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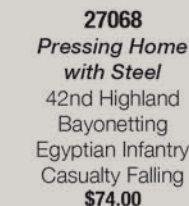
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Lost Opportunity Along the North Anna River

THE DIRT ROADS LEADING FROM SPOTSYLVANIA toward the North Anna River 20 miles to the south were choked with blue-uniformed Union troops and gray-clad Confederate troops on May 21, 1864. General Ulysses S. Grant's Union army shadowed General Robert E. Lee's army as it relinquished more Old

Dominion soil. Lee resigned himself to taking up a new position behind the North Anna River guarding the crucial railroad hub of Hanover Junction.

The heavy losses the Army of Northern Virginia had suffered in the preceding weeks were offset in part by the arrival of five brigades totaling 8,000 men called from points south and west to reinforce Lee's army for yet another major showdown with the Army of the Potomac.

At first glance, the terrain along the North Anna seemed to favor the Union army because the north bank was higher in elevation than the south bank. This would give the numerous Union batteries the ability to sweep the ground along the south bank.

Both Grant and Lee expected a major battle to unfold on the North Anna line. Each had his idea of how he would prevail in the encounter. For his part, Grant planned to fix Lee's army in place by simultaneously striking both of its flanks. He would then use his superior numbers to gain Lee's rear. Lee intended to make a bold counterattack that would isolate and destroy part of the Union army.

Lee, already familiar with the terrain from the Seven Days Battles, took up a strong position once he arrived. "At the North Anna River, by an imaginative use of the terrain, [Lee] turned a crisis into a tactical stroke of genius," wrote historian Clifford Dowdey. "Necessity and the terrain combined to form Lee's spontaneous plan."

Lee adapted the positions of his three corps to the location of the fords and bridges. The resulting lines and earthworks formed what was for all intents and purposes "a triangular fort," wrote Dowdey. The point of the triangle was at the river to block the Ox Ford crossing, and the oblique

sides served as bastions against a land attack by Federal forces that managed to cross the North Anna River to assail the Confederate flanks.

Lee intended to use Hill's corps to hold his left flank against Union troops crossing at Jericho's Ford, while Anderson's and Ewell's corps would wait for an opportunity to counterattack the Union troops who crossed at Chesterfield Bridge to assail his right flank. Since the Confederates enjoyed the advantage of interior lines, Lee could easily shift troops from one wing to the other as necessary.

Major General Gouverneur Warren's V Corps crossed the North Anna to probe the Confederate left wing, while Maj. Gen. Winfield Hancock's II Corps crossed the river to do the same to the Confederate right wing.

Even the best laid plans, though, cannot always hold up owing to unforeseen developments. Lee and his corps commanders did not function at their usual high capacity at North Anna. Lt. Gen. A.P. Hill did not perform his duties as expected, Lt. Gen. Richard Ewell's physical condition continued to deteriorate, and Lee suffered from a debilitating intestinal problem. Lee unfortunately had to let the opportunity to possibly destroy a Union corps slip by.

Grant recalled his forward units from the south bank and on May 27 his army marched by its left flank toward Richmond. Lee reiterated to his top commanders the need to strike a blow against Grant's army.

"We must destroy this army of Grant's before he gets to the James River," he told Maj. Gen. Jubal Early. "If he gets there it will become a siege, and then it will be a mere question of time."

—William E. Welsh

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By John E. Spindler

The German heavy tank destroyer **Elefant** proved a formidable opponent against Russian armor on the Eastern Front during World War II.

IT IS DUSK ON JULY 17, 1943. THE RED ARMY HAS NOT ONLY WITHSTOOD Hitler's Operation Citadel to eliminate the Kursk salient, but it has launched its own offensive. On Kursk's Northern Front the Soviets continue to hammer at the exhausted left flank of the German Ninth Army from the direction of Maloarchangelsk. Hauptman Rolf Henning's kampfguppe stands in the path of this counterattack. Before the day

The Germans believed that the self-propelled Ferdinand/Elefant mounting the 88mm long gun would be able to destroy Soviet tanks from behind front lines. Poor mobility, though, compromised its usefulness.

is over the kampfguppe has decisively smashed the attack, destroying 22 Soviet tanks, some at more than 2,500 meters. Henning was personally responsible for 10 of the kills, while Leutnant Hermann Feldheim tallied 11 more. Both were vehicle commanders in one of Hitler's new wonder weapons at Kursk, the heavy tank destroyer (Jagdpanzer) Ferdinand. Named in honor of Ferdinand Porsche, the Ferdinand, which was later renamed the Elefant, had a decisive effect in any armored clash in which it participated.

The Ferdinand had its origins as Porsche's failed entry into the heavy tank competition for what would eventually be the famous Tiger tank. Being a friend of German leader Adolf Hitler, his design was expected to win; however, test trials in 1942 showed the Porsche model failed in deep mud and its drive system was mechanically unreliable, thus the Henschel model was selected. Assuming his design would win, Porsche already had stored 100 Krupp-built hulls at the Nibelungenwerke in St. Valentin, Austria. He

submitted a proposal to build a heavy tank destroyer using these hulls. The specifications for this turretless vehicle included a maximum frontal armor thickness of 200 mm and use of the 88mm Pak 43/2 anti-tank gun, the most powerful in Germany at the time. An order was issued in October 1942 for the conversion of 90 hulls into the new tank destroyer.

Porsche supervised the development of the vehicle. Layout began with the standard formula used in Germany. The design called for the



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Karen James is a noted journalist and expert in sex and relationships.

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Older Men in Italy Don't Need ED Drugs. Now We Know Why...

A Secret Any Man Can Use...

This month I got a letter from a reader in Texas about a "little secret" that has renewed her sex life with her husband!

Tina writes: Dear Karen,

For years my husband and I had a wonderful love life, but when he reached his 50s, he lost some of his old spark, especially in the bedroom. He tried every product available, but nothing worked. For the past few years, it's felt like we were roommates, not husband and wife.

Well, last month he came home from a business trip in Europe and shocked me with more energy and passion than he's had in years. He took me in the bedroom like we were newlyweds and gave me a night I'll never forget. It was just incredible, and our love life has been like that ever since. So here we are, closer than ever and enjoying the best sex of our lives... in our 50's!

On his trip, my husband stayed in a hotel room next to an Italian nutritionist and his wife and heard them passionately making love every night. He figured they must be in their twenties, but one morning he encountered them in the hallway and it turns out, they were in their 70s!

Instead of being embarrassed that they'd been found out, they were positively glowing and happy to share their "secret." The man pulled out a small pack from his satchel, gave it to my husband and said "These tablets come from a small town up north and are made from naturally pure extracts, packed with densely rich sexual nutrients. They will give you back your vigor in the bedroom and you will perform even better than you did as a young man. Then he laughed and said, "You will become an Italian Stallion like me!"

Karen, my husband has been taking one tablet each morning with breakfast, but



"My husband shocked me with more passion than he's had in years. I'm so glad I discovered this new product"

the pack is almost empty and we both desperately want more. Do you know about these European tablets and how to get some in the States?

Sincerely,

Tina D., Fort Worth, TX

Tina, you're in luck, I do know about them. Ever wonder why older men from Italy and all over Europe are famous for staying energized, passionate, and sexually active well into their golden years? For decades, these men have relied on a unique blossom seed extract to enhance their bedroom power and performance.

Milled on the fertile northern plains, and sold under the brand name Provarin, these pure plant extracts have a legendary reputation throughout Europe for naturally fueling increased energy and excitement.

All-natural and safe to take, Provarin is a well-kept secret for those in the know.

An old-school, family business, they still harvest product by hand and don't do any advertising. Long-time customers and word of mouth ensures their limited stock is sold out every year.

They do have a distributor here in the U.S. and Provarin is surprisingly inexpensive. A spokesman told me they were proud to produce the highest quality product for men and couples. He went on to say that if any of my readers call and mention this article, they'll be offered an additional 50% discount, free priority shipping, and a free bonus pack of 30 tablets!

Wow, so there you go, Tina - and the rest of you readers! The offer is only good while supplies last so give them a call today. The number is **1-800-596-0953**.

Aren't you glad you asked?

Karen



Red Army troops discerned during Operation Citadel that the Ferdinand was vulnerable to antitank fire. Because it attracted enemy artillery, panzergrenadiers were loath to follow it into battle.

driving compartment to be placed in the front, the fighting compartment in the middle, and two engines in the rear. To compensate for the recoil of its main gun, designers extended the back of the casement to the back of the hull. With the main gun now firmly placed toward the rear of the chassis, the engines were relocated into the middle of the vehicle.

Officially named the Ferdinand on February 6, 1943, the vehicle required a crew of six. The driver and radio operator were situated at the front of the vehicle. The vehicle's commander, gunner, and two loaders were situated in the fighting compartment. As the main purpose of the vehicle was to destroy tanks, it boasted an 88mm Pak 43/2 L71 gun. Fixed racks allowed for 36 rounds of armor-piercing or high-explosive ammunition, although the vehicle could carry as many as 90 rounds when necessary. The gun was so powerful that it could penetrate the front armor of the Soviet IS-2 at 2,300 meters, which was well before the IS-2 could get into the range of 500 meters to fire a round that could penetrate the Ferdinand. Unfortunately, the German designers failed to install a secondary machine gun, and this turned out to be a major flaw during combat on the Eastern Front.

For survival in battle, the 100mm hull front armor was doubled by the addition of a 100mm bolted-on plate, making the Ferdinand practically impenetrable.

"Even the heavy Soviet Josef Stalin tank hit us many times on the frontal armor without any effect," said Emanuel Schlenzka, a Ferdinand gun commander. Both the hull and superstructure sides had an armor thickness of

80mm, while the tops of both were 30mm and the hull bottom a mere 20mm thick.

A pair of V-12 265-horsepower Maybach HL 120 petrol engines powered the Ferdinand. The arrangement of the two engines, fuel tanks, generator, and drive motors in such a confined space, though, frequently resulted in overheating from an inadequate air supply to the carburetors. This design flaw plagued the vehicle throughout its service.

The engines were extremely loud and could reportedly be heard up to five miles away. Supporting this armored giant, which had a combat weight near 69 tons, was a suspension system differing from the conventional German tank design as the Porsche design did not possess return rollers. The heaviest armor-fighting vehicle of the time when it went into battle, the Ferdinand was 26 feet, 8 inches long (with its gun), and slightly more than 11 feet wide, and 9 feet, 9 inches tall. Its sheer bulk adversely affected its speed and range. The heavy tank destroyer had a maximum speed of only 19 mph and a cross-country range of just 55 miles.

It took the Germans a relatively short time to build the initial 90 Ferdinands. Production began at the Nibelungenwerke plant on February 16, 1943. The last vehicle rolled out of the plant three months later. The Wehrmacht established two heavy tank destroyer battalions, each having 45 Ferdinands, on March 22. Designated as heavy tank destroyer battalions, they were numbered 653 and 654. Heavy Tank Destroyer Regiment 656 was established on June 8. The regiment combined the two battalions under the overall command of Obstl. Der Reserve Baron Ernst von Jungfeld. The regi-

ment also included a battalion that fielded the new Sturmpanzer IV. The battalions did not get any time to train together.

Heavy Tank Destroyer Regiment 656 began its trek eastward toward Orel on June 9. As part of Field Marshall Walter Model's Ninth Army, the regiment was placed under the command of the XXXXI Panzer Corps. The various elements had arrived at the designated assembly point by July 1. Positioned on the far left wing, the Ferdinand's combat debut was about to take place in Operation Citadel. For the initial push, both heavy Jagdpanzer battalions would go into action on level ground in support of the 86th Infantry Division. After penetrating enemy lines, Regiment 654 would switch its support to the 292nd Infantry Division, also of the XLI Panzer Corps. The Orel-Kursk railway was the boundary line; Regiment 653 would deploy east of the railway, and 654 would deploy west of the railway. Before combat began, six Ferdinands had to be withdrawn for repairs. It was a bad omen.

Operation Citadel began at 3:40 AM on July 5. The first objective for Regiment 656 was Hill 257.7, the cornerstone of the Soviet defenses in the area. The combination of a powerful gun and impenetrable front armor proved a lethal combination as the Ferdinands overran the first of three Soviet defensive lines. Reports stated the regiment destroyed several antitank guns and 26 T-34 tanks; however, dozens of the Ferdinands succumbed to enemy mines.

Although the Ferdinand was an unexpected surprise to Soviets, they soon learned that like any armored fighting vehicle, the tracks proved highly vulnerable to antitank fire. Being such large targets, the Ferdinands were a magnet for enemy artillery. Because of this, German infantrymen were reluctant to follow closely behind the heavy Jagdpanthers. This lack of infantry support was more of a factor than the lack of the hull machine gun. Postwar stories of Soviet crews knocking out Ferdinands with Molotov cocktails have been exaggerated. Despite the regiment having achieved all of its objectives—shattering the Red Army's first line of defense and critically weakening its second—only 12 Ferdinands remained operational at the end of the day. Soviet mines and antitank fire had disabled the tracks and suspensions of the majority of the Ferdinands. Soviet artillery had completely destroyed two of the vehicles. Upon inspection, it turned out that the engine grating was not thick enough and the spacing was too wide, which allowed shrapnel to cripple the engines.

In the drive for the fortified village of Ponyri the following day, the Ferdinands engaged the

SU-152 self-propelled heavy howitzer. Although not designed as a tank destroyer, the Soviets found it was the only vehicle capable of destroying the Panzerkampfwagen VI Tiger tank. Duels at up to 3,000 meters occurred, with one Ferdinand lost and several Su-152s knocked out. The Ferdinand's high-velocity, 88mm cannon, which was supplemented by superior optics, overwhelmed the low-velocity, 152mm howitzers. For the next few days, Ferdinands continued to assist in the battles raging around the Ponyri rail station. Unfortunately, the number of combat-ready vehicles on any day was in the single digits. Though four vehicles were unsalvageable, damage from mines and mechanical issues kept almost all of the tank destroyers under repair.

The repair shops suffered from a chronic lack of spare parts. In addition, the Germans did not have a recovery vehicle capable of towing the

National Archives



heavy Ferdinand. It was only in June that three of the remaining hulls were converted to maintenance vehicles; however, these only had jib-boom cranes and no recovery equipment. Repair crews had 20 of the 40 vehicles back in action by July 11. Even in the small numbers available, the Ferdinands helped German forces overcome the second defensive line and part of the third line.

By July 11 the battle around Ponyri had severely exhausted German resources, taking a heavy toll of both men and equipment. Small numbers of Ferdinands were held back to deal with the growing number of Soviet tank-led attacks on the German flanks. One week into the offensive 19 Ferdinands had been listed as total losses. This included one abandoned vehicle captured by the Soviets. The situation abruptly changed on July 12 when the Soviets launched their own attack in the Orel salient. The Soviet attack initially was aimed at the Second Panzer Army, which was positioned north of the Ninth Army. Ten Ferdinands were part of the force sent north while the rest of Regiment 656 remained heavily engaged in combat in the Ponyri area. For the next few days, the

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ABOVE: Grim-faced panzergrenadiers march past a destroyed Elephant during the Battle of Anzio. The massive Elephant was ill suited for Italy's fragile roads and bridges. LEFT: U.S. military personnel study the damage to a knocked-out Elephant at Anzio.

Ferdinand proved without a doubt that it was well suited to defensive roles by knocking out a significant number of Soviet tanks. The Germans loaded most of the vehicles in the regiment onto railcars in Orel on July 20 in preparation for evacuating the untenable salient. The six vehicles that remained behind proved pivotal in stabilizing the area.

Ferdinand losses increased as Operation Citadel dragged on into August and the Germans continued their retreat. The Germans recorded 39 Ferdinands as total losses. They blew up many of the 20 Ferdinands that had been immobilized owing to mechanical failures and could not be recovered.

The lack of foresight to build a recovery vehicle capable of towing the 69-ton behemoth came back to haunt the Germans. As a late response, three of the remaining hulls were converted into a recovery vehicle known as the Bergepanzer Ferdinand. Unfortunately, the vehicle lacked a winch for pulling Ferdinands or other heavy armored fighting vehicles out of deep mud, which put a heavy strain on the recovery vehicle's transmission. On August 6 Regiment 654 was ordered to deliver its remaining Ferdinands to its sister battalion before heading to France to be eventually equipped with the newly designed 45-ton Jagdpanther. On Hitler's personal order the remaining Ferdinands were sent to a steelworks in Dnepropetrovsk to begin their long overdue repairs.

The overhaul of the vehicles turned out to be a long, drawn out process. Problems ranged

from difficulty in obtaining sufficient transport to move the vehicle to the ever present lack of spare parts. The Germans ultimately fitted the Ferdinands with new tracks, engines, and other parts, but they made no design improvements despite a long list sent by Regiment 656. Needing all operational armored fighting vehicles at the front, the Germans sent groups of repaired Ferdinands to critical areas.

In late September the 40 Ferdinands in need of long-term repairs arrived in Nikopol, while 10 operational vehicles were deployed in the Zaporozhe bridgehead over the Dnieper River. Held as mobile reserve, the Ferdinands continued to be an invaluable asset, as demonstrated on October 10 when they repulsed a Soviet assault through the destruction of 48 enemy tanks. The number of kills continued at Krivoj Rog with another 21 tanks and 34 antitank guns eliminated. The regimental diary stated that from July 5 to November 5 the unit had destroyed 582 tanks, 344 antitank guns, 133 artillery pieces, three assault guns, 103 antitank rifles, and three aircraft. Although no records exist of exactly how many kills were attributed to the Ferdinand, there is little doubt it accounted for a very significant percentage. In December, orders came through for the Ferdinands to be sent to Nibelungenwerke in St. Valentin, Austria for repairs and modifications.

In January 1944 the much needed repair and improvement commenced. Among the key upgrades included the addition of a hull machine gun, the installation of a new commander cupola with seven vision blocks (this



German repair crews hoist the turret of an Elephant tank destroyer using a gantry crane during operations in the Soviet Union. Damage from mines and mechanical failure made it essential to have forward-deployed repair facilities.

type of cupola was installed on the StuG III), replacement of the engine grating with a better designed one, and an additional 30mm armor plate attached to the bottom front hull section. Urgency to complete the overhaul arose on January 22, 1944, when the Allies landed at Anzio, threatening to outflank the German defensive lines south of Rome.

On February 15, the 1st Company of Regiment 653 received 11 Ferdinands, one Bergepanzer Ferdinand, and a maintenance platoon. The next day it was on its way to Italy. Arriving in the Anzio-Nettuno area a couple of weeks later, the company was attached to the LXXVI Panzer Corps. The Germans soon found the heavy vehicles unsuitable to the rolling terrain. The 69-ton vehicles also proved too heavy for Italy's roads and bridges. In one instance, an Elephant fell through an old Roman bridge. Even before the company could engage the enemy, the Germans had to destroy two Ferdinands when one ran off the road and became pinned and the other struck a mine.

The Germans renamed the Ferdinand the Elephant in May. When the Allies finally broke out of the Anzio beachhead, the nine remaining Elephants were positioned along the Via Appia covering the approaches to Rome. The 1st Company of Regiment 653 knocked out several Allied tanks over a period of several days, but vehicle losses were high due to Allied

air superiority. Allied fighter bombers destroyed two Elephants, and the Germans blew up others that became too damaged to salvage. The Americans took possession of an abandoned Elephant during this time. By June 21, only three Elephants and the Bergepanzer Elephant remained in service. Throughout the summer of 1944, the company withdrew to the north, reaching the city of Piadena on August 2 where it was loaded on railcars and sent to Vienna for repairs.

While the 1st Company of Regiment 653 was in combat in Italy, the Wehrmacht restocked the remaining two companies. The company, which had 31 Ferdinands, two Bergepanzer Elephants, and supporting vehicles, was sent to Brzezany, Poland, on April 2, 1944. Attached to SS-Obergruppenführer Wilhelm Bittrich's 9th SS Panzer Division on April 6, the regiment was to assist in the relief of an encircled Tarnopol. Several vehicles suffered overheated engines while trying to negotiate the extremely muddy conditions. Lessons from the previous year were not learned as an insufficient supply of critical spare parts plagued repair efforts. The vehicles proved their worth fending off Soviet attacks along the Strypa River in late April, despite only having a low number of Ferdinands battle ready on any given day. The weight of their firepower compelled Soviet commanders to

withdraw their armor; instead, the Soviets used large numbers of antitank guns and artillery pieces.

The battlefield remained relatively quiet in May, which allowed the Germans to conduct repairs. All but three Elephants were ready for action by June. The final four repaired vehicles joined the regiment, bringing it up to 28 vehicles. The calm was shattered on July 13 as part of the continuing Soviet offensive against Army Group Center. Regiment 653 fought a rear-guard action at Pomorzony. The unit was still east of Lwow when the Soviets entered the city on July 22. The Germans withdrew their 12 remaining Elephants five days later. As with previous actions, the majority of lost Elephants resulted from their crews demolishing them after they became immobilized.

Shortly after extracting itself from the precarious situation, the regiment received orders to undergo repairs in Krakow, Poland. Two of the 1st Company's surviving vehicles joined the unit, raising the total to 14 vehicles. The Germans consolidated the Elephants into a single Elephant company. At the end of July, the company was assigned to General der Infanterie Friedrich Schulz's 17th Army. The other two companies fielded Jagdtigers.

The Elephant company remained in the Krakow-Tarnow area for a few months. On December 15, it was redesignated Heavy Tank Destroyer Company 614 and sent to the Kielce area under the command of the 4th Panzer Army. The Red Army launched another offensive along the Wisla-Odra Rivers in Poland on January 12, 1945. By month's end the company had retreated all the way to Sorau. Only four Elephants survived, all of which needed repairs. A month later Company 614 was situated at Wunsdorf south of Berlin with its four Elephants ready once again for combat.

Assigned to Kampfgruppe Ritter, the unit fought near Zossen on April 22. Two more machines were abandoned due to unrepairable mechanical damage. The last two Elephants fought in the Battle of Berlin that began on April 16. One vehicle fought in Karl-August Square and the other at the Trinity Church. The Soviets eventually captured both vehicles.

Limited by poor mobility and being underpowered, the Ferdinand-Elfant was plagued by mechanical issues throughout its career; however, the heavy tank destroyer may have been the most successful employed given that it had an estimated kill ratio of 10 kills to every one vehicle lost. Because of this, the Ferdinand-Elfant had a significant influence on the outcome of most armored clashes in which it was engaged. □

OWN A PIECE OF AMERICAN HISTORY

In 1921, WWI ended, the first Miss America was crowned, and Babe Ruth was hitting homers...

This is also the last year the U.S. minted the famous Morgan silver dollars which is often considered the #1 silver investment coin.



The Morgan Dollar obverse features Lady Liberty wearing a headband labeled LIBERTY. Her curls fall loosely from a twist at the nape of her neck. She is surrounded by 13 stars representing the original colonies. The year of issue appears at the bottom.

The reverse of each Morgan Dollar features an American Eagle with the words UNITED STATES OF AMERICA at the top. It is also engraved with the motto IN GOD WE TRUST and the coin's denomination.



By Mike Phifer

Comanche Chief Quanah Parker proved a formidable opponent of the U.S. Army on the Southern Plains in the late 1800s.



A Comanche war band as painted by American artist

George Catlin. Parker

belonged to the Quahadis,

one of the 35 bands in

Comancheria.

ABOVE: Quanah Parker.

SPREAD OUT AND TURN THE HORSES NORTH TO THE RIVER,” QUANAH Parker shouted to his fellow warriors. It was the late 1860s and Parker was part of a war party that had swooped down on isolated ranches and farms near Gainesville, Texas. They had managed to steal a good number of horses and were headed back to a safe haven known as the Llano Estacado (Staked Plains). Word of the raid had reached

troops stationed at Fort Richardson, and they caught up with the war band along the Red River. The cavalrymen opened fire on the Comanches killing their leader. Parker immediately took charge of the desperate situation.

The warriors raced north for the rough terrain along the river. Parker, who was in the rear, urged the warriors on as bullets fired by a pursuing soldier whizzed past him. Swinging down under his galloping horse’s neck, Parker notched an arrow in his bow. Then, taking cover in a clump of bushes, he straightened himself,

turned his horse around, and charged toward the soldier firing the bullets.

Both men rode hard for each other. When they closed to within 100 feet, the soldier fired his revolver, nicking Parker’s thigh. Parker let his arrow fly. It struck the soldier in the shoulder, causing him to drop his gun. Slumped in the saddle, the wounded soldier turned his horse around. The duel was over. Parker had won.

Parker still had to get away. He wheeled around under a hail of bullets and galloped toward the river,

rejoining the other warriors who were swimming their horses through the brown water. No longer pursued, the Comanches escaped with the captured horses thanks to Parker’s quick thinking and bravery. These attributes were among the many positive traits of a Comanche warrior who eventually became the most famous Comanche chieftain of the Southern Plains.

Parker was born in Elk Valley in the Wichita Mountains in or around 1848. He was the first born of a white captive named Cynthia





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Join historians *D. Scott Hartwig* and *Dennis Frye* for this comprehensive tour of the 1862 Maryland Campaign. We'll spend a day covering the events of the Battle of South Mountain and devote a morning to Jackson's operation at Harper's Ferry. Coverage will also include famous sites such as the Miller Cornfield, the West Woods, Bloody Lane along with the Burnside Bridge. In addition, this tour will include stops at sites outside of the park not usually visited even by veteran campaigners. Evening lecture by retired Antietam National Battlefield chief historian *Ted Alexander*.



Sept. 27-29 *Chancellorsville: Lee's Greatest Victory* \$550

Follow historians *Robert K. Krick* and *Erik Nelson* as we cover the historic sites associated with R. E. Lee's dramatic victory over "Fighting Joe" Hooker at Chancellorsville. This tour will put you in the footsteps of Stonewall Jackson from his last meeting with Lee to his death at Guinea Station. Stops will include such historic sites as Ely's Ford, Catharine Furnace, Hazel Grove, Fairview along with Salem Church. In addition, this tour will include a day examining the role of the Sixth Corps in the Chancellorsville campaign. Evening lecture by *Frank O'Reilly*.



Oct. 4-6 *Gettysburg: High Tide of the Confederacy* \$550

Spend three days with historians *D. Scott Hartwig*, *Jeff Wert* and *Jim Hessler* for this dramatic tour of the events leading to the Confederacy's high tide. Along with visits to Little Round Top, Devil's Den, Sherfy peach orchard and Culp's Hill we will take you to places seldom visited, such as East Cavalry field, Jones' Battalion Avenue and Benner's Hill. Evening lecture by Gettysburg historian *Wayne Motts*.



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The U.S. Cavalry targeted Comanche camps in the sprawling tableland known as the Staked Plains in the 1870s in order to cripple their capacity to wage war.

Ann Parker and Chief Peta Nocona of the Quahadi band. Nine-year-old Cynthia had been kidnapped by Comanches during the Fort Parker raid of May 1836.

The Comanches numbered approximately 30,000 at the beginning of the 19th century and they were organized in a dozen loosely related groups that splintered into as many as 35 different bands with chieftains. Comancheria, as their territory was known, stretched for 240,000 square miles across the Southern Plains, covering parts of the modern-day states of Texas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Kansas, and Colorado. Growing up in this world were Comanche men were to be hunters and warriors, Parker was taught to ride at an early age and was skilled in the use of a bow, lance, and shield.

In late 1860 Nocona and his family were living in a camp near the Pease River, which served as a supply depot for war parties raiding the Texas settlements. After one particularly vicious raid, a conglomerate force of U.S. Cavalry, Texas Rangers, and civilian volunteers surprised the Comanches as they were breaking camp on December 18. Although most of the Comanches were killed, Cynthia and her Comanche daughter, Prairie Flower, were captured. Nocona purportedly was killed in the raid. Parker and his brother, Pee-nah, escaped and made their way to a Comanche village 75 miles to the west.

Parker later vehemently denied his father was killed during the raid, stating he was hunting at the time. Nocona died several years later, Parker maintained. Cynthia and Prairie Flower were returned to her Parker kin.

Following his father's death, Parker was

introduced into the Nokoni band, but later he returned to the Quahadi band. He frequently participated in raids in which the Comanches stole horses from ranchers and settlers. It was during such raids that he perfected his skills as a warrior.

The tribes of the Southern Plains, members of a U.S. government peace commission, and U.S. Army commander General William T. Sherman met in October 1867 at Medicine Lodge Creek, Kansas. The council was attended by upward of 4,000 Kiowa, Cheyenne, Arapaho, Kiowa-Apache, and Comanche. Parker was among the Comanches in attendance. He summarized the talks that led to the Medicine Lodge Treaty as follows: "The soldier chief said, 'Here are two propositions. You can live on the Arkansas and fight or move down to Wichita Mountains and I will help you.'"

In an effort to end the bloodshed, Sherman and the peace commissioners hoped to move various Southern Plains tribes to reservations, provide them with provisions, and transform them into farmers. On October 21 the various chiefs made their marks on the treaty. About a third of the Comanches refused to sign, among them Parker and the other members of the Quahadi band. Those who agreed to relocate subsequently moved to a 2.9 million-acre reservation in what is now southwestern Oklahoma.

The treaty had little chance of success given that the Southern Plains tribes were nomadic hunters who had no interest in farming. To make matters worse, the U.S. government failed to obtain enough rations and annuities for those who settled on the reservation to survive

the first winter. When rations did finally arrive, they were found to be rancid. The warriors believed that the Army had deliberately deceived them.

The so-called non-reservation Comanches came to find a good use for the reservation. They spent the lean winter on the reservation in order to obtain government rations, but when springtime arrived, they returned to buffalo hunting and raiding.

A die-hard non-reservation Comanche, Parker continued raiding in Texas. In the summer of 1869 he participated in a raid deep into southern Texas in which approximately 60 Comanche warriors stole horses from a cowboy camp near San Angelo and then continued to San Antonio where they killed a white man. In response 30 whites set out in pursuit of the raiders.

Catching up with the Comanches, the Texans' superior rifles allowed them to get the upper hand in the small battle. The Comanches began to fall back, except for Parker, who hid in a clump of bushes. When a couple of Texans rode by him, he emerged and killed both of the men with his lance. Inspired by Parker's bravery, the other Comanches charged their pursuers. The Texans quickly went to ground. The battle raged until the Comanches ran out of ammunition and withdrew. In appreciation of his valor, the members of the war party elected Parker as their leader. Parker soon began leading raids in Texas, northern Mexico, and other locations.

One Comanche ambush narrowly missed Sherman, who was touring U.S. Army forts in Texas and the Indian Territory in the spring of 1871. The May 18 ambush, known as the Salt Creek Massacre, resulted in the death and mutilation of seven wagoners who were part of a wagon train bearing food for Fort Griffin in north-central Texas. In the wake of the widely publicized massacre, the U.S. government resolved to force the remaining Comanches to submit to reservation life.

Sherman turned to Colonel Ranald Mackenzie, the battle-hardened leader of the 4th U.S. Cavalry based at Fort Richardson, Texas, to cripple the Comanches' capacity to wage war. In late September 1871, Mackenzie set out with 600 troops of the 4th Cavalry and 11th Infantry, as well as the 25 Tonkawa scouts, to punish the Quahadis. The Quahadis used the Staked Plains, an escarpment in west Texas, as a natural fortress where they could elude both the U.S. Army and the Texas Rangers.

The two opponents skirmished frequently in the following weeks, eventually winding up in Blanco Canyon in the Staked Plains. In the early

hours of October 10, Parker and his warriors fell upon the U.S. Army soldiers with blood-curdling yells. The Comanches rang bells and shook their thick buffalo robes in an effort to stampede the soldiers' horses. The troopers held on to some of their horses, but lost 70 of their mounts to the Comanches. Later that morning the Comanches stole a dozen more horses, prompting two officers and a dozen troopers to take pursuit.

The troopers soon discovered to their horror they had been led into an ambush. After a few rounds were fired more than half the troopers and an officer galloped away. The remaining five men and a lieutenant slowly fell back, firing as they did. Swinging into the saddle, the remaining soldiers attempted to escape when one of their horses faltered.

