Flamethrowers on Iwo Jima

MILITARY HERITAGE

CMG 02313

MILITARY HERITAGE ▪ WINTER 2022 Volume 23, No. 4

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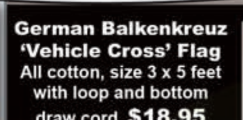

German Balkenkreuz 'Vehicle Cross' Flag

All cotton, size 3 x 5 feet with loop and bottom draw cord. **$18.95 #FLAG21**

MILITARY HERITAGE

Winter 2022

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Cover: A Marine from K Company, Ninth Marines goes "over the top" to assault a Japanese pillbox on Iwo Jima's Airfield Number Two, February 1945. See story page 26. Photo: Naval History and Heritage Command

Military Heritage (ISSN 1524-8666) is published quarterly by Sovereign Media, 6731 Whittier Ave., Suite C-100, McLean VA 22101-4554 (703) 964-0361. Periodical postage PAID at McLean, VA, and additional mailing offices. *Military Heritage*, Volume 23, Number 4
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Subscription Services, back issues, and Information: 1(800) 219-1187 or write to *Military Heritage* Circulation, *Military Heritage*, P.O. Box 1644, Williamsport, PA 17703. Single copies: $11.99, plus $3 for postage. Yearly subscription in U.S.A.: $39.95; Canada and Overseas: $53.95 (U.S.). Editorial Office: Editor, William E. Welsh. Send editorial mail to *Military Heritage*, 6731 Whittier Avenue, Suite C-100, McLean VA 22101. Email submission queries to Managing Editor Michael.Fowler@sovmedia.com. Review the magazine to tailor your submission to its approach before querying. Do not send unsolicited hardcopy manuscripts. The Editorial Department will not respond to inquiries regarding individual contracts. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Military Heritage*, P.O. Box 1644, Williamsport, PA 17703.

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EDITORIAL

HELL HATH NO FURY LIKE NATHAN BEDFORD FORREST

CONFEDERATE CAVALRY commander Nathan Bedford Forrest's finest hour came in a bloody clash on the muddy roads of Northern Mississippi on June 10, 1864, at a place called Brice's Crossroads. He'd fought many battles before that day, and many afterward, as well. Some of those clashes vie with Brice's Crossroads for being his finest hour.

His illustrious career as a confederate cavalry commander in the Western Theater began on the snow-covered grounds at Fort Donelson in mid-February 1862. The siege marked the rise of Brig. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant, but it also showed that Forrest had the right stuff to be a commander of men.

Lt. Col. Forrest helped roll back the Union Army's right wing in order to give some or all of the 16,000 besieged Confederate soldiers a chance to escape, but Confederate commanders squandered the opportunity. In the kind of initiative he would show repeatedly over the next three years, he led his mounted battalion safely through the frigid waters of Lick Creek to safety.

Five months later he received a promotion to brigadier general and took command of a 1,400-man brigade of horsemen. Then began a long string of raids and counter-raids in which he bedeviled Union cavalry and wreaked havoc behind Union lines and in defense of Confederate supply lines in the western theater. One of his greatest achievements was spoiling Colonel Abel Streight's spring 1863 raid into northern Alabama by overtaking that commander's mule-mounted column before it could disrupt the Confederate supply line.

Surviving veterans of Forrest's cavalry command posed for a photo during a reunion in 1917. Forrest died in 1877 at the age of 56.

Forrest's glory came not just from raiding, though. As he had at Shiloh, where he was in the thick of the fighting, he showed that he could play a significant role in large infantry battles. At Chickamauga, for example, his troopers performed ably as dismounted cavalry in the opening attack on September 18, 1863, driving Union cavalry across Reed's Bridge and securing the key crossing for the Confederate infantry to assail the Union left wing.

Forrest bickered repeatedly with Confederate commanders who got in his way. He did this in large part because they did not direct a given campaign or battle the way Forrest thought it should be fought. He became embroiled in bitter arguments and feuds with rival Confederate cavalry commander Maj. Gen. Joseph Wheeler, and also Army of Tennessee commander General Braxton Bragg. These feuds, as well as his role in the debacle known as the Fort Pillow Massacre, tarnished his reputation in the long run.

With his adage, "get there first with the most," he became a legendary commander during and after the war. To his credit, he rose from private to lieutenant general, winning one engagement after another, without having any formal military education or training. He succeeded because he had a remarkable, innate sense of grand strategy and battlefield tactics.

He also had an inexhaustible supply of grit. His heroism is unquestionable. The statistics speak for themselves. He had 29 horses shot from under him, suffered four wounds in battle, and killed or seriously wounded 30 Union soldiers in combat. Few soldiers or troopers could say the same.

—William E. Welsh

VOLUME 23, NUMBER 4

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6731 Whittier Ave., Suite C-100
McLean, VA 22101-4554

SUBSCRIPTION, CUSTOMER SERVICE, AND BUSINESS OFFICE
2406 Reach Road
Williamsport, PA 17701

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PRINTED IN THE U.S.A.

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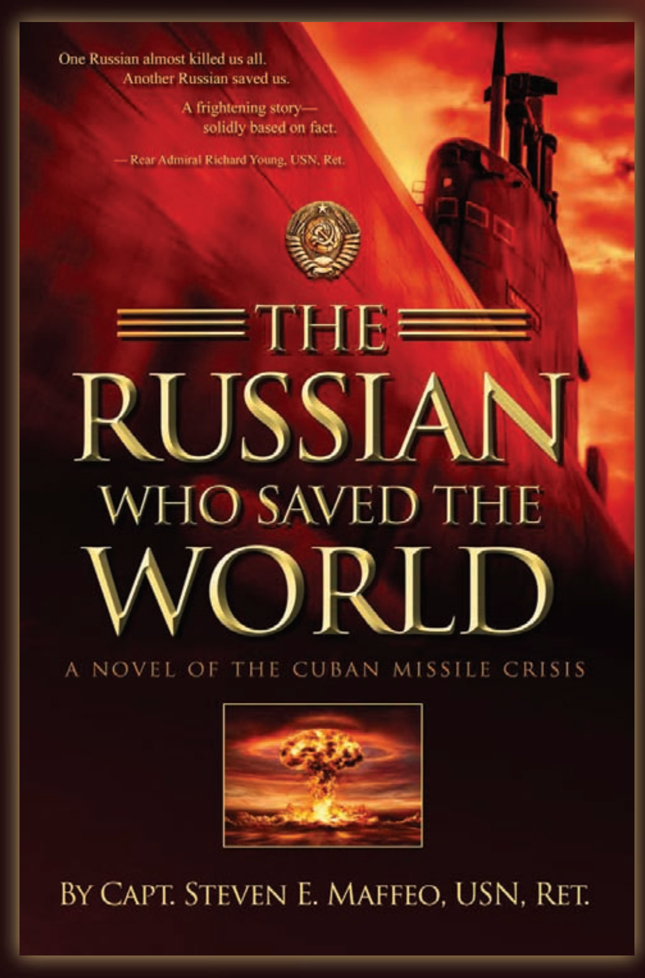

268 pages (6 x 9 inches), 18 illustrations, afterword

Hard bound: $29.00
ISBN 978-0-9600391-3-5

Paperback: $14.59
ISBN 978-0-9600391-4-2

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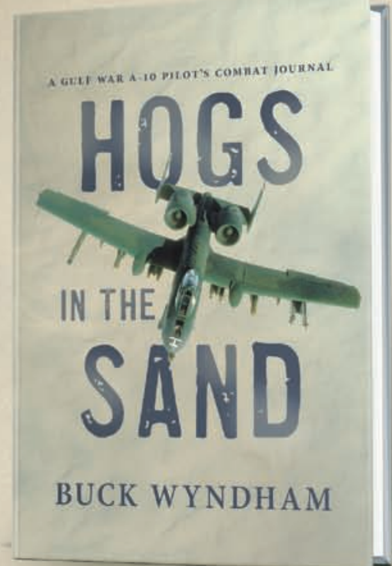

Pages: 440 Pub Date: 08/24/2020
Softcover: $22.95, 978-1-64663-158-2
Hardcover: $31.95, 978-1-64663-160-5
Ebook: $7.99, 978-1-64663-159-9

HOGS IN THE SAND

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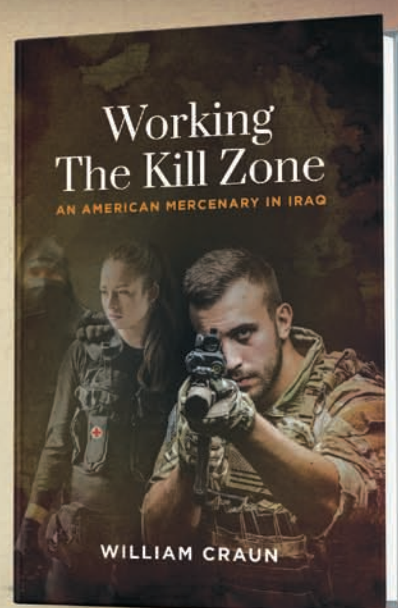

Pages: 314 Pub Date: 05/26/2021
Softcover: $19.95, 978-1-64663-345-6
Hardcover: $28.95, 978-1-64663-347-0
Ebook: $7.99, 978-1-64663-346-3

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Pages: 296 Pub Date: 09/11/2021
Softcover: $19.95, 978-1-64663-436-1
Hardcover: $28.95, 978-1-64663-438-5
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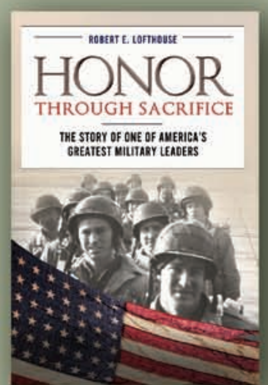

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by Robert E. Lofthouse

Pages: 206 **Pub Date:** 10/22/2021
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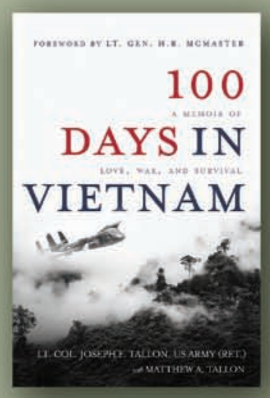

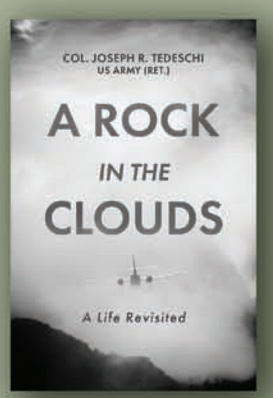

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Pages: 278 **Pub Date:** 11/09/2021
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THE TOUGH, RELIABLE A-10 THUNDERBOLT GROUND-ATTACK PLANE HAS PROVIDED U.S. TROOPS WITH CLOSE-AIR SUPPORT FOR THREE DECADES.

By Christopher Miskimon

Smoke and haze clouded the skies over Kuwait on February 25, 1991. It was the second day of Operation Desert Storm, the ground operation to eject the Iraqi military from its smaller neighbor. The Iraqis were losing badly and sought to level the battlefield by setting oil wells on fire. Burning Iraqi tanks and military equipment added to the man-made fog hanging over the battlefield.

Through those black, polluted clouds flew Lieutenant John "Karl" Marks, the wingman of Captain Eric "Fish" Solomonson, both in A-10 Thunderbolt attack aircraft. They had gone aloft before sunrise to patrol an area where the borders of Iraq, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia met.

As the dawn appeared, so did a convoy of tanks near a road. The convoy was just leaving the roadway, likely to find cover for the daylight hours. Marks could see the tracks each tank made in the sand. He knew that where a set of tracks ended, a tank would be sitting. Each A-10 carried several AGM-65 Maverick missiles equipped with infrared guidance. The hot engines of the tanks shone brightly to such a weapon.

Within minutes, six Iraqi tanks lay destroyed. Marks and Solomonson switched to their deadly seven-barrel Gatling-style 30mm autocannon and destroyed two more tanks. A hit was only

TOP: The A-10 Thunderbolt II's seven-barrel, 30mm autocannon fires a round made of depleted uranium encased in an aluminum shell with a muzzle velocity of 3,500 feet per second. RIGHT: Lt. Col. John Marks. Flying A-10s during Operation Desert Storm, Marks and his wingman Captain Eric Solomonson destroyed and badly damaged more than 30 Iraqi tanks over the course of several missions on one day.

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ABOVE: Crewmen load the GAU-8/A Avenger autocannon with 30mm rounds. The weapon platform is so large that the aircraft is literally built around it. LEFT: An A-10 banks over the desert during the Gulf War in 1991. Although Air Force generals have tried to retire the A-10 Thunderbolt II, Army and Marine Corps privates and NCOs have staunchly defended its need to remain in service.

recorded as a kill if the vehicle burned. Each time Marks saw a burning tank, he recorded it on the inside of his canopy with a grease pencil.

After they had exhausted their ammunition, the two pilots landed at a forward operating base to refuel and rearm. Assigned a new mission, they flew to Kuwait City. Once there, a Marine Forward Air Controller in an F/A-18 Hornet marked more Iraqi tanks with smoke rockets. The two pilots raced in, destroying another half-dozen tanks with Maverick missiles and two more with their fearsome cannon.

After once again rearming and refueling, the two American flyers returned to Kuwait City. Seven more enemy tanks were left burning, bringing their total to 23 tanks over the course of three missions. Solomonson had 11 tank kills and Marks had 12. The lieutenant suspected they had damaged or destroyed 10 more with strafing runs, but since the vehicles did not burn, they were not counted. Between them, they had knocked out two companies' worth of enemy tanks in just one day. Their stellar performance helped cement the A-10's reputation as one of the deadliest combat aircraft of the modern age.

The combat debut of the A-10 occurred in the skies over Kuwait and Iraq during the Gulf War of 1991. Since that time, the A-10 has flown close air support for American troops and will likely continue to do so until 2040.

Originally developed for the Cold War European battlefield, the A-10 was intended as a tank buster, a tool to whittle down the enormous numbers of armored vehicles the Soviet Union could throw at its opponents in NATO. The Cold War ended before A-10 pilots had a chance to face the Soviets in battle, but it performed superbly against the Iraqi Army during Operation Desert Storm and was responsible for the majority of aerial kills against ground vehicles.

Development of the A-10 began in the mid-1960s with the A-X program. This effort sought to create an inexpensive ground-attack plane that was heavily armed, armored against antiaircraft fire, and that had a long loiter time over the battlefield. The Air Force selected Fairchild Republic's design in January 1973, with production beginning about three years later. The plane's official name was the Thunderbolt II, after the famous P-47 fighter-bomber of World War II, but its common nickname was the Warthog for its squat, blunt appearance.

The aircraft's design centers on its primary weapon, the GAU-8 Avenger 30mm cannon. This weapon, with seven barrels and sizable ammunition feed mechanism, is so large the plane is literally built around it. The gun's main purpose is destroying enemy armor. It fires a round made of depleted uranium encased in an aluminum shell with a muzzle velocity of 3,500 feet per second.

When the projectile hits the armor of a tank, it transfers enough kinetic energy to cause "spalling." After impact, the energy travels through the armor, causing pieces of its inner layer to break off and fly around the tank's crew compartment. Such impacts also cause a large amount of heat, which could kill or injure as easily as the spalling.

The GAU-8 initially had variable rates of fire of either 2,100 or 4,200 rounds per minute, but this was later set at 3,900. It is also an accurate system, with a dispersion of only 30 feet at 6,000 feet range. The magazine can hold 1,174 rounds of ammunition, enough for 18.06 seconds of firing.

Alongside the 30mm cannon, the A-10 can also carry a variety of weapons on external hard points. This includes guided and unguided bombs and 70mm Hydra rockets, along with the Maverick missile. The AGM-65 Maverick has a 125-pound shaped charge warhead and is equally effective against armored vehicles or bunkers. Different versions use either infrared or optical television guidance using a small screen in the cockpit. Weapons load-outs depend upon the expected targets, with Mavericks preferred for anti-armor missions. The 30mm cannon serves as an effective backup to the Mavericks.

Aside from the Warthog's heavy armament, it is also well armored. The pilot sits in a protective titanium "bathtub," which is sufficient to guard against light antiaircraft guns, such as the ubiquitous Russian-made ZU-23-2, or small surface-to-air missiles, such as the man-portable SA-7. Design features also protect against fire in the fuel tanks, and the A-10 can still fly with half a wing shot off or half the tail missing, or even with the loss of one engine. The A-10 is powered by two General Electric TF34-GE-100 turbofans. Each turbofan furnishes 9,000 pounds of thrust.

The Thunderbolt II's maximum speed is 450 nautical miles per hours, and its maximum range is 800 miles. This is not particularly fast for a modern plane, but the low speed allows the pilot to aim at targets more accurately, and fuel consumption is low enough to let the aircraft loiter over the battlefield searching for and engaging targets. Another engineering detail is the ability to replace large components on the plane quickly and easily, allowing ground crews to repair damage and get their aircraft back in the air.

Once in service, pilots quickly developed the tactics needed to make the A-10 a success. The

planes generally operate in pairs, flying low to the ground to avoid enemy antiaircraft fire. When a pilot identifies a suitable target for the Maverick, he climbs and locks on to the target. He then fires a missile from about two miles out.

When an A-10 pilot needs to use his gun, he makes a turning climb and then tilts the nose of the plane downward. Once he lines up the target, he fires a short burst at a range of 4,000 to 6,000 feet. Pilots generally limit their bursts to one to two seconds. This is done partly to conserve ammunition. The 30mm gun produces enough recoil that it can slow the aircraft down. Being in a shallow dive during firing helps increase airspeed to compensate for the gun's recoil forces. The recoil can also throw off the pilot's aim on a longer burst.

When it entered service, the A-10 used a simple but not always accurate navigational system. "When I flew the A-10A in Europe back in the 1980s, you were lucky if the old Inertial Navigation System (INS) fitted in the jet got you within a couple miles of the target due to its propensity for drifting," said Marks, who is now a lieutenant colonel.

"That was where you made your money as an A-10 pilot, employing effective clock-to-map-to-ground skills." After Operation Desert Storm, the Thunderbolt received upgrades including global-positioning-system navigation and improved targeting systems.

During Desert Storm, the A-10 earned its reputation as a tough and capable ground-attack plane. The Coalition Forces divided Kuwait into grids where the Iraqi army was operating. Each piece of the grid was known as a "kill box." Aircraft were assigned to each kill box, and their pilots could roam at will attacking anything they saw.

Thunderbolts received credit for destroying approximately 900 Iraqi tanks, 2,000 other armored vehicles, and 1,200 artillery pieces. "It was imperative that air knock out as much of this armor as possible," said Captain Michael Isherwood, an A-10 pilot and weapons officer, "as the alternative was to let 20-year-olds in tanks go head-to-head."

Lt. Gen. Charles A. Horner, the joint force air-component commander during the war, noted how effective air power was during the Battle of Khafji. "Every time Iraqi vehicles began to march south, A-10s, F/A-18s, or even the odd Pave Tack F-111 or F-15E would show up, and all hell would break loose," wrote Horner. Six kill boxes were used to make 267 sorties against the Iraqis, stopping them decisively.

After Desert Storm, there followed a general drawdown of American military forces, coinciding with the end of the Cold War. The U.S. Air Force had to make hard choices regarding which aircraft to retain. It generally chose the faster, more glamorous supersonic fighters over the slow, ugly A-10. Even though the A-10 did serve in the Balkans during the 1990s and received some key upgrades in that period, it seemed the Thunderbolt II's days were numbered.

A-10 pilots refine their skills at Razorback Range located at the Fort Chaffee Joint Maneuver Training Center in Arkansas. The venerable Warthog is expected to remain in service at least until 2040.

The fate of the A-10 changed, though, when the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, took America back to war again in the Middle East. In the two decades that followed, the A-10 served in both Iraq and Afghanistan, providing much-needed ground-support firepower to U.S. and Allied troops. It is a favorite of troops on the ground, who know the aircraft can drop ordnance accurately even when the enemy is close to them.

An example of the A-10's effectiveness occurred on October 28, 2012, when Captain Jeremiah Parvin and Lieutenant Aaron Cavazos were diverted to help a U.S. Marine special-operations unit under attack in Bala Murghab, Afghanistan. They found the Marines pinned down in a village under heavy fire. The two A-10 pilots had to risk flying through heavy cloud cover in the mountains to get to the Marines.

They found four heavy machine guns pounding the Marine's position. The pilots made repeated gun runs, during which they destroyed all four weapons. They also made low passes to draw enemy fire away from the Marines, who had started to withdraw with their wounded, using infrared strobes to mark their location. This made it easier for the pilots to make danger-close strafing attacks.

The exploding 30mm rounds sounded like hand grenades. During each of their passes, the A-10s sent 60 "grenades" down on the heads of Taliban fighters. With the A-10s furnishing covering fire, the Marines were able to disengage. The Marines later wrote statements that they would have died if not for the pilot's actions. Both Parvin and Cavazos received the Distinguished Flying Cross for their courage under fire.

Despite the A-10 proving its combat effectiveness in combat, the Air Force has tried to retire the aircraft several times, planning to replace it with the new F-35 Lightning II. While the F-35 is a technological marvel, it cannot carry the ordnance loads or loiter the way an A-10 can. It is a different plane designed for a different kind of fight. The Army and Marine Corps have argued to keep the A-10 in service, with the Army even offering to fly it themselves, though this violates long-standing agreements about which aircraft each service can operate.

So far, the A-10s have managed to stay in service, with Congress even intervening to keep the Thunderbolt II flying. While it is an old design that would have difficulty surviving in a high-technology combat environment, the A-10 is well suited to environments where the United States has air supremacy. A program to replace worn-out wings has ensured the plane can stay in service for perhaps 20 more years.

Despite its origins in the final years of the Cold War, the A-10 has served for four decades, providing effective close air support that no other design, either existing or forthcoming, can deliver. While Air Force generals have sought to retire it, privates and noncommissioned officers on the ground want no other angel flying over their shoulders. ■

UNIFORM GREEK HOPLITE (8TH - 4TH CENTURY B.C)

By William E. Welsh
Illustration by Peter Connolly

HELMET: A leather-lined bronze helmet protected the head, neck, and face. The helmet was often crested to make the wearer seem taller than he was and appear imposing in battle. The front of the helmet often featured an engraved city-state design.

SPEAR: A hoplite's principal offensive weapon was his eight-foot-long spear (*doru*). It was made of ash wood and fitted with a leaf-shaped bronze or iron blade. The hoplite used his spear for thrusting, not throwing.

ARMOR: Body armor consisted of a breastplate (*thorax*), which protected the upper body, and greaves (*knemides*) that protected the shins. The breastplate was made either of bronze or leather, while the greaves were made solely of bronze.

SHIELD: The circular shield (*hoplon*) was 30 inches in diameter and was capable of deflecting spear or sword thrusts in battle. The shield, which often had an engraved design on its front, was made of either wood or stiff leather on the inside and bronze on the outside. The hoplite placed his arm through a central band and gripped the shield with a strap.

SWORD: The 24-inch straight sword (*xiphos*) was made of iron and worn in a sheath on a belt. Some types of swords (*machaira* and *kopis*), though, were curved. Some hoplites also carried daggers (*encheiridion*).

The Greek hoplite was a heavily armored infantryman who fought in a phalanx formation. The typical formation was eight ranks deep, although some city-states fought with much deeper ranks. The hoplite was the most common type of infantry soldier in Ancient Greece from the late 8th century B.C. to the 4th century B.C.

When deployed in a compact phalanx formation, the shield on the left arm of one hoplite protected the right side of the hoplite next to him. A hoplite phalanx advanced into battle at a fast walk. Once in contact with the enemy, they stabbed with their spears from behind the shield wall.

The density and weight of the hoplite phalanx formation enabled Greek armies to defeat the Persians at Marathon and Plataea during the Greco-Persian Wars during the 5th century B.C. It also allowed the Spartans to hold the pass at Thermopylae long enough to buy valuable time for other city-states to mobilize to meet the Persian threat.

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NATIVE AMERICAN ERNEST CHILDERS OF THE 45TH DIVISION KNOCKED OUT TWO GERMAN MACHINE-GUN NESTS DURING THE ITALIAN CAMPAIGN IN WORLD WAR II.

By William F. Floyd, Jr.

TOP: Lt. Gen. George S. Patton drove the 45th Infantry Division relentlessly in an attempt to beat the British to Messina during the invasion of Sicily. During the hard fighting in Sicily, Childers was promoted to second lieutenant. LEFT: Childers' tenacity in battle matched that of his German foes.

After three years of brutal warfare in World War II, the Italians in July 1943 overthrew fascist leader Benito Mussolini in the hope of obtaining a separate armistice with the Allies. But the Allied leaders had decided at the Casablanca Conference held six months earlier that they would only accept unconditional surrender of all three of the Axis powers.

Thus, the Italians found themselves in the unfortunate position, from August 1943 until the end the war, of being occupied by both Allied and German forces. The peninsula became the scene of some of the most intense fighting of the war. This was the situation that Second Lieutenant Ernest "Red Eagle" Childers, of the 45th Infantry Division, and thousands of other Allied soldiers found themselves in as they fought to liberate Italy from the Germans.

Childers was born on February 1, 1918, in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma. He was the third of five sons born to Ellis Childers, a member of the Muskogee Creek tribe and a lawyer, who served in the Creek House of Lords before Oklahoma became a state in 1907. Raised on a farm that was his father's original tribal allotment, he was taught at an early age by his father to shoot a rifle.

The Childers faced considerable struggles after the father's death in 1930. Ernie, who was the best

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to the Pacific Theater, and the Navy crewmen replacing them were unfamiliar with the infantry landing ships (LSI) they would operate to shuttle the men to shore. Fifty-three hundred Allied troops organized into 67 battalions came ashore in the first wave on 26 beaches that stretched across 105 miles of coastline in southern Sicily.

The 45th Division was one of two divisions in Lt. Gen. Omar Bradley's II Corps of Patton's Seventh Army. The 45th Division was to land on the extreme right of the American line at Scoglitti. Once ashore, the American troops were to push as far as 30 miles inland so that enemy artillery

LEFT: GIs move up an old hillside trail in Italy, accompanied by a pack mule. Childers, suffering from a fractured foot, led eight men uphill over rough terrain, silencing two German machine gun nests and capturing a mortar crew observer. RIGHT: A member of the Muscogee (Creek) nation, Childers received his basic training at Fort Sill in his home state.

shot in the family, had the heavy burden of feeding the family during the Great Depression. Life was particularly hard for families in Oklahoma owing to the severe drought and erosion resulting from the dust storms in the Great Plains.

Childers said later in life that he honed his shooting skills hunting rabbits for the family to eat. His mother would give him one .22-caliber bullet each day. "I learned to be a very good aim, because if I missed, we didn't eat," he said in an interview with an Oklahoma newspaper.

Childers graduated in 1937 from Chilocco [OK] Indian School, where he learned mechanics and boxed. Upon graduation, Ernest and some of his school friends enlisted in the Oklahoma Army National Guard as a way to earn extra money. He was assigned as a private, but earned a promotion to sergeant in Company C, 180th Regiment, 45th Division. It was one of two regiments in the division that included 2,000 Native Americans from 52 tribes.

The 45th Division, nicknamed the Thunderbird Division, was one of 18 National Guard units that were activated early in the war. The Thunderbird symbol, which became the unit's insignia, was a Native American symbol of good luck and magic. The division, led by Maj. Gen. Troy H. Middleton, first saw action in Operation Husky, the invasion of Sicily.

The division was proud of its Native Americans, and on the night before the division embarked for Europe, an artillery officer organized a war dance around a roaring bonfire. The 21,000 soldiers in the 45th Division set sail in 19 ships from Hampton Roads, Va., on June 8, 1943. During a one-week layover in Oran, Algeria, on its way to Sicily, Lt. Gen. George S. Patton, the U.S. Seventh Army commander, visited the 180th Regiment to advise its soldiers on what to expect and how to behave in battle. Patton told them to accept surrender from enemy troops only after they had overrun an enemy unit. "Kill devastatingly," he told them.

After a one-week layover in Oran, Algeria, the armada continued to Sicily. Unfortunately for the soldiers and officers that would go ashore, the Army landing-craft coxswains with which they had trained in the Chesapeake Bay were diverted

would not be able to shell coastal airfields captured by the Allied forces.

The 45th Division had a rougher landing than either Maj. Gen. Terry Allen's 1st Infantry Division or Maj. Gen. Lucian Truscott's 3rd Infantry Division, which came ashore further west, at Gela and Licata, respectively. Right up to the point that the soldiers were ordered to their assembly areas for loading onto the LSIs, many of the Native Americans of the 45th Division were playing poker and sharpening their knives, eager to use them on the Italian soldiers defending the largest Mediterranean Island.

The soldiers of the Thunderbird Division braved 12-foot swells as they rode to shore in their LSIs and then had to fight their way ashore through six-foot surf. As they did so, a pair of destroyers fired white phosphorous shells that slammed into the Italian machine-gun pillboxes and gun batteries.

Once the Italians on the island's southern coast had been vanquished by the Americans, Patton directed Middleton to drive north toward the center of the island to reach the north coast. With the

Italians steadily losing the will to fight, the Germans took over the island's defense. Field Marshal Albert Kesselring skillfully used the island's mountainous terrain to his advantage, slowing the Allied advance north towards Messina.

The 45th Division fought its way through Caltanissetta on July 19 and four days later reached coastal Highway 113. Advancing east along the coastal road, they ran into the Germans. Patton exhorted Middleton to push his troops hard. "This is a horse race in which the prestige of the U.S. Army is at stake," Patton told him. "We must reach Messina before the British." It was during the hard fighting in Sicily that Childers was promoted to second lieutenant.

Kesselring was forced on the night of August 11-12 to withdraw the Axis troops to the mainland. To his credit, he succeeded in getting 40,000 crack German troops, as well as 60,000 Italian troops, across the Strait of Messina to Calabria.

Montgomery's 8th Army landed in Calabria on the Italian mainland on September 3. On the same day, Maj. Gen. Walter Bedell Smith, Eisenhower's chief of staff, and Italian Brig. Gen. Giuseppe Castellano agreed to an armistice at Cassibile, Italy.

Next, the 45th Division participated in Operation Avalanche, the Allied landings near the port of Salerno, on September 9. After the beaches had been secured, the Americans and British began to fight their way inland. Kesselring ordered the German forces at Salerno to pull back to stronger positions inland on September 16.

The Allies followed on their heels. In the days that followed, Middleton directed elements of the 45th Division to capture the town of Oliveto. The mountaintop town lay 35 east of Salerno.

As a steady rain fell on the morning of September 22, Childers advanced against enemy positions with his company. As he did so, he slipped in a shell crater, fracturing his foot. He made his way to an aid station to get treatment for his foot, but a German mortar round landed next to the aid station, killing the doctor on duty. Childers stoically returned to his company. When it came under heavy fire from Germans holed up in several houses on a hilltop, the second lieutenant gathered eight men for a mission to silence the enemy machine guns.

Loaded down with their 60-pound packs, Childers and his men worked their way up the rough terrain toward the enemy gun emplacements. As they neared their objective, they took cover behind a rock wall overlooking a cornfield. Childers instructed his men to lay down covering fire while he continued forward toward the houses.

German snipers in one of the houses fired at Childers, and he responded by spraying the house with gun fire, which killed two of the Germans inside. He continued his one-man assault, taking out the Germans manning one of the machine-gun nests.

ABOVE: Lt. Gen. Jacob L. Devers, the Allied Deputy Commander of the Mediterranean Theater, presents the Medal of Honor to Second Lieutenant Childers on April 12, 1944. He participated in the Allied landings at Salerno and Anzio. BELOW: Childers served in the Army through Korea and the start of the Vietnam War, and reached the rank of lieutenant colonel before retiring from the Army in 1965.

He then crawled behind another house, where a second machine gun nest was located. He lobbed rocks at the machine-gun team, hoping that the two enemy soldiers would think they were grenades. His trick succeeded, and the Germans emerged from their protected position. He shot one of the Germans, and another American killed the other one, thereby knocking out a second-machine gun position. Childers then continued up the hill, where he single-handedly captured the German mortar observer in another house.

"The German must have been watching the action, because he came out toward me. I was on my knees training my 30-caliber carbine on him," said Childers. "I was yelling to one of my men, 'Take him prisoner!' My sergeant yelled back, 'Shoot the bastard.' I yelled, 'I can't! I'm out of ammunition.'"

Childers said his body was wet with perspiration since the German was fully armed and Childers was holding an empty rifle on him. The captured mortar observer "was the only surviving German in the entire action that day," he said.

For his courage and valor on September 22 in leading an attack that silenced two enemy machine-gun nests, Childers eventually would receive the Medal of Honor. He was the first Native American to receive the nation's highest honor in World War II. It was the first time a Native American had received the Medal of Honor since the 1880s.

After recovering from his wound in North Africa, Childers went into action again with the 45th Division at Anzio on January 22, 1944, where he was wounded a second time. While recovering in Naples, he learned that he would receive the Medal of Honor.

On April 8, 1944, Lt. Gen. Jacob L. Devers, deputy commander of the Mediterranean Theatre, presented Childers with the medal "for his conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity" in the action at Oliveto," according to the citation. "The exceptional leadership, initiative, calmness under fire and conspicuous gallantry displayed by Childers were an inspiration to his men," the citation stated.

Childers then went on a well-deserved leave back to the states. Childers was welcomed as a hero in his hometown on April 26, 1944, which honored him with the largest parade in its history. During this time, he met with U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt at the White House.

Childers remained in the army through the Korean War and the first few years of America's involvement in Vietnam. He retired in 1965 as a lieutenant colonel and returned to Oklahoma. His hometown erected a nine-foot statue of Childers in uniform at Veterans Park in 1994. A middle school in the town was subsequently named for him, as well as a Veteran's Administration outpatient clinic in Tulsa.

Ernest Childers died in Tulsa on March 17, 2005, at the age 87. He was buried with full military honors in Broken Arrow, not far from the home where he had grown up. ■

SOLDIERS

VANQUISHING PIRATES, CONQUERING KINGDOMS, AND WINNING THE ADORATION OF THE ROMAN POPULACE, POMPEY ROSE TO NEAR-OMNIPOTENT POWER.

By Ludwig Heinrich Dyck

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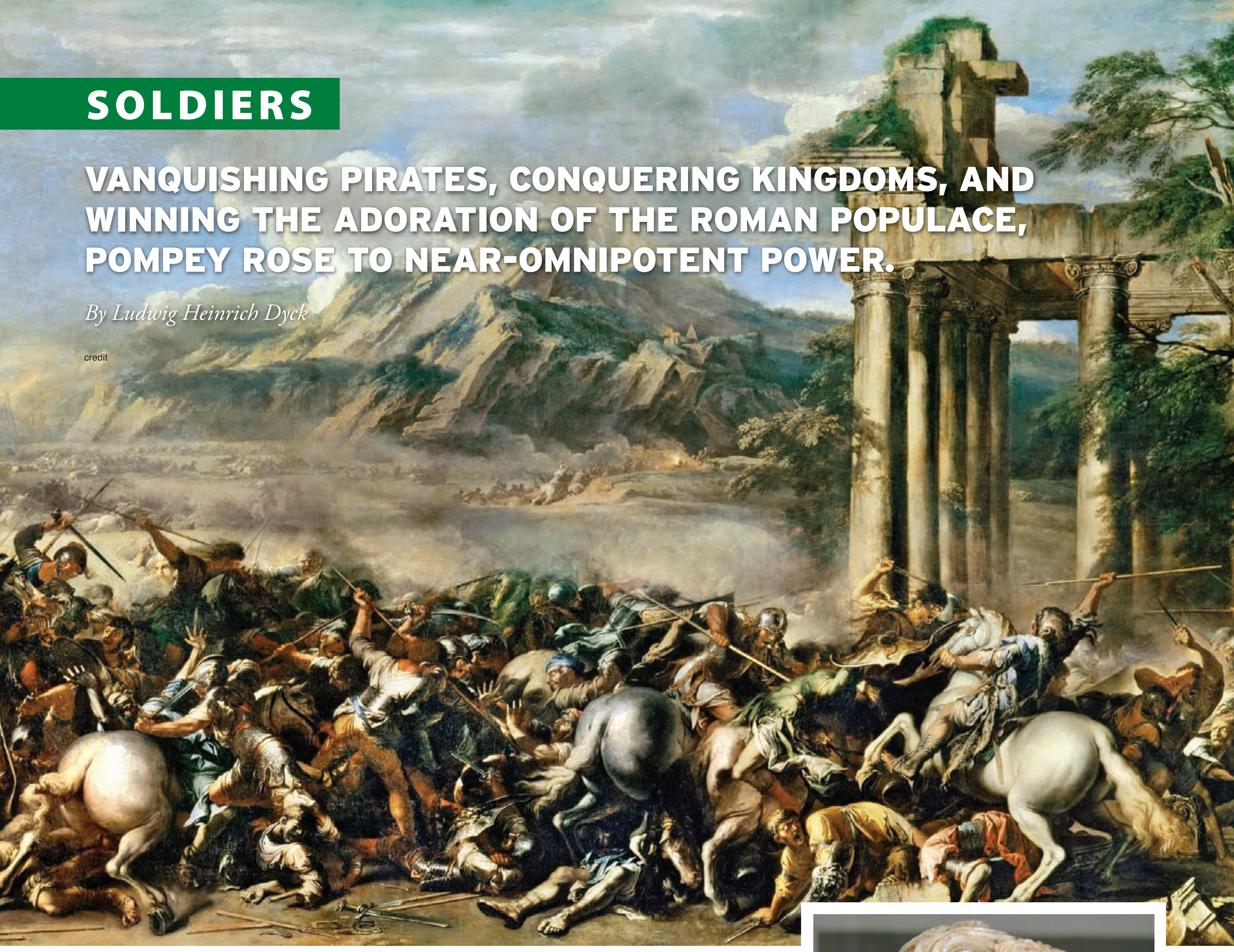

ABOVE: Pompey led troops to victory in a series of battles and actions that neutralized threats to Rome's interests in Asia Minor. RIGHT: Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus was a superb administrator, sound strategist, and determined general.

Gnaeus Pompey was one of the pivotal Roman leaders during the last decades of the Republic. He was born into an old and wealthy provincial family from Picenum on September 29, 106 BC. Good looking and well-spoken, Pompey grew up to be a gifted diplomat with ample military skills. He would need them, for his was an age of anarchy and civil wars.

As a teenager Pompey served on the staff his father, Pompeius Strabo, during the Social War (91-88 BC). Rome achieved victory over her rebellious Italian allies, but social inequalities and corruption continued to undermine the Roman Republic. In 88 BC, civil war erupted between leading generals Gaius Marius and Lucius Cornelius Sulla. Strabo sided with Sulla, who drove Marius out of Rome. The following year Sulla left for Greece to stop Mithridates VI of Pontus from taking over that region. Marius returned to Rome and slaughtered Sulla's supporters. Although Pompey's vigilance saved his father from assassination, Strabo succumbed to dysentery.

Pompey avoided persecution by the Marians by staying at his country estates. In 86 BC Pompey disproved charges of embezzlement against himself and his late father. The judge was so impressed by Pompey that he offered his daughter Antistia in marriage. The same year Marius passed away at the age of 70, but the war was continued by his followers. Upon Sulla's return to Italy in 83 BC,

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Pompey's third triumph in 61 B.C., which followed his successful campaigns in the East, was one of unsurpassed extravagance.

Pompey declared for Sulla.

Enrolling three new legions, Pompey defeated the Marian forces sent against him. During one cavalry engagement, Pompey slew a Celtic champion fighting for the Marians. After driving the Marians from Italy in 82, Sulla persuaded Pompey to marry Sulla's step-daughter Aemilia; as a result, Antistia was forced to divorce Pompey. At the time of her marriage to Pompey, Aemilia was pregnant by her husband, Manius Acilius Glabrio. She was reluctant to marry Pompey, but bowed to Sulla's pressure and shortly afterwards died in childbirth. During that same year, Pompey cleared Sicily of the Marian enemy. Pompey kept his soldiers from committing atrocities by ordering swords sealed in scabbards.

Pompey set sail in 81 BC with six legions and 120 galleys to retake Africa from the Marians. Upon landing at Utica, 7,000 of the enemy deserted to Pompey's side. Crossing a flooded river amidst a deluge of rain, Pompey caught Domitius Ahenobarbus and his ally, Numidian King Iarbas, unawares and defeated them in a chaotic battle. Pompey restored Hiempsal II, who had been ousted by Iarbas, to the Numidian throne.

After hunting lions and elephants, Pompey returned to Utica, where he found letters from Sulla. Ordered to await his replacement, Pompey was inwardly grieved but went out of his way to prevent a mutiny among his troops. Reluctant to serve under anyone else, his troops hailed Pompey as Magnus (the Great). Pompey was received with much fanfare when he returned to Rome.

At first refused a triumph by Sulla on account on his young age, Pompey eventually got his way by threatening to not disband his troops. Sometime around 79 BC, Pompey married his third wife Mucia Tertia. The next year Sulla passed away in his country villa.

One more powerful Marian remained at large in Hispania: the hard-bitten veteran Quintus Sertorius, who had roused the Lusitanians into revolt. In 77 BC, Pompey arrived in Hispania to bring Sertorius to heel, but instead he was twice defeated. During a battle near the Surco River, Pompey, who was mounted, was beset by a powerful footman. Pompey received a slight hand wound, but his own blade sheared off the hand of his opponent. Sertorius ended up being murdered by jealous subordinates in 72 BC. Perpenna, who was the ringleader, assumed command, but Pompey easily dispatched him. Pompey pardoned the rebel officers and destroyed Sertorius' correspondence to prevent prosecutions.

Pompey returned to Italy in 71 BC to assist in the mop-up operations of Marcus Licinius Crassus, who had crushed Spartacus' slave revolt. Pompey unfairly claimed much of the credit for the victory. As a result, a rift developed between Pompey and the Roman Senate, which envied his popularity and was angry with him for blaming his failures in Spain on them.

Instead of opposing Pompey, Crassus joined forces to bully the Senate into appointing the two as consuls for 70 BC. Pompey then lifted the restrictions that Sulla had placed upon the tribunate, which was the people's representatives in the government. He looked to them, and not the aristocratic Senate, for further military commands.

Pompey obtained sweeping powers in 67 BC to eradicate the pirate menace. Based on Cilicia's coast, the pirates had received Mithridates' support. Their ranks swelled with the addition of war refugees. They had 1,000 ships, and had seized 400 cities along the coasts and islands of the Mediterranean.

