HARD FIGHTING AT SHILOH

Curtis 02313

MILITARY HERITAGE

VIETNAM

Brutal Battle in Ia Drang Valley

ANCIENT ROME

Savage Clash in Greece

Confederate Submarine *Hunley*

CRUSADES

Catastrophe at Varna

+ RECKONING AT CUSTOZA, MEDIEVAL ARMIES, BOOK AND GAME REVIEWS AND MORE!

MARCH 2019

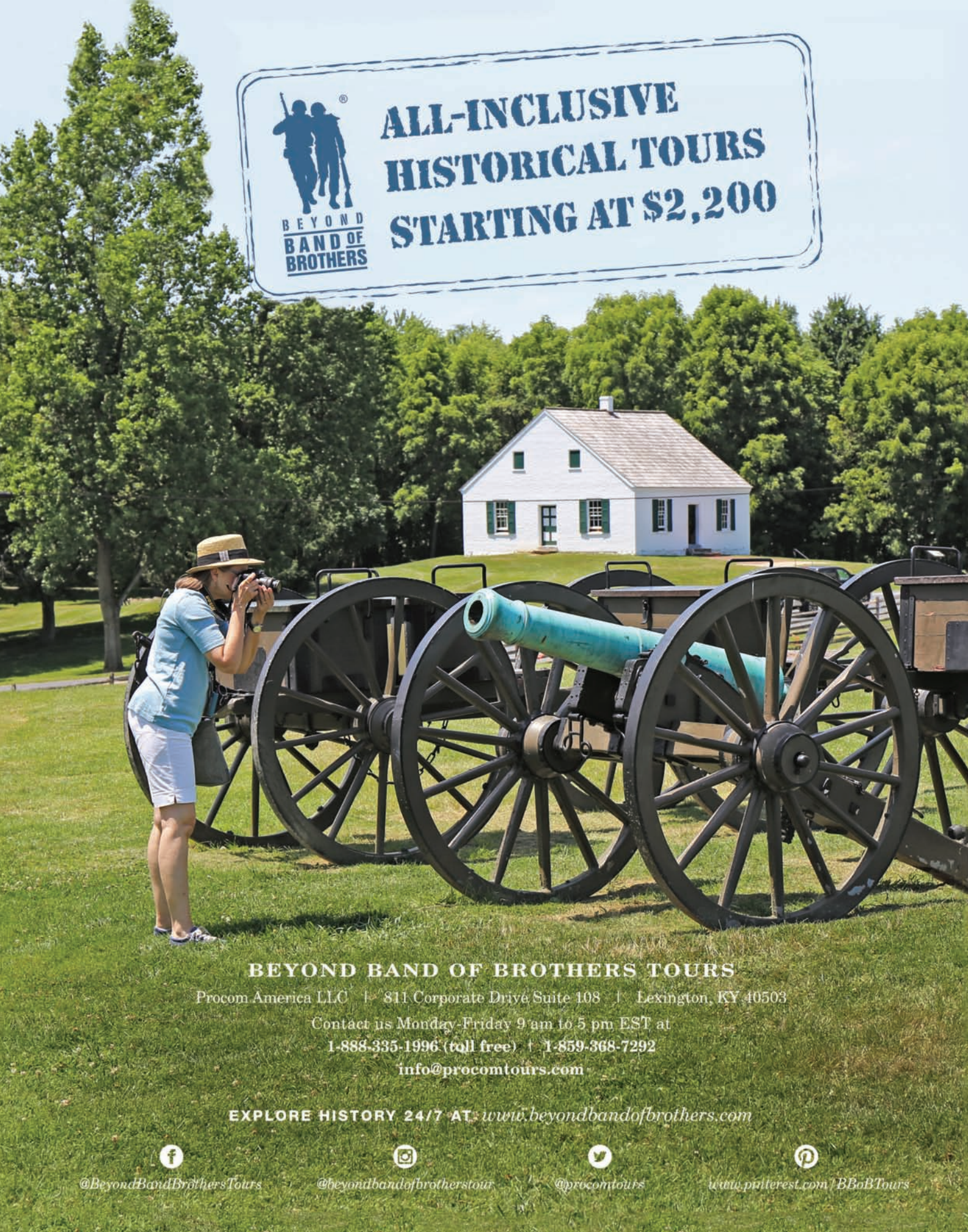
$5.99US $6.99CAN

03

0 74470 02313 5

RETAILER: DISPLAY UNTIL APRIL 1

MILITARY HERITAGE ■ MARCH 2019 *Volume 20, No. 5*


BEYOND BAND OF BROTHERS
ALL-INCLUSIVE HISTORICAL TOURS STARTING AT $2,200
BEYOND BAND OF BROTHERS TOURS
Procom America LLC | 811 Corporate Drive Suite 108 | Lexington, KY 40503
Contact us Monday-Friday 9 am to 5 pm EST at
1-888-335-1996 (toll free) | 1-859-368-7292
info@procomtours.com
EXPLORE HISTORY 24/7 AT: www.beyondbandofbrothers.com
@BeyondBandBrothersTours
@beyondbandofbrotherstour
@procomtours
www.pinterest.com/BBoBTours

INDIANA MILITARY MUSEUM

World War I Event

Historic VINCENNES KNOX COUNTY
Visitors and Tourism Bureau

Vincennes Indiana boasts the **Indiana Military Museum**, which has one of the most comprehensive collections of artifacts in the Midwest including the military uniforms of Generals Patton and Eisenhower. Indoor and outdoor exhibits of military aircraft, vehicles, artillery, uniforms, insignia and related artifacts spanning the Civil War through the present day.

VisitVincennes.org
800.886.6443

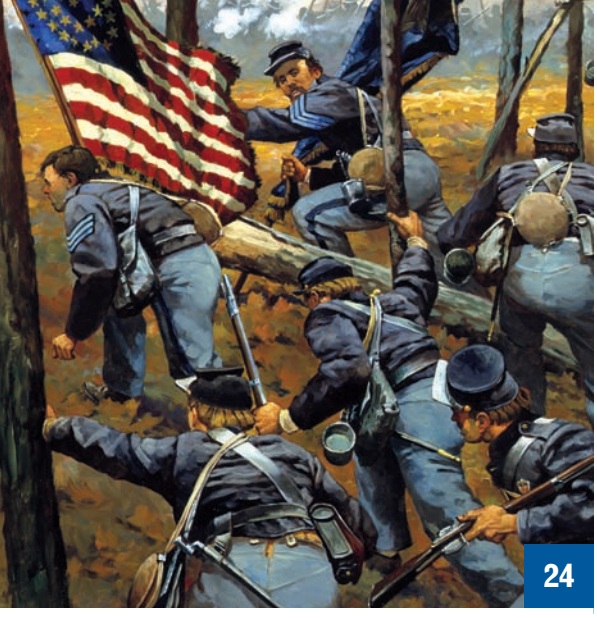
HONEST to GOODNESS INDIANA Est. 1816

M-1917 Tank

Annual Living History Events
World War I Event - March 30-31, 2019
Salute to Veterans of WWII - Aug 31-Sept 1, 2019

Salute to Veterans of WWII

Indoor Exhibits



MILITARY HERITAGE

March 2019

features

columns

Cover: American soldiers move through rough terrain searching for NVA troops during a patrol in Vietnam in 1966. See story page 32. Photo: Alamy

Military Heritage (ISSN 1524-8666) is published bimonthly by Sovereign Media, 6731 Whittier Ave., Suite A-100, McLean VA 22101-4554 (703) 964-0361. Periodical postage PAID at McLean, VA, and additional mailing offices. Military Heritage, Volume 20, Number 5 ***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: $5.99, plus $3 for postage. Yearly subscription in U.S.A.: $24.95; Canada and Overseas: $30.95 (U.S.). Editorial Office: Send editorial mail to Military Heritage, 6731 Whittier Ave., Suite A-100, McLean VA 22101-4554. Military Heritage welcomes editorial submissions but assumes no responsibility for the loss or damage of unsolicited material. Material to be returned should be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope. We suggest that you send a self-addressed, stamped envelope for a copy of our author's guidelines. **POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Military Heritage, P.O. Box 1644, Williamsport, PA 17703.**

US MILITARY TRIBUTE RINGS
YOUR CHOICE

LIMITED TO ONLY 5,000 EACH

Expertly Hand-crafted in Solid Sterling Silver

Gleaming with Rich 18K Gold Plating

Featuring a Custom Cut Genuine Black Onyx Center Stone

Engraved with the Noble Values of Each Military Branch

Comes in a Deluxe Wood Presentation Case with Engraved Plaque

ARMY®

USMC

AIR FORCE™

NAVY®

For Distinguished Service... To Wear with Pride

Our U.S. Armed Forces—Air Force™, Army®, Navy®, USMC—and those who have served under their proud emblems have stood strong through the years defending freedom wherever challenged. Now, you can show your pride with our limited-edition tribute rings, honoring each military division.

A Singular Achievement in Craftsmanship and Design

Our *"U.S. Military" Tribute Rings* are individually crafted in solid sterling silver with 18K gold plating, and feature the branch's emblem or logo in raised relief against a custom-cut genuine black onyx center stone. The striking contrast of silver and gold continues in the rope borders that surround the central emblem or logo and the sculpted eagles on each side. Adding to the meaning and value, the ring is engraved inside the band with the noble values of the military branch.

Limited to Only 5,000... Order Now!

Each ring is available in sizes 8-15 and comes in a deluxe wood case with a plaque engraved with the words on the ring, and includes a Certificate of Authenticity. An exceptional value at $249*, you can pay for your ring in 6 easy installments of $41.50. To reserve yours, backed by our unconditional 120-day guarantee, send no money now. Just mail the Priority Reservation. Hurry... this edition is strictly limited to 5,000!

*For information on sales tax you may owe to your state, go to bradfordexchange.com/use-tax.

www.bradfordexchange.com/military

A Limited Edition Custom Jewelry Exclusive from The Bradford Exchange

Magnificently Detailed from Every Angle!

THE BRADFORD EXCHANGE JEWELRY

9345 Milwaukee Avenue
Niles, IL 60714-1393

SATISFACTION GUARANTEED
To assure a proper fit, a ring sizer will be sent to you after your reservation has been accepted.

*Plus a total of $15.00 shipping and service each (see bradfordexchange.com). Please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery of your jewelry item after we receive your initial deposit. Sales subject to product availability and credit approval.

YES. Please reserve the **"U.S. Military" Tribute Rings** indicated below for me as described in this announcement.

- ❑ **U.S. Air Force™ Ring**.....01-26619-001
- ❑ **U.S. Army® Ring**.....01-25530-001
- ❑ **U.S. Navy® Ring**.....01-20091-001
- ❑ **USMC Ring**.....01-18594-001

Ring Size (If known) _____

PRIORITY RESERVATION **SEND NO MONEY NOW**

Signature _____

Mrs. Mr. Ms. _____
Name (Please Print Clearly)

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-Mail (Optional) _____

E17701

Weighing the Odds of Crusader Success

THE CHRISTIAN CRUSADERS THAT MARCHED SOUTH into Ottoman Rumelia in 1444 bet heavily that the combined power of Poland, Hungary, and Wallachia would prove sufficient to break the iron grip the Ottoman Porte had on the southern Balkans. Roughtly a half century before, a Franco-Hungarian army crossed swords with Sultan Bayezid I's army at Nicopolis on the south bank of the Danube River, but the imperious French knights rushed headlong into battle without waiting for the Hungarian infantry. When they became enmeshed in the Turks' multi-layered defenses, they were quickly surrounded by Turkish and allied Serbian horsemen. The commanders of the Polish-Hungarian-Wallachian army, who were more familiar with Ottoman tactics than the Western Europeans, clearly seemed to have a much better chance of success at Varna. If they were to fail, then it likely would be as a result of a mistake from which they could not recover.

Much had happened in the intervening years between Nicopolis and Varna. Within a decade of his glorious victory for Islam at Nicopolis, Bayezid found himself facing the ferocious Turko-Mongol army of Emir Timur, a conquering Turkish lord of the Barlas clan who grew up on lands ruled by the Chagatai Khanate in Central Asia. A quarter-century before the Crusade of Nicopolis, Timur had seized control of Transoxiana. He then began a haphazard march of conquest through Persia, Mesopotamia, northern India, the Caucasus, and eventually into Anatolia.

Sultan Bayezid I marched east and met Timur in battle at Ankara. Bayezid's trusted allies, the Serbs, launched a devastating charge before which Timur's mounted archers recoiled. But the Ottoman infantry could find no shelter from the Mongol archers' rain of arrows. Bayezid fled with his bodyguards but was overtaken and captured. He died in captivity the following year. The Battle of Ankara left the Ottomans vulnerable to attack by their Christian foes, but the Christians failed to take advantage of the opportunity.

The Ottomans had much rebuilding to do after Timur returned to Samarkand to plot his invasion of China. That invasion never occurred, though, because he died in 1405 while it was still in the planning stage. Sultan Mehmed I, who succeeded the unfortunate Bayezid, had to fight to regain control of southeastern Anatolia from the independent-minded Karamanids.

Hunyadi, who was the governor of Transylvania, had a near flawless record against the Turks having inflicted major defeats on them from 1441 to 1443. Borrowing heavily from the Hussites who had repeatedly defeated Catholic crusaders sent to crush them in Bohemia, he used wagon forts when conditions called for them and also integrated arquebusiers into his infantry units. Indeed, it was their exposure to Hunyadi's arquebusiers that led Sultan Murad II to equip a portion of his janissary corps with arquebuses.

The catalyst for a new crusade against the Ottoman Porte was to provide relief to the Byzantine Emperor Constantine XI Palaiologos and his beleaguered troops at Constantinople. In 1422 Murad had besieged Constantinople for three months only to break off his siege to deal with the ever rebellious Karamanids. It was only a matter of time, though, before the Turks assaulted the great Christian metropolis again.

Hunyadi's repeated successes seemed to bode well for a fresh offensive in 1444. But in medieval warfare, there was rarely a sure victory.

William E. Welsh

MILITARY HERITAGE

VOLUME 20, NUMBER 5

CARL A. GNAM, JR.
Editorial Director, Founder

WILLIAM E. WELSH
Editor
editor@militaryheritagemagazine.com

LAURA CLEVELAND
Managing Editor

SAMANTHA DeTULLEO
Art Director

Contributors:
William F. Floyd, Jr., Robert Heege, Joseph Luster, Tim Miller, Christopher Miskimon, Eric Niderost, Blaine Taylor, Alexander Zakrzewski

ADVERTISING OFFICE:

BEN BOYLES
Advertising Manager
benjaminb@sovhomestead.com
(570) 322-7848, ext. 130

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

MARK HINTZ
Chief Executive Officer

STEPHFANIE RUPP
Subscription Customer Services
sovereign@publishersserviceassociates.com

ROBIN LEE
Accountant

CURTIS CIRCULATION COMPANY
Worldwide Distribution

SOVEREIGN MEDIA COMPANY, INC.
6731 Whittier Ave., Suite A-100
McLean, VA 22101-4554

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

(800) 219-1187

PRINTED IN THE U.S.A.

WARFARE HISTORY NETWORK

By William F. Floyd, Jr.

Despite being plagued by misfortune, the Confederate submarine *H.L. Hunley* became the first underwater vessel to sink an enemy warship.

AT THE START OF THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR IN APRIL 1861, U.S. President Abraham Lincoln proclaimed that he planned to blockade the Confederacy by stationing warships in waters off its shores. This entailed guarding 3,500 miles of coastline along the Atlantic seaboard and Gulf of Mexico. The primary targets of the blockade were the 12 largest ports.

The Confederate Navy endeavored to break the Union blockade, but it was seriously inferior to the vastly larger U.S. Navy. The Confederacy ruled out constructing a comparable fleet because of a shortage of funds. A partial answer to the blockade lay in the privateers' use of steam-powered ships that could run the Union blockade. Yet the privateers met only a fraction of the Confederacy's need in regard to getting sufficient exports of cotton to foreign markets and importing enough munitions and other war materials. The Union blockade quickly slowed the Confederacy's exports and imports to a crawl.

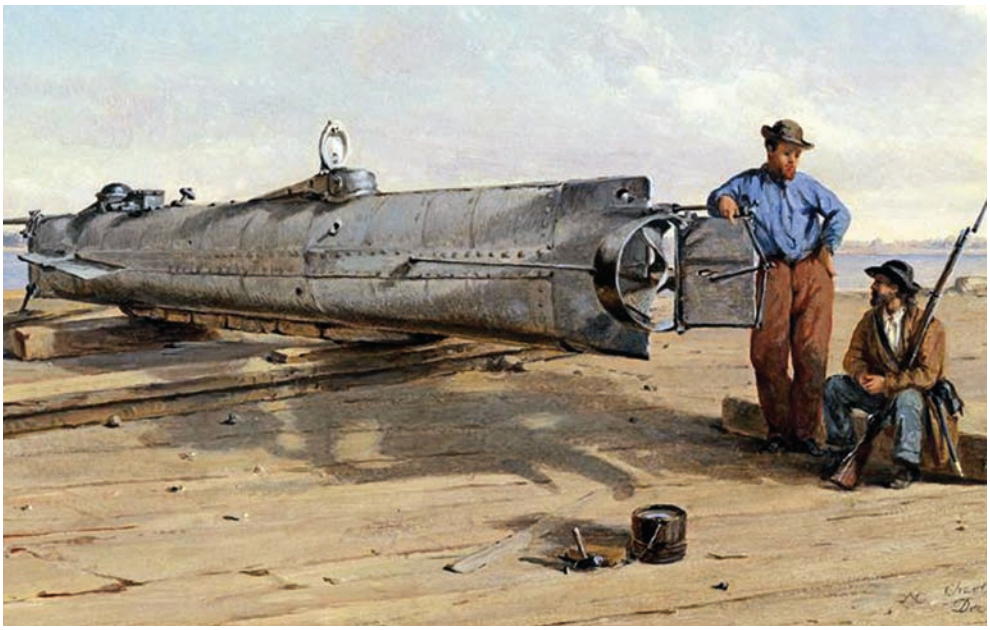
Southern inventors sought to develop a weapon that could counter the blockade fleet. The Confederate government offered private contractors a bounty of 20 percent of the value of any warship sunk by a licensed privateer. Inventors put their minds to developing an underwater vessel that could attack the blockading ships.

The idea of submersibles was not a new one. Inventor David Bushnell had introduced the submarine *Turtle* during the Revolutionary War. The *Turtle* had conducted an unsuccessful attack in September 1776 against the British 64-gun *Eagle* anchored in New York Harbor. Most of the work related to submersibles during the late 18th century was theoretical rather than practical, though.

Three visionary naval engineers—Horace Hunley, James McClintock, and Baxter Watson—gathered in New Orleans in 1861 to build an underwater vessel that might serve as a much-needed nautical weapon against the Union blockade. The U.S. Navy also was at work on a submersible to use against Confederate ships. In November 1861 the U.S. Navy entered into a contract with French inventor Brutus de Villeroi, who lived in Philadelphia, to develop a hand-cranked, screw-propeller submarine. The U.S. Navy ultimately purchased the vessel, named the *Alligator,* when it was completed in June 1862. It met a swift demise when it sank in rough seas in April 1863.

Horace Lawson Hunley was the most influential and resourceful of the trio of Southern inventors. A native of Tennesee, he attended the University of Lousiana. He went on to study law and was admitted to the bar in 1849. Hunley amassed considerable wealth as a sugar and cotton planter in Lafourche Parish during the 1850s. In 1857 he was appointed to serve as a clerk in the U.S. Customs House in New Orleans. At the outbreak of the Civil War, Hunley was a special collector for the Port of New Orleans,

Horace Hunley's hand-propelled underwater vessel, dubbed a "Fish Boat" because of its long shape, was a crucial step in the development of submarines.



ROLLING THUNDER

Britain®

31291
Federal Light Artillery Limber With Two Man Crew
$115.00

31283
Federal Artilleryman Standing With Hand On Belt
$36.00

31189
Federal Artilleryman Standing With Arms Crossed
$36.00

31265 · $36.00
Hand-Painted, Pewter Figures

31293
Confederate Light Artillery Limber With Two Man Crew
$115.00

31279
Federal Artilleryman Yelling
$36.00

31138
3" Ordnance Rifle No.1
$39.00

31066
12 Pound Napoleon Cannon No.1
$39.00

wbritain.com
419.865.5077
U.K. Tel. 08000869123

facebook.com/WBritainToySoldiers

MHCW01 Federal 3" Ordnance Rifle and Crew **$175.00**
31138, 31283, 31144, 31279

31264 *We Hit 'Em Boys!* **$175.00**
Confederate 10 Pound Parrott Gun and 4 man crew

which made him an agent of the Confederate government.

The three inventors built a prototype submarine they named the *Pioneer.* In February 1862, they tested the vessel in the muddy waters of the Mississippi River and Lake Pontchartrain. But the Union advance on New Orleans the following month prompted the men to scuttle the *Pioneer* in the New Basin Canal on April 25, 1862.

The men resumed their work in Mobile, Alabama, where they teamed up with Thomas Park and Thomas Lyons to develop a second vessel, the *American Diver.* The design team received substantial assistance from the Confederate Army. Lieutenant William Alexander of the 21st Alabama Infantry Regiment stepped in to oversee the work. In the course of its construction, the marine engineers experimented with electromagnetic and steam propulsion before deciding on a simple hand-cranked propulsion system. The *American Diver* underwent trials in Mobile Bay in January 1863. The trials revealed that its propulsion system was too slow to be practical. An attack by the *American Diver* on Union vessels the following month was unsuccessful. The submarine sank in Mobile Bay during a storm and was never recovered.

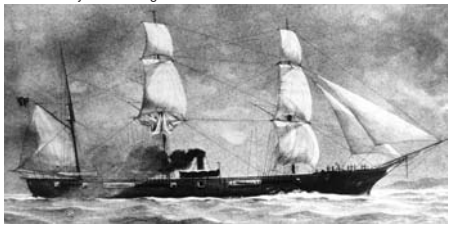
After the loss of the *American Diver,* work began on a new vessel known as the *H.L. Hunley.* The third vessel was primarily Hunley's project. He constructed his crude, hand-powered submarine from a 25-foot-long cylinder boiler that was 48 inches in diameter. He cut the boiler in half lengthwise and installed two half-inch iron straps on each side.

Next, Hunley extended the structure by fitting it with a tapering iron section both fore and aft that extended it to 40 feet in length. The resulting underwater vessel was four feet wide and five feet deep. He then installed water tanks outfitted with a stop-cock, an externally operated valve, that permitted water to flow into a tank to submerge the vessel. He also installed a pump to empty the tanks for raising the boat. To assist the pilot in determining the depth, Hunley installed a mercury gauge. He also installed a shaft, controlled by a lever amidships, to raise or lower the fins.

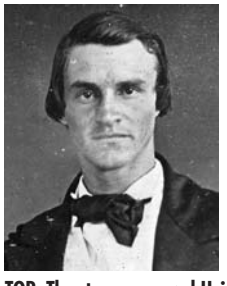
The submarine was outfitted with a hatchway fore and aft. The hatches were sealed with rubber gaskets and bolted from the inside. Each of the vessel's hatches had an eight-inch-high combing. Glass was installed in the sides and ends of the combings to allow the crew to see outside of the vessel. The designers made an opening in the top of the boat for a lever-operated air box outfitted with another stop-cock to admit air. Because of its long, slim shape it was dubbed the "Fish Boat."

The *Hunley* was operated manually by a commander and eight crew members. The commander navigated the vessel by looking through glass viewing ports in the hatch cover. He controlled the submarine's depth with a handle that operated the dive planes, and he steered the *Hunley* with a lever that operated rods and cables that turned the vessel's rudder. The eight crew members operated the hand-cranked propeller shaft. The propeller revolved inside a wrought-iron ring to guard against it being fouled. The shaft and cranks took up much of the space inside the vessel, making movement next to impossible. Besides being cramped, the vessel was also dark. The only light came from a candle the commander used to read the depth gauge. The crew could operate the *Hunley* underwater, but the vessel required calm seas to run successfully.

Naval History and Heritage Command



Both: Naval History and Heritage Command



TOP: The steam-powered Union sloop of war *Housatonic.* ABOVE: James McClintock, left, and Horace Hunley, right.

The *Hunley*'s armament originally consisted of a floating explosive charge that used a contact fuse attached to the end of a 200-foot-long rope. The intent was to have the *Hunley* dive under its intended target and then surface once it had passed by it. The vessel would pull the torpedo against an enemy ship to make it explode.

The first trial with the newly constructed submarine took place with mixed results in Mobile Bay in July 1863. The *Hunley* submerged well enough but could not return to the surface. Nevertheless, the underwater vessel received the support it needed to go into action from Admiral Franklin Buchanan, the Confederate naval commander in Mobile and former commander of the CSS *Virginia.* In response to inquiries by General P.G.T. Beauregard, the commander of Charleston, South Carolina, Buchanan sent him a written endorsement in which he praised the *Hunley*'s potential.

Beauregard subsequently arranged for the *Hunley* to be shipped by rail to Charleston. The *Hunley* arrived on flatcars on August 12. Inventor-turned-captain James McClintock, the first commander of the *Hunley* during its Charleston deployment, was reluctant to engage the Union ships. Beauregard quickly grew impatient with McClintock's timidity. Beauregard decided that the only way to get the vessel into action was if Confederate military forces owned it. He therefore convinced the Confederate government in Richmond, Virginia, to acquire the vessel. By late August, McClintock had been sacked. He was replaced by Lieutenant John Payne, who took charge of the vessel's volunteer civilian crew.

The *Hunley* was plagued throughout its development with problems associated with its submerging capabilities. While the boat was tied to the wharf at Fort Johnson on James Island, a passing steamer swamped it, sending it to the bottom. The men aboard the vessel at the time perished. Payne escaped because he was able to get out of a hatch. As soon as the vessel was raised, Payne and another crew volunteered for service. When the boat set out on a trial run, Payne became tangled in the *Hunley*'s internal equipment and inadvertently made the vessel dive while the hatch covers were open. Water swept into the vessel as the crew tried desperately to evacuate. Although Payne, Lieutenant Charles Hasker, and two crewmembers escaped, the rest of the crew drowned. Hasker, who was not ordinarily assigned to the vessel, had joined it for the test. While Payne and the other two men managed to swim free before the vessel hit the sea floor, Hasker miraculously managed to free himself after going to the bottom of the harbor.

The vessel was successfully raised from the harbor floor and cleaned for another trial; however, by that time the *Hunley* had a reputation as a death trap. Because of that, it was difficult to find more volunteers. When Horace Hunley learned of the continuing fatal accidents, he was convinced that the crews were improperly operating the vessel. He journeyed to Charleston to instruct the next crew in the proper operation of the underwater vessel. Beauregard was heartened by Hunley's willingness to personally train the new crew.

Another sea trial took place on October 15, 1863. The inventor was aboard the vessel to ensure its proper operation. This time the vessel was scheduled to make a practice dive

underneath a stationary Confederate receiving ship, the *Indian Chief*, anchored in Charleston Harbor. Although it successfully submerged, it failed to return to the surface. Hunley and the crew members all perished in the botched trial. The eight crew members, as well as Hunley, were laid to rest in a plot called "Hunley Circle" in Magnolia Cemetery in Charleston. The *Hunley*'s run of bad luck earned it the nickname "floating coffin."

At that point, Beauregard was ready to scrap the program, but Lieutenant George E. Dixon, who was knowledgeable in the operation of the *Hunley*, convinced Beauregard to allow him to continue the trials. During the next trial, a cable to which the contact explosive was attached became entangled in the rudder of a ship towing the *Hunley*.

To remedy the entanglement problem, the vessel was outfitted with an alternate torpedo system. A spar torpedo was installed to be used when the submarine was six or more feet below the water's surface. The explosive system consisted of a copper cylinder packed with 90 pounds of black powder attached to a 20-foot-long wooden spar mounted on the bow. The crew would ram its barbed tip into the target. Once the torpedo was affixed to the enemy ship, the crew would back away to a safe distance. Then the crew would activate the torpedo with a mechanical trigger. At this point, the *Hunley* was moored at the Battery Marshall dock on Sullivan's Island.

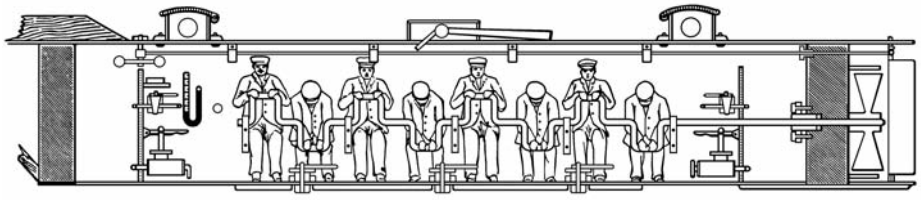
Naval History and Heritage Command

The *Hunley*'s spar torpedo detonates against an underwater section of the USS *Housatonic*'s hull.

The Confederates were finally ready to use the *Hunley* against a ship in Charleston Harbor. The Union fleet, though, had learned from deserters and spies that an effort was going to be made to destroy one or more of its vessels using a submersible. Although the Union ironclads that were stationed closest to shore took precautions to prevent a torpedo attack, wooden vessels that were farther out in the harbor took no such precaution in the mistaken belief that they would not be targeted. Dixon decided to attack one of the wooden ships.

During the interim period before the attack, the *Hunley* underwent more sea trials. During

Both: Naval History and Heritage Command



TOP: The *Hunley*, which was raised in 2000, is now stored in a specially designed tank to preserve its fragile hull. BOTTOM: A diagram shows the submarine's eight crew members cranking the propeller shaft.

one of the trials, the vessel was successfully submerged for two hours and 35 minutes. Lieutenant Dixon and his crew waited for the optimal conditions to carry out their attack. They got their opportunity for a completely flat sea on the cold and windless night of February 17, 1864. The vessel departed from Breach Inlet, a passage noted for its strong current. Within 300 yards of his target, Dixon brought the *Hunley* to the surface to make one last observation.

Dixon had singled out the USS *Housatonic,* which had been on station for nearly a year and a half. The 207-foot-long, steam-powered, propeller-driven Union sloop of war mounted 12 cannons. Captain Charles Pickering, the commander of the ship, had orders to keep a sharp eye out for blockade runners. For that reason, he had the vessel's fires stoked so that she could make steam on a moment's notice.

As the *Hunley* approached the *Housatonic,* Dixon paused the vessel long enough to take in fresh air through the open hatchway and confirm his bearings. He then gave the order for the *Hunley* to proceed on its mission.

At 8:45 PM acting Master John K. Crosby on the deck of the *Housatonic* spied something in the chilly, dark waters of the harbor. After initially believing he had seen a porpoise, Crosby decided instead that it might be a Confederate torpedo boat. He sounded the alarm. Since the mysterious vessel was directly beneath the towering, three-masted sloop, the Union cannoneers could not depress their guns far enough to fire on it. Instead, the Union sailors began firing on the vessel with muskets and shotguns in a futile attempt to stop it. The bullets ricocheted off of the *Hunley*'s armor. The crew rammed the barb of the spar torpedo into the Union ship's hull. The torpedo struck the *Housatonic*'s starboard side near its powder magazine. The crew of the *Hunley* then reversed the propeller as fast as they could crank the shaft.

The muffled explosion tore a hole in the Union ship. A geyser of water erupted into the air alongside the *Housatonic,* and then water began pouring in through the breach. Just three minutes had passed between the time the submarine had been sighted and the point at which the torpedo detonated. The *Housatonic* took on water quickly and slowly began to sink. Those who were able scrambled into hastily launched lifeboats, while the remainder climbed the rigging toward the starry sky. Since the vessel was in just 27 feet of water, the top of the rigging stayed above the surface of the water as the ship settled on the bottom. The USS *Canandaigua* dispatched rescue boats to pluck the men from the rigging and take them to safety. Because of these factors, the Union loss of lives was greatly minimized. Only five Union sailors perished in the ordeal. The *Hunley* never returned to the wharf on Sullivan's Island; it went to the bottom, taking its crew with it.

In the final analysis, the *Hunley* killed far more of her own crew members than enemy sailors. Despite its tragic sea trials, the *Hunley* played a crucial part in the development of underwater warfare vessels. The *Hunley* has the distinction of being the first American submarine to sink an enemy warship in battle.