Parker wove his way toward the trooper with the weakened mount, using him as cover from the fire of the remaining soldiers. Parker even-

Both: Library of Congress

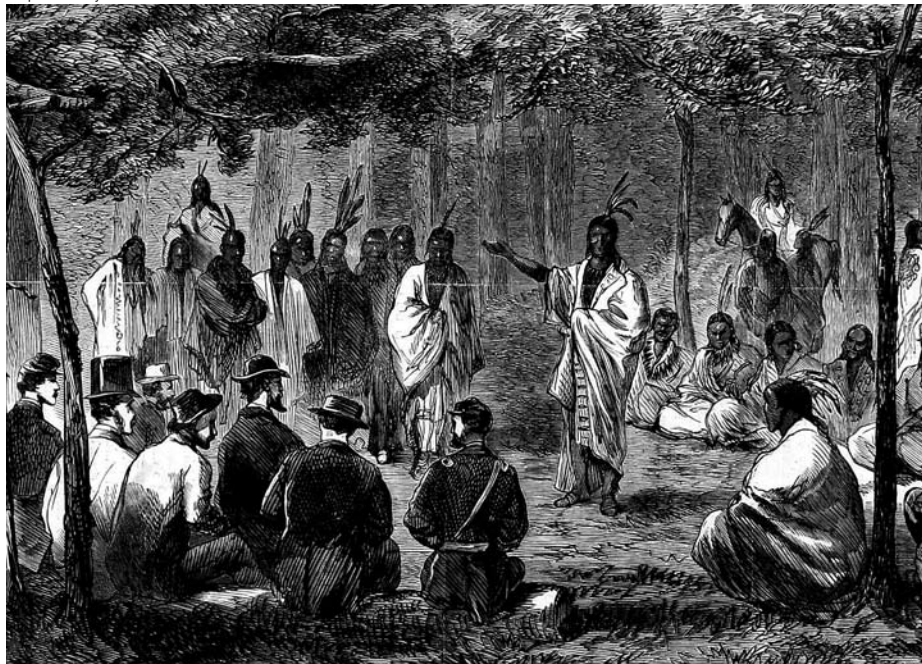


tually shot the soldier in the head. When he spotted the main column of the enemy bearing down on him, Parker and his warriors fell back, slowly trading shots with the Tonkawa scouts leading Mackenzie's advance.

The cavalrymen eventually located Parker's former village. The trail of the escaping Comanches was plain enough with their dragging lodge poles and numerous horses and mules. Parker attempted to confuse his pursuers by dividing the Comanches and animals into two groups and having them cross and recross their trails. The tactic fooled the Tonkawa scouts into believing that the Comanches had doubled back on them. The next morning, the Tonkawa scouts picked up the Comanche trail, which led up the steep walls of the Blanco Canyon. The soldiers followed the Comanches out of the canyon, but Parker sought to elude Mackenzie's men by leading his people back into the canyon. The Tonkawas once again picked up the trail, and the soldiers entered the canyon again only to discover that the Comanches had gone up the bluffs on the other side.

A storm blew up prompting Mackenzie to halt his command in order to give his men a much

Harpers Weekly



ABOVE: Parker was one of a large group of Comanches who refused to sign the Medicine Lodge Treaty of 1867. **LEFT:** Chief Quannah Parker (left) and Colonel Ranald S. Mackenzie.

needed rest. The Comanches, though, rode on through the storm and succeeded in escaping their pursuers. Although Mackenzie's force tried to pick up the Comanches' trail in the canyon the following day, they were unsuccessful. Although outsmarted by Parker in what became known as the Battle of Blanco Canyon, Mackenzie familiarized himself with the Comanches' trails and base camps in the following months. This would allow him to lead future operations with a greater prospect of success.

In September 1872 Mackenzie attacked a Comanche camp at the edge of the Staked Plains. He destroyed their village; in the process, he killed 23 warriors and captured 124 noncombatants. He also snared a good size herd of horses and mules, the care of which he entrusted to his Tonkawa scouts. True to form, Parker's Comanches recovered their horses. Nevertheless, Mackenzie's 1872 expedition came as a severe blow to the Comanches. Many Comanches straggled back to the reservation in hopes of getting back their women and children.

Parker, who was not at the village when Mackenzie attacked it, continued to remain off the reservation. The Comanches received a badly needed reprieve the following year when Mackenzie was bogged down in operations along the U.S.-Mexican border.

The winter of 1873-1874 proved to be a hard one not only for Parker and his band, but also for Comanches living on the reservation. The reservation Comanches found gov-

ernment rations either nonexistent or of poor quality. As a result, many Comanches were forced to eat their horses.

The Medicine Lodge Treaty had granted the Southern Plain tribes exclusive rights to buffalo hunting between the Arkansas and Cimarron Rivers. But in 1874 white buffalo hunters from Kansas converged on the region in large numbers to kill buffalo. Armed with 50-caliber Sharps rifles, the whites flaunted government regulations and began hunting buffalo year round for their hides on land specifically set aside for Native American hunting. To process the hides for shipment to the East, they established supply depots. In response, the Comanches launched repeated raids in which they sought to curtail the activity.

The Comanches who needed the buffalo for food had a particular hatred for these men who killed buffalo, not for food, but for the hides alone. Many in the U.S. Army, though, had a completely different opinion of the buffalo hunters who were systematically destroying the Native Americans' food source. "For the sake of a lasting peace, let them kill, skin and sell until they have exterminated the buffalo," said General Phil Sheridan, commander of the Military Division of the Missouri.

With the situation looking increasingly grim for the Comanches, a medicine man named Isatai, who claimed to be the Great Spirit, claimed to possess magical powers that would make the Native Americans immune to the white man's bullets. Isatai prophesied that the Comanches

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would regain their former glory and drive out the whites. With the help of Parker, Isa-tai spread his message to the various tribes of the Southern Plains.

A large gathering was held along the Red River in May 1874, not far from the reservation. Half of those in attendance agreed to follow Parker and Isa-tai in a desperate bid to drive the whites off the Southern Plains. During the war councils held at the gathering, Parker said he wanted to raid the Texas settlements and the Tonkawas. The tribal elders had other ideas, though, telling Parker that he should first attack the white buffalo hunters. The elders told Parker that after the buffalo hunters were wiped out, he could return to raiding Texas settlements.

A war party of approximately 300 Southern Plains warriors, including Parker's Quahadis, struck out for the ruins of an old trading post known as Adobe Walls where the buffalo hunters had established a supply depot. Expecting to catch the 29 whites asleep, Parker and his war party touched off the Second Battle of Adobe Walls in the early morning hours of June 27.

To the Comanches' surprise, the buffalo hunters spotted them as they approached. "Hundreds of warriors, the flower of the fighting men of the southwestern plains tribes, mounted upon their finest horses, armed with guns, and lances, and carrying heavy shields of thick buffalo hide, were coming like the wind," wrote buffalo hunter Billy Dixon.

The buffalo hunters stood their ground. The Comanches made repeated assaults but were repulsed each time. As always, Parker was in the thick of the action. At one point, he backed his horse to the door of one of the buildings in a vain attempt to kick it in. Another time, he ignored the hunters' gunfire and leaned down to retrieve a badly wounded warrior.

But bravery alone was not enough to defeat the buffalo hunters with their long-range Sharps rifles. At one point, they shot Parker's horse from under him from one of the outpost's buildings at 500 yards. Taking cover behind a buffalo carcass, Parker was struck in the shoulder by a ricochet. After a few more warriors and horses, including Isa-tai's mount, were hit at great distances, the fighting died out for the day. The siege continued for two more days, but the Comanches eventually withdrew.

Angered over their defeat, the Comanches attacked other settlements. But their efforts to stop the white buffalo hunters came to naught. By the end of the summer, only about 1,200 Comanches, of which 300 were warriors, were still holding out in Comancheria. They shared

their territory with a similar number of Southern Cheyenne and Kiowa who refused to live on the reservation.

It was the beginning of the end for the Comanches when five mounted columns, composed of the 4th, 10th, 8th and 6th Cavalry Regiments along with the 5th and 11th Infantry Regiments, set out in August to defeat the remaining non-reservation people from the Southern Plains tribes. Mackenzie commanded three of the five columns. The U.S. Army burned villages and seized horses in order to cripple the last Southern Plains holdouts from reservation life.

This concerted campaign by the U.S. Army proved disastrous for the Comanches and their Kiowa allies. The Army regiments steadily wore them down in countless clashes and skirmishes. On September 28, the Comanche and Kiowa suffered a crippling defeat when Mackenzie swept through Palo Duro Canyon in the Staked Plains, destroying their village and capturing 1,000 horses. After giving a few hundred of these animals to his Tonkawa scouts, Mackenzie

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Parker struck back against white buffalo hunters who began hunting the animals year round for their hides in 1874 in violation of the Medicine Lodge Treaty.

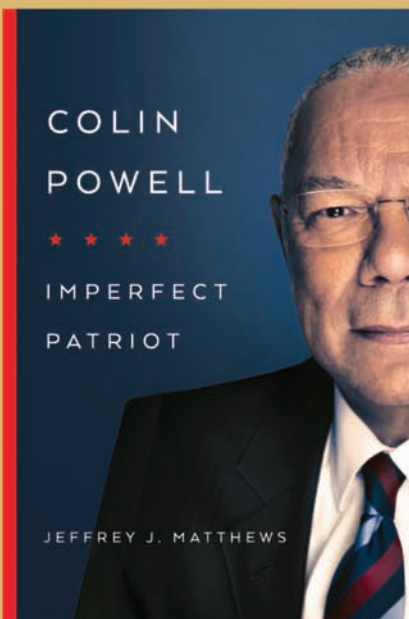
ordered the rest of the horses shot to prevent the warriors from recapturing them. Throughout the following winter, many of the remaining Comanche and Kiowa in the Staked Plains surrendered to the Army.

Parker, who was not present at the Battle of Palo Duro, continued to hold out with his followers, dodging army patrols and continuing to hunt the quickly vanishing buffalo. But by the spring of 1875, he realized that further resistance was futile. On June 2 Parker arrived at Fort Sill where he surrendered to Mackenzie.

Once on the reservation, Parker worked hard to keep the peace between the Comanches and the whites. In an attempt to unite the various Comanche bands, the U.S. government made Parker the principal chief. He took his role seriously and did what he could for his people. He urged them to learn how to farm and ranch.

In 1901 the Federal government subdivided the reservation into 160-acre parcels of land, which compelled many of the Comanches to move away. As for Parker, he prospered as a stockman and businessman, but he remained a Comanche at heart. Proof of this was that when he died on February 24, 1911, he was buried in full Comanche regalia. □

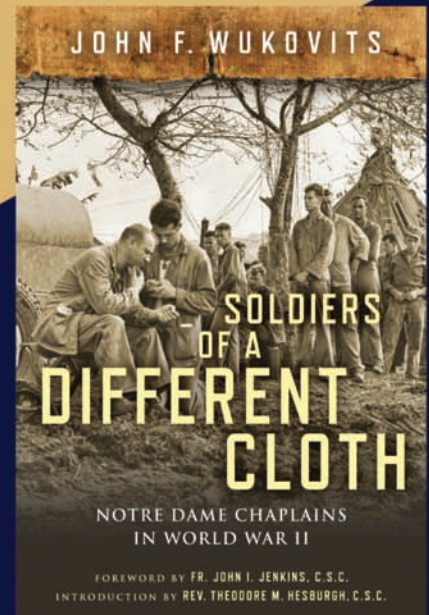
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By William E. Welsh

Two worldly members of the Duke of Burgundy's court conducted successful spy missions to the Near East in the early 15th century.



Sultan Mehmed II's successful siege of Constantinople in 1453 proved that the Ottomans were a formidable power to be respected by the West. INSET: Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy.

DUKE PHILIP III “THE GOOD” OF BURGUNDY TOOK RESPONSIBILITY in the early 15th century for overseeing intelligence missions to the Near East to assess the strength of the Ottoman Empire relative to the relief of the beleaguered Byzantines, as well as the possible recovery of Jerusalem. Although Constantinople still remained in the hands of the Byzantine Emperor in the 1430s, the light

with which it shone had been greatly dimmed by the Turkish encirclement of the great city that had stood as a bulwark against the steadily expanding Ottoman Empire.

The French and Burgundians conducted themselves with caution in regard to new offensives against the Turks in light of the failed crusade of 1396 that ended in a disaster for the Franco-Hungarian crusader army when it was defeated by Sultan Bayezid I's Ottoman army. Although the Latin rulers of Europe would have liked to roll back the Ottoman

tide they exercised extreme caution for they did not wish to risk the destruction of their armies.

The situation in which the Byzantines found themselves in the 15th century was extremely dire. The Papal Curia and the Court of Burgundy were the most active proponents of a crusade against the Ottomans. They pinned their hopes not only on the Hungarians, but also on the idea of directly reinforcing the Byzantines by sea using Venetian or Genoan warships and transports.

With the approval of King Henry

V of England and Charles VI of France, Philip the Good tapped his Flemish chamberlain Gilbert of Lannoy to travel to the East and gather first-hand information on the Muslim powers controlling the Outremer, Anatolia, and Egypt. Lannoy was perfectly suited for the task since as a young man he had accompanied Lord John of Warchin on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 1401. During that pilgrimage he had passed through Constantinople on the return leg. In addition to his impressive travels, Lannoy was also a veteran soldier who fought for Burgundy in the Armagnac–Burgundian Civil War and with the Teutonic Knights in the Polish-Lithuanian–Teutonic War. He also was an accomplished diplomat who helped negotiate the Treaty of Troyes of 1420 through which English King Henry V and his heirs would inherit the French crown upon the death of King Charles VI.

Lannoy, who departed in 1420 and returned to Burgundy three years later, compiled his extensive observations in a work titled *Voyages et Ambassades*. He traveled to the Outremer via a circuitous overland route through Germany, Poland, and Russia to the Genoese colony of Kaffa on the Crimean Peninsula where he sailed across the Black Sea to Constantinople. In Constantinople he met with Byzantine Emperor Manuel II Palaiologos.



From there he sailed to Alexandria, Egypt, with stops on the way at Cyprus and Crete. He traveled to Cairo, visited Christian sites in the Sinai, and sailed home via Rhodes and Venice.

One of the most informative parts of his travelogue for contemporary military planners was his description of the port of Alexandria. He detailed the installations, walls, and fortifications of its two harbors. The harbors had expansive quarters for principal traders, such as the Venetians, Genoese, and Catalans. Importantly, Lannoy noted the numbers of Mamluk troops defending Alexandria. In addition, he outlined the strategy and tactics, as well as the weapons, used by the Mamluks.

At the time, the Mamluk Empire, which encompassed Egypt, Palestine, and Syria, was ruled by Burji Sultan Al-Ashraf Barsbay. The Burji dynasty, which was established in 1382, was a Circassian Mamluk family.

Barsbay improved some aspects of Mamluk rule but allowed others to lapse. On the one hand, he instituted a number of reforms and cultivated higher learning. On the other hand, his reign was characterized by a relaxation in military discipline and neglect of the Mamluk army. Although the empire was at peace with its neighbors, it was experiencing ongoing internal problems. The lapse in military strength made the Mamluks vulnerable to depredations by Frankish pirates that prowled the Eastern Mediterranean Sea. In retaliation, Barsbay eventually ordered the confiscation of all of the property belonging to Frankish merchants in the trading hubs of Alexandria, Damietta, and Damascus.

Lannoy visited key Christian sites in the Sinai and pieced together from his own observations and those of pilgrims information on the roads and towns of the Holy Land. With respect to Jerusalem, he noted that the city's low walls and weak towers left it ripe for capture, that is, if a crusader army got that far.

Lannoy's observations relative to Ottoman Turkey were restricted primarily to an analysis of the Gallipoli Peninsula that the Turks used as a military base for operations against Byzantine-held Constantinople. Lannoy maintained that one of the primary objectives of the crusaders should be to seize the hilly peninsula in order to interrupt the flow of Turkish troops into Greece and Thrace.

At the time of Lannoy's trip to Constantinople, Ottoman Sultan Murad II had been on the throne for two years. The Ottomans were still recovering from the devastating invasion of Turco-Mongol Emir Timur's army in 1402. The Timurids had swept into Asia Minor that year



TOP: Bertrandon de la Broquiere experienced firsthand the formalities of the Ottoman court while accompanying the Milanese ambassador to Adrianople in 1433. **BOTTOM:** Christians undertake a pilgrimage to Muslim-controlled Jerusalem in a 15th-century painting. Broquiere was questioned frequently as to his intentions by Muslims he encountered during his journey.

and routed Bayezid's army at Ankara. Bayezid, who was captured after the July 28 battle, died in captivity the following year. The Timurids lacked the administrative framework of Ghengis Khan's Mongol Empire, and it evaporated after Timur's death in 1405.

Following Timur's departure, the Ottomans succumbed to a civil war fought among Bayezid's sons. Mehmed Celebi emerged as the victor in 1413 when he became Sultan Mehmed I. He ruled the Ottoman Empire until 1421 when Murad II ascended to the throne. Each sultan worked diligently to restore lands lost in both Ottoman Anatolia and Rumelia (i.e., the Turkish-controlled parts of the Balkan Peninsula).

The resurgent Ottomans besieged Thessalonica in 1422. At the same time, Carlo Tocco, Despot of Epirus, who was an Ottoman vassal, threatened to conquer the Morea (Peloponnese

Peninsula). Despot Andronicus Palaiologos governed Thessalonica, and Despot Theodore Palaiologos ruled the Morea. Both were younger sons of Byzantine Emperor Manuel II.

Murad personally directed a siege of Constantinople the same year, but after three months was forced to lift it to defeat his uncle, Mustafa the Imposter, who unsuccessfully tried to seize control of the throne. Meanwhile, John VIII Palaiologos, the eldest of Manuel's sons, who had been appointed co-emperor to assist his ailing father in administering the Byzantine Empire, sailed to Western Europe in 1423 seeking military aid, but was unsuccessful in the endeavor.

The failure of his mission could be tied in part to the schism that had separated the Latin and Orthodox churches since 1054. But the schism was not the only reason. The competing

nationalist interests of Latin kingdoms, exemplified most glaringly by the Hundred Years War between England and France, made cooperation on a crusade highly unlikely.

The desperation of the Byzantine situation can be seen by Manuel II's efforts to try to restore the bond between the two churches through negotiations. The diminishment of Ottoman power at the outset of the 15th century had dampened the prospects of a reunion, though, and Manuel II had focused his efforts closer to home. He had overseen improvements to the Hexamilion Wall that divided the Isthmus of Corinth from the Peloponnesian Peninsula, strengthened Byzantine forces in the Morea, and focused on retaining control of Thessalonica. The Byzantines had recovered the city in 1403 when the Timurids occupied Anatolia and Ottoman power temporarily waned.

While Lannoy was traveling back to Burgundy in 1423, the Turks destroyed the Hexamilion Wall and overran Morea. In a desperate bid to keep Thessalonica in Christian hands, Despot Andronicus ceded it to the Venetians, whose maritime possessions included the western islands of the Aegean Sea. Seven years later Murad II recaptured Thessalonica. By that time, Manuel II had passed away, leaving John VIII as the sole emperor.

Philip the Good dispatched another envoy, Bertrandon de la Broquiere, to the Near East in 1432. Whereas Lannoy's observations focused heavily on the strength of the Mamluk Empire, Broquiere analyzed the military might of the Ottoman Empire.

Broquiere sailed to the Holy Land and landed in Jaffa after layovers in Corfu, Rhodes, and Cyprus. From Jaffa he traveled to Jerusalem and then turned north to Damascus.

In Damascus he spent time conversing with French adventurer Jacques Coeur, as well as a Genoese trader from Kaffa who Sultan Barsbay had sent to purchase more slaves for the Mamluk army. After his visit to Damascus, Broquiere joined a caravan of 500 Muslims and 700 camels and mules bound for western Anatolia.

The caravan wound its way through Armenia and emerged from the Taurus Mountains onto the Anatolian Plain. When Turks in the caravan accused him of being a spy for traveling by land rather than by sea, Broquiere brushed off the accusation. "I answered ... that the Genoans and Venetians were carrying on so bitter a war that I was afraid to venture by sea," he wrote. They warned him that Albanian slaves were afoot in Anatolia and he had to exercise great caution to avoid being robbed. When the caravan headed due west toward



This colorful depiction of the fall of Constantinople appeared in Broquiere's 1455 travel book. Philip the Good persuaded Broquiere to record his travel experiences for posterity.

Izmir, he veered northwest on his own to Brusa.

Upon arriving in Brusa, he stayed for 10 days in a Florentine hotel during which time he reconnoitered the Ottoman troops in the commercial town. Broquiere then crossed the Bosphorous to Constantinople where he met John VIII, who by that time had been reduced to the status of an Ottoman vassal. Having struck up a friendship with Milanese Ambassador to the Grand Turk Benedict Folco, he accompanied his newfound friend on his mission to meet with Sultan Murad II at Adrianople in Thrace.

Murad's court greatly impressed Broquiere. The Burgundian envoy spoke highly of the sultan in his writings and even went so far as to cast some disparaging remarks against the Latin powers in comparison to the Ottomans. "Murad has hitherto met such trifling resistance from Christendom that, were he to employ all of his wealth and power on the object, it would be easy for him to conquer a great part of it." Broquiere observed that Murad took in great wealth each year and was able to maintain an army that kept his empire in an "excellent state of defense."

Murad held court in a crimson satin robe over which he wore a green satin mantle lined with sable. The wall of the chamber was lined by attendants, as well as 20 Wallachian hostages who were retained to ensure the compliance of

their countrymen as Turkish vassals. Before Murad spoke with Folco, he heard a plea by a Bosnian lord who had chosen to side with the Turks against his ruler. Murad proved to be the consummate diplomat, inquiring as to the health and well being of the Duke of Milan. Before they discussed politics, though, they dined and were entertained by court musicians. Afterward, the sultan departed for his chambers.

Folco then made a bold request. He informed the pashas representing Murad that the Duke of Milan requested that the Ottomans respect the sovereignty of Hungary, Bosnia, Wallachia, Bulgaria as far as Sofia, and part of Albania. They informed Folco that he would receive an answer within 10 days. The pashas conveyed Murad's response after the allotted amount of time. They informed him flatly that Murad regarded the duke's request as unreasonable. The pashas related how Murad had deliberately refrained from advancing deeper into Hungary, as he might easily have done, out of respect for the Duke of Milan's wishes. "It would be too hard for [Murad] to surrender all that he had won by the sword," the pashas told the Milanese ambassador.

For his travel expenses, Murad gave Folco 5,000 silver coins before he departed. While he was in Adrianople, Broquiere saw many Christian slaves in chains who were brought to the capital of Rumelia for sale. "They

begged for alms in the street,” he wrote. “My heart bleeds when I think of the shocking hardships they suffer.”

By that time it was apparent that the sole hope for the preservation of the Byzantine Empire lay in the reunification of the two churches; however, the Papacy demanded that the Greek Orthodox Church submit to it as the price for saving Constantinople. This put the Byzantine emperor in a terrible bind. If he acknowledged Papal supremacy, he risked alienating his people, for the Orthodox religion was a mainstay of Byzantine culture. If he did not, the Turks were bound to capture Constantinople and wipe the Byzantine Empire off the map in the process. During the 1422 siege, Turkish bombardments failed to breach the walls, but artillery was growing more effective with each passing decade and it was only a matter of time before bombardments would be able to knock down the walls.

John VIII Palaeologus traveled to Italy in 1437 with John Bessarion, the Metropolitan of Nicea, to discuss the possible reunification of the Orthodox and Catholic churches. They agreed to acknowledge Papal supremacy at the Council of Florence in 1439, but in the end it was still not enough to save Constantinople. Political animosities among the Christian rulers in Italy worked against a new crusade, as did the growing might of the Ottoman Empire.

Broquiere and Folco departed Adrianople on March 12, 1433. They visited Macedonia, Bulgaria, Albania, Serbia, and Bosnia before continuing north to Buda where they parted ways. By that time, Bertrandon had given much thought to how to defeat the Ottoman Empire. Broquiere described in great detail Ottoman strategy, armaments, and military readiness in his work, *The Travels of Bertrandon de La Brocquiere, to Palestine: And His Return from Jerusalem Overland to France, During the Years 1432-1433*.

“Whenever the Christian powers take up arms against [the Ottomans], they have always had timely information of it,” he wrote. “In this case, the sultan has [the Christians] march watched by men assigned to this purpose, and he lays wait for them with his army two or three days’ march from the spot where he proposes to fight them.”

“Should he think the opportunity favorable, he falls suddenly on them, and for these occasions they have a particular kind of march beaten on a large drum,” wrote Broquiere. “When this signal is given, those in the lead march quietly off, followed by the others with the same silence.”

From Buda, Broquiere rode through Bavaria

and Swabia to Basel where he attended a meeting of the Council of Basel conducted by Pope Eugenius IV. Afterward, Broquiere reentered Burgundy at Montbeliard. He presented himself in July to Philip the Good at the Abbey of Pothieres on the Cote-d’Or.

Upon his return to Burgundy, Broquiere presented Philip with a copy of the Koran, as well as a biography of the Prophet Mohammed translated into Latin by the chaplain of the Venetian consul at Damascus. He also gave the duke the Saracen clothes he had worn on his travels through the Near East. The duke gave the Koran to Bishop John Germain, the chancellor of the Order of the Golden Fleece, but retained the robes.

Based on his first-hand observation of the Ottoman Turks, Broquiere noted that the one distinct advantage he believed that Western Europeans had over the Ottoman Turks was that man-for-man they were better armed. He held that if the Greeks of the Morea and the Albanians joined the Latin crusaders they would be able to take on the Turks on even terms. This would be the case particularly if the 50,000 Christian slave soldiers in the sultan’s service deserted their Ottoman master and joined the crusaders. Once the combined Latin-Greek crusader army defeated the Turks, they could then focus on reconquering the Holy Land, Broquiere said. The prospect of retaking Jerusalem a second time would be sufficient to motivate the Western Europeans to join the new crusade.

But the type of crusade that he suggested never occurred. A Polish-Hungarian crusader army met defeat at Varna in Ottoman-controlled Bulgaria on November 10, 1444. Although Hungarian Lord John Hunyadi fought with great valor, a foolhardy, ill-fated charge by the youthful King Wladyslaw of Poland and Hungary enabled Sultan Murad to triumph. Nearly a decade later, Sultan Murad’s son, Mehmed II “The Conqueror” captured Constantinople on May 29, 1453, following a 53-day siege in which his troops exploited gaps in the walls made by mammoth bombardments.

Philip the Good was grateful for the information imparted to him by both Lannoy and Broquiere. Lannoy, a member of the Order of the Golden Fleece, appears to have continued serving as a Burgundian emissary to Christian kingdoms after his return from the Near East.

Philip arranged for Broquiere to marry Catherine of Artois in 1443. The duke presented Broquiere with the royal captaincy of the Rupelmonde Castle on the left bank of the Escaut in East Flanders. Both works endure as windows into the medieval world. □

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CLASH

IN THE

Sibuyan Sea





A critical engagement during the Battle of Leyte Gulf, the action in the waters around the Philippines inflicted heavy damage on the Imperial Japanese Navy.

BY JOHN WUKOVITS

U.S. Navy Helldiver aircraft attack the Japanese battleship *Musashi* in the Sibuyan Sea during the Battle of Leyte Gulf. Painting by Sam L. Massette.

IN WARFARE, desperate times call for desperate measures, and in the fall of 1944 the empire of Japan found itself in precisely that predicament. Running wild through the vast Pacific in the war's earliest months, Japanese military forces had since enjoyed few successes while absorbing critical defeats. The American military machine, temporarily grounded after Pearl Harbor, had returned with a vengeance.

Fueled by grim determination, mountains of reinforcements, and thousands of ships, tanks, and aircraft, the U.S. registered a series of advances that brought its military to the inner reaches of the Japanese empire. At the same time, American submarines savaged Japan's merchant fleet and drastically reduced the crucial flow of oil.

With the enemy poised to assault the Home Islands, Japanese military strategists concocted four different responses called the SHO Plans. Depending where the United States chose to advance, the Japanese would focus their efforts in either the Philippines, the island of Formosa to the west, the Kurile Islands to Japan's northeast, or the Japanese Home Island of Honshu.

When it seemed obvious that the Americans had chosen the Philippines as their next objective, Japan enacted its SHO-1 plan for the defense of these islands. An elaborate plan in which success depended on the precise movements and coordination of four different naval forces, SHO-1 hoped to employ one force to lure away from Leyte Gulf the potent aircraft carriers that stood guard over the American invasion forces, while three other Japanese units slipped in to attack the vulnerable landing forces.

A Northern Force, commanded by Vice Admiral Jisaburo Ozawa, would steam down to the Philippines from the north in an effort to lure away the American carriers, under the command of American Admiral William F. Halsey. At the same time, Vice Admiral Takeo Kurita would lead his Center Force through the San Bernardino Strait and attack American units in Leyte Gulf from the north, while his cohort, Vice Admiral Shoji Nishimura, supported by Vice Admiral Kiyohide Shima, led the third and fourth naval units against the Americans from the south.



ABOVE: The Japanese Center Force leaves Brunei Bay, Borneo, on October 22 en route to the Philippines. The battleship *Nagato*, far right, leads the *Musashi* and *Yamato*. **RIGHT:** Japanese plans to attack U.S. forces at Leyte began to unravel almost immediately. Kurita's fleet suffered major losses in the Sibuyan Sea.

The plan risked almost the entire remaining strength of the Japanese Navy. Should it fail, little would remain to halt the growing American naval power. This worried senior officers of the Japanese Imperial Army, who feared that a defeat would further reduce the availability of overseas products and drastically limit their ability to defend the Home Islands. The Navy, however, wanted to implement the plan before American factories produced even more ships and aircraft.

The Japanese marshaled every ship they could to improve their chances of success. Admiral Ozawa commanded six aircraft carriers in his decoy force—*Ise*, *Hyuga*, *Zuikaku*, *Zuibo*, *Chitose*, and *Chiyoda*—but since they were designed to grab Halsey's attention and were expected to be destroyed by his more powerful surface units, they carried only 116 aircraft. In addition, three light cruisers and eight destroyers screened Ozawa's force. To the south, Nishimura's two battleships, one heavy cruiser, and four destroyers would join with Shima's three cruisers and four destroyers in an advance through Surigao Strait for an attack from that quarter.

The final force, under Kurita, packed the most powerful punch. Anchored by the two most lethal battleships in the world, *Yamato* and *Musashi*, a total of five battleships, 10 heavy cruisers, two light cruisers, and 13 destroyers would barrel through San Bernardino Strait to the north of Leyte Gulf. They would hopefully emerge to an unprotected, open sea and pounce on the Americans from the north, while Shima and Nishimura steamed in from the south. The surprise assault would then reduce the American landing operations on the island of Leyte. If successful, the plan would safeguard the Philippines, delay the American advance by weeks if not months, and keep the enemy away from the Home Islands.

However, one crucial aspect of the plan unraveled before the Japanese Navy sortied for the attack. Kurita expected air support from Japanese aircraft based in the Philippines, but American attacks on both Filipino airfields and a massive raid by Halsey against Formosa destroyed many of the aircraft earmarked to assist Kurita. Fewer than 100 aircraft remained in the Philippines, far less than needed to parry the expected American aerial assaults against Kurita as he wound his way closer to the San Bernardino Strait.

In a lapse that sometimes happens in war, Kurita never received word that his air support had been so badly mauled. Without realizing it, he faced a taxing voyage across the wide Sibuyan Sea off the Philippines' western approaches with no air cover. Should the enemy appear overhead, Kurita would be caught in the unenviable position of battling aircraft with nothing

but the guns mounted on his ships.

The immense operation started on the morning of October 18, 1944, when the chief of the Japanese Naval General Staff, Admiral Soemu Toyoda, sent out the "Execute" command to begin SHO-1. That same day, Kurita led his flotilla out of Lingga Roads near Singapore to Brunei Bay in Borneo. On October 22, after refueling had been completed, Kurita took his ships to sea and headed northwest for the Palawan Passage. From there, Kurita would steam across the Sibuyan Sea, rush through the San Bernardino Strait, and attack the Americans.

On the afternoon of October 22, Admiral Nishimura departed his anchorage near Singapore and headed for the Sulu Sea, while Shima steamed from the north for a joint assault through Surigao Strait to the south of Leyte Gulf.

The final element, led by Admiral Ozawa, left Kure in the Home Islands on October 20, skirted outside the range of American search planes on Saipan to avoid early detection, and steered toward the northern portions of the Philippine Islands. Ozawa, serving as the sacrificial victim, saw little hope of returning. "I expected complete destruction of my fleet," he later explained, "but if Kurita's mission was carried out, that was all I wished." Thus, a vast portion of the success of SHO-1 depended upon Kurita achieving his mission. It did not take long before doubts on this point surfaced.

Some distance out at sea, the crews of the U.S. submarines *Darter* and *Dace* prepared to head back to Australia. Short of food and weary from the constant state of readiness required in their lengthy mission, the submariners counted the days until October 23, when they could finally set course for Australia and much needed rest. "Our thoughts were more on that island, on fresh food, mail from home, and the two weeks of shore leave than on the war," *Dace's* executive officer, Lt. Cmdr. R.C. Benitez later wrote. Only one more day and they could focus on fun and sleep rather than responsibility and battle.

Commander David H. McClintock of *Darter* and Commander Bladen D. Claggett of *Dace* issued orders that would send their boats away from the war zone in a matter of hours. On October 22, as was the custom, the boats surfaced at dusk, and calm seas reflected the state of mind aboard the pair of submarines.