No merchant ship was safe. The pirates raided towns and villages, took captives for ransom, and posed a threat to the transport of Rome's grain supplies from Africa. Pompey established 13 strategic bases with more than 270 warships and upwards of 120,000 infantry. They scooped up the pirate fleets like shoals of fish. By showing mercy to captives, Pompey caused many to surrender voluntarily. Defeated at sea, the last pirates made their final stands in their mountain strongholds.

While still in Cilicia in 66 BC, Pompey received a new commission to deal with Rome's troubles in the Middle-East. Fortunately for Pompey, Mithridates and King Tigranes II of Armenia had already been weakened in warfare with the preceding Roman commander. In addition, Tigranes was busy fending off a Parthian invasion.

Free to concentrate on Mithridates, Pompey countered the king's guerrilla tactics with a chain of fortifications in the Lycus valley. Decisively defeated at Nicopolis, Mithridates fled to the Crimea. After receiving the submission of the battle-weary Tigranes, Pompey ended the campaign season by invading the tribal lands of the southern Caucasus. Through the winter and into 65 BC, Pompey fought off hostiles and beat down insurrections. During a battle near the River Abas, Pompey ran his spear through Cosis, the brother of the Caucasian Albanian king.

Over the course of the next three years, Pompey reaffirmed the treaty between Parthia and Rome, settled disputes between Parthia and Armenia, and turned Syria into a province. He also received the submission of the Nabataens of northern Arabia and captured Jerusalem while resolving a dynastic dispute.

When Pompey returned to Rome, he left behind a belt of Roman provinces along the eastern Mediterranean guarded on their inland sides by client kings. Altogether, Pompey conquered 1,000 strongholds and 900 cities, founded 39 new towns,

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TOP: The battle of Pharsalus pitted Pompey, whose health was failing him, against his rival Julius Caesar, who outgeneraled him. ABOVE: Pompey sought refuge in Egypt after his defeat at Pharsalus, but was assassinated while being rowed ashore in a small boat.

and increased the annual revenue of the republic from 50 million to 85 million *denarii*. Pompey's triumph was one of unsurpassed extravagance.

But not all was well for Pompey. He divorced Mucia, who was charged with adultery. What is more, the Senate maintained its grudge. Pompey allied himself in 60 BC with the rising politician Julius Caesar, who brought in his old patron Crassus to form the First Triumvirate. Although each member was out for himself, they collectively stifled opposition in the Senate to their mutual benefits.

Pompey married Caesar's daughter Julia, who was 30 years Pompey's junior. Appointed as proconsul for five years to relieve a food shortage, Pompey personally braved stormy weather at sea to ensure that supplies reached Italy. In 55 BC Pompey shared the consulship with Crassus and thereafter gained proconsular command over Spain. Governing Spain through deputies, Pompey remained in Italy, where he built a new theatre and enjoyed life with Julia.

When Julia died in childbirth in 54 BC, Pompey lost his principal reason to favor Caesar. Subsequently, Crassus was killed in 53 BC during his disastrous invasion of Parthia. From that point on, the Senate curried Pompey's favor. Appointed as sole consul for 52 BC, Pompey dealt with riots and with government corruption; that is, other than his own. Pompey then married for the fifth time. His wife Cornelia was the young widow of Publius Crassus, who had perished alongside his father at Carrhae.

In the meantime, Caesar had completed his conquest of Gaul, but refused to give up command. Doing so would put him at the mercy of his enemies in the Senate. When pressed about the danger of Caesar's legions, Pompey boasted that he need merely stamp his foot and troops would arise. On January 10, 49 BC, Caesar crossed the Rubicon River, which was Italy's northern frontier, with his legions. It was an act of high treason. Pompey had five legions, but he needed more to take on Caesar's army. Intending to rally troops from Rome's eastern provinces, Pompey fled to the port of Brundisium. Blocking all streets except the two that led to the seaside, Pompey skilfully fought off Caesar's probing attacks while embarking his legions.

Establishing his headquarters at Thessalonica, Pompey assembled an army of 11 legions and numerous auxiliaries from client kings. Pompey took part in the training of inexperienced troops, inspiring them with his skill and vigour despite his nearly 60 years of age. Pompey intended to liberate Italy, but early in 48 BC Caesar slipped through Pompey's naval cordon and crossed the Adriatic first. Wary of risking his untried troops in open battle, Pompey took up a defensive posture south of Dyrrhachium. Pompey's control of the sea allowed him to provision his camp at Petra, while Caesar had to forage abroad. During a night attack on Caesar's siege lines, Pompey made some promising gains but failed to follow up with an assault on Caesar's camp.

Caesar disengaged and headed towards the grain-rich fields of Thessaly. Coming after him was Pompey, who used his superiority in cavalry to cut Caesar's supply line. The senators in Pompey's camp considered Caesar as good as defeated. They persuaded Pompey into a decisive battle at

Pharsalus on August 9, 48 BC. Although Pompey held an advantage of 40,000 men versus Caesar's 22,000, he noticed how nervous his troops were compared to Caesar's steady ranks.

With his superior cavalry, Pompey sought to overwhelm the smaller cavalry detachment protecting Caesar's right flank. However, Caesar had ordered his cavalry to fall back, revealing six legionary cohorts. Instructed to use their six-foot long *pila* javelins in pike fashion, the cohorts wreaked havoc among Pompey's cavalry. When Caesar committed his remaining reserves for an all-out assault, the whole Pompeian line collapsed. Returning to his camp, Pompey sat down speechless in his tent before joining in the flight of his men.

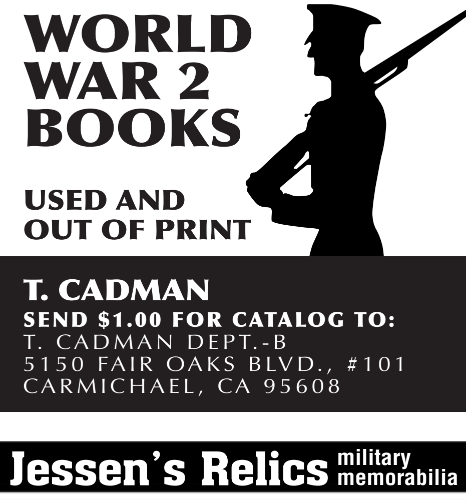
Avoiding attention, Pompey wandered to the coast. Given passage on a ship by a sympathetic captain, Pompey picked up Cornelia and his son Sextus on Lesbos. Pompey sailed on to Pamphylia, where at Attalia he met up with some senators with a few ships. They told him that he still retained his vast armada and that his army was regathering in Africa. Pompey, however, was worried about being caught by Caesar. He decided to seek the aid of the boy-king of Egypt, Ptolemy XII, whose late father had been a devoted ally.

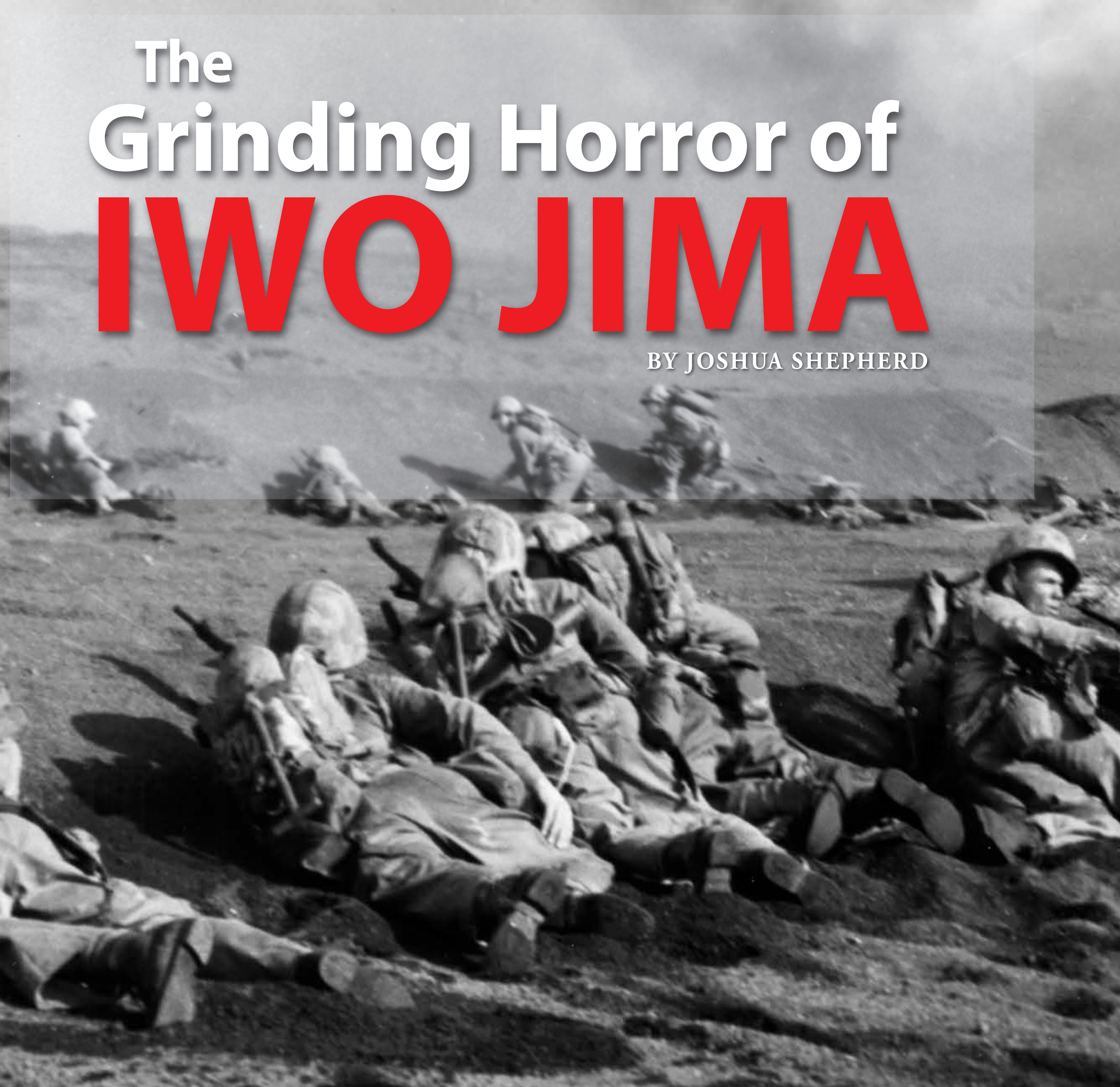
On September 29, Pompey was on his galley at Pelusium, awaiting the decision of Ptolemy's chief men. Rowed ashore on a small boat, Pompey and his party were met by a royal escort. While leaning over to help a freedman get out of the boat, Pompey was stabbed in the back. As two more assailants joined in the attack, Pompey drew his gown over his head and endured the wounds with only a groan. A cry was heard from the sea, where Cornelia had witnessed the scene from her galley.

Pompey's head was sheared off and his corpse thrown overboard onto the beach. Later when all had left, the freedman washed the corpse, wrapped it in his own shirt, and made a funeral pyre from driftwood. Pompey's ashes were brought to Cornelia and laid to rest at his country house near Alba.

Ptolemy's advisors had murdered Pompey to appease Caesar, but when shown Pompey's head, Caesar turned away in disgust. Caesar had born Pompey no personal enmity, nor wished him any harm, but more likely had hoped to win him over as a political tool.

Pompey's part in the dying Republic was over. Although Pompey's generalship had not been on par with the likes of Caesar, he proved capable enough against a host of lesser opponents. Pompey resolved foreign conflicts, strengthened Rome's frontiers, and brought peace and stability to war-torn regions. Whatever his shortcomings, Pompey proved popular among the troops and the people and would forever be remembered as Magnus. ■





The Grinding Horror of IWO JIMA

BY JOSHUA SHEPHERD

For the men of the 28th Marine Regiment, the morning of February 19, 1945, brought a sobering moment of truth. Attached to the 5th Marine Division, the regiment was scheduled to hit the beaches of Iwo Jima, an obscure volcanic island in the northern Pacific. As they neared the Island, the Marines, crowded aboard landing craft, had grown uncharacteristically subdued. Private Jim Naughton of the Third Battalion, 28th Marines, Fifth Marine Division, recalled the somber mood as the men prepared to approach the heavily defended Japanese shoreline. "Nobody talked," he said, "God only knew what was ahead of us."

When the ramps of their landing craft lowered, the men were greeted with surreal horrors that survivors would never forget. The beach was little more than a chaotic charnel house. The deaf-

U.S. Marines cautiously advance after landing on February 19, 1945. U.S. forces needed the tiny island as a stepping stone for a possible invasion of Japan.

The savage battle on Iwo Jima in 1945 marked the first invasion of the Japanese Home Islands. Although heavily outnumbered by the U.S. Marines, Japanese troops entrenched in bunkers deep within the island's volcanic rocks exacted a heavy toll in American lives.

ening roar of Japanese artillery fire rocked the entire shoreline, and the terrifying rattle of enemy machine-gun fire made movement nearly impossible. Officers shouted to bring order to their commands. The wounded cried out in terror.

The entire length of the beach was crowded with the wreckage of American vehicles shattered by Japanese fire. Worse yet, the mangled bodies of dead and wounded Marines were strewn indiscriminately in every direction. It was a stark introduction to the island of Iwo Jima. In little more than an hour, the deceptively placid shoreline had been transformed into an appalling killing field. "It was a terrible- looking sight," recalled Corporal Charles Johnson, also of 3/28 Marines. "I looked at the beach, and it was like hell on earth."

For the warriors who would do battle for the rocky wasteland, Iwo Jima would, indeed, become

a hell on earth. But the struggle for the seemingly insignificant island had become an unavoidable strategic objective in the American drive toward the Japanese homeland.

By the end of 1944, the Japanese Empire, once the undisputed scourge of the Far East, was on its heels in a wide arc across the Pacific. U.S. Army forces under the command of General Douglas MacArthur had pressed into the Philippines by that autumn. At the same time, the 1st Marine Division secured the island of Peleliu after a bloody two-month struggle.

For the Americans, perhaps the greatest prize of 1944 was the Mariana Islands, where the Marines captured Guam, Saipan, and Tinian. Captured during a hard-fought series of engagements beginning in June, the Marianas constituted a key stepping stone for Army Air Forces tasked with the reduction of Japan. Situated just 1,500 miles from Tokyo, the Marianas were soon home to airfields that could accommodate the B-29 Superfortress, the most fearsome bomber in the American air fleet.

Under the aegis of the 20th Air Force, B-29 crews operating out of the Marianas would soon bring the realities of total war to the Japanese homeland. Flying under cover of darkness and at low levels, the B-29s unleashed a fire-bombing campaign that wrecked Japan's industrial capacity. Large portions of Japan's major cities were reduced to ashes as the 20th Air Force delivered its own form of grim retribution.

The air campaign, though, was not without its risks. Any B-29 unlucky enough to be crippled over Japan faced a virtual death sentence in the waters of the Pacific. Worse yet, one particular island, which was situated 750 miles north of the Mariana Islands, was proving to be a nettlesome obstacle for the American air campaign. Although on some American maps the land mass appeared as Sulfur Island, it was destined to be remembered by the Japanese name of *Iwo Jima*.

At first glance, Iwo Jima was seemingly unimportant. The island was a rocky, arid, and inhospitable island that, due to a lack of fresh water, was barely habitable. But the island sat astride the most direct route from the Marianas to Japan. Japanese forces had transformed Iwo Jima into a forward defensive base, constructing radar installations that could detect incoming American bombers and give advanced warning to the mainland.

Additionally, the island boasted two airfields, with a third under construction. Incoming American bombers, which were forced to fly without their own fighter escorts, were attacked with impunity by fighters based on the island.

The U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff had decided by October 3, 1944, that the reduction of Iwo Jima was imperative and ordered the seizure of the island. As plans were developed, the top brass opted to throw overwhelming force against the island, eventually mustering the largest amphibious force assembled during World War II. Approximately 80,000 Marines drawn from the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Marine Divisions would conduct a direct assault against the Japanese forces on the island. Backing up the Marines would be an immense armada of eight hundred vessels. The ships would include scores of troop transports as well as aircraft carriers, battleships, cruisers, and destroyers, all of which could bring enormous heavy firepower to bear against Japanese positions before the infantry landings.

Operation Detachment, as the invasion was designated, would be led by some of the most

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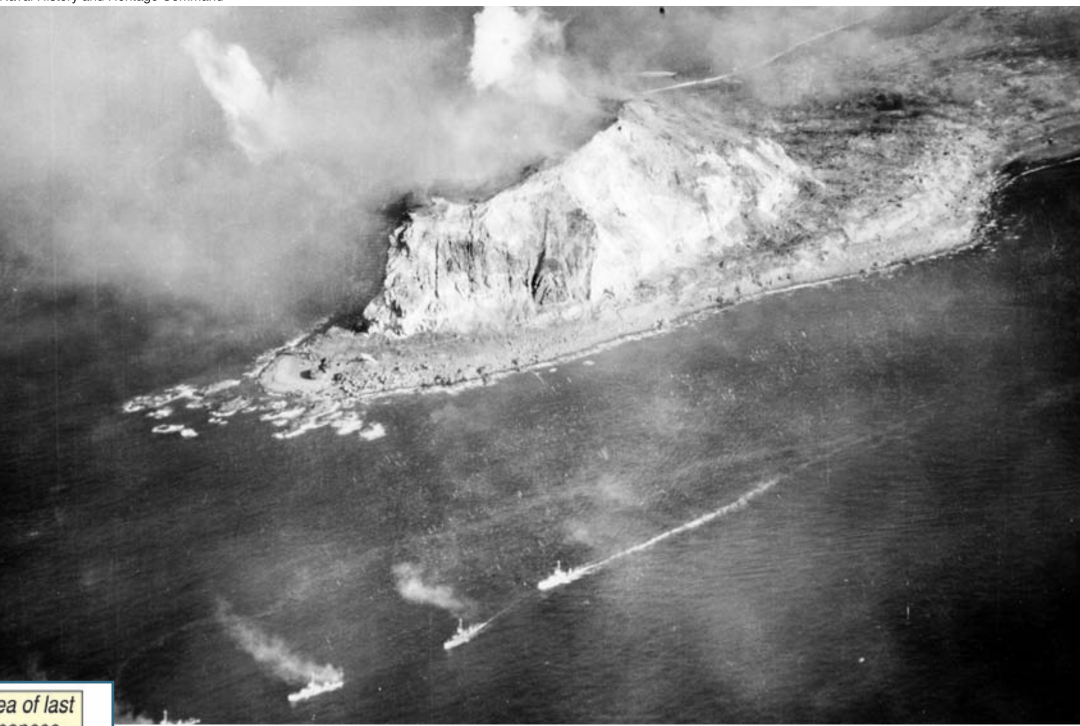

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ABOVE: U.S. Navy ships steam past Mount Suribachi on the southern tip of the island during the naval bombardment that preceded the landing. The Japanese had honeycombed the extinct volcano with artillery positions, machine-gun nests, and tunnels. LEFT: After securing the eastern beaches, the Marines concentrated on securing Mount Suribachi before systematically clearing the rest of the island. Twenty-seven medals of Honor were awarded for Marine valor. LEFT TOP: Lt. Gen. Tadamichi Kuribayashi's plan for defending the island called for allowing the Marines to land before unleashing a storm of artillery fire on the crowded beaches. He forbade suicide charges in order not to squander his manpower. OPPOSITE: After unloading from Navy LSTs, Marine Amtracs head toward the landing beaches. The Japanese held strong positions in a fortress-like network of pillboxes, bunkers, trenches, tunnels, and fortified caves.

experienced senior officers in the Pacific Theater. Overall command of the nearly 250,000 men who would carry out the operation was assigned to Admiral Raymond Spruance, a gifted naval officer and key fleet commander since the American victory at Midway in June 1942.

Overall command of landing forces was assigned to Lt. Gen. Holland "Howlin' Mad" Smith. But direct field command of the three divisions that would do battle for Iwo Jima, known collectively as the V Amphibious Corps, fell to Maj. Gen. Harry Schmidt, an unassuming career officer known to combine a keen intellect with aggressive Marine spirit.

Such Marine grit would be sorely needed, as the terrain of Iwo Jima itself constituted an infantryman's nightmare. Just eight square miles in size, the island was eight hundred yards wide across its southern neck but flared out to two and half miles wide in the north. Allied planners famously observed that the island resembled an inverted pork chop.

At the extreme southern tip of the island towered Mount Suribachi, a 500-foot-tall dormant volcano that was honeycombed with concealed artillery positions. The center of the island contained some stretches of flat terrain, dotted with two airfields and a handful of small villages. The northern reaches of the island were characterized by steep gullies and plunging ravines that were ready-made for defense. To secure lumber, Japanese engineers had stripped the island of trees, rendering much of Iwo Jima a rocky wasteland void of vegetation. The island's water supply consisted entirely of a few wells augmented by cisterns built to capture rainwater.

Awaiting the American assault force was an impressive network of fortifications manned by some of the most fanatically determined troops in the Japanese Empire. Although possessing a decided defender's tactical advantage, the Japanese would be badly outnumbered. The island's garrison numbered 21,000 men, most of whom were infantry, augmented by artillery and anti-aircraft units. A token armor contingent, the 13 vehicles of the 26th Tank Regiment, also was stationed on the island, as were naval support troops that included engineering and supply outfits.

In addition to dedicated foot soldiers, Japanese defenses on Iwo Jima benefited from the presence of Lt. Gen. Tadamichi Kuribayashi, widely regarded as one of the best field commanders in the empire. A seasoned veteran with three decades of experience, Kuribayashi descended from Samurai stock and possessed a steely resolve to serve his emperor.

Given command of the island defenses in May 1944, Kuribayashi used the remainder of the year

to good advantage. Under his direction, skilled Japanese engineers worked feverishly to carve an impressive warren of underground bunkers, artillery emplacements, pillboxes, barracks, and command posts. Much of the island was connected by a dizzying labyrinth of underground tunnels, ensuring that Japanese fighting positions were mutually supporting, heavily fortified, and well concealed.

With prescient strategic thinking, Kuribayashi decided to jettison long-standing Japanese defensive doctrine in confronting amphibious landings. At Tarawa, Peleliu, and Guadalcanal, Japanese forces had opposed enemy landings by confronting the Americans directly at the beachheads, mounting a rigorous defense at the shoreline in a desperate attempt to forestall an invasion before it could proceed inland. Kuribayashi realized that such an approach had been both costly and futile in the face of superior American manpower and materiel.

Despite heated opposition from his subordinate officers, Kuribayashi decided on a novel approach. He would allow the Americans to land unmolested, wait until the beaches were crowded with men and vehicles, and then unleash coordinated and pre-sighted artillery fire that would tear the Marines apart.

America's ability to project military power was starkly evident when the U.S. Navy's big ships began marshalling off of Iwo Jima. To soften up Japanese positions before the landings, the Americans planned a massive bombardment. Working out the details, however, occasioned no small amount of head-butting between Navy and Marine officers. For their part, generals Smith and Schmidt requested 10 days of naval gunfire before the invasion. Told that they would receive only three days of bombardment, both men sharply protested but were turned down by Spruance.

Ultimately, the Iwo Jima defenses were subjected to a brutal pounding from sea and air. Army B-24 Liberators operating out of the Marianas had bombed Iwo Jima every day beginning in December, and Rear Adm. William Blandy targeted the island for three days beginning on February 16. Blandy wielded impressive firepower from the Navy's older battleships, including the *Arkansas*, *Texas*, *Nevada*, *New York*, *Idaho*, and *Tennessee*, which collectively mounted seventy-four big guns.

Blandy's "Old Ladies," as these battleships were known, mercilessly shelled Iwo Jima for three days, but when the smoke cleared, the results were disheartening. It was apparent that the intense bombardment had barely put a dent in enemy defenses, and Japanese counter-fire revealed that the island was defended by many more concealed artillery positions than initially thought.

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ABOVE: Grim-faced Marines in camouflaged helmets stay low as they head toward the beach in a Coast Guard-manned landing craft. OPPOSITE: Marine dead, vehicles trapped in the sand, and swamped landing craft: contrary to intelligence reports that described the landing zones as ideal, the beaches were made up of coarse, black, volcanic crystals that were nearly impassable to men and vehicles.

Despite the results of the disappointing naval bombardment, the amphibious landings would be carried out as planned. Following another shelling of the island, the invasion would be spearheaded by 68 LVT Amtracs—amphibious vehicles mounting 75mm guns and three machine guns. The vehicles were intended to push inland about 50 yards, providing covering fire for the infantry and tanks that would constitute the primary landings.

Stretching north from Mount Suribachi were expansive beaches which, at least from aerial reconnaissance, appeared ideal for infantry landings. The beach was divided into seven landing zones, and the initial infantry landings would consist of eight battalions of Marines. Individual waves of landing craft were scheduled to make landfall every five minutes. If all went according to plan, it was hoped that the entire job of securing Iwo Jima could be wrapped up in 10 days.

Months of preparation finally came to fruition early on the morning of February 19, 1945, which was designated as D-Day. While the Marines assigned to the initial assault waves nervously boarded their landing craft, the Navy's big guns opened up yet again, battering suspected Japanese positions from Mount Suribachi north to the airfields. It was the largest bombardment ever seen in the Pacific, raising immense clouds of smoke and dust high in the air. The naval gunners held their fire just long enough for 120 carrier-based aircraft to strafe the beaches, at which point they opened up again.

Under cover of the bombardment, the first assault waves were ordered forward. The first armored LVT(A)s hit the beach at 8:59 a.m., but their attempts quickly degenerated into a fiasco. Contrary to intelligence reports that described the landing zones as ideal, the beaches were actually made up of coarse, black, volcanic crystals that were nearly impassable to both men and vehicles. Failing to get traction, some of the vehicles bogged down; others backed up into the surf and opened fire from the water.

As Marine infantry began pouring onto the beaches in five-minute intervals, their progress was no better. Moving forward on the loose volcanic ash was difficult enough, but running across it was impossible. And there were more unpleasant discoveries. Rather than finding a level exit to the mainland, the assault troops found their path blocked by a formidable 15-foot-high terrace of volcanic ash. The beaches quickly became packed with men as the troops frantically scrambled their way forward, with little success.

Curiously enough for the Americans, opposition to the landings was light. For about 30 minutes, the Japanese response was negligible— confined to sporadic small-arms and mortar fire.

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Naval officers entertained hopes that the pre-invasion bombardment had indeed shattered Japanese defenses. New recruits thought that perhaps Iwo Jima would be a pushover after all. Veteran Marines who had already fought their way across the Pacific knew better and braced for the worst.

As units struggled their way up the berm and got organized, officers prepared to lead their men over the top. The initial plan to expand the beachhead called for cutting the island in half and seizing Airfield No. 1. On the right, the 25th Marines would swing north toward a locale known as the Quarry and anchor the right flank. To their left, the 23rd Marines would push straight ahead toward the airfield, while the 27th Marines would attack toward the left and swing around behind the airfield. On the left, the 28th Marines would drive straight ahead, reach the opposite coast, and isolate the Japanese garrison on Mount Suribachi.

The Japanese had other plans. After waiting for the beaches to become clogged with men and vehicles, Kuribayashi finally gave the order for his men to open up. A terrific storm of artillery, mortar, and small-arms fire suddenly fell onto the crowded beach. With so many men bunched up and barely able to move forward, Japanese gunners exploited a rich target. The Japanese had presighted their guns and possessed precise ranges along the beachhead.

The shoreline quickly became a charnel house as the terrifying roar of artillery fire swept across the landing site, littering the ground with dead and dying Marines and dozens of wrecked vehicles. Pressing forward was the only alternative to annihilation, and officers and non-commissioned officers acted quickly to get the men moving. "Okay, you bastards, let's get the hell off this beach!" shouted Lt. Col. Chandler Johnson, 2nd Battalion, 28th Marines, to his men, who were deployed on the left. As the Marines finally succeeded in trudging over the top of the terrace, officers organized their outfits and charged forward.

Rushing ahead through a steady rattle of Japanese machine-gun fire, the men of the 28th Marines executed a wild attack across the island in order to cut Japanese defenses in two. It was a chaotic fight, carried out by the grit and determination of isolated knots of men. Marines assaulted and overran dozens of pillboxes, tossing grenades through the embrasures and killing anyone who survived the blast.

After coming to grips with the enemy, the Marines were worked into a killing frenzy. Private Lee Zuck of the 1st Battalion, 28th Marines, mounted the top of a 20mm gun position, and as the Japanese fled for the rear, he coolly gunned down the entire eight-man crew. Captain Dwayne Mears fought with nothing more than his .45-caliber sidearm, repeatedly attacking pillboxes and killing the defenders at close range.

Despite such heroics, the Marines were paying a fearful price in casualties as they ran the gauntlet of enemy fire. Men fell by the score, dying and suffering alone, while overwhelmed Navy corpsmen struggled to help those they could. After an hour and a half of determined fighting, breathless Marines began reaching the west coast, but their hold on the ground was tenuous at best.

Lieutenant Frank Wright of the 1/28, who had started the attack at the head of 60 men, found that only two men had come through with him; the rest of his command was either dead, wounded, or lost. Lieutenant Wesley Bates had fared little better, reaching the west coast with less than a half dozen men from his platoon. Marine officers, who led by example, suffered badly. In the 1/28th Marines, only one company commander was still on his feet.

Farther to the right, the men of the 27th Marines ran into stiff opposition as they struggled to exit the beach. Facing certain death as Japanese artillery continued to rake the shoreline, Marines fought their way up the berm and pushed inland. As elements of the 27th Marines skirted across the southern end of the airfield, they fought a bitter battle with Japanese troops.

Conditions on the landing beaches steadily deteriorated as tanks and vehicles continued to land but had nowhere to go. Wreckage clogged the shoreline until Navy beachmasters, working closely with Seabees, began clearing crippled vehicles and cutting exits through the beach terrace that could accommodate American armor.

But even with armor finally joining the fight, every inch of ground was hotly contested. Well-placed Japanese anti-tank guns ensured that American tank crews could only move forward at an agonizingly slow pace. On the Fourth Division landing beaches on the right, enemy resistance was particularly fierce. The Marines ran into a Japanese minefield, and engineers carefully probed their way through.

Flame throwers offered a brutally efficient way for the U.S. Marines to knock out Japanese bunkers and pillboxes.

Fighting through a maze of Japanese defenses on February 23, 1945, the men of Company C, 1st Battalion, 21st Marine Regiment, Third Marine Division, had reached an impasse. Confronted with a seemingly impenetrable complex of Japanese concrete pillboxes, the company was pinned down by enemy machine-gun fire. Out of options, the frustrated company commander asked Corporal Hershel Williams if he could do anything about it. Williams coolly replied that he would try.

Armed with a flamethrower and covered by four fellow Marines, Williams spent the next four hours burning out Japanese pillboxes, returning to his own lines for fresh flamethrowers, then heading back into the fight. In one remarkable day of combat, Williams opened up an avenue of attack for his company, earned the Medal of Honor, and demonstrated the terrible lethality of one of World War II's most devastating weapons.

Of all the American weapons used to subdue the Japanese garrison of Iwo Jima, few would prove their worth quite like the flamethrower. For confronting well-concealed Japanese pillboxes and bunkers, artillery fire and aerial bombardment could be woefully inadequate. The flamethrower would prove a simple, but grim, killing machine.

At the outset of the war, the United States scrambled to produce suitable flamethrowers. The initial model, the M1, was first used by American troops in the South Pacific, where it was quickly recognized as a valuable addition to the American arsenal. The weapon was particularly effective in confronting deeply entrenched Japanese infantry that could not be otherwise dislodged by small arms. Eventually, the United States would produce 25,000 flamethrowers during the war years.

By the time the V Amphibious Corps landed on Iwo Jima, the Marines were equipped with an improved version of the flamethrower, designated the M2. The M2 was relatively crude but effective. Fitted with twin fuel tanks that could accommodate four gallons, the flamethrower was charged by a compressed air tank that sent fuel into a discharge hose. Operation of the weapon was controlled by a hand-held gun with two triggers; one trigger released a stream of pressurized fuel; the other trigger was used for ignition.

The deadliest improvement to the M2 was actually to the fuel used in the system. By 1945, the Marines had adopted the use of napalm. The jellied gasoline could be fired in a strong stream that could reach as far as 60 yards. The flamethrower was brutally efficient in ferreting Japanese infantry out of the underground cave-and-fortification complexes on Iwo Jima. During the fight for the island, the Marines fielded 485 units. Most were carried on the backs of infantrymen, while other units were modified for use on Sherman tanks.

Despite the effectiveness of the flamethrower,

National Archives

ABOVE: A Marine on Iwo Jima armed with an M2 flame thrower goes into action against a Japanese position. The weapon could shoot a stream of jellied gasoline up to 60 yards. LEFT: An engineer tests a model of the flame thrower in 1943. The operator controlled the weapon with a hand-held gun with two triggers: one to release the fuel and the other to ignite it.

Marine infantrymen assigned to carry the weapon, who were prime targets for Japanese troops, had an unenviable job. The M2 weighed 42 pounds when empty, but it weighed as much as 70 pounds when fully loaded with fuel. Although the system was equipped with quick-release buckles in case of emergency, they often could not help. Fuel tanks punctured by enemy fire quickly released a cloud of vaporized gasoline that could ignite in seconds. Despite the inherent danger of operating the M-2, the Marines on Iwo Jima heroically carried them into battle.

—Joshua Shepherd

Marines on Red Beach One endure withering fire shortly after landing. The Marines suffered 2,500 casualties on the first day.

Naval History and Heritage Command

One of the prime objectives of the day was the Quarry, a forbidding swath of high ground that commanded the American right. The assault was assigned to Lt. Col. "Jumpin' Joe" Chambers of the 3rd Battalion, 25th Regiment. Chambers led a spirited attack into the crags of the ridge and slowly drove out the Japanese. By late afternoon, his Marines sat astride the ridge but had paid a fearful price. The 3rd Battalion was down to a skeleton force of 150 men. Company L of the battalion, which had started the fight with 240 men, could muster no more than 18 Marines.

Such dogged Japanese resistance bogged down the Americans, and as darkness approached, orders went out to halt the attack and sit tight for the night. Marines who were exhausted and numb from the day's fighting dug in as best they could and faced a tense night under the constant threat of a Japanese counterattack.

Although the first day's fighting had not advanced as far as initially planned, the Americans had secured a respectable lodgment on Iwo Jima. From the west coast near the base of Mount Suribachi, the Marines occupied a ragged line that stretched northeast across the island toward the vital ground at the Quarry. Airfield No. 1, another one of the prime objectives of the day, remained in no-man's-land.

The landings had succeeded in placing 30,000 men, bolstered by armor and artillery, squarely ashore the island, but the beaches remained dangerously crowded with men and tangled with immobilized vehicles.

The first day's battle for Iwo Jima had come at a fearful cost in blood. In the midst of the hotly contested battlefield, it was simply impossible to extract all the wounded. Although 1,000 men were evacuated during the day, the beach was littered with terrified, broken, and helpless men who desperately needed medical attention. Japanese mortar fire continued to fall indiscriminately, twice hitting aid stations. The sights and sounds of the first night on Iwo Jima was a "nightmare in hell," observed *Time-Life* correspondent Robert Sherrod.

The nightmarish struggle for Iwo Jima was only beginning. At dawn on the following day, naval aircraft hit the slopes of Mount Suribachi, dropping bombs and napalm in a merciless effort to soften up Japanese defenses. The 28th Marines, though, could make little progress toward the mountain, gaining no more than 200 yards of ground after a day of heavy fighting. With little vegetation or natural cover in front of them, the Marines simply could not make swift progress up the mountain. Second Lieutenant G. Greeley Wells of the 2nd Battalion, 28th Marine Regiment lamented the exposed approaches toward the mountain. "My men would be open targets all the way," he said.

Farther north, the Marines had just a bit more luck. Naval guns once again shelled Japanese positions, pummeling a wide swath across the Marines' front before the infantry push. While troops held fast at the Quarry, the attack was pressed hard on the left. At Airfield No. 1, the men of the 23rd Marines advanced into the teeth of heavy Japanese machine-gun fire, made a mad dash across the tarmac, and succeeded in holding the airfield. By the end of the second day, a cohesive American line stretched from coast to coast.

Over the next two days, Japanese determination and foul weather combined to frustrate further gains. In the north, General Schmidt continued to straighten his lines and push his men forward, but gains were negligible. In the forbidding terrain of the Quarry, Marines encountered a mystifying maze of enemy defensive positions and suffered heavy casualties. On D+2, the Americans gained just 50 yards.

At the base of Mount Suribachi, the 28th Marines experienced better progress. The mountain was initially defended by nearly 1,000 Japanese troops under the command of Colonel Kenehiko Atsuchi. Although Atsuchi's troops were resolute fighters, they were entirely cut off from Kuribayashi's main body in the north. The mountain defenses likewise took a steady pounding from Navy vessels, Marine artillery, and aircraft.

Marine tanks found it impossible, though, to operate at the foot of the mountain, leaving a tough fight for the infantry. On February 22, the 28th succeeded in making good, if costly, progress against Suribachi. After a series of vicious close-quarter fights with small arms and flamethrowers, the Americans slowly began working their way up the lower slope. After several days of incessant combat, Atsuchi had lost hundreds of his men, and it was clear that Suribachi was ripe for the taking.

Early on the morning of February 23, a four-man patrol nervously scouted up the north face of the mountain. Although expecting to receive

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ABOVE: Marines of Company E of the 2nd Battalion, 28th Marines, raise the first U.S. flag atop Mount Suribachi on February 23. The flag was taken from the USS *Missoula*, a tank-transport ship. TOP: Marines assault an enemy-held cave with grenades, Browning Automatic Rifles, and M1 carbines. The Japanese clung to their defensive positions with astonishing determination.

enemy fire at any moment, the men reached the summit of the mountain. Convinced that enemy defenses on Suribachi had nearly collapsed, Johnson ordered 40 men up Mount Suribachi to seize the crest. As the commander of the attack, Lieutenant Harold Schrier of 2nd Battalion, 28th Marine Regiment, turned to head up the mountain, Johnson handed him an American flag carried by his battalion. "Put this up on the hill," the colonel said.

Schrier's party fought their way through light opposition from isolated Japanese and reached the summit a little after 10:00 a.m. Using an old pipe as an improvised staff, the Marines raised their flag above Suribachi in plain view of nearly the entire island. Standing off the coast, Navy vessels blared horns and whistles. Marines on the beaches shouted and cheered; others wept.

At the base of Mount Suribachi, Johnson realized something big was afoot and snapped at a nearby lieutenant. Someone up the chain of command was going to want the battalion flag, but he is not going to get it, warned Johnson. "That's our flag, "he said. "Better find another one and get it up there." A larger flag was located, measuring roughly four by eight feet, and carried to the summit. With little fanfare, six Marines raised the new flag above Suribachi. Fortunately for history, Associated Press photographer Joe Rosenthal captured the moment on film, preserving the most iconic moment in the history of the Marine Corps.

Despite the inspiring flag-raisings above Mount Suribachi, the bloody fight for Iwo Jima was far from over. The 28th stayed on the mountain to mop up Japanese survivors, who remained hidden in the underground tunnel system. But with Mount Suribachi in American hands and Japanese guns on the mountain silenced, General Schmidt was able to concentrate all of his efforts into the drive against primary Japanese positions in the north.

Ultimately, the entire V Amphibious Corps would be committed to the fight. On the American left, Maj. Gen. Keller Rockey's 5th Division advanced along the west coast. Maj. Gen. Graves Erskine's 3rd Division was assigned the drive up the center of the island. On the American right, Maj. Gen. Clifton Cates' 4th Division faced a tough fight in the heavily defended and forbidding terrain that hugged the eastern coast.

On February 24, five days after the initial landings, the drive north began in earnest. Naval and air bombardment continued unabated against Japanese positions, and the ground attack was aimed at Airfield No. 2, which was defended by an impressive complex of as many as 800 pillboxes. While enemy artillery and machine-gun fire raked the runways, the Marines of the 21st Regiment prepared to move forward. Lt. Col. Wendell Duplantis of the 3rd Battalion, 21st Regiment, Third Marine Division, issued simple orders. "We have to get that airfield today," he said.

The Marines made a bold push for the airfield and, predictably, paid a heavy price. Leading their men forward at the run, officers fell quickly. Captain Rodney Heinze of Company K of 3/21 fell wounded from a grenade blast; Captain Clayton Rockmore of Company I of 3/21, lunging for a series of enemy pillboxes, was shot through the throat and killed instantly. Three lieutenants dropped in a storm of enemy fire, and command of the two companies devolved to sergeants.

Relief was on the way, in the form of First Lieutenant Raoul Archambault of 3/21, who had

already earned Bronze and Silver Stars for heroism on Guam and Bougainville. He rallied the men and led them in a wild charge across the airfield. Although the two companies were badly shot up in the dash across the runways, they miraculously succeeded in reaching the far side and coming to grips with the Japanese on the northern perimeter of the airfield.

The enemy was well-positioned on high ground on the northern end of the field, and Archambault's men pitched into them in a vicious hand-to-hand fight that ultimately cleared the trenches and pillboxes of Japanese. The breathless Marines regrouped and prepared for a counterattack; in a mere hour and a half, they had gained 800 yards of ground and seized Airfield No. 2.

As the battle for the northern reaches of the island commenced, such impressive gains in ground would be hard to come by. Schmidt's plan called for his Marines to progressively drive north and, reaching the northern coast of the island, split Japanese defenses in two in the hope that remaining Japanese troops could be destroyed in detail.

Yet troops across the island faced increasingly forbidding terrain, and Marines would fall just to gain a few yards of rocky wasteland. One of the primary objectives was a Japanese defensive complex that lay in front of the 4th Division. Built around strongpoints that included high ground at Hill 382 and Turkey Knob, the ruins of Minami village, and a dangerous depression known as the Amphitheatre, the area would come to be known, and for good reason, as the "Meat Grinder."

The first day of fighting at that location, on February 25, was indicative of what would follow. Determined to take the area with overwhelming strength, General Cates ordered both the 23rd and 24th Marine Regiments, numbering 3,800 men, to attack at midmorning. They ran into fierce opposition from Maj. Gen. Sadasues Senda's 2nd Mixed Brigade, which would fiercely contest ownership of the Meat Grinder. A platoon of Marines succeeded in reaching the top of Hill 382 but was battered off the hill by a Japanese counterattack. After a full day of fighting, only one hundred yards had been gained by the two regiments.

Along the rest of the American line, progress was equally slow. The 5th Division on the west coast succeeded in overrunning the last two wells available to the Japanese. Desperate to regain access to the water, the Japanese launched an ill-coordinated frontal assault. Marines who were accustomed to rarely seeing the enemy in the open were delighted to watch as the Japanese attack was shattered by artillery fire.