Efforts to find the *Hunley* began immediately after it sank. Union sailors dragged the waters around the *Housatonic,* hoping to find the Confederate submarine. It was believed for more than a century that when the *Housatonic* was scrapped the submarine was inadvertently demolished along with it. But evidence existed to contradict this assumption. Survivors of the *Housatonic* testified to the U.S. Navy in 1894 that after the explosion occurred light signals were exchanged between Confederates on the shore and a vessel in the water. This was confirmed by a Confederate officer who stated that he had answered a signal from the *Hunley* on its return from its mission.

The *Hunley* was eventually located seaward, not landward, of the *Housatonic.* Its location was unknown for 131 years because those searching for it had been looking between the *Housatonic* and the shoreline. The searchers assumed the submarine had gone to the bottom while attempting to return to shore. Of course, the reason it was seaward is unknown.

The salvage team found a softball-sized hole in the *Hunley*'s forward conning tower, which led some experts to speculate that small arms fire from the sailors on the *Housatonic* shattered cast iron, allowing water to flood the *Hunley.* Other experts speculate that the crew ran out of air and succumbed to anoxia.

A private organization, the National Underwater and Marine Agency, spent 15 years trying to find the *Hunley.* Using a magnetometer, members of the organization finally located a large metal object in 1995 four miles off the coast of Sullivan's Island. The vessel was located in 30 feet of water obscured by three feet of sediment. The salvagers raised the *Hunley* on August 8, 2000. It is now exhibited in the Warren Lasch Conservation Center in North Charleston, South Carolina. It is on display in a specially designed tank that holds 90,000 gallons of fresh water necessary to preserve it. □

When you own a piece of the past, you don't have to worry about the future

Think owning gold is out of reach?
These classic coins are both beautiful and affordable.

British Sovereign New Queen

Struck almost continuously since 1817, the British Sovereign are designed and minted to the Queen of England's highest standards.

20 Franc French Gold Rooster

The Gallic Rooster, France's unofficial national symbol, makes this French Franc one of the most popular and cherished fractional gold coins in the world.

Swiss Gold Franc Vrenelli

Vreneli Swiss Francs, sometimes referred to as "Swiss Miss's", are gold coins like no other. As a representation of history, they are a favorite among collectors.

BLANCHARD™
America's rare coin and precious metals firm

Blanchard and Company, Inc. | www.blanchardgold.com | 888-546-5866

By William E. Welsh

Matthias Corvinus expanded the Kingdom of Hungary in the late 15th century at the expense of Emperor Frederick III.

Hungarians battle Turks in a 15th-century engraving. The Black Army's strength was derived from the ability of the component arms to work seamlessly with each other.

ABOVE: Hungarian King Matthias Corvinus.

ENCASED IN MAIL AND ARMOR, THE SOLDIERS OF THE KINGDOM of Hungary's Black Army stood rigidly at attention on a warm summer day in late August 1487 at Wiener Neustadt in Lower Austria. Their capture of the town came at the end of a long conflict between archrivals King Matthias Corvinus of Hungary and Frederick III, Holy Roman Emperor and Archduke of Austria.

Astride his imposing war horse, the Hungarian monarch rode slowly past the troops, stopping occasionally to bestow rewards on units that had shown great valor fighting Frederick's Imperial forces. The Black Army assembled that day consisted of 20,000 cavalry and 8,000 infantry, according to Antonio Bonfini, who was Matthias's royal historian. In addition to native Hungarians, the army included Czechs, Moravians, Silesians, and South Slavs, all of whom belonged to a Hungarian empire that Matthias had carved out through conquest over a quarter century following his election to the throne by the Hungarian Diet in 1462.

After the inspection was over, the units performed a variety of maneuvers for the Hungarian aristocrats and foreign dignitaries in attendance. They reorganized themselves crisply and seamlessly into a number of Matthias's favorite battle formations, such as the circle, triangle, square, and wedge. They also fashioned themselves into a unique formation known as the scorpion, The shape of which resembled the predatory arachnid. Heavy and light cavalry formed the pincer claws, while heavy and light infantry made up its abdomen.

The reign of Matthias Corvinus, son of the famous Hungarian generalissimo Janos Hunyadi, marked the apex of power for medieval Hungary. Matthias is noted not only for holding back the Ottoman hordes from overrunning Hungary, but also for campaigns of conquest in the Kingdom of Bohemia and the Archduchy of Austria. When Matthias died in 1490, his Hungarian empire stretched from Brandenberg in the north to Serbia in the south. It was a remarkable achievement for a man whose low-born father had risen to become one of the greatest military commanders of the Middle Ages.

Following the death in 1439 of Albert the Magnanimous, who held the crowns of Bohemia, Croatia, and Hungary, the Realm of St. Stephen, as Hungary was known, underwent

Both: Public Domain

WAR THUNDER

PLAY NOW FOR FREE

WARTHUNDER.COM

Gaijin

PS4 XBOX ONE Windows STEAM Mac oculus VIVE

12

Public Domain

Young Matthias fought under his father, Janos Hunyadi, against Sultan Mehmed II's (right) troops at Belgrade in July 1456. The following month, the elder Hunyadi died from the plague.

a period of instability. Instead of selecting Albert's infant son, Ladislas the Posthumous, the magnates of the Hungarian Diet instead chose King Wladyslaw III of Poland as their king because they believed he was better qualified to protect them from foreign aggression.

However, Ladislas's mother, Elizabeth, ultimately compelled the Hungarian Church to crown her three-month-old son on May 15, 1440. Elizabeth intended to serve as regent, and she enlisted the support of her cousin, Frederick, the Duke of Inner Austria and future Holy Roman Emperor, to serve as her son's guardian.

Although Wladyslaw was slain by the Ottoman Turks in the epic clash at Varna in 1444, Elizabeth still had to contend with Hunyadi, who the Hungarian magnates elected to serve as their governor with full regal authority in 1446. He served in that capacity for seven years until his death in 1453.

Matthias, who was Hunyadi's second son, was born on February 23, 1443, in Cluj in the principality of Transylvania. He began fighting alongside his father at the young age of 12 and was exposed to the ferocity of the Ottoman army during the Siege of Belgrade in July 1456. In many ways Hunyadi's glorious victory over Suleiman's army at Belgrade was payback for their defeat at Varna. Matthias, who fought with great valor in the desperate siege, was knighted after the battle. Hunyadi, who was weakened by the hard-fought defense of Belgrade, succumbed to the plague shortly afterward.

The Hungarian monarch was not a hereditary kingship like most monarchies in Western Europe at the time; instead, the Hungarian Diet elected the king. It was a process that dated back to 1382. A king might be native born or foreign born. The Diet was composed of both wealthy magnates and threadbare barons.

A power struggle ensued upon Hunyadi's death between Ladislas the Posthumous and Hunyadi's eldest son, Ladislas Hunyadi. Some members of the Diet sought to replace Ladislas the Posthumous with Ladislas Hunyadi. Count Ulrich of Cilli, one of the most powerful magnates in Hungary and a long-time foe of the Hunyadis, took it upon himself to become Ladislas the Posthumous's protector. But Ulrich was disliked by many members of the Hungarian Diet. When the Diet convened in 1455 it stripped Ulrich of his authority. This was unpalatable to Ladislas the Posthumous, and the young monarch responded by elevating Ulrich to captain-general of Hungary with control of its military forces.

When false accusations were made against Ladislas Hunyadi that he was not willing to pay debts owed by his father to the crown, he convincingly defended himself before the Hungarian Diet when it met the following year. Ladislas Hunyadi had inherited from his father a number of royal castles, as well as the fortress at Belgrade where he resided.

In the late autumn of 1456, 16-year-old King Ladislas and Count Ulrich set out together for Belgrade to receive the forfeiture of the city from Ladislas Hunyadi. The forfeiture had been arranged as part of the reconciliation between the two rivals. Ulrich, who brought with him a company of mercenaries, intended to slay Ladislas Hunyadi. But Ladislas Hunyadi disrupted his machinations when he refused to let the count's mercenaries enter the fortress.

Shortly after the meeting convened at Belgrade on November 9, 1456, the count tried to slay Ladislas Hunyadi with his sword, but Ladislas Hunyadi's guards rushed to their lord's aid and thrust their swords into the count.

In the aftermath of the scuffle, King Ladislas granted his rival amnesty; however, he later arrested both of Hunyadi's sons. In March 1457 Ladislas Hunyadi was executed for plotting against the king. The ensuing backlash from the Hungarian nobility was so great that King Ladislas fled to Bohemia where he died unexpectedly 11 months later. The death of Ladislas the Posthumous, who died childless, marked the end of the Albertinian line of the House of Hapsburg.

At the time of the king's death, Matthias was being held in Prague in the custody of Hussite leader George of Podebrad, who had seized power as governor of Bohemia in 1448. Although Emperor Frederick III held the crown of Bohemia at the time, Podebrad usurped his authority and seized the throne in 1457. Young Matthias became engaged to Podebrad's daughter, Catherine, but because of her extreme youth the wedding was put off for a future date. Podebrad subsequently freed Matthias so that he might be considered for the Hungarian throne. Podebrad did this for self-serving reasons for it was to his advantage to have his son-in-law in such a powerful position.

Matthias benefitted from widespread support among the Hungarian nobility. He also had the endorsement of papal legate Cardinal Juan Carvajal, who had great admiration for Matthias's father. Fearing that he might be murdered by enemies, Matthias asked his future father-in-law to give him 500 mounted troops for protection.

Matthias subsequently was elected king on January 24, 1458, by a majority of the Hungarian nobles. The 15-year-old king arrived in Buda the following month. Although Michael Szilagyi had served briefly as regent for Matthias, the teenage king had every intention of beginning his reign immediately. He gave Szilagyi control of Bistrita County in Transylvania, but it was not a high enough post to satisfy his ambitions. When Szilagy refused to be sidelined, Matthias had him arrested. After a year in prison, Szilagy resigned himself to an ancillary role in Hungarian military affairs. He was captured and put to death by the Turks following a battle on the north bank of the Danube River at Bazias in 1460.

The biggest threat to Matthias's rule, though, was Emperor Frederick III, who sought to add

King of Hungary to his long list of titles. To reinforce his position as a legitimate king, Matthias needed to come to an agreement with Emperor Frederick III. Indeed, Frederick III held the Crown of St. Stephen. It had come into his possession for safe keeping during the ongoing baronial rebellions in Hungary. Pope Pius III intervened on Matthias's behalf with the emperor in part because the Pope wanted Matthias to lead a crusade against the Turks. The negotiations, though, dragged on for five years.

Frederick III enjoyed the support of rebellious nobles in western Hungary. One of Frederick's key allies, Hungarian magnate Ladislaus Garai, led a rebellion in 1459 in which as many as 30 nobles supported Frederick III's quest for the Hungarian throne. But by that time Matthias had assembled enough troops that he was able to crush the rebellion. Matthias marched into western Hungary where he forced Garai and his allies to take an oath of fealty to him at Burg Gussing Castle.

In April 1463 Matthias reached a settlement with Emperor Frederick III. The agreement was ratified and signed by the parties the following year. One provision of the settlement called for the emperor to return the Crown of St. Stephen to Matthias. The agreement stipulated that Frederick was the titular king of Hungary, but that Matthias would be its ruling king. If Matthias failed to produce an heir, then the monarchy would revert to Frederick and his heirs. In addition, Matthias had to pay Frederick 80,000 gold florins. Matthias had postponed his coronation until such time as the Crown of St. Stephen was back in his possession. He was at long last crowned in a ceremony on April 29, 1464.

From his father's experience battling the formidable Ottoman Porte, Matthias gleaned that it would be risky to engage in a pitched battle with the Ottomans. He therefore decided to fight limited wars against the Turks. His goal was to stabilize his southern frontier and not to try to retake Ottoman-controlled territory in the Balkans.

His first priority, though, was to consolidate his power. Afterward, he focused on molding a national army made up of professional soldiers supplemented by mercenaries or allies for campaigns. Matthias overhauled the banderial system whereby troops were recruited to serve the king. These reforms gave Matthias a professional standing army with a peacetime strength of 40,000 troops. Of this number, 16,000 were heavy cavalry, 14,000 heavy infantry, 8,000 light cavalry, and 2,000 musketeers. The artillery branch consisted of powerful bombards and culverins.

Alamy

Matthias (left) confers with Hungarian usurper George Podebrad. By the time of his death, Matthias had conquered Moravia, Lusatia, Silesia, Lower Austria, and Styria.

The groundbreaking Hungarian effort was comparable to that of French King Charles VII who established a standing army to drive the English from France in the final years of the Hundred Years War. Although not called the Black Army at the time, later generations referred to it as such because of the blackened armor the knights wore. What gave the Black Army a decisive advantage over its opponents was not its size, but rather the ability of the component arms to work seamlessly with each other.

Although Matthias's had first-class heavy and light cavalry, the army always suffered from a serious shortage of professional infantry. In his 1475 campaigns against Mehmed the Conqueror's army, he fielded 68,000 cavalry and 57,000 infantry. However, half of the troops in that campaign came from the Danubian Principalities.

While Matthias was busy securing control of Hungary after his election as king, Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror was steadily chipping away at the buffer zones that Hungarian King Sigismund had established in the early 15th century between Hungary and the Ottoman provinces. At the same time, Mehmed put pressure on the voivodes of Wallachia and Moldavia to ensure that they remained loyal vassals of the Ottoman Porte and not of the Hungarian kingdom.

Mehmed captured the Danubian fortress of Golubac in 1458 and then took the key fortress of Smederevo the following year. Additionally, Mehmed tightened his control over Bosnia and Serbia. He executed Bosnian King Stephen Tomasevic in May 1463 and drove the remaining members of the Brankovic dynasty out of Serbia. The Brankovics relocated to Hungary where they helped defend its southern border.

Matthias launched one of his limited offensives against Ottoman territory in 1463 following the departure of the sultan's army at the end of the summer season. Although he initially had hoped to liberate northern Bosnia, Matthias resigned himself to capturing the walled hilltop fortress of Jajce. After a two-month siege that began in September, the victorious Hungarians took possession of the key fortress. Mehmed returned to try to retake Jajce the following year, but after subjecting it to 43 days of continuous bombardment he withdrew. A decade would pass before Matthias attempted similar operations on his southern frontier.

In 1467 Matthias crushed a rebellion in Transylvania. Afterward, he marched into Moldavia in an attempt to compel its voivode, Stephen of Moldavia, to recognize the Hungarian king as his suzerain. But Matthias did not realize that he was up against a first-rate opponent. While encamped in northern Moldavia in December of that year, Stephen led his troops in a stunning nighttime assault that routed the Hungarians. Stephen's peasants fell upon the better armored Hungarians, driving them out of Moldavia. The defeat cured Matthias of wanting to exert control over Moldavia.

In 1468 Matthias went to war against his former father-in-law George Podebrad, the King of Bohemia. Matthias's wife, Catherine Pode-

Continued on page 70

By Blaine Taylor

Italian Marshal Rodolfo Graziani was the highest ranking Italian war criminal to escape postwar justice.

THE TOWN OF AFFILE IN ITALY'S LAZIO REGION ERECTED A mausoleum to Italian Army Marshal Rodolfo Graziani in August 2012. The event occurred 57 years after the controversial marshal's death on January 11, 1955. As emcee of the elaborate memorial service, Mayor Ettore Viri was joined by a special delegate from the Vatican. Emblazoned with the words "Fatherland" and "Honor," Graziani's new tomb cost Italian taxpayers $160,000.

The event touched off an uproar because of Graziani's role in war crimes in Ethiopia in the aftermath of the Second Italo-Ethiopian War of 1935-1937. As a result the Lazio parliamentary regime cancelled funding for the project in 2013 in the wake of a negative reaction at the polls in regional elections. The Lazio Regional Council's legal action to remove Graziani's name from his own monument reportedly is still pending.

In the postwar bloodlust by the Soviet Communist Party that occurred in April 1945, no real Italian war crimes trials ever emerged as they did at both Nuremberg and Tokyo. This was partly because almost all the captured top Fascists had been simply gunned down without any hearings. The elimination began with Italian dictator Benito Mussolini, identified as "Il Duce" to his followers as the leader of the National Fascist Party, on April 28, 1945, and continued downward.

Graziani was born on August 11, 1882, at Felettino in Frosinone Province of Savoyard Italy. In 1903 19-year-old Rodolfo joined the Regio Esercito (Royal Army). Having graduated from the Royal Military Academy at Modena, Graziani was commissioned as a lieutenant in the service of King Victor Emmanuel III of the House of Savoy until September 1943. Lieutenant Graziani's first posting was to Italy's Eritrean colony, where he was bitten by a venomous snake after having contracted malaria.

The hardy young soldier recovered, learning both Arabic and the language of the local native Tigrayans who inhabited the highlands of Eritrea. Graziani fought for the first of several tours of duty in Libya in the Italo-Turkish War that began in September 1911 and ended in October 1912. The conflict witnessed the advent of martial air power in modern warfare, as the Regia Aeronautica (Royal Air Force)

Italian armor advances into Ethiopia at the outset of the Second Italo-Ethiopian War. The conquered country became part of Italian East Africa. RIGHT: Badly injured by a failed assassination attempt, Marshal Rodolfo Graziani authorized the massacre of thousands of Ethiopian civilians.

ALPVENTURES®

WORLD WAR II TOURS

Alpventures® World War II Tours are packed with History, Fun & Adventure.

Visit the World War II Battlefields of Europe and Russia on our Guided Tours, and enjoy exceptional service, first-class hotels, experienced guide, and much more...

(888) 991-6718 **worldwar2tours.com**

MAXIMUM 25 GUESTS PER TOUR!

- **Normandy to the Eagle's Nest Tour**
- **Men, Masterpieces & Monuments Tour**
- **Holocaust Memorial Tour to Poland**
- **Battleground Italy Tour: Sicily to Rome**
- **Franco's Spain Tour with Gibraltar!**
- **Britain at War! Tour**

Travel with America's most knowledgeable Tour Guide

bombed the Turkish Army, thus bringing yet another conquered people under Italian colonial domain.

Promoted to captain, Graziani in 1913 married Ines Chronetti, the union lasting until his death 42 years later. During Liberal Italy's World War I alignment with the Allies, Captain Graziani returned again to Libya, where he saw firsthand how both the central powers of Imperial Germany and its ally Turkey incited the local rebel Muslims to attack isolated Italian desert outposts.

When he was subsequently transferred to northern Italy's embattled Caporetto Front against the central powers' Imperial Austrian Army, Graziani was twice wounded in combat, being also doubly cited for his martial skills and personal bravery in action under enemy fire. At the end of the war, he emerged as the youngest colonel in the Regio Esercito at age 36. Following World War I, Italian domestic politics cast their shadow across Graziani's upwardly mobile path over what up to that point had been a stellar martial career. It was the first time this occurred, but it would not be the last.

Reportedly marked for assassination by liberal Savoyard Italy's rapidly rising Communist Party, Graziani took a leave of absence from active military service, awaiting a better social climate at home to return. As a Parma-based importer of Far Eastern goods, though, he was not very successful and the business eventually failed. Trying another tack, civilian Graziani in 1924 joined the ruling Fascist Party of Italian Premier Signor Benito Mussolini, remaining a member until its very end in April 1945.

Due to an uptick in rebel Libyan Muslim assaults on both Italian colonial families and businesses on what Il Duce called Italy's Fourth Shore, Graziani was selected for that embattled command. On January 11, 1930, Graziani was empowered to return yet again to the scene of his first desert warfare laurels to ruthlessly quell all resistance in whatever manner he saw fit. Newly named as the Italian viceroy-governor for Cyrenaica, Graziani duly stamped out most of it from 1930-1932. Both his military effectiveness and political hardness had come jointly to the fore.

Aside from outright air-ground warfare, Graziani's "pacification" of the locals encompassed the erection of both concentration and slave labor camps that saw the deaths of thousands of overworked Libyans of color. To the overjoyed Italian colonial populace, he was trumpeted instead as the Pacifier of Libya for he had soundly beaten rebel leader Muhammad ibn Ali as-Senussi and his followers in open battle. Graziani had Senussi hung publicly as an object lesson. That lesson failed to take hold; nevertheless, the mainstay of the rebellion had finally been crushed after two decades of war.

Graziani and other Italian officials distribute funds to the poor on the steps of the royal palace in Addis Ababa. Minutes later a pair of assassins would hurl grenades at the group of dignitaries.

From Rome, Mussolini sent him on to a second desert colonial command as the reigning governor of Italian Somaliland in 1935-1936. His domain and rule expanded dramatically midway through 1936 when he became viceroy and governor-general of all Italian East Africa.

The vain marshal was overshadowed, though, during the 1935-1936 Italian campaigns in Ethiopia by his longtime rival, Marshal Pietro Badoglio, the actual conqueror of Addis Ababa. Still, he had led his field command well enough for Mussolini to promote him yet again, to the Army's top post as commando supremo, which was essentially chief of the general staff, a capacity in which he served from 1939 to 1941 in Rome.

Fascist Italy's conquests over the two-year period beginning in 1935 were the manifestation of Il Duce's attempt to establish a Second Roman Imperium modeling the conquests of ancient Rome. Yet Graziani made it clear to the world that he would ensure Mussolini's conquest of Ethiopia. "The Duce will have Ethiopia, with or without the Ethiopians!" bellowed Graziani. These words became a signature utterance of the Italian colonial period in 20th-century Africa. The period was marked by massacres and rampant violence and criminality at the expense of the Ethiopians and others.

During the Second Italo-Ethiopian War, Graziani commanded the southern front, leading his troops from Italian Somaliland into Ethiopia. He fought the Ethiopians at Genale Doria and Ogaden; however, Graziani's efforts constituted a secondary thrust whereas the primary thrust came from Eritrea and was led by General Emilio De Bono and later continued by Marshal Pietro Badoglio. Badoglio entered Addis Ababa in triumph. "Italy has its empire!" Mussolini shouted from the Palazzo Venezia balcony in Rome on May 9, 1936, in celebration of the conquest of Ethiopia.

The main charge against the late marshal's name and character rests on the infamous massacre on Yekatit 12, the date on the Ethiopian calendar equivalent to February 19, 1937, in Addis Ababa of an estimated 19,200 black Ethiopians over a three-day period. The massacre began immediately following Graziani's near miraculous survival of an assassination attempt.

It is alleged that the Italians executed an additional 1,469 captives the following month. Graziani was forever branded afterward as the Butcher of Ethiopia. The tragedy was made even greater by the fact the slaughtered included 2,000 black monks of the ancient Coptic Order Debre Libanos Monastery, as well as attending pilgrims who were celebrating their founding saint.

Addis Ababa fell to Badoglio on May 5, 1936. Although Graziani had wanted to reach Harar before Badoglio reached Addis Ababa, he was not able to pull it off. Nevertheless, for his role commanding the southern front Graziani was promoted to marshal of Italy. During a tour of an Ethiopian Orthodox church in Dire Dawa, Graziani fell into a pit covered by an ornate carpet, a trap he believed had been devised by Ethiopian priests to kill or seriously injure him.

Despite his belief in the origins of the attack on him, Graziani announced a planned public

EXPERIENCE THE ACTION OF WORLD WAR II AFLOAT!

Aboard the Liberty Ship JOHN W. BROWN

2019 Cruises from Baltimore on the Chesapeake

Saturday, June 15

Saturday, September 7

The SS JOHN W. BROWN *is one of the last operating survivors from the great fleet of over 2,700 war-built Liberty Ships and the last operational troopship of World War II. The ship is a maritime museum and a memorial to the shipyard workers who built, merchant mariners who sailed, and the U.S. Navy Armed Guard who defended the Liberty ships during World War II. The JOHN W. BROWN is fully restored and maintained as close as possible to her World War II configuration. Visitors must be able to walk up steps to board the ship.*

This exciting 6 hour day cruise *includes lunch, music of the 40's, period entertainment and flybys (conditions permitting) of wartime aircraft. Tour on-board museums, crew quarters, bridge and much more. See the magnificent 140-ton triple-expansion steam engine as it powers the ship through the water.*

★ **Visit www.ssjohnwbrown.org for up-to-date information on additional cruise dates**

★ **Order your tickets online at: www.ssjohnwbrown.org**

★ **For information call: 410-558-0164**

Visit www.ssjohnwbrown.org for special pricing, group rates, gift certificates and more.

Last day to order tickets is 14 days before the cruise. Conditions and penalties apply to cancellations.

Project Liberty Ship is a Baltimore based, all volunteer, nonprofit organization.

Find us on Facebook

LIBERTY SHIP JOHN W. BROWN

celebration of the recent birth of the Italian Prince of Naples. He planned to distribute money to the poor of the occupied Ethiopian capital of Addis Ababa on Friday, February 19, 1937. The site chosen for the distribution of funds was the front of Guenete Leul Palace, the royal palace known affectionately as Little Gebbi.

The crowd that morning included a pair of would-be assassins: Eritreans Abraha Deboch and Mogus Asgedom. They had arrived in Addis Ababa as students at the city's Menelik II School, which was named after the Ethiopian emperor from 1889 to 1913. Ironically, the former had a job with the Fascist Political Bureau, but this might well have been simply a concealment attempt as he deeply resented the ruling power's racist policies against all its underlings of color.

The Little Gebbi event initially went off as planned. Viceroy Graziani spoke, and the local nobility rendered abject homage to him as their lord. Aircraft of the Regia Aeronautica roared overhead in salute. Donations were distributed to the poor at 11 AM.

The two would-be assassins had arrived at the foot of the steps of Little Gebbi. They startled everyone by lobbing as many as 10 hand grenades directly at a stunned Graziani. The

Graziani was branded as the "Butcher of Ethiopia" for the horrific executions he oversaw.

alleged third accomplice, local taxicab driver Simeyon Adefres, who had reportedly supplied the hand grenades, drove them to initial safety.

Among the wounded was Graziani, whose body had been peppered with hundreds of grenade fragments. Rushed to a nearby Italian hospital, he miraculously recovered after emergency surgery. The enraged Fascist response to the attack occurred immediately after the explosions. Italian police fired directly into the tightly packed crowd of poor who had assembled to receive the charitable funds at the foot of Little Gebbi's steps. Italian Federal Secretary Guido Cortese purportedly drew his holstered sidearm and fired into the assembled Ethiopian dignitaries standing next to him onstage.

"Comrades, today is the day we should show our devotion to our viceroy by reacting, and destroying the Ethiopians for three days!" Cortese said, issuing the first reprisal order. "I give you carte blanche to destroy and kill, and do what you want to the Ethiopians!"

The persecution began almost immediately. Italians chanting "Il Duce!" ruthlessly stabbed the Ethiopians with daggers or bashed their heads in with truncheons. The terrorism escalated to torching black houses with gasoline, as well as invading the homes of resident Greeks and Armenians in order to lynch their servants.

Gory photographs were taken showing murdered civilians, their severed heads being held by their Italian killers. The marshal duly upheld Cortese's bloodbath, using it to implement a planned slaughter since May 3, 1936, of all black society intellectuals known as The Young Ethiopians. These individuals had graduated from both American and European colleges, and thus were seen as possible future rebel lead-

ers against Italian colonial rule. The same day as the attempt, an Italian Army tribunal convened. By that night, they had shot in reprisal as many as 62 of these young graduates at Addis Ababa's Alem Bekagn Prison.

Thus, the Italians wiped out at one fell swoop the entire intellectual center of the new resistance movement, in what was dubbed thereafter as "the Graziani Massacre." The Italians ramped up persecution at their various detention camps, including Danan, Ogaden, Nokra, and the Dahlak Archipelago. The Fascist overseers made sure the imprisoned received only the barest of subsistence rations and water. At Nokra, for example, 1,500 individuals received life sentences handed down by Fascist kangaroo courts.

When a hospitalized Graziani learned that both of the assassins and one of their wives had found shelter at the Coptic Debre Libanos Monastery, and also that the monks might have known in advance of the planned attack, he sent a cable to his local commander instructing him to take immediate action.

"Therefore, execute all monks without distinction, including the vice-pryor!" wrote Graziani. The fatal order was carried out the next day, which happened to be that of the order's patron Saint Tekle Haymanot. The monastery's entire population was shot. This amounted to the death of 297 monks and 23 religious laymen. Overall, these political slaughters were later commemorated by Ethiopians who had been liberated by the British Army. The Ethiopians erected the Yekatit 12 Square Monument, an obelisk recalling all the victims of the worst massacre by the Italians of their conquered people. Meanwhile, the two assassins who were hiding out at the Debre Labanos Monastery in an effort to obtain political asylum in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan were murdered by local residents.

Following Graziani's surrender in 1945, the Allies overlooked his long list of war crimes in their pursuit of a postwar democratic Italy.

Even today the actual number of politically slain black victims is hotly debated, with a 2017 estimate being 19,200 souls, which if true, would amount to 20 percent of the Addis Ababa population in 1937. One of these was said to be the identifier of the two assassins, Ayale Gebre, who turned stool pigeon for the Italians, only to be killed himself. The wounded marshal was recalled to Italy by a concerned Mussolini. Graziani went on to receive successively higher posts, both military and political, up until the collapse of Fascist Salo Republican Italy in April 1945.

Italian dictator Mussolini declared war on England and France on June 10, 1940. Shortly afterward Graziani experienced another upswing in his career when Air Marshal Italo Balbo's personal aircraft was struck by friendly fire over Tripoli Harbor. None on board survived.

That very day Mussolini named his most famous Fascist marshal to succeed the slain aviator, a post he held until March 15, 1941. However, it was during this final sojourn in the Libyan wastes that Marshal Graziani's reputation took a downward spiral from which it never quite recovered. This was due to Il Duce's determination that his new desert warlord

Continued on page 70

GRANT'S ORDEAL AT SHILOH

IT was raining heavily, a deluge of almost Biblical proportions that hammered down on the exhausted men of the Union's Army of the Tennessee. They had just fought a very bloody battle on April 6, 1862, with Confederate forces, the bloodiest to date in this fratricidal war, and had been pushed back almost to the Tennessee River. The bluecoats were forced to bivouac as best they could in a downpour that did little to mute the horrors of that evening.

It was pitch dark, an inky void that was briefly illuminated by bolts of lightning that suddenly veined the sky at intervals. But perhaps the darkness was a blessing, because survivors could not see the 2,000 corpses that lay thickly on the bloodied ground, some of them horribly eviscerated, and others without a limb or even a head. But if they could not see, they could still hear. Hundreds of wounded and dying were lying where they fell, moaning and screaming with pain in the darkness. Their agonized cries were mingled with the low-pitched grunts of wild pigs rooting around and feasting on the putrefying corpses. Union gunboats added to the cacophony, creating a terrible din by shelling the seemingly triumphant Confederates.

Major General Ulysses S. Grant, commander of the Army of the Tennessee, had originally planned to sleep under the spreading branches of a large oak tree, but slumber proved impossible under these conditions. Torrential rains were one thing, but Grant was experiencing excruciating pain from a leg injury he had sustained a couple of days earlier. Seeking better shelter, he used a crutch to hobble over to a log house that was serving as a field hospital. He immediately realized it was the wrong thing to do. Medicine in the American Civil War was still a primitive affair, and surgeons amputated arms and legs on a regular basis. Sweating surgeons, daubed with gore, grimly plied their trade as they sawed bones and tied off arteries time and again.

Grant turned away and hobbled back to his oak tree, unable to witness even a minute more of that sanguinary hell. Brig. Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman, one of his subordinate commanders, found him under that tree a short time later. Grant huddled there, sodden collar turned up in a futile attempt to ward off the rain, his saturated slouch hat pulled down over his head. Grant took a drag on a cigar, the glowing orange end a tiny beacon of light in the gloom, though he also had a lantern in his other hand.

Sherman was unsure about what Grant was going to do. Some of the officers felt the Army of the Tennessee had to retreat or risk annihilation. Sherman, whose nickname was "Cump" from Tecumseh, decided to sound Grant out about the matter. "Well,

The Confederate sledgehammer attack sparked panic among some Union regiments, but not the 9th Illinois Regiment. It blunted the Confederate advance from a ravine on the south side of the 10-acre Peach Orchard.

Ulysses S. Grant faced a formidable command challenge on the first day at Shiloh in April 1862 when caught off guard by Albert Sydney Johnston's spirited Rebel attack.

BY ERIC NIDEROST

National Guard Heritage Series

Grant, we've had the devil's own business," Sherman observed. "Yes," Grant admitted, taking another puff of his cigar, "lick 'em tomorrow though."

In many ways, this was Grant's defining moment. He had been taken by surprise, caught off guard, and his Army of the Tennessee had been badly battered and forced back to the river after heavy fighting. On the surface, at least, it looked like the Confederates were on the verge of a great victory. Grant's statement was typical of the man. It was brief and laconic, but precise and to the point, and provided a glimpse of his true greatness as a general. He had carefully analyzed the situation, weighing both pros and cons, the possibilities of victory or defeat, and determined they would win the next day.