That changed shortly after midnight on October 23, when *Darter* spotted a group of ships steaming into the southern entrance to the Palawan Passage about 350 miles west of Leyte Gulf. McClintock ordered the two boats to close on the targets, which required McClintock

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



tock and Claggett to head at top speed through an area nicknamed the “Dangerous Ground,” a threatening stretch of water containing numerous reefs, shoals, and rocks. If they hoped to reach an advantageous intercept point, however, the submarines had to risk the treacherous waters.

When McClintock and Claggett moved in on the enemy force, they noticed a surprising fact. The enemy commander had failed to post any destroyers ahead of his formation to guard against a head-on attack. He churned forward in two sections, each containing primary columns of heavy cruisers and battleships escorted on the flanks by light cruisers and destroyers. While this shielded the Japanese flanks from a submarine attack, the formation exposed the enemy commander to a frontal torpedo assault.

More astonishingly, instead of destroyers leading the columns, Japanese heavy and light cruisers led the way. The light cruiser *Noshiro* stood first in one column, while the heavy cruisers *Myoko* and *Atago* steamed ahead of the other ships in two adjoining columns. With this formation, the Japanese commander almost invited an attack on his more valuable cruisers instead of the more expendable destroyers. The sinking of the *Atago*, which served as Kurita’s flagship, would toss the formation into even more chaos during an encounter, leaving the Japanese without their leader.

McClintock and Claggett reached their intercept positions shortly after 5:00 AM. The Japanese would first encounter the *Darter*, waiting on the northwest sector of the Japanese fleet. Claggett halted about five miles northeast of *Darter*, ready to launch his torpedoes in case the Japanese veered to the starboard to avoid McClintock.

McClintock fired the initial shots of what became known as the Battle of Leyte Gulf at 5:32 AM when he unleashed six torpedoes from his bow tubes at Kurita’s flagship, *Atago*, from less than 1,000 yards. As soon as the sixth fish left its tube, McClintock swung his stern tubes to bear and fired four more torpedoes, this time at the second ship in line, the heavy cruiser *Takao*.

Five eruptions quickly indicated to McClintock that most of his first six fish struck their mark. From farther away, Claggett watched the show unfold through his periscope. When the torpedoes exploded, he shouted to those nearby, “It looks like the Fourth of July out there! One is burning. The Japs are milling and firing all over the place. What a show! What a show!”

McClintock’s torpedoes reaped enormous dividends. Within a half-hour, Kurita’s flagship disappeared beneath the waves, leaving a frustrated commander floating in the waters. *Takao*

sustained such heavy damage that she had to reverse course and head back to Brunei. The Battle of Leyte Gulf was only moments old and already Kurita had lost two heavy cruisers.

Claggett now moved in. With Kurita in the water, Rear Admiral Matome Ugaki took temporary command. He increased the formation’s speed to quickly outdistance his submerged foe, but this only placed him in Claggett’s crosshairs. Four torpedoes sped from the *Dace* directly into the heavy cruiser *Maya*, which sank under tremendous explosions. A wet and exhausted Kurita was just being taken aboard the destroyer *Kishinami* when he saw a series of flashes in the distance. He turned to view the death throes of yet another of his ships.

As the *Dace* sped away, the boat shook from Japanese depth charges. For a few hours, the men endured a series of attacks that rocked the *Dace*, shattered lightbulbs, tossed out the contents of lockers, and dumped tools onto the floor. “The Japs were very mad and we were very scared,” admitted Benitez, but the Japanese departed without striking the boat. Later in the day, Claggett, after waiting a safe time, surfaced to find an empty sea.

The Japanese had steamed out of view, but the dangerous reefs and shoals remained. A few minutes into October 24, *Dace* received a message from *Darter* stating that the boat had run aground on one of the numerous reefs. When the *Dace* moved in for a close look, Claggett could clearly see *Darter*’s propellers out of the water. He had no choice but to take the *Darter*’s crew aboard his boat, then sink the hapless submarine so it did not fall into enemy hands. Crewmen placed demolition charges aboard the *Darter*, but all failed to properly ignite. Claggett then fired four torpedoes, but as the *Darter* stood too high out of the water, each missile exploded harmlessly against the reef.

Claggett now turned to his final option, using his deck gun to sink the submarine. *Dace*’s gun



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ABOVE LEFT: Commander Bladen D. Claggett, skipper of the submarine *USS Dace*, poses with his periscope aboard the vessel in September 1945. **ABOVE RIGHT:** Seen through the periscope of the U.S. Navy submarine that has just successfully attacked it, a stricken Japanese warship lists to port and belches a heavy cloud of black smoke before plunging to the bottom off the coast of the Philippines. **BELOW:** The *USS Darter* photographed aground on Bombay Shoal after sinking the Japanese heavy cruiser *Atago* during the opening hours of the Battle of Leyte Gulf.



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sprayed the *Darter* without inflicting much damage. After demolition charges, four torpedoes, and the deck gun had failed to sink the *Darter*, some of the crew joked that maybe they would be safer aboard the beached boat. They did not enjoy their laughter for long, as Claggett's worst fear materialized. Fortunately, they did not have to worry, as the Japanese pilot targeted the *Darter*. The relieved crews of both boats, now packed into the tight confines of *Dace*, hoped the enemy airman would destroy *Darter*, but his bomb missed its mark. That night Claggett set a course for Australia and left the Palawan Passage.

The action in the Palawan Passage handed the United States a victory in the first phase of the Battle of Leyte Gulf. At the cost of one submarine, the abandoned *Darter*, U.S. forces sank two cruisers, damaged one, and removed two destroyers that were detached to escort the *Takao* to Brunei. Before the Japanese commander had engaged enemy surface forces, he saw his flotilla depleted by five ships. More importantly, his presence in the Palawan Passage had been relayed to American naval commanders, which meant that an air attack loomed, followed by a probable advance against an American Navy arrayed to halt its progress.

When the Japanese cleared the Palawan Passage late on October 23 and entered the Sibuyan Sea, Kurita switched command from the smaller *Kishinami* to the super battleship *Yamato*. While he still retained a large force, including five battleships and nine cruisers, American submarines had rattled the commander. Admiral Ugaki wrote of October 23, "A bad day is a bad day to the end." It would only get worse.

Steaming in the waters off the eastern Philippine coast with his mighty force of aircraft carriers, Admiral Halsey eagerly anticipated action with the Japanese fleet. Halsey knew the enemy fleet would most likely sortie in response to General Douglas MacArthur's assault against the Philippines, so he prowled the Philippine Sea, searching for enemy carriers he was certain would appear.

One possible path for the Japanese was to sortie from the Singapore area and approach the Philippines from the west. Since he sat with his carriers to the land's east side, Halsey considered moving west through the narrow waters of the San Bernardino Strait to be in position to engage the enemy, should he actually appear.

Halsey's superior, Admiral Chester Nimitz, quickly squashed this prospect. He reminded Halsey that his main responsibility was to cover the invasion forces in Leyte Gulf, not to pursue the enemy carriers. Nimitz admonished Halsey not to steam through the strait unless he received orders to do so.

With that plan negated, Halsey began sending his weary task groups, which had been at sea for 10 months, to Ulithi for a breather. On October 22, he ordered Task Group 38.1 under Vice Adm. John S. McCain off its station toward Ulithi and told Rear Adm. Ralph E. Davison to commence preparations for removing Task Group 38.4 from the line the next day.

Everything changed in the early pre-dawn minutes of October 23, when Halsey received the information forwarded by *Darter* that "MANY SHIPS INCLUDING 3 PROBABLE BBS" had been sighted. Halsey immediately canceled Davison's departure and ordered his three task groups to refuel and move closer to the Philippine coast to reduce the flight time westward to the Sibuyan Sea.

Halsey's carrier forces steamed into position on the night of October 23. Rear Adm. Frederick C. Sherman's Task Group 38.3 took station off the Polillo Islands east of Luzon. To the southeast, 140 miles distant, Rear Admiral Gerald F. Bogan guided Task Group 38.2 (which included Admiral Halsey) off San Bernardino Strait, while Davison occupied the southernmost position off Leyte Gulf 120 miles

southeast of Bogan.

All three readied to launch search planes at daylight. To ensure he spotted the enemy, Halsey ordered an exhaustive examination of the western approaches to the Philippines. He gave each carrier group a search arc extending 300 miles, with teams of one Curtiss Helldiver bomber and



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ABOVE: Navy pilot Commander David McCampbell shot down nine Japanese aircraft during the air battle, and received the Medal of Honor for his accomplishment. **BELOW LEFT:** Vice Admiral Takeo Kurita. **BELOW RIGHT:** Vice Admiral John S. McCain.



BELOW: USS *Intrepid*, photographed by Richard Shipman from the rear seat of a Helldiver SB2C while taking off to attack the Japanese fleet. *Intrepid* and USS *Cabot* launched the first planes against the Japanese at 10:26 AM.



two Hellcat fighters assigned to cover each 10 degrees of the arc. As backup, Halsey also stationed more fighters at 100-mile intervals to relay messages from the search planes to the carriers. Aboard his flagship, the carrier *Essex*, Admiral Sherman worried that this excessive deployment of fighters might hamper his ability to defend himself, but he went ahead with the orders without stating his objections.

All search planes lifted off at daybreak. At 8:20 AM, one of Bogan's pilots reported five battleships, nine cruisers, and 13 destroyers south of Mindoro Island and steaming into the Sibuyan Sea. Seven minutes later, Halsey ordered his three groups to move closer together, and at 8:37 AM he issued the order, "Strike! Repeat: Strike! Good luck!"

Admiral Sherman had just turned his carriers into the wind to launch his strike when radar operators picked up three incoming enemy formations of 50 to 60 aircraft each from the west and southwest. His fear that he lacked enough fighter strength now materialized. He could either follow Halsey's orders and launch an air strike or postpone the strike so his fighters could protect the ships, but he could not do both. He had little choice but to cancel the offensive strike so his fighters could intercept the oncoming enemy.

What he had spotted were Japanese land-based aircraft out of Luzon—the same aircraft Kurita had hoped would serve as his air support. They had instead been deployed against U.S. ships, as Japanese commanders believed the ships would be a more opportune target for their inexperienced aviators. In addition to the three air groups, a fourth group of 76 aircraft also approached from the Japanese carrier force that steamed down from the north.

Sherman hastily postponed the air strike against Kurita until his fighters dismissed the more threatening Japanese aerial assault. He launched every available fighter, far too few in his opinion, then turned his ships into "one of the nearby rain squalls for cover, like soldiers going into their fox holes. Throughout the day we played hide and seek in these squalls."

Lieutenant Carl Brown was flying combat air patrol over the carrier *Princeton* when the Japanese struck. Although outnumbered, he and his fellow pilots quickly jumped into the fray. "We estimated that there were 65 fighters and 15 bombers in the attack," Brown later recalled. "Ordinarily we would not have tackled 80 planes with eight Hellcats, but it was get them before they reached our ships. It had been drilled into us from the time we were in pre-flight school that the primary task of a Navy fighter pilot is to protect his ship."



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ABOVE: Curtiss Helldiver bombers from the USS *Intrepid* fly over Filipino airspace as the sun sets to the east. **BELOW:** USS *Birmingham* attempts to train fire hoses along the port side of the *Princeton*. Moments later, an explosion ripped through the carrier and badly damaged the cruiser as well.



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Brown and the other aviators did more than their share of protecting the carriers. In spite of their lesser numbers, American fighter pilots shredded the Japanese formations as if they had been stationary targets. It was just like the Marianas Turkey Shoot in which American fliers scored such huge tallies earlier in the year.

Commander David McCampbell was one of the aviators fortunate enough to have taken part in the Marianas slaughter. In one frantic day, he splashed seven enemy aircraft to become an instant ace. He could never guess that he would top that incredible performance this October 24.

When he received the order to intercept the enemy planes, McCampbell, followed by his wingman, Ensign Roy Rushing, wondered what to do. The pair of fliers faced an oncoming enemy force of more than 40 aircraft, so he radioed back to *Essex*'s combat information center, "My wingman and I are up here alone with about 40 fighters. What do you suggest that we do, attack them or not?" As the Fighter Director Officer, John Connally, later to be the governor of Texas, was not sure what the fliers should do, he replied, "Well, use your best judgment."

McCampbell opted for the offensive. He and Rushing waited about 2,000 feet above the Japanese, who had formed into a tight circular formation labeled the Lufbery, to have the altitude advantage when the foe left the formation for their attack. When they saw the enemy break out of the Lufbery, McCampbell and Rushing executed repeated runs on the less experienced pilots. "I would pick out my plane, then he'd [Rushing] pick out his," wrote McCampbell after the war. "We'd make an attack, pull up, keep our altitude advantage and speed, and go down again. We repeated this over and over. We made about 20 coordinated attacks."

As the pair downed enemy planes, McCampbell marked the tally in pencil on his dashboard.



TOP LEFT: The Japanese heavy cruiser *Haguro* fires at attacking U.S. carrier planes during the Sibuyan Sea battle on October 24. **BOTTOM LEFT:** Battleship *Yamato* is hit by a bomb near her forward 460mm gun turret during attacks by U.S. aircraft. The hit did not produce serious damage. **BELOW:** After taking a pummeling from U.S. planes in the Sibuyan Sea, Kurita pressed on through the San Bernardino Strait.



At the end of the encounter, McCampbell had shot down nine enemy aircraft, while Rushing added another six. In the ready room after the melee, another aviator boasted that he had registered five kills that morning and asked how many McCampbell notched. The pilot lapsed into silence when he learned his fellow pilot shot down almost twice that number.

For his aerial feats, McCampbell received the Medal of Honor. The group that faced McCampbell failed to break through to the carriers, but at 9:39 AM a solitary bomber from a different group took advantage while the *Princeton* recovered aircraft to sneak in and drop a 550-pound bomb that plunged through the middle of the flight deck forward of the elevator. Since the bomb left only a small hole as it continued deeper inside the carrier, Captain William H. Buracker, *Princeton*'s commanding officer, believed the damage could speedily be repaired. Aboard the *Essex*, Admiral Sherman also dismissed the bomb hit, "as I felt the *Princeton* was much too tough a ship for one hit by a 500-pound bomb to cause any very serious damage."

Both officers underestimated the seriousness. The bomb passed through both the flight deck and the hangar deck before stopping in the ship's bakery, where it exploded and killed everyone stationed there. The bomb tore open the hangar deck, where aircraft, loaded with ammunition and fuel, erupted in flames. Buracker called for Salvage Control Phase I at 10:10 AM, which removed 1,100 men from the stricken ship. Only firefighters to battle the inferno and gunners to defend the ship from subsequent air attacks remained on the burning vessel. When ammunition stored in lockers started exploding, Buracker ordered the gunners to abandon the ship.

By early afternoon, firefighters appeared to have the situation under control. The light cruiser *Birmingham* pulled alongside at 1:30 PM to take the carrier under tow. Crew members gathered in repair parties, brought out lines, manned guns, and started the intricate process of bringing a larger vessel under tow when, around 3:30 PM, an immense explosion blew open large portions of the *Princeton* and showered the *Birmingham* with lethal metallic fragments.

"The explosion was as surprising as it was terrifying," said a survivor afterward. "I think it can well be compared to a small volcano. A considerable portion of the after part of the *Princeton* was blown into the air and fell in the water astern. Flying fragments, some huge, some small, burst out-

wards and upwards, showering the deck of *Birmingham* from stem to stern."

The men on *Birmingham*'s deck were caught in the open, their fates sealed by where they stood and which path the metallic missiles took. Men dropped as if cut by large scythes, and blood freely washed across the deck.

Despite the horror, men shook off their stupor and started helping the wounded. Their valor was matched by the calmness exhibited by those felled by the blast. "I really have no words at my command that can adequately describe the veritable splendor of the conduct of all hands, wounded and unwounded," explained the *Birmingham*'s executive officer. "Men with legs off, arms off, with gaping wounds in their sides, with the tops of their heads furrowed by fragments, would insist, 'I'm all right. Take care of Joe over there,' or 'Don't waste morphine on me, Commander; just hit me over the head ...' Terrible as the destruction was, it is a source of supreme gratification to know the heights of courage and forgetfulness of self to which one's shipmates can rise."

Captain Buracker had no choice but to order the remaining crew members off. At 4:38 PM, after ensuring that no one alive remained aboard, Buracker stepped off the *Princeton*. The cruiser *Reno* fired two torpedoes into the carrier that sent her to the bottom. In all, more than 100 men from the *Princeton* and 220 from the *Birmingham* perished, while another 430 suffered wounds. Although the *Birmingham*'s starboard side looked more like Swiss cheese than a ship's hull, she retained enough power and stability to slowly head back to port for repairs.

While Admiral Sherman repelled the Japanese air attack, Bogan and Davison launched their strikes against Kurita, now commanding from the super battleship *Yamato*. For four hours, from midmorning until early afternoon, American carrier planes hit Kurita's forces steaming across the Sibuyan Sea on the Philippines' western side five separate times.

The initial raid consisted of 45 fighters, dive-bombers, and torpedo planes from the carriers *Intrepid* and *Cabot*. Fair weather greeted the aviators, as fluffy clouds sprinkled a clear blue sky lightly buffeted with easterly winds. Below, verdant tropical isles with soaring mountain peaks breaking through green foliage dotted the turquoise waters. "The scene hardly suggested the bitter battle about to be fought in its environs," Admiral Sherman later wrote.

The first aircraft started their runs at 10:26 am. The intensity of the Japanese anti-aircraft barrage stunned American pilots, who did not know that the enemy had purposely strengthened each ship's defenses to compensate for the lack of air cover. More than 100 guns boomed from Kurita's battleships, including his heaviest batteries, while cruisers added another 90 guns per ship and destroyers close to 40. Anti-aircraft guns shredded the peaceful skies with varied colors of shell bursts, casting lethal shrapnel toward the oncoming American planes. "The cumulative effect was terrific," wrote one aviator of the pink-purple-and-white-hued eruptions that surrounded his aircraft on the way down.

The pilots, happily surprised at the absence of enemy fighters, droned toward their targets. The fighters descended first to send the Japanese scurrying for cover, then the torpedo planes and dive-bombers attacked against what they hoped would be a disorganized defense. Most aircraft focused on the giant battleship *Musashi*, whose reinforced steel plates absorbed most of the damage in this attack. The cruiser *Myoko*, however, had to turn back toward Brunei due to damage sustained.

After a second strike inflicted further damage to *Musashi* and other ships, Kurita dashed off a message to Admiral Ozawa inquiring whether he had succeeded in luring Halsey away from San Bernardino Strait. "We are being subjected to repeated enemy carrier-based air attacks," Kurita informed Ozawa. "Advise immediately of contacts and attacks made by you on the enemy." Kurita also asked for fighter help from Manila, but those aircraft were then busy attacking Sherman. The best he could hope for now was that Ozawa had removed from the scene some of the enemy forces arrayed against him.

Pilots in Halsey's third air attack, which

arrived over Kurita in the early afternoon, noticed the now-vulnerable *Musashi* struggling to make headway and concentrated their efforts against her. A string of bombs and torpedoes cracked the battleship's sturdy hull, releasing a torrent of ocean water into Number 4 engine room. The subsequent loss of power caused *Musashi* to list.

Commander Dan Smith, the commanding officer of an air group from the carrier *Enterprise*, participated in this third attack. "When we winged over for our dive, we entered a cloud bank and the Jap guns went silent because they couldn't see us. When we emerged from the clouds, they opened up again like the hammers of hell. I personally saw all eight of our torpedo planes score direct hits on the bow of *Musashi*, and saw five direct hits and three near misses from our bombers. The last time I saw *Musashi*, she was stopped dead in the water and her entire forecastle was awash."

The final two attacks concentrated on sinking *Musashi* and blasting Kurita's other major combatants. Aircraft from Admiral Sherman's task group joined in now that the Japanese air threat had been removed by McCampbell and the other brave aviators. One bomb struck *Musashi's* tower housing the command bridges and 10 torpedoes slammed against her hull, while other aircraft enacted a nonstop attack on Kurita's cruisers and destroyers. The hapless Japanese commander, steaming without an air cover to shield him, could do little but hope his anti-aircraft guns could still the opposition before it inflicted significant damage. Later that day, after being pounded by 17 bomb and 19 torpedo hits, *Musashi* sank, taking with her 1,100 men.

With the fifth and final air attack over, Halsey's carrier aircraft had flown 259 sorties against Kurita. Japanese guns splashed only 18 American planes, such an insignificant number that Admiral Ugaki wrote in his diary, "The small number of enemy planes shot down is regrettable." Against this meager loss, U.S. pilots inflicted heavy punishment. The battleships *Yamato*, *Haruna*, and *Nagato* sustained damage, the cruiser *Myoko* was forced back to Brunei for repairs, and *Musashi* had been lost.

As was often true in the war, Halsey's aviators reported more damage than was actually inflicted. Exaggerated claims led the admiral to believe that Kurita was a beaten man commanding a shattered force, someone who now could be discounted in favor of searching for a larger quarry: enemy carriers. Halsey had missed several such opportunities earlier in the war, and he was not about to let providence steal another chance from him. Consequently, he too quickly dismissed the importance of Kurita so he could embark on a search for enemy carriers. This would lead to near catastrophe. Despite his casualties, Kurita retained an armada of battleships, cruisers, and destroyers that could, if luck veered in his favor, badly sting the Americans.

While Halsey turned his attention away from the Sibuyan Sea, Kurita pondered a decision of his own. His staff, fearing that additional American air attacks would gradually wipe out the force, urged him to reverse course and regroup. Kurita also knew that if he continued toward the Philippines at his current speed, he would enter the narrow San Bernardino Strait before darkness provided him some protection. The last thing he wanted to face was an air attack while steaming in narrow waters that prevented him from properly maneuvering.

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The Japanese super-battleship *Musashi* comes under attack by planes from the USS *Enterprise* in the Sibuyan Sea.

SHARP CLASH

AT NORTH ANNA



Lieutenant Colonel Charles L. Chandler rallies the 57th Massachusetts Regiment of the Union IX Corps at North Anna in the face of heavy fire from the Confederate line in the distance. Union forces that crossed to the south bank of the North Anna received rough treatment from the Rebels.

Ulysses S. Grant's drive on Richmond in May 1864 faced a difficult tactical challenge when Robert E. Lee's army entrenched behind the North Anna River.

BY DAVID A. NORRIS



DRIPPING WET UNION SOLDIERS stepped out of the North Anna River's Jericho Ford on May 22, 1864, setting foot in Hanover County, Virginia. Concerned with building fires to boil their coffee, they were unaware that Confederate General Robert E. Lee observed them through a spyglass from a high vantage point. The commander of the Army of Northern Virginia was evaluating the degree to which they threatened his left flank.

Too sick to mount a horse, Lee took a carriage from his headquarters to the location. Racked with an intensifying intestinal ailment and a high temperature, he dismissed the distant Yankees from his worries. Lee believed the Army of the Potomac's main force intended to cross the river somewhere downstream. "This is nothing but a feint," Lee said as he dictated orders to Lt. Gen. A.P. Hill, commander of the Confederate III Corps, instructing him to remain in camp.

Hill's troops had just completed a 30-mile march from Spotsylvania and were bivouacked at Anderson's Station. Although Hill was responsible for covering Jericho Ford, he had failed to do so. But Lee's intuition was dulled by his illness. On the heels of the little vanguard that crossed the North Anna were four divisions of Maj. Gen. Gouverneur K. Warren's V Corps.

After the enormous Battles of the Wilderness and Spotsylvania Courthouse, Union General Ulysses S. Grant could well have halted for a few weeks' recovery from the ceaseless carnage and heavy casualties they had endured. Instead, Grant shifted to his left and sought new battlegrounds. Heartened by Grant's determination, and on the move against Lee once again, more than one Yankee sang "Ain't I glad I'm out of the Wilderness" as he marched.

No one from either side would regret leaving the dark and tangled woods of the Wilderness. Nor would anyone object to departing from the trampled and muddy grounds of the Mule Shoe salient near Spotsylvania Courthouse. Ten days of grinding battle from May 5 to May 15 had cost the Union 36,872 casualties. Newspaper headlines amplified the appalling losses across the North. The enlistment terms of thousands of Grant's men would end within a few months. A great many soldiers looked forward only to escaping from the blood-soaked battlefields of Virginia and getting home. Winning a significant victory now would bolster Northern morale and ensure reenlistments as well as more new recruits.

Confederate losses at the Wilderness and Spotsylvania were fewer than Grant's losses; however, Grant could replenish his army from the North's greater population. The North had a steady flow of immigrants. Additionally, former slaves and freemen joined the growing Union ranks of the United States Colored Troops.

Another loss weighed very heavily on the Rebels. Maj. Gen. Phillip H. Sheridan clashed on May 12 with Maj. Gen. James Ewell Brown "Jeb" Stuart's cavalry at Yellow Tavern. Sheridan drove the Confederate cavalry from the field, and Stuart was mortally wounded during the battle. Stuart's loss was a stunning blow to Southern morale, similar to the loss of Stonewall Jackson almost one year before.

Leading the way for Grant was Maj. Gen. Winfield Scott Hancock's II Corps. These troops broke camp near Spotsylvania on the night of May 20. Cavalry under Brig. Gen. Alfred Torbert rendezvoused with them to screen their march. Warren's V Corps and Maj. Gen. Ambrose Burnside's IX Corps moved out the next day. Wright's VI Corps remained behind a few more hours to divert Confederate attention from the Union shift.

Lee learned of movement on Grant's left on May 21. With the keen eye of a military engineer, Lee saw the next good line of defense was the North Anna River, less than 25 miles north of Richmond. Named

for England's Queen Anne, the North Anna was a small nonnavigable river. Because it cut deeply through steep banks, it made an excellent defensive barrier. Each of Lee's three army corps left Spotsylvania and marched toward the North Anna.

Of Lee's three principal officers, Lt. Gens. Richard Ewell and A.P. Hill, commanders of the Army of Northern Virginia's II and III Corps, respectively, were worn down by poor health. His I Corps commander, Maj. Gen. Richard Anderson, was in good health, but he was brand new to this high level of military responsibility. Anderson replaced Lt. Gen. James Longstreet, who had been severely wounded on May 6 in the Wilderness.

On May 22, Hancock's column turned onto the Telegraph Road, which led southeast to cross the North Anna at Chesterfield Bridge (also known as the County Bridge), about half a mile upstream from the bridge of the Richmond, Fredericksburg, & Potomac Railroad. Their southbound march would take them to Hanover Junction, which was where the RF&P intersected with the Virginia Central Railroad. Their march would put them one and a half miles beyond the North Anna River and 25 miles north of Richmond.

Grant halted at a plantation near the Mattaponi River that afternoon. He and some staff officers conversed with two stiffly polite secessionist ladies who lived in the house. Burnside, who was leading his IX Corps south for a rendezvous with Lee's army, rode into the yard and joined the party on the porch. Burnside addressed one of the women, unaware that she had stayed for some time in Richmond at a house with a view of the prisoner of war camp at Belle Isle. When Burnside asked, "I don't suppose, madame, that you ever saw so many Yankee soldiers before?" Grant and the staff officers burst out laughing when she replied, "Not at liberty, sir."

Lee had grasped Grant's intentions quickly enough that both Ewell's and Anderson's troops began filing into Hanover Junction on May 22, comfortably ahead of Hancock. Lee set up headquarters at the Miller House, just northwest of the rail junction. His soldiers entrenched to await the arrival of Grant's army.

The 43rd North Carolina of Brig. Gen. Bryan Grimes's brigade shambled into Hanover Junction early the next morning after an all-night march. The Tarheels had little time to rest before being put to work on a line of earthworks northwest of the junction, facing the river between the Chesterfield Bridge and the railroad bridge.

Grant approached the North Anna on May 23. Warren's V Corps on the Union right headed toward an intended crossing at Jericho Ford. Wright's VI Corps followed behind.

On their left, Hancock's II Corps marched down the Telegraph Road, which crossed the North Anna at Chesterfield Bridge about a half mile west of the railroad bridge. Between Warren and Hancock, Burnside's IX Corps marched toward Ox Ford.

Hancock's front paralleled the stretch of the North Anna looming ahead of them. Union Army maps omitted Long Creek, a stream flowing roughly parallel with the river before turning south to empty into the North Anna between the bridges. For a time, Hancock mistakenly thought he had reached the North Anna, but he found the real river soon enough. Both bridges were intact when he arrived.

Lee did not expect a Union advance toward the Chesterfield Bridge. Only a single Confederate brigade, Colonel John W. Henagan's South Carolinians, was north of the river. A for-

mer sheriff of Marlboro County, South Carolina, Henagan had been reelected to the state legislature the previous fall.

Henagan and the 2nd South Carolina held a small redoubt. A post-battle Union map shows it laid out like a partial pentagon, with its point aimed slightly northwest, in a line parallel with the road. The rear side was open. Built the year before to protect the North Anna bridges, the work was perched on high ground just before the terrain drops down toward the river. Its earthen walls were protected in front by deep ditches. The rest of Henagan's brigade held lines of rifle pits on either side of the little dirt bastion. Henagan knew of Hancock's advance, so he sent couriers requesting reinforcements or orders, but no one replied.

As the II Corps approached, Maj. Gen. David Birney's 3,000-man division moved toward Henagan's redoubt. The South Carolinians poured heavy fire into Birney's division as they



TOP: Studded with guns, Henagan's Redoubt served as a strong bulwark against Union thrusts south of the Chesterfield Bridge. BOTTOM: A bird's-eye view of the Union V Corps pontoon bridge at Jericho Mill.



rushed across the open ground and then cascaded into the ditch fronting the walls of “Henagan’s Redoubt.” With the ditch about five feet deep, they faced a climb of 10 feet to scramble up the steep face of the redoubt.

Without scaling ladders, Birney’s men had to improvise. Sergeant William T. Lobb of the 141st Pennsylvania called out to a fellow non-commissioned officer, “Mount my shoulders!” As Lobb leaned his head and hands against the earthen walls, Sergeant John T.R. Seagraves climbed on his shoulders up to the parapet. Lobb later could not remember how many of his comrades followed Seagraves up that human ladder, but Lobb did see Seagraves holding the regimental colors atop the works.

Near Lobb, Sergeant James Anderson bore the colors of the 72nd New York (also known as the Third Excelsior Regiment) into the ditch. Several of his comrades made steps by sticking their bayonets into the bank and holding up their muskets. Anderson clambered up the makeshift stairway and waved the Union colors over the works.

Overflowing the walls, Birney’s men poured into the redoubt. As many as 200 of Henagan’s men were killed, wounded, or captured while the rest fled across the bridge. With the redoubt and the northern bridge approaches safely in Union hands, Hancock planned to cross the river the next morning.

As Hancock reached the North Anna, Warren’s corps reached the river about five miles upstream at Jericho Mill at 1:30 PM. The banks on both sides of the river there were high and steep, and the roads leading to the ford were rough. Some Union officers were disappointed that their map called the place “Jericho Bridge,” but they found only a deep ford. (The map also omitted Chesterfield Bridge, which it showed as a ford.) The Jericho crossing appeared undefended, and the lead elements of the V Corps pushed across to the south bank. The ford was more than waist-deep, but foot soldiers could wade across. It would be impossible to drag guns across, though, until a pontoon bridge was assembled.

By 4:30 PM, two of Warren’s divisions were across, a third was still in motion, and engineers had installed a 160-foot-long canvas pontoon bridge. Hill saw a chance to smash a small and isolated portion of Grant’s army, and he sent Brig. Gen. Cadmus Wilcox’s division to attack Jericho Ford. Shortly thereafter, Hill sent Maj. Gen. Henry Heth’s division in support.

All four of Warren’s divisions were across the North Anna by late afternoon. The bluecoats halted long enough to start building fires to make coffee and cook a meal. Some of Wilcox’s



Clockwise from top left: Private Thomas P. Devereux of the 43rd North Carolina, Private William H. Austin of the 1st South Carolina, Private Simeon E. King of the 57th Massachusetts, and an unidentified Union sharpshooter.

men were spotted moving about in the woods beyond the campground. At first believed to be friendly troops, the Yankees quickly realized that they were Rebels. Brig. Gen. Lysander Cutler’s division was ordered forward to meet them.

The orders to fall in at once came “before the men had time to drink their coffee or eat their hardtack,” wrote Orson Blair Curtis, veteran and regimental historian of the 24th Michigan of the famed Iron Brigade. “Some of the men carried their coffee pails on sticks, and others carried frying pans containing their partly cooked pork, just as they had snatched them from the fire.” Private William Rodearmel of the 150th Pennsylvania carried a fresh pot of hot coffee with him.