Remarkably, another horrifying month of carnage awaited the men of both armies. Just 12 days after the initial landing, Japanese forces, initially numbering about 21,000 men, were down to approximately 7,000 men. By the first week of March, Kuribayashi moved his headquarters underground in remote terrain in the northwest corner of the island. As the Japanese were slowly pushed into an ever-tightening perimeter, they sold their lives dearly for every inch of ground gained by the Marines.

Marines pass the grave of a fellow warrior who was buried at the spot where he was killed. Iwo Jima was the only battle in the Pacific War in which U.S. casualties outstripped those of the Japanese.

Naval History and Heritage Command

Despite heavy American casualties, General Schmidt slowly succeeded in tightening the noose around the island's remaining defenders. Steady pressure on the defenses of the Meat Grinder, which was bolstered by armored support, finally succeeded in seizing the area after a week of bloody fighting. In that time, the Fourth Division had suffered 4,800 casualties but succeeded in capturing vital Japanese defenses at the Amphitheater, Turkey Knob, and Hill 382.

Exasperated by the heavy losses, General Erskine, to his credit, endeavored to exercise original thinking. Rather than continue to launch daytime attacks, which the Japanese had learned to expect, Erskine planned a nighttime assault on D+16 which, he hoped, would seize vital ground atop Hill 362C and break the impasse on the 3rd Division's front.

The 3rd Battalion, 9th Marines, under the command of Lt. Col. Harold Boehm, succeeded at 5:00 a.m. in infiltrating Japanese lines, pushing 300 yards ahead in the darkness. A brief fight that caught the Japanese unprepared left Boehm in possession of a hilltop, which turned out to be Hill 331. A frustrated Boehm called in artillery support, and after several hours of further fighting, he succeeded in capturing Hill 362C.

For the Third Division, the hill was the last major obstacle in their drive toward the sea and splitting Japanese forces in half. On D+18, a patrol of 28 Marines led by Lieutenant Paul Connelly of the 1st Battalion, 21st Marines succeeded in breaking through to the coast. The remaining Japanese defenders, numbering just 1,500 men, were reduced to two isolated pockets on the northern and eastern corners of the island. Kuribayashi, hiding underground with what remained of his command, settled in for a final fight in the crags of a forbidding rocky gorge that the Marines nicknamed Death Valley.

There would be no final epic clash in the battle for Iwo Jima. To the very last, the Marines were forced to flush individual Japanese from their fighting positions with rifles, grenades, and flamethrowers. True to Kuribayashi's initial plan, the bulk of Japanese troops fought to the death, extracting the highest price possible from the U.S. Marines sent to force them out. By the third week of March, the fighting was nearing a conclusion. A final message from the Japanese garrison went out over radio to a nearby Japanese naval base on March 23. "[To] all officers and men of Chichi Jima, goodbye from Iwo," stated the announcement.

More senseless killing, though, would erupt in the early morning hours of March 26. Exhausted and hungry Japanese troops, far from disillu-

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Revolutionary France's OPENING SALVO

When Jean Baptiste Jourdan invaded the Austrian Netherlands during the War of the First Coalition in 1794, it fell to Prince Josias of Saxe-Coburg to turn him back. The fate of the province was decided in a bloody clash at Fleurus.

By Victor Kamenir

The French Revolution of 1789, which began as a peaceful process of social and financial reform, rapidly descended into internal strife and violence. Virtually powerless, the French King Louis XVI and his Austrian-born queen Marie-Antoinette soon found themselves under what amounted to house arrest at the Tuileries Palace. Members of French aristocracy, faced with increasing hostility, surveillance, and physical violence, began to emigrate in large numbers to escape persecution, establishing armed émigré units in the immediate vicinity of French borders.

Concerned for Marie-Antoinette's safety, the queen's brother Leopold II, the Holy Roman Emperor and the King of Austria, issued a declaration on August 27, 1791, proclaiming his support for the deposed monarch and denouncing Revolutionary France. Joined by King of Prussia Frederick William II, Leopold carefully phrased the wording, stating he would go to war only if other major European powers went to war with France as well. In response to Louis XVI's appeals for armed intervention and urged on by influential French émigrés, Austria and Prussia forged a military alliance in February 1792.

The National Assembly, the French governing body, interpreted the declaration and the military alliance as Austria intending to go to war. Viewing an external conflict as the solution to its internal problems, the French government preemptively declared war on Austria on April 20, 1792, unleashing the French Revolutionary Wars, which, in conjunction with the Napoleonic wars, were to shake Europe for nearly a quarter century.

Alamy

Jean Baptiste Jourdan astride a white horse launches his reserves in a decisive counterattack against the Allied center at Fleurus.

Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

ABOVE: The French Revolutionary Army was formed from a variety of infantry units. Veteran regiments wore the traditional white uniforms of the French Royal Army, while national guardsmen wore their blue coats. RIGHT: The Revolutionary Army's resounding victory over the Austrians at Jemappes in 1792 showed that its officers and soldiers were capable of mounting complex military operations against their enemies.

Following the revolution, the French Royal Army was on the verge of collapse. Tens of thousands of aristocratic officers fled the county, discipline was shaken, pay was in arrears, and the supply system was in shambles. To supplement the disintegrating Royal Army, the French government in 1791 issued a call for national volunteers. Hundreds of thousands of enthusiastic Frenchmen responded to the call.

With so many officers gone, the losses had to be made good by promoting noncommissioned officers. Especially hard-hit by the officer flight was the cavalry, with its higher proportion of aristocratic officers. The artillery, the majority of whose officers were middle-class and received promotions based on merit, remained largely intact. In the volunteer battalions, promotion was by election. Popularity frequently substituted for competence, and a man with no military experience often found himself with the rank of general, and just as quickly a civilian again. Despite many newly minted officers being totally unsuited for their roles, a surprisingly large number of good men steadily rose to the top.

Eventually, under the amalgamé system, each white-coated battalion of the old Royal Army was combined with two battalions of blue-coated volunteers. The combined units were called demi-brigades, since the term regiment harked back to the Ancien Regime, which was the political and social system in France before the Revolution of 1789. The idea was for the old battalions to stiffen the resolve of the volunteers. Although the volunteers were willing and enthusiastic, they sorely lacked discipline and training.

Having disregarded the shape of the army and intent on exporting revolution abroad, the French government launched an invasion of the Austrian Netherlands in late April 1792, which it considered ready to embrace the revolutionary ideas. Senior officers who chose to stay and serve their

1794. The so-called war of maneuver, championed by Napoleon, was still several years away, and positional fighting was centered on French strongholds in northern France and the Austrian fortresses in the Austrian Netherlands.

The Austrian fortress of Charleroi, near the village of Charnoy, was built by the Spanish crown in the mid-17th century to protect its possessions in the Spanish Netherlands. Named after the Spanish King Charles II, the hexagonal fortress was situated at the bend in the Sambre River. Perched on the north bank of the river, Charleroi's six bastions overlooked the gently sloping ground to the north, providing a dominating view toward west, east and south. By the time of the French Revolution, the Spanish Netherlands had evolved into the Austrian Netherlands, and the Austrian crown controlled Charleroi fortress.

During the campaigns in the beginning of the War of the First Coalition, Charleroi changed hands several times between the Spanish, French, and Austrians crowns, variously undergoing improvements or partial demolitions. Famous French military engineer Sebastien de Vauban rebuilt the fortress in the same footprint, with several additional outlying redoubts and lunettes. The French built a bridge across the Sambre River to allow for easier shifting of reinforcements from France.

The 3,000 Austrian troops garrisoning the formidable fortress repulsed three attempts by the French to capture it. Each time, the French suffered heavy losses. In response to the failed attempts, a 52,000-strong French grand army was created to take Charleroi. The grand army comprised divisions from the Army of the North under General Jean Baptiste Kleber, the Army of the Ardennes under General François Marceau, and the Army of the Moselle under General Jean-Baptiste Jourdan. The whole of the French force was overseen by representatives Louis Saint-Just and Philippe Le Bas. None of the three commanders was willing to accept another as his superior. This compelled Saint-Just and Le Bas, on their own authority, to appoint Jourdan as overall commander. Jourdan deployed his ample forces in a ring around Charleroi in order to protect the troops besieging the fortress from attack by an Austrian relief army.

The son of a surgeon, Jourdan enlisted in the army at the age of 16 and participated in the Siege of Savannah during the American Revolutionary War. Afflicted with malaria, he was discharged several years later. The French Revolution of 1789 found him a respectable dress-shop owner in his hometown of Limoges. When the Limoges National Guard battalion was raised, Jourdan was elected as a captain of its light company. A natural leader and capable tactician, four years later Jourdan was a general of division—the equivalent of a major general.

After his victory over the British at Hondschoote on September 8, 1793, Jourdan was appointed to command the Army of the North, a posting he accepted with some reservations. The two previous commanders of the Army of the North, Adam Philippe Count de Custine and Jean Nicolas Houchard, had been arrested on trumped up charges and executed.

Well aware that Charleroi could not be reduced without a proper siege, Jourdan resolved to wait for arrival of the siege train, despite being harangued by Saint-Just and Le Bas demanding action. Upon the siege train's arrival, Jourdan gave orders to advance on June 12. Approaching Charleroi, Jourdan tasked General Jacques Hatry's division with conducting the siege while the rest of combined armies formed an outer ring around the fortress, busily constructing earthen fieldworks facing outward. An offer of surrender was made and rejected, and the Austrian garrison was determined to await the relief by the Allied field force led by 57 year-old Field Marshal Count Frederick Josias of Saxe-Coburg.

Saxe-Coburg was a scion of the highest nobility of the Holy Roman Empire and a future great-great-uncle of the British Queen Victoria. Entering Austrian service as a lieutenant at the age of 18, Saxe-Coburg first saw combat in the Seven Years' War, rapidly rising through the

The Allies relied on a series of coalitions to defeat French aggression.

Upheaval caused by unleashing the French Revolutionary Wars in 1792 battered Europe for the next 23 years. Like heads of a hydra, coalition after coalition rose up first to attempt to smother the nascent French Republic and later to defeat Napoleon's empire. The wars involved a bewildering array of belligerents, from the mightiest royal houses of Europe to the bandit lords of North Africa.

The end of the War of the First Coalition in 1797 saw the rise of the obscure general Napoleon Bonaparte after his successful campaign in Italy. With Napoleon's invasion of Egypt the following year, the coalition wars expanded outside of Europe for the first time. Coalition wars and their offshoots eventually ranged across the globe.

Although Napoleon's Egyptian campaign ultimately ended in failure, his reputation saw a meteoric rise. Returning from Egypt in 1799, Napoleon launched a successful coup, creating a triumvirate Consulate with himself as the First Consul. Bonaparte crowned himself emperor on December 2, 1804.

With Austria and Russia defeated during the War of the Second Coalition in 1801, Napoleon's implacable enemy Great Britain was compelled to conclude the Treaty of Amiens on March 27, 1802, which effectively ended the French Revolutionary Wars. The peace lasted barely a year, until May 18, 1803—the only period of peace in Europe until the Congress of Vienna in 1814.

By the time of Napoleon's decisive defeat at the Battle of Waterloo on June 18, 1815, seven coalitions had gone to war against Revolutionary France and Napoleon I's French Empire. Between the coalition wars, there were bloody interludes, such as Napoleon's invasion of Russia in 1812 and a festering guerilla war, the so-called Spanish Ulcer, fought in Spain and Portugal for seven years beginning in 1807.

Great Britain, Austria, and Russia consistently formed the backbone of coalition wars. Great Britain, the only European power not to institute conscription, fielded only a small army, instead serving as the paymaster and financier of the never-ending coalitions. The Austrian and Russian empires, with their vast manpower resources, provided the bulk of forces fighting the French in the field.

In previous centuries, war was a king's hobby. Professional standing armies were small, rarely numbering more than 200,000 men, fighting set-piece battles in contests over territory. Napoleon introduced the war of maneuver, where the goal was to neutralize a nation's field army in order to bring its government to the negotiating table.

Coalition wars saw the rise of national armies and the concept of total war; in these conflicts, all resources and manpower of the state were subordinated to war needs.

After the fall of Napoleon, the Congress of Vienna saw to the realignment of power on the European continent, and France lost the dominant role it had enjoyed since the time of Louis XIV. Coalitions of war became political coalitions that were characterized by a jealously guarded balance of power.

—Victor Kamenir

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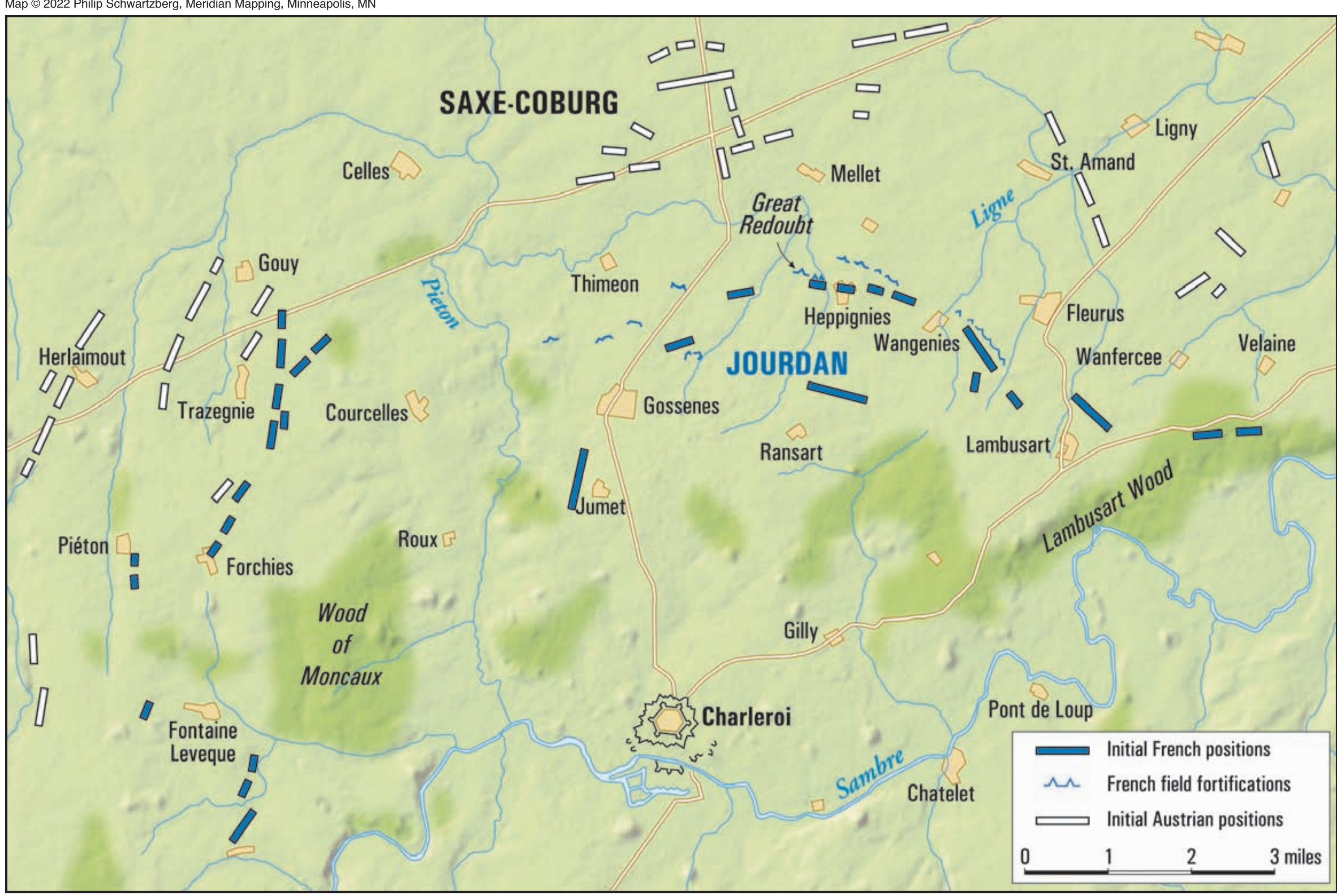

Even though the Austrians on the left (shown at top right) held their ground, the French counterattacked and captured the Allied center, and also drove from the field the Dutch (shown at far left) positioned on the Allied right.

ranks and gaining extensive experience fighting the Ottoman Turks.

Although Coburg enjoyed the unity of field command, he was severely hamstrung by diverging political agendas emanating from London, Berlin and Vienna. Relationships between Prussia and England were cool, while both Prussian and Austrian attention was distracted by a Polish uprising in March of 1794. Austrian and Prussian troops, which were vitally needed on the French front, were diverted to Poland instead to assist Russia in suppressing the uprising. Having just wrapped up another war with the Ottoman Empire, Russia was not interested in becoming embroiled in a conflict 800 miles away.

Marching to relieve Charleroi on June 16, 1794, a 41,000-strong Austro-Dutch force under Coburg emerged from the thick fog behind glinting bayonets. Caught unaware, the French had little time to form up before the Dutch troops leading the allied army quickly deployed several artillery batteries. Their rapid fire disordered the French formations, with the Austrians and the Dutch quickly following up with an infantry attack. Under strong pressure, General Marceau's command was forced to abandon its positions at the Wanfersee hamlet and the Lambusart Woods, exposing French right flank.

A determined Austrian flank attack routed the French main body and drove it back across the Sambre River. The Austrians entered Fleurus just as the French were departing the town. The fiasco cost the French close to 3,000 killed and wounded and eight guns captured. The Allied losses amounted to 2,200 Austrian and 800 Dutch casualties. In the belief that he had chased the French away for good, Coburg withdrew his command after demolishing French fieldworks.

After restoring order, Jourdan ordered him men back across the Sambre on June 18 for the fifth time. Both Saint-Just and Le Bas pressured him to reengage the Austrians. Jourdan's force reached Charleroi with almost no opposition from the Austrian garrison and began rebuilding seigeworks around the fortress.

Another attempt by the French to storm Charleroi was beaten back with losses. The vanguard commander, General Francois Joseph Lefebvre, reported running out of artillery ammunition. Saint-Just quickly found a scapegoat in the person of a hapless artillery captain, who was arrested and sent to the guillotine. It was later discovered that Saint-Just had prepared a proscription list of several generals. Jourdan was at the top of the list. He was targeted apparently for standing up to Saint-Just's unwanted and uneducated advice on military matters.

Once the siegeworks were completed, a cannonade commenced and went on for five days in hopes of inducing the Austrian garrison to surrender. The Austrians stood firm; indeed, they even launched several sorties to disrupt the siege work of the French troops. Austrian positions near the hamlet of Lambusart opposite Lefebvre's division were particularly well-entrenched. Their fieldworks were enhanced by the rough terrain in which they were located.

Representatives Saint-Just and Le Bas were not satisfied with the slow pace of the siege, visiting the seigeworks daily and harassing engineer Colonel Marescot, who was directing the siege. At one point, Saint-Just found the work on a new

battery was not being conducted as quickly as he would have liked.

"When will the battery be completed?" Saint-Just inquired of a captain overseeing the work.

"It will depend on the number of workers I'm given," the captain replied. "But I assure you they will work tirelessly."

"If it is not ready by six o'clock tomorrow, your head will roll!" Saint-Just said.

Jourdan learned that Coburg had been reinforced by additional forces, and he believed it was no longer feasible to continue the siege while strong enemy forces could approach from the rear. It was now necessary to quickly capture Charleroi or abandon the siege. On the morning of June 25, the French stood ready to assault the fortress yet again. An officer was sent to Charleroi under a flag of truce, carrying a letter to the Austrian commander that included a message from Saint-Just. "The General-in-Chief of the Army of the Sambre is ordered to assault the town of Charleroi and put the garrison to the sword if the town does not surrender within an hour," the message stated.

The Austrian garrison commander had no doubts about Saint-Just making good on his threat and quickly sent back his own aide with a letter containing articles of surrender. Saint-Just refused to open the letter. "You are aware of the order I gave to the general-in-chief; I have the power to give it, but I don't have the power to retract it," he told an Austrian officer. "I still have my and my army's courage to carry it out. Take this answer to your general and tell him to fall upon French generosity."

The unfortunate Austrian garrison commander promptly signed the capitulation that the French had dictated to him. The French took 2,700 enemy troops into captivity. Yet a small number of die-hards continued to hold out in outlying redoubts. No sooner was the surrender completed than the lead elements of Coburg's vanguard arrived before Fleurus. They fired several rounds from their cannon to announce to the garrison that they had arrived. Unaware that the fortress was already in French hands, Coburg marched to Charleroi; he intended to trap Jourdan between the hammer of his field force and the anvil of the fortress.

ABOVE: Prince William V of Orange, the Stadholder of the Dutch Republic, is shown with his staff on the grounds of a windmill at Fleurus. His troops were outmatched by the French at Fleurus. RIGHT: Austrian cavalry receive well-directed volleys from French infantry. In a key part of the battle, French musket fire shattered the charge of 10 Austrian cavalry squadrons against infantry protected by hedgerows.

Both sides prepared for battle that night. The French worked tirelessly to improve their outward-facing earthen fieldworks. The French built a strong outpost near Heppignies, which they aptly named the Great Redoubt.

With the reinforcements that arrived during the siege, Jourdan had on hand 75,000 infantry, 2,300 cavalry, 11 field batteries and two horse-drawn artillery batteries. The French divisions were composed of regiments, demi-brigades, and separate volunteer battalions, including infantry, cavalry, and artillery.

Jourdan deployed his forces in a semi-circle around Charleroi with both flanks resting on the left bank of the Sambre River. The left wing was given to Kleber's Army of the North. Kleber placed General Charles Daurier's brigade on the far left, with its left flank resting on the Sambre River, at the hamlet of Fontaine-l'Eveque. On Daurier's right was the division under General Charles Montaigu at Trazegnie and Courcelles. Kleber placed his own infantry division in reserve of the left flank at Gosselies. Only a few scattered pickets occupied the right bank of the Sambre, where they kept watch for the arrival of additional Allied forces.

Jourdan's Army of the Moselle held the center of the French line. General Antoine Morlot's division was on its left at Mellet, in contact with Kleber. General Jean Ettiene Campionnet's division was at Heppignies and Wangenies.

General Francois Joseph Lefebvre deployed on Championnet's right to hold the Lambusart Woods. Lefebvre's vanguard occupied the village of Fleurus. Two divisions of the Army of the Ardennes under General Francois Marceau took up a position on the far right of the French line, with its right flank anchored on the Sambre River. General Jacques Maurice Hatry's infantry division, as well as a cavalry division led by General Paul-Alexis Dubois—both of which were held in reserve—assembled on the northern outskirts of Charleroi.

Saxe-Coburg's Austrian-Dutch army was composed of 32,000 infantry, 14,000 cavalry, and 50 guns. While the French army was still homogenous at this stage, the Allied army represented a mixed bag of soldiers from a half-dozen European countries. The Dutch Army had not gone to war for more than a half century. Because of this, its army had severely declined in effectiveness. Its soldiers were inexperienced, and its older generals very old. Saxe-Coburg also had two Swiss battalions and several French émigré units, which were spread among his Dutch troops. The Royal-Allemand Cavalry Regiment was composed of French-born German speakers.

The backbone of the Allied army was the white-coated Austro-Hungarian regiments. The men were steady and brave, despite being poorly led. The officers lacked experience, and they tended to be extremely conservative in their thinking. It is worth noting that no other nation fought as often, or put more troops in the field, than Austria did during the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars.

Saxe-Coburg's three corps went into battle arrayed in five columns. The first column, which was commanded by Prince William V of Orange, the Stadtholder of the Dutch Republic, consisted primarily of Dutch and French émigré troops. They deployed on the Allied right flank opposite

Both: Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

Kleber's command. The other four columns were composed of Austrian troops with a few émigré units integrated with them. Facing Jourdan's Army of the Moselle in the center, Saxe-Coburg personally commanded three columns under Field Marshal Peter Quasdanovich, Field Marshal Count von Kaunitz-Rietberg, and Field Marshal Archduke Charles. Field Marshal Johann Peter Beaulieu's fifth column, on the Allied left, deployed facing Marceau's troops in the section of the line of battle that stretched from Fleurus to the Sambre River.

The Allies made the first move on June 26. The battle began before sunrise with the Dutch cavalry conducting a wide sweep through Anderlues on the French left. Their objective was the hamlet of Landmeier on the left bank of the Sambre.

Daurier's brigade staunchly held its position, preventing the Dutch from reaching the bridge over the river. The Prince of Orange's infantry lunged at the divisions of Montaigu and Moller. The Dutch foot succeeded in capturing the hamlets of Forchies and Trazegnies. In so doing, they drove the French east toward Charleroi.

The French found themselves in a dire predicament three hours later. Beulieu's column on the right flank followed the same route it had 10 days previously, and it once again overran Marceau's position. The Austrian attack unfolded so rapidly and furiously against the French at the hamlets of Wanfersee and Velaine that a portion of Marceau's command fled in disorder to the right bank of the Sambre. In so doing, they left Marceau alone with his staff officers and some artillery to face the enemy.

The Austrian column continued along the left bank of the Sambre toward Charleroi. Seeing the disaster unfolding to his right, Lefebvre sent his chief of staff Colonel Nicolas Soult to ascertain the situation. He entrusted Soult to act on his authority as the situation required.

When Soult found Marceau, the "boy general" was distraught from the shameful flight of his troops. In anguish, 22-year-old Marceau pulled out his pistol and pointed it at his head to wash away the shame of his troops.

"You want to die, and your soldiers dishonor themselves," Soult, stopping Marceau from taking such a drastic act. "Go look for them and come back to win with them." Marceau followed Soult's sage advice. Acknowledging it was a "path to honor," Marceau galloped off to find his troops, while Soult rode to Hatry's division and brought up an infantry brigade to plug the gap left by Marceau's fleeing troops. Two hours later, having chased down and rallied his errant divisions, Marceau brought his troops back in the battle line.

By late morning the Austrians had driven back the French on both flanks. On the right, even though the situation had somewhat stabilized, the French were pushed back to the outskirts of Charleroi. On the left, Montaigu's divisions were driven beyond the Pieton River, a small tributary of the Sambre. At the same time, Dutch cavalry probed towards Marchienne, where the French siege artillery was assembled.

A Dutch cavalry patrol penetrated to the outskirts of Charleroi, where a small Austrian unit from Cahrleroi's garrison was holding out in an outlying redoubt. In order to prevent the Dutch from crossing the river in force, Kleber reinforced the troops at Marchienne and destroyed the bridge there.

In the center, where main bodies of both armies clashed near Fleurus, the situation settled into a bloody stalemate. Lefebvre's vanguard was ejected from Fleurus by Archduke Charles' column and withdrew to join the rest of the division at Lambusart. Charles then continued his advance to Gosselies, which was situated on the northern outskirts of Charleroi. But the main battle line of Lefebvre's and Championnet's divisions held fast. Units advanced within musket range and traded volleys until one side broke. Disordered units would fall back to rally, fresh units would take their place in the line of battle, and the process would repeat itself.

With the French right flank compromised, Beaulieu led his Austrian column to attack Lambusart. The light troops of Lefebvre's vanguard,

ABOVE: French commander Jean-Baptiste Jourdan won a decisive victory at Fleurus; Louis Antoine de Saint-Just of the Committee of Public Safety monitored the French forces; Austrian commander Prince Josias of Saxe-Coburg-Saalfeld suffered a string of defeats at the hands of the French. OPPOSITE: French Captain Charles Coutelle went aloft in the hydrogen-filled balloon L'entreprenant at Fleurus to observe and record the Allied dispositions. Jourdan's decisive victory at Fleurus compelled the Austrians to cede control of the Austrian Netherlands to the French First Republic, which annexed it in October 1795.

which had withdrawn to Fleurus, defended the gardens and the entrance to the village as a gap in the French line developed from the Lambusart Woods to the Sambre. Under orders from General Lefebvre, Soult led three infantry battalions and a dragoon regiment to fill the gap. An artillery battery from Marceau's command, left behind in the general rout, took up a position in Lefebvre's battle line.

The Austrian column under Quasdanovich pushed Morlot's division from the hamlet of Mellet. Another column under Kaunitz captured the Great Redoubt. All French attempts to recapture it were beaten back with losses, while artillery and musket fire from both sides set afire fields of ripe wheat surrounding the Great Redoubt.

When a strong Austrian column advanced on Lefebvre's position at Campinaire, he ordered his troops to hold fire until the Austrians were within a stone's throw. A devastating musket volley opened huge gaps in the Austrians' ordered lines. The volley was immediately followed by a charge of General d'Hautpoul's light cavalry, routing the Austrian column.

The dogged Austrians kept coming back. Archduke Charles' column attacked three times without success. Beaulieu's column also had little success at Lambusart and against the French line placed at right angles between the village and the woods. Charleroi stood like an island surrounded by a sea of fire and smoke; Jourdan looked to the northwest, where he expected to see a relief column of 1,500 men arrive at any time.

Saxe-Coburg not only found his troops fought to a standstill in the center, but also learned of the fall of Charleroi to the enemy. At that point, he began to consider retreat rather than continuing the battle. Casualties were mounting in the Allied ranks, and the French appeared to be fighting with renewed vigor.

The Austrian commander exhibited great determination. He launched another assault against the long-suffering French right flank. The column under Beaulieu attacked against Lambusart and cleared the hamlet of the French, who managed to hang on to a small number of houses on its edge. Further Austrian progress in Lambusart was halted by the French setting fire to buildings, thus creating a flaming barrier between combatants.

Ten Austrian cavalry squadrons attacked hedgerows that were staunchly defended by the French. Well-directed musket volleys and grapeshot shattered the Austrians' mounted attack. Countercharged by a French battalion and a dragoon regiment, the Austrian cavalrymen fell back. The fighting was so intense that one French colonel had five horses shot from under him.

At this critical juncture, Kleber sent his Army of the North in a general advance against the Allied right flank across the Pieton River. Meanwhile, Colonel Jean Bernadotte's demi-brigade and a cavalry regiment attacked toward Forchies, while Colonel Duhesme advanced with three regiments against Courcelles. On the far left, steadfast Daurier's brigade attacked the Dutch right flank.

With both of his wings secure by late afternoon, Jourdan led his troops forward. He attacked with Championnet and Morlot's infantry divisions, which were supported by Dubois' cavalry division. Lefebvre advanced his reserves against Lambusart, and even Marceau's rallied battalions participated in the general advance, supported by a brigade from Hatry's divisions. Although Kaunitz was still in firm control of Heppignies with Quasdanovich supporting him astride the road to Brussels, Saxe-Coburg lost heart and gave orders for his troops to withdraw.

The first Austrian line became so disordered that several of its artillery batteries fell into French hands, but the second line held fast. Austrian cuirassiers covering the withdrawal countercharged and were able to retake their lost artillery. Until then, Beaulieu had continued attacking French entrenchments, but now—charged on the flank—he was forced to withdraw. The whole of the Allied line began falling back. However, they withdrew in relative order, with Quasdanovich and Kaunitz giving them time to disengage.

Nightfall brought an end to the fighting except for some desultory skirmishing, and the Allies were withdrawing without interference from the French. Even though some French commanders were calling for pursuit, the French, engaged for almost fifteen hours, were exhausted and almost out of ammunition. Jourdan finally ordered his command to stand down.

An invention previously unseen on a battlefield made its debut at the battle of Fleurus: the world's first military reconnaissance balloon. The hydrogen-filled balloon *l'Entrepremant* was constructed in 1793 by French scientists Charles Coutelle and Nicolas-Jacques Conte.

When Coutelle demonstrated the balloon to members of the Committee for Public Safety, they were so impressed with it that they authorized the creation of the first air force, called Compagnie d'Aeronautiers. Established on March 29, 1794, the company numbered just 30 men, all of whom were tradesmen with skills applicable to carpentry and balloon-making. Coutelle was commissioned a captain and given command of the newly created company.

Deployed for the siege, *l'Entrepremant* was inflated at Maubege on the French side of the border and towed by ropes to Charleroi. When the battle at Fleurus began, the balloon was raised behind the French lines, with Coutelle and an observer officer riding up in its gondola. Coutelle operated the balloon in conjunction with the ground crew; the observer communicated by use of signal flags and by sending down messages in a weighted bag fitted with rings to slide down a rope. The Austrian troops took pot shots at the balloon, and Coutelle was forced to raise it higher.

Even though much credit has been given to the balloon's contribution to the battle, Jourdan was skeptical regarding its effectiveness. Soult was not so charitable. "I will say nothing about the balloon that was hovering over the heads of the combatants during the battle, and this ridiculous innovation would not even have deserved to be cited if it had not been given an important role," he said, giving a detailed account of the tedious steps involved in such a reconnaissance. "At the height to which

they were allowed to climb, the details escaped their sight and everything was confused. We were not better informed about it and no one paid attention to it, neither the enemy nor ourselves."

The French remained on the field the next day, recovering and counting their losses. Both sides suffered approximately 5,000 casualties. Among the prisoners taken by the French were some of their émigré former countrymen. Although a law was in effect sentencing to death those émigrés taking up arms against the Republic, no executions were carried out. Both sides were tired of the bloodletting, which Soult later described as "15 hours of the most desperate fighting I ever saw in my life."

Saxe-Coburg initially withdrew his forces a short distance and reformed his columns for renewed combat in the morning; however, he changed his mind during the night, considering himself beaten. The Allied forces withdrew to Waterloo, 25 miles way, which in 1815 would become one of the most pivotal battles in world history.

The day after the battle, Saint-Just and Le Bas rushed to Paris with the good news, arriving there just in time for Saint-Just to be arrested along with Robespierre when the Jacobin regime was overthrown. Revolutions tend to turn on their makers, and it was now the Jacobins' turn to face the terror they had unleashed. Robespierre and Saint-Just were sent to the guillotine on July 28. When Saint-Just's turn came to die, he begged for his life in vain. Le Bas, who successfully evaded arrest, committed suicide the same day.

Shortly after the victory, the Committee of Public Safety confirmed Jourdan's appointment in command of newly renamed Army of Sambre-and-Meuse. Four of Napoleon's future marshals—Jourdan, Lefebvre, Soult, and Bernadotte—fought at Fleurus, gaining valuable leadership experience.

Even though the Battle of Fleurus was a draw, its far-reaching political consequences outweighed the military significance of the victory. Allied objectives were dictated from each capitol, and political goals far outweighed military necessity. Rather than withdrawing north to link up with the British and Hanoverians, Saxe-Coburg began moving east across the Rhine River. Austrian withdrawal robbed the Allies of much-needed manpower.

When French General Jean-Charles Pichegru renewed his offensive in the winter of 1794-1795, the Dutch army disintegrated, and the British evacuated across the English Channel to their home islands. Prince William of Orange, the Dutch Stadtholder, fled to England. The French government reconstituted the Dutch Republic as a French client state known as the Batavian Republic.

As for Prussia, which was forced to divert significant forces to assist Russia in putting down the Polish uprising in March 1794, Prussian King Frederick William II no longer had interest to fight in the west, having made significant territorial gains in the east in the eventual Second Partition of Poland.

Frederick William concluded a separate agreement known as the Peace of Basel with France in 1795 that recognized French territorial gains. The Austrians did not accept the loss of the Austrian Netherlands until 1797, when they signed the Treaty of Leoben. Even though the First Coalition collapsed after the Battle of Fleurus, successive coalitions rose up like heads of a hydra to battle France. ■

Maj. Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest, a self-taught military commander, outgeneraled Brig. Gen. Samuel D. Sturgis at Brice's Crossroads by making a bold attack with his dismounted Confederate troopers. Painting by John Paul Strain.

Samuel Sturgis' orders in June 1864 were to find and whip Nathan Bedford Forrest. Finding him was one thing; whipping him was quite another as he learned at Brice's Crossroads.

BY MIKE PHIFER

Forrest's FINEST HOUR

Confederate Maj. Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest's fighting blood was up. It was mid-morning on June 10, 1864, and the Tennessean cavalry commander had just hurried Colonel Hylan Lyon's brigade of Kentuckians from along the muddy Baldwyn road toward Brice's Crossroads in northern Mississippi. Forrest's route crossed the Ripley-Guntown Road, where William's Brice two-storey white house, general store, and a few outbuildings were situated. It was not the buildings that interested Forrest, but the Yankee cavalry brigade posted just east of the crossroads. Another Union cavalry brigade lurked nearby.

A few companies of Forrest's regiments had already skirmished with the Federals, determining their strength. Although outnumbered, Forrest meant to gain and hold the initiative by launching an attack. He ordered Lyon to dismount his 800 Kentuckians and advance on both sides of the Baldwyn road. As was typical on both sides when cavalry fought dismounted, one man held the reins of four horses while the other three went into action in foot.

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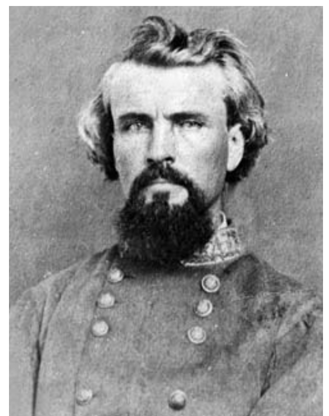
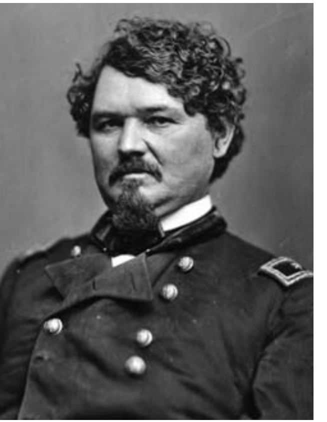




TOP: left to right: Maj. Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest, a soldier of the 93rd Indiana Infantry, and Brig. Gen. Samuel Sturgis. ABOVE: The 10-man crew of a 12-pounder Napoleon smoothbore cannon belonging to Battery E, 1st Illinois Light Artillery. RIGHT: Heavy spring rains turned the roads in western Tennessee and northern Mississippi to quagmires, slowing the progress of the Union column of infantry and cavalry as it sought to overtake Forrest's troopers.

Moving quickly through the undergrowth that camouflaged them, Lyon's Kentuckians launched a spirited attack against Colonel George Waring's cavalry. The crack of carbine fire reverberated as the Confederates forced back the Federal cavalry. Lyon's men seized a ridge from which to fire on the Yankees. When they saw the Federal cavalry massing in their front, the Confederates hurriedly began building a breastwork of logs and fence rails.

Colonel Edmund Rucker rode up with his 700 men. Forrest ordered them to dismount and take up position on Lyon's left flank. Arriving a little later was Colonel William Johnson's brigade of 500 Alabamians, who would form on Lyon's right. Although they were still outnumbered, the Confederate troopers boldly engaged the dismounted Federal cavalrymen, who were armed with rapid-firing carbines.

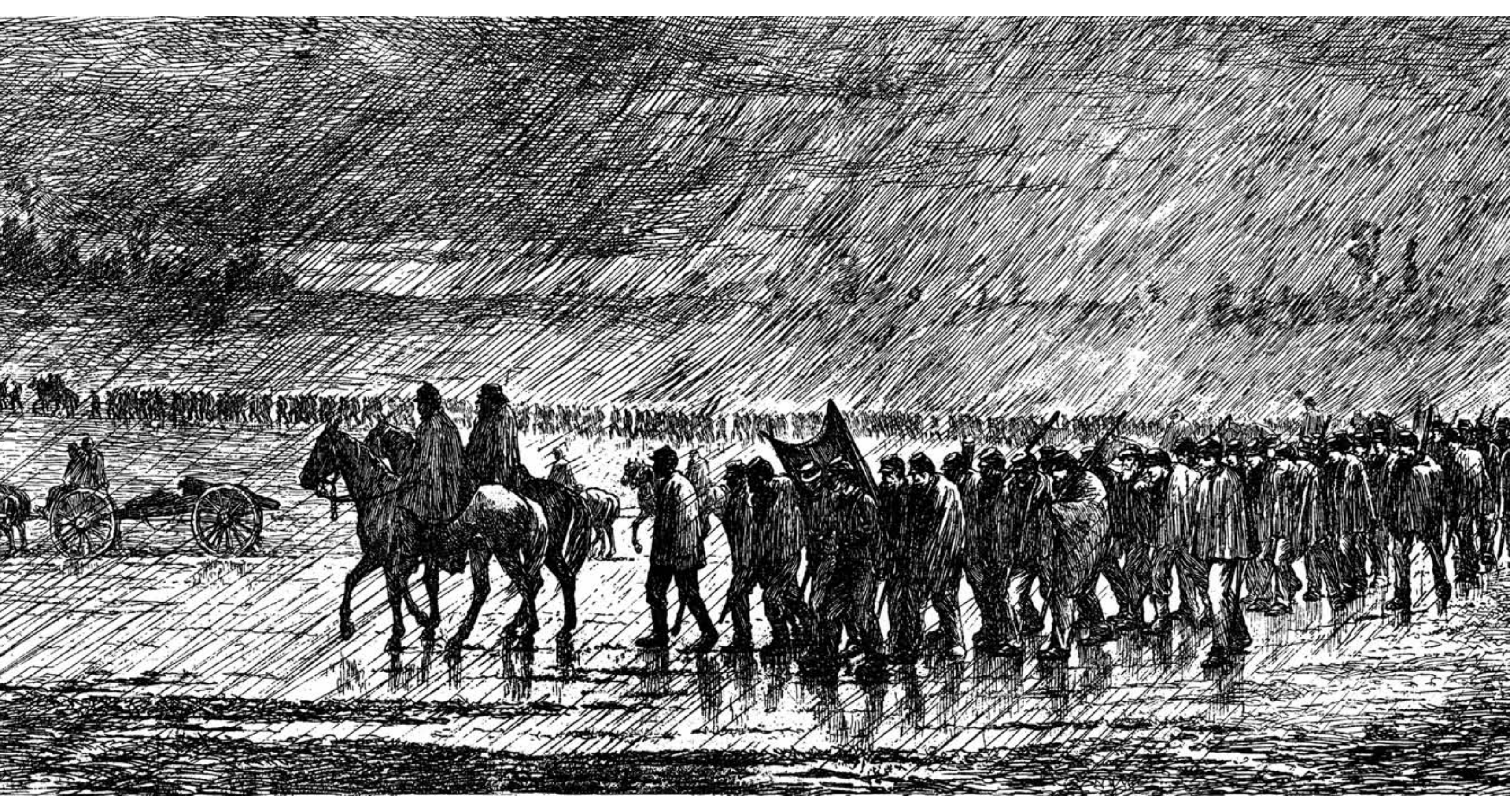
Forrest needed to buy precious time until the other half of his command arrived from nearby towns. When they did, Forrest intended to press his attack against the mixed force of Federal cavalry and infantry at Brice's Crossroads. He intended to drive off the Union cavalry first, and then fall on the blue-coated infantry marching to their aid.