Apart from some distinguished service as a young lieutenant in the Mexican-American War, Grant's military career was anything but auspicious before 1861. Posted to frontier outposts in the West, separated from his beloved wife and children, Grant began to seek solace in the bottle. Evidence seems to indicate that Grant was a binge drinker, not an alcoholic in the classic sense of the word. With little to do but pine for his family, Grant turned to the bottle as a welcome relief from the deadening ennui. Yet he could be perfectly sober for months at a time, and with the care and support of his wife Julia, and later his aide and close confidant Captain John Rawlins, he could stay on the wagon more or less permanently.

Yet the label of drunkard became an albatross around his neck long after he had given up the bottle. Buried for a time, accusations of drunkenness would surface periodically, even as he became famous though a string of victories in 1862. For the most part they were put forward by jealous rivals or others who had some axe to grind, but luckily President Abraham Lincoln ignored these calumnies.

Grant resigned his commission in 1854 and rejoined his family in Missouri. The rest of the decade was one of failure and bitter disappointment as Grant tried various occupations without success. He tried his hand at agriculture, but after some initial progress he failed as a farmer. To make ends meet he was reduced to selling firewood in the streets of St. Louis. Grant also had to endure a measure of humiliation when he encountered Army officers he had known while serving in the Mexican-American War and on other assignments.

These former colleagues were shocked when they saw Grant hawking firewood, dressed in a shabby old Army overcoat and looking like a common peddler. When one astonished onlooker asked Grant what he was doing, he replied, "Solving the problem of poverty."

He hit bottom in 1857, when he pawned his watch to buy Christmas gifts for his family. By 1860 he threw in the towel and took his family to Galina, Illinois, where his father made him a clerk in a leather goods store.

It looked as if Grant was condemned to live out his life as a failure, dependent on the charity of others to make a living. That all changed when the American Civil War broke out in April 1861. The U.S. Army, which was generally called the Federal or Union Army, greatly expanded. To fill its ranks, there was a need for trained officers. Yet, ironically, Grant continued to have bad luck, at least initially. He was appointed a mustering officer, but it was a temporary position that ended in two weeks.

Still hopeful, Grant wrote to Lorenzo Thomas, the adjutant general of the army, seeking a commission. "I feel myself competent to command a regiment if the President, in his judgement, should see fit to entrust one to me," said Grant, putting his best foot forward. He received no response; undeterred, Grant visited the headquarters of George B. McClellan, who at the time was a brigadier, seeking a staff appointment.

Grant patiently waited to see McClellan that June of 1861 only to cool his heels in the general's waiting room for two days without an audience. Somebody finally put Grant out of his misery by informing him the general had gone out. That seemed to be McClellan's favorite tactic when he wanted to avoid seeing someone.

Grant went home disappointed, but his luck was about to change. Not long after the McClellan episode Governor Richard Yates of Illinois offered him the colonelcy of a new body of men that was being formed, a regiment eventually called the 21st Illinois. Grant accepted with alacrity.

The newly minted colonel did well in his new post, but he was surprised to learn only a month or so later he had been promoted once again, this time to the rank of brigadier general. Elihu Washburne, a U.S. Representative from Illinois and a Republican who had Lincoln's ear, had been his benefactor this time. As a brigadier, Grant found himself in charge of four regiments, totaling 4,000 men.

Although his tenure as colonel had been brief, he did learn a valuable lesson when he was ordered to capture Thomas A. Harris, a brigadier general in the pro-Confederate Missouri State Guard. Harris's 1,200-man mounted force was staging hit-and-run raids on isolated Union outposts. Grant found he was more than nervous, and his fears grew as he approached the place where Confederate raiders were said to have an encampment.

Grant was a seasoned Mexican-American War veteran, but then he had been a mere lieutenant. Now he was responsible for the lives of


Library of Congress

Thrust into the national spotlight by his capture of Forts Henry and Donelson, Ulysses S. Grant boosted Union morale and received a promotion to major general.

many men, and that made a difference. He tried to fathom Harris's intentions. Would Harris turn the tables and ambush him? His anxiety was such that he admitted in his memoirs his heart was in his throat.

To Grant's great relief Harris had retreated. "My heart resumed its normal place," Grant later recalled. "It occurred to me at once that Harris had been as much afraid of me as I had been of him."

It was a kind of epiphany for Grant, a profound realization that he remembered throughout the war. The Confederates were human beings just like their Northern opponents, not invincible foes with unlimited resources at their command. McClellan, the so-called Little Napoleon, was slow to recognize this central truth. He was overcautious, always believing he was vastly outnumbered, and constantly calling for heavy reinforcements. At one point he was held up by the Confederates alleged superior artillery, only to discover they were so-called Quaker guns, which were actually painted logs.

Ironically, his genuine disinterest in a military career made Grant a great general in some respects. Grant had been forced to go to West Point by his domineering father. "Military life had no charms for me," Grant once said. Because he was a reluctant soldier, he did not constantly yearn for military glory like many of his colleagues. Union generals tried to emulate the great captains of the past, studying every move in hope of gaining similar fame.

Grant was aware of this trend and avoided it. "Some of our generals failed because they worked out everything by rule," wrote Grant. "They knew what Frederick the Great did at one time and Napoleon at another. They were always thinking what Napoleon would do. Unfortunately for their plans, the rebels would be thinking about something else." Grant did not scorn the lessons of the past, but he recognized that new inventions, such as the steamboat and the railroad, required new paths of military thought.

By early 1862 Union plans went ahead for what might be called "river wars." The natural focus was the Mississippi River, the magnificent "Father of Waters" that flowed through the heart of the Confederacy on its way to the Gulf of Mexico. Near its end was the city of New Orleans, the South's greatest port and its largest city. Capturing New Orleans was one thing, but if the entire length of the Mississippi could be controlled by the Union, the Confederacy would be cut in half.

Though this divide-and-conquer scheme was the heart of Union Western strategy, other

Library of Congress

ABOVE: The Union gunboats *Lexington* and *Tyler,* each bristling with more than a dozen guns, pummeled the Confederate right wing. BELOW: Union field officers succeeded in rallying their shaken troops after the initial shock.

Library of Congress

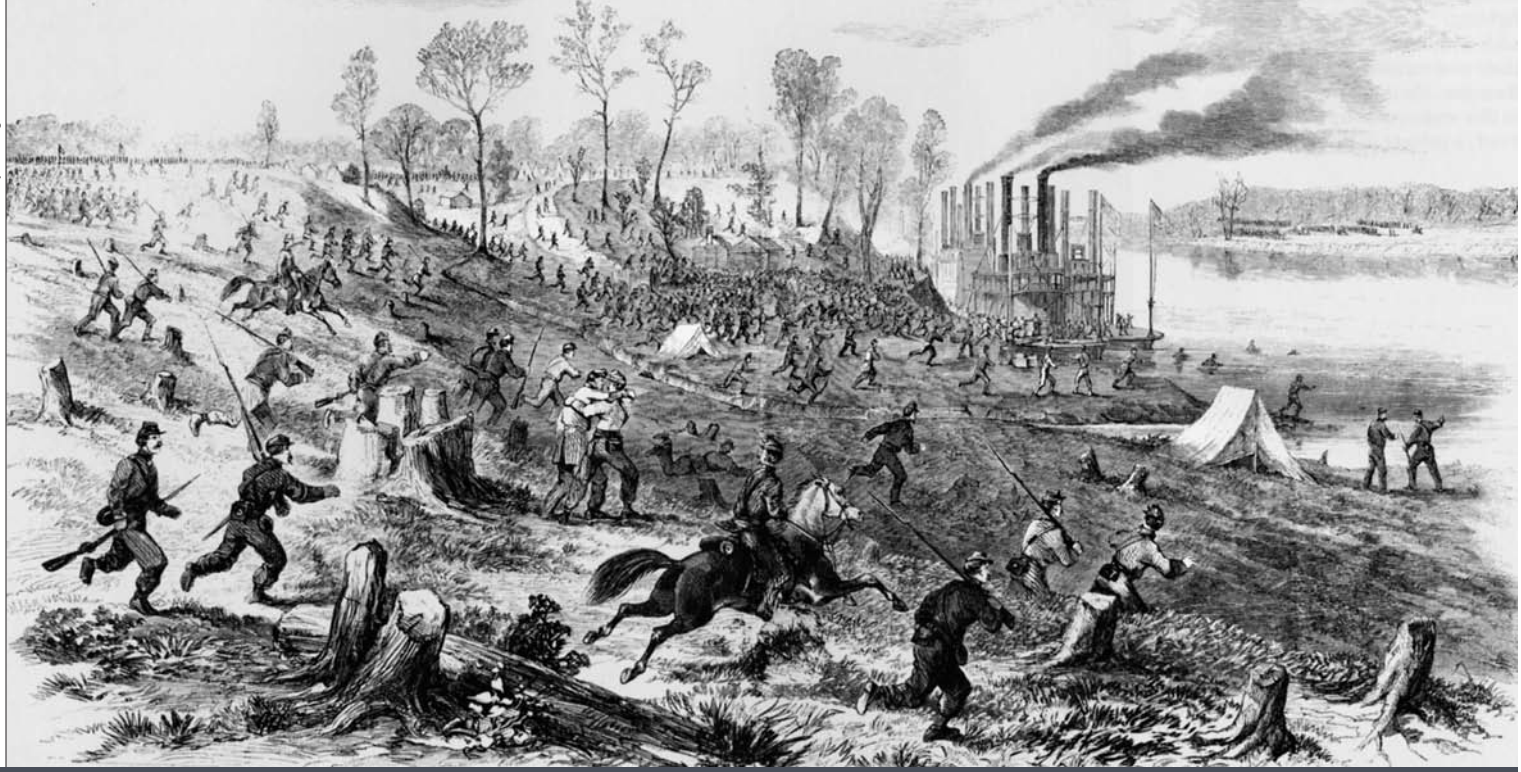
waterways were not forgotten. The Cumberland and Tennessee Rivers were fluid gateways to the Rebel states of Tennessee, Alabama, and Mississippi. Grant made his headquarters at Cairo, Illinois, the southernmost point of the Union and an important intersection where the Ohio River emptied into the Mississippi.

Besides being natural gateways into Dixie, the Cumberland and Tennessee Rivers meandered through one of the principal grain-growing and iron-producing areas of the Confederacy. The iron works at Clarksville on the Cumberland was vitally important, while the city of Nashville on the same river was major supply depot for Confederate forces.

The Confederates were well aware of Union plans, at least in broad terms. Confederate General Albert Sydney Johnston, a soldier of some reputation before the war, headed the Western Department, and he was tasked with forming a defensive line that would stop Union thrusts south. The left flank defenses were anchored on the Mississippi River by a fortress in Columbus, Kentucky, while the right flank defenses rested on Bowling Green, situated in the central part of the state.

But the Confederate defensive line was vulnerable in its center. The center was held by Fort Henry on the Tennessee River and Fort Donelson on the Cumberland River. Both were slapdash affairs, badly sited and badly constructed. Fort Henry was the more poorly constructed and sited fortification. They were the Confederate line's weakest links, essentially twin Achilles' heels that would be tempting targets to any Union general with the strategic vision, boldness, and offensive spirit to recognize their vulnerability.

Major General Henry Halleck, Grant's immediate superior, ordered an advance on Fort Henry, which should be "taken and held at all hazards." Grant, long straining on Halleck's leash, could now go forward. Fort Henry was considered the easier of the twin forts because it was actually



Library of Congress

THE REAL ROCK OF SHILOH WAS GRANT HIMSELF. HE SEEMED NOT ONLY ONE PERSON BUT SEVERAL, APPEARING AS IF BY MAGIC WHERE THE FIGHTING WAS THE HEAVIEST. MINIE BULLETS WHISTLED THROUGH THE AIR LIKE SWARMS OF ANGRY BEES, BUT HE PAID THEM NO HEED.

lower than the surrounding hills, and when the river was high, as it was in the winter of 1862, was prone to flooding.

When Grant visited his headquarters in Cairo he would from time to time gaze out the window at the fleet of Union gunboats that lay at anchor nearby. Instinctively, he knew that these great aquatic beasts, ungainly but powerful, represented a new weapon in his hands that was uniquely adapted to this river campaign. Flat bottomed, wide beamed, and propelled by steam-powered paddle wheels, each vessel boasted 13 guns that provided a powerful sting. The gunboats were also protected by sloped iron plates up to 2.5 inches thick, which gave them a nickname, "Pook's Turtles," after naval architect Samuel Pook. They could take on most anything the Confederates had to offer.

Grant formed a solid working relationship with the gunboat fleet commander, Flag Officer Andrew H. Foote. Luckily, Foote was an energetic, offensive-minded officer who shared Grant's strategic vision. The plan to take Fort Henry was simple and straightforward. Foote's flotilla would bombard the fort at close range, and Brig. Gen. John McClernand would take an infantry division and envelop Fort Henry from behind, sealing off any possibility of escape.

The Union infantry became bogged down in the dense forests and rain-saturated roads of the region, so its progress was slowed. In this case, it did not matter: Foote's gunboats did the job and battered Fort Henry into submission. The Confederate fort surrendered, but after the white flag was hoisted the Federals found to their surprise it had been manned by a skeleton garrison. Approximately 2,500 troops had been evacuated to Fort Donelson, 11 miles away.

Nevertheless, Grant's taking of Fort Henry was a magnificent achievement, but the general wasted no time in proceeding to Fort Donelson. Grant was not about to rest on his laurels. Fort Henry was taken, but how long was it going to take for the stronger fort to fall?

Fort Donelson proved a much tougher nut to crack, but it fell on February 16, 1862. At one point the Confederates made a surprise attack on Union lines in a desperate bid to break out. The effort did not succeed, but the attack left at least some of the Union forces demoralized. Some Confederate soldiers had been captured, and Grant asked to have a look at their knapsacks. When opened up, they were found to have three days of cooked rations.

Some Union officers interpreted this as proof the Rebels were going to stand and fight. Grant begged to differ, saying, "They mean to cut their way out." He admitted that "some of our men are pretty badly demoralized, but the enemy must be more so, for he has attempted to force his way out but has fallen back; the one who attacks first now will be victorious."

In the end, Fort Donelson surrendered. Brig. Gen. Simon Bolivar Buckner, the Confederate commander, knew Grant before the war, and there was genuine respect and admiration between the two men. Grant was magnanimous as a victor, always reminding his men that the Confederates also were Americans. But he had little stomach for the "moonlight and magnolias" romantic ethos that came from the tradition of Southern chivalry.

There would be no "knightly" courtesy; Grant demanded unconditional surrender from his vanquished foe. Buckner, who protested, had little choice but to agree. Grant's army captured 15,000 Confederate prisoners as well as a large quantity of commissary stores, weapons, and artillery. The fall of Forts Henry and Donelson was the best news the North had had in months, and immediately catapulted Grant into the national spotlight.

Halleck planned a deeper thrust into the heart of the Confederacy. The fortress town of Corinth, Mississippi, near the Tennessee border

soon became a primary objective. It was the crossroads of two vitally important railroads, the Mobile & Ohio and the Memphis & Charleston. These railroads were important communication links as well as conduits to ship supplies and men from the western parts of the Confederacy to the Eastern Seaboard.

As Union plans matured, it was decided that Grant's 42,000-man Army of the Tennessee would proceed down the Tennessee River, calling a temporary halt at an old steamboat stop called Pittsburg Landing. Only 20 miles from Corinth, Pittsburg Landing would be a staging area for a major advance on that city. The pause was necessary because Maj. Gen. Don Carlos Buell's 37,000-strong Army of the Ohio was scheduled to rendezvous there as soon as it could arrive from Nashville.

Once Grant's and Buell's armies were combined, they would be a juggernaut and surely outnumber anything the Confederates could scrape together. Grant and some of his subordinates, such as the irascible Sherman, seemed to be in an ebullient mood. Buoyed by his recent successes, Grant was sure Corinth would be an easy objective. Grant would soon discover, though, that he had grossly underestimated his opponent.

Pittsburg Landing was a high tableland, where raw nature and cultivated farmland existed in seeming harmony. Graceful trees spread their branches atop high ridges, dramatically spiking the sky, and dense forests contrasted with the cultivated fields and orchards of cherry and peach. It was spring, but the next day this terrestrial paradise would soon be transformed into a nightmare vision of hell.

The Pittsburg Landing encampment held five of the Army of the Tennessee's six divisions, a neat if sprawling tent city that stretched two to three miles from the Tennessee River to a rough-hewn log Methodist church called Shiloh. Ironically, the name was taken from a Hebrew term for peace. The Union 6th Division, which was led by future *Ben Hur* author Brig. Gen. Lew Wallace, was located five miles north at Culp's Landing. The Pittsburg Landing site had natural features that lulled the Federals into a false sense of security. The Tennessee River guarded the eastern flank, Snake Creek hemmed in the western approaches, and Owl Creek blocked any attack from the north. The only possible way an enemy could attack was from the south, and if the bluecoats had thrown up some defensive works there, the camp would have been nearly impregnable.

Grant decided not to fortify the Pittsburg Landing camp for a variety of reasons that seemed valid at the time, but in retrospect they nearly brought on disaster. For one, he did not expect his army to stay in the area long, so there was no need for such precautions. Moreover, Grant was a firm believer in the offensive spirit, and he therefore maintained that in this particular instance entrenchment would be counterproductive to the men's morale.

There were also regiments under his command who were little better than raw recruits; some had received their muskets only a few days before. Grant did not want them to trade their new weapons for spades and axes. It was drill, not digging, that would mold them into soldiers. Above all, though, Grant believed the Confederate forces in the area were a broken reed, demoralized after the twin defeats at Forts Henry and Donelson.

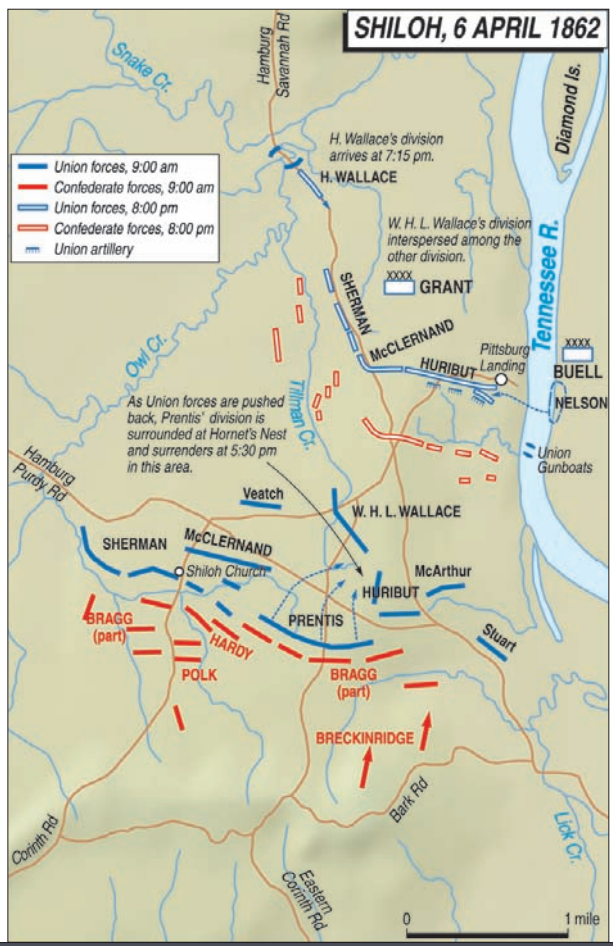
For all of Grant's developing brilliance, he made a terrible, and nearly fatal, miscalculation. Confederate General Albert Sydney Johnston was not going to passively stand by while the Federals marshaled superior forces against him. Johnston gathered all the forces he could, some from as far away as the Atlantic seaboard, and began planning for a surprise offensive. If he could badly defeat, or possibly even destroy, Grant's army the Northern cause would receive a crippling blow.

Luckily for the Union cause, one brigade commander, Colonel Everett Peabody, did not share his superiors' complacency about the weakness of Confederate forces. He was part of Brig. Gen. Benjamin Prentiss's 6th Division, yet another complacent Federal officer. Peabody was not so sure, and so on his own initiative he sent out a patrol, five companies from the 12th Michigan and 25th Missouri, in the wee hours of the morning.

It was 5 AM when they made contact with the cutting edge of the enemy assault force, 9,000 Confederates under native Georgian Maj. Gen. William Hardee. The patrol fought hard, stubbornly contesting every foot of ground, but the sheer weight of numbers forced them back. The sound of gunfire alerted Prentiss, who sent reinforcements from the 16th Wisconsin and 21st Missouri to aid the beleaguered patrol.

But the contest was too unequal, the numbers too great, to delay the inevitable outcome for long. The Union skirmish line, which acted as a dam, gave way. The shattered remnants of the four Union regiments were forced into a headlong retreat. Right behind them was a Confederate juggernaut that carried all before it. Long lines of gray and butternut-clad Confederate soldiers swarmed out of the woods, filling the air with the angry screams that later would be dubbed the Rebel Yell. The gray tidal wave was accompanied by regimental bands playing "Dixie." Yet before long such music was all but muted by the staccato sounds of rifles and the deafening roar of smoothbore and rifled artillery.

The shattered Union patrol, stumbling in their haste and running in great disorder, passed through the main camps of both Prentiss's 6th Division and Sherman's 5th Division. The fugitives filtered through the 53rd Ohio's



Map © 2019 Philip Schwartzberg, Meridian Mapping, Minneapolis, MN

RIGHT: The Union army bent at Shiloh, but it remained unbroken. The Confederates squandered their manpower battling Brig. Gen. Benjamin Prentiss's division. OPPOSITE: Panicked Union troops race downhill to Pittsburgh Landing. Grant radiated confidence, and his straightforward, positive demeanor helped rally his troops.

camp, one of Sherman's regiments, and at the moment the general himself was coming up to see what was going on. Sherman raised his telescope to scan the woods, sweeping the clumps of trees for signs of the enemy

Sherman got more than he bargained for. A Union officer shouted, "General! Look to your right!" and Sherman complied. It was a sight that would have startled even an old campaigner like Sherman. An entire Confederate brigade came storming out of the forest, not 50 yards away. At the same time a volley of bullets peppered Sherman's position, killing an aide who was at Sherman's side. The general himself was hit by a piece of buckshot in the hand and later received a spent bullet in the shoulder.

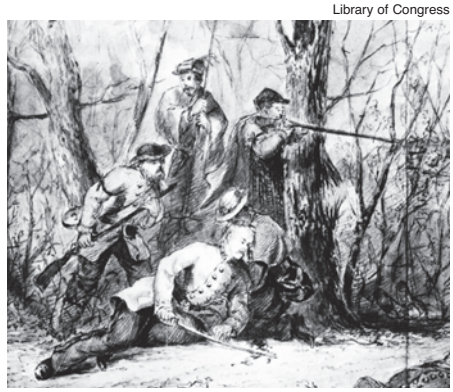
"My God," Sherman exclaimed, "we are attacked!" Sherman wheeled around and galloped back, not only to escape the surging Rebels, but to rally the rest of his division for the onslaught. In the early stages of the battle confusion reigned among the Union soldiers. Some accounts contradict each other, but at least some Federal soldiers had been caught in their tents, lazily taking it easy or eating breakfast. "[Bullets] came whistling through our tents," recalled 2nd Lt. William Rowley.

Grant was at his headquarters in Savannah, about nine miles downriver. He had just sat down to breakfast with some of his officers when the sound of distant rumbling could be heard in the direction of Pittsburg Landing. Grant was just about to drink a cup of coffee, but on hearing the unnatural thunder he placed his cup down. He listened a moment, then jumped up from the table and quietly said to his staff, "Gentlemen, the ball is in motion," he said. "Let's be off."

Grant knew the sound was artillery, and it was clear a major battle was developing. He hurriedly wrote orders, including a missive to Brig. Gen. William "Bull" Nelson. Nelson, who had recently arrived at Savannah, commanded the advance guard of Buell's Army of the Ohio. Grant ordered him to march to Pittsburg Landing, but on the opposite side of the river. Once he arrived, he would be ferried over to the battlefield.

Within 15 minutes the general, staff, orderlies, clerks, and horses were aboard the steamship *Tigress* and on their way to Pittsburg Landing. The commanding general arrived at 10 AM. He was gratified to see that the troops—at least, most of them—were fighting hard under tremendous pressure from wave after wave of Rebels. A few thousand, mostly the raw recruits who had never seen a gun fired in anger, huddled beneath the bluffs near the landing for safety, but the rest were performing prodigies of valor. Grant was still nursing his leg, now swollen and extremely painful, and so agonizing he could not walk without the aid of crutches.

Library of Congress



Undaunted, Grant had himself hoisted onto his horse, his crutch tied to his saddle. His injury was so bad it could have given him an excuse to stay at the landing in relative safety. This was not his style; he had to personally see what was going on. He had a quick conference with Sherman, who brought him up to date and gave him an accurate appraisal of the situation. Sherman was an inspiration to his green troops, although at the moment he looked anything but a conquering hero: covered in dust, his arm in a sling from a bullet wound, and a bloody bandage wrapped around his hand.

Several Union officers provided exemplary leadership that bloody day, including Sherman and Prentiss, but the real rock of Shiloh was Grant himself. He seemed not only one person but several, appearing as if by magic where the fighting was the heaviest. Minie bullets whistled through the air like swarms of angry bees, but he paid them no heed, calmly issuing orders as if the occasion was a peacetime review. He radiated confidence, and his straightforward, positive demeanor gave fresh heart to his men.

At one point a courier, having just delivered a message, had his head blown off moments later. Grant was sprayed by the man's blood, but the general was unfazed and showed no emotion. "Not beaten yet by a damn sight," he mumbled, as if refusing to believe the soldier's sudden death might presage his army's defeat and symbolic demise.

Prentiss's division had been driven back to a sunken wagon road, a rutted, muddy, nondescript path that paralleled the Confederate front. There was a patchy stretch of woodland to its rear, and in the front brambles formed a prickly barrier to its front. It was there that Prentiss decided to make his stand. A short time earlier he had been visited by the commanding general, who told him to hold fast.

The remnants of Prentiss's 6th Division were joined by several brigades from Brig. Gen. W.H.L. Wallace's 2nd Division. The bluecoats entrenched, and for the next six hours refused to be dislodged in spite of equally heroic headlong assaults by the Confederates. The fighting was fierce; bullets flew so thickly they were like angry insects, giving the road the name "Hornets' Nest."

Federals from Brig. Gen. Stephen Hurlbut's 4th Division deployed on Prentiss's left where they defended a 10-acre peach orchard. The blooming trees with their delicate petals formed a dramatic contrast to the bloody carnage that occurred in that ordinarily tranquil place. Johnston was near the orchard when he was hit in the knee by a minie ball. He scarcely felt the wound for the adrenaline of battle numbed the pain. He bled to death within minutes.

As the Federal right and left bent back forming a salient, Prentiss and his men found themselves dangerously exposed. Confederate General P.T.G. Beauregard took command after Johnston's demise, and he realized that the Hornets' Nest must be taken. He assembled no fewer than 62 artillery pieces for the task. These iron monsters spewed a hurricane of shot and shell at 300 yards.

Hurlbut's men were forced to give way as this same shot and shell scythed through the packed blue ranks. W.H.L. Wallace's division fared no better, ripped to pieces to such an extent it lost its cohesiveness as an organized unit. Wallace tried to retrieve the situation, but in an attempt to rally his troops he was mortally wounded with a bullet to the head

Confederate attacks ground on, pushing Grant's Army of the Tennessee back foot by foot, yard by yard. These gains were not without cost. Confederate General Braxton Bragg hurled wave after wave of graybacks against the Union lines in the Hornets' Nest. Yet these nearly suicidal frontal attacks initially achieved nothing.

After the other Union divisions had been forced back, Prentiss and his bloodied bluecoats held the salient for two hours alone. But at last flesh and blood could stand no more. Prentiss surrendered himself and his approximately 2,200 men, which was half of the division's original strength.

Johnston's original plan was to attack on Grant's left flank by the Tennessee River, separating the Federals from their so-called brown-water navy steamships and the possibility of escape. Once pushed back from the river, they could be forced inland and eventually end up in the swamps, their backs to Owl Creek. If that happened, surrender would almost inevitably follow.

Library of Congress

But Johnston had not anticipated such a spirited Union defense. Also the Confederate general had formed his troops into a clumsy, layered offensive attack formation. Hardee's division was the vanguard, the spearhead of the assault, and immediately behind him were General Braxton Bragg's 11,000 troops. The third rank featured two corps led by Maj. Gens. Leonidas Polk and John Breckinridge.

But like their Federal counterparts, not all gray troops were seasoned soldiers. When they advanced, they tended to get bunched up, and units from different divisions intermingled. Also, as they passed through abandoned Union camps, they could not resist the temptation to loot. Even at this early stage of the war, the Federal soldiers had better creature comforts, such as blankets and food, which the graybacks desired. By the late afternoon Grant had pieced together a decent defensive line, and the fighting ended for the day. The Federal army had been pushed back about two miles, but the vital Pittsburg Landing was still in Union hands. Still doggedly optimistic, Grant personally visited each of his subordinates to tell them to be ready for a major offensive the next day.

Late in the day Buell showed up for an impromptu conference with Grant. Buell scanned Pittsburg Landing and what he saw appalled him: the seeming chaos, the bewildering confusion, the hundreds of green and badly frightened troops still trying to keep out of harm's way. Buell did not beat around the bush, but asked Grant about his plans for retreat.

ABOVE: Union Brig. Gen. Benjamin Prentiss, mounted at right, directs his division's defense of the Hornet's Nest in Thure de Thulstrup's famous painting. The hard-won Union victory opened the way for the fall of Vicksburg the following year. OPPOSITE: While reconnoitering enemy forces, Confederate General Albert Sydney Johnston was struck by a minie ball and bled to death within minutes. His death shocked the South.

Grant must have been incredulous, but answered calmly, "I haven't despaired of whipping them yet!" This was not arrogance, wishful thinking, or bravado. It was an insightful and accurate assessment of the overall situation. Lew Wallace's division, which supposedly had taken the wrong road, finally arrived. In addition, three divisions of Buell's Army of the Ohio had been ferried across the Tennessee River before daybreak. These fresh divisions took up positions on the Union left for the second day of the battle.

That gave Grant 25,000 fresh soldiers who would join his 15,000 survivors of the first day. Beauregard probably had 25,000 troops available for action on the second day, so the Federals would have numerical superiority. Even though he made the initial mistake in underestimating the enemy, Grant redeemed himself by his calm, rational demeanor under pressure and his unflagging confidence in himself and his men.

On the morning of April 7 Grant's predictions rang true. The fighting was heavy, but the Confederates lost all the ground they had gained the first day. Beauregard, who realized that he had been outfought, ordered a general retreat to Corinth.

It had been a close-fought battle. Johnston, who gave his life for the Confederate cause that day, had successfully concentrated his far-flung forces and had pulled off one of the most stunning surprise attacks of the war. The South had good reason to weep, for Johnston was a truly gifted commander. As for Grant, he had risen to the occasion; however, the Union victory was by no means an unalloyed triumph. Grant had grossly underestimated the offensive spirit of Johnston's army, and it had almost led to his undoing.

The clash at Pittsburg Landing was the bloodiest battle up to that time, with the Union suffering 13,000 casualties and the Confederates losing 11,000 men. It was a sobering clash for both sides given that more men had been killed in the battle than the Revolutionary War, War of 1812, and Mexican-American War combined. Sadly, it was a foretaste of even greater, albeit tragically necessary, butchery to come.

Shiloh was a crucial milestone for both Grant and the Northern cause. The hard-won victory opened the way for the eventual fall of Vicksburg the following year and Union control of the Mississippi River. The Confederacy would be cut in half. When that occurred, Lincoln observed. the "Father of waters again goes unvexed to the sea." □

BLOODY

Elite U.S. air cavalrymen won a desperate battle against North Vietnamese regulars in the Central Highlands of South Vietnam in November 1965.

Specialist 4 George McDonald leaped out of a UH-1 helicopter on November 14, 1965, into a hellish firefight. McDonald served as a mortar man in Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry, and his unit was deploying into Landing Zone X-Ray deep in the Central Highlands of South Vietnam near Chu Pong Massif. As the helicopter set down, he saw soldiers lying in the tall grass firing their rifles into the trees around the landing zone. As soon as he and his comrades left the helicopter, bullets zipped past them. The nearby tree line was alive with muzzle flashes, each one signifying an incoming round from a weapon aimed at a human target.