Driving a scattering of frightened hogs, cows, and game animals ahead of them, Wilcox’s troops crashed into Cutler’s partially deployed formation at 6 PM. Brig. Gen. Edward Thomas’s Georgians were in the lead, plowing into the Iron Brigade. Thomas was conspicuous, riding behind



Ledlie's brigade rushed forward as dark, menacing clouds rolled in from the west and promised a thunderstorm. Confederates stood up in their works, shouting, **"COME ON, YANK, COME ON TO RICHMOND!"**

his men on horseback and "hallowing as if he were in a fox chase." In the confusion, the Iron Brigade became, as one embarrassed veteran later put it, the "I Run Brigade." They poured across the stream back to the north bank.

Rodearmel joined the refugees. A bullet pierced the coffee pot he carried, and scalding coffee gushed onto his leg. He later admitted to an officer that he rushed to the stream and waded across. Asked why he did not take the pontoon bridge, Rodearmel replied that "the bridge was too darned full of officers and doctors."

Luckily for Warren, Wilcox's charge began to unravel as the units drifted apart. Thomas's brigade, with the 1st and 12th South Carolina on its right, pressed ahead into the gap left in the Union lines. The neighboring Confederate units were left far behind.

Colonel Jacob B. Sweitzer, who was until a few minutes before in the Union center, found the men of his brigade holding the Union right flank. To Sweitzer's aid came Brig. Gen. Joseph Bartlett's brigade. Bartlett swept toward the Confederates and smashed into the two South Carolina regiments. Isolated and far under strength, the South Carolinian regiments were overwhelmed and broke for the rear. Their brigade commander, Colonel Joseph N. Brown, was shot and captured. An Iron Brigade veteran heard a Confederate prisoner claim that the legendary brigade's rout was really a trick to lure the Southerners into range of the Union artillery.

Brown's repulse left Thomas's Georgians vulnerable under heavy musket and canister fire. "The whole of Georgia broke loose and ran for dear life," observed a soldier in the 16th North Carolina. Wilcox's other brigades lost contact with each other and fell back under the Union attack. Heth's division had not reached the scene before a drenching thunderstorm pounded the battlefield before dark.

After night ended the fighting, each side had suffered approximately 600 casualties. The Confederates pulled back and left Warren firmly settled on the south bank of the river. Lee's line was now threatened by a large enemy lodgment on his left.

Lee's illness, as well as missed opportunities and bad luck along the North Anna, provoked some of his rare but scathing bursts of temper. The next day he lashed out at his III Corps commander who was responsible for protecting his left flank. "General Hill, why did you let those people cross here?" Lee asked. "Why didn't you throw your whole force on them and drive them back as Jackson would have done?"

On the evening of May 23, Lee shifted some of his units to meet the enemy advance. The advance works where the exhausted men of the 43rd North Carolina labored were abandoned to the

brigade's sharpshooters. The rest of the men were pulled back about one mile to the Virginia Central rail bed. By consolidating his troops, Lee ended up with a nearly ideal defensive line. Shaped like an inverted "V," the formation is often referred to in later sources as "the hog snout line," although this designation was not used widely, if at all, in wartime sources.

The tip of the Rebel line was anchored at Ox Ford on the south bank of the North Anna. Stretching to the left, Hill held perhaps one and a half miles of earthworks angled southwest from Ox Ford, running far enough to cover Anderson's Station on the Virginia Central Railroad. This line ended at a winding stream called Little River, near Anderson's Mill. The right under Anderson ran two miles southeast from the center, shielding Hanover Junction and running to meet the North Anna. Thus, Lee's position left the Union right and left flanks several miles apart. For either Warren or Hancock to reinforce the other, troops would have to cross the North Anna twice.

Conversely, Lee could shuttle troops across the Confederate enclave by short marches through protected ground. The Rebel works were heavily fortified, so Lee could hold his front while keeping considerable numbers in reserve. With luck, his reserves would have a chance to rush out of their works to overrun one Union flank or the other and win a significant victory.

Hancock's skirmishers on the north bank traded shots with their Confederate counterparts on the southern edge of the river until nightfall put an end to the sporadic firing. The graybacks managed to set fire during the night to the southern end of the railroad bridge. Even with the railroad bridge rendered useless, the Yankees still held the Chesterfield Bridge. Early on May 24 Hancock sent his men across the Chesterfield Bridge. He also ordered his engineers to erect a pontoon bridge a short distance upstream. Federal engineers assembled two new pontoon bridges below the ruined railroad bridge that afternoon.

Most of the Confederate infantry had dropped back from the river bank, leaving skirmishers and sharpshooters to pepper the Union foot soldiers who crossed the river. The 1st and 2nd U.S. Sharpshooters, with the 20th Indiana, helped clear away Rebel skirmishers. But Maj. John Lane of Colonel Allen S. Cutts' Artillery Battalion with six rifled guns held a bluff just downstream from Ox Ford. Lane's pieces were within range of the Chesterfield Bridge. One shell burst killed half a dozen bluecoats on the bridge.

Three Union batteries opened fire on Lane. A Yankee shell exploded near an ammunition

chest, making casualties of several gunners. Captain John T. Wingfield and Private E. Hemington prevented a larger disaster when they extinguished the cotton packing in the ammunition chest.

False reports reaching Union commanders indicated that Lee's troops were abandoning their positions. When Burnside arrived, Grant sent his troops against the apex of the Rebel position. Grant expected the IX Corps to roll through the Rebel works at Ox Ford, and the entire Union force would unite south of the river. Colonel Benjamin Christ's brigade of Brig. Gen. Orlando Willcox's division was sent forward to the river.

A stone's throw upstream from Ox Ford, the North Anna split into two channels in which the water flowed around a wooded island. The island was not even a quarter of a mile long, but it was large enough to give cover to two of Christ's regiments while they awaited orders to spring at the enemy works. But those orders to charge never came. While the regiments were shifted to the island, it became clear to Union officers that the Confederates were comfortably dug in. Crossing the rocky bed of the shallow river under the very noses of the Rebels would be enormously costly, if not completely impossible. Christ's men remained in place and fired across the river at the enemy.

Next, Burnside sent Maj. Gen. Thomas Crittenden's division across the river at Quarles' Mill, about one mile above Ox Ford. Crittenden's lead brigade, under Brig. Gen. James H. Ledlie, was ordered to advance downriver and cover the rest of the division's crossing.

"The water was so deep in places that the men had to throw their cartridge boxes across their shoulders to keep the ammunition from getting wet," noted Lieutenant John Anderson of the 57th Massachusetts. "It was slow work floundering over the slippery rocks and through the whirling eddies.... [Once across], all were soaking wet up to their armpits." His brigade halted for five minutes so men who crossed barefoot could put their shoes back on, and "the others to empty the water from their shoes and wring out their stockings," he wrote.

Ledlie was supposed to watch the enemy, but not engage them. A former civil engineer, Ledlie had built a mediocre record but rose steadily in rank because of political connections, including acquaintance with Secretary of State William Seward and Maj. Gen. George B. McClellan. Ledlie was an ineffective field commander. He drank far too much and was often absent to further his career; but his staff covered for him, and his connections made him a brigadier general in the fall of 1863.

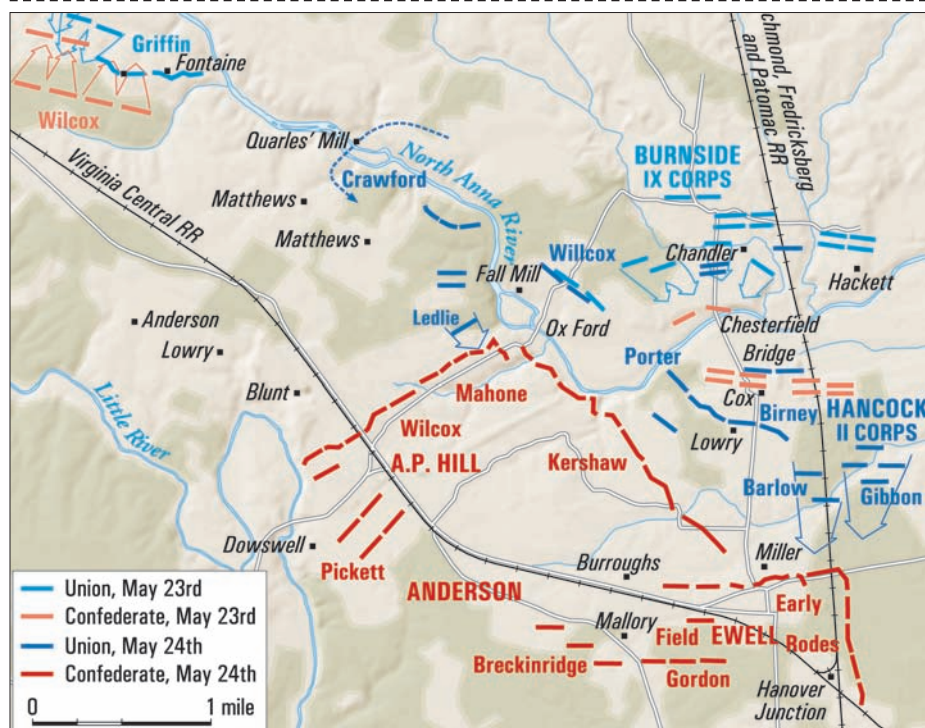
The ambitious Ledlie thought he saw a vulnerable Rebel battery amid the enemy positions. He became eager to hurl his brigade at the enemy "before the other troops could come up, and then he would not have to make a division of the anticipated glory," recalled Lieutenant Anderson. But even as his brigade pressed forward and pushed the Confederate skirmishers back, Ledlie sent an officer to Crittenden to ask for three regiments to follow him in support.

Crittenden could not spare any regiments yet as the rest of his men were still crossing the river. At first he bade Ledlie's messenger to tell the general not to charge, but then Crittenden wavered and allowed Ledlie to attack if "he sees a sure thing where he could capture a battery not well supported." Crittenden went on to warn that he had information that the enemy was in force and heavily entrenched, and an attack would likely fail.

On his way back, Ledlie's messenger rode across high ground from where he could see a formidable trench line and dust clouds in the distance, indicating Rebel reinforcements were on their



TOP: Union artillery rolls across the Chesterfield Bridge while under fire from Confederate guns. **BOTTOM:** Confederate General Robert E. Lee's strong position behind the North Anna was one of the best defensive positions ever held by the Army of Northern Virginia. **OPPOSITE:** The Confederates set fire to the south end of the railroad bridge over the North Anna on the first night of the battle. Federal engineers, though, quickly assembled two pontoon bridges below the ruined railroad bridge.



Library of Congress

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

way. But he found the obviously intoxicated Ledlie in an agitated state. Ledlie already had hurled his men at the Confederates without waiting for an answer from Crittenden.

Ledlie's brigade rushed forward as dark, menacing clouds rolled in from the west and promised a thunderstorm. Confederates stood up in their works, shouting, "Come on, Yank, come on to Richmond!"

As the Yankees drew close, the Rebel infantry opened fire, and their cannons fired canister into the enemy ranks. Dozens of Massachusetts men fell, and the flag bearer of the 57th Massachusetts was shot down. Lt. Col. Charles L. Chandler tried to take the colors, but the wounded color sergeant grasped the staff and staggered forward.

Under heavy fire, the charge halted and the men were thrown back. Chandler fell mortally wounded near the enemy works. He sent away several men who tried to help him, saying, "You can do nothing for me; save yourselves if you can." The colonel lived for a short time after the Confederates took him prisoner. According to Anderson, Colonel Merry B. Harris of the 12th Mississippi carefully saved Chandler's watch, his diary, and a photograph of a young woman. Harris returned Chandler's effects to his mother via a flag of truce.

Some of Brig. Gen. William Mahone's troops shot their last bullets, but kept up their fire with anything that came to hand. Among Ledlie's casualties were men shot with iron slugs and others skewered with flying ramrods. One soldier was shot in the leg with a four-inch piece of a broken bayonet tip. He extracted it with his own hands.

Drowning in the violence of the battle, the anticipated thunderstorm lashed the stampeding Massachusetts men as they rushed back to the river and found safety with the rest of their division. Ledlie was nowhere to be found, and he sent no orders to his officers. Far from suffering

consequences for sending his men on a doomed and foolish charge while he was drunk, Ledlie was promoted to command his division early in June, upon Crittenden's resignation. He would remain in high command until he was effectively dismissed from the army for bungling the attack at the Battle of the Crater at Petersburg, Virginia, on July 30, 1864.

Lieutenant George H. Mills and the 16th North Carolina were some distance to the left of Ledlie's attack. The rainstorm did not spare them from notice of the enemy. When the rains hit, Mills wrote that he "crawled under a high piazza for protection, but had hardly gotten in a comfortable position when the first shot fired came crashing through the house above me, and I soon walked out into the rain but did not find much comfort then, for a gun fired from the opposite side of the river, enfilading our line, killed two men on the left of Company G and all was confusion for a time."

Meanwhile, Hancock had crossed Chesterfield Bridge by early afternoon. The bridge was "constructed of plank, with posts on each side, and having a top rail of one board about six or eight inches wide," recalled a Maine soldier.

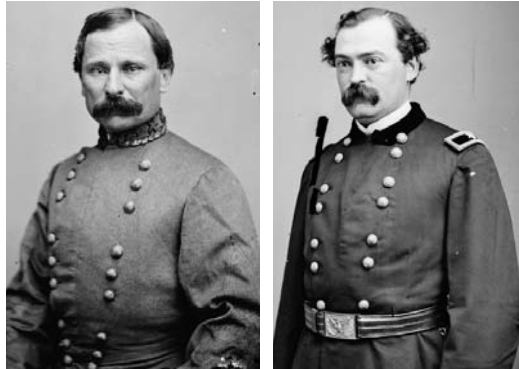
So far Grant was stepping into the snare laid by Lee. Most of his army was on the south bank of the river. The V and VI Corps and part of the IX Corps were on Lee's left, and the II Corps was on the right. Lee's wedge-shaped formation neatly clove the Union force in half. Now was the time to concentrate the Confederate reserves and smash into one enemy flank or the other. Each Union flank would be hours away from reinforcements.

But by this time, Lee was incapacitated by an attack of intestinal illness. Stricken with fever, he could not rise out of his cot. Lt. Col. Charles S. Venable, Lee's aide-de-camp, recalled his commander was in a delirious state. "We must strike them a blow—we must never let them pass us again—we must strike them a blow," Lee shouted. But Lee was unable to lead the offensive.

Not so long before, Lee might have entrusted an able lieutenant, such as Jackson or Longstreet, with directing the complex maneuvers in his absence. But Jackson was dead and Longstreet was still convalescing. Of his three current corps commanders, Ewell and Hill also were in poor health (within a few days, Lee would replace Ewell with Maj. Gen. Jubal Early), and Anderson was new at this level of rank. The golden opportunity slipped away untaken.

Hancock's sector was relatively quiet until about 3 P.M. Elements of Brig. Gen. John Gibbon's division then ran into a Confederate

BELOW: Union cavalry troopers thunder across Chesterfield Bridge to support the infantry of the II Corps. RIGHT: Confederate Maj. Gen. Cadmus Wilcox (left) hurled his crack division against the Union V Corps at Jericho Mill. Union Brig. Gen. James Ledlie was an incompetent and inebriated commander who served until January 1865. OPPOSITE: Union guns north of the river shell the Confederate works. The Confederates held their ground at North Anna, but General Ulysses S. Grant turned General Robert E. Lee's right flank by marching across the undefended Pamunkey River farther east.





picket line that stretched from Ewell's front east past the Doswell Farm.

The 19th Maine passed into a ravine carved by a small stream, climbed a steep rise, and emerged on level ground in front of the Confederate fieldworks on the edge of a wooded tract. The closest Union troops to their right were some distance away, and their left was apparently uncovered. The aide leading the regiment "seemed excited and did not know just where we were wanted," recalled Corporal John D. Smith. Because of the rugged and wooded terrain, the Union artillery was unable to provide them any support.

One hundred yards from Ewell's line, heavy fire cut down several of the Maine soldiers. They fell back beyond the brow of the hill as dusk fell. Smith and Lieutenant O.R. Small crept up to the top of the hill, intending to drag some of the wounded back under cover; however, the enemy fire never slackened and they were unable to help their comrades.

The 14th Connecticut of Colonel Thomas A. Smyth's brigade was sent forward to bolster two regiments fighting as skirmishers against the Confederate right, east of Hanover Junction. "We had to go through a heavy piece of woods and it was awful," recalled Sergeant E.H. Wade. When they came in sight of the Virginia Central Railroad, "about fifty of the enemy had piled rails up across the track, and were firing at us, but we kept pretty low," he noted. The Rebels brought up a cannon that "threw grape and canister at us unmercifully," but caused few casualties.

Brigadier General Stephen Ramseur's North Carolina brigade charged out of their works at 5:30 PM, halting Smyth's advance. To aid them, Gibbon sent Colonel John R. Brooke's brigade to Smyth's left. Brooke pushed close to the Confederate line by the railroad, but the same thun-

derstorm that interrupted the fighting at Ox Ford also struck the units engaged south of Chesterfield Bridge. As darkness fell, rather than pressing further, the Yankees held their ground and dug in for the night. By the next morning, May 25, Grant decided to break off the attacks. "To make a direct attack from either wing would cause a slaughter of our men that even success would not justify," he informed Washington by telegraph.

Union sharpshooters remained on the island opposite the Confederate apex at Ox Ford. Picket fire sputtered along the lines during the day, joined by some cannon shots, but the low-intensity skirmishing never swelled into a battle. A minor incident, the capture of four Confederate sharpshooters, cheered up the Yankee pickets on May 25.

"These had shot a cow on our side of the river, and with matchless impudence, at a favorable moment, swam across the river to get their prize," wrote a *New York Times* correspondent. "They were, however, seen and taken prisoners, and were marched up to headquarters in their shirts and drawers."

Grant lingered to destroy several miles of the Virginia Central Railroad. Ties were piled to make bonfires hot enough to soften the rails. Drooping under their own weight, the rails could then be twisted beyond repair.

Grant began abandoning his lines that night and sending his units around Lee's right. His withdrawals continued on May 26. That day Union soldiers captured a woman wearing a Confederate cavalry uniform. It was an unusual incident that several Union soldiers vividly recalled in connection with the battle.

The North Anna, Little River, and the South Anna merged into the Pamunkey River a few miles downstream. Grant saved considerable delay by crossing only the latter stream near Hanover Courthouse. By May 29 Grant's army had assembled three miles south of the Pamunkey. Lee had no choice but to follow, leaving behind one of the best defensive positions ever held by the Army of Northern Virginia.

Compared to the appalling and endless slaughter of the Wilderness and Spotsylvania, the North Anna clash paled in comparison. The Battle of North Anna seemed "a matter of brains between the generals, than brawn between the men," recalled William Meade Dame of the Richmond Howitzers. "Some sharp fighting, on points right and left, but that was all!"

Total losses for the fighting from May 23 to May 26 are difficult to state with authority. Most casualty reports for the clashes along the North Anna are mixed with losses from Maj. Gen. Philip Sheridan's Richmond raid and other previous and subsequent actions fought during May 1864. Most estimates fall within a range of 2,000 to 4,000 killed, wounded, or missing from each side.

Looking back years later, Private Frank Wilkinson of the 11th New York Independent Battery wrote of leaving the North Anna behind. "Before us, in the distance, rose the swells of Cold Harbor, and we marched steadily and joyfully to our doom," wrote Wilkinson.

Catching up with Lee, the Army of the Potomac found the Confederates once again dug into a formidable defensive barrier at Cold Harbor. Grant launched a headlong attack on the Rebel lines on June 3. As many as 7,000 Union soldiers were casualties during a single, 30-minute, ill-fated action. It was the disaster Grant sought to avoid at Ox Ford on the North Anna. □

Long ranks of Carthaginian infantry stood on a dusty plain a few miles east of the ruined town of Cannae on August 2, 216 BC. Cavalry massed at each end of the Carthaginian line stood poised to harass the enemy's flanks. Opposite the Carthaginians, a Roman army was arrayed in similar fashion.

The day was warm, dry, and windy. A seasonal wind known as the libeccio, which blew from the south, sent fine particles of dust into the faces of the advancing Romans. The armies had deployed from their camps north of the River Aufidius to the south side of the twisting waterway.

As combat grew near, many of the Carthaginian troops gripped Roman weapons that they had picked up from a clash at Lake Trasimene the previous year. More than a few wore similarly looted Roman armor. They carried Roman javelins, spears, and gladii. None of them had seen their native lands for many years. Indeed, the only way they might ever see those homes again was to achieve yet another victory. Although outnumbered and deep in enemy territory, their confidence remained high.

The Carthaginian troops had complete faith in their stalwart leader, Hannibal Barca. Hannibal had proved that he was brilliant, bold, and daring. Upon the fields surrounding Cannae that day Hannibal's name would become deeply etched in the annals of history. What Hannibal would achieve at Cannae would forever mark him as one of the greatest battlefield commanders of all time.

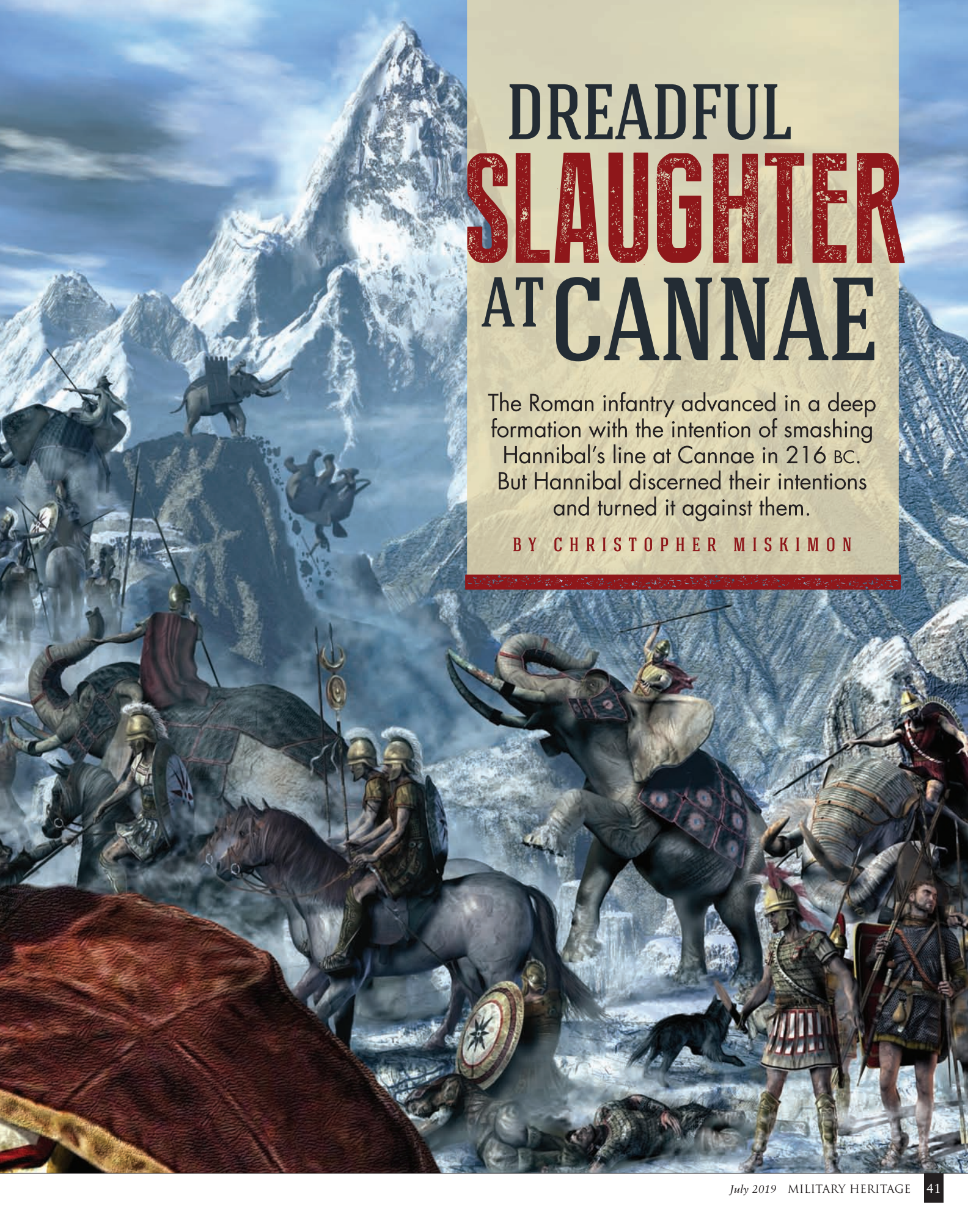
Rome and Carthage had previously gone to war against each other in the First Punic War that began in 264 BC. Over the course of the 23-year conflict, the Romans gradually wrested control of Sicily from the Carthaginians. The Carthaginians, who retreated to the western part of the island, could no longer sustain themselves when the Romans destroyed their fleet in the Aegates Islands in 241 BC. Rome ejected the Carthaginians from Sicily and forced them to pay a heavy indemnity at the peace table.

The Romans emerged from the First Punic War as the dominant naval power in the Mediterranean Sea. Afterward, the Carthaginians began to rebuild their military forces in anticipation of a new war. To finance their armies and fleet, the Carthaginians embarked on a concerted effort to expand economically.

Hamilcar Barca, one of Carthage's leading generals, masterminded the Carthaginian occupation of Iberia. It took decades and a generation of the Barca family, but by 218 BC Carthage was ready

Hannibal's army faced a great challenge getting its war elephants over the Alps in 218 BC. The arduous trek was ample proof of the skill and fortitude of his troops.





DREADFUL SLAUGHTER AT CANNAE

The Roman infantry advanced in a deep formation with the intention of smashing Hannibal's line at Cannae in 216 BC. But Hannibal discerned their intentions and turned it against them.

BY CHRISTOPHER MISKIMON



Hannibal's engineering skills were on full display during the Carthaginian army's difficult crossing of the Alps in 218 BC.

to exact revenge against Rome. The job fell not to Hamilcar, but to his son, Hannibal. When Hannibal was only 10 years old, Hamilcar made him swear an oath of eternal enmity toward Rome.

Hannibal was an astute commander who knew how to inspire men. He once swam a river to encourage his men to follow and slept on the ground as they did. Ready for a rematch with Rome, Hannibal attacked the Iberian city of Saguntum after its leaders chose to ally with Rome. The incident touched off the Second Punic War.

Seizing the initiative, Hannibal led his army north. The Carthaginians crossed the Alps and invaded the Roman heartland with 46,000 troops and 37 elephants. Hannibal recruited Gauls and others enemies of Rome as he marched.

The Romans responded with their legions, each accompanied by another legion raised by a Roman ally in the region. Hannibal's generalship brought the Romans low at Trebia in 218 BC and at Lake Trasimene in 217 BC. Rome suffered heavy casualties and damage to its reputation from these defeats.

The Romans needed to turn the tide. For that reason, they appointed Quintus Fabius Maximus as dictator. Fabius realized his best option was to create time to rebuild the Roman armies, so he avoided pitched battles and sought smaller skirmishes designed to weaken the Carthaginians gradually while building his own strength. While the strategy was reasonable given the situation, it did not sit well with Roman leaders. Rome had a tradition of aggressive military action and their mind-set precluded anything other than the offensive.

The Romans subsequently elected two consuls, Lucius Aemilius Paullus and Gaius Terentius Varro. Meanwhile, the Roman Senate authorized the expansion of the Roman army by four legions along with four allied legions. These would join with two existing armies led by the previous year's consuls, Marcus Atilius Regulus and Gnaeus Servilius Geminus. Regulus would be replaced before the battle by Marcus Minucius Rufus. These existing armies shadowed Hanni-

bal's force while it wintered in Geronium in southern Italy.

The Roman plan was simple. Paullus and Varro would each command the army on alternating days, a Roman custom of the time. They would rendezvous with the two armies in the field and take command of the entire force. Their objective was to bring Hannibal to battle and defeat him, thereby ending the Carthaginian threat. The alternating command may have been Roman tradition, but Paullus and Varro disliked each other and were frequently at odds. Thus, the Roman army had a significant leadership problem.

The two armies were organized and equipped according to their own customs and heritage. The Roman legions were raised by the legio, a levy of citizens ranging from 17 to 49 years of age, who owned property. Rome had a long martial tradition and propertied families were accustomed to military service, training their sons for it. In addition, each Roman ally was expected to raise its own legion to join the Romans on a one-for-one basis. It is believed these units were organized similarly to the Roman legions. During the Second Punic War the legions were raised for a period of one year with new troops rotated through them, so these units began to become permanently established organizations.

Each legion was 4,500 strong with 4,200 infantry and 300 cavalry. By this time the legions were organized into the triplex acies, a system of three lines. The first line was the hastati, 1,200 younger men armed with the pilum, a Roman javelin, and the gladius, a short sword. They also carried a large shield called a scutum and wore a helmet and chest armor. The second line consisted of the principes, another 1,200 men considered in their prime. They carried similar arms and armor to the hastati though some may have worn mail coats called lorica hamata. The third line held the triarii, 600 experienced older men who also carried spears. Each legion also had 1,200 velites, light infantry who would screen the legion and act as skirmishers. These men probably did not wear armor but carried a light shield, a few javelins, and a gladius. These lines would stagger to cover gaps, which also allowed the cavalry or velites to move through the formation more easily.

The wealthiest Romans made up the cavalry. Known as the equites, they guarded the flanks and pursued fleeing enemy soldiers. The 300 horsemen of a legion were divided into 10 turmae of 30 men each, all well armed and armored. Generals often positioned themselves with the cavalry. In all a well-trained legion was a formidable unit led by trained leaders, the

entire force steeped in the militaristic Roman tradition. One flaw of the legions present at Cannae was a lack of training. They were hastily raised and sent into battle before they could be seasoned. The troops also were raised from a wider group due to the desperate need for men after the previous defeats. The property requirements were eliminated, which meant many of the recruits lacked the martial training the wealthier men received.

The Carthaginian army followed different practices based on Carthage's multicultural nature and experiences. Carthage did not have Rome's population base and historically paid more attention to its navy. Their society was largely an oligarchy and the army reflected that quality. The Carthaginians drew troops from the various provinces and allied states to round out their army. The army contained a small core of citizen-soldiers surrounded by larger numbers of the allied troops and mercenaries recruited through Carthage's extensive trading networks. The polyglot Carthaginian army was composed of Carthaginians, Numidians, Libyo-Phoenicians, Iberians, and Gauls. The Carthaginian cavalry at Cannae consisted of Numidians, Iberians, and Gauls. The senior officers were Carthaginians and were drawn from the city's leading families.

Rather than try to train and organize these disparate factions along a common line, each contingent was allowed to fight according to its native traditions. This allowed the various groups to maintain their cohesion in battle,

RIGHT: A fanciful depiction of Hannibal atop one of his war elephants in Italy. Hannibal had hoped the elephants would frighten enemy troops. BOTTOM: The two armies were similarly deployed, but the Roman cavalry on the wings failed to protect the legions in the center.

remaining at the side of their tribal comrades. They also used whatever equipment was familiar to them; however, as the campaign stretched out over the years much of the original equipment had to be replaced.

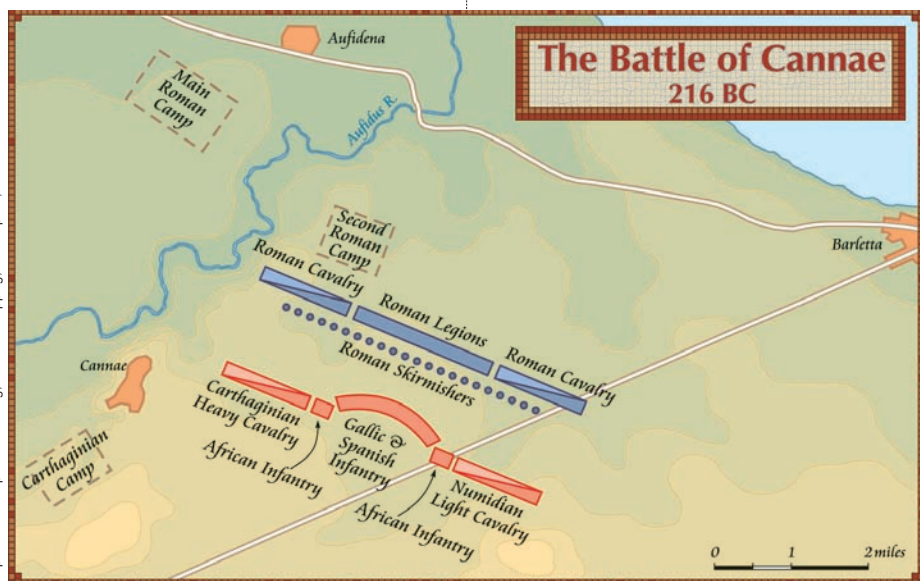
In combat, the Carthaginian infantry often would form into side-by-side columns to help maintain cohesion. This formation mitigated the differences in fighting techniques of the various contingents. These columns contained the Gauls and Iberians in alternating blocks with the Libyo-Phoenicians anchoring them on both ends. In front of this line of columns were the light infantry, which was composed of Balearic slingers and Celts. Four thousand Gallic horsemen were present in the Carthaginian army at the time of the battle. Like the Romans, they took their place on either end of the infantry formation, prepared to screen or charge as needed.

