piled in heaps with the blood of men and horses covering the ground, recalled Private Sam Buck of the 15th Virginia.

The Federals on the flat land along the river knew that to continue the fight was useless since the Confederates had captured the commanding ground. They slowly retreated north. A short time earlier, Jackson had sent orders to Brig. Gen. Isaac Trimble to bring the rest of the Confederate troops across the covered bridge over the North River and burn it in order to prevent Fremont's troops from using it.

Trimble marched all of the troops across the bridge, but he waited until the Confederates had driven Tyler's force from the battlefield at Port Republic before torching the bridge. Jackson sent some of his troops in pursuit of Tyler, who withdrew north to reunite with the rest of Shields' command. The Confederates pursued the retreating Union troops for four miles and then returned to Port Republic. Confederate losses at Port Republic totaled 816 men, while the Union suffered 1,002 casualties.

Although the battle was a close fought one, Jackson prevailed over Tyler; in so doing, he avenged the tactical defeat by the forces of Shield's command at Kernstown 11 weeks earlier. Jackson led his two divisions out of the Shenandoah Valley on June 17. They were bound for Richmond where Jackson reinforced General Robert E. Lee, the newly appointed commander of the Army of Northern Virginia, in the Peninsula Campaign against Maj. Gen. George B. McClellan's Army of the Potomac. Confederate President Jefferson Davis had given Lee command of the army on June 1 following the wounding of General Joseph Johnston the previous day in the clash at Seven Pines.

The victory at Port Republic capped a magnificent campaign in which Jackson had disrupted the Union military effort in the East and forced Washington to funnel troops from various commands into the Shenandoah Valley to contain Jackson. As an integral part of that victorious campaign, the fighting at Port Republic continues to fascinate students of the Valley Campaign of 1862. ■

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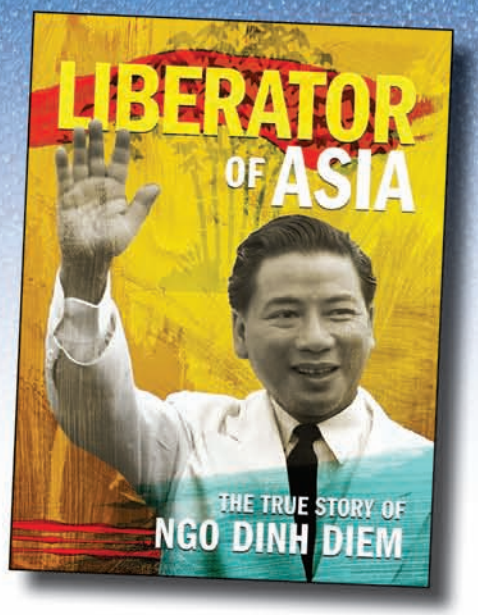

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