The young man was carrying a stubby M-79 grenade launcher that did not have the range to reach the tree line. McDonald therefore borrowed an M-16 from the man next to him, aimed carefully, and began firing at the muzzle flashes until they finally stopped. Whether he hit the shooters or just convinced them to move will never be known, but the fire slackened enough for the mortar crew to move into cover and set up its weapon in an American-held section of the tree line. Within moments they were dropping bomb after bomb down the tube, launching them toward their North Vietnamese enemy.

When their ammunition ran out, McDonald heard a call from ahead. There was heavy fighting and the troopers in contact needed more help. McDonald went to their aid, but when he ran out of rifle ammunition, he returned to his mortar. It was not the last close combat he would see at LZ X-Ray; indeed, it was just the beginning of a harrowing three-day ordeal for a man who at that point had only two weeks left to serve in the U.S. Army.

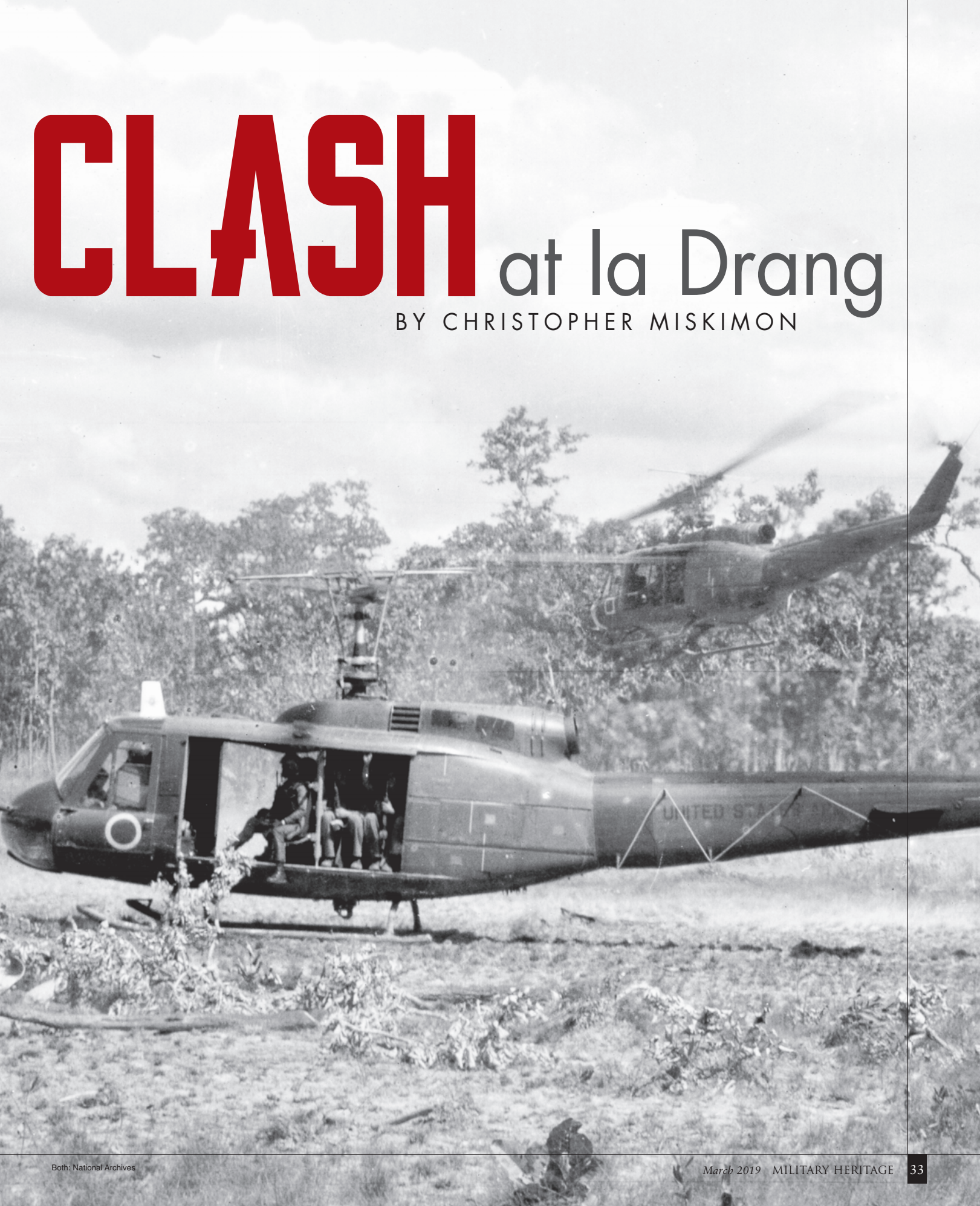
The communist insurgency in Vietnam was decades old by the time the United States dedicated ground troops in large numbers to the war. Small groups of American advisers had been there for years, even before France withdrew from its former colony in 1954. After the French left the nation became two states: a communist-controlled North Vietnam and a pro-Western South Vietnam. Despite the nominal peace, the war continued until the Americans chose to intervene with large ground units in 1965.

During that year the major threat to South Vietnam was in the Central Highlands, a mountainous region that was heavily forested and difficult to access. There were few roads, and the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) units that infiltrated into the area had almost complete freedom of movement. General Chu Huy Man commanded all of the NVA forces in the region, which were

ABOVE: Platoon leader Rick Rescorla participates in a sweep at LZ X-Ray. RIGHT: A UH-1D helicopter discharges soldiers of the elite 7th Cavalry at LZ-X-Ray. The Americans initially thought they were fighting the Viet Cong, but soon realized they were facing North Vietnamese regulars.

CLASH at la Drang

BY CHRISTOPHER MISKIMON



Both: National Archives

Both: National Archives

ABOVE: The 1st Cavalry Division conducted patrols from its base at Camp Radcliffe near An Khe in the Central Highlands. BELOW: The South Vietnamese fought hard to relieve the beleaguered Special Forces camp at Plei Me. They forced the battered North Vietnamese units to fall back to the Chu Pong Massif.

grouped together as the Western Highlands Field Front. There was a division's worth of NVA regulars divided into the 32nd, 33rd, and 66th Regiments, which were supported by units of mortars and heavy machine guns that could double as antiaircraft weapons. Several battalions of Viet Cong guerrillas also stood ready to assist the NVA force. The NVA's objective was to advance eastward from the Chu Pong Massif, which sat astride the Cambodian border. The NVA could receive reinforcements this way through the Ho Chi Minh Trail, a simple but massive supply route through the jungle. Attacking to the east, the NVA would slice through the Central Highlands and cut South Vietnam in two. This could end the war before American involvement became overwhelming.

General Man had a problem that had to be addressed first, though. The Americans had established a Special Forces camp at Plei Mei, which was situated about 20 miles east of the Chu Pong Massif. From there the Americans organized and directed the local Montagnard tribesmen into units known as Civilian Irregular Defense Groups, which ambushed NVA and Viet Cong forces. Thus, the NVA planned to wipe out the Special Forces camp. Man planned to employ a classic insurgent tactic. The 33rd Regiment would surround Plei Mei and put pressure on it, thereby prompting South Vietnamese forces to send a relief column to Plei Mei. The 32nd Regiment would ambush and destroy that column; afterward, both units would combine to destroy the camp.

Plei Mei held 10 American Green Berets and about 300 tribesmen, a third of whom were on patrol. The attack began at 11 PM on October 19, 1965, with a hail of mortar, rocket, and recoilless rifle fire. Infantry followed the barrage, forcing the camp commander to call for air support. It began at 4 AM, unloading bombs, rockets, and napalm upon the NVA troops. This went on for several days, for even though the NVA expected air attacks and deployed antiaircraft guns to contest American fixed aircraft, they were not prepared for the number of planes or their ability to attack at night. The NVA entrenched and awaited word about the destruction of the relief column.

The South Vietnamese relief force, which included tanks and armored cars, was delayed by the need to gather troops and did not set out until October 21. They were halted almost immediately at a bridge destroyed by local Viet Cong. This was apparently not coordinated with the NVA since it had the side effect of preventing the column from reaching the 32nd Regiment's ambush site. When the column resumed the advance on October 23, the NVA launched its ambush but the South Vietnamese troops put up unexpected resistance, quickly deploying their column into a fighting formation. Hard fighting ensued and the relief column finally reached Plei Mei on October 25. The battered NVA units withdrew toward the Chu Pong Massif.

Their withdrawal led directly to the Battle of the Ia Drang when American forces decided to employ the newly deployed U.S. 1st Cavalry Division to pursue them. The helicopter-borne cavalry division had established its base in September at An Khe on Route 19. The airmobile division relied on its speed and mobility to catch enemy units. The Americans believed that it would provide a quick reaction capability in the Central Highlands where the lack of roads made timely ground pursuit impossible. Two ubiquitous transports, the UH-1 Iroquois (nicknamed Huey) and the CH-47 Chinook, could move troops, artillery, and supplies to wherever they were needed in a matter of hours. This meant the Americans could place blocking forces in the path of a retreating enemy and attempt to trap them so that artillery and air strikes could destroy them. This is exactly what the division began doing on October 28.

These American sweeps showcased the effectiveness of the air cavalry, but the NVA was far from finished. Replacements and fresh supplies streamed into the Central Highlands from the Ho Chi Minh Trail. General Man planned to resume the attack by mid-November. During that time the Americans planned to launch a search operation near the Chu Pong Massif, directly in the path of the gathering offensive.

The unit selected to carry out the operation was the 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry, commanded by Lt. Col. Harold G. Moore. Moore was selected due to his extensive combat expe-

rience during the Korean War. Aside from a few other veterans of Korea and World War II, most of his troops were well trained but relatively inexperienced. The plan was to land Moore's battalion of 440 troopers on the northeastern entryway to the mountains using 16 Hueys, placing the men behind the retreating NVA forces. Moore had a choice of three different landing zones and chose LZ X-Ray, the most centrally located. It was an open field about 200 yards long and 100 yards wide surrounded by elephant grass, conical-shaped termite mounds, and open forest that became denser as the elevation increased. Colonel Thomas Brown, the 3rd Brigade commander, warned Moore to keep his battalion tightly together and not get separated.

LZ X-Ray could only accommodate eight helicopters at a time. The helicopters had limitations on how much weight they could carry at this altitude, so it would take half a dozen trips to get the entire battalion assembled. Each cavalryman carried 300 rounds for his M-16. Each grenadier had 36 grenades for his M-79. A pair of M-60 machine guns accompanied each platoon and the rifle squads had portable, one-shot M-72 light antitank weapons (LAW) for penetrating enemy bunkers. Two batteries of 105mm howitzers were flown into LZ Falcon, eight miles west of Plei Mei, to provide fire support. Air support also was standing by. The Americans had plenty of firepower as long as their ammunition held out.

The men of 1/7 were moved to an assembly area near Plei Mei and gathered together for the flight to X-Ray on the morning of November 14. The first lift took off at 10:35 AM for the 13-minute flight, their rotors blanketing the area in billowing clouds of the region's suffocating red dust. Minutes earlier the artillery and some helicopter gunships began bombarding all three LZs with shells and rockets both to confuse the enemy as to the actual landing site and to suppress any enemy troops nearby. Soon X-Ray was covered in dust and smoke thrown up by the barrage. The helicopters in the first troop lift dove down to treetop level, making them harder to spot from a distance.

Huey transports roared into LZ X-Ray to disgorge their passengers. The troopers of Captain John Herrin's B Company leaped off the transports. Also arriving on the first flight was Moore and Command Sergeant Major Basil Plumley, his senior NCO. Accompanying them were a handful of staff officers and a translator to help interrogate any prisoners that might be taken.

Within 10 seconds the empty helicopters were back in the air and the second group arrived. Moore and his support staff sprinted 75 yards to the cover of some old termite mounds. All of the arriving troopers sought cover as quickly as possible. Chu Pong Massif hovered above them, more than 1,000 feet over the landing zone. Captain Herrin began sending out patrols, and for the first few minutes the landing was unopposed.

Still, Moore felt the enemy was watching. His intuition was correct. The recent fighting had led the NVA to expect further aggressive American moves; however, they did not know where those moves would be made. North Vietnamese lookouts were posted throughout the area and the NVA leadership had mobile command groups to facilitate rapid responses to any American action.

The NVA and their Viet Cong auxiliaries were a light infantry force. Each soldier was equipped with an AK-47 assault rifle and several hand grenades. They were also liberally equipped with light machine guns and rocket-propelled grenade launchers. Their heaviest weapons were mortars and Soviet-made heavy machine guns, which were mostly posted as antiaircraft weapons along likely flight paths. One of the NVA's key tactics was to engage American troops as closely as possible to prevent them from using artillery and air support for fear of causing friendly casualties. Another technique was to strike quickly and inflict as many casualties as possible before American artillery and aircraft could respond.

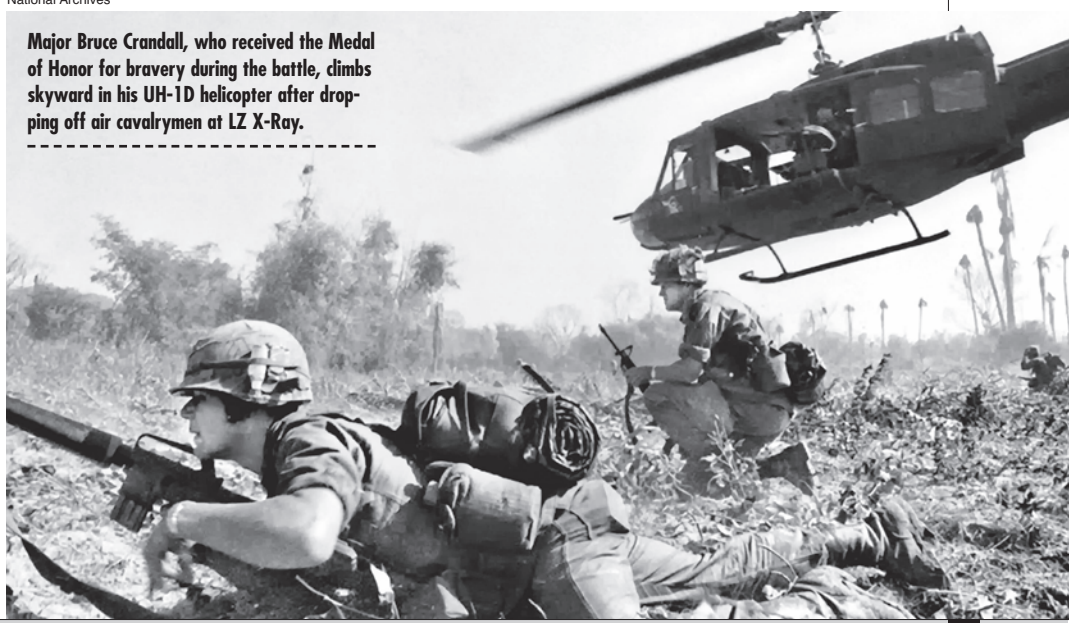
Herrin's Bravo Company worked its way up the mountain with Lieutenant Al Devney's 1st Platoon on the left and Lieutenant Henry Herrick's 2nd Platoon on the right. Lieutenant Dennis Neal's 3rd Platoon was in the rear. The 1st Platoon had gone only about 300 yards when Sergeant John Mingo's squad found an enemy lookout sitting on the ground. The unarmed youth had only an empty canteen and a torn uniform. Moore interrogated the Vietnamese using his translator. The young man revealed there were three battalions in the area and they were eager to kill Americans, yet they had not found any. This meant the Americans were heavily outnumbered. At 11:20 AM the next flight of helicopters arrived with the rest of Bravo Company and part of Alpha Company. The prisoner was evacuated on a helicopter and another lift came in at 12:10 PM. Some of the troopers had paused to eat C-Rations but at 12:15 PM rifle fire rang out from the direction of Bravo Company.

Devney's 1st Platoon was about 100 yards west of a dry creek bed with Herrick's platoon to the right. The platoon members ran headlong into attacking NVA troops that were streaming down the mountain. Within minutes they were heavily engaged with the enemy trying to flank them on both sides. Both sides took casualties and the Americans were soon pinned down. Captain Herrin ordered Herrick and his platoon to tie in Devney's men.

As they did so, 2nd Platoon also took fire from its right. The platoon responded by pursuing the enemy soldiers. Herren warned Herrick by radio to be careful, but he did not order him to break off the pursuit. As the men of 1st Platoon watched, the 2nd moved up toward them but kept right on going. Instead, Deal's 3rd Platoon was ordered up to help the 1st Platoon. They also came under heavy fire, particularly from a concealed machine gun. All three of the company's platoons were now engaged.

Herrick led 2nd Platoon down a trail after the enemy soldiers but they had disappeared. Herrick kept going, even though his men knew this was a bad idea. Soon they reached a small clearing and a ridgeline. They bumped into approximately 50 NVA troops. Both sides opened fire as the

National Archives



Major Bruce Crandall, who received the Medal of Honor for bravery during the battle, climbs skyward in his UH-1D helicopter after dropping off air cavalrymen at LZ X-Ray.

NVA troops broke both left and right. The American platoon was on two sides of a termite hill. Herrick ordered Sergeant Clyde Savage's squad to flank the enemy and they did so, coming out of the trees firing on full automatic and using grenades. This surprised the NVA, killing a number of them. Suddenly another large group of Vietnamese appeared and a general firefight ensued. Herrick radioed that his platoon was being cut off. Herren told him to entrench and use artillery and mortar support to keep the enemy at bay.

Bravo Company did not know it, but it was up against an entire battalion of NVA regulars. The next flight of helicopters arrived with the rest of Captain Ramon "Tony" Nadal's Alpha Company and part of Charlie Company. Moore sent Nadal and his men to the left flank of Bravo Company, where they extended the slowly forming battalion perimeter and blocked the NVA's route to strike the landing zone directly from the mountain. Captain Robert Edwards' Charlie Company was kept at the landing zone as a reserve. They guarded the south side of the LZ against a flanking attack.

Herrick's platoon by that time was completely encircled by the NVA. Attempts to reach it failed. Soon the rifle squads were pinned on a small knoll while the machine-gun squad was trapped about 30 yards downhill. The M-60 crews were doing fearful damage to the enemy, and the NVA were determined to knock them out. One crew was wiped out and the gun captured. The other crew made a dash for the knoll and made it but with precious little ammunition left. Sergeant Wayne Anderson, the M-60 gunner, ran into the small perimeter with his face on fire from a white phosphorus grenade. Two of his comrades knocked him to the ground and pried the burning fragments out of his face with their bayonets.

As more than 150 enemy soldiers swarmed around them, Herrick ran from one man to the next making sure they were still in the fight and doing his best to organize an effective defense. As he did so, a sharp burst of enemy fire struck him, his radioman, and a forward observer. Herrick died within a few minutes, after telling his men to burn their code books, redistribute ammunition, and call for artillery support. Platoon Sergeant Carl Palmer was wounded in the head about the same time and died minutes later, killed by an exploding grenade. Sergeant Robert Stokes took over and directed mortar fire until all the mortar rounds were expended. Stokes was struck twice by rifle fire in the head, which knocked him backward across a log. Sergeant Clyde Savage took over and reached Stokes' radio, calling for more artillery. He called in the fire as close to the knoll as he dared.

The barrage, combined with the desperate American defense, kept the NVA at bay. The firing died away, providing a desperately needed lull. Troopers crawled around collecting ammunition, grenades, and rifles from the dead and getting into better firing positions. The signal books and maps were destroyed and Savage retrieved Herrick's radio. Of 2nd Platoon's 29 men, eight were dead and 13 wounded. The survivors dug in and prepared for the next attack.

As the members of the 2nd Platoon fought desperately to survive the ordeal, enemy troops were receiving an introduction to combat against the Americans. The experience was much more intense than what the veterans among them had experienced against the less well-armed French a decade earlier.

Lo Khac Tam, a platoon leader with the NVA 66th Regiment, had only reached the Chu Pong Massif two days earlier. The long trek south on the Ho Chi Minh Trail had taken much out of the regiment, and its soldiers were heavily fatigued, he later recalled. His account of the battle is helpful in understanding the NVA experience.

The troops were "supposed to have a few days' rest," said Tam. "But then swarms of helicopters came to our area. Everyone thought we might not survive but I was a leader and so I had to push that thought away. I had to give orders to my men." Those men were new to combat and were all ordered to fix bayonets, which they were told symbolized their fighting spirit.

Once in action, they took terrible losses from artillery, air strikes, and small arms fire but kept fighting. Several American participants recalled their effective use of cover, good marksmanship, and discipline. Their lack of heavy firepower was apparent, but their elan was undeniable. Their officers urged them over and over to attack. The officers did so knowing that it was imperative to eliminate the American position before it was reinforced.

Shortly after 2 PM another flight arrived carrying the rest of Charlie Company and Captain Ray Lefebvre's Delta Company, the battalion's heavy weapons company. As soon as the helicopters touched down, heavy enemy fired poured into them. Major Bruce Crandall, the helicopter squadron leader, remembered seeing NVA soldiers on both sides of his Huey, just outside the width of his rotor blades. Everyone nearby was shooting. Crandall stayed on the ground long enough to pick up wounded, then

National Archives

AP Photo

ABOVE: Lt. Col. Harold "Hal" Moore, the aggressive commander of the First Battalion, 7th Cavalry, called up artillery and air support from his position in the center of LZ X-Ray. LEFT: Two batteries of 105mm howitzers at LZ Falcon furnished crucial fire support to the cavalrymen at LZ X-Ray. The howitzers fired 4,000 rounds on the first day.

took off to make room for the next flight. The helicopters drew fire—the NVA troops knew they were key targets. If they could knock out the helicopters, they would cripple American air mobility. All of the helicopters suffered some damage and many crewmen sustained injuries. Moore decided to stop further landings until the landing zone was more secure.

Charlie Company 1/7 arrived just in time to take its place in the perimeter. Captain Edwards put the troopers into place just before a battalion of enemy troops struck their section of the line from the south. The roar of firing blended into the general battle as another enemy battalion attacked Alpha Company, trying to find the gap between Alpha and Charlie. A pair of M-60s covered the gap. The machine-gun fire mowed down many of the attacking NVA soldiers. Much of the fighting took place at close quarters with only a few yards separating the opponents. Sharp bursts of fire were punctuated by the blasts of grenades and the screams of the wounded and dying. A small group of Delta Company men reinforced the perimeter and wiped out a group of 30 enemy soldiers who were swinging around to try to flank the Americans.

Many of the officers were wounded, often leaving capable sergeants in charge of their units. All the wounded were taken back to the termite mound where Moore had set up his headquarters. That position became a combination of headquarters, dressing station, and supply depot. Moore was in contact with Brown, who was overhead in a command and control helicopter. Brown wanted to land, but Moore waved him off. Instead, Brown focused his energies on coordinating reinforcements. Captain Myron Diduryk's Bravo Company of 2/7 was ordered to prepare to fly into LZ X-Ray. The other two battalions of the brigade also were scheduled to arrive the following day.

The final troops to arrive that day were the last of the Delta Company troopers and Diduryk's company. This gave Moore enough men to man a perimeter for the approaching night. The entire landing zone was being swept by enemy mortar and rocket fire. In return, American artillery dropped a hurricane of steel on the enemy. U.S. artillery batteries fired for five straight hours; during that time, two guns suffered broken hydraulics and a third had a burned-out barrel. The howitzers fired more than 4,000 rounds on the first day alone.

Jet fighters and propeller-driven A-1E Skyraiders dropped bombs and napalm around Chu Pong Massif, focusing on any concentration of troops. Six aerial rocket artillery gunships, each of which was armed with 48 rockets, conducted multiple missions, only stopping to refuel on every third mission. Their engines never shut down the entire day. The combination of artillery and air power made life a veritable hell for the NVA troops who now surrounded the American position.

National Archives

Air cavalry troopers engage the enemy. The combination of artillery and air power made life a veritable hell for the NVA troops attacking the landing zone.

One noteworthy incident reflected the fury of the close-quarters combat. Lieutenant Joe Marm, who led Alpha Company's 2nd Platoon, was in the thick of the fighting on November 14. During an NVA assault, he spotted an enemy machine gun dug into a termite hill. It was firing burst after burst into the adjacent platoons of Bravo Company. Marm tried to knock it out with an M-72 Light Anti-Armor Weapon (LAW) rocket, as well as a hand grenade, but neither did the job. Determined to take out that machine gun, Marm charged the termite hill, threw a grenade behind it, and then shot the surviving NVA with his M-16.

Marm was struck in the jaw and neck during his assault. "I saw him throw a grenade behind an anthill and empty his weapon into it," said Lieutenant Dennis Deal. "Then he fell to his knees. I said to myself: 'Please get up, don't be hurt.' I did not know who it was … there was so much battlefield haze, dust, smoke."

When Marm made it back to his platoon, they sent him to the aid station. The next day one of Marm's friends checked behind the termite hill and found a dead NVA officer and 11 soldiers. Deal credited Marm with saving his life and many others through his brave act.

After his wounds were treated Marm was evacuated on one of the helicopters. From there he returned to the United States to receive proper care. He received the Congressional Medal of Honor for his bravery and selfless action.

Darkness fell over the battlefiel but brought little respite. Some of the NVA troops seemed not to know where the Americans were and stumbled into the perimeter with their rifles still slung, only to be shot down. At dusk Moore and Plumley walked the perimeter, checking to see that the companies' defenses were tied together and the vital machine guns were well placed. He found the men to be in good spirits with high morale, but he was still concerned about the trapped platoon.

The landing zone was set up for night operations and more helicopters came in with fresh supplies. Aboard one of them was a young reporter named Joe Galloway, who had requested permission to board a supply-bearing Huey bound for the landing zone. Galloway sat on a crate of grenades as the Huey sped to LZ X-Ray. As it did so, Galloway saw signal lights that the NVA were using to direct their troops toward the Americans. U.S. artillery began shelling the area where the lights were seen, at one point causing a huge secondary explosion when a supply point was hit. When Galloway landed, he hit the dirt with the other arrivees. Galloway ultimately received a National Magazine Award for his coverage of the Ia Drang battle.

During the night of November 14 the NVA probed the perimeter several times. The American machine gunners were ordered not to fire so as not to reveal their positions, but the grenadiers launched 40mm grenades and artillery fire was called in frequently. When not repelling enemy probes, the men dug the foxholes they did not have time to dig earlier. The mortar crews had hundreds of rounds for the coming day. Artillery continued to fall around the encircled platoon, thanks to Savage's skill at directing the fire. At 3:15 AM the sound of bugles resounded on the

National Archives

mountain above the trapped Americans. Air strikes were called in to break up the NVA assault.

The arrival of dawn on November 15 brought no respite. It began with an eerie quiet. This bothered Moore, who thought it was odd. He sent out patrols to search for the enemy; meanwhile, he began planning a counterattack to rescue the trapped platoon. As he was doing this, men from one of the patrols rushed into the landing zone shouting, "They enemy is coming!" Machine gunners were ordered to wait until the enemy was close for maximum effect. Hundreds of enemy soldiers launched a formidable assault.

The attack was made by an NVA battalion reinforced with Viet Cong soldiers. Charlie Company was hit the hardest. Captain Edwards was wounded, but he stayed on the battle line directing his troopers. The enemy had worked its way into the heavy weapons. M-60 machine gunners fired into the attackers, mowing down NVA regulars wearing pith helmets covered in tree branches for camouflage. The situation soon became desperate. The enemy also struck other parts of the perimeter, including Delta Company's positions. The attack faltered quickly, though, because Delta Company had a large number of M-60s.

Air Force Lieutenant Charlie Hastings was the battalion's forward air controller. As such, he was tasked with directing incoming air support. Believing the American position was in danger of being overrun, Hastings broadcast the code, "Broken Arrow." This brought all available U.S. and Republic of Vietnam aircraft throughout South Vietnam to assist the hard-pressed 1/7. Soon planes were stacked at 1,000-foot intervals from 7,000 to 35,000 feet, each of them waiting to drop their ordnance on the attacking NVA.

Specialist Jon Wallenius, a mortar observer from Bravo 2/7, was with his mortar crew when he saw an enemy soldier poke his head up in a Y-shaped tree trunk just 30 yards away. Wallenius took aim and fired. The head disappeared, only to reappear moments later. Wallenius fired again, and the head disappeared once again. The young American could not understand why he was repeatedly missing his target, given that he was a crack shot. Wallenius later learned that it was not the same soldier. He had actually been picking off the enemy soldiers one at a time. He and his fellow troopers realized this when they discovered seven enemy bodies at the base of the tree.

Tam had his own memories of the horrible fighting that morning. "We used bayonets, and suffered terrible losses," he recalled. Many of his men were enraged, no doubt more so by the terrible shelling and bombing they endured. He noticed that the Americans always tried to evacuate their wounded, but it was not always possible. When a wounded U.S. air cavalryman was found, Tam encouraged his men to take him prisoner. Yet some of his men were beyond control, and they maliciously killed the helpless American casualties.

The Americans often hurled colored smoke grenades in front of their positions. Tam knew this was to mark their locations for the air support. "We knew that the Americans used smoke to signal where their line ended, and we tried to get inside that line of smoke," recalled Tam. "We had to get close. If we did not, we would be killed right away."

The close air support was helping keep the enemy at bay, but it became more difficult to control it as the day went on. The American troopers kept using smoke to mark their positions and allow the strikes to come in very close, but after a time the entire battlefield was covered in smoke, dust, and fire. Moore decided to commit his reserve, the battalion reconnaissance platoon, in a counterattack to drive the NVA back on the left side of Charlie Company. As that took place, a horrifying incident occurred.

Two U.S. F-100 Super Sabres armed with canisters of napalm moved into position to make their bombing run on what they believed was an enemy target at 8:30 AM. The pilot in the lead jet released his two canisters. Moore and those near him could see the six-foot-long canisters tumbling through the air toward them. The canisters exploded in a ball of flame inside the perimeter near Moore's command post. Moore shouted to Charlie Hastings to call the second plane off. "Pull up!" Hastings screamed into his radio. At the last second the fighter did so; however, two cavalrymen were severely burned in the explosion.

It was a terrible accident of war, but the airstrikes were keeping the enemy back. Moore told Hastings to continue bringing in air support. Moore also requested by radio that brigade headquarters send reinforcements. Soon Alpha Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry arrived and took its place on the perimeter. Over the course of the morning, more troops from that battalion arrived by helicopter. At the same time, Lt. Col. Robert Tully's 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry was flown to a nearby landing zone. Tully led it overland, through enemy-controlled territory, to LZ X-Ray. They arrived at 12 PM.

With troopers from two other battalions arriving at LZ X-Ray, Moore decided to send a rescue force to extract the trapped platoon. He designated two companies of 2/5 Cav to reinforce Herren's Bravo Company. Although Herren's men were exhausted, they knew the terrain and the best path to take to the trapped platoon. Helicopters preceded them, shooting

rockets to suppress any enemy troops between them and the trapped platoon. As the American force moved out, artillery observers called in marking rounds. This was a preliminary measure that enabled them to fire barrages of artillery quickly if necessary. It was a tense time as the advancing troopers expected the enemy behind every tree and termite mound.

Nothing happened as the relief force neared the trapped platoon, though. Moore ordered his troops within the perimeter to advance and police the battlefield. As they cautiously did so, they stumbled upon enemy bodies and abandoned weapons and equipment. In addition, they recovered some American bodies. A group of Charlie Company troopers ran into an enemy force and a brief firefight ensued. Still determined to inflict as many casualties on the Americans as possible, NVA regulars had tunneled into the creek bed and had begun hurling grenades at the Americans. Staff Sergeant Charles McManus saw one and leapt upon it after shoving two comrades out of the way. He died saving his friends, who killed the men in the tunnel with 40mm grenades from an M-79. Back at the command post at LZ X-Ray, Brown arrived on a helicopter to assess the situation. He asked if he should establish his own headquarters there and take over. Moore politely declined the offer. Brown trusted both Moore and Tully, and so he let them direct the ground fighting. He informed them, though, that he planned to withdraw 1/7 the next day when B-52 Stratofortresses were scheduled to bomb the Chu Pong Massif. It was important to remove the troops so that they were not accidentally struck by the 750-pound and 1,000-pound bombs.