For this mixed formation to succeed, Hannibal had to understand how each contingent worked in order to make the best use of them. He also commanded the respect of the various leaders, who trusted his orders. It was a highly complex arrangement requiring intelligence, planning, and foresight. Luckily for the Carthaginian army, Hannibal possessed these qualities in abundance. He knew how to get the most from each group. He also had a handful of trusted generals. These were his brothers Hasdrubal and Mago, Hasdrubal Gisco, Maharbal, and Masinissa.

Hannibal's army was experienced and confident; the army's recent victories had boosted its morale considerably. The army functioned well, with the senior leaders controlling the disparate



Palazzo dei Conservatori, Rome



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

sub-units under Hannibal's overall control. Hannibal also knew once battle was joined his influence over events was limited, so he engaged in extensive planning beforehand so his men knew exactly what to do.

While Paullus's and Varro's armies prepared to march, Hannibal's army left its winter quarters at Geronium and moved toward Cannae in June 216. This was a deliberate move as the ruined fortress at Cannae was a grain and food storage site serving the entire region. Occupying the area threatened food production for the whole area, something the Romans could not ignore without appearing helpless in front of their local allies. If the Romans did respond, Hannibal would get the battle he wanted. Regardless of whether the Romans appeared or not, the Carthaginians gained. In the interim, they could nourish themselves on Roman food.

The Roman armies of Atilius and Servilius shadowed Hannibal. Word soon reached Rome that he was at Cannae. Paullus and Varro hurriedly finished their preparations and marched out in late June. The entire Roman force rendezvoused about two day's march from Cannae, only about four months after Paullus's and Varro's election as consuls. It was a noteworthy accomplishment considering that Rome had never before fielded such a large army.

The Romans advanced toward Cannae and made camp five miles away, within sight of their opponents. Paullus and Varro succumbed to arguing. Paullus worried that the broad, flat plain was perfect for the cavalry actions at which the Carthaginians excelled. But Varro vehemently disagreed. As the two were alternating command each day, Varro soon had the chance to dispatch a reconnaissance in force to better ascertain Hannibal's position. The Carthaginians responded with cavalry and light infantry and a sharp skirmish ensued. The Romans suffered initial reverses but quickly recovered, reforming their lines. They drove the Carthaginian troops steadily back until nightfall put an end to the fighting.

This was a good initial success for the Romans, but the advantage was squandered the next day when Paullus took command. He refused to launch a followup foray; instead, he split the Roman army and set up a new camp on the other side of the Aufidius River. By doing so, Paullus hoped to better protect the Roman foraging parties while menacing the Carthaginian foragers.

Sensing the approaching battle, Hannibal gathered his troops and gave a speech. He told them he had no need to ask for their bravery because they had shown it three times already in previous battles since arriving in Italy. Hannibal further reminded them of all they had achieved since

This may have been due to the inexperienced men in the two newest armies, who lacked the training and experience to maneuver well in the standard formation. This was not necessarily a bad arrangement, but with the armies of Paullus and Varro on the outside edges of the line, it meant the least experienced troops manned the flanks.

The Roman cavalry took position on the right end of the line, anchored on the river. The allied horsemen deployed on the left end of the line. The light infantry screened the front of the line. Paullus went with the Roman cavalry on the right while Varro was with the Allied cavalry on the left. The two previous consuls stood in the center with their respective armies.

The 50,000-strong Carthaginian army was composed of 50,000 infantry and 10,000 cavalry. Hannibal deployed his light infantry, both slingers and spearmen, to screen his army as it

The battlefield was a horrifying scene, covered in the dead and dying. "So many thousands of Romans were lying, foot and horse promiscuously, according as accident had brought them together, either in the battle or in the flight," wrote Livy.



Jörg Schulz

then. "He who will strike a blow at the enemy—hear me!" said Hannibal. "He will be a Carthaginian, whatever his name will be, whatever his country." The speech worked, encouraging the entire army about the battle to come.

The next day Hannibal likewise established a second camp on the other side of the river. Paullus was in command and made no response, keeping his army in its own camp. He believed he could wait out Hannibal, not wanting to fight in that location. Soon enough, Hannibal's supplies would grow low and he would have to march. Some Romans did come out to collect water, and Hannibal dispatched a group of Numidians to harass them. This angered Varro and many in the Roman camp. The situation was bound to change the next day, though, when command of the army switched.

Varro took charge the following morning. He assembled the entire army at dawn on the south side of the river. The Romans drew up into their battle formation facing south toward the Carthaginians. Hannibal had purposely placed his troops generally facing north so that the libecio blew dust into the Romans' eyes. The combined legions possessed 40,000 Roman infantry, 40,000 allied infantry, and 6,400 cavalry. Varro detached 10,000 infantry from the main force to remain at the camp, leaving 76,400 to engage the Carthaginians.

The Roman line was organized with each of the four consular armies in line next to each other. The infantry closed up so that they presented a narrower front with more depth to their ranks.

Roman Consul Paullus knew that the broad plain at Cannae would give the superior Carthaginian cavalry a decisive advantage over their Roman counterparts.

crossed the river. Once across the river, Hannibal anchored his left wing on the river, placing 6,000 Iberian and Gallic cavalry on the extreme left flank under the command of Hasdrubal. On the extreme right flank were 4,000 Numidian cavalry led by Maharbal. The Gallic-Iberian heavy infantry stood in the center, with Libyo-Phoenician heavy infantry on each side. The Roman army had the greater number of men, but Hannibal's army was more experienced and had an impressive number of victories to its credit.

The Carthaginian line advanced at Hannibal's command, with the center slightly forward

so the entire line was shaped like a crescent with the depth of the line thinning out near the edges. Hannibal's line looked mismatched as it marched forward, the Iberians in their linen tunics interspersed with the Gauls, many of whom went into battle shirtless. All of them used large oval shields as protection. It was a polyglot force but it moved well in unison.

The opposing light infantry started the battle. The Balearians used their slings, covered by the spearmen. The Roman velites and their allies fought back and the fighting broke down into a number of small, inconclusive skirmishes all along the space between the two armies, not unusual in ancient combat. Being lightly armed and armored, the light troops in the screens could not last long even against each other and soon they fell back.

Hasdrubal's Iberian and Gaulish cavalry charged in what Roman historian Polybius deemed "true barbaric fashion," advancing along the bank of the river toward the Roman horsemen. It was a narrow front, with the river on one side and the infantry on the other, allowing neither force any room to maneuver. Normally, cavalry in ancient times would attempt to outflank by riding around the other force or by making feints. But the constricted space precluded those kinds of maneuvers.

The two groups rode straight into each other. The opposing horsemen were tightly packed. The horses often could not move and many simply stood still next to each other while their riders hacked and slashed at nearby enemies. Some fought so closely they grappled each other off their mounts and had to continue fighting on the ground. At first the Romans managed to put up a spirited resistance, but the violence of the Carthaginian charge took its toll in Roman casualties. Soon the Romans broke and retreated back along the river bank, the only way they could go in the close quarters. Hasdrubal ordered his horsemen to give chase and they pursued, sparing no one. Paullus managed to escape with a small contingent of bodyguards and rode to the center of the Roman line.

As the Roman right-wing cavalry fled in disorder, the infantry made contact. The legions in the Roman center crashed into the Carthaginian center, which was slightly ahead of the rest of their line. Paullus realized the battle was up to the infantry and took position where he thought he could do the most good. He shouted words



A stylized Renaissance depiction of the battle shows Romans fighting under banners bearing SPQR meaning "Senatus Populus Que Romanusa" (the Senate and the People of Rome). BELOW: Hannibal exhibited masterful control of his polyglot army during his long campaign in Italy.

of encouragement to his men, urging them forward. Each side sought to gain an advantage with its weapons. Men screamed and died, their flesh torn and yielding despite the armor they wore.

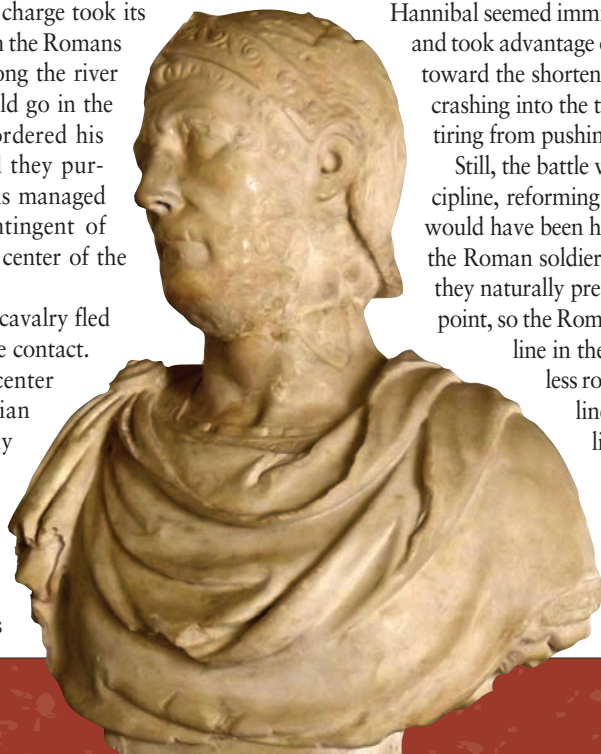
At first the Carthaginian soldiers held, fighting well despite their national and tribal differences. The Iberian and Gaulish ranks were too few, leaving their line thin and without the depth needed to maintain their defense. The legions packed their line more densely and now that depth told, forcing the Carthaginians back. Soon their bulging convex line turned into a concave one just as the Roman line now became a wedge. As that wedge grew deeper the Romans on the ends of the line started to draw in toward the center and pushed even harder toward the apparent weak spot in Hannibal's line. These were the novice troops of Paullus's and Varro's armies.

The legionaries kept up the pressure as the Carthaginian center began to retreat. The Roman flanks soon drew in toward the center far enough that they were even with the Libyo-Phoenician infantry positioned to either side of the Iberians and Gauls. Now came a crucial point in the battle.

The contracted Roman line focused on the center, where at long last success over Hannibal seemed imminent. This left the flanks vulnerable. Hannibal saw this and took advantage of the situation. The Libyo-Phoenician infantry wheeled toward the shortened Roman flanks and charged in at them, fresh troops crashing into the tightly packed legionaries, many of whom were already tiring from pushing against the center.

Still, the battle was not yet over. The Romans must have kept their discipline, reforming their ranks to deal with the new threat. Such actions would have been hasty and extremely difficult, given the lack of space for the Roman soldiers to maneuver, for as they advanced toward the center they naturally pressed together. Yet the battle was not entirely lost at this point, so the Romans must have succeeded in quickly creating a defensive line in the constricted space. This did leave each individual with less room to use his weapon or position his shield. The Roman line remained coherent but its forward momentum was likely checked, allowing the battered Carthaginian center a brief but crucial reprieve.

While the Roman infantry realigned to deal with this new and dire situation, the 4,000 Numidian horsemen took advantage of the change in fortune to charge at the Roman allied cavalry on the Roman left wing. Varro remained with these Allied riders as



the Numidians bore down on them, but the circumstances were different on this side of the battlefield. The field was open for maneuver, as Paullus feared when he first laid eyes on the terrain days earlier.

The Numidians harried their foes, advancing and turning away, a more traditional cavalry tactic. "From the peculiar nature of their mode of fighting, they neither inflicted nor received much harm, they yet rendered the enemy's horse useless by keeping them occupied, and charging them first on one side and then on another," wrote Polybius. The fighting between the two cavalry forces went inconclusively for a time, but the scales soon tipped against the Roman allied horsemen when the Numidians received reinforcements in the form of the Iberian and Gaulish riders led by Hasdrubal. Once finished with the Roman cavalry by the Aufidius River, Hasdrubal reformed his men and rode to the assistance of the Numidians, adding his numbers to theirs. Daunted by the overwhelming numbers, the Roman cavalry fled.

Hasdrubal then made a cunning and sage decision. He directed the Numidians to pursue the fleeing Roman allies. This prevented them from reforming and returning to the battle. Next, he regrouped his own troops and together they rode back to the battle, joining the Libyo-Phoenicians.

At that point, the Roman infantry was in serious trouble. It had been abandoned by its cavalry as Hasdrubal's force rode into its rear. By this time, the Roman rear ranks were probably turned about to face the new threat since the Libyo-Phoenicians were so deep on their flanks. It is also likely the Roman velites light infantry were present in the Roman rear, since they would normally withdraw through the main lines to the rear after they skirmished. These lightly armed and armored fighters were ill equipped to face enemy cavalry. The Carthaginians launched rolling attacks all along the Roman rear line, encouraging the nearby Libyo-Phoenicians as much as they disordered the Romans.

Despite the cavalry attacks and Carthaginian infantry swarming around them, the Romans still held firm. Many of their leaders set the example, including Paullus. He suffered a wound from a sling stone early in the fighting, according to Roman historian Livy. Despite his injury, Paullus moved along the lines, giving encouragement and exhorting his men to stand firm whenever it seemed they might break. Eventually the consul grew too exhausted to remain on his steed and his retinue dismounted with him. The Carthaginians attacked them, angry that the Romans refused to surrender despite the growing odds against them. Paullus's men were slowly cut down. A few of them climbed back on their horses and rode away, but Paullus was not among them. He stayed behind and fought on until a band of Carthaginians cut him down.

Servilius was also killed about the same time. The loss of both generals caused the Roman infantry to start breaking. Groups of men within the cauldron began trying to push through the surrounding Carthaginians and make their escape. Even this became ever more challenging as the Carthaginian infantry pushed inward. More and more Romans in the outer ranks were killed or wounded and had to be pulled back. Being behind the front ranks provided no safety, however. Sling stones and javelins from the light infantry rained into the Roman center while the spearman and swordsmen around the shrinking perimeter hacked and thrust into legionaries so tightly packed some could not use their own weapons.

This continued until the Romans lost all cohesion and became merely a panicked mob awaiting death from all around them. The outcome was guaranteed as the last men were cut down either in small groups or individually. The immense battle ended with a mass of dead and dying Romans on the field. A few thousand of their infantry managed to break free and escape. They ran off to nearby towns while 300 of the Roman cavalry also escaped. The victorious Carthaginians quickly moved on the Roman camp, killing 2,000 of the troops left to guard the encampment and taking the remainder prisoner.

The battle was a complete disaster for Rome. The Romans suffered 55,000 casualties compared to 5,700 Carthaginian casualties. Paullus, 80 senators, and 21 tribunes were among the

Roman dead. Many of the lost equites were also men of standing or wealth. Varro fled with the remaining allied cavalrymen and survived. He rode with 70 other survivors to Venusia. Polybius would recall his conduct poorly in his later writing.

The battlefield was a horrifying scene, covered in the dead and dying. "So many thousands of Romans were lying, foot and horse promiscuously, according as accident had brought them together, either in the battle or in the flight," wrote Livy. "Some, whom their wounds, pinched by the morning cold, had roused, as they were rising up, covered with blood, from the midst of the heaps of slain, were overpowered by the enemy. Some too they found lying alive with their thighs and hams cut, who, laying bare their necks and throats, bid them drain the blood that remained in them."

Hannibal achieved a great victory at Cannae. His double envelopment, in which the forces of one army simultaneously attack both flanks of the enemy army in order to encircle it, became a textbook military maneuver emulated by modern commanders. Hannibal destroyed eight Roman legions and their matching allied legions. The defeat came as a terrible blow to Rome and did serious damage to its reputation.

Some of Hannibal's generals suggested the army rest after achieving such an overwhelming success, but Maharbal disagreed. He suggested the entire Carthaginian army march on

BELOW: Carthaginian cavalry pursued the fleeing Roman allies, thereby preventing them from reforming and returning to the battle. OPPOSITE: Paullus sought to set an example by fighting alongside the beleaguered Roman infantry. He shouted encouragement until cut down.



Army Stock Photo



Rome immediately and finish the war. Maharbal even volunteered to ride ahead with his cavalry, believing he could get to the city before its citizens knew he was coming. While applauding Maharbal's motivation and energy, Hannibal chose not to follow up with the immediate attack. "You know how to conquer, Hannibal, but you do not know how to make use of your victory," responded Maharbal.

There was truth in Maharbal's words. Hannibal possessed great tactical skill. He set the conditions for the Battle of Cannae and the Romans obliged, allowing Hannibal to dictate the course of the fighting. Over the course of the war Hannibal did this several times, taking advantage of the Romans' aggressiveness and impatience. Rome's martial traditions resided in a belief in the offensive, and Hannibal bled them dearly for their inflexibility.

In the wake of Hannibal's string of victories, the Greek-speaking cities of southern Italy, Sicily, and Macedon renounced their alliance with Rome. But Rome's other allies remained loyal. Hannibal eventually offered reasonable peace terms, but the Roman Senate rejected them.

Hannibal underestimated the Roman will to continue the fight. It did not occur to him that the Romans would refuse to yield and would never accept defeat. The stakes were simply too high. What is more, the sting of the routs the Roman army suffered brought calls for vengeance against the Carthaginians.

Over the course of a two-year period beginning in 214 BC, Rome ultimately captured the Greek city of Syracuse in Sicily. The achieve-

ment was the work of Marcus Claudius Marcellus who arrived with a fleet and an army. He had equipped some of his warships with siege engines and ladders to assault the strongly held city from the water.

The brilliant inventor Archimedes developed countermeasures that initially thwarted the Romans. One of these consisted of a hook that could reach out over the water and capsize Roman vessels. The Romans repulsed efforts by the Carthaginians to relieve the city. An elite group of Roman soldiers managed to infiltrate the city. The conquest spelled the end of the independence of the Greek cities in southern Italy and Sicily.

By 207 BC Hannibal's army in Rome had lost its ability to conduct offensives owing to shortages of men, money, and equipment. His brother, Hasdrubal, arrived from Iberia with badly needed reinforcements. Marcus Livius led a Roman army that blocked Hasdrubal's march on the banks of the Metaurus River northeast of Rome. Livius's second in command was the promising General Gaius Claudius Nero. The Iberian infantry drove back the Roman left wing and appeared close to victory when Claudius Nero conducted a stunning flank attack against the Carthaginian right wing. The Carthaginian cavalry fled the field, which allowed Claudius Nero to roll up the Carthaginian infantry without interference from enemy horsemen. Hasdrubal was among the slain.

The Romans achieved the pinnacle of revenge. A new Roman general named Scipio, who had survived the carnage at Cannae, invaded Iberia to deny it to Hannibal as a source of supply. He captured and sacked New Carthage. Scipio also inflicted a serious defeat on the Carthaginians at Iliipa in 206 BC. Two years later, he landed in Africa where he easily trounced the local forces. Fearing the fall of their great city to Scipio, the Carthaginians recalled Hannibal from Italy.

A grand battle unfolded on October 19, 202 BC on the plains of Zama southwest of Carthage. Hannibal sent his 80 war elephants against Scipio's troops, but the Romans opened ranks to allow the elephants to pass through where a special force at the back of the army was entrusted with slaying them.

Scipio then hurled his cavalry at their Carthaginian counterparts. They did so in grand fashion, routing the Carthaginian horsemen. Although the Carthaginian infantry performed well in their attack against the Roman foot soldiers, Scipio's cavalry attacked the Carthaginian rear. It was a decisive victory with 20,000 Carthaginian casualties and 26,000 prisoners. The Romans lost only 6,500 men. This marked the end of the war. Scipio imposed harsh terms on the defeated Carthaginians. For his great victory, Scipio received the honorific "Africanus."

Hannibal went into exile, but the Romans pursued him wherever he went, demanding his extradition. The Romans trapped him in 183 BC. "Let us now put an end to the great anxiety of the Romans, who have thought it too lengthy and too heavy a task to wait for the death of a hated old man," he said. With those words, the victor of Cannae and scourge of the Roman Republic took poison rather than suffer capture and humiliation at the hands of his foe. □

BLOODY STAND AT ALBUERA



An Allied force opposing the French advance on Badajoz during the Peninsular War came under heavy attack on May 16, 1811. The fine performance of Spanish and British infantry saved the day. | BY SIMON REES

Amid gun smoke and squalls of rain, the men of 1st Battalion, 3rd Foot, known as the Buffs, were firing their weapons and listening for further orders. Others tended to wounds, while still more were dying or already dead. The unit had run into a maelstrom of cannon shot and musket balls, exchanged volleys, and then joined a brigade-wide charge: stabbing, clubbing, and clawing their way forward until their opponents briefly wavered. However, the French held firm and had soon forced the British to retire.

Suddenly, the Buffs' right-hand companies were ordered to wheel around as an enemy cavalry formation had been spotted approaching. But many of the horsemen carried lances and wore uniforms with yellow facings; shouts went up that they must be Spanish allies, the relief of this assumption turning to terror when the cavalry accelerated into a charge. Within moments, hundreds of Polish lancers and supporting French hussars were tearing a bloody path through the beleaguered infantry, seemingly unstoppable in their fury.

On March 10, 1811, the Spanish fortress town of Badajoz surrendered to Marshal Jean Soult, its capture depriving the British, Portuguese, and Spanish alliance of a vital defensive bastion, one that dominated a nexus of roads in the border region of Extremadura, Spain. The commander of the Anglo-Portuguese forces, Arthur Wellesley, Viscount Wellington, urgently needed to retake Badajoz, but his immediate focus was on harrying Marshal Andre Masséna's retreating army out of Portugal. So Wellington decided his southern wing, then under the control of Marshal William Beresford, would have to complete the job in his absence.

Physically imposing and blind in the left eye because of an early hunting accident, Beresford's career up to that point had been steady and commendable, despite having to surrender Buenos Aires during the botched River Plate campaigns of 1806-1807. Escaping in 1807, he was appointed



ABOVE: Polish lancers of the French army assail the 3rd Regiment of Foot at Albuera. The British soldiers had just deployed when a thunderstorm rendered their muskets ineffective. **INSET:** Lieutenant General Sir William Beresford (left) and French Marshal Jean Soult.



National Portrait Gallery, London



Chateau de Versailles

commander of Portugal's strategic Madeira archipelago for several months before joining Lt. Gen. John Moore's ill-starred 1808-1809 expedition in northern Spain. Seconded to the Portuguese Army soon afterward, he was made a marshal and helped overhaul the country's dysfunctional army. Beresford also led a sizable flanking column during Soult's retreat from Oporto in 1809 but had yet to take an army into battle.

He started the campaign by concentrating 20,000 men at Portalegre, in south-central Portugal, the roster including Maj. Gen. William Stewart's 2nd Division, Maj. Gen. Lowry Cole's 4th Division, and several important Portuguese formations, such as Maj. Gen. John Hamilton's division,



Brig. Gen. Richard Collins' independent brigade, and Colonel Loftus Otway's cavalry brigade. British cavalry included Colonel George de Grey's heavy brigade and the independent 13th Light Dragoons. In addition, there were two Portuguese and two King's German Legion (KGL) batteries. Opposing the Allies were approximately 11,000 men from Soult's V Corps that had been left to consolidate French gains after the marshal returned south.

The first clash occurred on March 25, just east of Campo Maior, with the 13th Light Dragoons besting several enemy squadrons and, supported by Portuguese units, decimating an enemy baggage and artillery train on the outskirts of Badajoz. Approximately 1,200 French infantry retreating from Campo Maior were left dangerously exposed, but Beresford, who erroneously had been told the 13th's men had been taken prisoner, decided to shadow this formation and then retire. The Allies suffered 170 casualties, while the French lost upward of 400 men. The 13th's commander, Lt. Col. Michael Head, was unfairly chastised on his return, while events that day also put Beresford at loggerheads with his newly arrived cavalry commander, Brig. Gen. Robert Long.

Despite Beresford's awkward start, as well as a diversion in the form of an April 7 surprise raid in which two officers and 52 men from 13th Light Dragoons were captured, he made excellent progress in pushing the enemy back and isolating Badajoz. In addition, the 13th Light Dragoons had their revenge by participating in a fierce cavalry skirmish at Los Santos on April 16, with the Allies inflicting numerous casualties and capturing 150 men for almost no loss. However, Beresford remained unhappy with Long's overall performance. Other notable efforts included the capture of Olivenza, taking 400 prisoners, and a bid to entrap General Jean-Pierre Maransin's brigade, a move that failed only because the enemy received a last-minute warning and slipped the net.

Approximately 3,400 Spanish troops under General Francisco Ballasteros then linked up with Anglo-Portuguese forces. Meanwhile, General Joaquin Blake, a commander of Irish lineage, was marching toward Beresford with a force of several thousand after being transported from Cadiz to the mouth of the River Guadiana in mid-April. His army included two divisions commanded by General Jose Zayas and General Jose Lardizabal and it would later incorporate Ballasteros's men. In addition, General Francisco Castanos, who already was in Beresford's vicinity, would place 1,800 infantry and 300 cavalry at Blake's disposal during the battle.

Many British veterans argued the Spanish were lions led by donkeys, which was an unfair assessment as there were plenty of decent, brave leaders trying to implement reform. For example, Zayas had written a manual on military order and initiated a training regimen among several battalions that would soon pay dividends. Unfortunately, too many substandard commanders remained in positions of authority for political reasons, while the Spanish soldier's rations were meager, his pay atrocious, and his weaponry of variable quality. Uniforms were a mixture of prewar stock and locally produced or British-supplied clothing. Importantly, given the events to come, a number of Spanish cavalry units wore yellow coats or had uniforms with prominent yellow facings and finishes, while a smattering of regular and irregular cavalry units also carried lances.

Major General Charles Alten's KGL brigade of approximately 1,100 men reached the theater

ABOVE: The Spanish fortress of Badajoz dominated a nexus of roads near the Portuguese frontier. Beresford raised his siege of the fortress on May 12 in the face of Soult's advance. **OPPOSITE:** The Royal Welch Fusiliers, who helped plug a gap in the Allied line, fire at point-blank range into the attacking French.

on April 18, while Wellington arrived not long afterward on a quick visit to assist and guide Beresford. The pair scouted Badajoz and its environs on April 22, avoiding a sharp skirmish between accompanying KGL units and men from the French garrison. Detailed instructions on how to progress were written up the following day. Wellington chose the gutted and uninhabited village of Albuera situated 16 miles southeast of Badajoz as a primary location to oppose Soult if he tried to relieve the fortress town. Wellington returned north on April 25 and Badajoz was besieged in earnest by May 8.

Soult decided to mount a relief as the Allies predicted. His army comprised several major formations, including V Corps' 1st Division of approximately 4,250 infantrymen and its 2nd Division of 4,150 men. General Jean-Baptiste Girard would head V Corps and take 1st Division into the fight, while General Joseph Pepin commanded 2nd Division as its usual leader, General Honore Gazan, was appointed Soult's acting chief of staff. General François Werlé controlled an independent and over-strength infantry brigade of 5,600 men and General Nicolas Godinot a brigade of almost 4,000. There were also approximately 4,000 cavalry and between 35 and 40 cannons. In total, the French would field 24,000 men.

The bulk of Soult's army was underway by May 9, linking up with V Corps at Fuente Can-

tos on May 13 and reaching Santa Marta by May 15, putting the French near Albuera and within striking distance of Badajoz. On May 12 Beresford received intelligence on Soult's rapid advance and sensibly chose to raise the siege, despite having taken more than 400 casualties for limited gains. Stewart's 2nd Division, Hamilton's division, and some of his artillery were sent to Valverde, while other units were ordered to move nearer Albuera or fall back on the village when pressed. Cole's 4th Division and Castanos's men stayed at Badajoz, destroying supplies that could not be transported and covering the siege guns, which would soon be dragged back to the Portuguese fortress of Elvas. They would start marching for Albuera in the early hours of May 16.

Beresford, Blake, and Castanos held a council of war at Valverde on the afternoon of May 13, with Beresford arguing for a withdrawal on Elvas that would force Soult to put the River Guadiana at his back. Blake was angered by this, stressing that his men would begin to desert upon entering Portugal and that he was determined to fight on Spanish soil. Beresford could ill afford to call the Spanish commander's bluff, so it was agreed the Allies would fight at Albuera as originally intended. Beresford would have overall control and Blake promised to march almost 12,600 men from Almendral to the battlefield, just a short distance away, by 12 PM on May 15. In total, the Allies would field 20,800 Anglo-Portuguese and 14,500 Spanish troops, plus 40 cannons.

Albuera lies close to its namesake river, with a series of gentle ridges to its west. This feature runs for several miles along a north-south axis that then kinks southwest, with two hills separated by a shallow valley located at this juncture. It offered an alternative route for any would-be attacker, although the Allies were convinced Soult was going to advance directly on Albuera. The Spanish, considered a weak link by Beresford, were made responsible for defending positions south of the village and north of the shallow valley, the Allied center-right and right, because it was where the fighting was expected to be thinnest.

The Allies made several important errors on May 15, particularly the failure to contest territory south of where the Albuera River splits into the Nogales stream, which flows southeast, and the Chicapierna stream, which heads southwest. The land between both broadens out and rises to some height, the peaks and rear slopes wooded at that time and offering a superb screen to mask any move west, particularly toward the shallow valley. Allied cavalry hastily withdrew through this location to cover

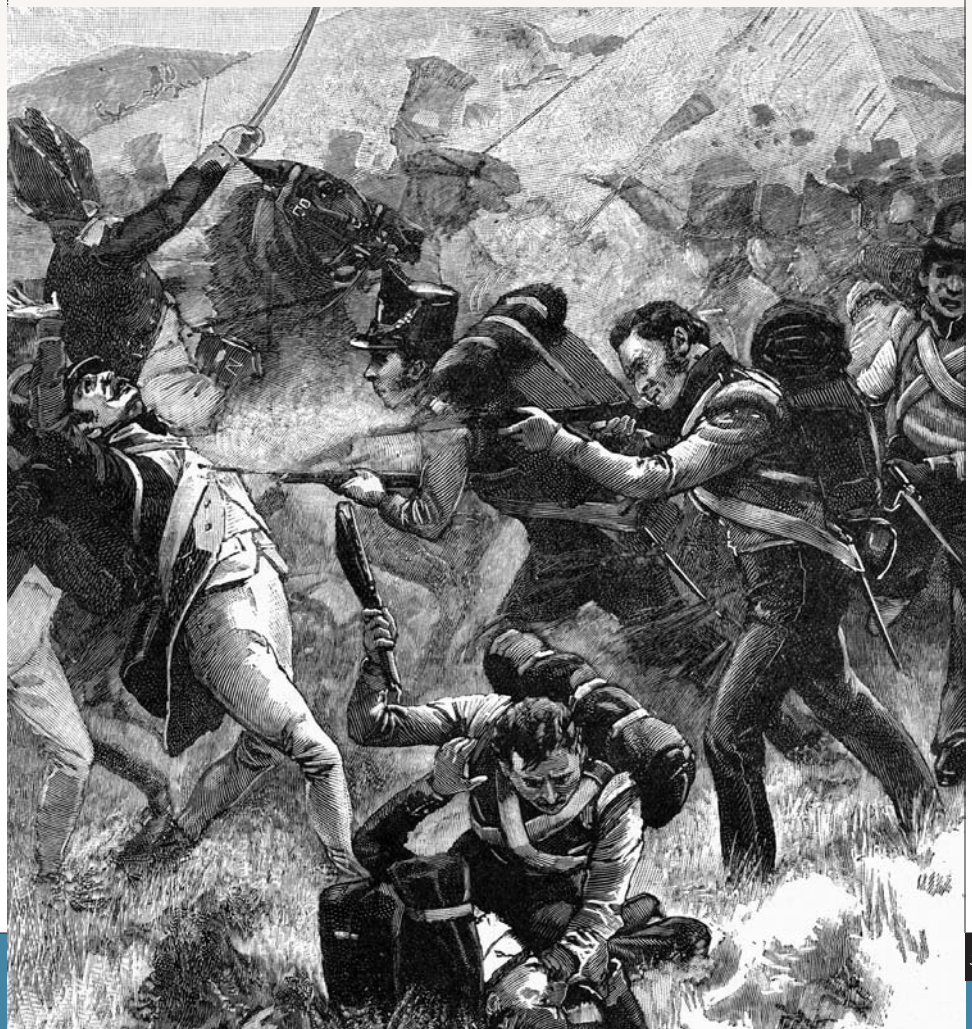
the terrain on which Blake was meant to deploy. Long and his supporters later argued he had been instructed by a staff officer to make this move and that Beresford should have rushed infantry onto or near the position, one that was unsuitable for horsemen anyway.