The battle came about because Maj. Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman, the commander of the Military Division of the Mississippi, was worried in spring 1864 about his supply line through middle Tennessee. Three armies under his overall command were advancing on Chattanooga into north Georgia with the aim of capturing Atlanta, one of the most important railroad hubs in the Confederacy.

President Abraham Lincoln had created the Military Division of the Mississippi as a way to improve the organization of U.S. forces in the western theater in the wake of the Union defeat at Chickamauga in September 1863. When Grant was promoted to lieutenant general on March 10, 1864, and given command of all U.S. forces arrayed against the Confederacy, Grant picked Sherman to succeed him as commander of the Military Division of the Mississippi.

To keep his 100,000 troops in the Armies of the Cumberland, Ohio, and Tennessee supplied, Sherman had to rely on the Nashville & Chattanooga Railroad that connected his army with the sprawling supply depot in the Tennessee state capital. Protecting his line of supply through middle Tennessee would require a considerable allocation of manpower. "Every foot of the way, especially the many bridges, trestles, and culverts, had to be strongly guarded against the acts of a local hostile population and of the enemy's cavalry," said Sherman. Although there were other Confederate cavalry commanders operating in the western theater, Sherman was most concerned about Forrest.

Having enlisted at the beginning of the war as a private, Forrest had risen to the rank of major



general despite never having had any formal military training. His success was a direct result of his bravery, sharp wits, and fierceness in battle.

Fearing that Forrest would cut the Nashville & Chattanooga Railroad, Sherman directed Maj. Gen. Cadwalader Washburn in late May to send a mixed force of cavalry and infantry and defeat Forrest. "I know that there are troops enough at Memphis to [whip] Forrest if you can reach him," Sherman told Maj. Gen. Cadwalader Washburn, the newly appointed commander of the District of Western Tennessee, whose headquarters was in Memphis.

Washburn picked Brig. Gen. Samuel Sturgis for the expedition to defeat Forrest. Reaching Forrest proved difficult enough for Sturgis, who had commanded troops in a half-dozen significant engagements. His force consisted of 8,300 cavalry and infantry, as well as 22 field guns and mountain howitzers. In addition, the expedition possessed 250 wagons that hauled enough food and ammunition to keep the army supplied for three weeks. The troops were organized into two divisions. Brig. Gen. Benjamin Grierson led a division of 3,300 cavalrymen, while Colonel William McMillen led a division of 5,000 infantrymen.

Grierson's division consisted of Colonel George Waring's First Brigade and Colonel Edward Winslow's Second Brigade. As for McMillen, he commanded three infantry brigades: Colonel Alexander Wilkin's First Brigade, Colonel George Hoge's Second Brigade, and Colonel Edward Bouton's Third Brigade.

The Third Brigade consisted of the 55th and 59th U.S. Colored Troops. The soldiers in these two regiments were determined to exact revenge against Forrest for the massacre on his watch of several dozen black soldiers in mid-April after they had surrendered at Fort Pillow.

Sturgis had orders from Washburn to strike for Corinth, Mississippi, and destroy any supplies there. From there he was to push south along the Mobile & Ohio Railroad to Tupelo, wrecking the railroad as he did. Sturgis was then to continue on to Okolona, Mississippi, wrecking more railroad tracks. He was then to move on to Grenada before returning to Memphis. "This is a general outline, the whereabouts of Forrest will, of course, have much to do in regulating your movements," said Washburn.

Sturgis' command departed Memphis on June 1. Almost immediately, a steady rain began to fall. Sturgis's infantry boarded train cars to journey southeast along the Memphis & Charleston Railroad towards Lafayette, Tennessee, on the Mississippi border. The cavalry, artillery, and wagons travelled by road. Five miles from Lafayette, the troops unloaded and set out on foot for the burned-out town as heavy showers began to pelt them. More troops continued to arrive by train the following day, as did Sturgis, after a night of hard drinking in Memphis.

That same day, Forrest departed Tupelo, Mississippi, bound for Middle Tennessee. His command consisted of 3,500 troopers. Forrest had orders to tear up track on the Chattanooga & Nashville Railroad. While en route through northern Alabama, he received an urgent dispatch from Maj. Gen. Stephen D. Lee, who commanded the Department of Mississippi and West Tennessee, instructing him to return immediately to Tupelo to intercept a Federal column that Lee feared was headed to south central Alabama to destroy that state's agriculture and industrial resources.

The rain continued to fall on June 3 as the Federals marched southeast along roads awash with mud through dense forest. The Third Brigade in the rear was tasked with guarding the long wagon train. Progress was slow because of the muddy roads. McMillen ordered a detachment of pioneers, which was drawn from the 9th Minnesota, to fell timber and construct corduroy roads in an attempt to aid the struggling teamsters of the wagon train. Its efforts were of little use. "The rain fell in torrents, and morning found the roads impassable ahead," recalled Sergeant John Mer-

rilies of the 1st Illinois Light Artillery.

When the rain let up temporarily on June 6, the humidity and heat quickly became unbearable. Several mules and horses struggling to pull the wagons along the muddy roads collapsed with heatstroke. Adding to the animals' misery was the lack of feed for them. Sturgis had hoped that by foraging, his men could feed the animals, but it proved to be an unrealistic expectation. "The line of march was through a country devastated by the war, and containing little or no forage, rendering it extremely difficult, and for the greater portion of the time impossible, to maintain the animals in a serviceable condition," noted McMillen.

That night the First Brigade bivouacked six miles from Ruckersville, Mississippi. Grierson's cavalry waited at that location for the slow-moving infantry to catch up. The commander of the Union cavalry sent patrols in the direction of Corinth in an effort to locate Confederate forces, but they had withdrawn south.

When Grierson informed Sturgis of the absence of Confederate forces, he decided to march southeast to Ripley, Mississippi. On the morning of June 7, the Union cavalry reached Ripley. Grierson sent the 4th Iowa Cavalry to reconnoiter beyond the town. The Iowans ran headlong into a Rebel skirmish line strengthened by two guns positioned on a hill. To assist the hard-pressed Hawkeyes, Grierson sent the 7th Indiana Cavalry. The troopers dismounted and advanced, only to find the Confederates had once again withdrawn.

By this time, Sturgis was at Ripley and was beginning to have doubts about continuing the expedition. "The rain still fell in torrents," said Sturgis. "The artillery and wagons were literally mired down, and the starved and exhausted animals could with difficulty drag them along." He conferred with his division commanders to discuss the situation. Sturgis feared that with their advance slowing down, the enemy might concentrate a superior force in the vicinity of Tupelo. If they were defeated in battle, Sturgis thought it was highly likely they would also lose their wagons and artillery to the Confederates owing to the deplorable conditions of the muddy roads.

For his part, Grierson wanted to return to Memphis. He argued that to proceed further would be to invite disaster. If they continued on, he said, then the rations should be distributed to the troops and the wagons sent back to Memphis.

For his part, McMillen believed the expedition should continue with the wagon train until the enemy was found and engaged. "If we went back without a fight, we would be disgraced," he said. After listening to both views, Sturgis decided the expedition would continue even though the rain continued to fall hard.

The weather was again distressingly hot and humid on June 8. At that point, Sturgis put 400 sick soldiers in 41 empty wagons and sent them back to Memphis.

The Federals continued marching southeast the following day along the Ripley-Guntown Road. Fourteen miles beyond Ripley, the troops halted for the night near Thomas Stubbs' farm. The unrelenting rain continued to make things miserable for the troops.

While the Federals pushed deeper into Mississippi, Forrest rode into Tupelo on June 6 from an aborted middle-Tennessee raid. Learning of Sturgis' whereabouts, Forrest dispatched scouts to watch him. He also began to consolidate his far-flung command. Forrest's Cavalry Corps was composed of the divisions of Brig. Gen. James Chalmers and Brig. Gen. Abraham Buford. Chalmers' division was composed of three brigades under Colonels Robert McCulloch, J.J. Neely, and Edmund Rucker. Buford's division consisted of two brigades led by Brig. Gen. Tyree Bell and Lyon. Colonel Johnson's small brigade from Colonel P.D. Roddey's command was unattached. In addition, Forrest had four batteries consisting of four guns each, under the overall command of Captain John Morton.

Neither Lee nor Forrest was sure of Sturgis' intentions. They supposed that Sturgis might want to destroy Forrest, burn the farms in northern Mississippi, or even march east via Corinth to join Sherman in north Georgia. Both Confederate commanders began to assemble troops to block either move. Forrest set out for Booneville, Mississippi; Rucker's brigade arrived at Booneville on June 9.

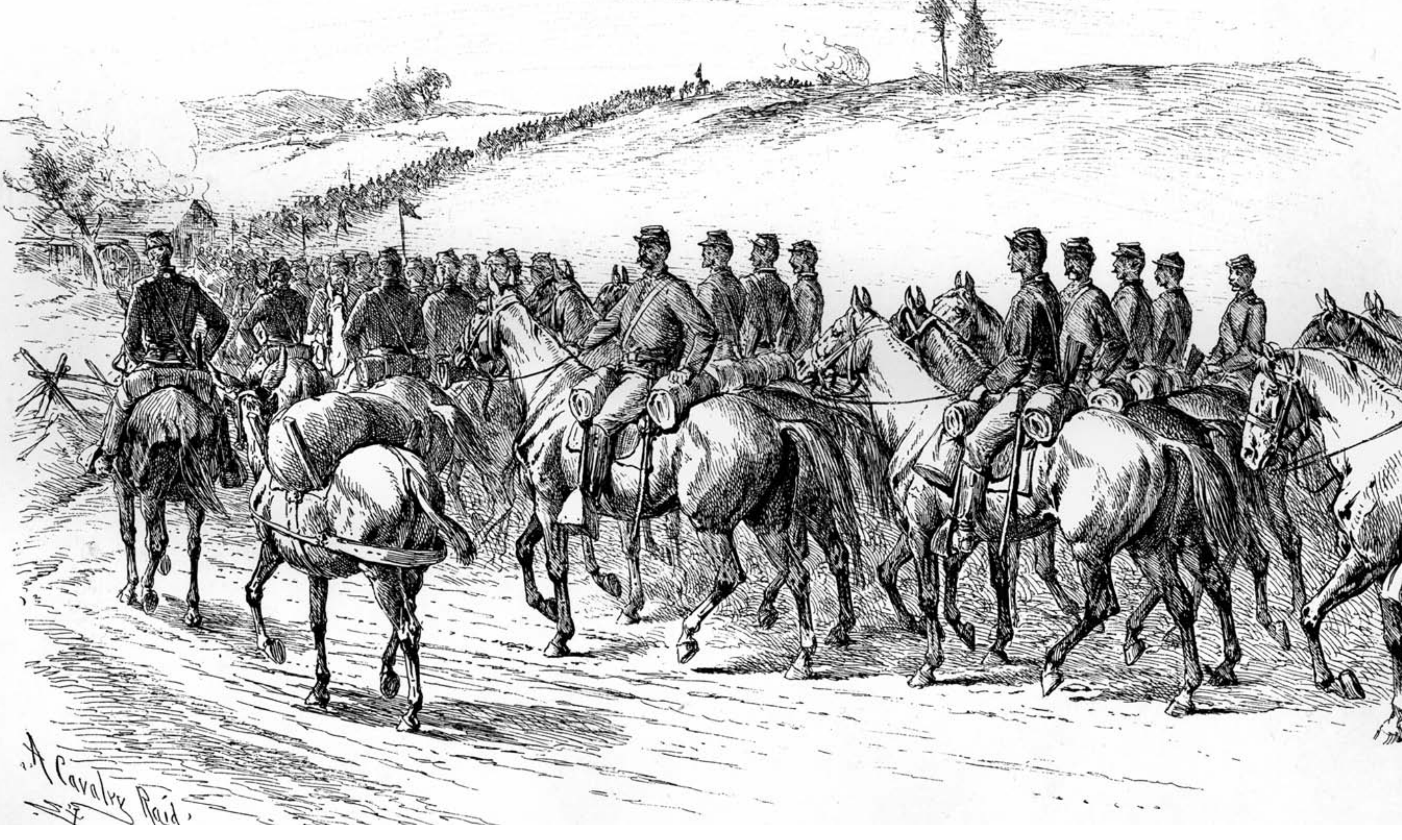
Lee told Forrest that he believed Sturgis was headed deeper into Mississippi. Lee set off by train for Okolona with two batteries of artillery to gather more troops to face the Yankees. Forrest was to follow the next day, but Lee gave him the discretion to act otherwise depending on the Federal army's movement.

That evening, Forrest called a council of war. Having learned that Sturgis was at Stubbs Farm, the Confederate commander concentrated his forces on the Mobile & Ohio Railroad to contest a Federal advance on either Corinth or Tupelo.

When Forrest learned on June 8 that Sturgis was advancing on Tupelo, he selected a site to engage Sturgis' force. The site he selected was the intersection of two dirt roads known to locals at Brice's Crossroads. The crossroads received its name because the Brice's house stood at one corner of the dirt road intersection and his store was situated on another corner.

Forrest estimated that Sturgis had upwards of 10,000 men. The odds in a pitched battle would seem to heavily favor Sturgis, given that half of Forrest's force was 25 miles away at Rienzi, Mississippi. Although the battle would be a gamble

ABOVE: Union cavalry rest while on an expedition. Forrest gave them little opportunity for idle time at Brice's Cross Roads. OPPOSITE: A Union cavalry column similar to the one led by Brig. Gen. Benjamin Grierson, whose troopers were the first to arrive at Brice's Crossroads.



given that he was seemingly heavily outnumbered, Forrest hoped to even the odds by attacking the Federals on the ground of his choosing. He was regarded throughout the South as the "Wizard of the Saddle," and he intended to further enhance his sterling reputation.

Forrest knew that Grierson's cavalry would compose the vanguard. He expected the Federal troopers to arrive at the crossroads several hours ahead of the Federal infantry. He knew that Sturgis would have to have his infantry march at the double-quick to reach the battlefield. "We can whip their cavalry in that time," Forrest said. "It is going to be hot as hell, and they will be coming on a run for five or six miles over such roads, their infantry will be so tired out we will ride right over them." After sharing his plan for the battle, Forrest rode ahead with Lyon's brigade to attack the Federal cavalry.

The Federal troopers at Stubbs Farm also saddled up early in the morning on June 10. Grierson had previously suggested to Sturgis that the cavalry should feel out the Confederates to gauge their strength. Once that was done, they might try to draw them back for an engagement at Stubbs farm, where the ground was of their choosing. But Sturgis rejected the idea because he did not believe the enemy in front of them was large enough to pose a real threat to the expedition.

Instead, Sturgis ordered Grierson to stay in the vanguard and not interfere with the movement of the infantry and train. Grierson's troopers set out from their bivouacs with Waring's brigade leading the way southeast along the Ripley-Guntown Road followed by Winslow's brigade. As for the infantry, it began moving along with the wagon train at 7:00 a.m.

Waring's vanguard encountered Rebel pickets as they neared Brice's Crossroads. Driving them back, the Federal troopers clattered across a narrow bridge over the swollen Tishomingo Creek and arrived at Brice's Crossroads at mid-morning.

Waring dispatched troops to scout south towards Guntown and in both directions on the Baldwyn-Pontotoc road. When the detachment reached Baldwyn, it ran headlong into troopers from the Confederate 12th Kentucky Cavalry leading the way for Lyon's Brigade. In the meantime, Waring's brigade advanced a half-mile up the Baldwyn road and deployed at the edge of a wooded tract. Part of his force faced east, and another part faced south. It was just in time, as a few companies from Lyon's Brigade, some mounted and others dismounted, soon probed their lines.

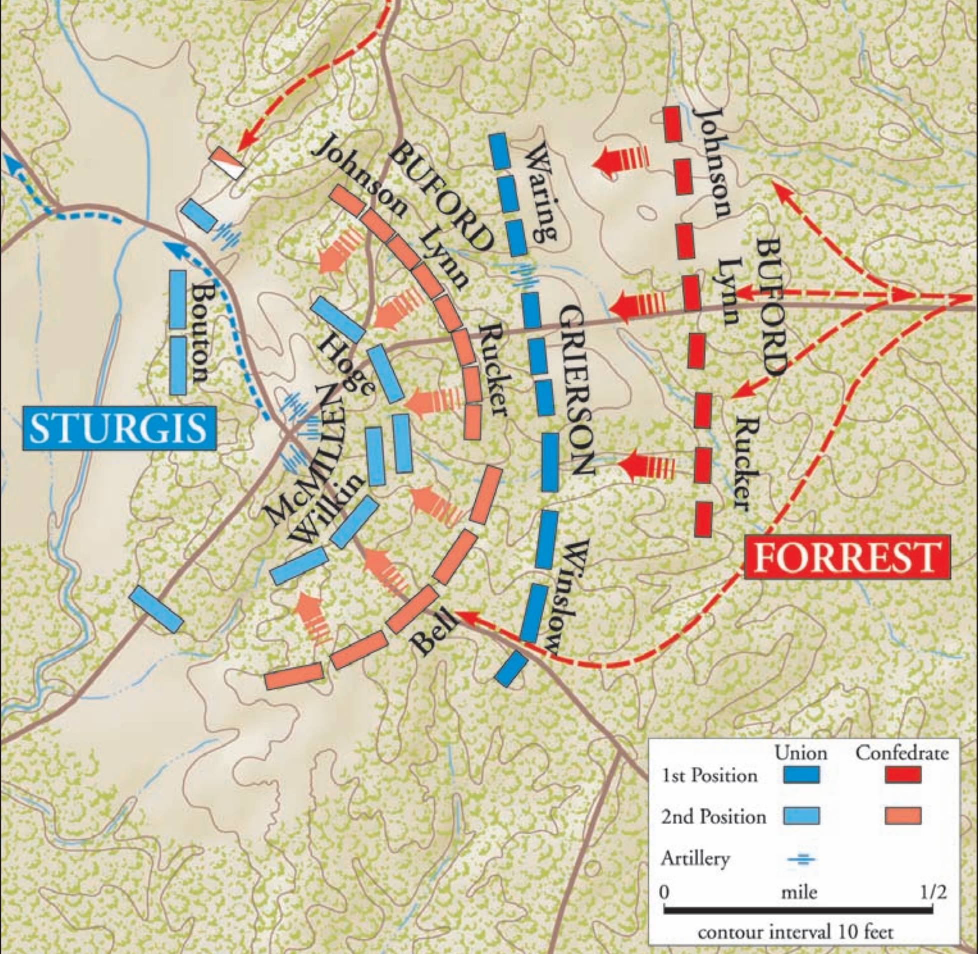
When word of the skirmishing reached Forrest, he sent a courier to Buford to order him to advance with the artillery and Bell's Brigade. Next, he sent Lyon's Brigade to attack the Federal line. Rucker's brigade of Tennesseans and Mississippians and Johnson's Alabamians soon arrived, and Forrest sent both forces into action. The Confederates attacked with their usual ferocity.

Waring's dismounted troopers blazed away at Lyon's men moving through the thick undergrowth. "The muzzle of carbine or musket was placed against the body of the assailants or the assailed, and discharged," said Lieutenant Thomas Cogley of the 7th Indiana Cavalry. In many instances, the men did not have sufficient time to re-load their carbines, so they fought the Confederates with clubbed muskets and their fists.

Rucker's Brigade soon entered the fray on Lyon's right, moving through a knee-high cornfield. A vicious fire erupted from the Yankee troopers positioned behind a rail fence strengthened with logs. "It looked like death to go to the fence, but many of the men reached it," said John Milton Hubbard of the 7th Tennessee Cavalry.

Some of the Tennesseans sought cover in a gully, but their lieutenant colonel ordered them forward. "Sheets of flame were along both lines while dense clouds of smoke rose above the heavily wooded field," Hubbard said. The Federal troopers continued to cling to their position.

Johnson's Alabamians struck Waring's left flank hard. Waring had to remove troopers from his



ABOVE: Forrest fought aggressively to mask his small numbers. His dismounted troopers assaulted both flanks of the Union army while his artillery shelled the Federal center. TOP: Although cavalry normally fought dismounted with one trooper holding four horses, the Confederates at Brice's Crossroads had one man hold eight horses.

right flank, where Winslow's Brigade had taken up position, and shift them to his battered left flank. This left a weak spot that Rucker and Lyons exploited by driving back the 7th Indiana Cavalry and 2nd New Jersey Cavalry. The entire Federal line fell back towards the crossroads. The Federal horse artillery continued to fire on the Confederates, which temporarily stabilized the battered Federal cavalry's line.

Grierson informed Sturgis by messenger of the developing situation at the crossroads. He met Sturgis on the Ripley-Guntown road at a muddy patch of low ground known as Hatchie Bottom. The Federal infantry column had arrived, and Hoge's Brigade was in the vanguard. After a brief discussion, Sturgis rode south with an escort for Brice's Crossroads. Before he departed, the Federal commander ordered McMillen to have some of his men make for the Hatchie Bottom, over which the infantry and wagon train had to cross to reach the battlefield.

Sturgis also instructed McMillen to hurry forward Hoge's Brigade to the crossroads to reinforce Grierson's cavalry. Sturgis arrived at the crossroads shortly after midday. Upon his arrival, Sturgis observed that Grierson's cavalry was being pressed hard by Forrest's troopers. "The situation was one of considerable confusion," recalled Sturgis.

Grierson overheard Sturgis say to one of his staff officers that if the Federal cavalry could be moved out of the way he might be able to whip the enemy with his infantry. But Grierson was staunchly proud of the work of his troopers. He said afterwards that they had held their own and had repulsed "with great slaughter three distinct and separate charges." Little did Grierson know, though, the three charges were feints. Forrest still did not have all of his men up, and he made the assaults to keep the more numerous Federal cavalry off balance. Sturgis, keen to get his infantry into action with an eye towards defeating Forrest, sent word to McMillen to "make all haste [and] lose no time in coming up."

Just then, Buford reached the crossroads with Colonel Bell's brigade. At the same time, Captain Morton arrived with two artillery batteries. Forrest ordered Morton to deploy his guns in a field next to the Baldwyn Road. Morton was soon shelling the Federal cavalry at the crossroads. At the same time, Forrest instructed Bell to deploy his brigade on the far left of the Confederate line. Bell, in turn, ordered Barteau to take his 2nd Tennessee Cavalry and move around the Federal right flank and attack Sturgis' wagon train on the Ripley-Guntown Road.

With his coat draped over the pommel of his saddle and sleeves rolled up, Forrest rode along the Confederate battle line with his sword in hand to encourage his men. Buford commanded the

Confederate right, Rucker led the center, and Forrest personally supervised the Confederate left. Hubbard remembered Forrest telling his men that when they heard Bell's guns and the bugle sounds, then "every man must charge, and we will give them hell."

A lull fell over the battlefield at 1:30 p.m. as Forrest reorganized his troops and the worn-out Federal infantry began to arrive. The Yankees had endured a brutal march along the Ripley-Guntown Road in the intense heat. "As I rode along the moving column from regiment to regiment and saw the numerous cases of sunstroke, and the scores and hundreds of men, many of them known to me as good and true soldiers, falling out by the way, utterly powerless to move forward, it was a sad, a fearful reflection, that this condition of so many, would ensure a certain defeat, and terrible disaster," said Dr. L. Dyer, Sturgis' surgeon-in-chief.

When McMillen arrived with Hoge's lead regiments at the crossroads, he quickly encountered demoralized cavalry, wagons, and artillery in retreat. The men of the 113th Illinois of Hoge's Second Brigade arrived first, and they went into action northeast of the Brice house with their left on the Baldwyn Road.

"The tongues of many hung out of their mouths, and they couldn't bite a cartridge," said Hoge. From left to right, Hoge's brigade deployed as follows: the 113th Illinois, 120th Illinois, 108th Illinois, 95th Illinois, and the 81st Illinois. Battery B of the 2nd Illinois Artillery unlimbered at the crossroads; as the battle progressed, its commander advanced one of his guns 400 yards forward along the Baldwyn Road.

Wilkin's First Brigade arrived next. McMillen split up the regiments and fed them into the Federal battle line where they were most needed. The 95th Ohio took up in a wooded tract to the left of the 113th Illinois. McMillen sent the 72nd Ohio and the 6th Indiana Artillery to a ridge overlooking the bridge at Tishomingo Creek. He ordered 114th Illinois to move down the Ripley-Guntown Road and make contact with the right of the 81st Illinois, but owing to a lack of men they were unable to carry out the order. The 93rd Illinois also advanced along the same road and formed up just south of it. McMillen held the 9th Minnesota and 1st Illinois Light Artillery in reserve near the crossroads. The two infantry brigades relieved Waring's and Winslow's exhausted troopers, who had used up nearly all of the ammunition of their rapid-firing carbines.

Leaving behind one man to hold eight horses instead of the normal four, Bell moved forward with his brigade through the thick undergrowth, which cloaked much of their advance toward the Federal right, held by the 93rd Indiana and 114th Illinois. At first the Yankee soldiers were confused as to who the troops in their immediate front were, for they could see blue-colored uniforms as well as butternut clothing. To stay on the safe side, they opened fire. The dismounted 16th Tennessee Cavalry returned their fire. The flash and crash of musketry filled the air as the fighting see-sawed back and forth.

South of the Ripley-Guntown Road, the 93rd Indiana was equally confused as to the identity of advancing troops in the thick undergrowth. At first, they thought they might be Federal cavalrymen, as they could see blue and even a Union flag. They soon learned otherwise when a well-aimed volley from the dismounted troopers of the 19th Tennessee tore into their ranks. The Hoosiers immediately returned fire.

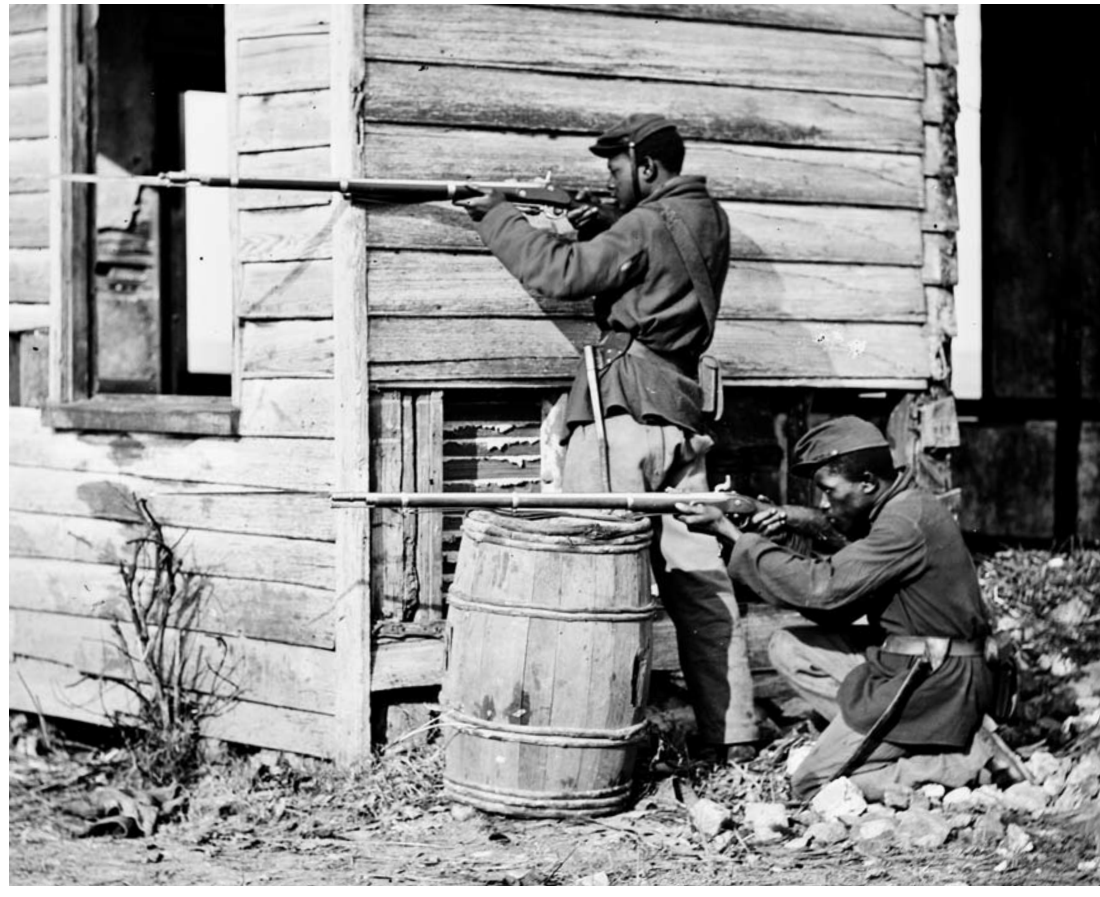
Both sides hammered away at each other. At one point, the 19th Tennessee Cavalry was on the verge of breaking, but the 8th Mississippi of Rucker's Brigade went in to action on their left. The Mississippians, who were reinforced by a squadron of the 12th Kentucky Cavalry that was part of Forrest's escort, hit the Yankees hard. "We soon drove the enemy out of the black-jack thickets in our front and soon had them on the run," said Tyler.

When the soldiers of the 93rd Indiana began falling back, the soldiers of the 114th Illinois began to take fire on their exposed right flank. Soon they were taking fire on the left flank, as well. This occurred when Rucker hurled the 7th Tennessee and 18th Mississippi against the 81st and 95th Illinois.

The Illinois troops moved forward into the ensuing foray with bayonets fixed. "Kneel on the ground, men, draw your six-shooters, and don't run!" Rucker yelled at his dismounted troops. Brutal fighting engulfed the troops before the men of the 81st Illinois fell back 300 yards to the crossroads. The 95th Illinois fared little better. As casualties began to mount and the men ran low on cartridges, they also fell back to the crossroads.

While the Union right was beginning to crumble, McMillen ordered the 9th Minnesota—being held in reserve near the crossroads—into action. The Minnesotans were to relieve the 93rd Indiana, "which had been contending against superior numbers until nearly annihilated," according to Lt. Col. Josiah Marsh, the acting commander of the 9th Minnesota.

Pushing through the dense undergrowth, the



The soldiers of the 55th United States Colored Infantry Regiment sought revenge for the alleged massacre of several dozen black prisoners Fort Pillow that occurred on Forrest's watch.

men of the 9th Minnesota found themselves in a slugfest with the dismounted troopers of the 19th Tennessee, 8th Mississippi, and Tyler's squadron of the 12th Kentucky.

"The enemy fought desperately for some time, but finally gave way and was thrown into disorder and confusion by the destructive fire of my brave boys," said Marsh. The Minnesotans then launched a bayonet charge, driving the Confederates back about a quarter of a mile. Marsh believed he might have turned the Southerners' left flank, but the canister from the Federal guns was flying through the regiment's left flank. For that reason, the Minnesotans fell back to their former position, despite reluctance on the part of some of the soldiers in the regiment. Their attack did succeed in allowing the 93rd Indiana to resume its former position.

most of the Federal troops. The situation only worsened as the hot, bloody afternoon drug on.

By that time, Colonel C.R. Barteau had finally gotten behind the Federal left flank with part of the 2nd Tennessee. To hide his small numbers, he spread his troopers out in a long skirmish line, taking full advantage of the cover afforded by the undergrowth and trees. In an effort to fool the Yankees into thinking his numbers were greater than they were, he had his bugler gallop along the line sounding the charge at different spots. Protecting the far Federal left was the 72nd Ohio, which began to blaze away at Barteau's men.

It was growing late in the afternoon, and the arrival of Confederate reinforcements had enabled Forrest to push the Federals almost all the way back to Brice's Crossroads. Forrest continued to ride along his line, encouraging his men. He

ABOVE: Federal wagons drawn by mules created a bottleneck at the bridge over Tishomingo Creek during the panicked Union retreat. OPPOSITE: Union Colonel Edward Bouton's brigade of black troops fought several rearguard actions to slow the Confederate pursuit during the Federal retreat to Memphis.

Bell rallied his men. He did so with the assistance of Forrest and his escort, who led them back into action. Forrest then rode down his line of battle, encouraging his troops to press the Yankees. Lyon's Kentuckians advanced along the Baldwyn road toward the Brice's house and Bethany Church. At the same time, Johnson's Alabamians moved into position to turn the Federal left flank.

Running low on cartridges, the 113th Illinois were hard-pressed to stop the Confederates, as were the 95th Ohio. With these regiments giving way, the 120th and 108th Illinois soon found themselves falling back to the crossroads, as were

promised them that one final push would sweep the Yankees from the field. To break the wavering Federal line, Forrest ordered Morton to advance four of his guns as close as possible to the enemy center for the final assault.

Loaded with double-shot canister, Morton's guns blasted the Yankees as Forrest's men swept forward. "The main line began to give way at various points," said Sturgis. "Orders soon gave way to confusion and confusion to panic." The situation only got worse as the Confederates proved unstoppable.

"The troops from all directions came crowding in like an avalanche from the battlefield, and I lost all possible control over them," said Sturgis. Company E of the 1st Illinois Light Artillery under Captain John Fitch had been ordered by McMillen to hold the cross-roads at all hazards. They kept their remaining two guns firing for as long as possible and then limbered up and barely escaped capture.

By this time, the wagon train had arrived, and some of the wagons were parked in a muddy field on the east side of Tishomingo Creek. As the Federal line turned into a stampede, the teamsters tried to get their wagons back across the bridge. They were not alone, as throngs of Yankees tried to escape Forrest's juggernaut. All of this created a bottleneck, causing some to try and wade across the creek.

Forrest and his jubilant commanders soon met at the crossroads, but there was still work to be done yet. Morton had also arrived at the crossroads with his guns, and they were soon pounding away at the Federals and wagons, causing mayhem. Forrest had put the scare into the Yankees, and he meant to keep it there.

Moving at the double-quick to the sound of the battle, Bouton's Third Brigade encountered worn and battered troops stumbling back up the Ripley-Guntown road. Two of the lead companies of the 55th U.S.C.T. pushed their way through the throngs of Yankees to get across the bridge and take up position with the 72nd Ohio and 4th Iowa Cavalry.

These units were Sturgis' last line of defense, attempting to hold back the Confederates long enough for their comrades and wagons to get across the bridge. Seven more companies of the 55th U.S.C.T. deployed on the west side of the creek in support.

Heavily outnumbered, these troops were forced back across the bridge or plunged into the creek. The two black companies joined the rest of their regiment. They, along with the 72nd Ohio, attempted to stall the Confederate advance but were soon forced back. Many of the teamsters cut their mules loose, climbed onto to their backs, and rode off, leaving their wagons in the road.

About a mile north of the creek, Bouton organized another line to the stall the pursuing Confederates. The rearguard consisted of the 59th U.S.C.T., two guns of Battery F, 2nd Light Artillery, and the retreating 55th U.S.C.T., which had rejoined their brigade.

McMillen soon arrived. "[I will] fight the enemy as long as I have a man left," Bouton told him. "If you can hold this position until I can go to the rear and form on the next ridge, you can save the entire command," replied McMillen.

Bouton's brigade bought McMillen precious time. They poured a heavy fire into the advancing Confederates and halted them. But the Con-

federates soon regrouped and outflanked the black troops, unleashing a deadly fire into them. Bouton's men fell back but continued fighting as Forrest's men repeatedly tried to outflank them, as well.

Further along the Ripley-Guntown Road at White House Ridge, the Federals formed yet another line at which to slow the Confederates. The 59th U.S.C.T., falling back, took up position to the right of 9th Minnesota. On the Minnesotans' left was the 114th Illinois, while the 55th U.S.C.T., when it arrived, formed on the left rear of the line.

Morton's four guns soon arrived to blast away at the Federals. Not far behind them was Forrest with Lyon's brigade. Forrest led a charge across an open field, while the guns were advanced to within 150 yards of the Yankee line. The Confederate gunners let loose on the hapless Yankees with double-shotted canister.

Fierce fighting raged as the 59th U.S.C.T. fought desperately with bayonets and clubbed rifles. In the gloaming, the Confederates once again shattered the Federal line. Soon the Yankees were in full retreat to Hatchie Bottom. Fortunately for the Federals, Forrest decided to give his men a brief rest and allow them to eat. But he soon sent small detachments to harass the retreating enemy.

At Hatchie Bottom, the Federals were desperately trying to get their wagons, artillery, and ambulances through the muddy quagmire, but to little avail. Many of the guns were spiked and some dismounted and heaved into the sinkhole. The teams were unhitched from the stuck vehicles and left behind.

The Union army had to abandon some of their wounded to the enemy, too. "There in the wilderness, in the darkness and gloom of midnight, our wounded companions were taken out, and gently laid upon the bosom of mother earth—the precious trust left to the tender mercies of the advancing foe," wrote Dyer.

Bouton arrived at the chaotic scene at 11:00 p.m. and did not like what he saw. "Give me the ammunition that the white troops were throwing away in the mud, and I will hold the enemy in check until we can get those ambulances, wagons, and artillery all over the bottom and save them," he told Sturgis. But the Federal commander would have none of it. "If Forrest would let me alone, I will let him alone," said Sturgis. "You have done all you could and more than we expected of you, and now all you can do is to save yourselves."

Forrest had no intention of leaving Sturgis alone. For the next 30 hours, the Confederates pursued the retreating Yankees. They continued the chase for 60 miles before breaking off. The defeated Union army arrived in Memphis on June 13. Completely undone by Forrest and his crack troopers, Sturgis reported to his superiors that he had been defeated by 15,000 Confederates.

The Federals suffered 223 killed, 394 wounded, and 1,623 captured. They also lost 16 artillery pieces and 176 wagons. In contrast, Forrest lost 96 killed and 396 wounded.

Outnumbered two to one, Forrest's stunning victory further boosted his fighting reputation not only among his peers in the Confederate army, but also among some of the commanders in the Union army. "[Forrest] has got some of our troops under cower," Sherman said when he learned of Sturgis' defeat.

Even though Sturgis had suffered a tactical defeat, he'd won a strategic victory by keeping Forrest from raiding Sherman's supply line in middle Tennessee. But Sherman still feared for his supply line, and so he ordered more Federal troops from Memphis into Mississippi to pursue Forrest. They were to "follow Forrest to the death, if it cost 10,000 lives and breaks the Treasury," wrote Sherman. They would not succeed in killing Forrest, but they did succeed in keeping him from wrecking Sherman's supply line. ■

Cortés Exacts His REVENGE

As the year 1520 drew to a close, the half-starved inhabitants of Tenochtitlan, the magnificent capital city of the most powerful city-state in the Aztec Empire, found that they were threatened by a massive host of enemies, both foreign and indigenous, which was led by Spanish Captain-General Hernán Cortés and his small band of conquistadors.

Moctezuma II, the ninth emperor of the Aztec Empire, rose to the throne of the empire in 1502. He ruled over an empire whose heartland was the central valley of Mexico. The Aztecs, though, never subjugated the Tlaxcalans or Tarascans. The empire was a Triple Alliance of the three tribes with a combined population of roughly six million. Tenochtitlan was home to upwards of 200,000 Aztecs.

Cortes had landed on the coast of Mexico in early 1519 with 550 men. As he marched inland in the late summer, he initially encountered the Tlaxcalans. The Tlaxcalans surrendered to the Spanish in September after losing a string of battles. Moctezuma planned an ambush of the Spanish, but the Tlaxcalans warned Cortes in time to save his troops. When Moctezuma learned that Cortes had been able to avoid the ambush, he believed that only a god could have known of it in advance. Suspecting that he might be the Aztec god Quetzalcoatl, Moctezuma welcomed Cortes into Tenochtitlan on November 8. The Spaniards not only took Moctezuma prisoner, but also attacked and killed some Aztec nobles.

In the second half of 1520, the Aztecs had suffered through the deaths of two of their emperors, Moctezuma II, who was followed by his brother Cuitláhuac, as well as a devastating 70-day epidemic of smallpox that ravaged every part of the city and claimed the lives of 100,000 people. "When the Christians were exhausted from war, God saw fit to send the Indians smallpox," wrote Alfonso Aguilar, a conquistador who participated in the expedition. "In Tenochtitlan, the streets were so filled with the dead and sick people that our men walked over nothing but bodies."

Worse still, the huge death toll had quickly resulted in a dearth of able-bodied workers available to grow and harvest crops, leading to massive food shortages, starvation, and eventually famine. After Cuitláhuac perished from the pox on December 4, 1520, having ruled for just 80 days, Moctezuma II's 18-year-old nephew, Cuauhtémoc, was chosen the new emperor. Cuauhtémoc had argued strenuously, but unsuccessfully, against allowing the conquistadors into the city.

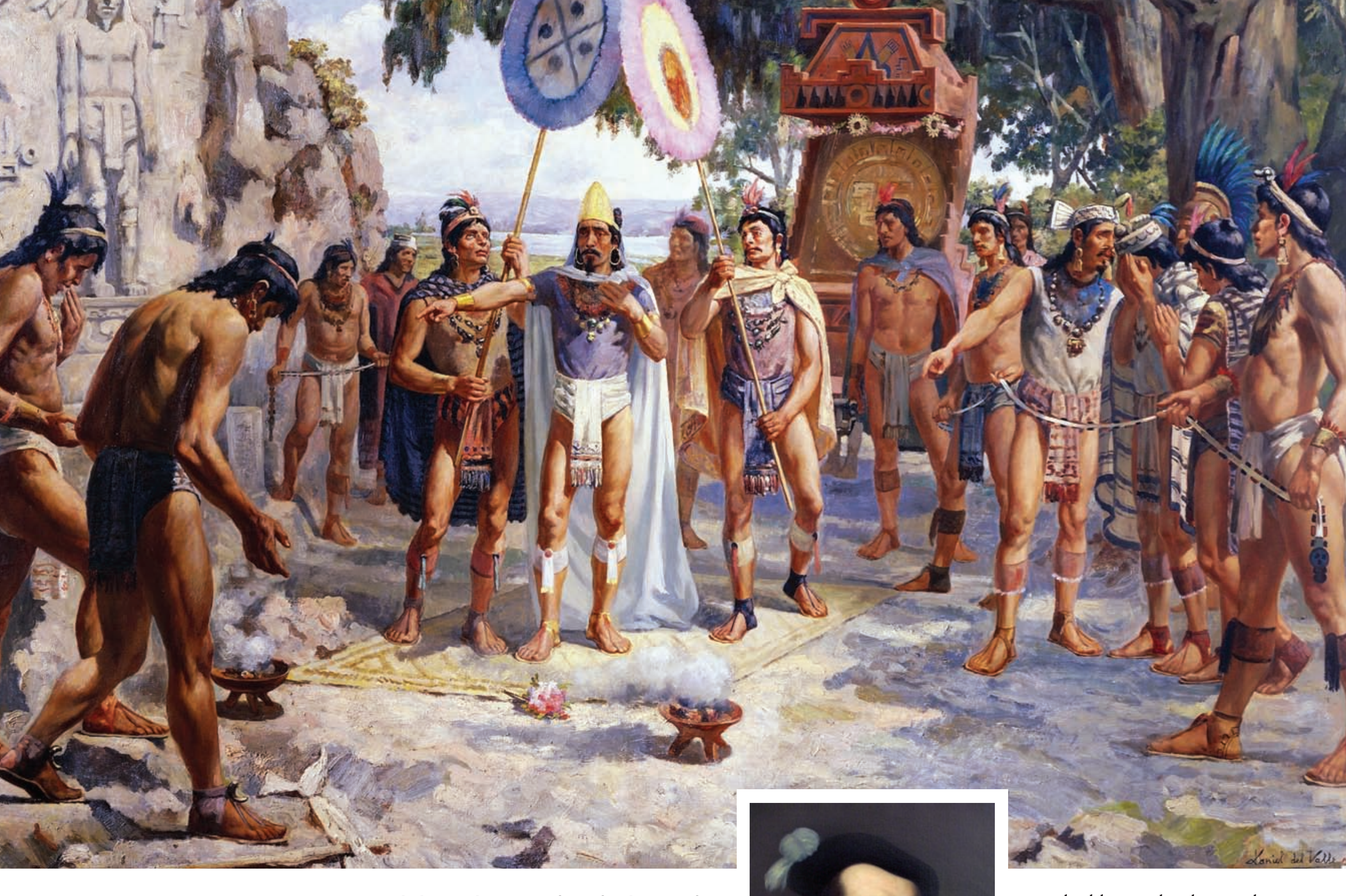
The Aztec Empire had become far and away the most dominant city-state in the Valley of Mexico well before Moctezuma II was chosen to be the emperor in 1502. In 1427 Aztec warrior-lord Itzcoatl, after forging a coalition between the cities of Tenochtitlán, Texcoco,

Alamy

Spanish conquistador Hernán Cortés and his indigenous allies fought a grueling campaign to capture the Aztec capital of Tenochtitlan in 1521.