Just before 3 PM Herren's company reached the trapped platoon. The ground around it was blasted from artillery fire. Enemy rifle fire broke out but the Americans replied with machine guns and quickly swept the resistance aside. When they found Savage and his men, they were covered with dust and debris and practically blended into the ground. Only seven men were unwounded, with 13 injured and nine dead. Rather than take the time to check the enemy dead, the entire force quickly moved back to the landing zone, carrying the dead and those unable to walk. It had been a grim two days for the encircled platoon, but the survivors were finally back with their battalion. The troopers then prepared to spend one last night at LZ X-Ray.

In the hours before dusk, the Americans dug in, preparing foxholes and setting out booby traps and warning devices. All the casualties were evacuated and ammo was resupplied. At 12 AM the enemy began firing machine guns. Green tracers zipped over the troopers' heads. The troopers estimated that the enemy machine guns were about 500 yards away. An hour later five NVA probed the perimeter. The troopers killed two before they disappeared back into the darkness.

At 4 AM trip flares and other warning devices began going off south of the perimeter. Soon the enemy appeared, charging in human-wave attacks. The Americans opened fire and called in artillery, a mixture of high-explosive and white phosphorus. An entire NVA battalion was attacking, but they were repulsed within minutes. A half hour later they tried again but were once more turned back. Overhead a C-123 flare ship lit up the battlefield, giving the Americans clear targets. Two more assaults before dawn also failed.

It was eerily quiet. Drawing on his extensive combat experience, Moore suspected the enemy was still nearby, preparing to attack another section of the perimeter. He therefore ordered everyone to conduct a so-called mad minute at 6:55 AM. This entailed all of the troopers firing on full automatic at anything that might be an enemy position. The tactic worked because a group of 50 enemy soldiers began firing back. The troopers drove them off, killing several snipers in the process.

The cavalry troopers spent the morning securing their perimeter and recovering the last few dead troopers. Although there were still a few NVA scattered around the perimeter, they were killed with grenades or rifle fire. At that point, Moore received orders to prepare his troops for withdrawal from the landing zone. Determined that no American bodies would be left behind, he ordered his men to make one last sweep of the area.

American casualties amounted to 79 killed and 121 wounded with no one missing. Although no precise number is available for the NVA losses, the Americans counted 634 dead on the battlefield. The Americans estimated that the North Vietnamese had taken as many as 1,000 of their slain comrades with them as they withdrew from the battlefield.

The Americans returned to their base camps for rest and reorganization. The NVA withdrew to continue the fight from its mountain bases. Tam and a comrade were separated from their unit and hid in a cave for two days. Exhausted, hungry, and thirsty, they rejoined their regiment, but they found it in a shell-shocked state. Some men would not wash themselves, while others refused to get out of their hammocks. To their credit, they had fought with great discipline and bravery. The Americans who fought at Ia Drang were impressed with the NVA regulars' performance and their ability to stand up to American firepower.

In many ways the battle at LZ X-Ray was a draw, but each side had proven its toughness and particular capabilities. The Americans had mobility and firepower while the NVA showed its tenacity and endurance. The NVA plan to split South Vietnam in half was thwarted by the American campaign, though. The NVA never again willingly engaged the 1st Cavalry Division in head-to-head combat. Although the communists were willing to spend lives to achieve victory, they could ill afford another defeat such as they had suffered in the bloody fight at LZ X-Ray. □

BELOW: Moore examines a slain enemy soldier. He made sure that no Americans were left behind. OPPOSITE: A platoon sweeps through the elephant grass firing its M-16 rifles. The 7th Cavalry's aggressive air assault blunted a major North Vietnamese offensive.

National Archives

ROMAN PLUCK AT

A Roman army under Lucius Paullus took on Perseus's formidable Macedonian army in the hills of northern Greece in 168 BC during the Third Macedonian War. | BY TIM MILLER

PYDNA

akg-images

WHAT BEGAN AS A POLITE TRUCE between armies that allowed each to draw water from the same river turned into the battle that would give Greece to Rome. After a Roman mule escaped across the water into the lines of the Macedonians, one Macedonian ally ended up dead, and the whole army began crossing for revenge. It almost could have been planned, for both the Romans and Macedonians were impatient to get on with the battle.

By the spring of 168 BC, Macedonian King Perseus had been complicit in the execution of his brother and, by extension, the early death of his father, Philip V. In the decade since his ascension, Perseus had been able to fill the coffers of Macedonia, increase its military force, and swell the home front population with disaffected people from all over the Aegean. He achieved this despite the growing influence of Rome in Greece and the Balkans and the resistance from neighboring Greek states.

When the complaints of neighboring states had brought Roman armies to Greece, Perseus had defeated them all, though never decisively. At last, on a scorching day in late June, as he led his army across the Leucus River in Macedonia, just south of the city of Pydna and not far from the Gulf of Thessalonica, that decisive battle was finally at hand. The battle pitted Macedonian King Perseus's 40,000 troops against Roman Consul and General Lucius Aemilius Paullus's army of nearly equal strength.

As the Romans began to gather themselves, they must have wondered what advantage Perseus had gained by crossing the river to attack the Roman camp, which lay at the foot of Mount Olocrus, since they had given up the more level terrain in the fields south of Pydna. Paullus watched in awe as the Macedonians advanced boldly through the water. The first phase of the battle went badly for the Romans, for they were driven up the mountain. The Romans had also brought along 20 war elephants, but they were of questionable value on the mountainous terrain.

It was not long before Perseus's assault began to falter. As each section of the Macedonian army encountered uphill terrain and varying degrees of Roman resistance, the men rushed ahead or lagged behind those beside them. What had been a successful push became a wildly uneven one, and gaps began to appear in their battle line. The Roman commander

In the rough terrain of northern Greece, Roman infantry armed with gladii easily penetrated the wall of Macedonian spears.

Both: Wikimedia

Lucius Aemilius Paullus (top) and King Perseus of Macedon.

saw this development and immediately ordered his men to thrust themselves into the gaps to engage them in hand-to-hand combat. In this way they would not be "fighting a single battle against them all, but many separate and successive battles," wrote Roman historian Plutarch. In those gaps, the successor state Macedonia, established on the death of Alexander the Great, came to an end.

In 168 BC Rome was barely 30 years removed the Second Punic War, that traumatic but ultimately victorious struggle with the Carthaginian general Hannibal. Hannibal was a tactician of particular genius who wreaked havoc through Roman Spain. He crossed the daunting Alps with his army and descended into northern Italy where he nearly wiped out the Roman army first at Lake Trasimene and again at Cannae. Yet in the end the Romans prevailed.

When a Roman army under the command of Cornelius Scipio Africanus crossed to north Africa and threatened Carthage in the way Hannibal had always hoped to threaten Rome, he abandoned Italy and was eventually defeated at Zama in 202 BC. Hannibal remained for the time being in Carthage; however, when Rome became worried over a resurgence of Carthaginian influence in the Mediterranean, they demanded Hannibal surrender to them. But Hannibal went into voluntary exile and was received into the court of King Antiochus III, the ruler of the Seleucid Empire.

With Carthage no longer a threat, Rome suddenly found itself in the position of a Mediterranean and Aegean power, a position that needed constant defending and refinement. As such, the countryside of Italy was emptied of men either because their land had been destroyed during the war or because they were recruited for the army. Thus, Rome came to depend upon slave labor as it never had before, as well as the continuation of war. As a result of these pressures, Rome's burgeoning democracy was jeopardized. The death of the Roman Republic would occur less than two centuries later. For the time being, though, Rome fought abroad against aggression in order to maintain stability in a nearby region. It had no interest in conquering and assimilating new territories.

The pressure to become involved in foreign wars began almost immediately after Hannibal was defeated at Zama when Rome was dragged into defending the kingdom of Pergamum in northeastern Anatolia and the island kingdom of Rhodes in the Agean Sea. Both of these minor kingdoms appealed to Rome for help when Philip V of Macedonia began threatening them. Rome feared that if they fell, it would not be long before Philip tried to move into Italy itself.

The Romans soundly defeated Philip at Cynoscephalae in 197 BC. Rome won the battle primarily because of the characteristics of its army. The Roman army was based on the maniple formation. Although the Romans were organized in squares as the Greeks were, the maniple was a more versatile formation on the battlefield. The Roman soldier fought with a short, double-edged sword known as a gladius. Armed with the gladius and fighting in the maniple, the Roman troops were able to manuever more easily than the Greek soldiers, who were armed with 21-foot spears known as sarissas. The Greeks, who were packed tightly together, could only fight from the front with their long spears. If attacked in the flank or rear they were in serious trouble.

Another Roman ally in the Aegean, the Aetolians, upset over the terms that Philip V was granted, entered into negotiations with Antiochus. He saw an opportunity to break into Anatolia and hence Greece by defeating the Romans.

In 190 BC Antiochus met a Roman and Greek army commanded by Consul Lucius Cornelius Scipio on a field of battle at Magnesia in Lydia in western Anatolia.

In that sanguine contest, the Roman infantry contained the attack of Antiochus's Macedonian-style phalanx. Although Antiochus led the cataphracts in a charge that punched through the Roman infantry, he wound up behind enemy lines facing the well-defended Roman camp. Unable to take the camp, he was boxed in for the duration of the contest.

The battle was decided in the contest between the Roman right wing's cavalry and Antiochus's left wing consisting of half the heavy cavalry, elephants, chariots, and skirmishers. The Roman light infantry's missile attack startled the elephants. The great beasts, which were driven back on their own troops, broke up the Seleucid phalanx attack. Having eventually fought his way out of the Roman rear, Antiochus returned to his army to find that his left had collapsed. He fled the field and the Romans captured his camp. It was a battle full of portent for it showed that it was no easy task bringing a phalanx to bear against Roman legions.

The Romans demanded that Hannibal be handed over to them since it was well known that he had been advising Antiochus for the past five years. As it happened, Hannibal had foreseen this event and escaped. He ultimately committed suicide in Bithynia rather than fall into Roman hands. But Rome also demanded that the Seleucid Empire abandon all Asian land west of the Taurus Mountains. This once again isolated the Balkans and the Peloponnese from outside forces while also putting Rome in the position of having to be available to oversee any developments. The lesser kingdoms, like Rhodes and Pergamum, also favored Rome's help in part because it did not desire to annex them.

The region was convulsed by instability for the next 20 years. Greece and Anatolia by this time had very nearly become areas of Roman administration. As such, the Romans could no longer ignore internal squabbles of minor powers or even the most seemingly petty appeals if they were to maintain order.

Among the various quarrels that surfaced were complaints made by the Thessalians

against Philip V. Rather than sending an army, though, Rome dispatched embassies to investigate each complaint. Philip saw this as a sign of Rome's weakness and attempted to regain power. He told one Roman delegation that "his days had not yet set," according to Roman historian Livy.

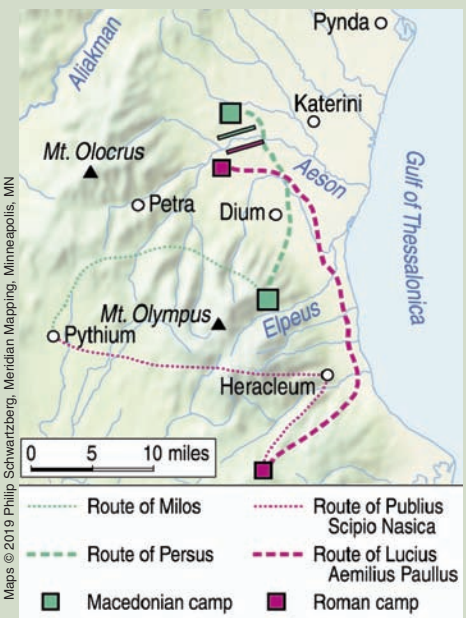
To stall for more time, apparently to build up an army, he sent his youngest son, Demetrius, to Rome to make Philip's own case for authority in the area. However, Philip's oldest son, Perseus, jealous of his younger brother's successes and the attention he was receiving, fed such convincing lies to his father that Philip had Demetrius poisoned. Philip, learning almost immediately that Perseus had lied to him, sank into a haunted depression and died in 179 BC.

Perseus was now ruler in Macedonia, and he saw no reason to end his country's enmity for Rome; however, he made sure to officially renew the same terms of alliance with Rome that this father had, if only to present a good face. Meanwhile, he shored up the support of many of Greek states and did so by never once resorting to battle. Instead, he took advantage of the fact that Roman policy in Greece and the Balkans had forced many erstwhile mercenaries to cease their activities.

Alamy

The Seleucid army's cumbersome phalanx and elephants were no match for the nimble Romans at Magnesia in 190 BC.

Macedonian King Perseus sent a large detachment south toward Pythium to intercept Nasica's Roman flanking column marching north; however, Nasica prevailed and continued north to join Paullus.



Maps © 2019 Philip Schwartzberg, Meridian Mapping, Minneapolis, MN

The new Macedonian ruler made a call for all such people to come to Macedonia and in general asked for the support of anyone who had become a political exile or gone into impossible debt thanks to Roman incursion in the area. Even as the Achaean League officially denounced Macedonia in 175 BC, Perseus was still able to create an anti-Roman fifth column in every city throughout an area to which Rome only recently thought it had brought peace.

The Romans dispatched commissioners to Greece to assess its current political environment. In the meantime, King Eumenes travelled to Rome where he presented a detailed list of Perseus's crimes to the Roman Senate. Ambassadors from Rhodes, also present, accused Eumenes of the very crimes of which he was accusing Perseus. The senators chose to believe Eumenes over the Rhodians. On his way back to Pergamum, and at the Oracle of Delphi no less, Perseus arranged for an attempt to be made on his life. By that time, the Romans had begun to fully appreciate how serious a threat Perseus posed to them. With ample amounts of money and food with which feed his own people and pay his army for more than a decade, Perseus assumed a defensive stance and awaited a Roman attack.

Perhaps Perseus was aware of the limitations of his own army, even as its numbers continued to swell. At some point between the time of Alexander and Perseus, the Macedonian commanders had subordinated the cavalry to the infantry, putting all of their faith in the infantry phalanx. It has been suggested that this focus evolved from the fact that after Alexander's death warfare in Macedonia remained a much more local affair, which meant battle in mountainous and uneven terrain unsuitable for cavalry. In theory, a phalanx of moving infantry could maneuver such ground more easily; but by Perseus's day, the phalanx had developed a series of fatal flaws. The Macedonian phalanx was composed primarily of half-trained citizen-soldiers. Moreover, the spearmen were packed so tightly together that they could only move forward. Thus, the mobility that was typically associated with infantry had disappeared altogether. This meant that the phalanx was most effective on level ground. Since Macedonia was mostly mountainous, its troops would be in serious trouble defending their homeland.

For a moment, though, Perseus succeeded. The first Roman army ferried across the Adriatic Sea to face him was led by Consul Publius Licinius Crassus, who crossed to Epirus in the summer of 171 BC. Perseus soundly defeated Crassus' army at Callinicus in Thessaly; afterward, Perseus indicated to the Romans that he wanted to enter into peace negotiations. This was extremely distasteful to the Romans, and they responded by demanding unconditional surrender.

As it happened, Perseus would get two more chances in 170 BC. Aulus Hostilius Mancinus was sent to replace Licinius, but he too was defeated by Perseus. The following year Quintus Marcius Philippus also proved wanting. Although he led the Roman forces deeper into Macedonian territory than his predecessor, he realized only too late that they were beyond the reach of their supply train. Perseus, though, did not know that the Roman army was overextended. He only knew that the Roman army was nearer to him than it had ever come before. He fell back on

Pydna, a city on the Gulf of Thessalonica. Philippus was unable to follow, so Perseus repositioned his troops on the Elpeus River. Becoming increasingly dispirited, Philippus refused to attack the Macedonians. Perseus, who could have forced the Romans to fight, decided not to make the first move. The two armies remained in position on opposite sides of the river in a baffling stalemate.

The Roman Senate decided in 168 BC that Perseus could be dealt with properly only by a general and a consul who showed no interest in his own aggrandizement or the attainment of riches won from a protracted foreign campaign, or any of the other excuses thought up for Philippus and Licinius. The man chosen was Lucius Aemilius Paullus, whose father had fallen at Cannae and whose brother-in-law was Scipio Africanus, who defeated Hannibal at Zama. Indeed, by this time Paullus had already had an illustrious career himself in Spain and Liguria, and by 168 BC he was a sexagenarian.

As if making up for lost time, the Roman Senate not only agreed to Paullus's suggestion that a committee be sent to Greece before any definitive plans were made, but also allowed Paullus to select its members. It only took two days for the three chosen men to set off. Upon returning, the ignorance of the Macedonian situation back in Rome was finally rectified. The forces of Perseus and Philippus were at a standoff on either side of the Elpeus River, both leaders either unable or unwilling to initiate a fight. Meanwhile, Appius Claudius's Roman forces in Illyricum were running out of food and succumbing to apathy. It was immediately suggested that if both armies received renewed support and the vigor of leadership, Perseus and his men could be caught between these two forces.

Meanwhile, Perseus committed several foolhardy mistakes. In attempting to buy off Rome's Gallic allies, Perseus refused to hand over the agreed amount up front, and it soon became clear to the Gauls that he was not going to pay them at all. The Gallic force, which was led by Clondicus, numbered 10,000 infantry and cavalry.

"First the Thracians advanced, whose appearance ... was most terrible, men of lofty stature, clad in tunics which showed black beneath the white and gleaming armor of their shields and greaves, and tossing high on their right shoulders battle-axes with heavy iron heads," wrote Plutarch.

Wikimedia

Perseus was a "better guardian of his money than his kingdom," wrote Livy. When the Gauls gave up and withdrew north to the Danube, Perseus justified his decision by saying it was dangerous to allow so many Gauls into Macedonia anyway.

The Macedonian troops, which had pinned their hopes on the Gauls, clearly thought otherwise since the Gauls' presence in Thessaly alone would have cut off the Roman army's main food supply. Yet Perseus tried the same tactic with Gentius, the king of the Ardiaei in Illyricum, another Roman ally. He promised Gentius a large sum of money. Gentius seized two Roman envoys in the hopes of proving that he meant business. Perseus hoped that Gentius's actions would provoke such a strong Roman response that his men would be forced into a war regardless of whether they received complete payment, which he refused to give them in advance. "It was as if Perseus's every action was designed to preserve as much booty as possible for the Romans after his defeat," Livy wrote.

Such was the news delivered to Paullus and the Senate. Paullus then immediately selected tribunes for the two legions under his command, numbering 14,000 Roman foot soldiers and 1,200 cavalry. Two more legions, totaling 10,000 foot soldiers and 400 cavalry, were called up to serve under Lucius Anicius Gallus and the other forces stationed in Illyricum. Before leaving with his army, Paullus gave a lengthy speech to the Senate, warning them against second guessing. "At dinner parties, there are men who can march the army into Macedonia, who know where the camps should be established, which places should be occupied by garrisons, when and by which pass Macedonia should be invaded," Livy quoted Paullus as saying.

In the spring of 168 BC Paullus and his legions crossed the Adriatic at Brundisium and landed in Greece. Gallus's two legions made their way north to Illyricum, and a month later the would-be traitor to Rome, Gentius, was seized. By that time, Paullus had reached the Roman forces on the Elpeus River. He quickly gained the affection of the men when he found them short of water. The army was situated at the foothills of Mount Olocrus, and Paullus rightly assumed that it contained a hidden source of water. He ordered the soldiers to dig wells closer to the shoreline and the effort proved successful.

Taking stock of the situation with his officers, Paullus nixed the idea of a direct frontal assault on Perseus's forces, which were heavily defended by catapults and ballistae. Instead, he chose to divert Perseus's attention with a feint

against his northernmost forces; at the same time he sent a large force around the mountains with instructions to fall on Perseus's rear. He assigned two Perrhaebian merchants, who knew the mountain passes, as guides for approximately 1,000 men under the command of his son and Publius Scipio Nasica. Over the course of the next four days, and traveling only at night to avoid detection, they marched south along the coast of the Gulf of Thessalonica. When they reached the Tempe River they turned west and then north through the mountains toward Pythium and Petra. In the final leg, they angled east toward the gulf where they hoped to fall on Perseus's camp. At the same time, more than 8,000 infantry and 300 cavalry arrived at the port of Heracleum in a diversion intended to deceive Perseus into believing that a large naval force was headed his way.

For the next few days, the plan worked. Paullus skirmished with Macedonian forces and then withdrew in the middle of the day, slowly drawing them more to the south and more vulnerable to attack from Nasica's advancing army. As it happened, though, even Roman setbacks turned to their advantage. A short time after they set out, Cretan soldiers under Nasica's command deserted and fled to the Macedonian camp. Perseus immediately sent a force immensely larger than Nasica's 2,000 troops, but the Romans easily defeated them. Additionally, the Roman guides had been mistaken in assuming that many of the mountain passes were guarded. This not being the case, the way was open for Nasica and his men to descend downhill to strike Perseus's camp. Afraid of being caught between Nasica and Paullus, Perseus fled north with his army. He marched his troops past Dium and established a new camp just south of Katerini. This placed his army 10 miles south of the town of Pydna.

In no time Nasica's army, which was heading east, and Paullus's army, which was advancing north, converged at Dium. While the former feared that Perseus would again slip away and suggested that they attack immediately, Paullus refused. Their men needed a rest, and he decided to set up camp only a mile or so away from Perseus's forces with the Leucus River between them. The flat plain Perseus had chosen for his camp was suddenly neutralized as well, since even when fully rested the Romans were not about to cross the river onto such disadvantageous ground. The Roman camp, which was situated on the slope of Mount Olocrus, was equally unsuitable for the Macedonian army given that its phalanxes would not function well in that terrain. One of the armies might have to cross to unfavorable ground. It

Wikimedia

ABOVE: At Pydna the Macedonians' tight formation, as depicted on this ancient vase, unraveled when the spearmen encountered uneven ground. OPPOSITE: An Italian Renaissance painting celebrates the Roman victory at Pydna. Roman morale outstripped that of their opponents.

remained to be seen what matter of random and unforeseen circumstances would finally force it to do so.

A stalemate ensued, but there was no shortage of drama. The clash at Pydna can be dated precisely to June 22, 168 BC, because a lunar eclipse took place the previous evening. One of the Roman military tribunes, Gaius Sulpicius Galus, was aware of the event beforehand. He announced the event to a gathering of soldiers and advised his troops that no one should regard it as an omen. While Galus succeeded on this point, the soldiers still held his knowledge in awe.

While the Romans saw the eclipse as a good sign, the Macedonians regarded it as an evil omen. "The Macedonians regarded the eclipse as a bad omen, signaling the fall of their kingdom and the ruination of their people," wrote Livy. "So did their prophets, and wailing and shouting filled the Macedonian camp until the light of the moon re-emerged."

Still, both leaders were reluctant to enter battle the following morning. Even though he offered them a much needed rest, Paullus had been criticized by his men for not seeking battle immediately upon arriving on the scene, and he realized that, if given the chance, the standoff could end up no different than the one which had prompted his appointment in the first place. Meanwhile, Perseus had no desire to fight with a Roman army that was now well rested.

That morning detachments from both sides gathered drinking water from the Leucus River. Sent to retrieve the water for the Romans were two cohorts and some cavalry, and likely a similar complement of troops on the Macedonian side. While a truce had held as the troops gathered water, it is not surprising that such an arrangement did not last for long. At mid-afternoon a Roman mule broke loose and was chased by three soldiers into the water. Two Thracians in the Macedonian army led the animal over to their side, but the Romans killed one of them. Not long afterward the entire Macedonian army crossed the river.

The Romans, who had been itching for a fight, were more than happy to oblige. The noise of the initial skirmish alerted Paullus to what was going on. The fighting had progressed to such an extent that "it seemed neither easy nor safe to recall or stop the impetuosity of those who were rushing to arms," wrote Plutarch. "Paullus thought it best to avail himself of the ardor of his soldiers, and to turn an accident into an opportunity." Just as he began to lead his forces out for a proper battle, Nasica informed Paullus that Perseus was doing the same thing.

Paullus probably placed his two legions in the center with allied troops flanking them on the right and cavalry beside them on the left. His elephants were behind his troops. Giving in to the passion of his men, Perseus surrendered his advantageous position in the fields near his camp and crossed the Leucus River to the lower slopes of Mount Olocrus. His phalanxes initially forced back the experienced Roman infantry.

"First the Thracians advanced, whose appearance … was most terrible, men of lofty stature, clad in tunics which showed black beneath the white and gleaming armor of their shields and greaves, and tossing high on their right shoulders battle-axes with heavy iron heads," wrote Plutarch. Following the Thracian division was a second division composed of mercenaries.

The third division consisted of "picked men, the flower of the Macedonians themselves for youthful strength and valor, gleaming with gilded armor and fresh scarlet coats," wrote Plutarch. "As these took their places in line, they were illumined by the phalanx-lines of the bronze-shields which issued from the camp behind them and filled the plain with the gleam of iron and the flitter of bronze, the hills too, with the tumultuous shouts of their cheering."

There is a sense from Livy's fragmented account that Paullus suddenly found himself gripped by fear at the sight of the advancing Macedonians with their bristling spears. If this is the case, the astonishment and terror the spectacle initially presented was shared by the rest of the army. The lower slopes of Olocrus were defended by the Roman right line—that is, by their Italian allies and the Roman cavalry—and they were unsuccessful in beating back the Macedonians. Salvius, their commander, sought to inspire them by throwing their standard over to the enemy forces, but that had the opposite effect. Rather than inspire them, it served to demoralize them. The Roman line was driven back and gradually forced up the slopes of Olocrus.

The Macedonians must have felt their advantage swelling as they continued to push forward, and even the elephants the Romans introduced to the fight proved ineffective. But until this moment the

Wikimedia

A beaten Perseus, who ultimately died in prison in Rome, kneels in surrender to Paullus. Pydna transformed Rome into a world power.

Macedonian phalanx also had the advantage of fighting on relatively level ground. As the army began to ascend the Olocrus, this advantage dissipated and did so piecemeal. With whole sections of men advancing to different sections of the mountain, the Macedonian line began to peel back and break, and gaps opened up. "Either on account of the unevenness of the ground, or on account of the very length of the front," wrote Livy, "those who attempted to occupy higher ground were necessarily, though unwillingly, separated from those who occupied lower positions."

Plutarch describes how quickly and almost seamlessly Paullus perceived this development to turn it to the final advantage the Romans needed. "Dividing up his cohorts, Paullus ordered them to plunge quickly into the interstices and empty spaces in the enemy's line and thus come to close quarters, not fighting a single battle against them all, but many separate and successive battles," he wrote. "As soon as they got between the ranks of the enemy and separated them, they attacked some of them in the flank where their armor did not shield them, and cut off others by falling upon their rear, and the strength and general efficiency of the phalanx was lost when it was thus broken up."

In the rough terrain, the Macedonian line became uneven, and the Romans were quick to exploit the situation by inserting units into the gaps that opened up before them. Sensing the day was lost, the Macedonian cavalry on the flanks quit the fight. "The cavalry left the battle virtually unscathed. Perseus himself led the flight," wrote Livy.

Left to fend for themselves, the Macedonians were ripe for the slaughter. "The remaining Macedonian squadrons also rode off with their ranks intact since the infantry column lay in the path of the enemy; the killing of these men, which detained the victors, had made them forget to pursue the cavalry," wrote Livy. "The slaughter of the phalanx, from the front, from the flanks, from the rear, went on for a long time."

Those Macedonian foot soldiers who were able to escape the slaughter headed for the Gulf of Thessalonica. Once there, some drowned while others were cut down in the water by Roman troops in ships. In their desperation, the Macedonians had mistaken the ships for those of their allies. Some of the Macedonians turned inland only to be trampled by the Roman elephants. Even by the standards of warfare in the ancient world, the carnage was awful. Among the captives taken after the battle was the Greek historian Polybius, who would chronicle in his epic historical work how the Roman Republic advanced to the point that it dominated the Mediterranean region.

In the aftermath of the decisive defeat of the Macedonian army, Rome demanded the virtual impotence of their enemy, as well as its allies throughout the Aegean Sea. Macedonia ceased to exist and was divided into four separate leagues, with marriage and business alliances prohibited across boundaries. Its top officials and ruling class were shipped off to Rome, while show trials were held throughout Greece and many officials were executed. Illyricum and Epirus received the same treatment. Against his better judgment, Paullus allowed his men to plunder Epirus at will, enslaving thousands. Meanwhile, more than 1,000 members of the Achaean League, including Polybius and all of the Roman allies in the struggle, also were deported to Italy. Rome then imposed its rule on their lands.

Pydna made Rome into a world power. Whether this happened by choice or by chance, the Romans still embraced that status, or at least saw its maintenance as the only way of assuring their own survival. On the one hand, there is the belief that Rome became an empire reluctantly, and that without the succession of Punic and Macedonian wars, which forced the Roman Republic into the wider net of eastern Mediterranean politics and warfare, Rome may have remained satisfied without such expansion. On the other hand, many believe that the culture of Greece eventually defeated their conquerors, and that Hellenism won out in the end.

The famous sack of Corinth in 146 BC led to the wholesale deportation of Greek art and sculpture that would have a vast influence on Rome in the centuries that followed. This point is no better illustrated than by the fact that the victorious commander at Pydna, the Roman Consul Paullus, took Polybius into his household and entrusted him with the education of his children. □

Waterloo. Normandy. Agincourt. Antietam.

MILITARY HERITAGE

Available in traditional print and digital format.

MILITARY HERITAGE Magazine celebrates military history for the birthright it is. Bringing to life the legendary and the little-known. Making you an eyewitness to the drama of conflicts past.

And what can you expect in the pages of MILITARY HERITAGE Magazine?

You can expect the unexpected.

- **Strategies and Tactics.** Detailed Maps, famous and little known photographs and paintings. Find out who did what and why and when. Analyze the strokes of genius and the stupendous blunders that carried or lost the day, and consider what might have been.
- **Profiles of Courage.** Meet the leaders who called the shots at history's high points and the men who fought the battles and changed history.
- **Eyewitness…** Read first hand accounts – interviews, excerpts from diaries, letters and memoirs that reveal the human side of warfare.
- **Weaponry.** Period photographs, color illustrations and detailed diagrams let you chart the development of the technology of war.

And there's so much more. But there's only one way to discover for yourself. Order right now.

Subscribe now!

Use the subscription card, or visit our website below!

www.WarfareHistoryNetwork.com/magazine

Hungarian and Polish crusaders marched into Bulgaria in 1444 determined to defeat the Ottoman army. The opponents met at Varna in a tight contest of arms.

"LET US FIGHT WITH BRAVERY"

BY ALEXANDER ZAKRZEWSKI

DURING THE MID-14TH CENTURY, A new theater of the crusades erupted, this time on the doorstep of Christian Europe. The Ottoman Turks, once just one of many pastoral Turkic tribes wandering the Anatolian steppe, had united into a powerful and sophisticated military state. Under the leadership of a series of brilliant sultans, they had expanded steadily westward, mostly at the expense of the aging and decaying Byzantine Empire. After conquering most of Anatolia, they crossed the Hellespont and established themselves in the Balkans, even moving their capital to the city of Adrianople, which they renamed Edirne.

The Ottomans were fortuitous to have arrived in Europe at a time when the entire continent seemed to be coming apart at the seams: the Byzantine Empire was barely clinging to life; England and France were locked in a ruinous Hundred Years' War; the Italian city states were consumed by greed and mutual hatred; the Papacy was divided by schism and rival popes; and even the once powerful Balkan kingdoms of Serbia and Bulgaria were beset by dynastic problems. Worse still, Genoese galleys in 1347 had unwittingly carried the Black Plague to every harbor on the Continent, devastating the population and economy.

Not surprisingly, Christian Europe's response to the new Ottoman threat was slow, half-hearted, and uncoordinated. In 1396, after subjugating Bulgaria and reducing Serbia to a vassal, Ottoman Sultan Bayezid I began to threaten Hungary. The Hungarian king and Holy Roman Emperor, Sigismund of Luxembourg, appealed to Pope Boniface XI for help and a crusade was called. Nobles from Western Europe travelled to Hungary to help repel the Ottomans.

The Nicopolis Crusade, as the campaign is remembered, was a disaster. The Catholic nobles behaved like a drunken mob on the march south through the Danube corridor, massacring Turkish prisoners, abusing the local Orthodox peasantry, and refusing to follow orders. When they met Bayezid in battle, they repeated the mistakes of Crecy and Poitiers and launched foolhardy cavalry charges that succeeded only in wearing out their own horses. After a fierce fight, Sigismund and what was left of his army were forced to flee back to Hungary, leaving thousands of prisoners behind to be executed in revenge for their earlier atrocities.