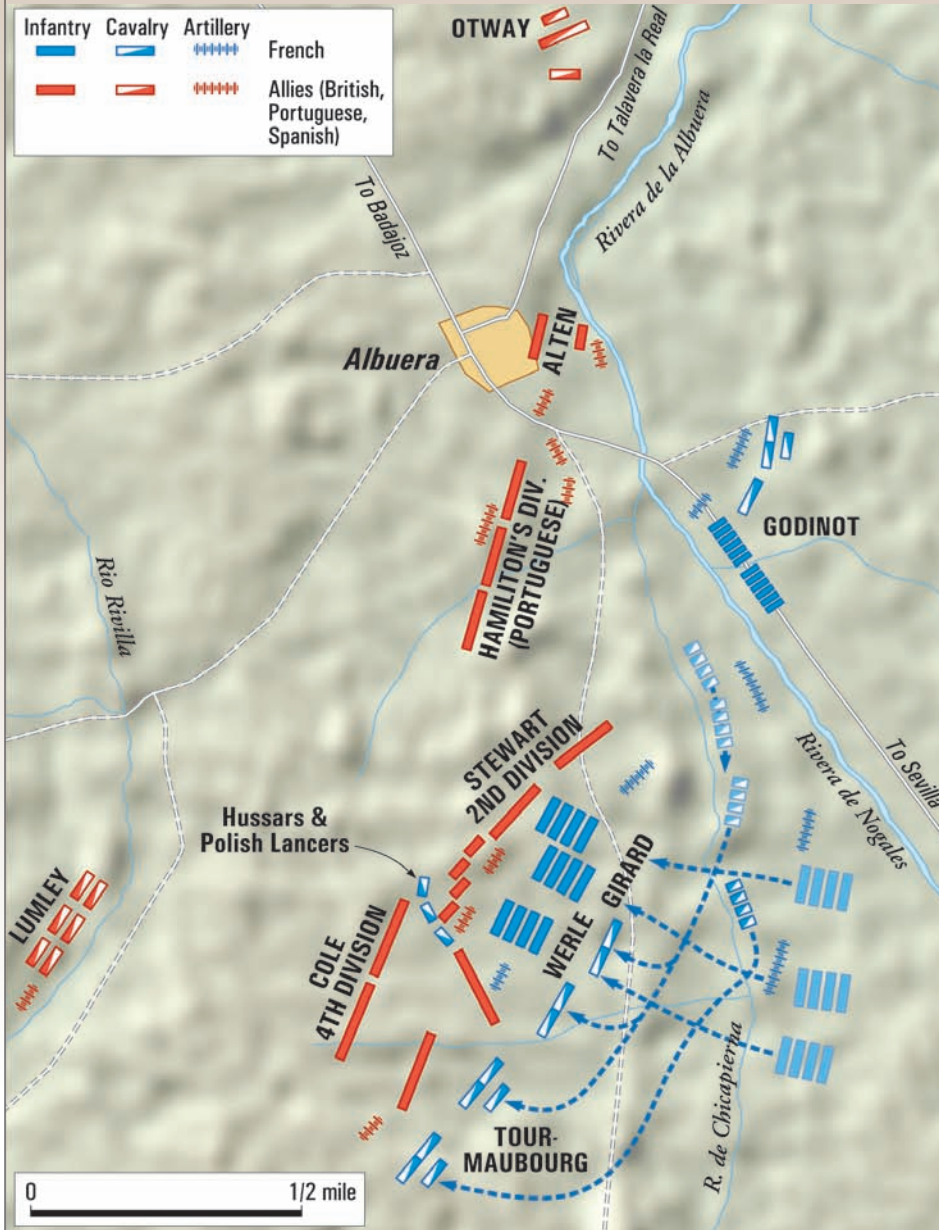
A resolution between the two men was imminent as Long had already requested his replacement. Ostensibly, this was to ensure the correct chain of command as someone with a superior rank was needed to assume control of Spanish cavalry formations, although both undoubtedly wanted their unhappy partnership brought to an end. Maj. Gen. William Lumley, a brigade commander in 2nd Division, was selected and proved to be a relatively sound choice as he had originally been a cavalry officer. The handover would occur during the fighting, a decision later condemned by Long as unusual and an affront to his honor.

Long's cavalry had reached the area at 2 PM, which was roughly the same time other Allied units were arriving in force. Otway's cavalry was positioned north of Albuera and Hamilton's division was placed to the northwest, with Collins' brigade formed to their rear. Stewart's 2nd Division deployed just west of the village and comprised three brigades under the respective commands of Lt. Col. John Colborne, Maj. Gen. Daniel Houghton, and Lt. Col. Alexander Abercromby (Lumley's acting replacement). Stewart also had 140 riflemen from the 5/60th attached. Alten's KGL Brigade was positioned in and around Albuera to act as an early breakwater on any French advance, with cannons in support. Although these moves went comparatively smoothly, concern started to mount over Blake's absence.

Rather than reaching the battlefield around 12 PM, the Spanish commander's first units arrived late in the evening with his last formations and stragglers recorded at approximately 3 PM. Worse still, Blake deployed his men on the forward slopes, an elementary mistake his staff began to correct in the early hours, ordering units behind the crests to conceal their true strength and offer rudimentary protection. Back at Badajoz, Cole's 4th Division and Castanos's men, who were under the command of General Carlos de Espana for the battle's duration, were getting underway. Espana would join Blake, while Cole moved behind 2nd Division as planned, with both formations arriving shortly before the battle started.

Cole was missing most of Lt. Col. James Kemmis's brigade, which had been stranded on the north bank of the Guadiana due to a flash flood. It was forced to make a lengthy detour and would arrive





ABOVE: Soult sent two French divisions to envelop the Allied right. Four Spanish infantry battalions of the Allied army fought desperately to hold on until reinforcements arrived. **OPPOSITE:** A soldier of the elite 3rd Regiment of Foot known as the "Buffs" for the color of their coat facings.

after the fighting, although three of its light companies had crossed beforehand and marched with the division. Beresford was not overly concerned by this; he was more frustrated at the absence of Brig. Gen. George Madden and his Portuguese cavalry brigade, last seen scouting toward Talavera la Real. Only two squadrons would turn up, arriving at Badajoz and marching with Cole's men before joining Otway's formation.

French cavalry units under General Andre Briche reached the Nogales on the afternoon of May 15, with Allied activity in and around Albuera noted. Blake's absence was also apparent and Soult, after he arrived and surveyed the area, concluded the Spanish commander would reach Albuera late on May 16, or possibly May 17. Although wrong in this assumption, he correctly guessed the Allies were preparing to contest a French attack via Albuera and decided to exploit this. He would begin by making a convincing feint against the village, while almost simultaneously using the ground between the Nogales and Chicapierna to mask a vast flanking maneuver aimed at the Allied right.

Most French formations started reaching the area from midnight until the small hours, with the final units arriving at 7 AM. Soult began May 16 with the unwelcome sight of Blake's men posi-

tioned roughly where the flank attack was going to fall, the French marshal later claiming their appearance had been sudden and unexpected. This was a convenient excuse as thousands of men would have been impossible to miss, even if many of them were finally behind the reverse slopes. It is more likely the French believed their enemy would be poorly led and break when attacked in force, just as they had done many times before.

The weather that morning was inclement and the Allies assumed the French attack would come later, maybe even the next day. Their repose was upset by thousands of enemy troops advancing on Albuera by 8 AM, with Soult trying to make his feint seem thoroughly believable. Godinot's men led the advance, supported by some of Briche's cavalry and squadrons from the 1st Vistula Lancers. This 600-strong regiment was led by Colonel Jan Konopka. The men sported dark blue uniforms with yellow fronts, collars, and cuffs, while their breeches had yellow stripes down the legs. Their lances were topped with pennants and they also wore distinctive shakos, called czapka.

Behind them came Werlé's brigade and 2,000 cavalry. French artillery was also committed and began a duel with several guns opposite, just as skirmishers started needling Alten's men. One hundred lancers then forded the shallow Albuera River south of the village, including two platoons that started to advance even farther. Long ordered the 3rd Dragoon Guards to throw them back, with the Poles inflicting and receiving a number of casualties as a result. They then rejoined their unit's main body. Soult was no doubt satisfied to see Beresford taking the bait by moving Campbell's brigade of Hamilton's division, Colborne's men, two Spanish battalions, and extra artillery closer to Albuera.

At that point it was about 9 AM and the wheels were already turning on the flank attack as V Corps' infantry, supporting artillery, and an array of cavalry started moving between the Nogales and Chicapierna. Beresford was informed of this via a picket's report, which he appeared to ignore. The clue became more obvious when Werlé and his accompanying cavalry held back from committing to Albuera, eventually back-tracking toward the same ground the other formations had passed through. It was only when a Spanish messenger arrived and reported a suspected enemy advance over the Chicapierna that Beresford realized Soult was pulling the proverbial rug from under his feet.

The Allied commander galloped over to Blake, requesting the Spanish move their battle line several hundred yards south and realign

themselves to oppose a French advance. Beresford then left to organize the shifting of Anglo-Portuguese formations, with an uncertain Blake belying his orders. However, Zayas took 2,000 men south and assumed a position on the hill north of the shallow valley. The 2nd Battalion Royal Guards and 4th Battalion Royal Guards were in line, with Battalion Irlanda and Battalion Voluntarios de Navarra behind in column. Zayas also had Colonel Jose Miranda's battery of six 4-pounder guns in close support.

Under lowering clouds, thousands of French troops could be seen entering the clear ground west of the Chicapierna, with Soult committing a total of 14,000 infantry and 3,500 cavalry to his flank attack. Blake finally recognized the danger and ordered the realignment, although it took time because of Spanish inexperience in drill and maneuver, their difficulties compounded by instructions that were, in the opinion of one British observer, both tedious and pedantic. It was at this point Beresford arrived and took complete control, with Blake apparently nowhere to be found until after the fighting.

Zayas had extended his line by now; Battalion Irlanda, the 2nd Battalion Royal Guards, Miranda's guns, and the 4th Battalion Royal Guards were deployed west to east, while Battalion Voluntarios de Navarra remained in immediate support. Units under Lardizabal and Ballesteros were moving up farther east as the remaining Spanish battalions were placed in reserve several hundred yards behind, to the north. Meanwhile, Spanish cavalry positioned ahead of Zayas was withdrawing under pressure from their French opponents, retreating northwest of the Allies' new right wing. They would be joined by other cavalry, raising their number to approximately 2,000 men, including 800 British sabers, and with Lumley now in command. Cole's 4th Division moved behind them and continued to act as a reserve.

Zayas had placed three light companies on the hill south of the shallow valley and they had also fallen back. This position had excellent views and the French initially unlimbered horse artillery here, replacing them with V Corps' guns as Soult's cavalry commander, General Nicolas de Fay de La Tour-Maubourg, took his forces farther west. V Corps' 1st Division

was then organized to begin its advance. It was previously assumed the unit adopted a massive T-shaped, mixed-order formation. This theory is now disputed and two large columns were most likely used—the left-hand attack aimed at Battalion Irlanda, the right targeting the 2nd Battalion Royal Guards and Miranda's battery.

Spanish skirmishers behaved with confidence and kept their French counterparts at bay, but this was just the preliminary phase and Zayas's line was soon being hammered by artillery fire. Miranda's guns responded by targeting the enemy straight ahead, with the skirmishers on both sides falling back as Girard's lead units trudged well into range, closing to within 60 yards, and orders to fire were bellowed, a Spanish volley thundering out. Girard now made an understandable but critical mistake: he had his battalions extend left and right to enter a musket duel, as was the usual practice, but he would have been better served by having his men press forward and attempt to overwhelm the enemy in a gigantic melee, recalling the earlier tactics of the French Revolutionary Wars.

It is easy to imagine the shouts of frustration and despair among the French front ranks at this stage. "Our soldiers fall left and right.... In vain, the leaders try to revive confidence through their example," Captain Edouard Lapene recalled. Gazan came up to assist and was wounded, as was the leading brigade's commander, General Michel-Sylvestre Brayer. Order was eventually brought out of the chaos and Zayas's men experienced punishing fire in return, although help was at hand for the Spanish; Stewart's 2nd Division was approaching, with Colborne's brigade at its head and accompanied by Captain Andrew Cleeve's KGL battery.

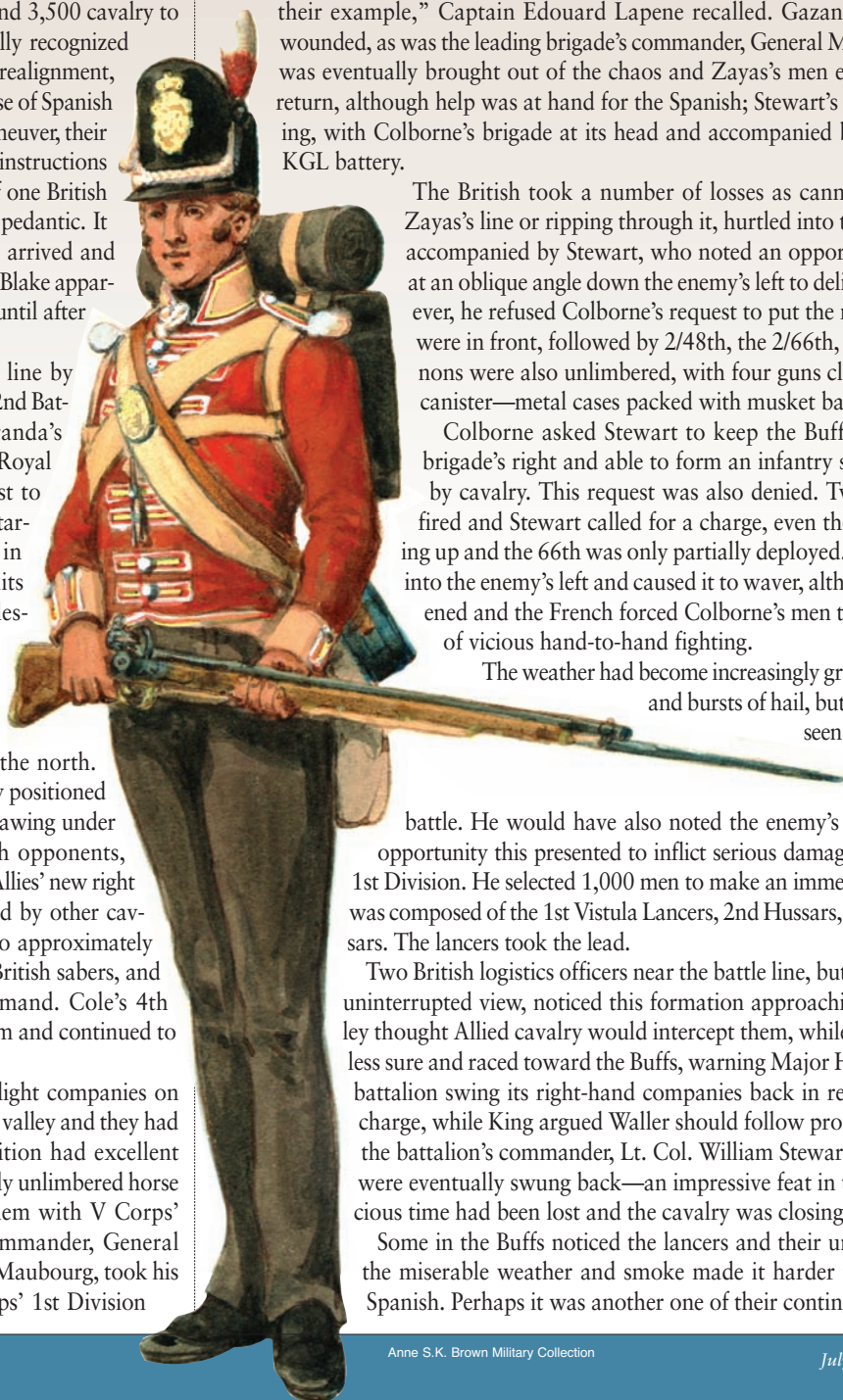
The British took a number of losses as cannon balls, either falling over Zayas's line or ripping through it, hurtled into their columns. Colborne was accompanied by Stewart, who noted an opportunity to deploy the brigade at an oblique angle down the enemy's left to deliver lethal enfilade fire. However, he refused Colborne's request to put the men into line first. The Buffs were in front, followed by 2/48th, the 2/66th, and the 2/31st. Cleeve's cannons were also unlimbered, with four guns close enough to start shooting canister—metal cases packed with musket balls.

Colborne asked Stewart to keep the Buffs in column, anchoring the brigade's right and able to form an infantry square at speed if threatened by cavalry. This request was also denied. Two British volleys were then fired and Stewart called for a charge, even though the 31st was still moving up and the 66th was only partially deployed. He personally led his troops into the enemy's left and caused it to waver, although resistance quickly stiffened and the French forced Colborne's men to retire after several minutes of vicious hand-to-hand fighting.

The weather had become increasingly grim, including irregular squalls and bursts of hail, but Tour-Maubourg would have seen the British approach and possibly witnessed some of the melee through the smoke of battle. He would have also noted the enemy's exposed right flank and the opportunity this presented to inflict serious damage and relieve pressure on the 1st Division. He selected 1,000 men to make an immediate charge. The strike force was composed of the 1st Vistula Lancers, 2nd Hussars, and units from the 10th Hussars. The lancers took the lead.

Two British logistics officers near the battle line, but far enough away to have an uninterrupted view, noticed this formation approaching; Lieutenant Charles Bayley thought Allied cavalry would intercept them, while Captain Robert Waller was less sure and raced toward the Buffs, warning Major Henry King. He suggested the battalion swing its right-hand companies back in readiness to receive an enemy charge, while King argued Waller should follow protocol and speak instead with the battalion's commander, Lt. Col. William Stewart. The right-hand companies were eventually swung back—an impressive feat in the midst of battle—but precious time had been lost and the cavalry was closing fast.

Some in the Buffs noticed the lancers and their uniforms with yellow facings; the miserable weather and smoke made it harder to tell, but surely they were Spanish. Perhaps it was another one of their contingents withdrawing north? In



addition, it was unlikely anyone in the Buffs knew of the Poles, while some would have heard of or even seen Spanish lancers in the past. The mistaken identification, and the subsequent orders to withhold fire, lost the brigade its final chance to take the sting out of the enemy's attack, the horsemen slamming into their shocked opponents almost unopposed.

With the battalion being ripped apart, the king's colors were passed to Lieutenant Matthew Latham who received ghastly wounds in their defense. After being told to surrender the flag, he had shouted, "I will surrender it only with my life!" Several British cavalrymen of the 4th Dragoons suddenly dashed into the fray and distracted the enemy long enough for Latham to hide the colors in his jacket. Amazingly, he would survive the fighting and recover, albeit badly disfigured and his left arm amputated. The regimental colors were lost in the fighting but were later found discarded on the battlefield.

The 48th and 66th were also obliterated by the charge, with all of their colors taken. "Waller had held up his hands asking for mercy but [a] ruffian cut his fingers off," wrote Lieutenant John Clarke of the 66th. Fortunately, Waller survived his wounds. Stewart and his divisional staff scattered, as did Zayas and his personnel, while Cleeve's battery was also targeted, losing almost 50 men—most of them captured—and a howitzer towed away. Located farthest from the point of impact, the 31st was able to form a hasty square and warded off the horsemen.

The Allied cavalry's ability to respond was limited because Lumley needed to maintain his men's cohesion, especially if called on to guard a retreat. Nonetheless, he committed two squadrons from the 4th Dragoons and two Spanish squadrons to sap some of the enemy's vigor. Their efforts not only assisted Latham but helped many of Colborne's men flee or evade capture, including Colborne himself. But four squadrons were never going to be enough and they were forced back, with bolder lancers and hussars free to gallop behind the Spanish line and ahead of Hoghton's brigade, which comprised the 29th, 1/57th, and 1/48th.

Companies from the 29th started firing in response, almost setting off a chain reaction as men of the 57th began shooting as well. A friendly fire disaster loomed as the Spanish were close by, albeit at a higher elevation, prompting Lt. Col. William Inglis, the 57th's commander, to dash out in front and successfully call on his men to stop. In the meantime, several lancers had hurled themselves toward the Allied commander and his staff, with one even reaching Beresford. The Pole was hauled out of his saddle by the marshal and flung to the ground, where he was promptly finished off by the escort.

After several more minutes, and with the enemy cavalry finally gone, it was decided to withdraw the Spanish and replace them with the rest of 2nd Division. Their achievement had been immense, having both stalled the enemy and inflicted a fearsome toll in the process. Yet it appears some were concerned about accusations of cowardice. Lieutenant Moyle Sherer of the 2/34th

(Abercromby's brigade) later recalled how a Spanish officer pleaded with him. "He begged me, with a sort of proud and brave anxiety, to explain to the English that his countrymen were ordered to retire, but were not flying," wrote Sherer.

It was now approximately 12 PM, with a pause on the French side, too, as V Corps' 1st Division was replaced by its 2nd Division, which was now under the control of Maransin as Pepin had been mortally wounded. Some light infantry was also sent ahead to occupy the hill just vacated by Zayas, although the British easily pushed them back. The 31st, Colborne's last surviving unit, deployed just west of Hoghton's men, while Abercromby's brigade, initially facing a composite unit of French Grenadiers, took the eastern side.

Maransin ordered his men to deploy into line and reignite the musket duel once more, with Hoghton fatally injured early on and Inglis taking over until incapacitated by canister shot. Lying on the ground, he shouted words of encouragement to soldiers of the 57th that became part of British Army lore: "Die hard, 57th, die hard!" This story's veracity has recently been questioned but, regardless of

BELOW: Polish lancers tore a bloody path through the Allied infantry during the rainstorm. Their yellow lapels and cuffs were similar to those worn by the Spanish cavalry. **OPPOSITE:** The 57th Regiment, known as the Diehards, holds the line in a driving thunderstorm against the French onslaught. "Die hard the 57th, die hard!" shouted Colonel William Inglis, purportedly giving the battalion its nickname.



being true or not, the regiment would proudly and justifiably be nicknamed “The Diehards” because of it.

Despite their best efforts, the British advance ground to a halt in the face of almost overwhelming fire. “Our line at length became so reduced that it resembled a chain of skirmishers in extended order,” wrote Lieutenant Charles Leslie of the 29th. Beresford urgently needed more men forward and ordered battalions from the Spanish reserve to advance, only to be met with sullen refusal. In his fury, he dragged a nearby colonel forward, hoping the battalion behind would follow. Nobody moved. Increasingly desperate, the Allied commander ordered Hamilton’s division to come up.

Unfortunately for the Allies, Hamilton had decided to support Alten and it took time to find him and start extricating his men. Beresford then left his position to discover what was happening, while staff officer Lt. Col. Henry Hardinge rode over to Cole and, acting independently, urged him to bring up the 4th Division. This presented the divisional commander with a potentially career-wrecking choice. Should he stay in reserve as instructed or advance? Cole sought the advice of other fellow officers and then chose to fight.

Mindful of the cavalry threat, 4th Division moved in broad echelon and in mixed order, with Brig. Gen. William Harvey’s Portuguese brigade taking Cole’s right and Lt. Col. William Myers’ fusilier brigade his left. There was also a battery of guns, the three light companies from Kemmis’s brigade, and a company of sharpshooters from the Brunswick-Oels Regiment who were equipped with rifles. Cole had approximately 5,100 troops underway, with Lumley’s cavalry offering support.

Soult saw the movement and ordered Tour-Maubourg to contest it, while also telling Werlé to advance his brigade. Tour-Maubourg’s men threw back Spanish cavalry ahead of the 4th Division and then primarily targeted Harvey’s brigade, possibly thinking the Portuguese would offer less resistance. They were wrong in this assumption as solid firing kept them at bay. Overall, the nature of the fighting was scrappy and, from the French perspective, ineffective as the 4th Division continued to advance, although Myer’s men now had to contend with Werlé’s attack columns.

They managed to stall the French with some well-aimed volleys and Werlé responded by having his men deploy into line, making the same mistake as Girard and Maransin. This decision lost an opportunity to grapple with the enemy and it would also cost men their lives, including Werlé’s own. Nonetheless, French



return fire was telling and backed up with plenty of cannon shot. Sergeant John Cooper from the 2/7th noted the effect on British ranks. “Under the tremendous fire of the enemy our thin line staggers, men are knocked around like skittles, but not a backward step is taken,” he wrote. Myers was mortally wounded, while Cole took a musket ball to the thigh.

However, the British maintained their momentum and the fusiliers fired several volleys that were followed up with charges. The French 55th Line almost lost its Imperial Eagle standard in one melee, until it was recovered just in time by the bravery of a subaltern leading a small host of men. In desperation, Soult ordered the lancers forward again, although they were held back by accurate shooting. A few managed to break past the enemy line and capture some prisoners but it was nowhere near enough to stall Cole’s men.

In the meantime, to the northeast, Alten had been ordered by Beresford to withdraw from Albuera and cover the road to Valverde, while Campbell’s brigade was told to hold positions near the village. The Germans were promptly ordered back into Albuera when the Allied commander realized events had turned in his favor. Alten noted the enemy had yet to move up in force and that recapturing the village proved fairly easy, although localized attacks continued for some time after the battle proper had finished.

The Allies decisively turned the tide at 2:30 PM as Werlé’s men finally cracked. “They break and rush down the other side of the hill in the greatest mob-like confusion,” recalled Cooper. Almost simultaneously, and following advice given by Hardinge, Abercromby’s men were starting to envelop the French 2nd Division’s right. Sherer remembered bayonets being drawn and the men cheering until a body of French cavalry was seen, stopping them from making a charge. Nonetheless, some of the French were prompted to flee, while the British fired into those who remained. “The slaughter was now, for a few minutes, dreadful,” Sherer wrote.

V Corps’ 2nd Division broke not long afterward, its resolve weakened by the enemy’s volleys and the loss of Maransin, who had been badly wounded. They streamed toward the Chicapierna alongside the men of 1st Division and Werlé’s brigade, with Soult forced to make a rapid retreat. However, V Corps’ guns inflicted heavy damage on the advancing Allied ranks, while Tour-Maubourg’s cavalry moved across, further slowing the enemy’s pace. French units started to rally once over the Chicapierna, the artillery then brought across to offer close support.

The battle sputtered to a halt not long afterward as Beresford started recalling his men. It was a prudent choice. Losses among the Spanish had fallen disproportionately on their best units and it would have been too much to expect their other battalions to perform the maneuvers required during an attack. Later on, it was determined that Blake’s men suffered 1,375 casualties (a 9.5 percent loss rate). The Portuguese had suffered far less, with 387 lost, although their formations were now the backbone of Beresford’s army and needed in case Soult decided to mount another attack. In addition, the task of renewing the siege of Badajoz still lay ahead.

The carnage among the British formations would have been readily apparent, with an eye-watering 4,161 casualties later tallied (nearly 40 percent of all British soldiers present). Colborne’s brigade

Continued on page 70

SWORD

of Albania



Albanian warlord
Skanderbeg
heroically thwarted
the objectives
of the Ottoman Turks
in the 15th century.

— — —
BY LUDWIG
HEINRICH DYCK



ON December 12, 1466, a small group of horsemen led by an old man with a long white beard rode up to the gates of Rome. By the looks of his attire, he was a common soldier, although he bore his tall, gaunt frame as proudly as any great king. A fire still blazed in his eyes, and his gnarled muscles retained most of their legendary strength. He was not as old as he appeared, for a life of constant battle had aged him prematurely. Despite his humble entrance, meant to accentuate his plight, he was recognized. Soon his name was on everyone's lips. Excited crowds gathered to behold the renowned Albanian hero and champion of Christendom "Skanderbeg," who had bravely held back the relentless Turkish advance toward the west.

More than 60 years earlier, around 1405, in the mountainous Dibra region of eastern Albania, Voisana, wife of Gjon Kastrioti, gave birth to Gjergj, the future Skanderbeg. Gjergj was the youngest of four brothers among nine children. Their grandfather Pal had come down from the village of Kastirat in northeastern Albania and made himself a chief in the Dibra. Gjergj was born at a time when the land was fractured by shifting alliances between Albanian nobles, Venetian coastal colonies, and Ottoman Turks on the Macedonian border. By his wit and sword, as well as marriage alliances through his daughters, Gjergj's father expanded his realm. He lorded over much of central Albania by 1394.

Sultan Bayezid I invaded Albania that year, subduing the lands and establishing Ottoman presence in the south. Gjon got his chance to rebuild his power when the Ottoman Empire fell into disarray after its defeat at Ankara by the Timurids in 1402. Gjon even took possession of Kruja, the bastion of central Albania, but in 1415 the Ottomans returned and reestablished authority. Gjon was forced to hand over nine-year-old Gjergj as a hostage. Gjergj appears to have been returned to his parents after only a year, not entering the sultan's service until he was 18 years old in 1423. One of Gjergj's brothers, probably Stanisha the eldest, was more fully integrated into the sultan's court. He married a Muslim woman and had a son named Hamza.

After three years of military training at Edrine, Gjergj was likely granted a timar (land grant) in return for military service near his father's domains. Gjergj's father was soon again at odds with the sultan, as he refused to aid the Ottomans against Venetian Thessaloniki. The sultan sent a punitive expedition and in 1430 seized both Kruja and Svetigrad, the key fortress on Albania's Macedonian frontier. The Turks "pillaged and destroyed the lands of Gjon Kastrioti, the men were put to the sword, while the women were made slaves," wrote Ottoman chronicler Oruc. Gjon was assassinated on the sultan's secret orders in 1437. Gjergj became aware of the culprit behind his father's death but for now remained loyal to the sultan.

In 1438, Gjergj was rewarded by being made *subashi* (town commander) of Kruja. Yet with his typical stern eyes Gjergj would have looked upon the Turkish standards on Kruja's ramparts with disapproval. All along he had dreamed of a free and Christian Albania. He was only biding his time to make it so. Without centralized command and powerful allies, Gjergj had seen how Albanian resistance was doomed. To build a base of future alliances, Gjergj covertly sent messengers to Naples, Venice, Ragusa, and Hungary. This he continued to do even as he was promoted to *sanjakebey* (district commander) of Dibra in 1440.

By 1443 Gjergj had served Murad for 15 years and had gained the Turkish name of Iskander, after Alexander the Great, who was revered by Christians and Muslims alike. Hence Gjergj became known as Scenderbeij to the Albanians, which was a combination of his Turkish name and the rank of bey. In early November, Skanderbeg and his 300 Albanian cavalry were with the sultan's army when it engaged the Hungarians and Poles at Nis.

Ladislav, the brave young king of Hungary and Poland, commanded the army in person but it was the renowned Turkish fighter Janos Hunyadi, Lord of Transylvania, who led it to victory. In the chaotic aftermath of the Turkish defeat, Skanderbeg forced the sultan's secretary to write a note handing over command of Kruja. With Skanderbeg was his nephew Hamza, who upon their arrival at Kruja delivered the secretary's note to Governor Hasan Bey. Hamza lacked his uncle's physical stature but not his charisma and spirit, and so he convinced Hasan of the legitimacy of the note. Skanderbeg gave a stirring speech in the cathedral on November 28. He renounced the sultan and Islam and championed Christian freedom. The Kastrioti flag of the two-headed black eagle on red was once more hoisted over Kruja.

Gjergj Kastrioti, better known as Skanderbeg, leads Albanian cavalry against the Ottoman Turks. He thwarted Ottoman attempts to subjugate his native land over a quarter century.

An emboldened Skanderbeg captured the Turkish strongholds from east of Kruja to the Black Drin. Like their duped comrades at Kruja, the garrisons were given the choice of baptism or execution. Skanderbeg pushed himself hard, sleeping as little as two hours a night and sustaining himself through his healthy appetite for food and wine. He was joined by Moses Golemi of Dibra, who forced Svetigrad into surrender.

Skanderbeg prepared for an expected Turkish spring counteroffensive during the winter of 1443-1444. On March 2, 1444, nine leading families joined Skanderbeg at the cathedral of the Venetian coastal town of Lezhe. Skanderbeg's spirit of patriotism struck at the hearts of the assembled lords. They elected him captain general of the League of Albanian Princes. Thereafter, thousands of soldier-peasants showed up to fight under Skanderbeg, for his manner of dressing and eating plainly appealed to the common man.

In June, Skanderbeg awaited the Turks in the northern Dibra, where the upland plain of Torvill descended to the Black Drin. Just before sunset, Ali Pasha encamped his 24,000-strong Turkish army not far from the Albanian camp. Fires in the Ottoman camp illuminated faces full of mirth and confidence. In contrast, Skanderbeg's camp was dark and silent to keep the Turks guessing about his own army. In the morning Skanderbeg deployed his horsemen and archers in a crescent with infantry in the rear. Amused at the paltry numbers of the Albanians, Ali opened the battle with cavalry skirmishes. The Turkish infantry had just marched forth to join the battle when 3,000 Albanian horsemen suddenly charged out of the woods to the rear. The Turks panicked and were cut down in great numbers. Ali Pasha was among the few that escaped.