BY JOHN WALKER

Cortes and his Spanish conquistadors defeated a mighty Aztec army at Otumba in July 1520. The victory occurred one week after the Night of Sorrows, when the Spanish suffered heavy casualties while fleeing the Aztec capital.



ABOVE: Aztec Emperor Montezuma II needed a steady stream of sacrificial victims for their religious rituals, and this brutality created strong resentment among all of the empire's subjugated tribes. INSET: Thirty-five years-old when he conquered the Aztecs, Cortes was perhaps the ablest of the Spanish conquistadors.

and Tacuba, defeated and subjugated Azcapotzalco, the region's dominant power during the 14th and early 15th centuries. The three victors formed the powerful Triple Alliance in 1428, which soon came to be dominated by Tenochtitlan, and began aggressively expanding the alliance's borders in all directions.

At its peak, Tenochtitlán's splendor, architecture, and sheer size rivaled anything found in Europe and the world. Nearly a quarter million people lived in the two island cities of Tenochtitlan and Tlatelolco, which lay atop the waters of Lake Texcoco, and one million more Nahuatl-speaking natives lived in the cities and villages surrounding the lake and beyond.

Tenochtitlan was connected to the mainland by a number of elevated stone roadways known as causeways, each with several drawbridges, and was surrounded by thousands of floating gardens known as chinampas. These were vast fields that encompassed millions of acres of fertile soil, staked and constructed within the actual waters of Lake Texcoco itself, a brilliant innovation that enabled Tenochtitlan to supply most of its own food. The city was home to a huge stone aqueduct, a vast central marketplace that hosted crowds of 60,000 people daily, and flotillas of thousands of war canoes that seemingly made the city impregnable.

During his reign, Moctezuma II showed little mercy when enforcing his laws within the Triple Alliance and even less toward his enemies outside it, exterminating entire adult populations in communities that defied him and distributing tens of thousands of their children throughout the empire as slaves.

Although their massive army was rightly feared all through central Mexico, the Aztecs for generations had been unable to subdue the people of Tlaxcala. To keep them subordinate, Moctezuma II ordered numerous so-called flower wars, which were highly ritualized, staged battles between the best warriors from each city during which the participants attempt to only wound and subdue their foes, to be captured for human sacrifice later, rather than leave them dead on the battlefield.

Their overwhelming advantage in numbers almost always assured the Aztecs' victory, and thereby the continuation of Tlaxcalan tribute in the way of goods and young men and women to be ritually sacrificed and eaten, which had gone on for decades. The emperor also imposed an economic blockade that cut Tlaxcala off from trade in cotton and salt. The compliance of its subject peoples depended entirely upon their constantly being reminded of the Aztecs' prowess in battle.

Cortés and his men had been resting and recuperating in Tlaxcala after their harrowing escape from Tenochtitlán on July 1, 1520. By that point in time, the Aztecs had turned on the Spanish and besieged them in their compound. When Cortés sought to lead his army out of the city at night, it was attacked by the Aztecs. Cortés said he lost 154

Spaniards and 2,000 indigenous allies. The bloody event became known thereafter as La Noche Triste, or the Night of Sorrows.

While his troops were recovering from La Noche Triste, Cortés devised a new offensive plan of an unprecedented scope and magnitude in comparison to his earlier battles. If he could not capture Tenochtitlán by land, he reasoned, he would do so by water.

With this in mind, Cortés tasked Martin Lopez, his carpenter and master shipbuilder, with building a fleet of shallow-hulled brigantines. To carry out the assignment, Cortés furnished Lopez with the best craftsmen in the army and a host of Tlaxcalan laborers and wood-gatherers. In their quest to build the brigantines, they salvaged wood and other hardware from the ships that Cortés had ordered destroyed when he landed at Vera Cruz in April 1519. Once the construction work was completed, the ships would be dismantled so that they might be transported over the mountains by thousands of porters. When the dismantled ships reached the shores of Lake Texcoco, they would be reassembled and launched.

Backed by 10,000 Tlaxcalan warriors supplied by his new ally Xicotencatl the Elder, Cortés departed Tlaxcala on December 26, 1520, and marched west into the Valley of Mexico. When he reached the outskirts of Texcoco, Cortés was approached by the rebel Texcocan warlord Ixtilxochitl, who offered his assistance, and that of his followers, in the offensive against Tenochtitlán.

The Spaniards and their Indian allies arrived at Texcoco the following day and found the city almost deserted. Many of the inhabitants had fled into the mountains, while many others, including the city's ruler, Coanacochtzin, fled in canoes across the lake to Tenochtitlán.

Cortés angrily ordered what was now his usual punishment for cities that defied him. His troops sacked the city, slaughtered the adult males, and sold the women and children into slavery. He then named Ixtilxochitl the new ruler of Texcoco.

With little effort, Cortés had gained effective control over the second city of the Triple Alliance, whose strategic location on Lake Texcoco's eastern shore and its rich agricultural surpluses would serve Cortés and his troops well in the months ahead. The conquistadors, who did not have to answer for their actions to the crown of Spain, acted as a law unto themselves for almost four decades. They destroyed and founded cities at will and enslaved conquered people as part of the plunder of war.

When news of Texcoco's fate became known, ambassadors from cities around the region began arriving at Cortés' court to offer their submission. Cortés knew by then that the Chalca city-states south of the lake, which had been conquered in 1464, were reluctant tributaries of the Aztecs and eager to defect.

Maps © 2022 Philip Schwartzberg, Meridian Mapping, Minneapolis, MN

TOP: Cortes marched into the interior of Mexico in August 1519, trying on his long march to the Aztec capital of Tenochtitlan to use military force against the tribes he encountered only when necessary. BOTTOM: The Aztecs settled on the west side of Lake Texcoco where they constructed their great capital city of Tenochtitlan in the mid-14th century.

With possession of the strategic city of Iztlapalapa a key to his success, Cortés led 200 Spanish infantry, 18 horsemen, and 8,000 Allied warriors against the city and captured it with surprising ease. The Spanish conqueror and his allies realized too late, though, that they had walked into a trap. Having abandoned the city, the Aztecs breached the Dike of Netzahuacoyotl, which separated the salt water in the eastern section of the lake from the smaller body of fresh water in the western portion. This drowned dozens of Spaniards and hundreds of Tlaxcalans. At dawn the Spaniards and their allies conducted a fighting retreat in the face of overwhelming numbers and began their return to Texcoco.

Despite the embarrassing setback, envoys continued to arrive at Cortés' camp ready to pledge their allegiance to the captain-general. Lopez arrived with the fleet of 13 brigantines in late January 1521. The craftsmen and laborers immediately undertook the time-consuming process of reassembling the vessels. From his base in Texcoco, Cortés launched a series of spoiling attacks the following month to keep the Aztecs off balance. In the first foray around the lake's northern

Cortes' second-in-command, Pedro de Alvarado, massacred a large number of Aztecs in spring 1520 during Cortes' absence, thereby igniting a major war between the Aztecs and the Spanish.

shore, Cortés took Xaltocan on February 3 with the assistance of 10,000 Tlaxcalans. The conquistadors found the cities of Cuauhtitlán, Tenayucan, and Azcapotzalco had been abandoned, and they quickly occupied them.

When he arrived at Tacuba on the landward side of Tenochtitlán's western-facing causeway, the route the Spaniards and their allies had taken on La Noche Triste, Cortés found the Aztecs had constructed formidable defenses in that sector. The Aztecs had rallied in massive numbers to support the only remaining city-state of the Triple Alliance other than Tenochtitlán. The Spanish and their allies launched repeated charges, through which they eventually succeeded in dislodging the Aztec defenders.

When Cortés tried to exploit this success by seizing the Tacuba causeway, the Aztec drew him in until he was exposed, deployed their war canoes on both Allied flanks, and opened fire with a withering barrage of arrows, spears, stones, and darts. After losing a number of men killed, wounded, and captured, Cortés and the survivors withdrew after a day of fighting and headed back to Texcoco. When Cortés and his men arrived there on February 18, Cortés knew his decision to order the construction of a fleet of brigantines had been a good one. Without naval power to wrest Aztec control of the lake, he could not secure the causeways, and without the causeways he could not invest Tenochtitlán.

Yet there was good news from the coast. Supply ships from Hispaniola and Cuba continued to arrive at Vera Cruz unmolested. They brought fresh troops and horses, as well as badly needed gunpowder and weapons. The Spanish crown had finally given its long-awaited approval to Cortés' expedition.

Rather than returning to Cuba, as ordered by Cuban governor Diego Velásquez, after he led a brief exploratory mission of the coast of the Aztec Empire, Cortés led his small band of 600 conquistadors into the Valley of Mexico, fully intent upon advancing the interests of the Spanish Crown and Roman Catholic Church while acquiring fame, status, and vast riches for themselves in the process. The Chalca city-states to the south, though, were being raided by the Aztecs and pleading for help. In response to their pleas, Cortés dispatched a force to assist them, and it succeeded in thwarting the Aztec attempt to retake Chalco on March 25.

Cortés then decided to pacify the entire southern region, leaving Texcoco on April 5 and leading 300 infantry, 30 horsemen, 20 crossbowmen, 15 arquebusiers, and more than 20,000 Texcoca-Tlaxcala allies against the city of Cuernavaca in Xochimilca territory. He made a rare mistake on April 11 when he encountered an Aztec force occupying the rocky heights of Tacuba city. Cortés split his forces and sent the various columns in a series of direct assaults up the steep slopes. The Aztecs hurled back each assault. The battle was a costly failure. Cortés admitted his mistake. Since the Aztec garrison had no access to water, it surrendered the following day.

Afterwards, Cortés marched on to Oaxtepec, which submitted without a fight. Although steep ravines offered formidable natural protection to Cuernavaca, Cortés launched a massive frontal assault that pinned the garrison down, allowing other units to roll up the enemy's flanks and overwhelm the city. The victories won during the campaign secured the area south of the Valley of Mexico for the Spaniards, further isolating Tenochtitlán from sources of supply and reinforcement.

Cortés army countermarched northward, arriving at Xochimilco on April 16. His troops easily overwhelmed the Aztec defenses, but in the evening a large number of Aztec reinforcements arrived from Tenochtitlán. The Aztec commanders hoped to trap the Spaniards and their allies in the city by securing the causeway.

When Cortés led his mounted lancers in a spirited charge against the Aztec line, he found that the Aztecs had fashioned new weapons. Using Spanish steel salvaged from Lake Texcoco after La Noche Triste, they had cleverly fashioned deadly polearms.

"In the narrow space of the causeway, the Aztec received the charge of the cavalry with fixed lances, and wounded four of our horses," wrote conquistador Bernal Díaz del Castillo. "Cortés' mount fell down with its rider, and numbers of Aztecs instantly laid hold of our general, tore him away from the saddle, and were already carrying him off when Cristobal de Olea and some Tlaxcala flew to his assistance, and, by dint of heavy blows and good thrusts were able to free their comrade."

Although Cortés managed to escape, several Spaniards were captured. They were taken before Cuauhtémoc, who ordered them to be sacrificed. The Aztecs dispersed their severed limbs throughout their empire as a warning to wavering tributaries.

From high atop the pyramid of Xochimilco at dawn the following day, Cortés and his captains could see thousands of Aztec warriors in canoes paddling furiously toward them. The force, which was estimated at 15,000, shouted battle cries that echoed across the lake. At least 10,000 more were on the march from Tenochtitlán. The Spaniards and their allies soon came under attack from both land and sea. Aware that he did not have sufficient forces to hold the city, Cortés ordered a withdrawal. The Spaniards and their allies then marched back to Texcoco.

When he reached Texcoco, Cortés heard the news that he had awaited: His shipbuilders had

completed the construction of the 13 brigantines. The Spanish launched the vessels on Lake Texcoco on April 28, 1521.

For his first combined land and naval assault on Tenochtitlán, Cortés had at his disposal 700 infantry, 86 horsemen, and 118 crossbowmen and arquebusiers. The army had substantial artillery in the form of three heavy iron guns and fifteen 3-pounder falconets.

Cortés' native troops, who were motivated by the desire for revenge, greed, and fear of Spanish reprisal, numbered 200,000 warriors. Most of these warriors hailed from the cities of Tlaxcala, Texcoco, Cholula, Chalco, and Huexotzinco. The chief of the Totonacs provided 50 warriors and 400 porters, the latter to help transport Cortés' falconets. Cortés was about to draw on two centuries of European siegecraft to target the city's food and water supplies and sanitation system.

Cortés had three infantry divisions commanded by captains Pedro de Alvarado, Christobal de Olid, and Gonzalo de Sandoval. By mid-May 1521, the three divisions were in position to invest Tenochtitlán. Cortés gave each captain two cannon, retaining the remainder for his use. Alvarado and Olid departed Texcoco on May 22, marching around the northern shore of the lake to approach Tenochtitlán from the west. Sandoval set out nine days later, marching along the eastern side of the lake to approach Tenochtitlán from the south.

Alvarado reached Tacuba with 150 Spanish infantry, 30 horsemen, 18 crossbowmen and arquebusiers, as well as 50,000 indigenous allies drawn mostly from Tlaxcala, Texcoco, and Otumba.

Olid accompanied Alvarado to Tacuba, and then pressed further on to Coyocán. He had a force of 38 horsemen, 20 crossbowmen and arquebusiers, and 150 Spanish pikemen. He also had 50,000 native warriors drawn from Tziuhcohuac and various other northern provinces.

As for Sandoval, he had under his command 23 horsemen, 14 arquebusiers, 13 crossbowmen, and 170 Spanish pikemen. He struck out for Iztlapalapa accompanied by 40,000 assorted allies from Chalco, Cuernavaca, and other southern cities.

Cortés took personal command of the naval squadron that would crew the 13 brigantines. Each sloop had a crew of 25 that consisted of a captain, six crossbowmen, six arquebusiers, and 12 oarsmen. The ever-loyal Ixtilxochitl commanded a flotilla of Texcoca war canoes that would escort Cortés' fleet.

The fourth major causeway, which ran north to Tepeyacac, was deliberately left open. Cortés hoped to tempt Cuauhtémoc to make a sortie from the city onto open ground, where Spanish mobility would prove decisive. Although the emperor refused to take the bait, he could not stop Alvarado from occupying Tacuba on May 25.

The following day, Alvarado and Olid combined their forces and launched a combined-arms attack against Chapultepec. Although the country was not ideal for mounted warfare, the two captains resolutely broke through the Aztec defenses and destroyed the city's aqueduct. This deprived the townspeople of fresh water for the remaining 75 days of siege. Sandoval inflicted yet another crippling blow to the Aztecs by capturing the strategic city of Iztapalapa on May 31.

The Spaniards were shocked by the urban battles they had to fight and the sheer number of enraged native warriors they faced. Veterans of Spain's wars against its European foes, such as the Ottoman Turks, said they had never seen such

TOP: Cortes arrives with reinforcements before Tenochtitlan in late May 1521 with plans to besiege it. BOTTOM: Shipbuilder Martin Lopez oversaw the work of natives who built a fleet of shallow-hulled brigantines on the coast. The boats were hauled overland in pieces to the shores of Lake Texcoco, where they were reassembled and launched.

bravery in all the fighting they had done in the Mediterranean theater.

Forced to fight in the back alleys and narrow corridors of Tenochtitlán, the Spanish found themselves under constant missile attack from the surrounding rooftops. Their cannon saved the day, for the grapeshot shredded wave after wave of attackers. In addition, repeated charges by the lance-wielding horsemen, as well as steady volleys of crossbows and arquebus fire, cut the natives down from distances of 100 yards or more.

While his three captains advanced along the Tacuba, Tepecayac, and Iztapalapa causeways the next morning, Cortés led his brigantines into the fray aboard his flagship, the *Capitana*. The Aztecs succeeded in forcing him to divert from sailing straight to Iztapalapa, where he intended to support Sandoval. After he spotted enemy lookouts sending smoke signals to Tenochtitlán from the small island city of Tepepolco, Cortés landed on the island with 150 men, overran its fortifications, and killed all of its defenders.

Setting off once again from Tepepolco, Cortés' fleet clashed with a fleet of 600 Aztec war canoes, many of which had been outfitted with additional wooden shielding that offered the crews more protection. As the Spanish brigantines glided swiftly through the water, ramming and blasting their way through the enemy flotilla, the Aztec missiles fell harmlessly against their sturdy sides. The combination of oar-power and sail-power meant the Spaniards' brigantines could outmaneuver the Aztec war crews. What is more, the high decks made it nearly impossible for the Aztecs to successfully grapple and board the brigantines. All the while, the Spanish crossbowmen and arquebusiers could fire down on the Aztecs, inflicting heavy casualties on them.

The Texcocan canoes coming up in support vanquished any Aztec canoes that remained in Cortés' wake. Once the Aztec war canoes had been vanquished, Cortés sailed on and seized the fortress at Xoloc on the main causeway from Iztapalapa to Tenochtitlán. This enabled Olid, whose flanks were protected by the brigantines, to link up with Cortés.

The Aztecs nearly had an important success on June 1, when the captain of the *Capitana*, Rodriguez de Villafuerte, inadvertently ran the vessel aground in the shallows. After a host of enemy warriors swarmed aboard, Villafuerte gave the order to abandon ship and fled to the rear of the sloop, where he might leap across to another brigantine nearby with Cortés at his side.

Marin Lopez, the man who had labored around the clock to construct and transport the fleet, refused to give up so easily, and he rallied its crew. Observing an Aztec officer in feathers and plumes directing the assault from a nearby canoe, Lopez picked up a crossbow and shot the man dead.

Spanish warriors grapple with the Aztecs in the streets of Tenochtitlan. OPPOSITE: Cortes' army crosses a causeway to assault Tenochtitlan. Cortes enticed the Aztecs into making costly sorties by sending their tribal enemies against them while holding his Spanish troops in reserve.

The Spanish repulsed the boarders, which left the deck littered with dead and dying. Despite a determined defense by the Aztecs, who had lined their canals with sharpened stakes and had succeeded in destroying two brigantines, the Spaniards prevailed. With his brigantines, Cortés had smashed the Aztec navy.

Having mobilized all available manpower, Cuauhtémoc divided his forces into four divisions. The first division covered the northern causeway to Tepeyacac; the second division defended the Tacuba Causeway against Alvarado; the third division concentrated against Cortés Olid, and Sandoval at Acachinanco; and the fourth division took up a reserve position to contest possible amphibious landings in other parts of the city. The battle for the causeways now began in earnest.

From that point forward, Cortés adopted a policy of total warfare, "I saw how determined to die in their defense, they gave us cause, and indeed obliged us to destroy them utterly," he said. With Tenochtitlán effectively surrounded, Cortés personally led Olid's division in a major assault against the city on June 10, with Alvarado and Sandoval advancing along the Tacuba and Tepeyacac causeways, respectively.

Using his brigantines as pontoons to bridge gaps in the Iztapalapa Causeway, Cortés overran the defenses at the Eagle Gate, the southern entrance to the city, and advanced as far as the Temple Compound. After heavy fighting raged all day, the three Spanish divisions withdrew with some difficulty. They tore down temples, walls, and homes as they fell back.

Meanwhile, the brigantines enforced a tight blockade of the city. They intercepted Aztec canoes conducting supply runs and blasted the city's walls with their cannons. Growing ever more confident, Cortés and his captains launched daily forays into Tenochtitlán. During these incursions they nearly always advanced as far as the temple complex before withdrawing. As they withdrew, they left a trail of destruction in their wake.

Cortés spent the nights at his headquarters in Xoloc. Every incremental gain achieved by the Spaniards was exploited by their allies, whose numbers were increasing almost daily. They knocked down houses to remove platforms for missile troops and used the rubble to fill in canals and breaches in the causeways. This made it easier for them on successive attacks and enabled them to penetrate deep into the dying city.

The shifting tides of war eventually turned for a time in favor of the Aztecs. With his defenses crumbling and with scant options available, Cuauhtémoc radically changed his tactics in mid-June by removing almost all of Tenochtitlán's remaining populace to its sister city to the north, Tlatelolco, a move the Spaniards wrongly perceived to be a retreat. At the head of his cavalry division, the rash Alvarado on June 23 was lured into Tlatelolco by a feigned Aztec retreat across a narrow breach in the causeway. Leaving his infantry behind, Alvarado and his horsemen rushed across the canal, only to be ambushed by overwhelming numbers of Aztecs.

With the breach they had crossed blocked by hundreds of canoes, the attackers were fortunate to escape. Alvarado and eight others were wounded, and five Spaniards were captured and taken to the Great Temple to be sacrificed. This gave the city's defenders a much-needed victory. Despite the hardships they had endured, the inhabitants of Tlatelolco remained loyal to Tenochtitlan through her darkest days. In the siege's final days, it became the last redoubt for resistance against the allies.

Catastrophe found Cortés, as well. Persuaded to launch a premature attack against Tlatelolco, Cortés ordered a large-scale assault on June 30 that he hoped would end the siege in a single stroke. Sandoval and Alvarado, backed by six brigantines and 3,000 allied war canoes, attacked the city from the west along the Tacuba Causeway. After Cortés entered the city from the south, he divided his force into three columns, each with

about 100 Spaniards, eight horsemen, and tens of thousands of allied warriors, sappers, and porters. Working in concert with each other, they would force their way along the roads from Tenochtitlán to Tlatelolco.

At first, all went well. The Allies "fought their way into the city, killing many and taking houses, bridges, and fortifications without sparing anyone, in such a way it seemed they would take Mexico that day," recalled Ixtilxochitl. Aztec resistance then stiffened, though, as the Allies advanced deeper and deeper into unfamiliar and irregular city blocks. Cortés was unhorsed again and almost carried off before he was rescued. The enemy's preference for taking captives instead of killing the foe once again saved Cortés' life.

Under a deluge of arrows, stones, iron-tipped spears, and piercing darts that rained down on all sides, the three assault columns stalled in the face of massive numbers. As they withdrew, their retrograde movement quickly turned into a rout. With a total collapse in progress, Cortés ordered all units to pull out of the city back to the relative safety of their compounds. Dozens of Spaniards and Tlaxcalans had been slain. Cortés lost one cannon, a brigantine, and eight horses. In addition, the Aztecs captured 50 Spaniards and 100 Tlaxcalans.

After they witnessed captured Spaniards and Tlaxcalans being herded naked up the steep slopes of the Great Pyramid and slaughtered in a gruesome public spectacle, Cortés' massive army of indigenous allies vanished. "One by one they were forced to climb up to the temple platform, where they were sacrificed by the priests," said a native who witnessed the scene. "The Spaniards went first, followed by their allies, all were put to death. The Aztecs ranged the Spaniards' heads in rows on pikes, arranged so their faces were toward the sun."

Elated by their victory, the Aztecs went on the offensive the next morning, launching wave after wave of foot and canoe attacks on each of the Spanish compounds. Most of Cortés' allies from Cholula, Huexotzinco, Chalco, Texcoco, even Tlaxcala, had returned home, leaving token forces behind. While Cortés regrouped and his men recovered from their wounds, Cuauhtémoc rallied his allies, sought new support, and sent the severed body parts of slain Spaniards to the cities surrounding the lake as proof the invaders were not invincible.

Adding to Cortés' woes, envoys from cities that had accepted Spanish suzerainty began arriving at Xoloc, pleading for protection from tribes stirred up by Cuauhtémoc. In the supreme crisis of the siege, Cortés rose to the challenge, dispatching sufficient forces under Sandoval and Diego Tapia to aid Cuernavaca and Toluca, allies who were being threatened. Cortés' huge gamble paid off. The Spaniards' total victories in both actions stabilized the diplomatic situation and proved that Cortés army had lost none of its prowess in battle. What is more, it proved that the Spanish would readily come to the aid of their indigenous allies. The Allied units that had vanished en masse just days earlier now flocked back to Cortés' banner.

Fortunately for Cortés and his withering army, the Aztecs did not mount any serious attacks against the Spanish camps for most of July 1521. Their defense of the city was clearly faltering. Disease, starvation, battle casualties, and the destruction of much of their city from the fighting in late June had greatly diminished and demoralized the remaining defenders. Aztec accounts describe people reduced to eating lizards, corn cobs, weeds,

Aztec Style of Warfare Outmatched by Spaniards' Weapons and Tactics

The Aztec Empire had the misfortune of encountering Spanish conquistadors at a time when 16th-century Spanish armies were at the forefront of military technology. The Spaniards were far superior in all categories of arms, armor, and tactics to every native tribe they faced. The Mesoamericans, especially the Aztecs, did have one advantage, though, which was their overwhelming numbers.

Although all of the resources, such as sulfur, iron ore, and copper, were available to the Mesoamericans, they lacked the technology to manufacture firearms or steel swords. Fashioned from oak, flint, stone, and obsidian, indigenous weapons in the early 16th century were incapable of killing in substantial numbers. While hand-held clubs could stun a foe, killing required repeated thrusts.

Oddly enough, the many city-states in central Mexico had for generations fought so-called "flower wars." These were highly ritualized, staged battles between the finest warriors from opposing sides who fought only to wound and capture their foes in order for them to be whisked away for human sacrifice.

Aztec foot soldiers wielded wooden broadswords, spears, and hand-held clubs, as well as bows. Flakes of obsidian served as the cutting edges, but they chipped or lost their edge after just a few strokes. As for the bows, they could be fired rapidly but lacked the penetrating power of European crossbows and composite bows. The Aztecs' wood, hide, and feather shields were of almost no value against the Spaniards' steel crossbow bolts and arquebus shot.

Because their infantry was overmatched against Spanish cavalry and infantry, native commanders relied heavily on projectile weapons, such as piercing darts, arrows, and stones, which could penetrate the unprotected arms, legs, necks, and faces of the Spaniards at ranges of up to one hundred yards. One type of missile weapon known as the *atlatl* was crafted from a two-foot-long piece of wood that had grooves and a hook at one end to propel a flint-tipped, fire-hardened dart. The atlatl was accurate at up to fifty yards. In addition, Aztecs also used slings to hurl stones at their enemies.

Aztec tactics were almost non-existent. As two armies swarmed one another and attempted to achieve envelopment, native warriors took part in individual sword and club play rather than launching mass attacks in disciplined ranks. The battalions were centered on gaudy, leather-clad, banner-carrying lieutenants whose capture often sent their troops fleeing the field. The Mesoamericans did not array themselves in ranks and files. They neither fired missiles in volleys, nor did they coordinate the missile firing with infantry charges. Mesoamericans also did not advance and withdraw on command.

Aztec warriors who had trained for years and won renown in their style of warfare—such as stunning, binding, and passing captives, especially enemy chieftains, back through the ranks for sacrifice—found it difficult to discard their preferred tactics in just a few months. They stood little chance in combat against Spanish infantry that had been trained since an early age to kill with a single stroke.

The Aztecs did change some of their tactics; for example, they learned to avoid swarming attacks in open territory and confined their fighting during the siege of Tenochtitlan to the city's narrow streets and corridors, where ambushes and storms of missiles might offset the Spaniards' cavalry and gunpowder weapons.

As it happened, the Spanish conquistadors could never have vanquished the Aztec Empire without the aid of vast numbers of native allies, such as the Totonacs and Tlaxcalans. Nor could the surrounding city-states, who had fought the Aztecs unsuccessfully for decades, defeat them without Cortés' assistance. With legendary Spanish battlefield discipline and state-of-the-art weapons, such as crossbows, arquebuses, arbalests, metal-tipped pikes, javelins, cannon, mounted lancers, as well as massive armies of Indian allies arrayed against them, Tenochtitlán was finally overwhelmed. The great city was reduced to smoking ruins, and the Aztec Empire brought to a cataclysmic end.

—John Walker

Aztec warriors in eagle and jaguar costumes brandish wooden clubs with sharp obsidian blades known as macuahuiti.

leather, and even dirt. "Nothing can compare with the horrors of that siege and the agonies of the starving," stated one account. With the Aztecs' strength waning, Cortés went on the offensive.

Allied columns cleared the entire Tacuba Causeway on July 21. In so doing, they linked the western (Alvarado) and southern (Cortés and Olid) columns. Four days later, all three Allied divisions advanced to the great marketplace in Tlatelolco, where the emperor had chosen to make a last stand. They stormed the Great Pyramid, torched the temple at its summit, and planted Cortés' banner atop it.

The next day, Cortés climbed to the summit of the pyramid once more, from where he could confirm that most of the city was under Allied occupation. Supplies from Vera Cruz continued to arrive unmolested, and Aztec deserters told Cortés the inhabitants of both island cities were starving, and the emperor had begun conscripting women to fill his ranks.

Spanish lancers freely roamed the causeways by August 1521, wiping out any natives who dared leave their homes in search of food. Cortés' vengeful Tlaxcalan allies roamed the city slaughtering, and sometimes eating, their hated foes. In this way, they gained revenge for generations of enforced isolation and tribute. With no surrender from the emperor forthcoming, Cortés resumed hostilities on August 12.

The last remaining body of Aztecs, packed into the small pocket of the city they still possessed, was finally overrun. "We jostled and crowded against one another, but no one could go anywhere," stated an Aztec account. "Many, in fact, died trampled in the press. Any Aztec survivors now fled the city, leaving behind houses crammed with dead bodies, and among them several poor people were found still alive, too weak to stand, and lying in their own filth."

After courageously directing the capital's defenses for three months and gaining the admiration of his enemies, Cuauthémoc was captured on August 13, 1521, attempting to flee the city in a canoe. He was brought before Cortés and signed a formal surrender, at which moment the siege ended and the Aztec Empire ceased to exist, replaced by what the invaders were by then calling New Spain. Cortés tortured the emperor in a futile attempt to acquire gold and forced him to play the role of puppet ruler. He took him on a failed expedition to Honduras, and ultimately executed him on false charges in 1523.

The fabulous city that had greeted Cortés two years earlier was now a wasteland. During the course of the long siege of the city that began in late May, 100,000 Aztecs had fallen in the fighting. The Spanish had lost 100 conquistadors, and their allies lost upwards of 70,000 men.

Aztec ruler Cuauthémoc fights heroically in a fanciful depiction of the final phase of the siege; in reality, the Spanish captured Cuauthémoc and his chief warriors as they tried to escape the city by canoe.

Of the 1,800 conquistadors who campaigned in Mesoamerica between 1519 and 1521, approximately 1,000 had been killed in battle or captured and sacrificed to the Aztec gods. Disease, famine, and constant warfare had effectively wiped out Tenochtitlán's population. Even in their death throes, the Aztecs had taken a fearsome toll upon Cortés' allies. Their archenemies, the Tlaxcalans, lost 30,000 fighters.

Far from benefitting from their association with Cortés, his native allies eventually found that they had exchanged the threat of subordination to Tenochtitlán for the reality of subordination to Spain. Cortés and Spain's alliance with Xicotencatl the Elder, which had saved the Spaniards when they were at their weakest and most vulnerable, was soon discarded by Madrid, thus reneging on the terms of their agreement to aid Tlaxcala in imposing regional hegemony.

The only real victors to emerge from Cortés' conquest, which in two years changed the face of an entire subcontinent, were the Spanish Crown and the Roman Catholic Church, which obtained a secure foothold in the Americas from which they could expand their imperial presence in the New World.

Oddly enough, Cortés' name is rarely mentioned among the great captains of history. Yet his two-year odyssey into the Valley of Mexico, which culminated in the destruction of the great city of Tenochtitlán and the Aztec Empire, has to be considered one of the most extraordinary military campaigns ever waged. With no military experience, no formal authority, no intelligence regarding his expected theater of operations, and only a handful of men, he forged a multinational coalition that brought down an empire and reshaped an entire subcontinent.

With the conquistador era and its four decades of unrestrained greed, barbarity, and cruelty drawing to a close, the man who has conquered the vast Aztec lands so that they could be incorporated into the colony of New Spain was marginalized and almost forgotten.

His followers, though, appreciated the scale of his conquests and paid tribute to him.

"Long live, then, the name and memory of him who conquered so vast a land, converted such a multitude of men, cast down so many idols, and put an end to so much sacrifice and the eating of human flesh," wrote Francis Lopez in 1552, of Cortés' military achievements. ■

The crash of the heavy guns from a dozen British and French capital ships, one of which was the super-dreadnought the HMS *Queen Elizabeth*, reverberated against the shoreline of the Dardanelles on February 19, 1915. The Allied fleet engaged the Turkish forts guarding the entrance to the straits at long range that day, although three of the warships did move in much closer. The Allied warships drew surprisingly little return fire, but at the same time they did not inflict any significant damage on the forts that defended the straits. British Vice Adm. Sackville Carden, the officer commanding the British forces in the Aegean Sea in World War I, had to delay his next attack for nearly a week because of severe weather.

Vice Adm. John de Robeck, who directed the bombardment on February 25, engaged the forts at close range. This allowed the captains of the warships to observe the effects of their fire more closely. The forts received such a

When the British Navy failed to force a passage of the Dardanelles in 1915, it fell to British and ANZAC troops to capture the Gallipoli peninsula from the Turks. But the ground campaign proved to be a total disaster.

BY WILLIAM E. WELSH

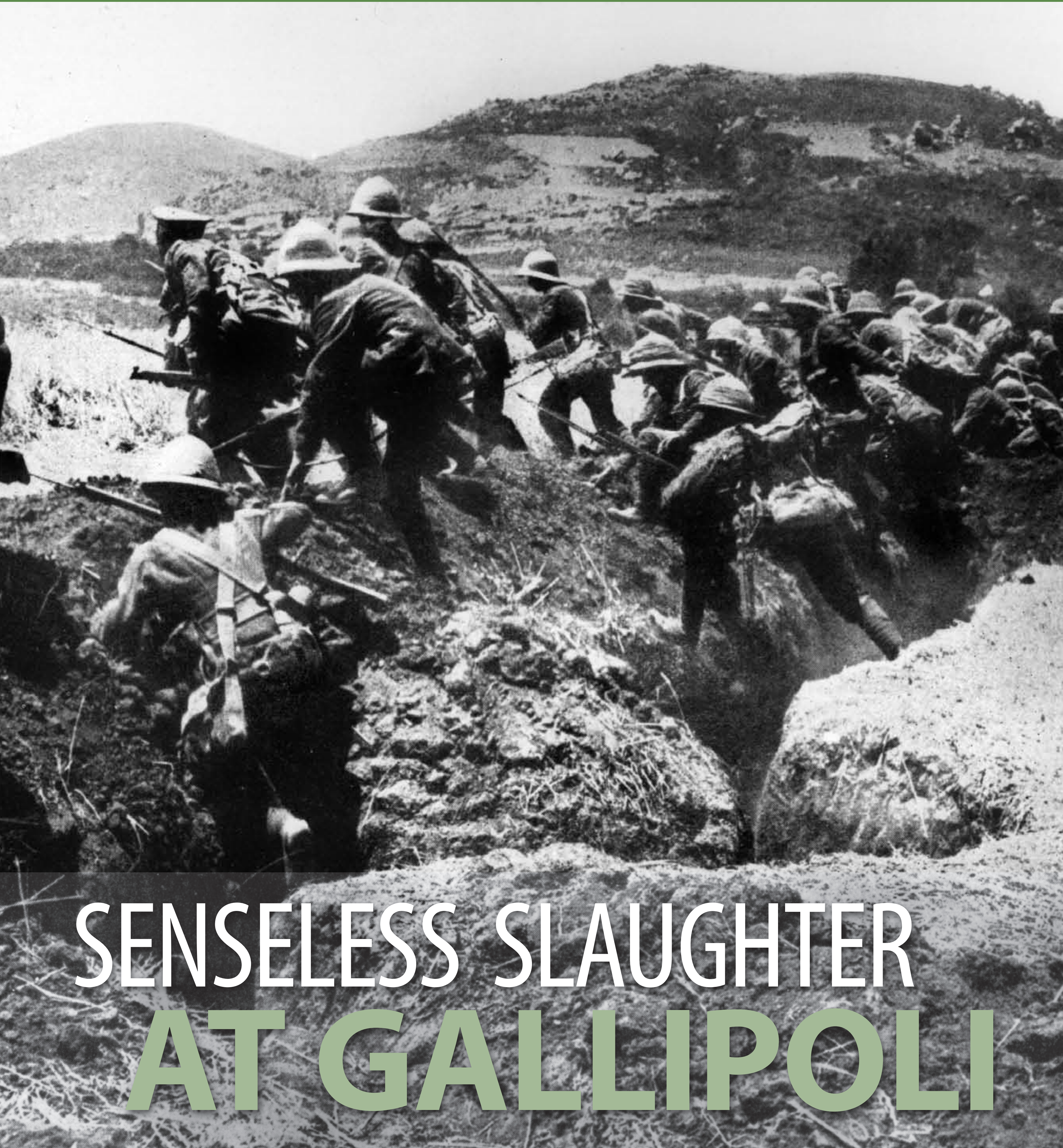
pounding that day that the Turkish and German crews manning the guns withdrew from the forts to minimize their loss in lives.

But silencing the forts guarding the entrance was only the first part of a naval campaign aimed at reaching Constantinople in the hope of toppling the supposedly fragile Ottoman Empire, thereby taking it out of the war. The Ottoman Empire had secretly joined the Central Powers in August 1914 and then officially announced to the world two months later that it had sided with Germany and Austria-Hungary in the global conflict.

The Ottoman Empire had been in a downward spiral since the late 16th century. It was economically unstable and had come to be increasingly reliant on Western Europe to maintain its existence. Indeed, the threat that Imperial Russia posed to the Ottoman Empire had sparked the Crimean War. Russia maintained its pressure on the Turks, defeating them decisively in the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878. The disastrous Balkan Wars of 1912-1913 saw the Ottoman Empire lose nearly all of its remaining European territories

Marines of the British Royal Naval Division go over the top in an assault against Ottoman positions on the strategic high ground of Achi Baba at the base of the Gallipoli Peninsula.

AKG Images



SENSELESS SLAUGHTER AT GALLIPOLI

National Archives

The Australian and New Zealand Army Corps came ashore at Ari Burnu on the western side of the Gallipoli Peninsula. The barren landing site, which lacked an adequate water supply to sufficiently sustain the troops at that location, became known afterwards as ANZAC Cove.

to Bulgaria, Serbia, Greece, and Albania.

A coalition of nationalist generals known as the Young Turks, who were determined to implement major economic reforms in the Ottoman Empire, had emerged in 1908. Enver Pasha, one of the Young Turks who gained dictatorial powers in 1913 through a coup d'état, had orchestrated the alliance with Germany. Ironically, the British had actually driven the Turks into the arms of Germany by seizing two dreadnaught battleships purchased by Turkey but not yet delivered by the outbreak of the war. The Germans, in a clever move, replaced the losses by giving the Turks two German battle cruisers *Goeben* and *Breslau*.

Winston Churchill, the First Lord of the Admiralty in Prime Minister Herbert Henry Asquith's liberal government, had dispatched the Royal Navy to bombard the Turkish forces at the entrance to the Dardanelles shortly after the Ottoman Empire had joined the Central Powers. Lord Fisher, the First Sea Lord, supported Churchill's plan for a naval offensive to capture the Dardanelles, but had said it must happen immediately, before the Turks had time to improve the naval and land defenses protecting Constantinople. "I consider the attack on Turkey holds the field!" wrote Fisher in January 1915. "But only if it is immediate." The British War Council stopped Churchill from pressing the attack against Turkey at that point in the war, however.

When it became obvious in early 1915 that the Allied and Central powers were locked in a stalemate on the Western Front, the military leadership of Britain and France began to ponder at length how they might defeat the Turks in a quick and decisive campaign. The need for a campaign against the Ottoman Empire became a pressing matter when the Turks gained the upper hand in fighting against the Russians in the Caucasus Mountains. The driving motivation in opening the Dardanelles to Allied shipping was to establish a supply route into the Black Sea by which the Allies could funnel supplies and military equipment to the hard-pressed Russian armies.

When Churchill asked Carden what it would take to force the Dardanelles so that an Allied fleet might reach Constantinople, the admiral told him it would have to be done in three phases. First, Allied warships would have to silence the heavy guns in the forts guarding the entrance to the straits. Second, Allied minesweepers would need to clear Turkish waters of mines. Third, the Allied warships would have to secure the Sea of Marmara, beyond the Dardanelles.

Turkish minefields in the Dardanelles had the potential to cripple the Allied fleet and wreck the naval campaign to reach Constantinople. When Carden became seriously ill in late February, command of the fleet devolved to Robeck. Although Robeck had 12 British and four French battleships, the crews of the minesweepers were civilians. The civilians operating the minesweepers were not inclined to risk their lives in the performance of their duties.

With the naval campaign bogged down at the end of February, British Minister of War Lord Herbert Kitchener agreed to land troops on the Gallipoli Peninsula to help clear out the forts on the European side of the Dardanelles. The peninsula, which juts out into the northern Aegean Sea, is 52 miles long. Tapered at both the top and bottom, the peninsula is 12 miles wide in the middle.