Much to the relief of Christian Europe, just six years later Bayezid was himself defeated and captured by the Mongol conqueror Tamerlane at the Battle of Ankara. The loss of the sultan plunged the Ottoman Empire into a decade-long civil war from which, for a period of time, it looked as if it would never recover. Bayezid's youngest son emerged the victor as Sultan Mehmed

A victorious Ottoman Sultan Mehmed II views the slain body of King Ladislas III, who held the crowns of Poland and Hungary, at the end of the battle.

Alamy

Wikimedia

Wikimedia

Royal Castle, Warsaw

LEFT TO RIGHT: Hungarian Voivode Janos Hunyadi, Ottoman Sultan Mehmed II, and Polish-Hungarian King Ladislas.

I. He restored order and rebuilt the military. By the time he died in 1421, his son Murad II was in good position to once again resume hostilities against Christian Europe.

Stern, aggressive, and clear in his sense of duty and purpose, Murad was exactly the type of ruler the empire needed after years of disorder. He was deeply religious and styled himself the Ghazi Sultan, a champion of Islam sworn to spread the faith and protect the faithful. He had no patience for dispute or dissent, even from his own household. When his headstrong son, the future Mehmed II, refused to listen to his tutors, he ordered the boy beaten into submission. On another occasion, when a renowned and respected imam scolded him for drinking alcohol, ironically his one major indulgence, he had him thrown into prison.

Murad began his reign by laying siege to Constantinople. He failed to take the city but forced Byzantine Emperor John VIII to agree to a humiliating peace that basically ceded away all the territory outside the city walls. Murad then began a series of campaigns to reassert the empire's control over the Balkans. First, he subdued the Venetians, the dominant power in the eastern Mediterranean, by ravaging their possessions in Greece and Albania and taking the rich city of Thessaloniki. Next, he marched north, reclaiming lost territory and forcing the rebellious Serbian Despot George Brankovic to seek sanctuary in Hungary.

It was on the Hungarian frontier that Murad's forces encountered one of the most brilliant soldiers of the age. John Hunyadi's origins are mysterious and widely contested. He was of relatively lowborn stock and was believed to have fabricated his own family crest and noble lineage. As a young man, he entered the service of King Sigismund, with whom he travelled across Central Europe and Italy. There he mastered the prevailing tactics and strategies of the time and soon became one of Sigismund's most valuable commanders.

Hunyadi was posted to Hungary's restless southern border at just about the same time that hostilities were once again arising with the advancing Ottomans. There he cleverly adapted the tactics he had learned abroad to the narrow valleys and rugged foothills of the Carpathian Mountains. In 1441 he was made voivode of Transylvania, and in the following few years he won a series of stunning victories that made him famous throughout Europe as the "White Knight of Transylvania." The nickname spoke to both his celebrated reputation as a defender of Christendom and the shining suit of Milanese plate armor he wore into battle.

In 1443 Hunyadi achieved one of his greatest successes in a whirlwind offensive known as the Long Campaign. While Murad was distracted with revolts in Greece and Albania, Hunyadi invaded Serbia, then crossed the Balkan Mountains in the dead of winter and overran most of Bulgaria. In the process he defeated three Ottoman armies sent to stop him. He might have pressed even farther had he not been hampered by the weather and a lack of supplies. Regardless, that spring he returned to Buda in triumph, and a shocked Murad sent peace envoys to offer very generous terms.

Hunyadi's forces were exhausted and he was equally as eager to come to terms; however, he had a powerful patron with ambitions of his own. In his capacity as Hungarian voivode, Hunyadi served 19-year-old King Ladislas who held the dual crowns of Poland and Hungary. As king of Hungary, Ladislas was responsible for securing Hungary's southern frontier against the Ottomans. As far as Hunyadi was concerned, this objective had been achieved. But Ladislas, being young, glory hungry, and imbued from birth with the ideals of Christian chivalry, believed the Ottomans were on the verge of being expelled from Europe altogether.

Ladislas was himself also under pressure from Pope Eugene IV—more specifically, his papal envoy Cardinal Giuliano Cesarini. The cardinal had supported Ladislas's election to the Hungarian throne. In so doing, he became a close confidant of the young monarch. He shared Ladislas's belief that the Ottomans were on their last legs. Cesarini believed that freeing the Orthodox peoples of the Balkans would bring the two churches closer together and lay the groundwork for a reunification of the two branches of Christianity. While peace negotiations with the Ottomans were under way in April 1444, Ladislas took a solemn oath to lead a crusade by year's end.

Murad and Ladislas agreed to a 10-year truce in June that Ladislas clearly had no intention of keeping. A strange series of events then followed. The sultan, fully planning to honor the agreement, withdrew from Europe with his army to lead a punitive campaign against one of his rebellious Anatolian vassals. Having secured both his Asian and European frontiers, he then shocked the world by announcing that he was exhausted by the strain of constant campaigning and was abdicating the throne in favor of 12-year-old Mehmed.

In Christian Europe, news of Murad's abdication caused a flurry of excitement, particularly in Hungary where both Cesarini and Ladislas believed that with the Ottoman Army far away in Anatolia, and an inexperienced

child on the throne, a golden opportunity had presented itself. Cesarini immediately declared the truce to be void on the basis that an agreement with an infidel was not worth the paper it was printed on. At a diet in Buda, Ladislas boldly declared that he would drive the Ottomans out of Europe.

An audacious plan was drawn up by which Ladislas, with Hunyadi as his commander in chief, would lead a crusader army south along the route of the Danube River into Ottoman-controlled Bulgaria, proceeding as far as the Black Sea coast. When the crusader army arrived at the coast it would rendezvous with a Venetian fleet that would resupply it for the final leg of its march to Edirne. All the while, the Venetians would blockade the straits between Europe and Asia, trapping Murad and his army in Anatolia and ensuring that the crusaders would be relatively unopposed as they rampaged across the Balkans. It was also hoped that the various peoples of the Balkans would take the opportunity to rise up against their Ottoman overlords, further clearing the way for the crusaders.

To accomplish this ambitious undertaking, Ladislas had at his disposal an army of 16,000 men. It was a multinational force made up of Hungarians, Poles, and Papal troops. Within each group were smaller ethnic contingents from across the diverse peoples of Central and Eastern Europe. For example, the Polish contingent included Lithuanians and Ruthenians. The Hungarian and Transylvanian troops included Croatians, Szeklers, and Saxons. Prince Vlad II of Wallachia, the father of the future Vlad the Impaler, contributed 4,000 horsemen led by his son Mircea II. These wild riders of the Carpathian frontier were among the most exotic of the crusader forces, easily distinguished by their short round beards, tall fur caps, and a lack of armor, which they considered unmanly.

Despite his generous contribution, Vlad voiced grave concerns over the coming campaign. He warned Ladislas that the sultan's hunting party alone would outnumber the crusaders. He was not the only one to have doubts. Hunyadi also desperately wanted to abide by the hard-won peace treaty and did everything he could to convince Ladislas to change his plans. Brankovic, who Hunyadi had recently restored to power, believed that diplomacy was the best way to secure his kingdom's survival and not only refused to participate, but actively sought to dissuade other Balkan rulers from doing so.

These protestations had no influence on Ladislas, who refused to break his crusader vow. On September 18, 1444, he led his army across the Danube River into Ottoman territory. At first things went well. The crusaders made slow but steady progress, taking Ottoman strongholds along the way and winning the support of the local Christians. The news of the invasion caused a wave of panic in Edirne that led to riots and the flight of much of the population.

It was not until the crusaders reached Nicopolis that they encountered their first real resistance. The town fell easily enough, but the Ottoman garrison in the nearby fortress refused to surrender and fought doggedly. The crusaders decided to bypass the fortress, but much to their vexation, the farther they advanced, the fiercer the resistance seemed to become. Ladislas also grew frustrated by how his troops seemed to show more interest in booty and plunder than in fulfilling their crusader vows. He and the other commanders consoled themselves with the knowledge that at least Murad and his army were far away in Anatolia, safely contained by the Venetian fleet.

It soon became apparent that the crusaders had not banked on two crucial factors. The first was the surprising wisdom and self-awareness of the young Sultan Mehmed. Upon receiving news of the crusade, he immediately sent his father a stern letter demanding that he return to the throne. "If you are the Sultan, come and lead the armies," he wrote. "If I am the Sultan, I order you to come and lead the armies." Murad did as his son asked and returned to power, bringing with him his years of experience and the loyal respect of the Ottoman army and people.

The other factor was the greed of the Venetians' hated rivals, the Genoese. For the exorbitant price of a ducat a head they agreed to transport Murad and his army across the straits. In mid-October, while the crusaders were still busy battling their way along the Danube, Murad crossed into Europe right under the nose of the Venetians. He immediately began marching north to confront the invaders, rallying together as many more men as he could along the way. By the end of the month, his force had grown to 60,000 men. By November 8, less than three weeks since crossing the straits, he was only a day's march from the exhausted crusaders who had only just reached the city of Varna on the Black Sea.

On November 9, 1444, scouts under the command of Michael Szilagyi, Hunyadi's brother-in-law and one of his most trusted captains, spotted the Ottoman army advancing in full battle array to a plain five miles west of Varna where they set up camp. Ladislas called his commanders to council and they all agreed the time had come to fight. In truth, they had no real other option. The ground to the north of Varna was hilly and rugged and impossible for an army to traverse. The Black Sea and Lake Devno to the south formed a narrow, marshy isthmus that was just as

Heavy cavalry played a major role in the pitched battles between the Christian crusaders and Ottoman Turks in the late Middle Ages as shown in this Polish engraving.

Wikimedia

uninviting. Furthermore, there was still no sign of the Venetian fleet, meaning no evacuation or resupply would be available to the army.

After months of endless marches and gruelling sieges, the crusaders were also eager to finally come to grips with the enemy. Ladislas brimmed with the confidence and exuberance of youth, and he surrounded himself with a retinue of young Hungarian and Polish noblemen, all just as headstrong and idealistic. Hunyadi was also confident. The conditions in which he had to fight were far from ideal, but he had been in tough spots before and he was yet to lose a battle to the Ottomans. "To escape is impossible, to surrender is unthinkable," Hunyadi declared at the council of war. "Let us fight with bravery and honor our arms!"

The order to prepare for battle in the morning rang out through the crusader camp. Cesarini gave a final mass in which he promised those who fell in battle a place in heaven. That evening Ladislas sent 5,000 horsemen to keep watch on Murad's forces camped to the west and report on any movement. As the scouts peered into the darkening night, they could see the huge Ottoman bonfires licking the sky and hear the ominous rumbling of their war drums. Both armies slept that night in their armor and with their horses saddled.

One hour after sunrise Murad broke camp and began deploying his forces in a wide concave arc that stretched for five and half miles across the plain approaching Varna. His strategy was to use his numerical superiority to envelop the crusaders. On his left he deployed the army of Rumelia under Beylerbey Sehabeddin, while on his right he placed the army of Anatolia led by his son-in-law Beylerbey Karaca. The Anatolian and Rumelian troops were composed mainly of sipahi cavalry, although both were also screened by a line of azab light infantry. The sipahi were in many ways the Ottoman equivalent of the Christian knights in that they were a feudal levy that was granted fiefs in exchange for military service. They carried swords, lances, bows, and shields and wore a combination of plate and mail armor. When called to war, they brought with them their own retainers who they themselves armed. The azabs were armed with halberds, maces, sabers, and bows.

Murad positioned himself on a low hill in the center of the Ottoman line. Below he placed a line of azabs, as well as his janissaries. The janissaries were the elite of the Ottoman military, easily distinguished from other units by their tall felt caps. They were slave soldiers who had been snatched from their Christians families in the Balkans and raised to be devoted warriors of the sultan and of Islam. They were extremely skilled hand-to-hand fighters and carried a range of weapons, including bows, swords, shields, spears, and knives. Some carried arquebuses, the early gunpowder weapon that was inaccurate from a distance but deadly at close range.

Despite this clear numerical advantage, the sultan was not taking any chances. He knew Hunyadi to be an extremely talented commander, and he also knew from experience how wary his troops could be particularly when facing heavily armored Christian knights. At the base of the hill, Murad ordered a trench dug and lined with iron stakes. As a further precaution, he also placed at the top of the hill 500 camels laden with sacks of gold and rich silks. Should his position be comprised, these sacks were to be cut open, creating a distraction that would give him time to escape.

Hunyadi was indeed an exceptionally talented commander. He immediately recognized Murad's envelopment strategy and planned accordingly. He deployed his forces in a convex formation two miles outside of Varna at a point where the plain narrowed between the marshlands to the south and rough high ground to the north. His strategy was to pin down the Ottoman flanks and funnel their troops onto the plain where their superiority in numbers would be negated and the heavily armored crusader cavalry had the advantage.

On his left by the marshlands he placed his Transylvanian troops under the command of Szilagyi. These were the hardiest and most experienced of his forces, veterans of the Long Campaign and innumerable other battles and skirmishes with the Ottomans. Most were light or medium cavalry units, highly mobile and used to fighting in the difficult terrain of the Carpathian frontier. The infantrymen were armed with swords and long halberds for cutting down cavalry and well-protected by mail hauberks and iron helmets and gauntlets. The heaviest of the Transylvanian troops were the Saxons knights, who fought encased in armor from head to toe.

On the crusader right, below the high ground to the north, Hunyadi placed the Papal contingent under Cesarini, the Wallachian horsemen under the command of Mircea II, and most of his Hungarian heavy infantry. Hunyadi knew that the Ottomans would try to outflank him from the high ground and he gave the commanders on his right flank orders to prevent this at all costs. It was for this reason that he assigned some of his most heavily armed and armored troops to this crucial position. As the Ottoman

BELOW: Pinned against the Black Sea coast, the crusaders had little recourse other than to fight their way out of their predicament. King Ladislas's charge against Mehmed's heavily defended position was suicidal. OPPOSITE: The Ottoman janissaries, shown at lower right in this 15th-century drawing, were elite infantry units that served as the sultan's bodyguards in battle. They were expected to stand firm in the most desperate situations.

horsemen struggled to maneuver down the high ground, they were to be pinned down by a wall of steel.

In the center of the crusader army were 4,000 troops under the command of Stephen Bathory, the Palatine of Hungary. Above them flew the crusader banner of St. George. These men included the king's 500-man bodyguard, which was composed of heavily armored knights drawn from the cream of the Polish and Hungarian nobility. Their shields, banners, surcoats, and livery were emblazoned with a colorful assortment of heraldic patterns and imagery, representing some of the foremost families in Eastern Europe. Mounted astride massive, well-trained destriers and boasting the best arms and armor of the age, this small but elite force was the mailed fist of the crusader army. It was Hunyadi's intention to use it to tip the scales at decisive moments during the battle.

Behind the main crusader force, Hunyadi placed a defensive line of war wagons, crewed by experienced Czech mercenaries. These vehicles had come into popularity in Eastern European warfare following their use in the Hussite Wars that ended a decade earlier. Each wagon was a sturdy mini-fort in which three to four crossbowmen or hand gunners could fire in relative safety through portholes in the reinforced wooden sides. When strapped together in a square or long line, the war wagons proved a surprisingly difficult defensive fortification to overcome and could do much to strengthen a weak or outnumbered battle line. They also provided his outnumbered troops with the psychological assurance that there was a defensive line to fall back to should the battle not go their way.

For three hours the two sides watched each other deploy. During this time the weather remained calm and tranquil. Just as the two sides appeared ready to come to blows, a fierce wind suddenly blew across the plain from the sea, snapping the poles of the majority of the crusader standards. Among the few poles that remained unbroken was that bearing the standard of St. George. Many crusaders saw this as an evil portend of what was to come, despite immediate reassurances from Cesarini and various priests that it was indeed a good sign. Murad must have also seen this as a bad auspice for the crusaders because he immediately gave the order to attack.

The first into battle were the azab irregulars who raced ahead of the main Ottoman forces to harry the crusaders and goad them into breaking formation. As they advanced, the entire Ottoman line erupted in a deafening din of blaring horns, crashing symbols, thundering

akg-images

> ALL EYES, CHRISTIAN AND MUSLIM, WERE FIXATED ON THIS INCREDIBLE DISPLAY OF MARTIAL PROWESS AND CHIVALRIC TRADITION. OTTOMAN SCRIBES WOULD LATER DESCRIBE HOW THE DUST CLOUD THROWN UP BY THE CRUSADERS' MOUNTS WAS SO GREAT THAT IT BLOTTED OUT THE SUN.

kettle drums, and resounding cries of "Allah Akbar." The crusaders responded by crossing themselves and sounding their own trumpets and battle cries.

The Saxon knights on Hunaydi's left were the first to respond to the enemy's provocations. Ignoring Szilagyi's orders to keep formation, they burst from the battle line and easily smashed through the lightly armed azabs. Following the irregulars were the well-trained and disciplined sipahis. When they saw the heavily armored Saxons coming right at them, they expertly parted their ranks to let them pass through, then surrounded them and attacked from all sides. They hacked and slashed furiously at the encircled knights only to discover that their light cavalry sabers could not penetrate the Saxons' heavy plate armor. The Saxons in turn took a fearful toll on the Ottoman horsemen, skewering many with their long lances and hewing down many more with their double-edged swords.

Szilagyi led the rest of the Crusader left in an attack to save the Saxons. Unfortunately, such was the Ottomans' superiority in numbers that soon he too was on the verge of being enveloped. Hunyadi saw this and he ordered Mircea to break from the crusader right and rescue the erstwhile rescuers. The wily Wallachians had a seething hatred for the Ottomans with whom they had been in almost constant conflict for over a century, and they took to their task with enthusiasm. What they lacked in armor they made up for in reckless bravery and remarkable horse archery. Astride their nimble mountain ponies, they weaved through the Ottoman ranks, unleashing rapid but

lethally accurate volleys of arrows from their powerful bows.

Mircea's fierce attack successfully restored the situation on the crusader left; however, it also weakened the right wing where the Ottomans had managed to maneuver up the high ground and were now pouring down the slopes, azabs in the lead and sipahis close behind. The crusaders dug in their spears and halberds and received the attack as best as they could but were quickly overwhelmed by the size and speed of the enemy force bearing down on them. More and more men began fleeing toward the safety of the war wagons. As they fled, they crashed into advancing comrades, creating panic and confusion.

For a time it looked as if the whole right flank was in danger of collapsing. In some places, the sipahis even managed to break through the line entirely and reach the war wagons where luckily they were temporarily halted by fire from the Czech mercenaries. The Ottoman left was composed of the sultan's Rumelian troops who were more seasoned in fighting Christian armies. They knew from bitter experience that their swords and spears were useless against the heavy crusader armor and instead turned to the concussive force of their maces and war hammers. Some of these bone-shattering weapons also had flanged edges or sharp spikes that could bite through an iron helmet and a man's skull along with it.

The Turks captured four crusader banners before Cesarini managed to rally 200 men for a desperate stand beneath the banner of St. Ladislas. They formed a hedgehog with knights and infantry in front and archers and crossbowmen behind. While units all around them fled in disorder, they stood like a breakwater, deflecting wave after wave of enemy attacks. At one point, 3,000 Ottomans bore down on them, but still they held their position and the banner of St. Ladislas continued to billow defiantly overhead. Hunyadi eventually noticed the desperate situation and reacted accordingly. He led a portion of the king's bodyguard in a counterattack that temporarily thwarted the Ottomans.

While Hunyadi was desperately trying to restore order on the crusader right, the situation on the left was actually beginning to swing in his favor. His Transylvanian veterans, used to the Ottomans' fighting methods, had parried every attempt at encirclement and refused to give chase to any of the enemy's feigned retreats. Frustrated and having suffered heavy losses, Beylerbey Karaca's men began to lose heart and leave the field. Karaca refused to join them. He let out a bellowing battle cry, spurred his horse forward, and charged straight into the enemy line, no doubt hoping to inspire his fleeing men to do the same.

It was an incredibly courageous act but ultimately counterproductive. After a brief struggle, a crusader knight killed Karaca. The sight of their commander being felled took the fight out of the remaining Anatolian troops and they began to flee. Hunyadi noticed this and took advantage of the situation to transfer troops from his left wing to his right where the battle was once again raging fiercely. Ladislas also committed his full bodyguard, and together with Hunyadi they made a thundering charge that smashed through the attacking Ottomans and drove them back up into the high ground. The crusaders pursued them for a few miles then returned to the plain.

A lull occurred in the fighting at that point. It was late afternoon and both sides were utterly exhausted. The battlefield was a charnel ground. Bodies lay everywhere, many hideously mutilated by the intense close-quarter hand-to-hand fighting. The ground itself had been completely torn up by the thousands of men and horses crisscrossing in all directions, and it was littered with discarded weapons and armor. As the tumult of battle subsided, the wails and groans of the wounded filled the air, which reeked of the acrid combination of blood, sweat, filth, and gunpowder. Hunyadi himself had been slightly wounded in the head by an arrow that had managed to partially pierce his helmet.

Ladislas, Hunyadi, and the other crusader commanders met behind the wagon line to discuss their next moves. At first glance, it appeared that they had won a spectacular victory. Both Murad's right and left wings were in retreat and he had suffered ghastly casualties; however, the crusaders had also suffered mightily. Given that they had been significantly outnumbered to begin with, they felt their losses even more acutely than the Ottomans did. Moreover, the crusaders' mounts were either dead or spent. A great many had been killed or wounded and those that remained were worn out from the terrible strain of rushing around the battlefield for hours with heavily armored riders on their backs.

Hunyadi urged the king to rest his men then reform his lines and wait for Murad to make the next move. He had been in similar situations before and knew that so long as the crusaders held firm, the stilted Ottoman attacks would eventually peter out, forcing the sultan to either sue for peace or retreat back to Edirne. It was prudent advice, and though the crusaders had no way of knowing it for certain, it was actually completely accurate. Across the battlefield, a despondent Murad was indeed preparing to rally what was left of his scattered forces and withdraw.

Unfortunately, young Ladislas had fallen victim to his own vanity and the misguided advice of his bodyguard. They had not incurred as many casualties as the other crusader units and were emboldened by the seeming ease with which they had put the Ottoman left wing to flight. They were also jealous of Hunyadi's influence over Ladislas and his position as commander in chief of the crusader army. They convinced the king to seize the initiative and launch one more glorious attack directly on Murad's position. Otherwise, it would be Hunyadi who would receive the credit for the victory and perhaps even the entire crusade.

When Hunyadi heard what Ladislas was planning, he was aghast and pleaded with him to reconsider. The king would not hear it. Instead he rode out with his bodyguard to a point in the plain looking directly out on Murad's position and arrayed his men for a charge. Though they were relatively few in number, they must have looked resplendent on the open plain with their armor glistening in the sun, banners and livery blowing in the breeze, and lances and swords cutting the air. When he was satisfied with the formation, Ladislas drew his sword and spurred his horse forward.

With king in the lead, the crusaders advanced at first at a trot, then a canter, then finally broke into a full gallop. The pounding of their horses' hooves was like a rolling thunder on the plain, which had fallen surprisingly quiet since the battle subsided. All eyes, Christian and Muslim, were fixated on this incredible display of martial prowess and chivalric tradition. Ottoman scribes would later describe how the dust cloud thrown up by the crusaders' mounts was so great that it blotted out the sun.

Watching from his fortified hill, Murad could hardly believe his eyes at what he was witnessing. He was at the same time terrified of this deadly new threat bearing down on him and shocked that Ladislas would so recklessly gamble his own life. As the crusaders charged up the plain, they easily scythed through the few fleeing Ottoman troops in their way. The closer they got the more nervous the sultan became. Finally, his nerves gave out and he pulled on his horse's reins to turn and flee. To his horror, the horse would not move. He looked down to find one of his veteran janissaries tightly holding the reins. The sultan and members of his staff screamed at the man to let go, but he stoically refused.

Ashamed and emboldened by this astonishingly courageous act of indiscipline, Murad regained his nerve and ordered his men to stand

Alamy

The fury and mayhem of King Ladislas's charge is portrayed in Polish artist Jan Matejko rendering of the climax of the battle. After attempting to save him, Janos Hunyadi fled north with a remnant of the army.

firm. No sooner had he done so than the crusaders plunged into the first line of azabs at the base of the hill. The irregulars stood no chance against the heavily armored knights. Many were simply trampled like grass by the crusaders' massive mounts. But behind them was the stake-lined trench, which forced them to slow down and maneuver awkwardly. At the same time, from higher up the hill, the janissaries opened fire with their arquebuses. The four-ounce lead balls tore through the attackers' armor causing ghastly wounds and knocking many from their horses.

Ladislas was unscathed by the arquebus fire. He led the way through the trench, up the hill and into the tightly packed ranks of janissaries. The sultan's elite lived up to their hard-earned reputation. They did not retreat or even buckle in the face of the crusader's relentless attack, but instead fell upon the outnumbered enemy in a savage frenzy of violence. They hacked, hammered, slashed, and stabbed at the knights from all sides, even pulling many from their saddles with their bare hands and pummeling them to death on the ground. The crusaders fought just as ferociously and showed no signs of abatement despite their dwindling numbers. In the cramped fighting, their sword strokes cleaved the enemy apart two at a time, showering their bright livery with blood and gore.

Amid the dust and smoke, Ladislas spotted Murad sitting atop his richly caparisoned horse in his own glittering battle armor, and he charged right at him. The sultan's heart surely must have skipped a beat at the sight of Ladislas coming for him, bloody sword in the air ready to cut him down. But when the two were mere yards apart, another of Murad's veteran janissaries stepped between them with a battle axe in hand. He waited until the final moment then, with a skill and focus only the most battle-hardened of warriors possess, hamstrung the king's horse mid-stride, sending him crashing to the ground. Ladislas tried to rise, but the weight of his armor, and probably numerous broken bones, rendered him helpless. With a single stroke of his axe, the janissary cut off his head then presented the gruesome trophy to Murad.

Even before Ladislas was killed, Hunyadi could see he was in trouble and rode out to save him. He was prevented from doing so by some Ottoman troops who had heard the cries of triumph from the sultan's position and had returned to the field with renewed fury. Hunyadi fought them off until sunset then fled north into the hills, rallying isolated groups of crusaders along the way. The victorious Ottomans pursued him for a number of days, leaving a grisly trail of dead crusader stragglers in their wake. Back at Murad's position, the king's bodyguard was butchered to a man and Ladislas's head was fixed on a pike and displayed for all to see.

After watching Ladislas and his bodyguard gallop off to face the sultan, much of the crusader army assumed that the battle was won and set up camp behind the wagon line. It was only the next day when the entire Ottoman army appeared before them, Ladislas's head waving in the air, that they realized the battle had been lost. In one great rush, the Ottomans overwhelmed the defenders, bringing the crusade to a close at last. Of the crusader commanders, both Cesarini and Bathory were slain. Mircea and Szilagyi fought their way out and rejoined Hunyadi in the flight back to Hungary. Meanwhile, Murad strode triumphantly into Ladislas' tent, plunged his sword into the king's throne, and fell to the ground to offer a prayer of thanks.

The Varna Crusade was the last major effort by the Christian powers to expel the Ottoman Turks from Europe, and their defeat had enormous consequences for the peoples of the Balkans. Nine years after the battle, Constantinople fell to Murad's son Mehmed, who also overran Serbia and Wallachia. Mehmed probably would have driven into Hungary as well were it not for his defeat at the hands of Hunyadi at the Battle of Belgrade in July 1456. Hunyadi died of plague the following month, but the resulting peace finally stabilized the frontier and ensured peace between Hungary and the Ottoman Empire for the next 70 years. □

A bloodied Italian corporal at Second Custoza. Despite major weaknesses in its army, the newly founded Kingdom of Italy chose to go to war with Austria for Venetia.

CLAWED BY THE AUSTRIAN EAGLE

The Italians sought to take Venetia from Austria in 1866. Their inexperience resulted in a humiliating defeat at Second Custoza.

BY ROBERT HEEGE

IT was June 24, 1866, late in the afternoon of a northern Italian summer, and Venice, the jewel of the Adriatic, was bleeding again. Down a dusty dirt road on the sun-streaked outskirts of the fabled city, a dejected, rag-tag column of beaten, broken men trudged sullenly on.

Seventy humiliating years of restive occupation under the oppressive yoke of the Habsburg Empire had left its mark on this legion of dazed automatons, as it had upon their fathers and their grandfathers before them. The abortive attempt of this new generation of starry eyed redeemers to rise up as men and cast off the shackles of their despised Germanic overlords had failed, utterly, like all the others before it.

Inspired and emboldened by events swirling all around them, it seemed to a hardy few that the time was right to make common cause with like-minded allies and strike a blow for themselves, but their ad-hoc insurrection quickly came to naught. In the space of a single day, albeit a cruel and bloody one, the fight had been taken right out of them. Their would-be saviors fared no better, and for the second time in 18 years, the age-old dream of a glorious Venetian revival, coupled now with another Risorgimento—a resurgent new vision of a single, unified nation upon the Italian peninsula—had been thoroughly blasted to pieces. The chains, it seemed, would remain.

Defeated, demoralized, and shamed before God and the venerable achievements of their glorious ancestors, some men wept, while others cursed the fates that had denied them, mocked in retreat by the incessant hum of the cicadas and the sight of the great Romanesque domes and spires of the Basilica di San Marco still visible at their backs.

Once the prosperous and glittering center of an unparalleled maritime power, whose merchant galleys and mighty warships had plied the seas for centuries, the legendary Venice of old had been a true thalassocracy, a seaborne empire with territorial acquisitions stretching far beyond the tranquil lagoons of its pocket-sized homeland.

These latter-day lions of Saint Mark were desperate only for water and bread and a bit of shade, possessed by nothing more than an almost feral desire to put as much distance as was humanly possible between themselves and their hated, perennial nemesis, the Austrians, before the shadow of night descended like a black curtain over the blood-soaked soil and shattered hopes of Venetia.

In true Italian style, part tragedy, part rueful comic opera, what was quickly dubbed the Second Battle of Custoza and the events that led up to it were all part of a larger, chaotic, interconnected mosaic, a metronome of human aspirations, political cross-purposes, military adventurism, opportunism, and international skullduggery that became known to history as the Third Italian War of Independence. For captive Venice, after a long, galling series of slights, it was just another slap in the face.

In an age of petty kings and kingdoms, La Serenissima, the Most Serene Republic of Venice, had been the storied realm of the doges. Indeed, few states in history could boast of anything like the illustrious 1,000-year pedigree of Venetia. But by the early 19th century all of that had become the stuff of nostalgia and faded memory.

To begin with, the travails of Venice aside, the very concept of a unified Italian peninsula forged into a single nation state was a relatively new one in 1866. Not since the fall of Rome in the 5th century when the Visigoths clubbed their way into the Pantheon had there been anything of the kind. Nevertheless, it was the death throes of ancient Rome that had led directly to the birth of Venice, where it is said that in an effort to keep their daughters out of the clutches of the Proto-Germanic invaders and preserve their own ethnic identity several clans took refuge in the marshy wetlands abutting the headwaters of the Adriatic.

There, on 118 tiny islands, many of them little more than sandbars and spits of dry land surrounded by the natural defenses of barrier lagoons, the early Venetians set about building small boats to traverse the distances between each landfall and connecting bridges and canals between the islands wherever possible, adapting to a new life in a water world of their own unique creation.

In the generations that followed, their descendants laid the foundations of an expansive trading network in the eastern Mediterranean. Venice grew ever more prosperous and powerful, and over the next several centuries, as her galleys swept the sea lanes and the profits rolled in, tiny Venice became a force to be reckoned with.

Eventually, the coming of Islam and the rise of the Ottoman Turks in the eastern Mediterranean dimmed the sparkling brilliance of Venice's storied maritime thalassocracy. For a time, her venerable trading network stubbornly endured, buoyed by the strength of her powerful navy and shrewd diplomacy with her European neighbors.

Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

But by the 1700s, Venice, while still the cultural pearl of Europe, had neither the need nor the inclination to maintain its once enormous fleet of galleys. She became more inward looking, content to slumber within the picturesque confines of the lagoons.

That peaceful idyll ended abruptly in the spring of 1796, when a new foe emerged much closer to home. Napoleon Bonaparte, the glory-hungry warlord of revolutionary France, was by then breathing down the necks of the patchwork of weak little kingdoms that had dotted the landscape of the Italian peninsula for hundreds of years. France's only real rivals in the region were the Austrians, so Bonaparte quickly set about neutralizing them by going on the attack, driving them out of their holdings in Lombardy. In the course of their headlong retreat, the Austrians overran Venetia, pausing only long enough to loot the city of Venice in the face of the advancing French forces, which followed suit and proceeded to sack the city for a second time. Moreover, once there, the French had no intention of leaving, and the Venetians, never a land-based power in Europe, found themselves utterly overwhelmed by the unprovoked onslaught.