Gaining extra horses and immense booty from the Turkish baggage train, the Albanians broke out in song and boasted that the Turkish cow could not get away from the Albanian bull. More refined congratulations for Skanderbeg came from Poland, Hungary, Venice, Burgundy, and Pope Eugenius IV. Edged on by the Pope, King Ladislav called for Skanderbeg to join forces and together drive the Turks out of the Balkans. As it was, Skanderbeg was delayed from joining Ladislav before the king's death and disastrous defeat at Varna on November 10.

Sultan Murad offered to forgive his rogue vassal Skanderbeg and even recognize his claim to Kruja, but in return demanded other Albanian towns. When told that his offer had been spurned,

Murad sneered that Skanderbeg must wish for a terrible death. In 1445 Firuz Pasha set out from Skopje, the capital of Macedonia, with upward of 15,000 picked horsemen to deal with Skanderbeg. Instead, it was Firuz's cavalry that was set upon by Skanderbeg's light infantry in a wooded mountain pass not far from Prizren. Despite the disadvantageous terrain, the Turkish horsemen resisted bitterly until being forced to retreat. On September 27, 1446, Skanderbeg fell upon the poorly guarded Turkish camp of Mustafa Pasha at Otonete. Fierce fighting raged through the trenches until nearly all the Turks were slaughtered; however, Mustafa escaped and was thereafter ordered on the defensive.

A new theater of war opened up for Skanderbeg over the stronghold of Danje in northwestern Albania. When Danje's heirless Lord Lek Zaharia was killed, his mother handed Danje over to the Venetians rather than lose it to his slayer, Lek Dukagjini. Based on a previous agreement with his friend Zaharia, Skanderbeg felt that he should inherit Danje.

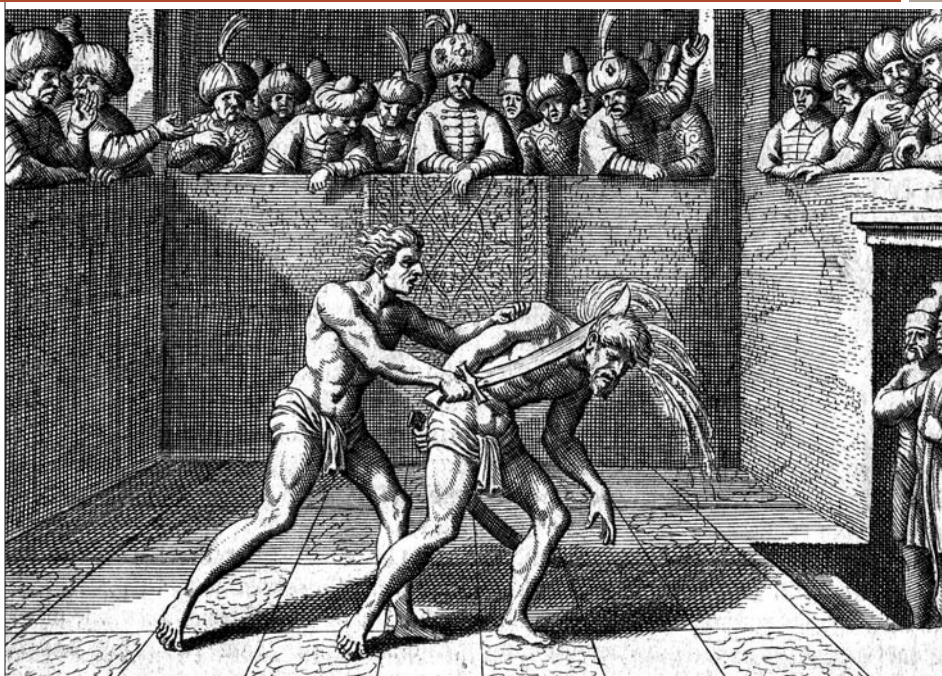
When Skanderbeg besieged Danje, the Venetians had the audacity to ask Murad to punish his wayward vassal and even offered a reward for Skanderbeg's assassination. Their scheming came to naught, though, and on July 23, 1448, the opposing armies met on a plain flanked by the Drin southeast of Venetian Scodra. This time Skanderbeg was also fighting his countrymen; two-thirds of the 15,000-strong Venetian army was Albanian, led by lords whose bond with Venice overrode their allegiance to Skanderbeg.

Skanderbeg reminded his men that they were fighting fellow Christians and that they should thus act more lenient. Venetian pikemen in corslet armor advanced into the furious fire of Albanian archers. On the wings, Skanderbeg's cavalry gained the upper edge. The bodyguard of Daniel Jurich of Sebenca, governor of Scodra, sustained the Venetian defense but nearly collapsed when Skanderbeg broke through with a cavalry charge. Jurich's Albanian allies came to his rescue but defeat could not be avoided.

Skanderbeg was thus able to continue the siege of Danje, but things turned sour when Hamza attacked Venetian allied Drivasta. Rebuffed, Hamza raided the surrounding population. Although greatly angered by the needless loss of Albanian blood, Skanderbeg had more pressing matters on his mind for a courier had brought news of a renewed Turkish invasion.

Leading 15,000 men from Ohrida was Mustafa, eager to wipe out the shame of his earlier defeat. Mustafa advanced to within six miles of Kruja when he was intercepted by Skanderbeg's army. During a prebattle duel, the

DURING A PREBATTLE DUEL, THE CAVALIER PAL MANASI BEHEADED THE TURKISH CHAMPION KRAGOZ. THE TURKS WERE LEFT DEMORALIZED, AND EVEN MUSTAFA'S PERSONAL BRAVERY COULD NOT REKINDLE RESISTANCE.



cavalier Pal Manasi beheaded the Turkish champion Kragoz. The Turks were left demoralized, and even Mustafa's personal bravery could not rekindle resistance. Mustafa was taken prisoner and ended up being ransomed by Murad for 25,000 ducats; however, in Skanderbeg's absence the Venetians had made gains. Furious over the matter, Skanderbeg hurried back to Venetian territory, putting to the sword any who did not swear fealty.

Nevertheless, Skanderbeg agreed to a peace with Venice on October 4, 1448, and even relinquished his claim on Danje. In return, Skanderbeg was to be paid 1,400 ducats a year and gain exemption from salt duty. Skanderbeg could ill afford to continue a two-fronted war since Hunyadi needed his help and was already moving against the Turks. For a second time, though, Skanderbeg was too late to help Hunyadi avert defeat. That defeat came at Kosovo-Polje on October 18-19, 1448.

In the spring of 1449 Sultan Murad personally led his gargantuan army against Skanderbeg. Fear took hold of Albania and crowded churches reverberated with prayers. To uplift morale, priests preached of celestial signs assuring victory. Skanderbeg had a vision of St. George, the patron saint of Albania, who handed him a flaming sword to strike down the unbelievers.

Preceding Murad's slow-moving main army with its siege engines and baggage train was a separate, powerful detachment of light cavalry. This advance force set up camp below Murad's objective of Svetigrad. Shortly afterward the Turks espied a party of peasants leading horses laden with supplies for Svetigrad. Mounting their horses, a number of Turks set off after the peasants only to discover that the peasants were Moses Golemi and 30 of his best men in disguise. The Turks were beaten in a furious melee, after which 4,000 Turkish cavalry were sent to hunt down Moses's party. They suffered an even greater defeat when Skanderbeg's infantry attacked from thickets and ravines.

Murad arrived on May 14 at Svetigrad with 150,000 soldiers, servants, and camp followers. From a forest of hoisted standards, a clamor of shouting, pounding drums, and blaring trumpets carried up the craggy hillside to Svetigrad's walls. Murad sent envoys, but neither money nor privileges could buy off fortress commander Peter Perlat.

Three days of bombardment opened a breach in the walls, but the approach was steep and missiles raked the Turks off the siege ladders. The Turks nevertheless kept climbing until they passed the outer trenches. At that point, Turkish pickets spotted an immense cloud of dust. Led by Skanderbeg, 5,000 Albanian cavalry



TOP: A Renaissance portrait believed to be Skanderbeg. Bottom: Ottoman sultans Murad II (left) and Mehmed II. OPPOSITE: Members of the Ottoman court watch as Skanderbeg deals a death blow to the neck of a Tatar opponent in gladiatorial combat.

a traitor had poisoned the well with a dead dog. Murad's son Mehmet wanted to massacre the survivors, but Murad let them depart unmolested. Wearing girdles around their necks as symbolic halters, the vanquished garrison prostrated itself before Skanderbeg. Knowing that Perlat and his men had done all they could, Skanderbeg praised them for their bravery.

Back at Kruja, Skanderbeg was beset by Albanian nobility urging him to find a wife who would give him an heir. Not inclined to submit to the yoke of marriage, Skanderbeg maintained that it was inappropriate to think of courting while Svetigrad remained under tyranny. Murad rebuilt Svetigrad's walls and left behind a strong janissary garrison, then left for Edrine. Skanderbeg, for his part, had been reinforced by Italian and German arquebusiers and crossbowmen, Serbian swordsmen, and French artillery. Even so, he was unable to retake Svetigrad because he was thwarted by the tenaciously defended natural defenses. When the weather turned foul, the janissaries ridiculed the soaked Albanian cavalry riding in the mud below.

In October Skanderbeg broke off the fruitless siege, having received news of an approaching Turkish relief force. The Turkish onslaught was sure to hit Kruja the following year. Riding through heavy snowfall and blizzards, Skanderbeg and Moses scouted attack routes and hill trails. Kruja's defenses were strengthened, grain was stockpiled, and Count Vrana's garrison reinforced with the European volunteers and mercenaries.

Sultan Murad and his massive army set forth from Edrine on April 5, 1450. Skanderbeg could do nothing to stop the Turkish army's slow but inexorable arrival below Kruja. From nearby Mount Tumenishta, Skanderbeg watched the Turks set up a sea of tents, pavilions, flags, and banners. Murad's heralds offered 200,000 aspers (silver coins) for Vrana and safe conduct and religious freedom to its citizens, if Kruja surrendered. When his offer was refused, Murad let his cannons do the talking.

After five days of siege the Turks launched their first assault, but it had barely begun when shouts and commotion erupted from the rear. Skanderbeg's cavalry was tearing through the periphery

thundered upon the Turkish camp. The Albanian horsemen gave a mighty shout that carried all the way up the mountain, lifting the hearts of the defenders.

Murad's royal cavalry galloped forth to engage the attackers, but the Albanians maintained the upper hand. Skanderbeg personally slayed five of the enemy. When the Turks on the hillside broke off the assault on the walls to join the fighting below, Skanderbeg retreated into the wilds. With Svetigrad's lofty heights frustrating assaults, Murad settled down for a lengthy siege.

Late at night on June 22, the Turks heard the neighing of horses and clatter of armor just before Skanderbeg's cavalry bolted out of the dark. Several thousand Albanian horsemen tore through the outer camp, spreading confusion, overthrowing tents, setting fires, and dealing death. When the Turks counterattacked with a solid phalanx of spears and pikes, Skanderbeg signaled the retreat. The Albanians took the heads of decapitated Turks with them.

Murad flew into a rage. He renewed the assaults and granted Firuz Pasha his wish to hunt down Skanderbeg. Unfortunately for Firuz, he was given second-rate troops. There was a high rate of desertion and, not surprisingly, the remainder were destroyed by Skanderbeg. When Firuz challenged him to combat, Skanderbeg drove his lance through Firuz's helmet and head.

Nevertheless, Svetigrad surrendered after three months of siege. Murad did this either because the water supplies ran low or because

of the Turkish camp. Crown Prince Mehmet led 4,000 Turkish horsemen in a counterattack, whereupon Skanderbeg retreated because he needed to conserve his paltry forces. The assault on Kruja then redoubled in fury, but Vrana rushed in fresh reinforcements and the walls held.

While cannon fire chipped away at the walls, Mehmet lay in wait for Skanderbeg's next raid. Instead, he was diverted by a feint attack led by Moses. Skanderbeg then attacked where least expected. He wreaked havoc before retreating. Drums and trumpets heralded another assault on Kruja, and the Turks stormed forth under their own artillery fire, but again the defenses held. Next miners dug beneath the fortress but rock barred their way. At one point, Murad espied Skanderbeg on the cliff overlooking Kruja. Murad laughed sardonically. Perhaps it would be better to leave the wild, ferocious lion alone, he thought.

After a third failed assault, Murad tried to buy off Skanderbeg by offering an annual stipend of 10,000 crowns. Skanderbeg retorted he would decline even if Murad offered half the Ottoman Empire. With the approach of winter, Murad was forced to concede failure and on October 26 marched back to Edrine. Stricken by illness, Murad passed away in January 1451.

Ecstatic crowds greeted Skanderbeg at Kruja; bonfires were lit and songs were sung. Vrana was awarded gold and silver, two ornamented coats of armor, and four manors. Praise for Skanderbeg arrived from Hungary, Burgundy, Naples, and the Papacy. Pope Nicholas V called Skanderbeg "the most redoubtable athlete and fearless warrior of the true faith," according to 19th-century German historian Friedrich Kayser. Alfonso of Aragon, King of Naples, sent wheat, barley, and workmen to Kruja. Early in 1451 Skanderbeg acknowledged Alfonso as his sovereign. This suited Alfonso's empire-building schemes along the Adriatic Sea and ensured future supplies and troops for Skanderbeg. As Alfonso's vassal, Skanderbeg held the title of Captain General of Aragon.

Skanderbeg wed in May 1451. His bride was 21-year-old Andronica, the daughter of Gjergj Arianiti and Maria Muzaka. The wedding festivities were held at Kanina overlooking Vlora Bay. People flocked to see the newlyweds as they toured Albania. Skanderbeg took leave of Andronica at Petrela. There were few passes into the idyllic pastoral valley, and given the dangerous times, Skanderbeg placed garrisons in all of them. Skanderbeg went to oversee the construction of Modrica, a new castle on the frontier, when he received envoys from the new sultan.

Sultan Mehmet II had grander dreams than his pragmatic father. Mehmet intended to extend the Ottoman Empire until it rivaled the Roman Empire of old. But first rebellious emirates in Anatolia required his personal intervention. Treaties kept Serbia, Hungary, and Venice in check but not Skanderbeg, who refused to bend to the sultan's will.

Cannon fire boomed along the lower Dibra as Modrica signaled the approach of an Ottoman army. Turkish commander Amese led 12,000 cavalry up a long and strenuous climb. When the exhausted men and beasts emerged into broken terrain, Skanderbeg sprang his ambush. From behind boulders and rocky crags, Albanian infantry struck at the Turkish column. The Turks threw down their lances and scimitars rasped out of scabbards but their horses had poor footing. The Albanians killed first the steeds and then the riders. It was the first in a new string of victories for Skanderbeg.

In March 1452, Skanderbeg penetrated Turkish territory to near Skopje. During a night battle, Skanderbeg ran his lance through the Turkish commander. Then on April 22, 1453, in the Pollog valley, Skanderbeg launched a cavalry attack during a storm, throwing the Turkish camp into chaos.

The losses that Mehmet incurred at Skanderbeg's hands were more than made up for with his capture of Constantinople in May 1453. The fall of the last bastion of the Roman Empire to the Turks sent a wave of fear throughout Christendom. Skanderbeg visited Naples and Rome to strengthen the war effort, but it was not until the spring of 1455 that a joint Christian offensive got underway. This time, though, everything was different. Skanderbeg wanted to retake Svetigrad, but his allies decided to recapture Berat, the key fortress of the south. Overall command was entrusted not to Skanderbeg, but to Musachi Thopia, whose family traditionally laid claim to Berat. Moses was not at Skanderbeg's side either, having remained on the Dibra frontier. Reinforced with 2,000 Neapolitan arquebusiers, crossbowmen, and artillerymen, the 14,000-strong Albanian army laid siege to Berat. Three days of bombardment blasted a breach in the walls. Skanderbeg was ready for the assault when Thopia accepted the unusual Turkish surrender terms; the garrison would hand over the town, but only after 11 days.

Skanderbeg encamped on a mountain next to Berat with 4,000 men. The rest of Thopia's army was already in victory celebrations when a huge Turkish relief force appeared. With an purported 40,000 cavalry, Izak Bey annihilated Thopia's Albanians, killing him in the process and wiping out nearly all the Neapolitans as well. Witnessing the disaster, Skanderbeg's upper lip split as it often did when he grimaced in anger. His cavalry stormed down the mountain and into the Turks, pur-

suing Thopia's Albanians. Two Turks charged their horses at Skanderbeg, who met them with his famous scimitar, forged in Damascus. Skanderbeg slashed one of the Turks across the eye, nearly cleaving the head in two. The other Turk flung himself from his saddle and grappled Skanderbeg, intent on pulling him off his horse. Skanderbeg freed himself by slicing his scimitar across the Turk's neck. The battle had been lost, though, and Skanderbeg had no other choice but to withdraw. The Turks vented their anger by breaking the limbs of the wounded Christians with maces. Having broken the siege of Berat, Izak Bey returned to Edrine.

The tear-stained women of Kruja implored Skanderbeg to tell them of missing husbands and sons. Those who had died in battle were lucky compared to those taken prisoner by the Turks. Impaled and decapitated, their heads were stuffed with straw and used as footballs by the street urchins of Edrine. On top of it all, Skanderbeg received the shocking news that Moses had defected to the sultan. Even before the Berat campaign, the sultan's agents had corrupted Moses's mind with gifts and flattery. Astonishingly, Skanderbeg forgave Moses, admitting that the disaster at Berat could have made the most loyal falter. Indeed, several other Albanian lords followed Moses's example. Modrica, too, was lost through treachery.

When the next Turkish army moved against Albania in late February 1456, it was commanded by Moses. On the plains of Oronichea, Moses spurred his horse toward Skanderbeg's army and challenged him to personal combat. Skanderbeg hesitated, not wishing to spill the blood of his former friend. When Moses's insults became too much, Skanderbeg walked out, whereupon Moses galloped back to his own lines. Six thousand Albanian cavalry smashed into the Turks, shattering their formations. Skanderbeg was nearly skewered by a lance, but his Albanians never lost their initial advantage. Moses was lucky to escape with a third of his army. Inflamed by the memory of Berat, the Albanians took no prisoners.

Defamed at the sultan's court, Moses stole away on a horse to return to Dibra. Wearing a rope in the form of a halter, a weeping Moses abased himself in front of Skanderbeg. Skanderbeg took his old friend's hand, pardoned him, and returned his lands and titles. Taking some well-deserved rest, Skanderbeg spent time with his wife on the coast and stayed with her at Kruja for most of the winter. Andronica was pregnant and during the year gave birth to their only child, Gjon Castrioti II.

The happy news of Moses's return and Skanderbeg having an heir was countered by

another defection. Tired of living in his uncle's shadow, Hamza aspired to be ruler of Albania and looked to the Sultan to make him so. In the late summer of 1457 Hamza advanced on Albania with Izak Bey in co-command of 50,000 men. Wary of ambushes, Hamza led the Turkish army down the Mat River valley to the coastal plain. Hamza's scouts reported that Skanderbeg had pulled back to Lezhe, but actually Skanderbeg had doubled back to Mount Tumenishta. The Turks set up their camp south of the Mat at the Field of White Water. Expecting Skanderbeg to approach from Lezhe, a strong force had been posted on the northern edge of the Turkish camp. The eastern side, where Skanderbeg was watching from the hillside, was left undefended.

On the afternoon of September 2 Skanderbeg and eight men crept up to dozing Turkish sentries and slit their throats. When one of the sentries escaped and ran screaming into the camp, Skanderbeg immediately ordered the attack. Trumpets and drums blared and shouts erupted, as if a mighty host was about fall upon the Turks, for Skanderbeg had told his small army to make as much noise as possible. To add to the confusion, the Turkish army was

Skanderbeg's cavalry overran the Ottoman camp in the Pollog valley in 1453.

attacked on two other sides by Moses and Tanush Thopia. Cavalry thundered back and forth. Devastating Albanian arquebusier fire parted the thick Turkish ranks. When the Turks fell back in disorder, both the arquebusiers and the bowmen drew their swords, slashing the fleeing Turks. Izak escaped due to the speed of his horse, but Hamza was captured.

Mehmet paid a ransom of more than 50,000 crowns for the standard bearer and for 40 distinguished captives. Hamza ended up in Alfonso's dungeon. An Ottoman envoy offered a 10-year truce, which Skanderbeg was willing to accept in return for Svetigrad and Berat. This Mehmet would not do. Despite the lack of a formal truce, the Turks remained on the defensive through the winter. On December 23 Pope Callixtus III honored Skanderbeg with the titles of Captain General of Kruja, the Holy See, and the Champion of Christ. In the spring of 1458 Skanderbeg found the Turkish lines too well prepared to risk a raid. Impressed by the noble character of the Turkish commander Hamur, Skanderbeg decided to honor the peace.

The year 1458 was marked by other fateful events, though. Kruja's indomitable defender, Count Vrana, passed away, as did Pope Callixtus and King Alfonso, whose son Ferdinand inherited the throne. The change in rulers occasioned the release of Hamza. Taking pity, Skanderbeg arranged Hamza's return to Edrine so that he could be with his Muslim family. Hamza was never heard of again, allegedly poisoned by a suspicious Mehmet.

Next, Skanderbeg's attention was drawn toward Italy where Ferdinand was beset by rebellious nobles. Skanderbeg felt honor bound to help Alfonso's son and heir, whom he still regarded as his sovereign. Headed by Orsini del Balzo, Duke of Taranto, the rebels backed John of Anjou's claim to the kingdom. Orsini wrote to Skanderbeg, trying to persuade him that he was backing a lost cause. Replying by the end of October 1460, Skanderbeg reminded Orsini that he had stood up to the Sultan's army, which was superior to any Italian army.

In the summer of 1461 Skanderbeg left Andronica as regent and departed from Vlora Bay with a fleet carrying 3,000 soldiers. After meeting up with smaller contingents at a welcoming Ragusa, Skanderbeg set sail for Italy. Delayed by mist and storms, the galleys reached Barletta in August. Ferdinand was besieged by the main French army under John of Anjou and soldier of fortune Count Jacob Piccinino. The French withdrew upon sighting Skanderbeg's fleet. Ferdinand embraced Skanderbeg with tears of joy. Except for Naples, Barletta, and Trani, the entire kingdom had already fallen to John of Anjou.





Leaving Skanderbeg to defend Barletta, Ferdinand departed to meet up with allies from Milan. Skanderbeg scouted out the rolling hills and flat plains, using his familiar tactics of attacking from different directions, retreating, and then counterattacking. This caught the French forces, which were used to set-piece battles, off guard. Coming out to parley, the diminutive Piccinino was left speechless by the sight of the tall, white-bearded Skanderbeg, who picked him up and kissed him in greeting. Sizing up Skanderbeg as a naive hill man with no inkling of Machiavellian politics, Piccinino drew out negotiations while planning to ambush and capture him. Forewarned, the infuriated Skanderbeg set forth to destroy Piccinino's mercenaries; however, they succeeded in slipping away. After carrying out raids, Skanderbeg returned to Albania in February 1462. Skanderbeg's intervention had enabled Ferdinand to turn the war in his favor and eventually emerge victorious.

From 1462 to 1464 Skanderbeg retained the momentum against the Turks. First to be defeated in 1462 was Sinam, whose army Skanderbeg shattered with a surprise attack along the frontier. Skanderbeg then won a second victory at Lake Ohrid, where he was touched by compassion for the brave Turkish commander Assembeg. When the bloodied Assembeg pleaded for mercy, Skanderbeg treated his wounds and had him escorted to safety. The last battle of 1462 took place close to Skopje, where the cowardice of the Turkish commander, Jusumbeg, caused the rout of his army.

The following year Skanderbeg's Albanians raided into Turkish territory and stole thousands of horses, cattle, sheep, and goats. In 1464 Skanderbeg defeated a force under Sheremet Bey by Lake Ohrid. Skanderbeg celebrated by feasting on the famed letnica trout endemic to the deep, clear waters. Skanderbeg's latest offensive was to be part of Pope Pius II's grand Christian strategy against the Turks, but while on his way with reinforcements Pius perished from illness.

In 1465 another succession of armies marched against Albania. They were commanded by Balaban Pasha, an Albanian. The son of a shepherd who lived on Skanderbeg's family lands, Balaban had been taken from his parents and brought up as a janissary.

In early April Balaban led his 18,000-man army against Skanderbeg's 4,000 cavalry and 2,500 infantry, all veterans, at the Battle of Vajkal near Ohrid. Although defeated, Balaban not only evaded capture but turned on his overeager pursuers and captured eight Albanian nobles, including Moses. Taken to Istanbul, Moses and the others were given the choice of conversion or death. Refusing to bow to Islam, they were flayed alive and their bodies thrown to the street dogs. The news of their fate struck Albania with despair, and there was mourning throughout the land.

Next, Balaban tried a night attack on Skanderbeg's camp near Oranik. Balaban bribed the guards, who were of his kin, but despite the late hour Skanderbeg was inspecting the camp perimeter and sounded the alarm. Again defeated, Balaban escaped with a portion of his army. Seizing the initiative, Skanderbeg attacked Balaban's camp below Svetigrad.

During the fighting Skanderbeg's horse was mortally wounded and collapsed over a tree stump. The dying horse pinned Skanderbeg's shoulder to the ground. Swooning in pain, Skanderbeg

ABOVE: Skanderbeg rallies the Albanians near Kruja. He forced the Ottomans to raise their siege of the strategic town three times. OPPOSITE: Skanderbeg (right) and his warriors are depicted in a sculpture at the Kruja Museum. His death came as a major blow to Christian resistance against Ottoman hegemony in the Balkans.

watched as the Turks advanced with sabers in hand. Fortunately, his faithful Albanians arrived to the rescue in the nick of time. Overcome with berserk rage, Skanderbeg shrugged off the pain, mounted another horse, and rejoined the fray. The Turks were routed, although Balaban was saved by his swift horse. Skanderbeg's injury took three months to heal. It probably took that long for the silver-tongued Balban to calm down the furious Mehmet.

Late in the fall, Balaban not only returned with another army of 24,000 men, but also received support from a 16,000-strong second army under Islamic Albanian Jakup Arnauti. Fortunately, Ferdinand had at last sent some troops, boosting Skanderbeg's forces to 12,000 men. With these he engaged Balaban at the Second Battle of Vajkal. Balaban fought bravely but fled when defeat seemed inevitable, precipitating the collapse of his army. Skanderbeg then defeated Jakup's army near the village of Tirana, personally slaying Jakup.

Skanderbeg continued to triumph against all odds, but the unceasing war had drained the land of its best young men and denuded the fields of their crops. And Skanderbeg's greatest challenge was yet to come, for in the spring of 1466 Mehmet led his great army against Albania. The 100,000-strong Ottoman army converged on Kruja in a pincer movement.

Mehmet led his contingent to the headwaters of the Shkumbi, following the river as it descended from the mountains into the fertile coastal plain. Turkish raiders burned, raped, and killed as they advanced. They pillaged anything of use before destroying everything else. Throngs of villagers with livestock fled to mountain retreats but the Turks came after them. The Albanian death toll was appalling and 20,000 were dragged into captivity. Skanderbeg struck at smaller Turkish parties but was unable to arrest the Ottoman advance.

Mehmet intended to starve out Kruja's garrison and kept them under constant bombardment. When Mehmet returned to Istanbul in the fall, he left behind 30,000 men under Balaban to continue the siege. It was under these dire circumstances that Skanderbeg and his small retinue showed up at Rome on December 12, 1466. At a service in St. Peter's, Pope Paul rewarded Skanderbeg with a sword of honor and a consecrated helmet. He also gave him 7,500 ducats but could offer no more help. Unfortunately, the Papacy was at war with none other than Ferdinand, whom Skanderbeg petitioned next. Ferdinand warmly welcomed Skanderbeg, but he could only offer 1,500 ducats, supplies, and ammunition.

Returning to Albania, Skanderbeg was pleasantly surprised that the Venetians sent substantial reinforcements; however, Balaban was likewise about to be reinforced by his brother Yonuzi and Yonuzi's son, Haiden. In a night attack in April 1467, Skanderbeg routed Yonuzi and Haiden's army and took both of them prisoner. Balaban then tried to win over Kruja's garrison by persuasion. The garrison commander, Tanush Thopia, answered by leading a sally out of the gate. When Balaban counterattacked, an arquebusier shot caught him in the throat. Galloping back to the Turkish camp, Balaban tumbled off his horse and died. Deprived of their leader, the Turks left the environs of Kruja at night and fought their way out of Albania. As for Yonuzi and Haiden, remembering the cruel end of Moses and the other Albanian leaders, Skanderbeg allegedly cut both prisoners in two with a single blow of his scimitar.

Truly incensed, Mehmet returned in the spring of 1468. In a repeat of the previous year, the Turks looted, burned, raped, and killed. When Mehmet returned to Istanbul in the fall, he again left behind an army to continue the siege of Kruja. Once more, though, Skanderbeg was able to break the siege.

Although Kruja was saved once again, Skanderbeg's army was reduced to only a few thousand men. He called for another council of Albanian leaders which, alongside representa-

tives from Venice, was to meet in Lezhe. Skanderbeg made it to Lezhe, but the council never happened. Beset by a fever from malaria or from the plague, he grew increasingly ill. From his bedside, Skanderbeg implored his closest friends to continue to defend Christianity.

Skanderbeg's last moments were spent in the company of his queen and their son. The legendary Albanian freedom fighter died on January 17, 1468. The wailing of women and the ringing of church bells echoed through the hills.

"Woe to Christendom!" Mehmet exclaimed. "She has lost her sword and shield," wrote Englishman Richard Knolles in his history of the Turks. Indeed, though diverted to the east for 10 years, Mehmet returned in 1477 to starve Kruja into submission. Kruja's men were massacred and the women and children enslaved. The Turks went on to take possession of the Venetian coastal towns and gained a foothold in Italy. Led in part by Gjon Castrioti II, resistance continued in Albania until 1481 when, after being ousted from Italy, the Turks returned in force. Like many Albanians, Gjon found refuge in the Kingdom of Naples.

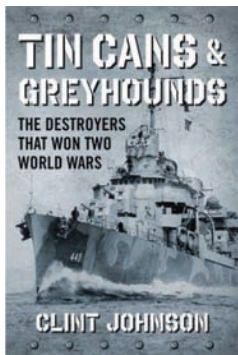
Albania remained under Ottoman rule for more than four centuries, not regaining her national freedom until 1912. But the memory of Skanderbeg kept alive an Albanian self-identity that defied foreign occupation. As his battle powers grew in the telling, the historical Skanderbeg became one of legend. He was said to have slain by his own hand upward of 3,000 Turks in battle. What is certain is that Skanderbeg was a man of honor and deep religious faith, of outstanding bravery and limitless energy. He united Albania's noble families and for 25 years won victory after victory. Skanderbeg's black, double-headed eagle on red became Albania's flag. To this day, Skanderbeg remains a national hero. □

ALTHOUGH DEFEATED, BALABAN NOT ONLY EVADED CAPTURE BUT TURNED ON HIS OVEREAGER PURSUERS AND CAPTURED EIGHT ALBANIAN NOBLES, INCLUDING MOSES. TAKEN TO ISTANBUL, MOSES AND THE OTHERS WERE GIVEN THE CHOICE OF CONVERSION OR DEATH.



By Christopher Miskimon

The U.S. Navy relied heavily on its versatile destroyers in two world wars to fulfill a variety of missions.



The USS *Borie* rams *U-405* in the North Atlantic in a painting by eyewitness Warrant Boatswain Hunter Wood, who served aboard the Clemson-class destroyer. *U-405* participated in nine wolfpacks and sank five vessels.

ON NOVEMBER 1, 1943, A GUNFIGHT UNFOLDED ON THE HIGH seas. It began with a more conventional naval battle, a depth-charge attack by an American destroyer on a German U-boat. USS *Borie*, an older Clemson-class destroyer built just after World War I, picked up a radar contact that turned out to be the *U-256*, a Type VIIC submarine. *Borie*'s captain, Lt. Cmdr. Charles

H. Hutchins, ordered his ship to investigate and soon attacked the enemy vessel. He thought the submarine sank, but *U-256* was only damaged. The U-boat limped home. It would later conduct three more patrols before being surrendered at the end of the war.

Shortly afterward, *Borie*'s crew detected another Type VIIC submarine, the *U-405*. The destroyer raced to the scene and dropped more depth charges, forcing the submarine to the surface only 400 yards away. The destroyer was maneuvered to open the range and allow her main battery

of 4-inch guns to open fire. The sailors manning the 20mm antiaircraft guns also joined in, peppering the U-boat with shellfire.