Kitchener had already deployed Lt. Gen. William Birdwood's Australian and New Zealand Army Corps, known as the ANZAC Corps, to the Greek island of Lemnos, and he now also begrudgingly transferred the British 29th Division, which he had been holding back in case it

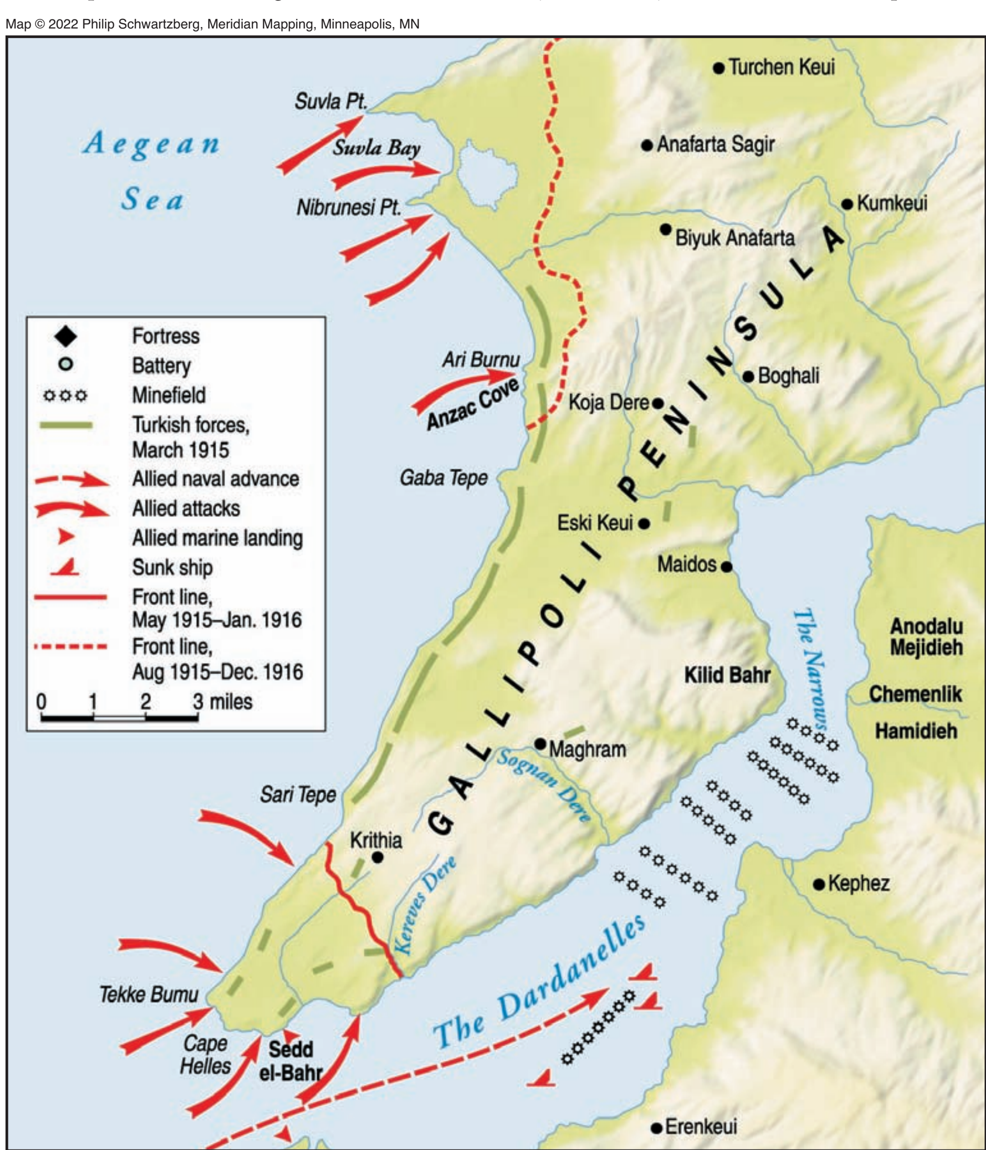
was needed on the Western Front in France.

By mid-March, Robeck had succeeded in silencing the batteries in the forts at the mouth of the Dardanelles, but not deeper into the straits, where batteries lined both coastlines. The fleet faced a daunting challenge clearing routes through the minefields while running the gauntlet of batteries inside the Dardanelles. The Turks had not only stationary gun emplacements defending the straits, but also mobile howitzer batteries.

Robeck committed nearly his entire fleet to clearing the minefields and silencing as many of the remaining batteries as possible on March 18. His goal was nothing less than forcing a passage of the Narrows section of the Dardanelles between the towns of Kilid Bahr and Chanak. The Allied battleships continued taking fire from the Turkish gun emplacements, and the naval assault that day went badly. The French battleship *Bouvet* struck a mine and sunk within minutes, sending 639 of its 674 officers and sailors to their deaths. As the day wore on, two British battleships, the HMS *Ocean* and HMS *Irresistible*, also sank. Turkish fire had also done considerable damage to many of Robeck's other warships.

Since the Allied warships had not even reached the two major minefields known to exist inside the straits, the Allied admirals and captains were puzzled as to where the mines had come from that sank the warships. They surmised that individual mines had broken free of their tethers and floated into the warships. This was not the case, however: On March 8, Turkish mine expert Lt. Col. Geehl Bey had secretly laid a line of 20 mines parallel to a line of Turkish mobile batteries deployed on the Asiatic side of the Dardanelles. It was these mines that had sunk the Allied battleships.

Map © 2022 Philip Schwartzberg, Meridian Mapping, Minneapolis, MN



First Lord of the Admiralty Winston Churchill hoped to relieve pressure on the Western Front by attacking the southern flank of the Central Powers, but British naval and land assaults at Gallipoli failed. The British and ANZAC infantry forces never reached Kilid Bahr Plateau, where they had hoped to establish batteries to control the Narrows.

Robeck and senior army commanders who observed the attack on March 18 advised the British War Council that a naval attack alone would not succeed. Although the Turks had exhausted a significant amount of ammunition for their artillery, they still had enough left to repulse another attack if the British chosen to launch one. What is more, the Turkish minefields in the Dardanelles remained intact.

The British War Council decided not to renew the naval attack until Allied infantry had come ashore and secured the Kilid Bahr Plateau, not far from the tip of the Gallipoli peninsula that overlooked the Narrows section of the Dardanelles. At that point, the mine-clearing could resume under protective fire from both land-based artillery and naval gunfire. Once the minefields were cleared, then warships could steam into the Sea of Marmara in order to reach Constantinople.

Two competent commanders directed the 80,000-strong Turkish Fifth Army that would contest the Allied landings. Lt. Gen. Liman Von Sanders, a 60-year-old German general from Pomerania, who led the German military mission to Turkey, oversaw the defense of the Gallipoli peninsula. The Ottoman Imperial Government gave him command of the Fifth Army, which initially consisted of six divisions. Von Sanders was flexible, decisive, and experienced. He deployed four of the Fifth Army's divisions on the Gallipoli peninsula and two on the Asiatic side of the Dardanelles.

Thirty-four-year-old Brig. Gen. Mustafa Kemel, who commanded the Turkish 19th Division, possessed superb strategic and tactical skills and ingenuity. Equally important, his courage would inspire the Turkish troops under his command to put up a tenacious resistance to the Allied forces that were soon to land on the peninsula.

Although Lt. Gen. Essad Pasha, who commanded the III Corps of the Fifth Army, was Kemel's superior officer, Kemel would frequently take actions during the Gallipoli campaign that, although beyond his authority, were tactically sound.

Sixty-two-year-old General Ian Hamilton commanded the British Mediterranean Expeditionary Force. His initial forces consisted of the British 29th Division, Royal Navy Division, 1st Australian Division, New Zealand and Australia Division, and the 1st Division of the French Corps Expéditionnaire d'Orient. Only the 29th and French 1st Division had any significant military training. The other three divisions were green and untested.

As Hamilton's force swelled, he realized that Lemnos lacked the infrastructure to serve as a for-

ward base for all of the divisions slated for the invasion. He therefore decided to stage his attack from Alexandria, Egypt. This would also give him an opportunity to reorganize his expeditionary force so that there was a clear chain of command.

The downside of transferring Allied men and ships from islands in the Aegean to Alexandria was that it gave Von Sanders ample time to deploy his forces in the best possible positions to contest the Allied landings on the Gallipoli peninsula. The most practicable landing sites were at the town of Bulair on the north end of the peninsula, Suvla Bay and Ari Burnu in the middle of the peninsula, and Cape Helles at the southern tip of the peninsula.

Von Sanders deployed the 5th and 7th divisions at the top of the peninsula near the towns of Bulair and Gallipoli and the 9th Division at the bottom of the peninsula at Cape Helles. He assigned Kemal's 19th Division to serve as a mobile reserve stationed in the middle of the peninsula at the town of Boghali. The 3rd and 11th divisions assumed positions on the Asiatic side at the mouth of the Dardanelles to thwart a landing at that location. Von Sanders' plan was to deploy regiments in screening positions atop the high ground overlooking the beaches to contain the Allied landing forces. In the event the Allies broke through a screening force, he would commit some or all of his reserves. The Turks had the advantage of being able to entrench on heights overlooking the beaches where, if they chose to do so, they could engage the Allied troops as they came ashore.

Australian War Memorial

Members of the 9th Australian Light Horse Regiment man a machine-gun post near Walker's Ridge just 120 yards from the Turkish trenches. ANZAC forces advanced only 2,500 yards from their landing beach before running into stiff resistance from entrenched Ottoman forces.

Hamilton's invasion force faced a daunting challenge. They had to secure their landing beaches, and in some cases scale forbidding heights. Moreover, they had lost any element of surprise by the time spent organizing for the expedition in Egypt. But the British command believed the Turkish infantry would not stand up to their troops, and they proceeded under that flawed assumption.

While the 29th Division would come ashore at Cape Helles, the ANZAC troops would land further up the peninsula at Gaba Tepe. In order to confuse the Turks as to the focus of their attack, Hamilton directed General Antoine Masnou's 1st French Division to land at Kum Kale on the Asiatic coast, where they could cover the rear of the British by preventing the Turks from moving mobile artillery into position to shell the landing beaches at Cape Helles.

In a move that weakened the forces at the two primary landing sites on the Gallipoli Peninsula, Hamilton also planned two diversionary attacks. A small contingent of French troops would land at Besika Bay, while a detachment of the Royal Naval Division would come ashore at Bulair Neck. To make the diversionary attack at Bulair Neck appear convincing, 20 warships steamed into the Gulf of Saros on the northern coast of the peninsula and fired broadsides against suspected Turkish positions at Bulair.

The Allied armada returned to the Gallipoli peninsula on the morning of April 25. Three British battleships, the *Queen, Prince of Wales,* and *London*, accompanied the troopships maneuvering into position at night to disembark their troops at Gaba Tepe. Steam pinnaces [light vessels] carried on the warships towed rowboats 3,000 yards toward the shore but stopped a few hundred yards from shore for fear of running up on rocks in the shallows.

The naval vessels carrying the ANZAC troops missed their intended landing site, which was designated "Z Beach," and mistakenly deposited the Australia and New Zealand troops a short distance north of it on a narrow beach at Ari Burnu. The barren landing site, which lacked an adequate water supply for the troops who would be operating out of it, became known afterwards as ANZAC Cove.

The ANZAC troops wound up in a dreadful place. The beach was at the base of a high cliff. The landscape on Gallipoli generally was covered with scrub; that is, low trees and bushes. The initial landing force that came ashore at 4:30 a.m. consisted of 1,500 Australian troops, who immediately began scaling the low cliffs. They made their way to the top by working their way back and forth through gulleys whenever possible. Throughout the course of the long day, 6,500 more troops came ashore until the entire ANZAC corps had been landed.

Three ANZAC scouts had orders to move as far inland as possible. They wound up climbing three separate peaks. The last of these, which was situated two miles inland from ANZAC Cove,

National Archives

The Turks launched repeated counterattacks against British and ANZAC forces at Gallipoli in a bid to dislodge them from key terrain. The costly counterattacks resulted in Ottoman casualties exceeding 200,000 men.

was the 1,000-foot-high Sari Bair range. The fighting in the days that followed would rage near the Chunuk Bair, the second-highest peak in the range. The scouts reached the top of the mountain range at 7:00 a.m. From their vantage point, they could see the plateau of Kilid Bahr and the Narrows section of the Dardanelles just beyond it. If all went according to plan, Birdwood's ANZAC Corps would link up with Maj. Gen. Aylmer Gould Hunter-Weston's 29th Division on the plateau in a matter of days.

Although Birdwood did not come ashore at first, his two divisional commanders had the presence of mind to expand the beachhead as quickly as possible. The four battalions of the 3rd Australian Brigade of Maj. Gen. William Throsby Bridges' 1st Australian Division led the assault. They were followed by the 2nd Australian Brigade and the 1st Australian Brigade. Two Indian mountain batteries with 12 mule-drawn 10-pounder guns accompanied the advance.

When the British attack began, Von Sanders was at his headquarters at the town of Gallipoli. He was awakened by staff officers at 5:00 a.m. and informed that British naval squadrons and detachments were landing troops at five separate locations, including the Asiatic side of the Dardanelles. Fearing that Allied troops were coming ashore in his rear at Bulair at the neck of the peninsula, he rode off with his staff to take personal charge of defending that location. Before departing, he issued orders for the Turkish 7th Division to march from Gallipoli to Bulair. He stayed at Bulair just long enough that day to assure himself that it was not a main landing point for the British before returning to Gallipoli.

Essad Pasha sent an urgent dispatch to Kemel, whose headquarters was located at the village of Boghali, east of the Sari Bair range, shortly after dawn to detach a battalion immediately from his 19th Division to contain the ANZAC landing. When he received the dispatch at 6:30 a.m., Kemel sent a battalion from the 57th Regiment on its way. He and his staff followed. They came upon the troops who had lost their bearings while heading west into the mountainous terrain. He and a few officers went ahead to reconnoiter the ground and ran headlong into a group of Australian soldiers. Both parties went to ground, taking cover in the scrub, and Kemel sent one of the officers to hurry forward the Turkish infantry. The encounter occurred on the slopes of Chunuk Bair.

As the fighting commenced, Kemel issued orders for his entire 57th Regiment and an Arab regiment in his division to engage the advancing Australians. By doing so, he overstepped his authority. Since his division was designated as a reserve force, he should have cleared it with his immediate superior Pasha. Realizing this, Kemel rode off to III Corps headquarters, where he debriefed Pasha and asked for permission to commit his third and last regiment to the expanding battle. Pasha realized the severity of the threat and gave his consent. The 57th Regiment, which was heavily outnumbered, was destroyed by the vanguard of the ANZAC Corps that day. Nevertheless, the Turks prevailed in the struggle for control of the Sari Bair range, and in so doing, they contained the advance of the ANZAC troops to just 2,500 yards from their landing beach. It was a setback that jeopardized the success of the entire invasion.

The ANZAC troops began entrenching on the west side of the Sari Bair range on April 26. Fierce fighting erupted in the no-man's land between the ANZAC forces and Kemel's reinforced 19th Division. The Turks charged the soldiers of the 1st Australian Division in an effort to hurl them back; the Australians and Turks fought hand-to-hand with each other. In the brutal fighting that occurred on April 26 and April 27, the 1st Australian Division suffered 4,500 casualties, which was nearly half of its strength.

The ANZAC troops on the frontline had to get by without the artillery support necessary to make any substantial headway against the entrenched Turks. They not only lacked any substantial heavy-artillery support, but also suffered from an acute shortage of trench mortars and spherical hand grenades. In an effort to compensate for the lack of grenades, they crafted home-made ones by packing discarded tin cans with explosive charges.

The Australians also had a difficult time holding their trench line because of an acute shortage of water. While the troops dug trenches, groups of soldiers had to return to ANZAC Cove to haul water, ammunition, and equipment to the front lines.

The 29th Division went ashore at five different beaches, coded S, V, W, X, and Y, at Cape Hellas. Lt. Gen. Hunter-Weston planned to make the main thrust at beaches V and W, at the tip of the peninsula. The other three beach landings, which were situated further up the tip, were conducted by forces with orders to strike the enemy forces opposing the main landings in the flank. Ele-

ments of the 86th and 87th brigades that landed at beaches S, V, and Y did not face any resistance when they came ashore. But at the tip of the peninsula, two companies of the 3rd Battalion of the Turkish 26th Regiment were entrenched behind rows of barbed wire.

The British troops landing at Cape Helles at the tip of the peninsula had the advantage of being covered by protective fire from British warships that could fire broadsides from three directions against the Turkish troops.

The 1st Lancashire Fusiliers belonging to the 86th Brigade landed in the first wave at W Beach, at the very tip of the peninsula. They were followed ashore by the second wave, consisting of the 4th Battalion of the Worcestershire Regiment. Turkish machine gunners behind barbedwire defenses raked the Lancashire Fusiliers as they came ashore, inflicting 50 percent casualties on the battalion. But when the troops in the second wave came ashore, they overran the defenders.

The situation was far worse, though, at V Beach. Rather than being towed to shore in small boats pulled by steam pinnaces, the plan called for the *River Clyde*, a tramp steamer that had been converted to a troop ship, to purposely run itself aground on the shore. Once it was fixed on the shoreline, troops were to come ashore over gangplanks.

As the troops from the 1st Royal Munster Fusiliers of the 86th Brigade filed across the gangplanks, Turkish machine gunners and riflemen poured a heavy fire into their ranks. One company drawn from the 1st Royal Dublin Fusiliers and two companies of the 2nd Hampshire Regiment arrived in the second wave in row boats pulled by the steam launches. The Turks defending V Beach, which was situated a short distance east of W Beach, fought with extreme tenacity. They benefitted from accurate supporting fire delivered by a Turkish howitzer battery deployed just north of the beach.

Turks triumphed at Gallipoli even though their units were understrength

Turkish Fifth Army Commander Lt. Gen. Liman von Sanders had to face the Allied invasion force at Gallipoli with six understrength divisions, the equivalent of two corps, available to defend the peninsula and the shores of the Dardanelles. Although a Turkish infantry division in wartime was supposed to have upwards of 19,000 men, it actually had about 6,000 men. Turkish divisions consisted of three regiments, each of which was composed of three battalions. Each division also had six batteries, with a total of 24 guns, and a cavalry squadron for reconnaissance.

Turkish divisional artillery units possessed modern Model 1903 75mm German-made Krupp guns and French-made 75mm Model 1906 Schneider-Danglis mountain guns, as well as outdated model 1877 87mm German field guns. Turkish corps and fortress-artillery units possessed some modern 150mm Krupp and Schneider-Creusot howitzers, although the majority of the Turkish fortress artillery was obsolete.

As the Ottoman Empire declined precipitously from its former glory, its units were habitually short of uniforms and equipment. The situation was so dire that when sandbags were issued to the soldiers defending the Gallipoli peninsula in 1915, infantry officers had to make sure that their troops did not empty the sandbags in order to use the burlap to repair their tattered uniforms.

Turkish officers were for the most part of inferior quality, given that they received scant training. The empire therefore employed experienced German officers as unit commanders, and this contributed greatly to the effectiveness of the Turkish units in World War I.

Turkish infantry was issued the Turkish Model 1890 7.65 Mauser bolt-action rifle, which was based on the German Mauser Model of 1887. The service rifle fired 7.65mm cartridges.

Imperial War Museum

Turkish soldiers armed with German-made Mauser rifles are seated in a trench next to one of the thousands of dugouts on the peninsula used for protection against incoming artillery shells. Ottoman General Mustafa Kemal Pasha's inspired leadership played a key role in the Ottoman victory.

Only half of the 150,000 men in the Ottoman army in 1914 were indigenous Turks. The rest were of various nationalities, including Slavs, Greeks, Armenians, and Arabs. For the most part, the Turkish conscripts were either Anatolian peasants or Arabs. The Anatolian peasants made better soldiers. First and foremost, they were more loyal and devoted to the Ottoman Empire than the Arabs, who essentially were an occupied people. Second, they had, over the course of many generations, become accustomed to hardship and deprivation. Moreover, they were proud, courageous, and stubborn. They exhibited high morale throughout the Gallipoli campaign.

—William E. Welsh

Naval History and Heritage Command

British soldiers attack during the Third Battle of Krithia in June 1915. The assault on June 4 was the final in a series of Allied attacks against the Turkish defenses five miles north of Cape Helles.

With the first wave no longer combat effective, the Turks were free to focus concentrated fire on the second wave of troops struggling to get ashore. "The water seemed to be alive, the bullets striking the sea all around us," wrote Captain David French of the 1st Royal Dublin Fusiliers. "Heaven alone knows how I got through a perfect hail of bullets." Those who did manage to get ashore were pinned down on the narrow beach throughout the first night. It was not until the early afternoon of the following day that the British succeeded in driving off the Turks.

Over the course of the next three days, the 29th Division endeavored to advance up the peninsula. They only got three miles, though. Two battalions of the Turkish 26th Regiment and an engineer company occupied trenches protected by layers of barbed wire at the town of Krithia, several miles above the tip of the peninsula. The losses were heavy enough at beaches V and W that Hamilton decided to transfer the 1st French Division from Kum Kale to Cape Helles for the drive against the Turkish forces at Krithia. It proved in the long run to be an unwise decision because shortly after the French departed, heavy guns from the forts and mobile batteries on the Asiatic side began bombarding the British and French troops at the bottom of the peninsula.

Hamilton pressed Lt. Gen. Hunter-Weston to advance as quickly as possible in order to seize a key raised plateau named Achi Baba that was situated northeast of the town of Krithia. If the Allies could gain control of the heights, then they could establish long-range batteries on Achi Baba that would give the British control of the bottom one-third of the peninsula.

Heavy fighting erupted on April 28 in a day-long clash that became known as the First Battle of Krithia. The Allies launched repeated frontal attacks against the Turkish forces deployed in and around the town. At one point, elements of the British 88th brigade gained a toehold on Achi Baba, but a spirited attack by the Turks forced them back. In just that one day of fighting, the British suffered 3,000 casualties.

Von Sanders had spent the last few days in April reinforcing the Turkish forces defending the Sari Bair range and those entrenched at Krithia. His first move was to shift the 5th and 7th divisions south from the northern end of the peninsula. He also began receiving substantial reinforcements from the mainland. He received two from Constantinople and transferred by boat the 3rd Division from the Asiatic shore, where it was no longer needed.

Von Sanders heavily reinforced the III Corps. Essad Pasha was nominally in command of the forces containing the ANZACs, but Kemel was the de facto commander. With his force swelling to 16,000 troops on the frontline along the Sari Bair ridge, Kemel launched a major counterattack on May 1. After a blistering Turkish artillery bombardment had pummeled the ANZAC trenches, multiple waves of Turkish infantry assaulted the entrenched Australian and New Zealand troops. To their credit, the ANZACs, who were being bloodied for the first time, hurled back the mass charges of the courageous Turks.

Kemel maintained the pressure on the ANZACs, launching follow-up attacks on May 2 and May 3. Hamilton reinforced Birdwood by sending Maj. Gen. Archibald Paris' Royal Naval Division to help plug gaps in the ANZAC lines. The 2nd Naval Brigade moved up to the front line just as the Turks had completed their costly counterattacks.

In addition, the Turks defending Krithia launched two major counterattacks against the Allied forces on the nights of May 1 and May 3. The counterattacks occurred at night because the Turks feared the naval gunfire that the British could bring to bear against their forces if they emerged from their trenches. These Turks suffered heavy losses that were unnecessary because the Allies were unable to make any headway against Turkish defenses in any case.

The Allied advance north from Cape Helles suffered from a lack of coordination among the senior levels of command. Lt. Gen. Hunter-Weston and his staff were responsible for this. At that stage of the fighting, the Ottoman forces did not even have a continuous defensive line across the base of the peninsula. The Turks simply held a string of outposts and entrenched positions on both sides of the town. With better coordination, the Allies might have dislodged them by maneuvering against weak points and using diversionary attacks to draw Turkish strength away from the main point of attack. Instead, just a few thousand Turks succeeded in bottling up more than 20,000 troops from the British 29th Division and the 1st French Division.

In order to give Hunter-Weston enough strength to break through the Turkish lines, Hamilton transferred two ANZAC brigades on the night of May 5 to the Krithia sector. In the reshuffling of forces in preparation for a renewed attack to gain the high ground at Achi Baba, Hamilton assigned the 29th and 125th Indian Brigades to the 29th Division to sustain it as an effective force and offset the heavy losses it had suffered up to that point in the campaign. By the

Imperial War Museum

Men of the King's Own Scottish Borderers of the 29th Division participate in the final attack at Krithia. Even with the arrival of five fresh divisions in August, Allied forces still could not break through the Turkish defenses.

end of the first week in May, Hunter-Weston had 25,000 troops for a fresh attack against the Turks holding Krithia and Achi Baba.

The British renewed their attack on May 6 in what became known as the Second Battle Krithia. For three days, the British hurled their troops against the Turkish positions. By that time, the 26th Regiment had been substantially reinforced. The casualties suffered as the British infantrymen charged into the teeth of the Turkish machine guns were horrendous. The three-day battle cost Hunter-Weston 6,500 men—three times the Turkish losses. The gain of 600 yards was negligible.

At that point, Hamilton wired Kitchener that he needed more men if he were to succeed in reaching the Kilid Bahr Plateau. Kitchener responded by sending the 42nd Division and the 29th Indian Brigade, which were forward deployed in Egypt.

The Gallipoli campaign began to fall apart when Italy joined the Allies on May 23, 1915. Commodore Roger Keyes, who was Vice Adm. Carden's chief of staff, had suggested a war council to resume naval operations in the Dardanelles. But Allied priorities changed when Italy entered the war, for London had pledged to give naval support to Italy if needed in its war against Austria-Hungary. Owing to the threat that German U-Boats and Turkish destroyers armed with torpedoes posed to their capital ships, the British withdrew their battleships. But they left their destroyers in place to furnish badly needed supporting fire.

As the prospects for a clear-cut victory against the Turks on the Gallipoli peninsula diminished with every passing day, Fisher came out ardently against any resumption of naval operations to force a passage of the Dardanelles. Fisher, who by that time was engaged in bitter disputes on naval strategy with Churchill, resigned his post as First Sea Lord on May 15. The reason given was that he was adamantly opposed to any further action in the Dardanelles or transfer of any more warships to the sector.

When Asquith was compelled to establish a coalition government that month, the Conservatives demanded that Churchill be removed as the First Lord of the Admiralty. Although demoted to a lesser position in the government, Churchill remained on the Dardanelles Committee, where he continued to argue in favor of continuing the campaign.

With naval support hamstrung by London, the entire campaign hung on the success or failure of Hamilton's Allied army on Gallipoli. With the Turkish ranks on the Sari Bair line having swelled to 30,000 troops by mid-May, the Turks launched a fresh attack against the ANZAC trenches on May 19. The Turks succeeded in temporarily capturing part of a section of the ANZAC forward trenches, but a counterattack by the 14th (Victoria) Battalion of the 4th Australian Brigade expelled the Turks. The Turks suffered 13,000 killed and wounded. Australian and New Zealand machine gunners had literally mowed down the Turks by the thousands at the cost of a few hundred Allied casualties.

The heroism of the Australians and New Zealanders was exemplified by Lance-Corporal Albert Jacka of the 14th Battalion. Jacka became the first ANZAC soldier of the war to receive the Victoria Cross when he shot five Turks and bayoneted two more during the Turks' costly attack.

The Third Battle of Krithia began on June 4. By that time, though, the Allies held no significant numerical advantage over the Turks. The British and French fielded 30,000 men, and they faced 25,000 Turks who were entrenched. Moreover, the Turks had 86 pieces of artillery to support the soldiers in the trenches. The British lost 4,000 men in yet another defeat at Krithia.

London decided in June to send five new divisions to Hamilton in hopes that the fresh troops would enable him to achieve victory against the Turks on the Gallipoli peninsula. These divisions

were the 10th, 11th, and 13th divisions from Kitchener's so-called New Army, as well as the 53rd (Welsh) and 54th (East Anglian) territorial divisions. Hamilton decided to reinforce the ANZACs with just one division, which was the 13th Division. The other four divisions would conduct a new landing at Suvla Bay, just five miles north of ANZAC Cove. Hamilton's plan called for the two bridgeheads to link up and advance east to the shore of the Dardanelles.

The 10th and 11th divisions, which had a combined total of 20,000 troops, landed at Suvla Bay on August 6. But the landing soon bogged down for a familiar reason, namely, 61-year-old Lt. Gen. Frederick Stopford, given command of the newly created IX Corps, did not press his attack. With the British milling about at Suvla Bay, Kemel launched a ferocious counterattack that put Stopford on the defensive.

Birdwood had assigned Maj. Gen. Alexander Godley to direct the forces attempting to break out of the ANZAC bridgehead. While this required attempting to finally gain control of the Sari Bair range, it also involved sending forces on the left flank of the bridgehead north to link up with the forces advancing east from Suvla Bay. Godley's first attack was directed at the Turkish forces at Lone Pine, an objective on the southern end of the ANZAC line. The 1st Australian Division had orders to charge across 220 yards of no-man's land to assail the Turkish trenches just before nightfall.

Officers blew whistles at 5:30 p.m., and soldiers of the Australian 1st Division soldiers surged across the rocky ground. When they reached the Turkish position, they found the intrepid Turks had covered their trenches with neat rows of pine logs. As some soldiers tried to pry the logs loose, others fired through cracks in the logs. The Australian soldiers eventually gained access to the trenches and began fighting the Turks with bayonets, clubbed rifles, and fists.

"[We were] met by some Turks who came at us suddenly and savagely," wrote Private Charles Duke of the 4th (New South Wales) Battalion, whose recollection captures the ferocity of the close-quarters combat in the trenches. "I lunged at the nearest, but my bayonet stuck in his leather equipment. Instantly he raised his rifle to shoot me, but before he could there was an awful bang alongside my ear, and he fell crumpled at my feet. My mate behind me had put his rifle over my shoulder and had shot him, but that discharge nearly blew my head off."

The British captured the first line of trenches on the first day but continued fighting the Turks in that sector for three more days at a cost of 4,000 casualties before finally capturing the location. Seven Victoria Crosses were awarded for valor in the Lone Pine sector.

The main attack, though, all along the Turkish line, began at 9:00 p.m. on August 6. At first light the following day, the 8th and 10th regiments of the Australian 3rd Light Horse Brigade were tasked with capturing a knoll held by entrenched Turks that blocked one of the avenues of approach to the peak of Chunuk Bair.

Whistles blew at 4:30 a.m., signaling the attack. The soldiers went over the top in what would prove an impossible mission. The troopers, who fought dismounted, had to cross 60 yards of a saddle between friendly forces on Russell's Top and enemy forces on the scrubby knoll to the east. Two rows of Turkish riflemen opened fire on the charging Australians. The Turks succeeded in mowing down two-thirds of the 600 Australians that made the charge.

Library of Congress

Ottoman gunners man a German-made field gun. When additional landings at Sulva Bay in August failed to break the stalemate, the British abandoned the campaign.

"Most of the first wave was down: either killed, wounded, or had taken cover," wrote Lieutenant Andrew Crawford of the 8th (Victoria) Light Horse. "I was soon laid out with a couple of bullet wounds in my body and a graze on my head. I could not move and was eventually dragged back into our trenches."

Stopford's failure to press inland, combined with the failure of the ANZAC troops to make much headway other than at Lone Pine, resulted in another static front on August 10. The British attacked again on August 21 in an attempt to gain ground but make no headway against steadfast Turkish troops. One of the principal reasons for the failure of the attacks in August was that the troops in the bridgeheads lacked the sufficient heavy artillery to soften up the Turkish defenses.

With the advent of the autumn months, the weather turned foul, with heavy rains sparking flooding in the gullies on the peninsula. The Australian government, horrified by the losses its forces had suffered on the Gallipoli Peninsula in multiple failed attacks, successfully lobbied London for the removal of Hamilton from command. Following his dismissal in October, Lt. Gen. Charles Monro took command.

Upon his arrival, Monro recommended immediate withdrawal. This prompted Kitchener to visit the peninsula in November to see things for himself. That same month, Churchill resigned from the government. Kitchener agreed with Monro's assessment of the situation. Although some quarters of the British government were calling for a fresh naval offensive in the Dardanelles, Kitchener had the final word on the matter.

The first troops to be extracted were those at Suvla Bay and ANZAC Cove on December 19-20. The remaining troops at Cape Helles were withdrawn on January 8-9, 1916. The efficient evacuation without casualties was the only real success of the entire campaign.

The Gallipoli campaign had failed because of a lack of preliminary tactical reconnaissance, poor planning and logistics, and an overestimation of the capabilities of the Allied forces. Last but not least, London had seriously underestimated the resourcefulness of the Ottoman generals and the fighting spirit of the Turkish soldiers. ■

ARNOLD'S FLAWED INVASION OF QUEBEC

BY ERIC NIDEROST

On November 9, 1775, a British resident of Quebec wrote a letter back home, a missive that he knew might not even reach England, because the Canadian fortress city would soon be under a state of siege. A bedraggled band of Americans under Colonel Benedict Arnold had recently arrived outside the gates, he said, determined to make both the city and Quebec province the so-called 14th colony in their fledgling rebellion against the British crown.

The writer had little sympathy with the patriot cause, but the sheer magnitude of their feat won them a grudging admiration. "There are about 500 provincials arrived on Pointe Levi opposite the town," he began, referring to the American revolutionaries, "by way of the Chaudière [River], across the woods." The author still could not believe that they were there, and the rest of the passage is filled with a genuine sense of awe. "Surely a miracle must have been wrought in their favor…. They travelled through woods and bogs, over precipices for the space of 120 miles, attended with every inconvenience and difficulty."

The description is accurate, but barely scratches the surface of the trials and tribulations that attended the long and agonizing march to Quebec. Arnold and his men had been soaked by torrential downpours of rain, half-blinded by raging snowstorms, frozen by plummeting temperatures, and exhausted by the hard physical labor of carrying heavy bateaux on portages that were little better than viscous bogs.

Sickness and starvation also assailed them, and some lacked the proper clothing for the onset of winter-like weather. By the time they reached Quebec, ragged and reduced in numbers, they were little better than emaciated scarecrows. The Americans had reached their objective and had overcome countless obstacles and hardships on their grueling wilderness trek. The completion of such a perilous journey was in and of itself a kind of victory, but it was just the prologue of a drama that was about to unfold in the coming months.

The idea of making Canada an ally against the British was not a quixotic as it might have seemed at the time. Canada had once been a colony of France, part of a Gallic empire based in large part on the fur trade. The French were decisively defeated in the Seven Years' War of 1756-1763 and had ceded Canada to Great Britain, but 80,000 Quebecois, Gallic in culture and speech, remained in Canada.

The British crown did its best to reconcile the Quebecois, even granting them the right to continue to practice their Roman Catholic religion. Nevertheless, French Canadian resentment was never too far below the surface. It was a smoldering ember that might be fanned into open rebellion. But would they make common cause with the predominantly Protestant 13 colonies to the south, which often expressed distaste for Quebec's ethnic identity and religion?

Many Americans hoped that the old adage, "The enemy of my enemy is my friend," might hold true. Perhaps the French Canadians would let bygones be bygones and let old animosities be forgotten as they took up common cause against the British foe. One of the main obstacles was going to be Brig. Gen. Guy Carleton, the governor of Quebec province. Energetic and resourceful, the 50-year-old British officer was uncommonly sympathetic to the concerns of the Quebecois. Whether that was enough to ensure their loyalty during a determined American invasion was anyone's guess.

After the clashes at Lexington and Concord in April 1775, an ad-hoc army of Massachusetts farmers hastily gathered together and placed British-occupied Boston under siege. Delegates assembled in Philadelphia to form the Second Continental Congress, and one of its first acts was to adopt the Boston army as the official fighting force of the united 13 colonies. The Second Continental Congress unanimously selected Virginian George Washington as the commander-in-chief of the Continental Army.

A commanding personality on the scene at the time was Benedict Arnold. A successful businessman who hailed from New Haven, Connecticut, his far-flung trading connections included ports such as New York, Boston, Montreal, and Quebec. By 1775 he was a wealthy man, but as the American Revolution unfolded, he became a fierce partisan of the Patriot cause. Once Arnold committed to the growing revolution, he gave it a dedication so single-minded in purpose it bordered on mania. A human dynamo, Arnold was full of ideas to advance Patriot fortunes.

Canada was a British stronghold, a strategic base from which redcoats could launch invasions to the south. In an age when roads were bad or non-existent, rivers and lakes were natural highways of travel and commerce. Arnold was particularly concerned with the Lake Champlain corridor from Canada, a veritable dagger pointed at the heart of the 13 colonies. Starting from Montreal, a British invasion force conceivably could sail up the Richelieu River and continue on to strategic Lake Champlain. Once the Lake Champlain forts were in their possession, the British could proceed further south to the Hudson River and, ultimately, New York.

Arnold was determined to prevent this nightmare scenario by any and all means at his disposal.

N.C. Wyeth

After an arduous trek through the Maine wilderness in 1775, Benedict Arnold arrived before Quebec with a band of soldiers poorly equipped for a winter battle.

Patriots garbed in hunting shirts and portaging heavy bateaux struggle through the snow-covered wilderness of Northern Maine on their way to besiege Quebec.

N.C. Wyeth

ABOVE: The Americans encountered seemingly endless stands of birch and pine in the Maine Wilderness. All the while, Arnold sought to have them set aside regional rivalries and join common cause against the oppressive British. OPPOSITE: Colonel Benedict Arnold, depicted in a picture published in 1776, underestimated the difficulties his men would encounter, as well as the length of the wilderness trek.

Once the British were firmly in control of the Lake Champlain and Hudson corridor, the New England colonies would be cut off from their compatriots further south. Divide-and-conquer would be a winning British strategy. The embryonic United States would never have a chance to be born and prosper.

Arnold acted with customary alacrity, raising a few companies of militia to augment his plans. The initial goal was to seize Fort Ticonderoga and Crown Point, which were the two key Lake Champlain strongholds. When he found out that Colonel Ethan Allen and his Green Mountain Boys also intended to take Fort Ticonderoga, Arnold had no problem joining forces with the Vermont militiamen. Ticonderoga quickly surrendered with little resistance, and Crown Point fell into American hands soon after.

Emboldened by these successes, Arnold conducted yet another expedition. In May 1775, he led a raid on Saint-Jean, a Canadian outpost 20 miles southwest of Montreal. One of the prizes of the raid was a 70-ton sloop-of-war that the Americans captured, which deprived the British of a vessel they might have used to ferry their troops across Lake Champlain.

Arnold seemed to be charmed. His successes laid the groundwork for the greatest venture of them all. He hoped to capture Montreal, Quebec, and the rest of British Canada. The capture of Ticonderoga and Crown Point were roadblocks to any British invasion. In Patriot hands, they would delay any southward thrusts by the British, if not entirely thwart them. And taking Canada would eliminate any chance of a landward invasion from the north.

Arnold travelled to Cambridge, Massachusetts, to get Washington's approval for a Quebec campaign. Upon his arrival, Arnold discovered that Quebec was already much on the general's mind. Indeed, Washington had already ordered Maj. Gen. Philip Schuyler to advance up Lake Champlain to seize Montreal and Quebec. His enthusiasm must have been dampened by this news, but Arnold rebounded with a counterproposal. He proposed to Washington two simultaneous campaigns against the province of Quebec that would be mutually supportive.

The proposal would be for a second expedition to sail to Maine and travel north on the Kennebec River. At the time, the province of Maine was part of the Massachusetts colony. The proposed expedition would leave the Kennebec, heading west through a 12-mile section of forest, bog, and lake known to the Indians for hundreds of years as the Great Carrying Place. In this case "carrying" was the operative word because the soldiers would literally have to carry their boats using human muscle, the arduous task being only slightly relieved by brief water passages across three small lakes.

At the end of the Great Carrying Place, the expedition would then travel down the Dead River, so named by the natives for its slow current. Eventually the Dead River would lead them to the Chaudière River and Quebec. It was a simple plan, not without risk, but Arnold was confident of success. The Connecticut colonel was a meticulous planner, seemingly leaving nothing to chance, but his calculations contained errors that almost proved fatal to the entire enterprise.

The wilderness area that the expedition would have to cross was very poorly documented. In 1761, a military engineer named John Montressor had conducted a survey of the Kennebec Valley region, but later events proved his map dangerously flawed. Based on the Montressor documents and other data, Arnold calculated it was 180 miles from Fort Western, which is now the site of the Maine state capital of Augusta, on the Kennebec River to Quebec. In reality, the distance was 350 miles.

Although Arnold did not suspect a thing, a little bit of sabotage might have been thrown in the mix. He had also been given maps drawn by Kennebec area surveyor Samuel Goodwin, but Goodwin was known to have loyalist sympathies. As events unfolded, the Goodwin maps were to prove riddled with inaccuracies and largely worthless. Was this deliberate sabotage? It is hard to say after the passage of more than 200 years. The Maine wilderness was covered with thick and seemingly endless stands of birch and pine, and not all areas had been explored by the white man.

Based on these flawed projections, Arnold figured it would take the Quebec expedition about 20 days to reach their goal. Though he did not know what was to come, Arnold did hedge his bets enough to allow for 45 days of rations for the men. He also was well aware that it was August, and that the summer was quickly slipping away. In those northern climes, winter often arrived early, defying any estimates based solely on the calendar.

Washington had his hands full at the time, because when he arrived at Cambridge, he was appalled at what he found. The Continental army, which had been founded on June 14, was not a real army of trained soldiers but an unorganized, often slovenly, ill-disciplined mob. The commander-in-chief had to do everything, including tasks normally relegated to junior officers. Even sanitation was beyond many of these men, and the general had to make sure proper latrines were dug.

He also was faced with the task of making the men under his command accept that they were

Americans united under a common cause. Colonists considered themselves as New Yorkers, Georgians, or Virginians first, and regional rivalries sometimes erupted into serious altercations. Yet these men had the potential to be good soldiers, and most of them were eager to strike a blow against the British.

The next step in forming a Quebec expedition was to call for volunteers for the mission. Washington decided 676 privates would suffice, along with their officers. But 275 riflemen organized into three companies also would also be attached to the effort. Most Americans were armed with smoothbore muskets that had an effective range of 100 yards at best, and usually a lot less. In contrast, the rifle, which had grooves in the barrel that put a spin on the bullet and created greater accuracy, when put in the hands of a trained marksman could reach 300 yards.