Bowing to the little corporal's demands, the last Doge of Venice abdicated, practically at bayonet point, in May 1797. The no longer serene republic was summarily abolished, and a French military governor began calling the shots. Later, in a cynical deal to make temporary friends of his enemies, Napoleon signed treaties with the Habsburgs that included some advantageous land grabs, all at the expense of the Venetians, who saw their landed territory west of the lagoons (the Veneto) and the city of Venice itself ceded to his Austrian partners in crime.

The eventual defeat of Emperor Napoleon I and his war machine in 1815 did nothing to improve Venetian fortunes. At the postwar Congress of Vienna, the skillful diplomatic maneuverings of Austrian Prince von Metternich and veteran French diplomat Charles Talleyrand dominated the proceedings. As a result, the vanquished got off lightly. The main obsessions of the victors, putting all the sovereigns of Europe who'd been deposed by Napoleon back on their respective thrones, restoring the French monarchy, and restoring all the original antebellum borders were all achieved—with one glaring exception: the city of Venice, indeed, all of Venetia, was to be merged with Austrian-controlled Lombardy.

All: Wikimedia



Left to right are Alfonso La Marmora, Archduke Albrecht, and Giuseppe Govone.

For 33 years, Venice simmered under the Austrian boot. Then, in 1848, a wave of political unrest that began in Austrian-controlled Hungary sent seismic shockwaves crackling throughout Europe. In France, the pear-shaped King Louis Philippe was sent packing. But the Austrian emperor had better luck than his corpulent Gallic counterpart. The revolt in Hungary was brutally suppressed, as was a full-blown popular revolt in Venice that it had inspired, known today as the First Italian War of Independence. But, as its name suggests, it would not be the last.

Ten years passed. Giuseppe Garibaldi, a hero of the uprisings of 1848, had fled into exile like so many others, but by 1854 this international man of the people had returned and was redirecting his dynamic energies toward a new ideal, that of a Risorgimento or resurgence, a restoration of ethnic pride and shared national identity. His followers, the Red Shirts, named for the blood red shirts they wore, believed that by banding together as one people, regardless of regional differences, they could at last expel the foreign powers that had long plagued the peninsula and bring together the disparate, squabbling collection of regions and rump states into a single, strong, reunited nation.

In 1859, Garibaldi's fellow travelers in the nascent Pan Italian movement suddenly found themselves in the cossetted embrace of a most unlikely ally. The big winner of the revolutions of 1848 had been one Charles-Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, the nephew of the great Napoleon. In 1852, with the blessing of the French people, he assumed the Imperial title.

By 1859 Emperor Napoleon III, as he fashioned himself, was cheerfully indulging his penchant for opportunism, intrigue, and political mischief in support of the Risorgimento by dispatching his resplendently attired troops into northern Italy to entice, encourage, and otherwise assist his newest protégé, the 39-year-old king of Sardinia-Piedmont, Vittorio Emanuele II.

Despite his own father's dismal performance as a freedom fighter with a pedigree in 1848, Vittorio Emanuele II was seen by a great many as the natural candidate to take up the banner of the Risorgimento, including, most crucially to his prospects, the charismatic Garibaldi. It was little wonder then, that the vainglorious Napoleon III was keen to pull the king of Sardinia-Piedmont into his sphere of influence by engineering a joint effort to squeeze the Habsburgs out of their holdings in Lombardy and Venetia, and by so doing, undermine his Continental rival, the emperor of Austria.

Thus, on June 4, 1859, near the northern Lombard town of Magenta, a mighty host of 50,000 Frenchmen joined by a Lilliputian force of 1,100 Piedmontese forded the Ticino River from Piedmont, led by their respective monarchs, and crossed over into Lombardy-Venetia seeking battle. The French-led Second Italian War of Independence was on.

Slamming headlong into the Austrian right, the attackers forced their quarry into a fighting retreat across the cramped, uneven terrain until they came upon a landscape of country orchards riven by a network of irrigation ditches. There, the Austrians made their stand, fighting tooth and nail to heed their officers' orders to either hold their positions or die trying. In reply, the obliging French spent the day blasting away at them with abandon, until the little streams that burbled through the area took on a sickening pinkish-purple red hue— a color that has been known as magenta ever since—as Austrian blood found its way into the water that fed the orchards. Three weeks later, about six miles from the shores of Lake Garda, at a benighted spot on the map called Solferino, a name that has since become a byword for slaughter, a similarly lamentable scene unfolded.

His battle laurels tarnished by unflattering press reports, Napoleon III quickly tired of his Italian sojourn and began sending out feelers to his imperial cousin, Franz Josef of Austria, stipulating the surrender of nearly all of Lombardy to France as the price of peace. Venetia, though, would remain firmly bound to the

Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

French Emperor Napoleon III's army mauled the Austrians at Magenta during the Second Italian War of Independence.

Habsburg Empire. The Austrians, still reeling from the horrific and humiliating mauling they had sustained at Magenta and Solferino, all but leapt at the idea, and a treaty was concluded with an almost unseemly haste just over the Alps in Zurich, Switzerland.

Vittorio Emanuele was mortified, but his mood improved considerably when the devious French emperor promptly ceded his newly acquired Lombard province to his Savoyard ally. Napoleon III cynically declared a victory for peace and returned home. But Vittorio Emanuele II was a man of conviction. He had other ideas about what a real victory would look like, and so, too, did lifelong revolutionary Giuseppe Garibaldi, who had long regarded Vittorio Emanuele as the very model of an enlightened, liberal monarch. Receiving Garibaldi's blessing was akin to a coronation. Bowing to the prevailing winds of change, one by one the other royal and assorted blue bloods offered obeisance to the scion of the House of Savoy, Vittorio Emanuele II, who was now snapping up provinces on the Italian peninsula one by one, even managing to acquire most of the territory of the Papal States.

On October 26, 1860, Garibaldi and the man he had virtually anointed met face to face. It was then that Garibaldi, the white-bearded old warrior, addressed Vittorio Emanuele as the king of all Italy from the Alps to Sicily. Doffing his famous rounded cap, he handed the younger Savoyard an Italy that was united for the first time in nearly 14 centuries.

On March 17, 1861, Vittorio Emanuele II was duly crowned as the king of Italy. Apart from the old Roman capital, only Venetia remained unredeemed. Acquiring Venetia became the new nation's burning obsession.

At that same time, Prussian statesman Otto von Bismarck was trying to corral the various independent German kingdoms into a single German empire, with his master, the king of Prussia at its head. Reading the tea leaves, many of the lesser states looked more and more toward their perceived big brother, Austria, as the natural protector and guarantor of their independence.

Bismarck decided to put an end to this ongoing Austrian involvement in the political affairs of the lesser German states and scotch their mutual efforts to stymie his grand scheme. A short, sharp war against an unprepared, reluctant adversary would be just the ticket, and so on June 14, 1866, Emperor Franz Josef of Austria found himself maneuvered into a war with Prussia.

Secret negotiations between Prussia and Italy had been initiated, with arch-intriguer Napoleon III of France volunteering his services as a go-between. Thoroughly seduced, the Italians agreed to attack the Austrians in Venetia while the Prussians were simultaneously mounting their main event in an entirely separate northern action that would drive a wedge deep into Habsburg territory in the province of Bohemia, thus inflicting a psychological blow by threatening the cohesion of Austria's sprawling, centuries old, painstakingly acquired empire.

The Italian offensive was a sideshow designed to compel the Austrians to siphon off badly needed troops that they would otherwise be sending into the line against Prussia's legions. The Italians were perfectly willing to swallow this bitter pill as long as the price of their equanimity would be the whole of Venetia and the reclamation of Venice.

The Italian army was still struggling to integrate the armed forces of the formerly separate states that now constituted the singular Kingdom of Italy into one effective force. Despite personal appeals from the king, the Italian officer corps remained a hotbed of bitter jealousies and unresolved personal feuds. In short, the newly minted Italian army was poorly trained, poorly equipped, and exceedingly poorly led.

Like clockwork, the Prussians sprang into action on June 14. They initially concentrated on soft targets, such as Hanover, Saxony, and Bavaria, peeling them away from their paternal Austrian ally. Next, they turned their considerable energies toward their main objective, that of isolating and panicking the lumbering Habsburg elephant, before driving it into the reeds and circling in for the kill.

The Italians, after an abundance of caution, declared war on their despised Austrian enemy on the June 19, 1866; however, they were so disorganized in their mobilization that they could not manage to field so much as a single platoon until June 23.

When they finally did so, they invited disaster from the very outset of the campaign by adopting a war plan that would divide their forces in two before they had even fired a single shot in anger. This marked the quixotic start of the Third Italian War of Independence.

As dawn broke on the morning of June 23, 11 infantry divisions supported by an additional division of mounted cavalry, 120,000 men in all, set out across the Lombardian plains in a line of advance so ponderous and slow moving that nearly 55,000 of them were still bringing up the rear when the main body forded the River Mincio and made its way toward Austrian-controlled Venetia. Christened the Army of the Mincio, it was under the command of General Alfonso Ferrero la Marmora, a 62-year-old nobleman and veteran of the Crimean War. Marmora, who sported an impressive tapered moustache and long, pointed goatee, bore a striking resemblance to Napoleon III, a fact that was not lost on either man when they had met with Bismarck to negotiate their secret accord.

La Marmora had set aside his royal appointment as the first premier of the infant kingdom for a chance to march to the sound of the guns one last time. Tagging along in this search for glory were the king himself and his two sons, Crown Prince Umberto and his younger brother Prince Amadeo.

La Marmora was initially tasked with launching an attack against the dreaded Quadrilatero, Austria's strategic quadrilateral fortress system. Meanwhile, a second force of another eight full divisions was making its way through the wheat fields just south of the River Po to engage the Austrians on the outskirts of Mantua, on the far end of their formidable defensive system. The Army of the Po was commanded by yet another elaborately bewhiskered, well-connected nobleman, General Enrico Cialdini, the Duke of Gaeta. The abrasive Cialdini was well known for his frequent fits of pique within Italian military circles. Moreover, it was equally well known that he and la Marmora, the two most senior officers in the Italian army, cordially detested each other.

BELOW: Austrian Colonel Maximilian Rodakowski leads the elite Galician uhlans in a furious charge against the Italians. Such determined cavalry charges helped win the day for the Austrians. OPPOSITE: The 49th Italian Regiment formed in square during chaotic fighting on the hilltops surrounding Villafranca. The outcome of the battle uncertain for a considerable period of time.

La Marmora reached the first of his objectives, the quadrilateral strongholds at Peschiera del Garda, and Mantua and, according to plan, prepared his attack.

Standing resolutely against the general's numerically superior force was the main body of Austria's somewhat less romantically monikered South Army, consisting of three army corps, a reserve division, and one division of cavalry, a total of 75,000 men. What it lacked in numbers, though, the South Army more than made up for in glittering imperial titles, as its upper ranks were chock full of barons. The field marshal's baton of overall command was clenched firmly in the gloved hand of Austrian Archduke Albrecht von Habsburg, the emperor's cousin.

The Austrians received excellent intelligence regarding the Italian incursion before they had even reached the Mincio. Archduke Albrecht was canny enough to make the correct command decision early on to concentrate the bulk of his forces in a strategic defense within the vicinity of the fortresses in order to blunt the spear of la Marmora's obvious intention, a thrust into Venetia, while simultaneously deploying a token force to check any potential movements on the part of Cialdini and his Army of the Po, operating at what was fast becoming the extreme edge of the offensive perimeter, a development that was apparently lost upon the egotistical martinet, Cialdini.

Cialdini was convinced that the approaching Austrians he was observing were the main event about to break open all around him and braced for the onslaught. Unable to dissuade him, la Marmora, who would find himself fending off a major Austrian counterattack by day's end, inexplicably left Cialdini to his own inert devices and proceeded on with his mission. Thus, the chain of command, like the lines of communication between the two, were effectively severed early on.

About the only thing that would go according to plan that day was la Marmora's successful effort to convince the king to proceed north with a small force that would place him conveniently and safely out of the way, so far afield from the central theater of operations that he was literally within sight of the Alps.

With the king obligingly en route to his Alpine idyll, la Marmora left almost two full divisions and all of his reserve artillery behind in an attempt to bottle up the Austrian forts,

Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea

THE APPEARANCE OF THE DREADED UHLANS COMING ON LIKE A HORDE OF BLOODTHIRSTY MOUNTED DEVILS GAVE RISE TO A GENERAL DISORDER IN THE RANKS OF III CORPS AND THE COMPLETE LOSS OF NERVE ON THE PART OF ITS OVERALL COMMANDER, GENERAL ENRICO DELLA ROCCA.

and with his remaining force of 50,000 men, proceeded with his advance into Venetia. At the same time, Albrecht was already directing elements of his South Army to move westward from their positions near Verona on the Adige River to head them off. Racing due west, he resolved to catch the Italians well to the south of him, mount a surprise attack from the rear, and cut them to pieces in one fell swoop.

By early the following morning, June 24, with the momentum of his unwieldy advance already showing signs of bogging down, la Marmora, sensing that a major engagement with the enemy was imminent, made a course correction in a frantic search for higher ground. The logic behind his decision was sound enough, but his timing could not have been more deplorable.

Coming within sight of the hilltops just outside the picturesque Veronese town of Villafranca, la Marmora impetuously directed his men to immediately take the high ground without performing so much as a routine cavalry reconnaissance. Gamboling headlong toward the hilltops, where the lush vegetation was studded with half a dozen tiny villages and sleepy little hamlets, Oliosi, San Rocco, San Giorgio, and Custoza among them, the Army of the Mincio ran straight into the teeth of the South Army, which was already in the process of securing the position and girding itself for battle.

Having lost his early numerical advantage by splitting his command again and again, neglecting to maintain a disciplined line of march during the advance into Venetia, and failing even to establish, much less secure, adequate lines of communication between himself, his field commanders, and his increasingly thinly spread forces, the battle that erupted on the hilltops outside Villafranca quickly devolved into utter chaos for the would-be Italian conquerors.

As the smoke of spent gunpowder clouded the air in the hills above Villafranca, even the methodical Austrian commander Archduke Albrecht, who was observing the action at a distance through his field telescope, could not be entirely sure of what was happening. But la Marmora, who some distance away was squinting frantically into the northern Italian sunlight with barely a scrap of intelligence, had left himself virtually blind. Operating with little to no information regarding the disposition of the enemy—or of his own troops—he sat in his field tent in a state akin to mental paralysis.

At that point, there was a complete breakdown of command and of loss of unit cohesion within the Italian ranks. Confusion reigned. Then, at about 7 AM a wing of the 13th Austrian Regiment of Uhlans under the command of General Ludwig von Pulz entered the fray. Unable to restrain themselves, they mounted their chargers without waiting for proper orders from von Pulz and charged toward Villafranca, training their lances on the unfortunate troops of a division of the Italian III Corps under the battlefield command of General Giuseppe Govone.

The appearance of the dreaded Uhlans coming on like a horde of bloodthirsty mounted devils gave rise to a general disorder in the ranks of III Corps and the complete loss of nerve on the part of its overall commander, General Enrico Della Rocca. A multi-titled nobleman, staff officer, and close adviser to the king, Della Rocca, despite a chest full of medals, had not held an actual battlefield command in years.

Della Rocca's total loss of backbone at this pivotal moment kept his other divisions at a near standstill. Meanwhile, whole groups of Govone's men were being ridden down like dogs in the olive gardens of Villafranca, lanced front and back in their desperate attempts to escape impalement. Not even the exhortations Crown Prince Umberto, who was on hand to witness the debacle

ABOVE: Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection. BELOW: Wikimedia

ABOVE: A series of fierce pitched battles punctuated by frenzied melees spilled over into a handful of hamlets such as Custoza. RIGHT: Although Italian Prince Amadeo showed great valor, he was cut down by Austrian snipers.

and who had known Della Rocca since he was a small child, could move him to action. Clinging to orders received earlier from the now incommunicado la Marmora, Della Rocca, much like the ossified Cialdini, held his defensive positions and did nothing. The crown prince openly wept.

This is not to say that the individual Italian soldier was not brave. There were many individual infantrymen who gave their all that day, especially in that hellish, desperate hour. Whether it was a single soldier standing his ground or small bands of brothers gathered together in instinctive defensive clusters all around the small groves and hamlets on the heights above Villafranca, isolated pockets of stubborn, dogged resistance fought like demons, often with neither officers nor orders, refusing to give in to the inevitable.

Fierce pitched battles raged throughout that one bloody day, often descending into frenzied melee and spilling over into the tiny hamlets of San Rocco, San Giorgio, Oliosi, and Custoza, as elements of Italian General Giacomo Durando's I Corps served notice on Serbian General Gabriel Freiherr von Rodic and the crack riflemen of his Moering and Piret Brigades that their Austrian masters had worn out their welcome in Italy as far as they were concerned.

But Rodic and his hard-bitten warriors were there to see that the Italians would not carry the day. In what amounted to an orgy of wanton, mutual butchery in the small village of Oliosi, the Italians finally reached the limits of their endurance and gave ground. In a sudden groundswell of sheer bedlam, the shattered remnants of an entire infantry division broke ranks and fled in a mad dash of humanity that did not stop until they were halfway back to the River Mincio.

Shortly after 8 AM another Italian division under the command of General Giuseppe Sirtori attempted to hit back at Rodic and his hard cases, but after enduring withering fusillades of gunfire and several murderous bayonet charges, Sirtori's men were at last sent reeling back on their heels in retreat.

Nevertheless, a great many of the sons of a united Italy somehow withstood the whirlwind of chaos spinning all around them, and as the bloody fight ground on, the stubborn Italian soldiers managed to punch a few holes in the lines of their equally exhausted Austrian enemies. The diehard, fatalistic heroism that ensued has been enshrined in Italian memory as the Second Battle of Custoza.

An hour later, the Brignone Division, one of the four divisions of Durando's I Corps, faced off like angry wildcats against Austria's finest, the IX Corps of the Junker General Ernst, Ritter von Hartung for possession of an otherwise nondescript outcrop beside the little hamlet of Custoza, known as Belvedere Hill, and drove them off with bullets, rifle butts, clenched fists, and even the heels of their boots, sending them scrambling back down the slopes of Monte Croce after another vicious, hour-long infantry slugfest.

But the aristocratic von Hartung, stung by the ignominy of seeing his proud fellow Austrians bested by an army of illiterate peasants, ordered his men to regroup and charge back up into the heights in a deadly game of king-of-the-hill. With la Marmora still frozen in inaction, Prince Amadeo organized a hasty relief party and made for Belvedere Hill, but Austrian marksmen spotted them as they attempted to scramble to the top and opened fire. The attempted rescue was quickly repulsed. The prince, who was badly wounded in the action, was carried from the field. Durando's fighters were compelled to quit the hill shortly thereafter.

The sight of a profusely bleeding Prince Amadeo being ministered to by his surgeon was enough to temporarily shake la Marmora from his torpor. Suddenly, he was imploring General Govone to send no less than two divisions scrambling up the hillsides to aid the now faltering Brignone Division as its soldiers dug in among the peasant huts and pig sties of Custoza, attempting to fend off the Bock Brigade of Hartung's IX Corps and the Scudier Brigade, part of the Austrian VII Corps, commanded by Hungarian General Joseph Freiherr von Maroicic.

Govone immediately complied and at length, against all odds, the counterattack began to bear fruit. Both the Scudier and the Bock Brigades were pushed clear out of Custoza. The Scudier Brigade was so badly mauled in the ensuing melee that it was compelled to quit the battlefield. This resulted in a serious breach in the Austrian line that was ripe for exploitation.

Almost on cue, an Italian general, Giuseppe Pianell, who had been sitting on the far side of the Mincio with his troops where he was waiting for further orders that never arrived, made up his mind to act upon his own initiative and seek out the enemy. Crossing the river and linking up with reserve elements of Durando's I Corps and the battered remnants of Sirtori's division, Pianell's ad-hoc command successfully reinforced the left flank of the Italian forces at a pivotal moment in the fight.

Unfortunately, the significance of this development was utterly lost on la Marmora, who

had already decided that all was lost just when the enemy was reaching the conclusion that their exhausted soldiers would be unable to go on much longer. After a few nervous glances at his pocket watch, la Marmora, convinced that the game was now up and anxious to get back across the Mincio before his bridgeheads crumbled and he found himself cut off on the wrong side of the river, ordered a general retreat. He was unaware that the redoubtable General Govone's division had just retaken Belvedere Hill.

Stupefied by the failure of his Italian counterparts to seize the day, an incredulous General Rodic, his Serbian blood boiling, launched an immediate, concerted attack on General Giuseppe Sirtori's positions. Buckling under the ferocity of the attack, Sirtori's already bloodied division fell back at 2 PM, creating a huge breach in the line of battle that Rodic's men proceeded to pour through and exploit with a vengeance.

As a direct result, General Govone, having only just recaptured Belvedere Hill at great cost, found himself almost completely cut off in Custoza, caught between a full Austrian brigade blocking a tenuous escape route over a dilapidated footbridge on the one hand and a vengeful Rodic and Maroicic, the latter acting without orders, gleefully pressing in for the kill on the other.

Wasting no time, Archduke Albrecht ordered von Hartung's corps to summon up its last ounce of valor and immediately renew the attack on the now thoroughly demoralized Italian divisions, who, abandoned by their superiors, were now abandoning the field, falling back in complete disarray.

Still, up on the hillside, in the shattered, blood-soaked hamlet of Custoza, what was left of Govone's command, surrounded by the enemy in this, their final redoubt, held out for nearly three more hours as heartless Austrian artillery pounded the peasant hovels and pig sties into powder. At that point, Maroicic, who had been steamrolling his way through like a juggernaut, secured his prize. He mopped up the surviving defenders and began bagging his prisoners.

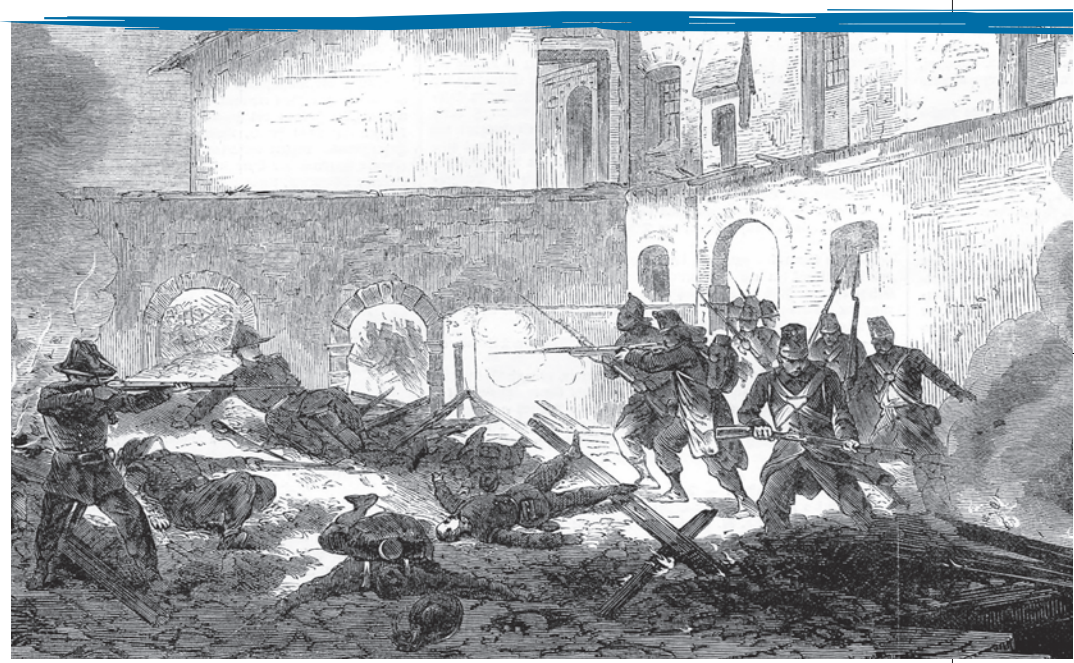
The Second Battle of Custoza cost nearly 2,000 lives outright and left almost another 7,000 wounded men from both sides writhing in agony on the battlefield, a not insignificant set of numbers considering the small space of time in which it occurred and the compressed nature of the terrain upon which it was fought. By late afternoon it was all over. For all the slowness of their initial advance into Venetia, the Italians could not get back across the Mincio fast enough. As the Austrians would later admit, Austria's victory had been won for them that day by Italy's high command.

But victory in Venetia was not victory elsewhere. The campaign against the Italians was all the Prussians had hoped it would be. In the verdant hills of Bohemia at Sadowa on July 3, the Austrian Empire suffered through a Custoza-like disaster of its own.

The Prussians proceeded according to their well-laid battle plan. With a singularly ruthless efficiency, they realized their goal of encircling a bewildered, demoralized Austrian army. In the manner of a pride of lions pursuing a lumbering and confused elephant, they inflicted a crushing defeat upon their suddenly hapless Austrian archrival, delivering a knockout blow so shattering that the Austrians' will to continue fighting the war was completely destroyed.

Soon after Sadowa, the traumatized Austrians decided to cut their losses and get out while the going was still good. An armistice was brokered within a month, assisted once again by the vulpine French emperor. Eight weeks later, the Austrians officially sued for peace. The Peace of Prague brought about the Habsburg Empire's permanent resignation from the German Confederation. In the future, Austria would no longer interfere in Berlin's efforts to corral the lesser German states into a unified German Reich. Austria also would have to surrender Venetia.

Napoleon III was on hand for that treaty ratification, picking up some key territories for France. The Austrians, although they had lost the war and were compelled to relinquish Venetia, pressed the galling assertion that, since the Italian high command had presided over a military debacle of the first order, they did not deserve to be rewarded with the prize of Venice and



General Govone's troops made a desperate last stand in the hamlet of Custoza. Austrian artillery pounded their position sufficiently to allow the Austrian VII corps to seize the blood-soaked village.

Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

Venetia. Though Vittorio Emanuele had allied himself with the Prussians, they washed their hands of him. As part of the treaty, the whole of Venetia and the prized jewel of the city of Venice went not to Italy, but to France.

Soon afterward, the wily Napoleon III, who was understandably cautious about adding so restive a province to his own peaceful preserves, and who no doubt relished the opportunity to further humiliate his Austrian rivals, could not resist twisting the knife in one more time. In a self-servingly grand gesture of magnanimity, he announced his desire to cede the whole of the territory to Italy. Not wanting to look like a pauper accepting charity from a rich man, Vittorio Emanuele insisted on putting the issue to a vote.

A plebiscite was orchestrated with the predictable result that the people of Venetia voted overwhelmingly to become a part of the new Kingdom of Italy. The foiled insurrectionists of Venice, forced to flee their beloved city, returned from their short-lived exile to a Venice that was now a part of a united Italy. Within four short years, the French garrison of Rome was recalled. After 15 centuries, Italy was whole and free, an eternal testament to the bravery and sacrifice of the ordinary foot soldiers who had made it possible, the men who paid for it with their blood, the true heroes of Second Custoza. □

By Christopher Miskimon

The American F-86 and MiG-15 battled for control of the skies during the Korean War.

THE F-86 SABRE WAS THE ICONIC AMERICAN FIGHTER OF THE Korean War era. The struggle was the first war that pitted jet fighter aircraft against each other. F-86 pilots were credited with 800 kills of enemy aircraft during the war. One of the first went to Lt. Col. Bruce Hinton, who downed a Soviet-built MiG-15. He and his flight of four Sabres lured some MiGs into a dogfight by simulating the flight characteristics of the less-capable F-80. The communists detected what they thought were inferior planes and quickly responded, intent on easy kills. They got more than they bargained for as Hinton and his wingman chased three enemy jets. He shot up one with his nose-mounted .50-caliber machine guns and saw it begin to trail smoke. The American pilot doggedly kept after the MiG, pouring fire into it until the plane was a veritable sheet of flame falling from the sky. It was the beginning of the classic struggle of the air war over Korea, F-86 versus MiG-15.

That conflict in the skies was the largest air-to-air war fought during the jet era. It pitted the United States, the most powerful country in the world, armed with not only advanced conventional weapons but also a monopoly on atomic bombs, against China and North Korea, second- and third-rate powers supplied in part by the Soviet Union. Although it would not become public knowledge until years later, Soviet pilots were secretly flying some of the communist aircraft, a clandestine confrontation of the early Cold War.

Central to the United Nations Command's achievement of air superiority was the F-86 Sabre. The Soviet-built MiG-15, introduced in

The introduction of the new F-86 Sabre into the Korean War in December 1950 enabled the United Nations Command to counter the swept-wing MiG-15. INSET: Lt. Col. Bruce Hinton was the first F-86 pilot to shoot down a MiG-15.

Jim Felce (Airwolfhound)

1950, was a formidable jet fighter that outclassed most Western aircraft. Up to that point the United Nations Command's air forces had ruled the skies and rained destruction upon North Korean ground forces, achieving decisive results. The MiG-15 changed that, downing fighters and bombers in large numbers. Something had to be done to turn the tide back in the United Nations Command's favor, and that solution was the F-86.

The Sabre was technologically advanced and flown by brave pilots with aggressive leadership. This combination soon achieved air superiority, allowing other United Nations Command aircraft to resume their campaigns of close air support and bombing without undue fear of the killer Russian jet. It also kept the communist air power from having any real effect on the war, aside from a few nuisance raids.

The F-86 deserves its status as icon, but there is more to its story than a few dogfights. It is a drama that spans the course of the war. That inspiring tale of courage mixed with technology is revealed in ***Sabres over MiG Alley: The F-86 and the Battle for Air Superiority in Korea*** (Kenneth P. Werrell, Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, MD, 2018, 318 pp., maps, photographs, notes, bibliography, index, $24.95, softcover).

The volume is written with attention paid to the creation and design of both Sabre and MiG along with the narrative of the pilots who flew them. Chapters are dedicated to how both planes were created and how they compared to each other as combat aircraft. Also included are accounts of those pilots on both sides who became aces and the political considerations that often curtailed attempts by the American flyers to decisively defeat the MiG menace. Attention is also paid to those who were shot down and the fates of the men who survived that experience.

The author is a veteran United States Air Force pilot who, as a young academy cadet listened to the stories of former F-86 pilots, many of whom shared their experiences with the would-be flyers. He never forgot their tales and has gathered the accounts of 60 Sabre pilots to shed new light on the subject. The book is engaging and detailed. It deftly pulls the reader in with battle stories of pilots in combat. Moreover, it

SHORT BURSTS

Augustus at War: The Struggle for the Pax Augusta (Lindsay Powell, Pen and Sword Books, 2018, $44.95, hardcover) Despite the period's name as a time of peace, The Roman Army was in action every year between 31BC and 14AD. This book reveals those campaigns.

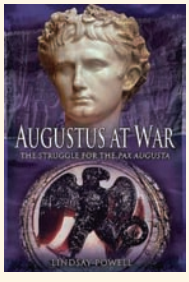
The Etruscans: 9th-2nd Centuries BC (Raffaele D'Amato and Andrea Salimbeti, Osprey Publishing, 2018, $19.00, softcover) The Etruscans populated North and Central Italy for centuries. This new work highlights their military organization.

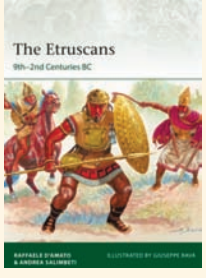
Forts: An Illustrated History of Building for Defence (Jeremy Black, Osprey Publishing, 2018, $50.00, hardcover) Fortifications have played a vital role throughout human history. Here they are presented from ancient times through the Cold War.

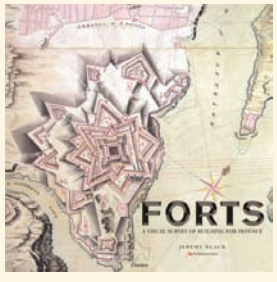
What Remains: Searching for the Memory and Lost Grave of John Paul Jones (Robert Hornick, University of Massachusetts Press, 2018, $28.95, softcover) John Paul Jones died in Paris and his resting place was lost to history. This book recounts the search for grave through the 19th and 20th centuries.

Richard III: England's Most Controversial King (Chris Skidmore, St. Martin's Press, 2018, $29.99, hardcover) This is the first full biography of the English monarch in 50 years. The author delves into Richard's true character, going past the myth and rumor about him.

Hungarian Uprising: Budapest's Cataclysmic Twelve Days, 1956 (Louis Archard, Pen and Sword Books, 2018, $22.95, softcover) The Hungarian Uprising against Soviet Rule was a major event of the early Cold War. This volume is part of the publisher's series on Cold War conflicts.





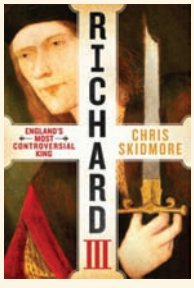


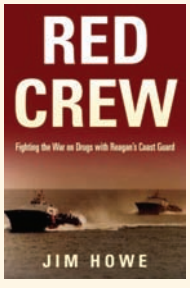
August 1914: France, The Great War, and A Month that Changed the World Forever (Bruno Cabanes, Yale University Press, 2016, $27.50, hardcover) This narrative examines the first few weeks of World War I. It uses the diaries and experiences of those who witnessed it firsthand.

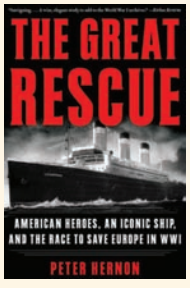
Masters of Mayhem: Lawrence of Arabia and the British Military Mission to the Hejaz (James Stejskal, Casemate Books, $32.95, hardcover) Thomas Edward Lawrence was one of the first practitioners of unconventional warfare. His operations were the genesis of later Special Forces development.

Red Crew: Fighting the War on Drugs with Reagan's Coast Guard (Jim Howe, Naval Institute Press, 2018, $29.95, hardcover) This first-hand account covers Coast Guard operations in the early 1980s. The author was the executive officer aboard a surface effect ship during this period.

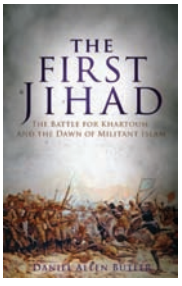
The Great Rescue: American Heroes, An Iconic Ship, and the Race to Save Europe in WWI (Peter Hernon, Harper Books, 2018, $27.99, hardcover) This is the story of a German ocean liner seized by the American government and used as a troop ship. It made numerous voyages across the Atlantic Ocean.







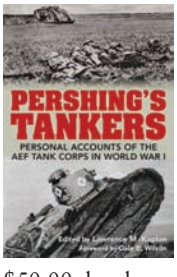
recounts the larger course of the war and how the Sabre pilots fit into the larger scope of the conflict.



The First Jihad: The Battle for Khartoum and the Dawn of Militant Islam (Daniel Allen Butler, Casemate Publishing, Havertown, PA, 2018, 256 pp., maps, photographs, bibliography, index, $12.95, softcover)

There is no denying militant Islam is a force in the modern world, but the movement had its start in the 19th-century with Muhammed Ahmed, popularly known to history as the Mahdi. In turn he opposed the Ottoman Empire, the Egyptians and finally the Europeans. He declared his holy war in 1880 and gathered thousands to his banners. He and his army enjoyed success for a number of years, defeating several forces sent against them. His forces even captured the city of Khartoum from British Maj. Gen. Charles George Gordon, killing him and displaying his head around the city. Though the Mahdi died shortly afterward, his campaign succeeded in keeping the British out of the Sudan for nearly 15 years. In 1899 Herbert Kitchener led an army into the country and crushed the Mahdists at Omdurman, stifling the flames of jihad for a century.

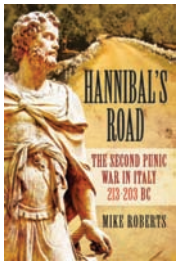
There are two sides to this new work. First, it recounts the history of the Mahdi and the jihad. Second, it explains how the Mahdi influenced modern jihadists. The author strives to show events from the Mahdi's point of view without apologizing for or politicizing his opinions. The history is detailed and deftly explains the complex political maneuvering of the region during that time. It gives interesting insight into not only the events of the Mahdi's campaigns but also their effects.



Pershing's Tankers: Personal Accounts of the AEF Tank Corps in World War I (Edited by Lawrence M. Kaplan, University Press of Kentucky, Lexington, 2018, 290 pp., appendices, notes, index, $50.00, hardcover)

The soldier watched the American tank advance slowly out of the northern end of a town. Colonel George S. Patton was sitting high on top of the tank, leading a portion of the newly formed American Expeditionary Force Tank Corps into battle. As the soldier gazed upon his commanding officer, machine-gun fire broke out. But the soldiers could not immediately ascertain the direction from which it came. In a matter of minutes it became clear when bullets began striking the side of the tank in which Patton was riding. Patton would survive this brush with death and go on to achieve a lasting legacy as a master of armored and mobile warfare, a legacy he began building in World War I.

The U.S. Army Tank Corps was an infant service during the Great War. Relatively little is known about this small service today since the war was largely one of infantry and artillery but this new work helps redress that imbalance. The author has compiled the official reports and combined them with the personal narratives of U.S. Army Tank Corps veterans, including letters Patton wrote home during the war. The book gives a very personal look at the dawn of armored warfare and the men who brought it forward.

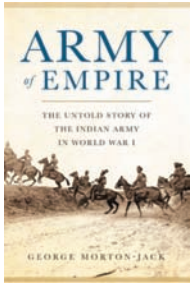


Hannibal's Road: The Second Punic War in Italy 213-203 BC (Mike Roberts, Pen and Sword Books, South Yorkshire, UK, 2018, 288 pp., maps, photographs, notes, bibliography, index, $39.95, hardcover)

By 212 BC the tide of the Second Punic War had turned against Carthage. Hannibal, the Carthaginian leader had struggled mightily to defeat Rome by carrying the war to Italy. Hannibal operated so far from Carthage that it seemed he could not stay long in action. Yet despite being outnumbered and out of supply, the resourceful Carthaginian commander not only maintained his force in Italy for another decade, but he managed to fight off several Roman armies at once.

Hannibal won several key battles in Italy. He maneuvered in such a way that the Romans were kept off balance and prevented from vanquishing his army. But eventually he was forced to return to Carthage to defend his homeland against Scipio's invading Roman army. Hannibal's ability to persevere and remain calm under pressure marks him as one of history's great commanders.

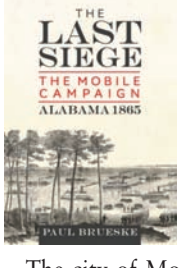
The author analyzes Hannibal's strategy and goals during these years, showing how the Carthaginian leader carried out his astounding feats of generalship. Relatively few works have focused on this period of the Punic Wars, but this book shows Hannibal's genius during perhaps his most astounding campaigns, when he rampaged throughout Italy despite all the Romans could do to stop him. This volume continues the author's series of books dealing with the military history of the ancient world, using flowing readable prose and detailed presentation of the events and engagements.



Army of Empire: The Untold Story of the Indian Army in World War I (George Morton-Jack, Basic Books, New York, 2018, 624 pp., maps, photographs, appendices, notes, bibliography, index, $32.00, hardcover)

When World War I began in August 1914, the British Army was a thoroughly professional force, but too small to meet the worldwide commitments arising from a global conflict. Fortunately for their empire, the British had a trained and ready force prepared to deploy wherever it was needed. The Indian Army wound up serving in the Middle East, Europe, the Mediterranean and even garrisons in Asia. By 1918 1.5 million Indians wore the uniform. In some places, they were hailed as heroes while in others they were greeted as mercenaries fighting for English coin. Wherever they went they were still subjected to the racial prejudice of the time. Their experiences also led to an increased desire for Indian independence. The Indian Army was the most widely serving Allied army of World War I.

This new work reveals the service of Indian troops, a relatively unexplored subject in the vast body of knowledge on World War I. The author uses newly found interviews with actual members of the Indian Army combined with archival documents and after-action reports to put a human face on the soldiers and their courage, both in combat and against the bigotry of the era. This book adds commendably to revealing the service of the Indian Army during the Great War.



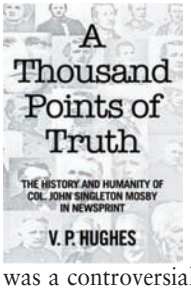
The Last Siege: The Mobile Campaign, Alabama 1865 (Paul Brueske, Casemate Publishing, Havertown, PA, 2018, maps, photographs, notes, bibliography, index, $32.95, hardcover)

The city of Mobile, Alabama, was one of the most important ports in the Confederacy during the American Civil War. After New Orleans fell to the Union in 1862, it was the

most vital anchorage on the Gulf Coast. It gave safe harbor to swift blockade runners, managing to stay operational despite the U.S. Navy's blockade. In 1864 Union forces won the Battle of Mobile Bay, but they were unable to capture the city itself.

As the war drew to a conclusion, Union troops attacked the city. They fought for two weeks against Confederate garrisons holding the Spanish Fort and Fort Blakely. The city's final fall helped end the war. It was a key event toward securing decisive victory, even though it is given little attention today.

The campaign of spring 1865 in Mobile is described in great detail in this new work. Among the aspects covered in great detail are camp life, cavalry operations, and Union offensive operations. The author combines archival records with a number of primary sources to create a compelling and rich narrative that puts the reader in the heart of the desperate fighting.

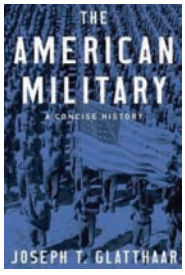


A Thousand Points of Truth: The History and Humanity of Col. John Singleton Mosby in Newsprint (V.P. Hughes, Xlibris, 2018, 777 pp., photographs, hardcover)

John Singleton Mosby was a controversial figure during the American Civil War, as well as its aftermath. He was a bold, aggressive cavalry commander who led lightning strikes against the Union Army, including the famous nighttime raid against Fairfax Court House on March 9, 1863, in which Mosby captured Brig. Gen. Edwin H. Stoughton asleep in bed.

Civil wars are bloody and brutal affairs, however and like many other irregular and guerrilla leaders Mosby soon became embroiled in accusations of brutality. Over time the newspapers, the mass media of the day, pulled Mosby onto center stage in the propaganda of the conflict. His notoriety kept him there, making him alternately hero or villain, depending on the perspective of the reader.

This new work collects many of the various newspaper articles written about Mosby. The author seeks to present him in a more balanced light, without the emotions and passions which surrounded him at the time and still pervade his image today. Just as the newspapers continued to follow him after the war, this book does, too. The work reveals how Mosby's legacy was shaped over the decades. It is an interesting study of one of the conflict's most colorful figures.



The American Military: A Concise History (Joseph T. Glatthaar, Oxford University Press, Oxford, UK, 2018, photographs, notes, bibliography, index, $18.95, hardcover)

America's military legacy began with the arrival of the first settlers from Europe. Initially, there was tension between the use of militia and a standing army, which was seen as a path to tyranny. But eventually the young nation saw the need to strike a balance between a regular army and a navy. The rise of new technologies also entered the mix just as the nation used its military to first keep it united, expand westward and later overseas during the latter part of the 19th century.

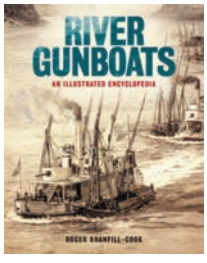
When the United States became a great power, it entered the world stage, which required a greatly expanded military, though it took time for the country to realize it. Air power entered the mix and after World War II appeared nuclear weapons, guided missiles, computer technology, and terrorism, complicating what was already a complex and difficult path from settlers to superpower.

The author explores this transition from the 13 colonies to the continuing wars in the Middle East in this book. It is part of Oxford University Press's new series of short histories on various topics. This edition covers the U.S. military in a general overview which is nonetheless interesting and relatable. It gives a broad view, drawing together the general flow of American military history and what it both brought the United States and what it cost.

Campaldino 1289: The Battle that made Dante (Kelly DeVries and Niccolo Capponi, Osprey Publishing, Oxford, UK, 2018, 96 pp., maps, photographs, bibliography, index, $24.00, softcover)

Italy in the 13th century was a hotbed of warring states and political intrigue. One of the most significant military events of the century was the Battle of Campaldino, which was fought on June 11, 1289. The battle pitted the Guelphs, who backed the Papacy, against the Ghibellines, who supported the Holy Roman Emperor. It was not a decisive battle, but it did prove the Guelphs could defend against external enemies and paved the way for further conflict. Many scholars consider the battle noteworthy more for its literary impact than its historical significance. The famous poet Dante Alighieri fought in the battle, and the clash played a role in his *Divine Comedy* for it includes an encounter with the spirit of a man killed in the battle. The horrors of medieval combat stayed with Dante.

This book is another memorable volume in Osprey's Campaign Series. The authors have uncovered new material from the battlefield itself and combined it with the existing accounts to provide a fresh take on the battle. The work is lavishly illustrated and includes several pieces of original artwork. Additionally, the work includes a good set of maps, as well as an informative section on what the battlefield looks like today.



River Gunboats: An Illustrated Encyclopaedia (Roger Branfill-Cook, Seaforth Publishing, South Yorkshire, UK, 2018, 336 pp., photographs, appendices, bibliography, index, $54.95, hardcover)

The HMS *Nemesis* had an active career, but perhaps her busiest day was January 7, 1841. This was during the First Opium War, during an attack against Chuenpee, a Chinese fort reinforced by 11 war junks anchored nearby. The British gunboat had powerful engines and a shallow draft, enabling it to sail very close to the enemy fortress. The *Nemesis* poured grapeshot into the fort's gun embrasures. Afterward, the British sailed toward the junks, setting the first one aflame with a Congreve rocket. The junk soon exploded, stunning the Chinese admiral present. The *Nemesis* then attacked the rest of the enemy flotilla; in the process, sending nine junks to the bottom of the sea. The British gunboat would serve for several more months during the war, taking part in several battles. Her crew sank 39 junks in one engagement and in April 1841 captured a large number of junks carrying silver from the Shanghai treasury.

River gunboats filled many roles throughout history. They were instruments of empire, enforcing the will of the powerful over the subjugated. They were also protectors, defending local populations against piracy. This detailed study lists the specifications and history of gunboats around the world. The entries include ships from centuries past up to the present day. There are hundreds of illustrations and line drawings and two appendices covering paint schemes and the gunboat in popular culture.

WAR GAME DEVS RUN INTO UNIQUE PROBLEMS WITH AFGHANISTAN '11, AND SOME MAJOR SERIES CONTINUE ON CONSOLES AND PC.

PUBLISHER
WARGAMING.NET

GENRE
ACTION

PLATFORM
PS4, XBOX ONE

AVAILABLE
2019

World of Warships: Legends

At the time of this writing we're fresh into the new year, so naturally that means it's time to turn our attention toward a new port of one of Wargaming's biggest titles. Beyond the ever-popular *World of Tanks* lies the maritime spin on the formula known as *World of Warships,* which makes its way to consoles this year in the form of *World of Warships: Legends*. With the PlayStation 4 and Xbox One releases right around the corner, we took a moment to look into what makes these ports unique among previous iterations.

The last week or so of December kicked off the Closed Beta period for *World of Warships: Legends,* which takes the naval combat game and introduces a refined and improved user interface more directly suited for console play. That adds up to a simplified layout and easier access for both novice and veteran players, many of whom got a chance to test out a variety of Legendary Commanders aboard ships like the *Amagi* and *Iowa* during testing. Voice chat has been added into the mix to make it easier to coordinate with friends and strategize throughout each mission, and there are enough visual tweaks to make it worth checking out for long-time players of the PC version.

The developer in charge of *Legends* is Wargaming St. Petersburg, which also handled the original *World of Warships* on PC. Beyond the initial changes and updates, Wargaming has a lot of exclusive content planned for *Legends* as it sails onto consoles this year. As long as they maintain a consistent level of quality with all the new features, *Legends* has the potential to introduce an entirely new community to the massively multiplayer online naval action that has made the series a success in recent years.

PUBLISHER
2K

GENRE
STRATEGY

PLATFORM
PC

AVAILABLE
FEBRUARY 14, 2019

Sid Meier's Civilization VI: Gathering Storm

Sid Meier's Civilization is a series with a history almost as storied as the subject matter on which it hinges. The first entry dates back to 1991, and now *Civilization VI: Gathering Storm* will carry the torch when it hits PC on February 14, 2019. The world has seen plenty of progress in the intervening years, and it looks like we can expect another leap in the level of content once history's great empires return to take over our computer screens for the foreseeable future.

The list of additions to *Civilization VI*—which has been teased with a consistent reveal of new leaders as it gradually approaches launch—are numerous and pretty substantial. Chief among them are eight new civilizations and nine new leaders, as well as new units, buildings, districts, World Wonders, advanced technologies, and so on. Those all sound nice, but they're more or less what one would expect from a sequel. The meat of *Civilization VI,* however, lies in the name itself.

Gathering Storm refers in part to the forces of nature that help bring it to life. Features such as Floodplains have been expanded, both in terms of scale and in the risk they pose to burgeoning civilizations. Thankfully, players will be able to safely enjoy the high yields that come along with these areas by mitigating the potential damage with the help of the new Dam district. Beyond floods, you'll also have to contend with volcanoes, which introduce their own unique risk/reward scenarios. Both these and the floods help fully realize the world along with other weather system factors, from droughts to major storms and natural disasters that make progression a little more unpredictable than before.

This all ties into the bigger picture, which even takes the science of climate change into consideration when dealing with the development of technology and conditions over time. *Civilization VI* is all about attempting to predict and adapt to the future, and some of the new concepts on display have been woven into the concepts of the Diplomatic Victory and World Congress. Both have been implemented here to allow players to foster diplomatic goodwill and see their ideas take shape and be accepted into the greater world community. Working together is of the utmost importance, and the team behind the *Civilization* series has taken this truth to heart in what appears to be one of the most intriguing and promising entries to date.

PUBLISHER
SLITHERINE

GENRE
STRATEGY

PLATFORM
iOS, PC

AVAILABLE
NOW

UPDATE

Afghanistan '11

Originally released on PC back in March 2017, *Every Single Soldier's Afghanistan '11* is, on the surface at least, a sequel to *Vietnam '65*. While its release on Steam has been met with a mostly positive response to this day, publisher Slitherine Ltd. hasn't had it quite as easy with the release that ultimately followed on Apple devices. More than a year after the game's initial launch, the developer and publisher were hit with a rejection that resulted in *Afghanistan '11* being pulled from the iOS App Store. What could have been so objectionable in what is otherwise a fairly innocuous strategy title?

According to Apple's response to the developer, the game has been rejected because it features "people from [a] specific government or other real entity as the enemies." While that may be the case, Slitherine issued a response via Polygon, saying that *Afghanistan '11* is more about infrastructure development and the offering of support to civilians throughout Afghanistan.Combat against the Taliban is certainly a factor, but it's far from the primary focus of the game.

The Slitherine representative continued, saying, "Historical rigor is a fundamental key of Slitherine and Matrix Games DNA.... We never portrayed an 'enemy' for its [ethnic] origin. Our [games] are based on history and we always try and depict realistic historical situations." Apple has taken similar actions in the past, including the removal of *Ultimate General: Gettysburg in 2015*—a move that was eventually reversed—as well as rejecting other games that made use of the Confederate flag. Hopefully this particular move will be reversed sooner rather than later.

MILITARY HERITAGE

Have a question about your subscription?
Need To Change Your Address?

FAX US:
570-322-2063, c/o: Customer Service.

CALL US: 800-219-1187.

EMAIL US: Kathyp@sovhomestead.com

SOVEREIGN MEDIA COMPANY,
2406 Reach Road, Williamsport, PA 17701

1.Publication Title: Military Heritage Magazine. 2. Publication Number 1524-8666. 3. Filing Date 10/30/18. 4. Issue Frequency- Bi-Monthly. 5. Number of Issues Published Annually 6. 6. Annual subscription Price $24.95. 7. Complete Mailing address of Known office of publication- 6731 Whittier Avenue, suite A-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 A-100. Mclean, Virginia 22101-4554. 9. Publisher (Name and complete mailing address)- Mark Hintz 6731 Whittier Avenue, suite A-100, Mclean, Virginia 22101-4554. Editor- William E. Welsh 6731 Whittier Avenue, suite A-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 A-100, Mclean, Virginia 22101-4554. Mark Hintz- 6731 Whittier Avenue, suite A-100, Mclean, Virginia 22101-4554. Carl Gnam- 6731 Whittier Avenue, suite A-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 September 2018. 15. Extent and nature of Circulation. Average No copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months a. total Number of Copies (Net Press Run) 33,936. (1) mailed Outside County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 11,980. (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 5,389. (4) Paid Distribution by Other Classes of Mail Through the USPS- 0. C. Total Paid Distribution – 17,379. 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 17,379. G. Copies Not distributed 16,557. H. Total 33,936. I Percent Paid 100%. Number Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date a. Total Number of Copies (Net Press Run) 39,653. (1) mailed Outside County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 12,883. (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 6,819. (4) Paid Distribution by Other Classes of Mail Through the USPS- 0. C. Total Paid Distribution – 19,702 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 19,702. G. Copies Not distributed 19,951. H. Total 39,653. Percent Paid 100%. 16. Electronic Copy Circulation. Average No Copies Each issue during Preceding 12 Months. A. Paid Electronic Copies 170. B. Total Paid Print copies + paid Electronic Copies 17,549.C. Total Print Distribution + Paid Electronic Copies 17,549. D. Percent Paid (Both Print & Electronic Copies) 100%. No Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date. A. Paid Electronic Copies 166. B. Total Paid Print copies + Paid Electronic Copies 19,870. C. Total Print Distribution + Paid electronic Copies 19,870. 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 January 2019 issue of this publication. 17. Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager or Owner Mark Hintz. Date 10/30/18

Continued from page 17

had died four years earlier, and therefore he no longer had any ties to her father.

In his invasion of the Kingdom of Bohemia, Matthias enjoyed the support of Pope Paul II, who had excommunicated Podebrad in 1465 for his support of the protestant Hussites. The Pope went so far as to call for a crusade against Podebrad, and Matthias was eager to oblige the Holy See. Matthias's first move was to invade and conquer Moravia where he threw his support behind the powerful Catholic nobility that opposed Podebrad. Afterward, he invaded Lusatia and Silesia.

The following year Matthias declared himself the King of Bohemia. Matthias's audacious move prompted the Bohemians, Austrians, and Poles to form a triple alliance against him. When Podebrad died in 1471, the Bohemian Diet elected as its king 15-year-old Polish prince Vladislaus Jagiellon, who was the eldest son of Polish King Casimir IV. Pope Sixtus IV, who succeeded Pope Paul II, backed Matthias, while Frederick III supported Vladislaus.

A Polish-Bohemian army invaded Silesia and besieged Matthias's army in Breslau, but the enemy mismanaged the campaign and ultimately quit the siege. The Hungarian light cavalry performed in an exemplary fashion during the Bohemian War. The fast-riding Hungarian horsemen conducted scorched-earth tactics, denying the enemy forage in the countryside and repeatedly attacking their supply lines. They also harassed the Polish and Bohemian troops on the march.

The Peace of Olomouc, signed in April 1478, brought an end to the decade-long Bohemian War. The treaty gave Vladislaus the right to rule Bohemia, and it bestowed upon Matthias the right to rule Moravia, Lusatia, and Silesia. Ironically, both Matthias and Vladislaus were given the right to call themselves King of Bohemia. Matthias emerged from the war as the victor given that he annexed the three prosperous provinces and added their revenues to his coffers.

In December 1475 Matthias once again focused on securing his southern frontier. He marched against the 1,200-man Ottoman garrison at Sabac in northern Serbia. The offensive was undertaken in part because a number of Hungarian magnates had accused Matthias of ignoring the damaging raids the Turks were launching into Croatia from their bases in Bosnia and Serbia.

On January 15, the Black Army besieged Sabac fortress, which the Turks had built five years earlier. In anticipation of such an attack, the Turks had constructed a moat which they filled with water from the Sava River. They also placed logs against the walls of the fortress to further strengthen them against the anticipated Hungarian bombardment. When an Ottoman relief force sought to cut its way through to the garrison, Matthias soundly repulsed it. After 30 days of continuous shelling, the Turks capitulated. Afterward, Matthias led the Black Army east through the Danube Valley. He captured all of the strongholds between Sabac and Smederevo. The Ottomans were thrown on the defensive for the next several years for the Ottoman Rumelian army was to suffer key defeats at the hands of the Wallachians and Moldavians. Matthias's able captain, Paul Kinizsi, succeeded in repulsing Ottoman forays into Transylvania, and he won a victory over the Ottomans at Breadfield in 1479. Two years later Mehmed the Conqueror died. His successor, Bayezid II, was far less aggressive.

Matthias's war against Frederick III in Austria was intermittent. He besieged Vienna twice. The first time in 1477 he withdrew without capturing it; however, he did force the emperor into peace negotiations. War erupted again in 1482. Three Hungarian columns successfully isolated Lower Austria and captured its outlying fortresses, thereby isolating Vienna from external relief by Imperial forces. The Black Army besieged Vienna on January 29, 1485. In mid-May, the Hungarians stormed Leopoldstadt, the central district of the city. On June 1, the city surrendered to the Hungarians. After its capture, Matthias made Vienna his royal residence until his death five years later.

At the end of his reign, Matthias had added Silesia, Moravia, Lusatia, and the Archduchy of Austria to Hungary. Yet in 1490 he died without a male heir. The Hungarian nobles, who distrusted Frederick III, chose Vladislaus II for their next king. Although Vladislaus kept the Ottomans at bay, many of Matthias's gains were lost.

Disaster lay on the horizon, though. Sultan Suleiman I crushed Vladislaus's successor, 20-year-old King Louis II, at the Battle of Mohacs in 1526. At that point, the Ottomans absorbed two-thirds of Hungary, leaving behind a rump kingdom in the north that was nothing more than a buffer zone between the Ottoman Empire and Hapsburg Austria. The dismantling of Hungary made Matthias's achievements seem even more impressive given the might of the Ottoman army. Matthias showed what a gifted statesman and commander could accomplish in 15th-century Europe. □

Continued from page 23

would in turn carry out the invasion of neighboring British Egypt.

Mussolini fully expected it would include the complete destruction of the British 8th Army.

Graziani told Mussolini in no uncertain terms that the more heavily armored 8th Army would crush the Italian forces. But Mussolini turned a deaf ear to such negative and unsolicited opinions.

The Italian Army's invasion of Egypt proceeded as planned on September 9, 1940. Despite its greater numbers, including colorful native Spahi light cavalry and both regular Army and fascist militia units, the Italian Army under Graziani was not quite equal to the task of vanquishing the British 8th Army. The defeat of the Italians was swift. They were humiliated by photographs of thousands surrendering to handfuls of British Tommy soldiers. Mussolini blamed his stricken marshal for the debacle. On March 25, 1941, a disgraced Graziani returned to Italy and went into retirement until July 25, 1943, when Mussolini was overthrown as the war turned against the Italian Fascists.

In September 1943 Graziani ended his four decades of loyalty to King Victor Emmanuel III of Italy, siding instead with the fallen Mussolini, who the Germans had restored to power in northern Italy. Graziani, who became minister of national defense, once more surprised everyone by winning the last outright Italian military victory of World War II in December 1944 at the Battle of Garfagna.

At Garfagna, Graziani deployed both the Monte Rosa Alpine Division and the San Marco Marine Division, which defeated an Allied force. But the tide was still flowing against the Italians. The Reds murdered Mussolini, U.S. tanks rumbled into Milan, and the Americans made Graziani a prisoner of war. Returned to Africa for his safety as the Reds slaughtered every top Fascist they could find, survivor supreme Graziani later returned home as the murders fell off. He subsequently spent four months in jail. But he was never convicted of anything.

Soldier-turned-memoirist Graziani defended his career in postwar books, re-establishing himself politically. By 1955 Graziani had emerged as the patron saint of the postwar neo-Fascism movement that eventually elected to the Italian Parliament Alessandra Mussolini, Il Duce's granddaughter. At the time of his death, the unrepentant Fascist marshal was the most prominent and most reviled Italian officer of World War II. □

It took 6 Years to Fight...
and 300,000 American Lives to win.

Now, the War is revealed as never before.

WWII HISTORY

The Foremost Authority on the Greatest War In History

WWII HISTORY Magazine is more like a fine reference for your history library than it is like a regular magazine that you just flip through and discard. Incisive, full-length feature stories from the top experts in the field are beautifully illustrated with historic photos, paintings, and battle maps.

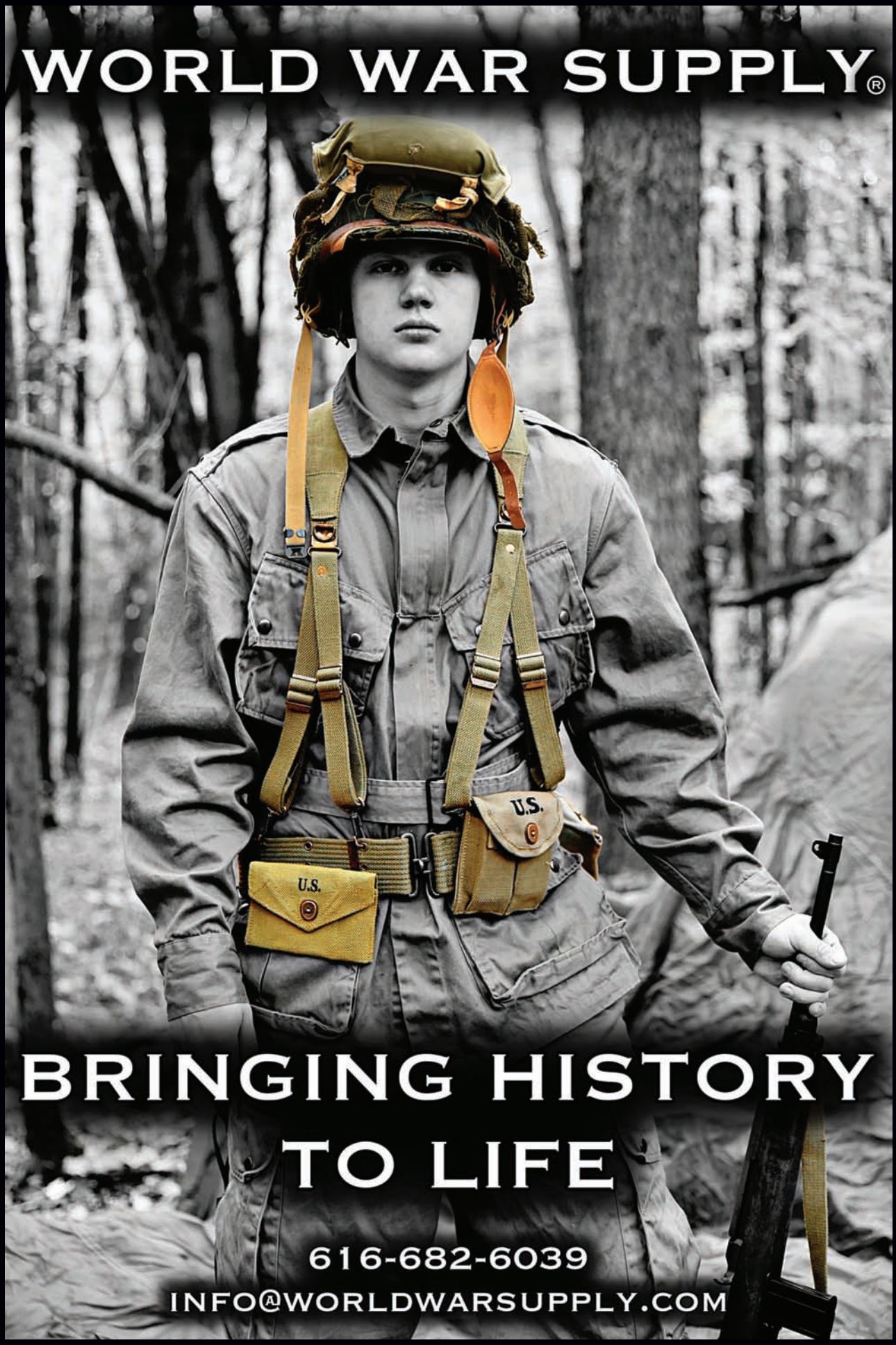
In just the first few issues, you'll gain a fresh new understanding of the war.

OUR GUARANTEE: Order now, and if at any time you decide WWII HISTORY isn't for you, you'll receive a full refund on all unserviced issues, no questions asked!

Subscribe now!

Visit our website below for our best subscription offers! Available in our traditional Print Edition, as well as Digital eBook format.

www.WarfareHistoryNetwork.com/magazine


WORLD WAR SUPPLY®
U.S.
U.S.
BRINGING HISTORY
TO LIFE
616-682-6039
INFO@WORLDWARSUPPLY.COM