Washington stipulated that any volunteers must be "woodsmen, and well acquainted with bateaux [flat-bottomed boats]; so it is recommended that none but such will offer themselves for this service." The general was well acquainted with the hazards of wilderness travel. In 1753, when he was just 21 years old, Washington had trekked through the Ohio country woods in the depth of winter.

But Washington's sage advice was largely ignored. There simply were not enough genuine woodsmen to fill the ranks. The volunteers that came forward were mostly farmers, tough and hearty enough, but entirely ignorant of the skills needed for wilderness survival.

The expedition began to coalesce under Arnold's watchful eye. Most of the men were going to be in two battalions, one commanded by Lt. Col. Roger Enos and the other by Lt. Col. Christopher Greene. Greene was a cousin of Brig. Gen. Nathanael Greene, who would later prove himself as one of Washington's best subordinate generals.

Yet there also was a third battalion, which had three companies of riflemen at its core. The riflemen were led by Captain Daniel Morgan, a man who was something of a legend. Affectionately nicknamed the "Old Wagoner," Morgan had driven supply wagons for the British Army during the French and Indian War. When a British officer hit him for some alleged offense, Morgan punched the redcoat with such force he knocked him down. Striking an officer was a cardinal offense in the British army, and Morgan was sentenced to 500 lashes. Usually this was a death sentence, but incredibly, Morgan survived the ordeal.

Washington facilitated the construction of the bateaux on September 3 with boat builder Reuben Colburn of Gardinerston, Maine, who was in Cambridge at the time on another matter, and instructed Arnold to correspond with him regarding any specifications he might have in mind. Meanwhile, a furor erupted when some of the soldiers demanded a month's pay in advance; when the money was forthcoming, things settled down.

The designated point of departure for the expedition was Newburyport, Massachusetts. Morgan's riflemen led the way, leaving Cambridge on September 11, with the last companies departing two days later. Sea travel was uncommon for the average American at the time, and many of these farm boys must have looked at this short voyage with some trepidation.

Some of the men were disappointed by the 11 vessels that waited them in Newburyport harbor. They were little better than "dirty coasters and fish boats," said one man. Yet they were seaworthy. In some respects, Arnold experienced his greatest anxiety during the passage of the ships from Newburyport to Maine. The British ruled coastal American waters, and one never knew if a British frigate might make a sudden and unwelcome appearance. Once spotted, the little American fleet might be sunk or captured in short order.

But Arnold's luck held, and the three-day voyage passed without incident. That is not to say the Arnold fleet emerged completely unscathed. The seas were rough—so stormy that many of the soldiers became seasick. "Such a sickness, making me feel so lifeless, so indifferent whether I lived or died!" said one man. Dr. Isaac Senter, one of the expedition's physicians, laconically noted the storm-tossed vomiting as soldiers "disgorging themselves."

Arnold arrived in Gardinerston, six miles south of Fort Western, on September 22 and inspected the bateaux. Two days later, he sent two reconnaissance parties to scout the route north. In the succeeding days, the rest of the expedition departed Fort Western. Morgan and his riflemen constituted the vanguard, followed on successive days by Greene with three companies and Major Return Jonathan Meigs with four companies. Arnold left the fort with two companies on September 29, followed by Enos with one company. The going was slow and difficult, with the stretched-out column taking two days to travel the first 18 miles.

Takonic Falls provided the first real inkling of the hardships to come, a portage of half a mile around the cascading, foaming waters. It was not just the boats that were the issue; the men had to transport some 65 tons of supplies past the falls, as well. But they also discovered that rowing was largely a thing of the past, because the steady suc-

Map © 2022 Philip Schwartzber, Meridian Mapping, Minneapolis, MN

General George Washington plotted a two-pronged invasion of Canada in which Maj. Gen. Philip Schuyler would advance up Lake Champlain to seize Canada, while Arnold would march from Fort Western to Quebec. Arnold sold Washington on the revised plan by saying the two columns would be mutually supportive.

cession of shoals, rapids and shallows made their paddles all but useless.

Many times, the men had to wade chest-deep in the frigid waters as they hauled the boats upstream by rope. It was a general method known by the French Canadians as *cordelling*. It was a dangerous proposition, given that most colonists did not know how to swim. The current was swift, and if a soldier slipped, there was a strong likelihood he would drown.

The boiling rapids of Five Miles Falls came next. What followed was a treacherous half-mile approach to Skowhegan Falls. Despite the hardship entailed in going upriver with the bateaux, the members of the expedition were still in good spirits, partly because their rations were augmented by the fish and game that were very abundant in this region. The mighty Kennebec was full of fish. "[I ate] broiled salmon for supper and slept comfortably about 13 hours," wrote one member of the expedition in his diary.

There were still settlements in the area, though they became fewer and fewer as the journey progressed. These sturdy pioneers, living on the fringes of colonial civilization, were usually generous and ready to help, but also charged high prices for goods when they could. Most seemed to be on the side of the Patriots and endorsed the expedition's goals wholeheartedly. There were a few pro-British loyalists in the region, but even they cooperated to a point. For the most part, they were not held in contempt by the Patriots. For example, local settler Ephraim Ballard was described as a rank Tory, but also an honest man.

It was not long before rain began to fall, but by that time the men had grown accustomed to being constantly wet from the arduous task of hauling the boats in the river. Temperatures plummeted, and the first frosts appeared in late September. The bateaux had been constructed rapidly and were shoddily built, and conditions made them deteriorate rapidly. Some sprang leaks, which spoiled the supplies being transported in the bateaux, and others were simply falling apart. To their credit, Colburn's artificers did their best to plug holes and caulk leaky seams in the battered craft.

The growing litany of woes grew with every passing hour. "The bread casks not being water-proof, admitted the water in plenty, swelled the bread, burst the casks, as well as soured the whole bread," recalled on soldier. "The same fate attended a number of fine casks of peas." Most of the salted beef was also bad, and the first cases of dysentery and diarrhea began to appear among them.

By early October, the expedition had reached Norridgewock Falls, which was actually a series of rapids. Arnold managed to secure the services of oxen teams, which temporarily took the place of the exhausted men and dragged the boats and supplies the mile or so past the falls. The surefooted beasts did their best, but oxen are incredibly slow, and the boggy soil and heavy rain did not help matters.

When the expedition left Norridgewock, they entered a rougher, more mountainous and desolate land. They were also bidding adieu to civilization; they were on their own now, with no one to help them. It was also dawning on Arnold that his maps charts and other data were seriously flawed. The expedition was running out of food, partly due to spoilage and partly due to Arnold's miscalculation of the travel distance.

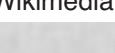
At last, the various divisions of the long-suffering army arrived at the beginning of the Great Carrying Place, a 12-mile portage that is essentially a land bridge connecting the Kennebec River and the Dead River, which is the western branch of the Kennebec. The Great Carrying Place is important, because by using it travelers avoided the Kennebec's most dangerous stretch of boiling rapids.

The Great Carrying Place had challenges of its own. For most of the route, the soldiers travelled

on three lakes, with long stretches of land in between. The trail had eight miles of land portage, as well as four miles of rowing across the three ponds. The soldiers' shoulders were rubbed raw from carrying their bateaux. The damp soil made the task all the more difficult. Weighed down by carrying their heavy bateaux, soldiers found that their legs sunk deep into the muck. The process of walking through the vicious muck drained their last reserves of energy.

When they reached a pond, the men's raw shoulders and aching muscles received little rest, for they then had to row their heavy bateaux. If that were not bad enough, the men had to retrace their steps time and again as they shuttled supplies forward between lakes. Rations were scanty at best, and occasionally the men were able to bag a wild animal. At one point, a party of soldiers succeeded in killing a 200-pound moose, which was scrawny by moose standards given that an adult male moose can weigh 1,400 pounds, but even so the meat afforded the men some much-needed protein. Such feasts were few and far between, though.

The two battalions finally reached the Dead River on October 13, but their trials were only just beginning. Progress was slow but steady, even though the men were lashed by an incessant, drenching rain. Eight days later, the rain fell even harder and was accompanied by howling winds of unusual strength. To the weary soldiers, it seemed as if the floodgates of heaven had been torn asunder.



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ABOVE: The extreme weather encountered by Arnold's expedition on its 350-mile trek resulted in a large loss of manpower. Following a council of war near the end of the march, several hundred opted to return home. FAR LEFT: Rhode Islander Christopher Greene commanded one of the battalions in Arnold's army. LEFT: Captain Daniel Morgan's Virginia riflemen cut the trail for Arnold's expeditionary force.

The troops cast about for higher ground to camp for the night, but their efforts were in vain. They found that the river had caught up with them. The deluge had been so great that the river had risen eight feet in as many hours. Even worse, the river had widened from 20 yards to 200 yards. The riverbanks were now obliterated, making navigation difficult if not impossible. It was said that flood waters reached a mile in width in some places. The increased volume had brought to life the Dead River with currents so swift they swamped and sank six bateaux.

The sinking of those bateaux must have seemed a particularly cruel development because the food and provisions stored in the bateaux were lost. At that point, Arnold had some serious doubts about the expedition, even though he wanted to continue. But he decided to seek the counsel of his officers on the matter. He told them he wanted to continue, and to his surprise they agreed with him.

There was one glimmer of hope at that point, which was that they were relatively close to the Chaudière River, an area known to have French Canadian settlements. Arnold intended to send an advance party ahead to try to make contact with these people in the hope of obtaining badly needed food and other provisions that could be brought back to the main column. In addition, it was decided that the sick and infirm would be sent back to the American settlements on the upper Kennebec.

But not all of the troops supported Arnold's decision to press on to Quebec. Some elements of the expedition were further behind, and these men were in a very bad way. Lt. Col. Enos held his own council of war, and after much wrangling it was decided that he would take 300 men and return home. Lt. Col. Greene would take the remainder and continue forward in the hope of reuniting with Arnold further up the trail.

The threat of starvation loomed over the entire enterprise at that point. For the most part, they had only flour to mix with water for sustenance. Starving soldiers dined on such diverse items as shaving soap, pomatum, lip salve, shoe leather, and even cartridge boxes. Perhaps it was inevitable that one officer's dog, which had somehow survived the ordeal to that point, wound up as a welcome addition to the communal cooking pot.

The unfortunate canine was a Newfoundland, a large breed known for its massive paws. He was owned by Captain Henry Dearborn. The men "ate every part of him, not excepting the entrails, and after finishing their meal they collected the bones and carried them to be pounded up, and to make broth for another meal," wrote Dearborn. The soldiers killed two other dogs, too. One time, the sol-

diers boiled a potpourri that included broth made of dog's head, a squirrel's head, and candlewicks.

The food crisis eased somewhat when the advance party sent forward by Arnold reached some of the French-Canadian settlements. The locals proved friendly, sympathetic, and generous, sending a large amount of food back to the main column. On November 9, the advance party of Americans arrived at the St. Lawrence River opposite Quebec City.

But the expedition was still strung out along the trail, and it was going to take some time for it to assemble on the south bank of the St. Lawrence. This did not stop Arnold from contemplating the assault on Quebec. He organized work parties that felled trees and began crafting ladders with which to scale Quebec's high stone walls.

While the troops in the main column continued to slog their way through the inhospitable wilderness, Carlton was preparing Quebec for the inevitable American onslaught. No one knew the exact timing of the invasion, but everyone knew it was coming, from Carlton to the poorest Quebecois farmer. Arnold's earlier raid at Saint-Jean may have been a masterstroke, but it had also alerted the British the Americans had possible designs on Canada. After all, they'd managed to get within 20 miles of Montreal with near impunity, exposing both the weaknesses of the British defenses and the dangers of complacency.

The raid had sent shock waves throughout Quebec province, and Carlton was particularly concerned. A year earlier he had sent two regiments of redcoats to reinforce General Thomas Gage in his troubled occupation of Boston. Carleton now realized he would be desperately short of professional soldiers. Winter would soon be upon them, and the St. Lawrence River, their main pipeline of men and supplies from England, would soon be clogged with ice. That meant that Carlton could not expect help from the mother country until the following spring.

When the Americans first appeared on the banks of the St. Lawrence, Carlton was absent. The general was in Montreal, because he knew Canada's second major town was also threatened with American occupation. For the moment, the defense of the walled city would be in the hands of the Lieutenant Governor Hector Theophilus Cramahé. The lieutenant governor did not have much to work with: just some French Canadian and British resident militiamen. The French were of dubious loyalty, and Cramahé was not even sure the British residents would fight.

Arnold could pause for a brief moment to take stock of his achievement leading his troops through the Maine wilderness. Eleven hundred men had left Cambridge almost two months earlier, and he had with him 675 troops on the south bank of the St. Lawrence. Three hundred had retreated with Enos, and to that number could be added 70 men whom Arnold had evacuated because they were too sick to go on. The remainder were either dead or had likely deserted.

Alamy

ABOVE: The Continental troops launched a spirited New Year's Eve attack on Quebec in a blizzard, but the vigilant British could not be dislodged from their strong defenses. OPPOSITE: The tragic death of Continental Army Brig. Gen. Richard Montgomery in an assault on the south end of Quebec's Lower Town is vividly, albeit romantically, portrayed in John Trumbell's period painting. A partial siege of the town that followed the failed assault ended when a British fleet arrived in spring 1776.

The difficult trek had taken 45 days, not the estimated 20, and covered 350 miles, not 180 miles. Because of the generosity of the French Canadians, his troops now had enough to eat. By the end of their trek many of the men were shoeless, or had shoes so worn and ridden with holes they scarcely covered their blistered feet. Proving that necessity is indeed the mother of invention, the men used raw beef hides from freshly slaughtered cattle and fashioned crude moccasins from them.

Their clothes were in tatters, too. They were "torn to pieces by the bushes and hung in strings," recalled one soldier. "Few of us had any shoes, but moccasins made of raw strings. Many of us [were] without hats, and our beards long and visages thin and meager." They had little or no powder and lacked artillery. They still might have triumphed, if only they had arrived a few days earlier.

Time is often the deciding element in warfare, and the Quebec campaign provides ample proof of the notion. The American vanguard arrived at the St. Lawrence River opposite Quebec City on November 9. But Arnold chose to wait for stragglers to catch up to the main army. He also decided to try to gather enough local boats to cross the swift-flowing St. Lawrence River, which was a mile wide at Quebec City. Arnold lost no time in contacting Indians to obtain their birch bark canoes. Local Quebecois also agreed to build some new ones.

Some things were beyond Arnold's control. The weather turned bad, with three consecutive days of snow squalls. What is more, he wanted to wait to cross on a moonless night to avoid detection by British boat patrols. These delays in crossing tipped the odds substantially in favor of the British.

Arnold crossed successfully, but he was outnumbered two to one. The notion of undertaking an attack on a walled city without artillery posed its own daunting challenges. He had to wait for reinforcements and basically bluff the British into thinking he had far more men than he actually had. On the whole, his bluff seems to have worked, though the British rejected his call to surrender out of hand.

However, the other parts of the invasion of Canada seemed to be proceeding without a hitch. The second wing of the invasion advanced successfully up Lake Champlain, and all was going according to plan. Schuyler had fallen ill, and therefore command of the second prong of the invasion fell to Maj. Gen. Richard Montgomery. The Montgomery expedition seemed to have a

relatively easy passage north, and it took Montreal with little difficulty. Governor Carlton narrowly escaped capture.

In a move that was to determine the course of the campaign, Carlton sent Colonel Alan MacLean downriver with 60 redcoat regulars and 120 men of his own Highland Emigrant Regiment. The Highland Emigrants were Scotsmen mainly from Canada but also hailing from as far away as the Carolinas. They were good soldiers and formed a backbone that would be a vital element to the overall defense of Quebec City.

McLean became the de facto leader of Quebec, and a very relieved Cramahé retreated into obscurity for the rest of the campaign. Colonel McLean wasted no time in organizing a proper defense. There were two British warships anchored at Quebec, HMS *Lizard* and HMS *Hunter*, and their crews were pressed into service as a marine division. Carlton himself arrived in Quebec on November 19 and took over command from McLean but found his subordinate had done a commendable job.

Besides the Royal Emigrants, some fusilier regulars, and the Royal Navy seamen, there were British and French-Canadian militia. The Quebecois were still unreliable, but Carlton had no choice but include them in the ranks. To bolster confidence and put up a brave show, the governor occasionally ordered an artillery bombardment.

In the meantime, Arnold could do nothing until Montgomery arrived from Montreal with supplies, clothes, and above all reinforcements for a possible assault on the Quebec's very formidable battlements. When Montgomery appeared, Arnold's long-suffering command felt victory was in their grasp. The attack would be at two separate parts of the city. Arnold would attack the defenses at the north end of the city, while Montgomery would storm the barricades on the south end of the lower town. The date chosen for the attempt was December 31, 1775.

The Americans hoped to cloak their advance by attacking at night and in the midst of a raging blizzard. Buffeted by the frigid gale, Montgomery's men clambered over great clunks of river ice to creep close to their goal, a wooden palisade that fronted a two-story blockhouse.

Montgomery, who was leading from the front, supervised his men as they sawed a gap though the wooden palisade stakes. They succeeded in opening a gap in the barricade, and their work apparently was undetected, since the soldiers in the blockhouse up ahead were silent. Montgomery led a small party of soldiers through the gap. The blockhouse loomed before them amidst wind-whipped snow flurries.

Suddenly, three of the blockhouse's gun ports came to life with a deafening roar, each aperture erupting with gouts of smoke and flame. Montgomery and his party were just 40 feet away when the cannon fired, instantly killing the general and many others. Montgomery's men, their commander dead and under heavy fire, beat a hasty retreat.

Arnold was not having much better luck. He bravely led his men toward a log palisade, but as he was going over the wall, he felt his leg go numb. The lead ball had missed his boot top, but ricocheted from his shin to his inner leg, finally lodging in his Achilles' tendon. Bleeding and unable to walk, Arnold was dragged to the rear to see a surgeon. Captain Morgan took command, and he managed to get a foothold in the lower town.

The fighting raged for another three hours, with Morgan and his men often fighting house-to-house. But in the end the effort, while heroic, was doomed to failure. The British got the upper hand, and Morgan and 426 Americans were forced to surrender. The American suffered about 84 killed and wounded compared to British losses of five dead and 14 wounded.

With the aid of reinforcements, Arnold managed to keep up a partial siege for another few months. "I have no thoughts of leaving this proud town until I first enter it in triumph," wrote Arnold. But when the ice melted on the St. Lawrence that spring, a British fleet appeared, carrying 10,000 reinforcements. The Americans had no choice but to raise the siege and retreat south.

Benedict Arnold's attempt to take Quebec and Canada came within an ace of succeeding. Bad timing, bad weather, bad maps, and bad luck all played a part in its failure. Arnold would go on to win glory at the Battle of Saratoga in 1777, and afterwards everlasting infamy three years later as a traitor to the American cause. ■

RUSSIA'S CONQUEST

Russian historical documents dating back to 1095 speak of an unknown people living beyond the Ural Mountains in Siberia who spoke an incomprehensible language and traded furs for iron knives and axes. The ermine, marten, and fox traded by the Siberian natives found ready and lucrative trade on the European markets. The most valuable fur was that of the sable, a species of marten.

Following the source of furs, trappers and merchants from the city-state of Novgorod developed an eastern route along inland waterways that skirted the Ural Mountains to avoid the unfriendly Bulgars and Tatars. By the beginning of the 12th century, Novgorod fought several campaigns to subjugate the peoples of Ugra, as the northern Trans-Urals was called, in order to expand its lucrative trade in luxury furs. Whether by force of arms or by negotiations, the native tribes were obligated to pay *yasak*—a Turkic word for tribute used in imperial Russia—which was collected in furs.

Yermak's Cossack brigade drives a wedge into Khan Kuchum's Tatar horde in the climactic Battle of Chuvash Cape on the Irtysh River in 1582.

OF SIBERIA

An intrepid band of Cossacks undertook a bloody conquest of western Siberia in the 16th century that added vast lands to the Tsardom of Russia.

BY VICTOR KAMENIR

Although a major trade hub, Novgorod's influence and power gradually waned as a result of its protracted struggle with the Grand Duchy of Moscow. In 1478, Grand Prince of Moscow Ivan III forcibly annexed Novgorod. In addition to absorbing Novgorod's territory, Moscow inherited Novgorod's profitable fur trade, which became a major source of income for Moscow's treasury. In their insatiable quest for more furs and trade routes, Muscovites continued Novgorod's push to the east.

The most accessible route to north-central Asia ran through the southern ranges of the Urals. Beginning with the Kama River in the Perm region, the route ran through a network of smaller rivers and portages that connected with the great Irtysh River. The Irtysh, which drained most of West Siberia, originated in the Altai Mountains and flowed north to the Ob River, which emptied into the Arctic Ocean.

But the hostile Khanate of Kazan, a Tatar Turkic successor state of the Mongol Golden Horde, controlled the route. A weaker Tatar state, the Khanate of Sibir, was situated further east. Tsar Ivan IV, commonly known as Ivan the Terrible, defeated the Kazan Khanate in 1552. Fearing the same fate, Khan Yadegar, who ruled the Sibir Khanate, dispatched an embassy to Moscow in 1555. His emissaries shared the khan's request for protection and pledged tribute to Ivan. The tsar, in turn, promised to defend the Sibir people of southwestern Siberia and welcomed their tribute in furs.

Because he had committed a large number of Russian forces beginning in 1558 in an attempt to conquer Livonia, the tsar lacked the manpower and resources to personally lead a march of conquest to the western foothills of the Ural Mountains. Instead, he trusted the expedition to Grigorii Stroganov, who was a senior member of the influential Stroganov merchant family.

The tsar granted the Stroganovs a patent on April 4, 1558, to exploit the lands along the Kama River, a left tributary of the Volga River. "[The Stroganovs] may build a small town in the black forest, in a secure and well-protected location, and emplace cannon and defense guns in that town, and I authorize him, at his own expense to station cannoneers and gunners and gate guards there to protect the town from the Nogai people and other hordes," Ivan wrote. The patent gave Stroganov the right to cut timber, plough arable lands, and establish farmsteads. It also empowered him to invite unregistered, nontax-paying persons to settle in the towns they established.

The Stroganovs found salt deposits in the Perm area. They mined salt for a domestic market and sent back furs for Russia's foreign trade. It was not long before they commanded the largest commercial enterprise in Russia. Eager to take advantage of the opportunity that the tsar's patent embodied, the Stroganovs steadily advanced east. In the course of their advance, they built settlements, established commercial enterprises, and traded with the natives for furs.

The Stroganovs' relentless expansion placed them in direct conflict with the Sibir Khanate. Whereas the Perm region was on the west side of the Ural Mountains, the Khanate of Sibir was situated just over the Urals on the east side of the mountains.

TOP: Yermak Timofeyevich led a brigade of Cossacks who spearheaded the exploration into the Sibir Khanate. ABOVE: Grigorii Stroganov was a key figure in a powerful merchant family whose expansion eastward placed them in direct conflict with the Sibir Khanate ruled by a Turco-Mongol ruling class.

The arrangements made by the Siberian ruler with the Russian tsar in 1555 did not last long. There were tensions in the Sibir Khanate between the rival Taibugid and Shaybanid clans. Kuchum, the Muslim chieftain of the rival Shaybanid clan and a direct descendent of Genghis Khan, desired to rule Siber. With the assistance of the Crimean Nogai Tatars, Kuchum killed Yadegar in 1563 and made himself the Khan of Siber. Tsar Ivan had never given Yadegar any protection from his enemies because the slain khan had failed to deliver the full sum of tribute that he had proposed to the tsar eight years earlier.

While Russia engaged in the protracted Livonian War on it western frontier, the Nogai Tatars in 1571 invaded the Russian empire from the south. They advanced all of the way to Moscow. When they set fire to the suburbs of Moscow on May 24, high winds blew it into the city, resulting in a conflagration.

Taking advantage of the disarray in the Tsardom of Russia, Kuchum stopped paying the tribute. The following year, he murdered the Russian ambassador and broke off relations with Russia. Kuchum then sent his nephew, Mametkul, to plunder Russian territory on the west side of the Urals.

In response to the depredations orchestrated by Kuchum, Tsar Ivan IV authorized the Stroganovs to prepare for war against the Sibirs. "[Recruit] as many Cossack volunteers as you can call upon, all well-armed with every manner of weapon from guns to bows and arrows," Ivan wrote.

Mametkul began raiding Stroganov territory along the Chusovaya River in 1573. The raiding parties burned villages and killed trappers and settlers. They also forced local Ostyak and Vogul tribes, who lived on both sides of the Urals, to join forces with the Khanate of Sibir and pay tribute to Kuchum.

The Stroganovs complained loudly about the growing menace to the tsar. "The Voguls live near our villages; the terrain is wooded, and they will not let our people and peasants to leave their forts, nor allow them to tend their crops nor to cut wood," they wrote. "And these petty people come to steal; they drive away our horses and cows and kill our people. They ruin our industry in the villages and won't let us pan salt."

The Stroganovs requested that Ivan IV grant them additional rights to explore eastward and impose order on areas they occupied beyond Russia's eastern frontier. The tsar agreed and issued a new charter in 1575 that allowed the Stroganovs to wage war against hostile tribes who invaded their lands and were the subjects of Khan Kuchum.

The tsar had previously suggested that the Stroganoffs should consider employing Cossacks under a dependable leader to protect their lands and commercial interests. Finally heeding the tsar's advice, the Stroganov's hired Cossack ataman (chieftain) Yermak Timofeyevich in 1579 to help defend their lands and businesses. Yermak had commanded a Cossack contingent in the Russian army during the Livonian War.

Yermak returned to his homeland in the Volga region as the long war in Livonia was nearing its conclusion. He and his band of Cossacks, who no longer could draw government pay as soldiers, began searching for new sources of income.

The Khanate of Sibir fielded a core force of 3,000 experienced Tatar horsemen, and it was rumored the Khan of Siber could put as many as 10,000 men in the field against the Russian Cossack invaders.

For the first two years of his employment, Yermak and his band of Cossack soldiers defended the Stroganov lands from incursions by Tatars, Cheremis, Ostyak, and Vogul tribesmen, who plundered their lands and carried off women and children to be slaves.

The Stroganovs had set their sights on eastward expansion beyond the Urals to extract natural resources from Siberia. Russian prospectors had located deposits of silver and iron ore just east of the Urals along the Tura River, and it was believed that the same area included sulfur, lead, and tin.

A popular and charismatic leader, Yermak cobbled together a small army of Cossacks and joined forces with atamans Ivan Koltso and Bogdan Briazga. The shrewd Stroganovs directed Yermak to undertake an expedition against Kuchum, describing riches to be had beyond the Urals. Maksim Stroganov, another senior member of the family, agreed to provide the Cossacks with supplies, but tried to get them to pay for the provisions.

The angry Cossacks came close to lynching him, with Ivan Koltso threatening to shoot Stroganov where he stood. Sufficiently cowed by the Cossacks, Stroganov furnished them with supplies needed for the expedition for free. In addition, the Stroganovs added 50 of their own armed retainers, as well as guides and interpreters, to Yermak's band.

The Stroganovs compensated the Cossacks handsomely. "[They] outfitted them with fine clothing and cannon, volley guns, seven-barreled muskets, and provisions in abundance," according to the *Stroganov Chronicle.* In addition, the merchant family furnished Yermak and his men with flat-bottomed river craft known as *doshchaniks*. These wooden boats could be rowed with oars, towed from the shore, or mounted with a sail. They could transport 20 men, as well as their weapons and supplies.

Much of the knowledge concerning Yermak's campaigns and other events involving the Russian conquest of Siberia are contained in several dozen works written from the late 16th through the 18th century known collectively as the *Siberian Chronicles*. In addition to the *Stroganov Chronicle*, other important chronicles are the *Yesipov, Kungursk, Pogodin,* and *Remezov*. The chronicles are complex and, while essential to understanding the period, they contain some apocryphal and contradictory information.

Having suffered from Tatar raids for years, the Stroganovs were aware of the military potential of the Khanate of Sibir, which had a core force of approximately 3,000 experienced Tatar horsemen. The Russian Ambassadorial Bureau estimated the total male population of the khanate at 40,000 souls, and it was rumored that Kuchum could field as many as 10,000 armed men. Although this number is almost certainly an exaggeration, the Ostyak and Vogul levies could add at least 1,000 warriors to Kuchum's host.

It was unlikely that the Stroganovs counted on Yermak and his men to conquer the Khanate of Sibir, but any foray by a band as strong as Yermak's would certainly relieve pressure on Stroganovs' territory. Yermak planned a swift raid by his Cossacks against Isker, the capital of the Sibir Khanate, before the rivers froze in late autumn. The Stroganov guides, familiar with the river network in the Ural Mountains, advised Yermak that the best time to cross the Urals would be in early September, when the autumn rains raised the water in the rivers substantially, thereby allowing the men to freely navigate their

ABOVE: Tsar Ivan IV expressed his pleasure at the exploits and acquisitions of the Cossack expedition into the Khanate of Sibir when Yermak's envoys returned to Moscow in 1583 laden with riches. OPPOSITE: Yermak's Cossacks armed with cannon, arquebuses, and crossbows make a display of force designed to intimidate their more numerous Tatar foes in the Khanate of Siber.

doshchaniks.

Yermak and his small force embarked on their journey east on September 1, 1582. His band consisted of 540 Cossacks, as well as 300 prisoners of war from the Livonian conflict that served as porters. The expedition traveled by boat up the Kama River to the Chusovaya River. The Cossacks had to contend with strong currents and rapids on the boulder-studded Chusovaya River. Entering the Serebryanka River, they continued to the Chuili River, from where they conducted a portage with their boats to the Zhuravl River. Putting their boats in the water once again, they entered the Baranch River, followed by the Tigil and Tura rivers. The last river they reached was the Tobol, where the Khanate of Sibir had been founded.

The first clash with the natives took place near the modern town of Turinsk on the Tura River, where Vogul ataman Yepancha had gathered his warriors. Disembarking from their boats, the Cossacks engaged Yepancha. In reply to Vogul arrows, the Cossacks fired several volleys from their muskets and then closed with cold steel. Dispersing the Voguls, the Cossacks looted Yepancha's settlement. "They killed many infidels whom they overcame with God's help," states the *Remezov Chronicle*. "And they took so much booty that the boats could not carry it, so they buried these possessions in the ground at the mouth of the river Tura."

Yepancha promptly reported to Kuchum of the approach of the Cossacks. Having won a string of victories over the Ostyak and Vogul tribes, Kuchum was confident that his forces could resist the Cossacks. Kuchum incorrectly surmised that the Cossacks were sent by the tsar, which meant the Russians would have had to strip their garrisons of men in the Perm region to form the expedition. If this were the case, then Perm would be practically undefended. Taking advantage of the situation as he perceived it, Kuchum sent his son and heir Prince Ali with his best troops to attack the Perm region. Ali's force travelled to the Urals by the northern route, skirting around Yermak's advance.

With the Cossacks rapidly approaching Isker in their light river boats, Kuchum gathered his Tatar warriors, as well as Ostyak and Vogul levies near the Chuvash Cape, and built a barrier of mud and tree trunks across the Irtysh River. Additional earthworks were thrown up on the shore, where Mametkul commanded the forces arrayed against Yermak. All the while, Kuchum watched the events unfold from the safety of a nearby height. Seeing the great host assembled before them, some of the Cossacks wanted to retreat, but Yermak would not hear of it. He knew all too well that a retreat would encourage Kuchum to attack. He therefore decided to attack the Tatars.

Disembarking from their boats, the Cossacks advanced against Mametkul. They stormed the earthworks twice, but the Tatars hurled them back both times. Seeing the Cossacks falling back,

Mametkul led his Tatar warriors forward. After absorbing volleys from Cossack firearms, the Tatars closed in to decide the matter with cold steel. Yermak rallied his men, and in the ensuing melee, Mametkul fell wounded from his horse and was taken away by his loyal warriors. When they saw Mametkul fall, the Tatars wavered. Worse still, their Ostyak and Vogul allies fled the field. The pursuing Cossacks reached the earthworks. Once at the earthworks, they overpowered the Tatars in hand-to-hand fighting and drove them from their entrenched position.

"The pagans shot innumerable arrows, and against them the Cossacks fired from fire-breathing muskets, and there was dire slaughter; in hand-to-hand fighting they cut each other down," states the *Yesipov Chronicle*. Although the Cossacks won, it was a Pyrrhic victory, for 100 Cossacks lay dead; of those who survived, almost no one escaped without a wound.

Seeing his warriors retreating, Kuchum rushed to Isker. Gathering his treasures, the khan abandoned his capital, and the town's residents followed him in flight. Yermak and his Cossacks entered Isker unopposed on October 20, 1582. Yermak's swift raid against Khan Kuchum had succeeded, but it was too late for the Cossacks to return to Perm given that the rivers had already frozen.

Several days after the Cossacks entered Isker, a local Vogul prince arrived with gifts and provisions and pledging his obeisance to the Russian tsar. Seeing that this prince and his men were unmolested, the town's residents began returning.

The Cossacks had difficulty wintering in the region. There was constant skirmishing with Mametkul troops. Nevertheless, Cossack parties were able to raid along the Irtysh River, collecting tribute and coaxing local princes into swearing allegiance to the tsar. While the Ostyak and Vogul nobles for the most part submitted willingly, the Tatar nobles in the villages near Isker resisted the Cossacks.

Ataman Briazga slaughtered the local nobles in one of the villages in order to compel others to submit. "[He] collected tribute with drawn sword, and then laying the sword on the table told them to pledge loyalty to the sovereign tsar, serve him, and pay tribute for all years, and not betray him," states the *Kungursk Chronicle.* Briazga then continued down the Irtysh River, collecting tribute from Ostyak tribes, but with less violence.

Supplies grew scarce in Isker as the winter dragged on. The Cossacks, who had acquired horses, conducted mounted forays into the countryside in search of provisions. One detachment of Cossacks arrived at a fortified encampment on the Demyanka River, which was controlled by Tatar ataman Nimnyuian. The ataman assembled a large force of Tatars, Ostyaks, and Voguls to resist the Cossacks. The Cossacks repeatedly assaulted the encampment over the course of three days but were unable to breach its defenses. Briazga eventually arrived with reinforcements that tipped the odds in favor of the Cossacks. With the additional troops, the Cossacks succeed in capturing the settlement.

While the Cossacks were establishing themselves in Isker, Prince Ali and his warriors arrived before Russia's Fort Cherdy in the Perm region. After an unsuccessful attempt at storming the fort, Ali destroyed several nearby villages before returning to Sibir.

While waiting for Ali to return, Kuchum gathered another strong force of 3,000 men under Mametkul to retake Isker. Taking the fight to the enemy once again, Yermak engaged the Tatars on December 5, at Lake Abalak, which was situated 10 miles from Isker. The fight was bloodier than at the Chuvash Cape and lasted all day. The fighting ended at nightfall, and the Tatars withdrew under cover of darkness. The Cossacks' losses were heavy, losing men Yermak could ill afford.

Another detachment under Briazga sailed down the Irtysh River in spring 1583. The Tatars ambushed the Cossacks in a narrow gorge. The Tatars approached the Cossacks on rafts and tried to board their boats by throwing grappling hooks, but the Cossacks fired a heavy volley that dispersed the attackers. Continuing along the Irtysh River, Briazga reached the Ob River, where he collected tribute and accepted the submission of the local tribes.

At that time, the Cossacks experienced discontent in their ranks owing in part to the harsh winter they had been through. With their ranks

Alamy

Alamy

The Stroganov's outfitted the Cossack explorers with boats to transport their supplies and equipment as they set off in autumn 1582 into the river network of the Ural Mountains.

steadily dwindling, many of the Cossacks wanted to return to Russia with the great store of booty they had accumulated. But Yermak decided to stay in Isker. In an effort to replenish his ranks, he sent one of his principal lieutenants, ataman Cherkas Aleksandrov, with 25 men to Moscow to make a personal appeal to the tsar for aid.

Reaching Moscow in autumn 1583, Aleksandrov and his men were full of apprehension, for they were unsure of how the tsar would react to their unauthorized expedition. To their surprise, Ivan IV expressed his pleasure when he learned of their exploits and their acquisition. He rewarded the members of the delegation with cloth and money and arranged for gold to be sent to Yermak and the other Cossack atamans. But he instructed Aleksandrov to tell Yermak that the tsar requested his presence in Moscow. The tsar wanted to present an additional gift to Yermak. Although there is no official record of the gift, it is believed that the tsar gave Yermak two suits of armor.

After Aleksandrov's departure, Tsar Ivan IV ordered preparations to be made for the spring 1584 campaign. The expedition commander Prince Semyon Bolkhovskii was to be accompanied by captains Ivan Kireev and Ivan Vasiliev Glukhov. Their force was to consist of 300 troops recruited from various regions such as Kazan, Sviiazhsk, Perm, and Viatka. The tsar also instructed the Stroganovs to furnish them with boats to transport their supplies.

The tsar died on March 28, 1584, and was succeeded two months later by his son, Fyodor. The new tsar was both physically weak and mentally deficient, and his wife's brother, Boris Godunov, managed the affairs of state.

The Cossacks inflicted multiple defeats on Kuchum's troops in 1584. These victories emboldened local tribal chiefs who were secretly hostile to Kuchum. One of the Tatar nobles, Senbakhta Tagin, who was a key rival of Mametkul, informed the Cossacks that Mametkul's camp was located on the Vagai River, 60 miles from Isker. Yermak immediately sent a strong detachment. The Cossack force attacked the Tatar camp under cover of night, inflicting heavy casualties on it and capturing Mametkul. The Cossacks eventually brought Mametkul to Moscow in 1585, where he pledged allegiance to Tsar Fyodor. Entering the Russian service, Mametkul fought with distinction during the Russo-Swedish War of 1590-1595 and in the 1598 campaign against the Crimean Tatars.

Mametkul's capture further emboldened Kuchum's enemies. He'd lost his best commander and the support of Mametkul's warriors, and even his closest advisors and nobles began deserting him. Sensing Kuchum's weakness, Seid-Khan, the nephew of murdered Khan Yadegar, returned to Siberia from his exile in Bukhara determined to get revenge. With his base of power eroded, Kuchum gathered forces still loyal to him and retreated to the eastern portion of the Khanate.

Unbeknownst to Kuchum, Yermak was experiencing difficulties of his own. His campaign up to that point had cost him many men. What is more, Cossack supplies of gunpowder and bullets were nearly exhausted, so many of the Cossacks opted to return to Russia. Anticipating a possible withdrawal from Isker, Yermak decided in 1584 to conduct a campaign in the Pelym region of the Sibir Khanate, which was the closest section of the realm to the Urals, in order to secure his lines of communications back to Russia.

Yermak's force moved at rapid pace. The Vogul tribes in the Pelym region around the Tavda River largely remained loyal to Kuchum, and Yermak wanted to destroy the threat the Voguls in Pelym posed to his Cossack band. The Voguls put up a fierce resistance. With their ammunition and gunpowder almost completely exhausted, the Cossacks engaged their enemy with swords. In one engagement, Cossack ataman Nikita Pan and his small force was wiped out. Altogether, the Pelym campaign cost Yermak 39 men.

The capital of Pelym, a town by the same name, was located on a fortified hill, and its ruler, Amir Aplygerim, could muster 700 warriors. Approaching Pelym, Yermak looked despondently on its strong defenses. Attacking Pelym would cost Yermak losses that he could ill afford, and therefore he returned to Isker.

Shortly after Yermak returned to Isker, the Russian detachment under Prince Semen Bolkhovskii arrived late in 1584. Setting off on their campaign, the soldiers carried their provisions with them. During the delays they encountered crossing the Ural Mountains, the soldiers consumed their supplies. As a result, they arrived in Isker tired and hungry. Worse still, they lacked winter clothing. The soldiers were expected to live off the land, but they could not do so in the hostile Pelym region.

The Cossacks living in Isker had sufficient quarters, but they had no knowledge of Bolkhovskii being sent to assist them or that they were to billet the soldiers. Moreover, there were only enough provisions in town for the Cossacks. The winter of 1584-1585 was brutal, with temperatures far colder than normal.

"These men sent with the [commander] Prince Semen Bolkhovskii, and with the captains, were Kazan and Sviiazhsk fusiliers, and men from Perm and Viatka," states the *Pogodin Chronicle.* "They had no supplies at all, and all these men who were sent … perished in the Old Siberia from hunger."

But the dead soldiers left behind their weapons, gunpowder, and ammunition. Even though Yermak's strength by then was fewer than 200 men, he could still fight with fresh supplies. Bolkhovskii also brought the tsar's orders for Yermak to come to Moscow, but after Bolkhovskii's death, Yermak simply ignored the orders.

Cossacks, who were expert horsemen armed with sabre and lance, waged many undeclared wars against Tatar foes in Europe and Asia.

Key Dates in the Conquest of Siberia

1468 The Khanate of Sibir is founded in western Siberia as the Khanate of the Golden Horde breaks up into smaller states.

1555 Khan Yadegar of Sibir pledges his allegiance to Tsar Ivan IV in the hope that he would help him against his opponents.

1558 Tsar Ivan IV grants the Stroganov family a large fief to develop the Perm region on the west side of the Ural Mountains.

1575 Tsar Ivan IV authorizes the Stroganovs to wage war against hostile Siberian tribes raiding their lands and to establish forts and settlements east of the Urals.

September 1582 Yermak's Cossack band embarks on its expedition into the Khanate of Sibir.

October 1582 Khan Kuchum abandons Isker, the capital of the Khanate of Sibir, and Yermak's Cossacks capture it without a fight.

1583 Yermak sends envoys bearing 5,200 furs from western Siberia to Tsar Ivan IV, and the tsar promises to send reinforcements.

August 6, 1585 Siberian Tatar forces launch a devastating night attack on Yermak's Cossack army near the mouth of the Vagai River, and Yermak is mortally wounded in the fighting.

1586 Vasilii Sukin and Ivan Miasnoi found Tyumen, the oldest Russian settlement in Siberia, on the Tura River.

1590 Khan Kuchum launches a counterattack at Tobolsk marked by indiscriminate slaughter of Tatars and Russians alike.

August 1598 Russian forces annihilate Khan Kuchum's army on the Irmen River, completing the conquest of the Khanate of Sibir.

1600 Nogai Tatars slay Khan Kuchum, who had sought refuge in their lands.

1639 Russians reach the shores of the Pacific Ocean in eastern Siberia.

—William E. Welsh

Yermak tried to avoid losing more men and was amenable to peace overtures from Tatar nobles. One of them was Ataman Karacha, who'd previously broken with Kuchum and established himself on the Tara River. Karacha offered friendship to Yermak and requested a Cossack detachment to accompany him for protection from his enemies.

Yermak sent Ataman Ivan Koltso with 40 soldiers to assist Karacha; however, immediately upon their arrival in Karacha's camp, the Tatars ambushed and killed the Cossacks. The victory encouraged other Tatar nobles to rise up against the Cossacks. As a result, several small groups of Cossacks who were collecting tribute and supplies were wiped out.

A large force of Tatars under Karacha surrounded Isker in spring 1585. Karacha established a tight cordon around the town and prevented those still loyal to Yermak from bringing in supplies.

A small force under Ataman Matvei Mescheryak sallied forth one night from Isker and caught Karacha's men by surprise. They slew many, but Karacha escaped. The following morning, Karacha rallied the rest of the Tatars besieging Isker. As a result, Mescheryak found his force encircled. Taking up positions behind bushes and trees, the Cossacks fired withering volleys from their muskets. Unable to match their firepower, Karacha raised his siege of Isker and withdrew from the area.

A messenger subsequently arrived in Isker. He informed Yermak that Kuchum was preventing a caravan from Bukhara from reaching the town. Believing that the caravan was bringing provisions in addition to merchandize, Yermak set off with 100 soldiers to break the Tatar stranglehold on Isker.

The Cossacks advanced along the Vagai River. When they could not locate the Bukhara caravan along the Vagai River, they traveled up the Irtysh River. As they made their way along the riverbank, Tatar riders conducted harassing attacks. The Cossacks had brought only a small supply of gunpowder and ammunition with them, and it was soon nearly exhausted from the constant skirmishing.

Reaching the upper Irtysh River, Yermak encountered a strongly held fort at Kulary, which had been established to protect the eastern reaches of the Siberian khanate from the Kalmyks. He besieged the fort for five days. When his troops failed to breach the fort's defenses, Yermak ordered his men to withdraw to Isker.

The failure at Kulary emboldened the Tatars and Karacha. As his Cossack force was retreating, another messenger arrived to inform Yermak that the Bukhara caravan was in fact on the upper Vagai River. The Cossacks rowed to that location from the Irtysh. All the while, a large force of Tatars shadowed them on the riverbank. The

LEFT: Founded in 1586, the village of Tyumen was one of the first permanent Russian settlements east of the Ural Mountains. It is situated in the watershed of the Ob River, which is the fifth longest river in the world. ABOVE: Tatars use Yermak's corpse for target practice following a night ambush in which the Cossack leader was slain.

Tatars purposely remained out of sight in order to be able to catch the Cossacks by suprise. When the Cossacks failed to locate the caravan, they turned back to the mouth of the Vagai River, where they camped for the night on a river island.

The night of August 5-6, 1585, was dark, and a heavy rain fell. The Tatars crossed a narrow channel undetected and fell upon the Cossack sentries. The main body of Cossacks rallied, and a furious fight unfolded in the darkness. Unable to use their firearms in the rain, the Cossacks fought hand-to-hand as they attempted to cut their way to their boats. As the Tatars attempted to cut the Cossacks off from their boats, the Cossacks desperately fought to reach them. Yermak, who lost 18 men in the fighting, succeeded in securing the boats. As his men scrambled aboard, a Tatar spear pierced Yermak's throat. Yermak fell mortally wounded into the river and drowned.

Although legend has it that Yermak was wearing a heavy coat of mail presented to him by the tsar, which weighed him down and caused him to drown, this is highly improbable. First, soldiers did not sleep in their armor. Second, Yermak would not have had time to don his mail armor if he was the victim of a surprise attack.

When the Tatars came across Yermak's body several days later, they stripped it and used it for target practice. His weapons, armor, and clothing were divided among Tatar atamans. After several days, his body was buried in an unmarked grave at an undisclosed location.

With Yermak dead, the Siberian expedition drew to a close. Abandoning Isker, Ataman Mescheryak and Captain Ivan Glukhov led 90 survivors back to Russia. Since the force was too few in number to fight its way back through Pelym, it sailed north along the Irtysh and Ob rivers and crossed the Ural Mountains by a long, roundabout way. A jubilant Kuchum returned to his capital after an absence of almost three years.

Unbeknownst to the survivors, a strong body of Russian fighting men had already crossed the Ural Mountains on their way to Isker. Commander Ivan Mansurov led 700 troops to Isker, where they ran headlong into a large Tatar force. Mansurov saw no sign of the Cossacks.

Not wishing to engage superior numbers, Mansurov bypassed Isker and turned back. He intended to catch up to the Cossacks; however, as his command traveled down the Irtysh, the weather turned cold. Not wanting his men to die of exposure to the elements, Mansurov decided to winter on the Ob River.

Mansurov's expedition, unlike Bolkhovskii's, had sufficient winter clothing, provisions, and military supplies. The soldiers used the remaining autumn days to construct a fort near the mouth of the Ob River. The Obskii Fort, and the settlement which eventually grew up around it, later became a major center of Russian power in Siberia.

The Ostyaks made an attempt that winter to destroy the fort but were easily beaten back. The Ostyak atamans soon returned with tribute, pledging loyalty to the Russian Tsar. In spring 1806, Mansurov returned to Russia with the remainder of his command, leaving behind a strong garrison at the fort.

Kuchum did not remain in Isker for long. Shortly after survivors of Yermak's expedition abandoned Isker, a Tatar civil war flared up in the khanate. Seidyak, son of Bekbulat—murdered by Kuchum—returned from his exile in Bukhara, bringing a powerful force of Kazakh warriors with them. Joining forces with Karacha, Seidyak defeated Kuchum and captured Isker.

Tsar Fyodor sent 300 more men under local ruler Vasilii Sukin beyond the Urals in 1586. A number of Yermak's former men served as guides in the new expedition. At that point in time, they were not the free Cossacks, but enrolled in the tsar's service. Sukin established Tyumen on the Tura River, the first Russian city in Siberia.

Another strong Russian detachment of 500 men under Danila Chulkov approached Isker in 1587. They constructed a new fort at Tobolsk using planks from disassembled boats. The location of the fort was 20 miles from Isker at the confluence of Tobol and Irtysh rivers. The Russians inhabiting these settlements collected tribute from the local tribes for the tsar.

The settlements at Tyumen and Tobolsk were the first Russian settlements founded east of the Urals. They were established not only to subjugate the native peoples in the surrounding area, but as a place to collect fur tribute. The Russians deliberately chose the confluences of major rivers and streams, as well as at important portages, for the sites of their new towns.

The princes Seidyak, Karacha, and Uraz-Mahomed, who were the new rulers of Isker, soon approached Chulkov while he was hunting with his falcons. Opening the gates, Chulkov welcomed them. Yermak's men among Chulkov's detachment could not forgive Karacha for ambushing Ivan Koltso and his men. During the feast in their guests' honor, the Cossacks attacked the Tatars and captured all three of the princes. Their guards sold their lives dearly. One of the great warriors killed during the fight was Yermak's former lieutenant Mescheryak.

Hearing about Seidyak's capture, the residents of Isker feared Russian revenge, so they abandoned the town. The Cossacks took Prince Seidyak to Moscow, where he swore an oath to the Russian tsar and was enrolled in Russian service.

Even though his health was declining, Kuchum could not accept the loss of his power. The elderly ruler suddenly appeared outside Tobolsk in 1590. Unable to attack the town, Kuchum burned down nearby villages and indiscriminately massacred both Russian and Tatar inhabitants. The Russians, with the assistance of their new Tatar allies, set off in pursuit. They caught up with Kuchum near Lake Chilikul and defeated him, but the wily Kuchum escaped again.

With the Russians still pursuing him, Kuchum retreated to the southeastern corner of his former khanate. The 1,500 troops sent against him included friendly Tatars and Bashkirs. Cherkass Aleksandrov, who was one of Yermak's former lieutenants, commanded the force.

Advancing up the Irtysh River, the Russians built an outpost that later became the town of Tara. The Russian force drove Kuchum and his last army east towards the upper Ob River. Emissaries of Tsar Boris Gudonov offered Kuchum clemency if he would surrender, but the blind old man, who considered capitulation to be a disgraceful act, refused to capitulate.

The Russians cornered Kuchum and 500 of his warriors near the Irmen River, a tributary of the Ob River, on August 20, 1598. Kuchum put up a strong fight but was soundly defeated. The Russians killed 200 of his warriors and captured 50 more. Among those captured were five of Kuchum's sons, two grandsons, and five women from his harem. To the Russians' embarrassment, Kuchum escaped once again to the south. This time, he had no choice but to seek refuge among the Nogai Tatars. Having no use for Kuchum, the Nogais assassinated him in 1600.

The establishment of Tyumen in 1586 opened a new phase in the conquest of Siberia that was driven by the increasing demand in Europe for luxury furs. Rather than haphazard exploits by small parties of trappers and traders, the Russian government embarked on a systematic program of exploration and exploitation. The Cossacks made sure that they always constituted the vanguard of the Russian advance east. Unlike Yermak's rush to Isker, every new Russian territorial advance was preceded by the establishment of new towns and villages.

Expanding east to the great Amur River in the mid-17th century, Russia became entangled in a military conflict with the Qing Empire, the last Chinese imperial dynasty. After suffering a temporary setback at the hands of Chinese, the Russians in 1639 reached the shores of the Pacific Ocean in 1639.

Tsar Peter the Great, in one of his last acts before he died, ordered Danish navigator Vitus Bering in 1725 to begin exploring the North Pacific for potential colonization. In the wake of explorers such as Bering came waves of settlers. The Russians established the first European settlement in Alaska at Three Saints Bay, near present-day Kodiak, in 1784.

By the mid-1860s, the Russian population of Siberia numbered in the millions. As the Russian population increased, native populations suffered drastic decreases. With them the Russians brought diseases previously unknown in Siberia, such as smallpox. Some native peoples, such as the Tungus and Yakut, lost as much as 80 percent of their population to disease.

Up until 1930s, the process by which Russia acquired Siberia was referred to as a conquest. But political expediency in the 20th century required a less negative connotation, and so the conquest was referred to as an annexation. For this reason, the Soviet Union portrayed it as a voluntary union of the native Siberian populations with the greater Russian population.

Yermak, the Cossack ataman who opened the door to Siberia, obtained the status of a national hero. His expedition had a profound and far-reaching effect on Russian history. By the late 17th century, Russia's borders were similar to those the country has now. ■

The Russians finally vanquished Khan Kuchum's last army on a plateau above the Irmen River in 1598. After the destruction of his army, Kuchum fled into Nogai territory, where he was assassinated two years later.

THE KOREAN WAR USHERED IN THE JET AGE OF MILITARY AVIATION AND PITTED THE MOST ADVANCED AIRCRAFT OF THE TWO PRINCIPAL COLD-WAR ADVERSARIES AGAINST EACH OTHER.

By Christopher Miskimon

Tim Felce (Airwolfhound)

U.S. Air Force

LEFT: A Mig-15 follows an F-86F Sabre at an air show in California in 2014. These two aircraft ushered in the age of jet fighter warfare during the Korean War. RIGHT: F-86 ace, Major George A. Davis, had 14 victories before he was shot down.

A B-29 crew's worst nightmare was a MiG-15 fighter boring in on them with its 23mm cannon blazing. The MiG pilot's own nightmares involved the F-86 Sabre, a jet with similar performance in most areas, but with pilots who were often vastly more experienced and aggressive. The F-86's six .50-caliber machine guns could tear a plane to pieces just as well as the Soviet-built plane's cannon could. Determined to sweep the MiGs from the skies, American Sabre squadrons often went hunting for MiGs. "MiG Alley," the area around the Yalu River in North Korea, proved a target-rich environment.

By early 1952, the Americans had a system in place designed to improve their chances of catching the enemy at a disadvantage. The F-86s took off in flights of four, with flights staggered three minutes apart. Three Sabre squadrons, totaling 48 aircraft, needed 33 minutes to all get airborne. This allowed the Americans to keep aircraft constantly over MiG Alley, so that any MiG groups that rose to intercept the Sabres were met by fresh planes coming in. Often the Sabre pilots flew below the contrail level, so that if they saw a plane leaving a contrail above them, they knew it was hostile. This also meant any MiGs diving on them from above the contrail level would be visible. They flew until they ran low on fuel before returning to Kimpo or Seoul airfields.

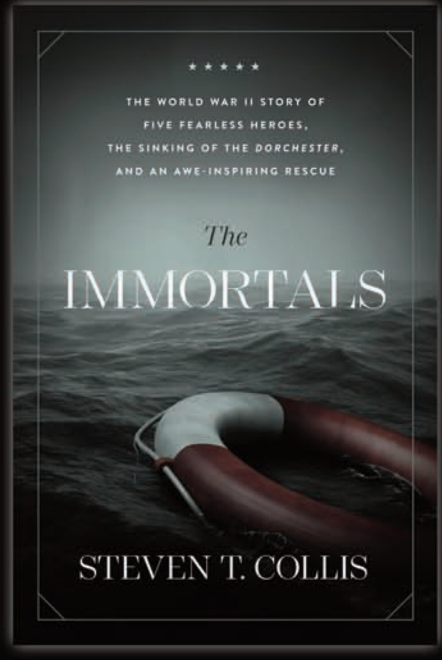
The combat became intense, and casualties could be high. Three Soviet pilots, secretly flying for the North Koreans, met disaster in January 1952. Two pilots were shot down but managed to bail out of their stricken planes. Both suffered wounds sufficient to put them out of the war. The third, Senior Lieutenant V.G. Stepanov, died while landing his battle-damaged MiG-15. U.S. fighter ace Major George A. Davis, who had 14 victories, died in February 1952. Both the Soviet and Chinese air forces took credit for his downing.

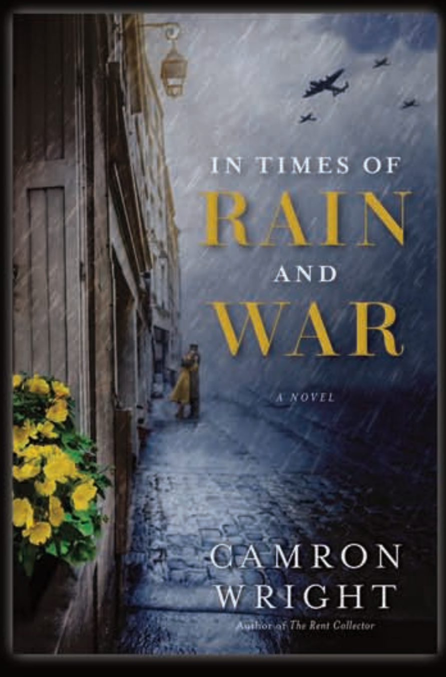
MICHAEL NAPIER
KOREAN AIR WAR
SABRES, MIGS AND METEORS 1950-53

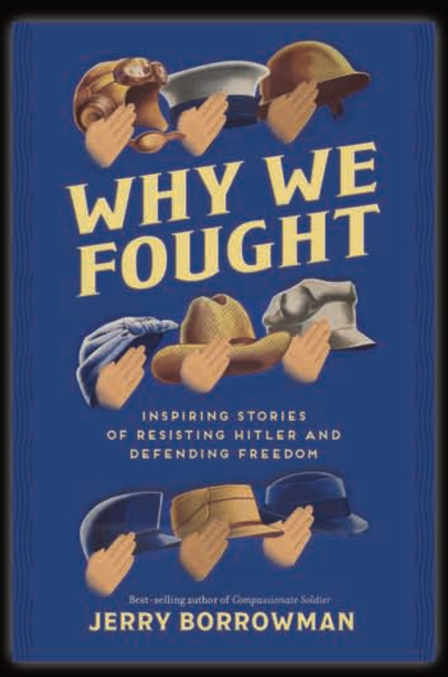
In March 1950, the Soviet pilots received brand-new MiG-15b fighters, which their opponents quickly noticed, since the new planes had dull silver-green paint rather than the clear varnish of previous models.

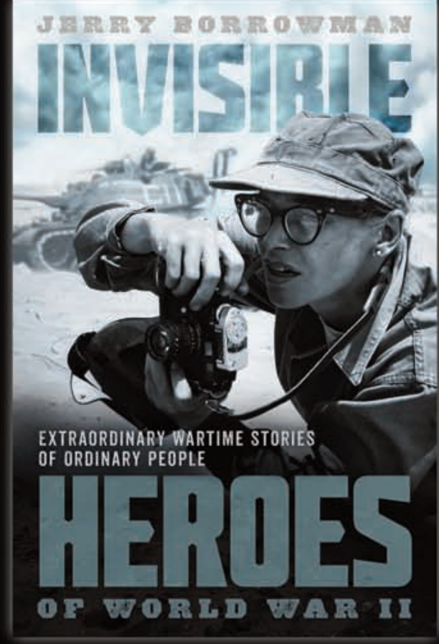
In one instance the Americans tried to kill North Korean pilots before they'd even learned to fly. On July 4, 1952, a force of 70 F-84s attacked the North Korean military academy at Sakchu. U.S. intelligence indicated that the academy trained approximately 2,000 officer cadets. A regiment of MiGs rose to intercept the incoming U.S. attack aircraft, but they failed to notice a covering force of F-86s, which dove on the MiGs and shot down seven of them, at the cost of just a single F-86. Subsequent waves of MiGs suffered four more losses to one American loss. The bombing mission achieved little result, but the covering force achieved a significant tactical success. Later that summer, United Nations Forces began receiving the

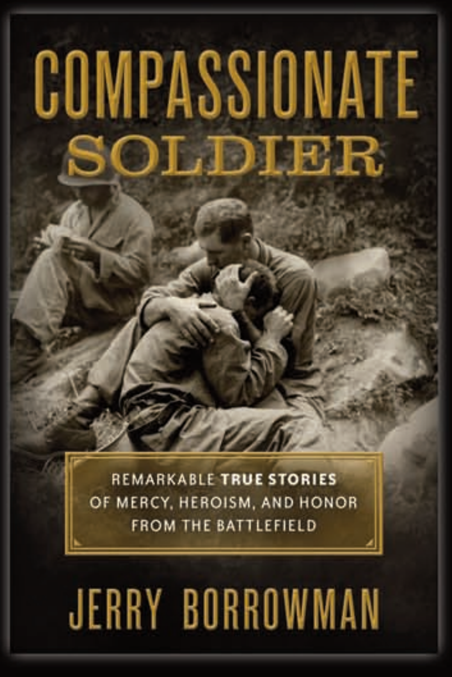
WORLD WAR II MUST-READS











AVAILABLE WHEREVER BOOKS ARE SOLD.

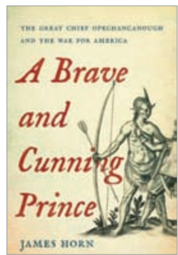
F-86F, with a more powerful engine that could match that of the MiG-15b. A new wing design also improved high-speed, high-altitude maneuvering. A night fighter known as the F3D Skyknight also made its first appearance that summer.

The air war over Korea proved a constant back-and-forth struggle. Pilots of varying skill levels faced off in aerial duels. The United Nations Forces usually held the advantage. Aircraft-design improvements came at a fast pace as each side tried to give their flyers a decisive edge in combat. Many piston-engine aircraft still flew, mainly as bombers and close-air-support planes, but the age of the jet was decisively ushered in during the conflict.

The overall arc of the Korean air campaign is well told in ***Korean Air War: Sabres, MiGs and Meteors 1950-53*** (Michael Napier, Osprey Books, Oxford UK, 2021, 319 pp., photographs, appendices, glossary, bibliography, index, $40.00 hardcover).

The author succinctly explains the capabilities of both sides of the Korean air war. Pilot quality, logistics, and advancing technologies all came into play. A dizzying variety of aircraft flew during this war, from leftover World War II aircraft to the latest jets, and each is shown in its own capacity.

The author also deftly offers context by providing information on the reason each air force flew the missions it did and how the missions contributed to the air campaign as a whole. The book is extensively illustrated using both color and black and white photography, showing both aircraft and pilots plying their deadly trade. A glossary and several appendices assist the reader and list ace pilots with five or more confirmed victories, a small but proud club of aviators on both sides of the war.



A Brave and Cunning Prince: The Great Chief Opechancanough and the War for America (James Horn, Basic Books, New York NY, 2021, 320 pp., maps, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index, $30.00, hardcover)

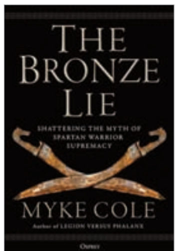
During the mid-1500s, Spanish explorers sailed up the Chesapeake Bay, where they kidnapped a small Native American boy and took him back to Spain, then later to Mexico. He returned to North America a decade later, now converted to Catholicism and with a band of Jesuits intent on establishing a Christian mission. Not long after he returned to his home continent, he organized a war party, killed the Jesuits, and began a lifelong struggle to rid his homeland of Europeans. The English called him Opechancanough, and he helped create one of the most powerful native chiefdoms in the Mid-Atlantic region. This chief of the Powhatan Confederacy fought against British settlers when they arrived in Virginia, starting the first of many bloody wars between the English and the Native Americans. These wars lasted four decades and almost destroyed the fledgling English presence before it could grow into a colony and eventually a state.

This biography brings to light one of North America's forgotten military figures. It is the first book written about Opechancanough and his struggle to save his people from subjugation. It also reveals the subject's keen sense of strategy, intelligence gathering, and tactical skill, belying biased accounts of Native American military acumen. The author's detailed research is evident in the work's flowing text, accompanied by good maps and numerous illustrations.

British Infantryman Versus Mahdist Warrior: Sudan 1884-98 (Ian Knight, Osprey Books, Oxford UK, 2021, 80 pp., maps, photographs, bibliography, index, $22.00, softcover)

The Sudan contains some of the world's most inhospitable terrain. In the last decades of the 19th century, it also held a very capable and determined enemy of the British Empire. The Mahdists, followers of an Islamic religious teacher who fashioned himself the "Guided One," or al-Mahdi, embarked on an extended campaign against the Egyptian Government and the British who essentially oversaw it. This set the stage for almost two decades of campaigning as Anglo-Egyptian and Mahdist forces clashed in numerous battles for which the outcome was not always certain. This was the time of Maj. Gen. Charles Gordon and Khartoum, of British infantry squares against charging masses of fanatical warriors, and the effects of advancing technology against devoted but ill-armed natives.

The author compares the British soldier to his Mahdist counterpart by examining their training, motivations, weapons, and equipment. Three battles serve as examples in this study, and they are Abu Klea in January 1885, Tofrek in March 1885, and Atbara in April 1898. Typical of this series, the book features several original illustrations; clear and instructive maps; and assessments of each side's strengths and weaknesses, battlefield actions, and the aftermath of the fighting.

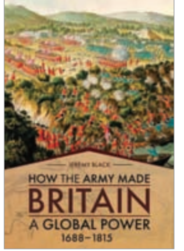


The Bronze Lie: Shattering the Myth of Spartan Warrior Supremacy (Myke Cole, Osprey Publishing, Oxford UK, 2021, 464 pp., maps, illustrations, appendices, glossary, bibliography, index $30.00, hardcover)

Studies of Western Civilization tend to view Sparta as a city-state populated entirely by superb warriors who vanquished their foes. The truth is more mundane. They lost to the Athenians in the waters off Naxos shortly after the Peloponnesian Wars. During their most legendary battle at Thermopylae, they did not fight alone, and their sacrifice, while cementing their reputation, did not stop the Persian war machine.

In 371 BC, Sparta's best warriors were chased down and killed at Leuctra by another group of 300—Theban warriors who defeated the Spartans decisively, even killing their king. A Spartan relief column elected to retreat rather than attempt revenge on the Theban Sacred Band. This does not mean the Spartans were not great warriors, for they had their share of notable victories, as well. For a time, they had the best heavy infantry in Greece, but the modern, idealized image of the Spartans does not hold up to serious scrutiny.

In fairness, such over-idealization is common with many elite military forces, including the Samurai, Mongols, and the British Special Air Service. The author attempts to show the Spartans as they existed, covering their strengths, weaknesses, victories, and defeats. He succeeds in his goal through lively writing, knowledge of his subject, and intellectual honesty, presenting a balanced view of a group overly shrouded in legend. In doing so, he breaks the hold pop culture places on the Spartans and brings them into the light of open scrutiny.



How the Army Made Britain a Global Power 1688-1815 (Jeremy Black, Casemate Books, Havertown PA, 2021, 239 pp., notes, bibliography, index, $65.00, hardcover)

While the Royal Navy has long held a reputation for sailing and fighting around the globe, the British Army

Statement of Ownership, Managagement & Circulation 1. Publication Title: Military Heritage Magazine. 2. Publication Number 1524-8666. 3. Filing Date 9/28/21. 4. Issue Frequency- Quarterly. 5. Number of Issues Published Annually 4. 6. Annual subscription Price $39.95. 7. Complete Mailing address of Known office of publication- 6731 Whittier Avenue, suite C-100, Mclean, Fairfax County, Virginia 22101-4554. Contact Person- Mark Hintz. Telephone (including area code) 703-964-0361 x 101. 8. Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office Of Publisher- 6731 Whittier Avenue, Suite C-100, Mclean, Virginia 22101-4554. 9. Publisher (Name and complete mailing address)- Mark Hintz 6731 Whittier Avenue, suite C-100, Mclean, Virginia 22101-4554. Editor- William E. Welsh 6731 Whittier Avenue, suite C-100, Mclean, Virginia 22101-4554.Managing Editor- Carl Gnam 6731 Whittier Avenue, suite A-100, Mclean, Virginia 22101-4554. 10. Owner- Full Name- Sovereign Media Company, 6731 Whittier Avenue, suite C-100, Mclean, Virginia 22101-4554. Mark Hintz- 6731 Whittier Avenue, suite C-100, Mclean, Virginia 22101-4554. Carl Gnam- 6731 Whittier Avenue, suite C- 100, Mclean, Virginia 22101-4554. 11. Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages or Other Securities. None. 12. Tax Status- N/A 13. Publication Title- Military Heritage Magazine. 14. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below Fall 2021. 15. Extent and nature of Circulation. Average No copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months a. total Number of Copies (Net Press Run) 25,013. (1) mailed Outside County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 9,386. (2) Mailed In-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541- 0. (3) Paid Distribution Outside the Mails including Sales through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Paid Distribution outside USPS 5,001. (4) Paid Distribution by Other Classes of Mail Through the USPS- 0. C. Total Paid Distribution – 14,387. D. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (By Mail and Outside the Mail) (1) Free or Nominal Rate Outside-County copies included on PS Form 3541- 0. (2) Free or Nominal Rate In-County Copies Included on PS Form 3541 (2) 0. (3) Free or Nominal Rate Copies mailed at Other Classes Through the USPS (eg. First Class mail) 0. (4) Free or Nominal Rate Distribution Outside the mail (Carriers or other means) 0. E. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution 0. F. Total Distribution 14,387. G. Copies Not distributed 10,626. H. Total 25,013. I Percent Paid 100%. Number Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date a. Total Number of Copies (Net Press Run) 25,572. (1) mailed Outside County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 9,122. (2) Mailed In-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541- 0. (3) Paid Distribution Outside the Mails including Sales through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Paid Distribution outside USPS 4,926 (4) Paid Distribution by Other Classes of Mail Through the USPS- 0. C. Total Paid Distribution – 14,048 D. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (By Mail and Outside the Mail) (1) Free or Nominal Rate Outside-County copies included on PS Form 3541- 0. (2) Free or Nominal Rate In-County Copies Included on PS Form 3541 (2) 0. (3) Free or Nominal Rate Copies mailed at Other Classes Through the USPS (eg. First Class mail) 0. (4) Free or Nominal Rate Distribution Outside the mail (Carriers or other means) 0. E. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution 0. F. Total Distribution 14,048. G. Copies Not distributed 11,524. H. Total 25,572. Percent Paid 100%. 16. Electronic Copy Circulation. Average No Copies Each issue during Preceding 12 Months. A. Paid Electronic Copies 183. B. Total Paid Print copies + paid Electronic Copies 14,569.C. Total Print Distribution + Paid Electronic Copies 14,569. D. Percent Paid (Both Print & Electronic Copies) 100%. No Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date. A. Paid Electronic Copies 167. B. Total Paid Print copies + Paid Electronic Copies 14,215. C. Total Print Distribution + Paid electronic Copies 14,215. D. Percent paid (both Print & Electronic Copies) 100% 17. Publication of Statement of Ownership If the publication is a general publication, publication of this statement is required. Will be printed in the Winter 2022 issue of this publication. 17. Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager or Owner Mark Hintz. Date 9/28/21

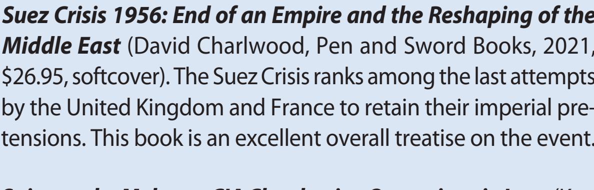
SHORT BURSTS

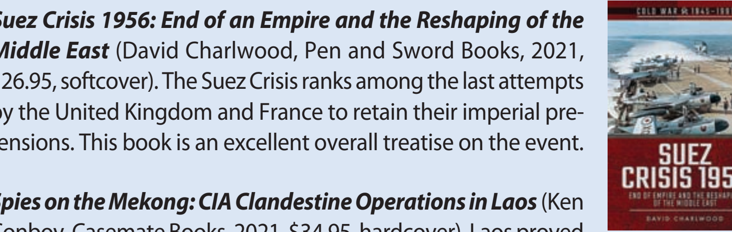
The Russian Civil War 1918-1921: An Operational-Strategic Sketch of the Red Army's Combat Operations (Translated by Richard W. Harrison, Casemate Books, 2021, $65.00, hardcover). This book is part three of the three-volume official Soviet history of the war. While biased, it provides valuable information about the conflict.

The Cold War Wilderness of Mirrors: Counterintelligence and the U.S. and Soviet Military Liaison Missions 1947-1990 (Aden C. Magee, Casemate Books, 2021, $34.95, hardcover). The Military Liaison Missions provided a legal way for the two nations to spy on one another during the Cold War, in the hope of preventing actual hostilities.

SAS Combat Vehicles 1942-91 (Gavin Mortimer, Osprey Books, 2021, $19.00, softcover). The British Special Air Services has a long tradition of using modified four-wheel-drive vehicles for combat missions. This book reveals their origins and evolution.

Fighting for Time: Rhodesia's Military and Zimbabwe's Independence (Charles D. Melson, Casemate Books, 2021, $65.00, hardcover). The author presents a new perspective on this little-known conflict of the 1960s and 1970s. He uses extensive participant accounts to bring the narrative to life.





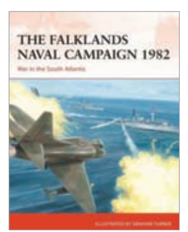
Suez Crisis 1956: End of an Empire and the Reshaping of the Middle East (David Charlwood, Pen and Sword Books, 2021, $26.95, softcover). The Suez Crisis ranks among the last attempts by the United Kingdom and France to retain their imperial pretensions. This book is an excellent overall treatise on the event.

Spies on the Mekong: CIA Clandestine Operations in Laos (Ken Conboy, Casemate Books, 2021, $34.95, hardcover). Laos proved a hotbed of espionage and intrigue during the Second Indochina War. This book reveals the complexities and depth of operations conducted there.

is truly its equal as a world-spanning force. During the United Kingdom's expansion into the British Empire, the army went wherever English ships, missionaries, explorers, and merchants travelled.

From 1760 to 1815, British troops fought in Montreal, Cape Town, Copenhagen, Waterloo, Manila, and throughout the American colonies. While they were not always victorious, they were always taken seriously. Although other European armies never got more than a few hundred miles from their bases, the British mounted successful expeditions thousands of miles from the home islands. Along the way they gained extensive experience, flexibility, and determination. Napoleon scoffed at Wellington, branding him as a Sepoy general, but Wellington beat him decisively in 1815.

This new study of the British army reveals its role both in Britain's expansion into empire and in the protection and preservation of that empire. The author studies the various places the army fought, analyzing their performance, the lessons learned, and its role in creating the empire. The book also contains extensive information on the technical, organizational, and tactical innovations that occurred during the period.

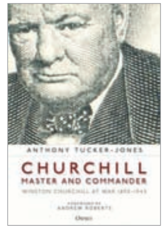


The Falklands Naval Campaign 1982: War in the South Atlantic (Edward Hampshire, Osprey Book, Oxford UK, 2021, 96 pp., maps, photographs, bibliography, index, $24.00, softcover)

The Falklands War pitted the United Kingdom, a key NATO member with longstanding military and naval traditions, against Argentina, one of the most powerful countries in South America. It is also one of the few major campaigns in the last 80 years involving true naval combat.

Aircraft carriers, fighter and attack aircraft such as the Harrier jet, nuclear submarines, anti-ship missiles, and large surface warships all saw use during the fighting. Both sides lost ships, but the Royal Navy fought through serious losses to achieve their goal of sea control and the landing of ground forces. Despite sinking or damaging several British ships, eventually the Argentine navy's own losses forced it out of the campaign, leaving their troops on the islands largely unsupported and doomed to defeat. It proved a risky gamble for Argentina, one that did not pay off and led to a humiliating defeat and unnecessary loss of life for both combatants.

All the major engagements of the war are covered in detail in this book. The author presents the points of view of both sides, providing a balanced look at the various operations. The text is both clear and engaging, giving the reader a good vision of the entire war. The numerous illustrations and maps are high quality, a given from this publisher. The book also includes several pieces of original artwork depicting critical engagements.



Churchill, Master and Commander: Winston Churchill at Wat 1895-1945 (Anthony Tucker-Jones, Osprey Publishing, Oxford UK, 202, 384 pp., maps, photographs, notes, bibliography, index, $30.00, hardcover)

Under a hot morning sun on September 2, 1898, near the Sudanese city of Omdurman, the British 21st Lancers received long-awaited orders to attack the enemy. Maj. Gen. Sir Herbert Kitchener instructed his only British cavalry formation to "Annoy them as far as possible on their left flank and head them off if possible from Omdurman."

The regimental commander, Colonel R.M. Martin, wasted no time. His unit had no battle honors, and he intended to remedy that today. He also had two journalists serving in his unit, ensuring any success would receive public attention. One of those reporters, Lieutenant Winston Churchill, commanded a troop of lancers. Martin didn't particularly like the young man, who carried a sword and a new model 1896 Mauser pistol. Churchill actually belonged to the 4th Hussars in India, which made him an intruder to the regiment. What is more, Churchill stated he sought a political career, and it became clear that his military adventure in Sudan was only a stop along the way. Nevertheless, Martin sent Churchill out with four squadron of Lancers on their mission. Contact with the enemy came soon after, and Churchill realized he had to do only two things this day: stay alive and act heroically.

Churchill is best known as Great Britain's prime minister during World War II, but he had military experience and an extensive association with England's armed forces, either as a politician, first lord of the admiralty, or correspondent in the Sudan and South Africa. This new work focuses on his military service and later oversight from his various political positions. The narrative is clear and very readable. It contains extensive background information that helps place Churchill among the wider historical events through which he lived. ■

IWO JIMA

Continued from page 35

sioned in their cause, were determined to die in the open rather than face death in the caves. Over the evening, upwards of three hundred Japanese infiltrated through American lines and then regrouped near Airfield No. 2. Before dawn, they launched a final, desperate banzai charge against an encampment of rear-echelon troops.

The surprise was total. In the darkness, a bloody melee erupted as Japanese troops stormed through the encampment, shooting and bayoneting confused Americans as they stumbled out of their beds. Nearby units rallied to halt the attack and pitched into the disorganized Japanese. By dawn the fighting was over. More than 50 Americans had been killed, as well as 262 of the enemy. Just 18 Japanese were captured.

The struggle for the island incurred a loss of life that was simply staggering, and Iwo Jima would remain the bloodiest battle in the history of the Marine Corps. All told, the V Amphibious Corps suffered 6,800 killed and 19,000 wounded. In the aftermath of the battle, 22 Marines and five sailors were awarded the Medal of Honor for gallantry at Iwo Jima. Of that number, 14 received their medals posthumously.

For the unfortunate Japanese troops stationed to Iwo Jima, the battle was a virtual death sentence. Kuribayashi's forces had been annihilated. More than 18,000 Japanese troops are thought to have lost their lives. The Americans captured just 216 Japanese alive during the savage fighting.

Forever associated with the Marines, the struggle for Iwo Jima was recognized by observers as an epic moment in American history. "Among the Americans who served on Iwo Jima, uncommon valor was a common virtue," said Admiral Chester Nimitz. Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal, who had accompanied the American fleet off the island, recognized that the performance of common riflemen at Iwo Jima would ensure the longevity of a vital branch of the armed forces. "The raising of that flag on Suribachi means a Marine Corps for the next five hundred years," said Forrestal.

Such lofty sentiments were likely lost on the Marines, who'd experienced the grinding horror of Iwo Jima. Jack Frazer, a corporal in the 2nd Battalion, 24th Marines, offered perhaps the most accurate assessment of the fighting on the island. The battle for control of the island lasted for five weeks, from February 19 to March 26. Scribbling in his diary on March 18, which was eight days before the mopping up ended, Frazer penned a brief but profound description of his own personal experience. "Iwo Jima is secured," he wrote. "Twenty-seven days of hell." ■

GAMES

NEW TACTICAL OPPORTUNITIES EMERGE

Tactical Combat Department

Genre: Strategy • **Platform:** PC • **Publisher:** Render System • **Available:** Now

Taking plenty of inspiration from SWAT games with turn-based tactics, the aptly titled *Tactical Combat Department* recently entered Early Access to give players a taste of its unique brand of strategy. Developed by LukasH, this one has you taking control of a special intervention squad that enters dangerous situations and locations to take down armed opponents while taking collateral damage and the constraints of realistic physics into consideration.

Each area of *Tactical Combat Department* places opponents in randomly generated positions, so it's never as simple as memorizing the layouts and where enemies tend to remain for the duration of certain levels. You'll need to tread carefully, as well, because enemies respond to loud noises and follow what they see, letting their own teammates know where you are so they can get the jump on you and your squad.

Enemy behavior isn't the only aspect of *Tactical Combat Department* that has its roots in realism. The shooting system's trajectory is all about the accuracy of each individual unit, with distance playing a significant role in whether or not your shots will hit the mark or stray and strike other, unintended targets nearby. That's one of the reasons it's so important to identify and secure suspects and civilians as soon as you're able to in each mission. After all, you only see what your team members see thanks to the Fog of War, so you have to proceed carefully in every

situation and make your decisions count.

Even the way you open doors plays into this thoughtful layer of strategy. For instance, before entering a room, you can opt to use a camera to check the number and location of the enemies within. You can then decide on how you plan to make your way inside. If the door is locked, you'll need to use a special multifunctional tool to break in. Even if it's not, you don't have to go in guns blazing, which might not always be the smartest route to take in the end. Carefully open doors to get the drop on those within and prioritize the protection of those who aren't your immediate targets.

At the time of this writing, *Tactical Combat Department* is still in Early Access and looking for feedback from players to make improvements prior to release. Once the time comes, the team plans on adding new missions and weapons, as well as other types of missions, environments, more enemy types, improved AI, and more. If you fancy giving this one a spin, you may still be able to provide your own feedback by the time this issue is in your hands. ■

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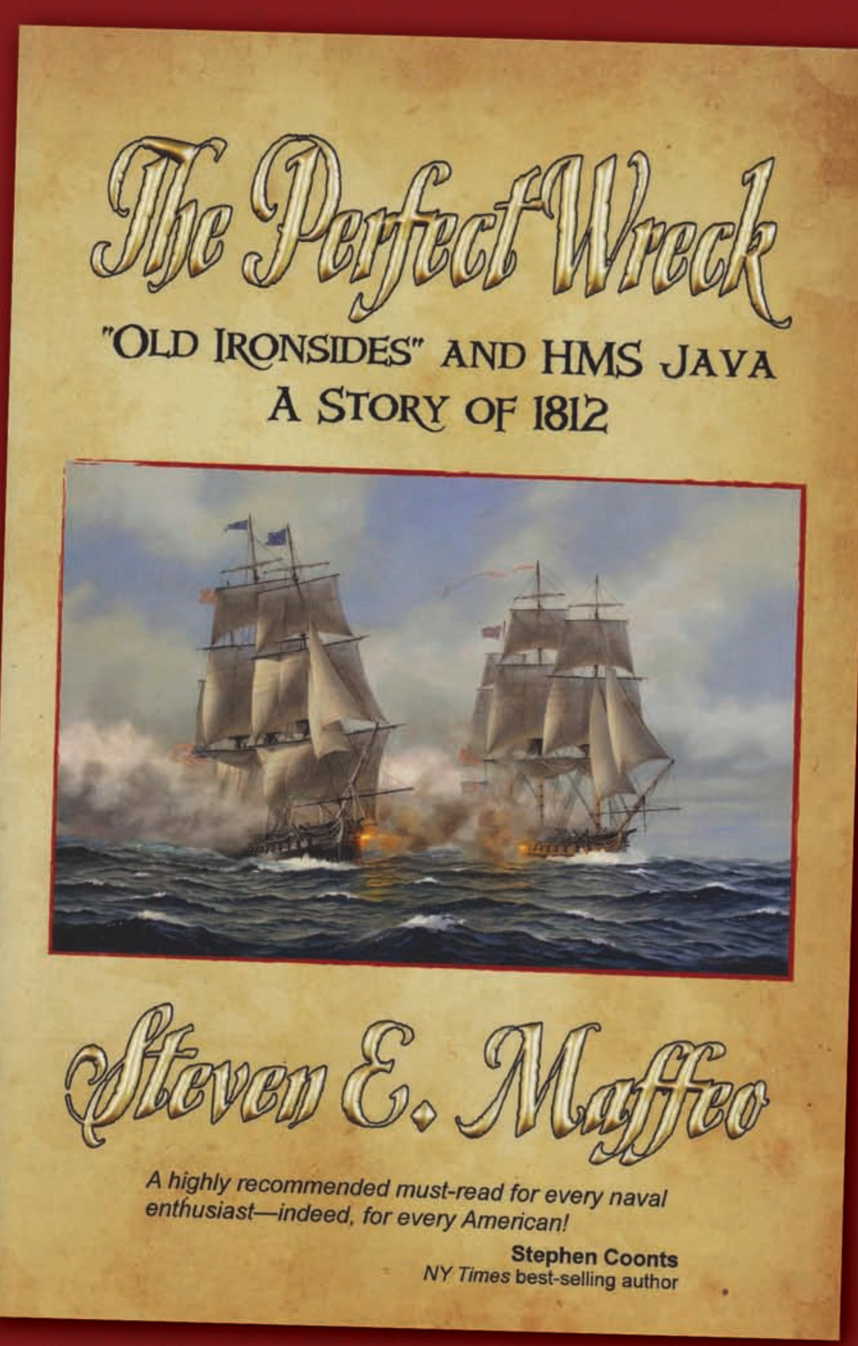

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