The Germans replied with their own antiaircraft guns, striking *Borie* around the bridge and in her forward engine room. When some of the Germans tried to man *U-405*'s deck gun, they were met by a hail of 20mm projectiles. One of *Borie*'s 4-inch gun crews then blew the submarine's deck gun completely off its hull.

Hutchins ordered his ship to ram the rapidly maneuvering submarine.

Just before it struck, a large wave lifted the destroyer so it instead landed atop *U-405* at about a 30-degree angle from parallel. The two vessels became wedged together. All of *Borie*'s main guns and most of her 20mm cannons couldn't depress far enough to hit the submarine. Determined to keep up the fight, the American sailors opened their ship's small arms lockers and grabbed shotguns, Thompson submachine guns, and rifles.

What followed was a gun battle that rivaled anything from the boarding actions of centuries past. The Americans poured small arms fire onto *U-405*'s deck, killing or wounding any German who dared try to man his remaining deck weapons. Eventually ammunition began to run low. Still, one German was knocked into the ocean by a 4-inch shell casing thrown by an American sailor. Another American crewman threw his sheath knife at a German. The blade sunk into his torso and he slipped into the water.

Eventually more waves pulled the two vessels apart and *U-405* tried to move away. More depth charges were fired and another 4-inch shell struck the submarine's exhaust, after which her crew began to abandon ship. Some of the men fired flares into the night sky, signaling another nearby U-boat. That submarine fired a torpedo at *Borie* but missed. *Borie*

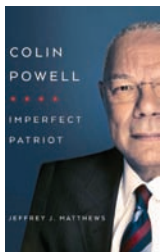


was trying to rescue the German crew but had to move off in light of the new attack. None of U-405's crew was seen again.

Borie's hull was badly damaged by the ramming attempt and she began to sink. The crew struggled to keep her afloat in worsening seas but eventually the ship had to be abandoned. In the end, *Borie* was torpedoed by an American plane after the surviving crew was rescued. This is one of the most astounding stories of destroyers from either world war and it is just one of the tales included in *Tim Cans and Greyhounds: The Destroyers That Won Two World Wars* (Clint Johnson, Regnery History, Washington, DC, 2019, 307 pp., photographs, notes, bibliography, index, \$29.99, hardcover).

Destroyers are among the most versatile and necessary ships for a major naval power. They can act as combatants in their own right but also serve as escorts, submarine hunters, rescue ships, or scouts. There is little their crews have not been tasked to do over the course of two world wars and, success or failure, they have always answered the call. While they perhaps lack the size and majesty of cruisers and battleships, destroyers carry their full measure of courage and skill.

The author accomplished his own skillful feat with this new book. Hundreds of destroyers served in the time this work covers. Thus, it is a daunting task to write a volume worthy of such a great number over so long a period. Nevertheless, the book does so, going through World War I, the interwar period, and both the Atlantic and Pacific during World War II. It pays fitting tribute to the thousands of sailors who crewed these ships in war and peace. The work is well illustrated and thoroughly researched. The writing is clear, concise, and readable.



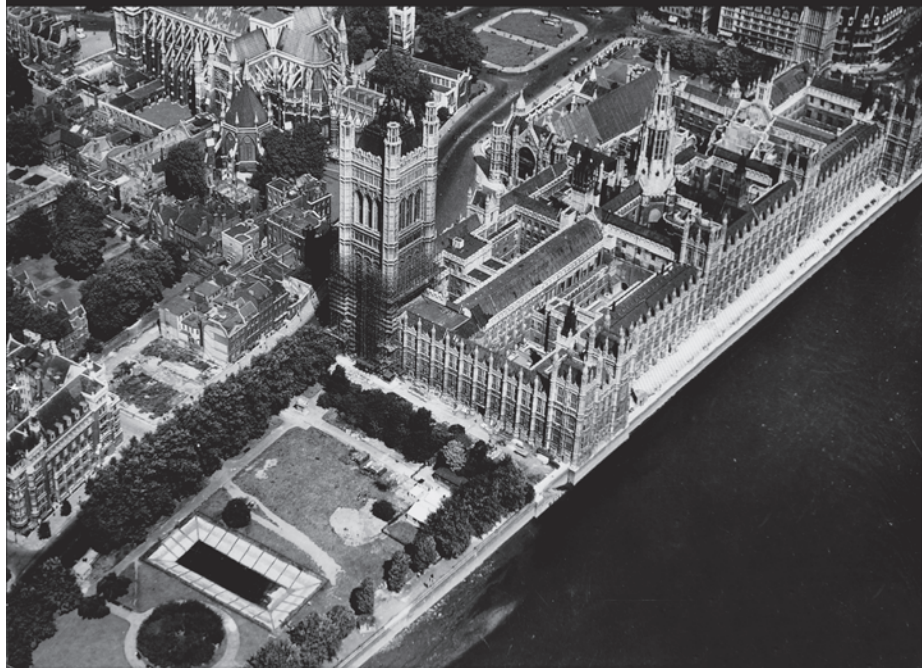
Colin Powell: Imperfect Patriot (Jeffrey J. Matthews, University of Notre Dame Press, Notre Dame, IN, 2019, 370 pp., notes, bibliography, index \$35.00, hardcover)

Captain Colin Powell arrived in Saigon, South Vietnam, on Christmas Day 1962. He was assigned as the senior tactical adviser to an infantry battalion of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam's (ARVN) First Division. He advised three successive commanders of the unit, all captains but with varying degrees of military skill and capability. He did his best to work with them through months of combat operations; however, he stepped on a punji stick

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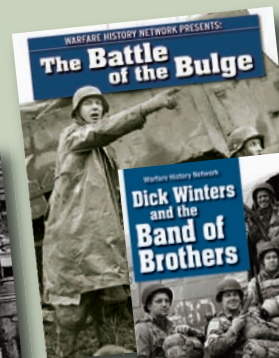
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in July 1963 that pierced his right foot.

As a result of his debilitating injury, Powell had to limit himself to more sedate duties for the remainder of his tour. Powell would return to Vietnam in 1968 for another tour, this time as a major and executive officer of the 3rd Battalion, 11th Infantry, part of the 23rd Americal Division. His performance there soon caught the eye of the division commander and Powell was given a place on the unit's staff. Along the way he learned many lessons—early instruction on a path that would eventually take him to high military and civilian office.

This work goes on to cover the lofty career of Powell, who eventually became chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Secretary of State. The author highlights both the successes and failures of his subject, revealing a human being navigating the complexities of leadership and power at the highest levels. It showcases the difficulties and consequences of decision making at the strategic level.

Famous Battles and How They Shaped the Modern World: C.1200 BCE–1302 CE from

Troy to Courtrai (Beatrice Heuser and Athena S. Leoussi, Pen and Sword Books, South Yorkshire, UK, 2018, 197 pp., maps, photographs, notes/bibliography, index, \$44.95, hardcover)

The Battle of Marathon saved Athens twice. First when the Athenian and Plataean hoplites destroyed the Persian center during the battle, driving their enemies back to their ships in flight. Despite the heavy losses, the Persians sailed to Phaleron, planning to attack Athens before its victorious army could return from Marathon. The Greeks made a forced march, reaching Athens in time to defend the city. Seeing this, the Persians sailed away without offering battle and Athens survived to take its place in history. It was a great victory against the hated Persians. Afterward, the Greeks no longer feared the bellicose Persians.

There is no way to accurately count the number of battles that occurred over human history, but the important ones, those that made a difference in the world afterward, are remembered. This new work is the first in a two-book series that examines those battles and their influence on Western civilization. The authors polled accomplished academics to help compile their list. Each chapter covers a different engagement or conflict with thoughtful writing and engaging ideas about its significance. It is an interesting work

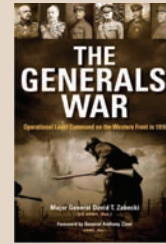
SHORT BURSTS



The German Soldier's Pocket Manual 1914-1918 (Edited by Stephen Bull, Osprey Publishing, 2018, \$15.00, hardcover) This work collects various writings about the German Army and its troops. It reveals what life was like for German soldiers during the conflict.



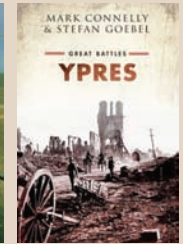
Run to the Sound of the Guns: The True Story of an American Ranger at War in Afghanistan and Iraq (Nicholas Moore and Mir Bahmanyar, Osprey Publishing, 2018, \$30.00, hardcover) Moore is a 10-year veteran of the War on Terror. This book recounts his experiences on numerous missions.



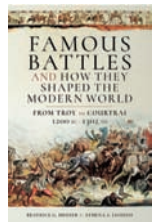
The General's War: Operational Level Command on the Western Front in 1918 (David T. Zabecki, Indiana University Press, 2018, \$45.00, hardcover) This is a study of higher level command during the Great War. It reveals how senior officers dealt with the tactics and weapons of the conflict.



Beyond the Call: Three Women on the Front Lines in Afghanistan (Eileen Rivers, Da Capo Press, 2019, \$27.00, hardcover) Female soldiers went everywhere and performed the same duties as their male counterparts in Afghanistan. This work highlights their service and challenges.



Great Battles: Ypres (Mark Connelly and Stefan Goebel, Oxford University Press, 2018, \$27.95, hardcover) This Belgian city was at the heart of World War I. The authors study how the various combatants viewed the fighting around it.



In the Hurricane's Eye: The Genius of George Washington and the Victory at Yorktown (Nathaniel Philbrick, Viking Books, 2018, \$30.00, hardcover) This study reveals the importance of the naval fighting in the Chesapeake Bay and how it influenced the outcome of the war.

Lasers, Death Rays, and the Long, Strange Quest for the Ultimate Weapon (Jeff Hecht, Prometheus Books, \$25.00, hardcover) The author recounts the history of America's research on and obsession with laser weapons. The story starts in the 1950s and continues through the present day.

Spy Pilot: Francis Gary Powers, the U-2 Incident, and a Controversial Cold War Legacy (Francis Gary Powers, Jr. and Keith Dunnavant, Prometheus Book, 2019, \$25.00, hardcover) Newly declassified documents and CIA debriefings were used to write this new account of the U-2 incident. Doubts linger over Gary Powers' actions and this book seeks to exonerate him of these rumors.

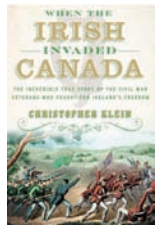
Lucullus: The Life and Campaigns of a Roman Conqueror (Lee Fratantuono, Pen and Sword Books, 2018, \$39.95, hardcover) Lucullus conquered the warring kingdoms of Asia Minor and made them part of the Roman Empire. This work is a thorough biography focusing on his military achievements.

Valentine Baker's Heroic Stand at Tashkessen 1877: A Tarnished British Soldier's Glorious Victory (Frank Jastrzemski, Pen and Sword Books, 2018, \$34.95, hardcover) Baker was a disgraced British soldier dismissed from the service. His victory over Russian troops during the 1877 war with Turkey provided some measure of redemption.



focused on the grand sweep of history, yet it keeps the reader grounded in the reality of each battle's effects.

When the Irish Invaded Canada: The Incredible True Story of the Civil War Veterans Who Fought for Ireland's Freedom (Christopher Klein, Doubleday, New York, 2019, 384 pp., photographs, notes, bibliography, index, \$28.95, hardcover)



The American Civil War was not yet a year ended when veterans of both the Union and Confederacy once again shouldered their rifles and marched off to war. This time they shared a common goal; this small army's intent was to invade and conquer Canada, then still a British province, and hold it until the British empire relinquished its hold on Ireland. These men were of Irish heritage, many of them recent immigrants who felt they were more Irish than American and wanted to free their homeland. They succeeded in seizing a tiny part of Canadian land for three days. Their story is a patriotic tale of men fighting for what they thought was right.

The attacks on English soil, known as the Fenian raids, are well covered in this new book. It is well researched, fleshing out the story with creditable detail. The writing is clear and readable throughout.

The Phantom Vietnam War: An F-4 Pilot's Combat Over Laos (David R. "Buff" Honodel, University of North Texas Press, Denton, 2018, 306 pp., photographs, notes, glossary, bibliography, index, \$29.95, hardcover)



It was a moonless night. David "Buff" Honodel flew an F-4 Phantom fighter-bomber, escorting an AC-130 gunship in the dark skies above Laos near the border with Vietnam. The gunship orbited, looking for targets along the Communist supply corridor known as the Ho Chi Minh Trail. Suddenly a stream of tracers from a 37mm anti-aircraft gun raced into the sky near the AC-130. The tracers lit the night, followed by the white burst of exploding rounds. The call came: "Fighter, put something on him. He's a bit too close." Honodel could only guess where the gun was on the pitch-black ground. He selected his cluster bombs; each would cover a 1,000-foot-diameter circle with fragments. Honodel does not know to this day if he got the gun, but he did

explode an unseen tanker truck, part of a convoy. The gunship warned him to get out of the way as it dove on the illuminated enemy. Low on fuel, Buff had to leave anyway. The gunship pilot was so busy, "He didn't even say goodbye," recalled Honodel.

Honodel flew missions in the secret air war over Laos, where men died but no one knew about it at the time. His descriptions of combat are vivid and compelling, laced with humor where possible but never forgetting the serious and deadly nature of war. The book chronicles a young man's journey from arrogance to maturity.

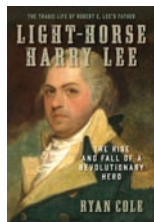
Battle of Killiecrankie 1689: The Last Act of the Killing Times (Stuart Field, Frontline Books, South Yorkshire, UK, 2018, 254 pp., maps, photographs, appendices, notes, bibliography, index, \$42.95, hardcover)



The Battle of Killiecrankie stands as the most dramatic of the clashes in the recurring Jacobite Risings. An army of Scotsmen charged down a steep hill to defeat the redcoats below. Both were Scottish armies, though, and they paid a terrible price. There would be more fighting just a few weeks later at Dunkeld, where a single regiment fought numerous clans to a standstill, yet another chapter in Scotland's bloody history.

The author is an acknowledged expert on the English Civil War and Jacobite period and that expertise shines through in this new work. Aside from Culloden, little about these conflicts is known or passed on today, but the book helps correct that imbalance, revealing the emotion and courage of the participants.

Light Horse Harry Lee and the Rise and Fall of a Revolutionary Hero (Ryan Cole, Regnery Publishing, Washington, DC, 2019, 434 pp., notes, index, \$29.99, hardcover)

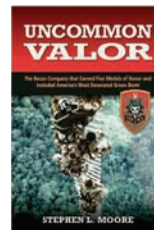


Lieutenant Colonel Henry Lee III, known as "Light Horse Harry," was one of the great cavalry leaders of the Revolutionary War. The father of Confederate General Robert E. Lee, Light-Horse Harry was instrumental in American operations in the South and frequently fought alongside Colonel Francis "Swamp Fox" Marion. He was a bold and daring leader whose efforts helped pave the way for the American victory at Yorktown. Lee was also a close friend of George Washington and gave

him the often quoted eulogy, "First in war, first in peace, first in the hearts of his countrymen." A staunch supporter of the Constitution, his influence led Virginia to ratify it. Lee was controversial as well; he was once beaten and injured by a political mob that cut off part of his nose and poured wax into his eyes.

Lee's shortcomings and sad end have perhaps led history to ignore his legitimate contributions. This new biography brings his life into clarity through thorough research and clear prose. The author read through hundreds of contemporary documents to gain an open view of his life, character, and politics before weaving that narrative into this book. Lee was a complicated man, at once talented and flawed, who gained exceptional achievements and suffered equally great failures. The book lays all of it out in equal measure, giving the reader an in-depth look at one of the American Revolution's lesser known heroes.

Uncommon Valor: The Recon Company That Earned Five Medals of Honor and Included



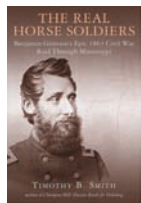
America's Most Decorated Green Beret (Stephen L. Moore, Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, MD, 2018, 440 pp., maps, photographs, appendix, glossary, notes, bibliography, index, \$35.00, hardcover)

Colonel Robert Howard could have been the poster boy for the Green Berets. The Alabama native was square jawed and muscular yet still soft spoken and unassuming. He was wounded during his first tour in Vietnam with the 101st Airborne. While recuperating in the hospital, he was recruited into the Special Forces. In the late spring of 1967 he arrived in Kontum, at the camp of the recon company of Forward Operating Base 2, as part of the now famous Studies and Observations Group. Initially assigned as a supply sergeant, he was soon going on missions. Cool under pressure, Bob soon earned the respect of his comrades. The Green Beret earned eight Purple Hearts for 14 different wounds and was written up for the Medal of Honor three separate times. The third nomination was approved and he received lesser awards for the first two incidents. Howard left Vietnam as the most highly decorated soldier since Audie Murphy.

Four other men earned the Medal of Honor in this unit, the subject of this new book. The author describes the unit's members and their daring missions in great detail, revealing the courage and dedication it took to be part of such an elite organization. The Special Forces

world in Vietnam is often cloaked in secrecy even today; this work brings out their actions in clear, action-packed prose.

The Real Horse Soldiers: Benjamin Grierson's Epic 1863 Civil War Raid Through Mississippi



(Timothy B. Smith, Savas Beatie Publishers, Havertown, PA, 2018, 336 pp., maps, photographs, bibliography, index \$32.95, hardcover)

The Union cavalry raid through Mississippi is one of the more famous episodes of the American Civil War. Led by Colonel Benjamin Grierson and composed mainly of two Illinois cavalry regi-

ments, the mounted force wreaked havoc throughout the state. They destroyed railroad tracks, burned bridges and trestles, and sowed chaos wherever they rode. The expedition also managed to free a number of slaves. These men rode long and hard, resting only for short periods before they were off again to spread destruction. Confederate forces pursued them for 16 days to no avail. The raid also had an effect beyond the damage Grierson's horsemen caused. The local Confederate command was distracted by the raiders, allowing Union Maj. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant to move on Vicksburg, helping seal the fate of that vital city. It was a larger than life, dramatic tale that even gave life to a 1959 Hollywood movie starring John

Wayne and William Holden.

This book captures the drama of the historical event with flair and an easy writing style, making the work enjoyable to read and simple to follow. It is well researched and effectively makes the case for the often-overlooked significance of Grierson's raid in helping Grant. The author is a renowned Civil War historian. This latest work confirms his status and eminence in the field.

Mutina 43 BC: Mark Antony's Struggle for Survival (Nic Fields, Osprey Publishing, Oxford, UK, 2018, 96 pp., maps, photographs, bibliography, index, \$24.00, softcover)

Civil war erupted after the death of Julius

simulation gaming By Joseph Luster

CHOOSE BETWEEN DIPLOMACY AND WAR IN THE YEAR 2027, AND TAKE TO THE BATTLEFIELD IN THE LATEST CRACK AT THE BATTLE ROYALE GENRE.

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Europe Empire 2027

At this point, the year 2027 still sounds vaguely futuristic, even though it's right around the corner. That means there's a certain air of futurism about *Europe Empire 2027*, a mobile strategy title from iGindis that's been lighting up

Android devices since its initial launch. With over a million downloads, there are plenty of people digging into its single- and multiplayer offerings, so we took the latest version for a spin to see how it executes its own take on tactical warfare. Before we go any farther, let's just say the aforementioned



futurism lies in the concept and title alone, and certainly not the visuals.

It may not come as a surprise to you that the world is in utter chaos in 2027. World markets collapse as major wars flare up in the Middle East and South China Sea, and Europe finds itself facing these and other problems on its own. Despite the need for assistance, the new American president pledges not to send U.S. troops to fight foreign wars, and forces are pulled back while America focuses exclusively on home affairs. As conflicts continue to spread, you find yourself lead-

ing a group of rebels to represent the country of your choosing, thus kicking off a variety of scenarios that force you to choose between diplomacy and war.

Once you pick your country, you'll have access to everything from a war room to a spy center, various weapons suppliers, advanced technology, and more features that are still being added at the time of this writing. Presentation-wise, it's an extremely mixed bag. From the title screen to the gameplay itself, *Europe Empire 2027* is very much hanging out on the clinical side of strategy aesthetics. Its no-nonsense visuals walk the line between stock assets and war declarations that look like a mix between local TV advertisement CG and stock market tickers. This isn't necessarily the worst type of presentation, it's just something that's going to attract a very specific subset of strategy fans while turning pretty much everyone else away.

As for the multiplayer, it works well enough as

a means to pit a handful of human players against one another and some AI opponents. As of right now there's a 28 country max, with support for seven human players and 21 AI players, but that could change with future updates. In-game messages are auto translated in an attempt to eliminate the language barrier, and if you've ever used Google Translate before then you should have a rough idea of how well it works. Thankfully, this is all something you can try for yourself, because it is available as a free download on Android. Visit the not-so-distant future and get a taste of managing your own rebellion on the go, just manage your expectations before you start making hefty decisions.

Battlefield V: Firestorm

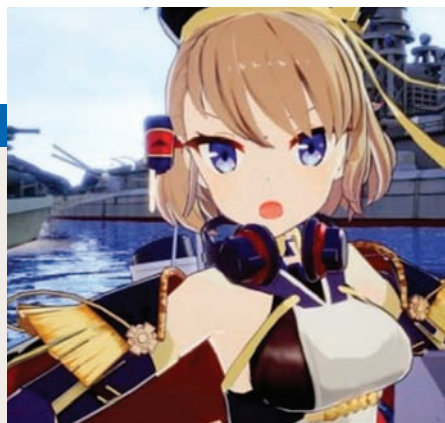
What do you get when *Fortnite* and *Apex Legends* are the biggest games on the planet? You get companies of all sizes scrambling to create the next smash hit battle royale shooter. EA actually



Caesar, pitting his adopted son Octavian against his self-declared successor Mark Antony. Both sides formed factions and maneuvered for advantage. Antony marched to northern Italy and laid siege to the city of Mutina. Octavian marched his legions there, accompanied by the two consuls, Aulus Hirtius and Caius Pansa. Antony's army became trapped between Octavian's force and Mutina's city walls in April 43 BC. They fought battles at Forum Gallorum on April 14 and Mutina on April 21. The fighting swung back and forth but ended with Antony's defeat. Both consuls were also killed, allowing Octavian to consoli-

date his power. It was a step on his way to ultimate power in Rome.

Mutina is one of the most famous battles in Roman history and this new book brings it to life with original artwork, excellent maps, and clear writing. It is part of Osprey's well-regarded Campaign Series and follows its well-laid out format, allowing the reader to get a clear idea of the battle's background, key leaders, tactics, and outcome. The author has painstakingly covered every facet of the campaign. The work is full of pertinent facts and magnificent descriptions. □



PUBLISHER
COMPILE HEART

GENRE
ACTION

PLATFORM
PS4

AVAILABLE
AUGUST 29
(JAPAN)

WWII timeline in which real warships are represented as anime girls. It looks exactly like it sounds, and the latest entry brings three-on-three shooting battles to life on PS4 in the form of *Azur Lane: Crosswave*.

In addition to the intense battles, *Crosswave* features a handful of different modes, including a Story Mode that follows Shimakaze and Suruga through an original narrative. Accumulating points allows you to scout allies and play as additional characters, and making expert use of the Storage, Dock, and Shop will eventually help you put together an unstoppable fleet. The more characters and equipment you gather, the closer you'll get to unlocking the increased challenges of Extreme Battle Mode, which pits players against top-class enemies for the opportunity to unlock rare items.

Azur Lane: Crosswave also includes a Photo Mode, which lets you snap shots of the game's 3D characters, and doing so in Free Stage will give you the best photo ops without any pesky enemies getting in the way. Finally, Episode Mode features secret event scenes, which, like the events in the main story, are all fully voiced. All in all *Crosswave* features 66 characters and plenty to do, so now we just have to wait and see if someone ends up localizing it for English audiences. □

PUBLISHER
EA

GENRE
ACTION

PLATFORM
PS4, XBOX ONE,
PC

AVAILABLE
NOW

already did just that with *Apex Legends*—even if it was released with relatively little fanfare just ahead of the publisher's own mega-budget *Anthem*—and they also tackled similar territory with the latest update to *Battlefield V*.

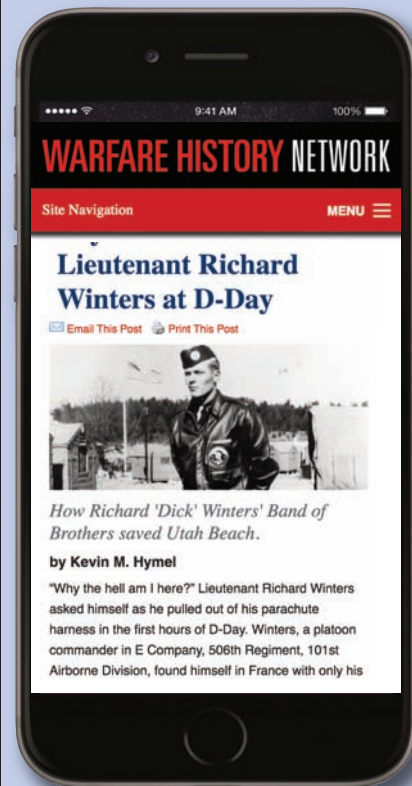
Firestorm launched as a free update near the end of March, bringing with it the type of battle royale gameplay titles like PlayerUnknown's *Battlegrounds* and *Fortnite* have been laying the groundwork for over the past few years. Instead of severe weather, the ever-growing threat this time around is the titular *Firestorm*. It's essentially a giant ring of fire that circles the map, destroying everything in its path with explosive results as it shrinks along with the timer. Stay in one place too long and you'll end up either having to desperately outrun it or succumb to its inextinguishable flames.

Between that, the airborne entry, and some other familiar aspects of the mode, one would be forgiven for thinking *Firestorm* is little more than a complete *Fortnite* ripoff. While that's more or less true conceptually, the fact that it mixes in *Battlefield V*'s gunplay and destructible environments is more than enough to set it apart from all the other quick-fire imitators. Whether you go at it on your own or as part of a squad, scavenging and fighting through the shrinking environments is pretty damn fun. Unique combat vehicles, intimidating reinforcements, and the various objectives at play add up to a feature that will hopefully maintain a strong community for a while to come.

Azur Lane: Crosswave

For those unfamiliar with *Azur Lane*, it's basically a direct answer to the anthropomorphic ship girls of *Kantai Collection*, aka *KanColle*. If that still sounds like gibberish, just think of it as an alternate

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Leyte Gulf

Continued from page 31

At 3:30 PM, Kurita thus ordered his ships to reverse course and head west to move out of bombing range. Thirty minutes later, he informed Admiral Toyoda, "Were we to force our way through [the strait], we would merely make ourselves meat for the enemy, with very little chance of success. It was therefore concluded that the best course open to us was temporarily to retire beyond the reach of enemy planes."

This measure by Kurita, however prudent for the safety of his men and ships, disrupted the entire timetable of the complex Japanese operation by seven hours, the time lost while Kurita retired. On the other side, Halsey made a false conclusion when American search planes spotted Kurita's force reversing course. He assumed that Kurita was retiring, when in fact he was only regrouping and waiting for a better opportunity to approach.

When Kurita had steamed west for a few hours without any subsequent air attacks, he again considered rushing through San Bernardino Strait. Possibly the enemy had pulled back, which would allow Kurita to steam across the Sibuyan Sea and risk a night passage through San Bernardino. A message from Toyoda strengthened his resolve. "With confidence in heavenly guidance, all forces will attack!" ordered the admiral. Toyoda's chief of staff prodded Kurita even more when he stated that the "change in schedule could mean failure for the whole operation. It is ardently desired that this force continue its action as prearranged."

Kurita tossed caution to the wind. At 5:14 PM he turned back toward the Philippines and sent a message to Toyoda stating, "Braving any loss and damage we may suffer, the First Striking Force will break into Leyte Gulf and fight to the last man."

With the dual moves of Kurita again heading toward the San Bernardino Strait and Halsey turning his attention away from the strait and to the location of Japanese carriers, the first phase of the Battle of Leyte Gulf was over. American aircraft had inflicted punishing blows to Kurita, but they had been by no means fatal. Kurita retained sufficient power to seriously impede American operations in Leyte Gulf, should he succeed in fighting his way through. Halsey admitted as much when he wrote afterward, "The most conspicuous lesson learned from this action is the practical difficulty of crippling by air strikes alone, a task force of heavy ships at sea and free to maneuver."

Kurita's chief of staff, Tomiji Koyanagi, expressed similar sentiments. He admitted that Kurita had suffered heavy losses, but in a backhanded manner. "We had expected air attacks, but this day's were almost enough to discourage us." Had Halsey's raids been more severe, Koyanagi would never have used the word "almost."

Koyanagi blamed Halsey for allowing Kurita to later slip through San Bernardino Strait. Had Halsey ordered more air attacks than the five that occurred, he would have known that Kurita had not reversed for good and that he once more steamed toward the Philippines. Halsey could have then bided his time until Kurita steamed into his clutches. "If he had done so, a night engagement against our exhausted force would undoubtedly have been disastrous for us," Koyanagi wrote. He added, "Thus the enemy missed an opportunity to annihilate the Japanese fleet through his failure to maintain contact in the evening of 24 October."

Halsey should have been guarding the eastern exit of the strait, but when Kurita barreled through, much to his surprise, he found nothing but open water and a free path to Leyte Gulf. Only the gallant stand of Taffy 3, a group of 13 tiny escort carriers and their smaller escorts, later prevented Kurita from steaming into Leyte Gulf.

On the other hand, Halsey's pummeling of Kurita and other events turned the Japanese commander into a timid leader. Within a 24-hour period, Kurita lost five ships to American submarines, had his flagship sunk under him, endured the embarrassment of being plucked out of the sea, watched as a series of American air attacks reduced his forces and left him no time to let down his guard, fretted that he could do little to fight back except employ his ships' guns, and watched as enemy aircraft sank *Musashi*, one of the mightiest battleships afloat. The cumulative effect of these actions was to make the weary Kurita more hesitant, less aggressive, and more amenable to terminating his mission. The next day, when he encountered Taffy 3, these factors played a crucial part in the outcome.

At the Imperial Palace in Tokyo, Emperor Hirohito greeted the news with grimness. The course of events in the Philippines was not what he had hoped, and he feared that the path led only to the enemy dislodging his military from that crucial land. With resignation in his voice, Hirohito turned to an aide and muttered, "Ah so, Ah so, deska," which meant, "It is so."

John Wukovits is an expert on the War in the Pacific. He is the author of Devotion To Duty, a biography of Admiral Clifton A.F. Sprague, who commanded Taffy 3 during the Battle of Leyte Gulf.

Bloody Stand

Continued from page 55

took 1,413 losses out of 2,066, with approximately 500 captured, although many of these men escaped and rejoined their battalions in the days that followed. Hoghton's brigade recorded 1,046 casualties out of 1,651 men present, with almost all either killed or wounded, while Myers' men lost 1,045 of 2,015 present. Total Allied casualties stood at 5,915 men.

Soult claimed to have held the field in his post-battle dispatch and disingenuously reported almost 3,000 losses for 9,000 inflicted. "Our troops are covered in glory," he said, which was certainly true of the lancers and hussars who had crushed Colborne's brigade and delivered one of the Peninsular War's most devastating cavalry charges. Soult later admitted to a total of 5,900 casualties, although the actual figure has been estimated at upward of 8,700, with V Corps' infantry and Werlé's brigade suffering the greatest blows. The cavalry lost 500 men, including 130 from the 1st Vistula Lancers.

The volume of wounded was almost too much for both sides to cope with and many serious cases were left to die by overwhelmed surgeons. Burial and cremation details soon got to work, while the rain became incessant by the evening, adding to everyone's misery. The French were forced to leave many of their badly injured behind when Soult's army finally retreated two days later. Those lucky enough to reach a hospital then faced unsanitary conditions and the dangers that went with them. George Farmer of the 11th Light Dragoons recorded the trauma of assisting a large batch of Albuera's wounded. "Everything seemed to be tainted with effluvia from [their] cankered wounds, and my dreams were all such as to make sleep a burden," he recalled.

Wellington arrived at Elvas on May 19 and was unhappy with Beresford's initial dispatch, a somber account of a battle almost lost. Like Soult, he also saw the need to report a better result. "Write me down a victory," Wellington insisted. But Beresford would still face censure afterward; he was frequently in the wrong place at the wrong time, while he seemed content to react to events rather than dictate them. Wellington visited the battlefield on May 21 and was unsettled by what he saw, although he remained fully supportive of Beresford. Nonetheless, there was a telling incident when, on visiting wounded men of the 29th, one of the veterans plucked up the courage to tell him a sincere truth: "If you had commanded us, my Lord, there wouldn't be so many of us here." □

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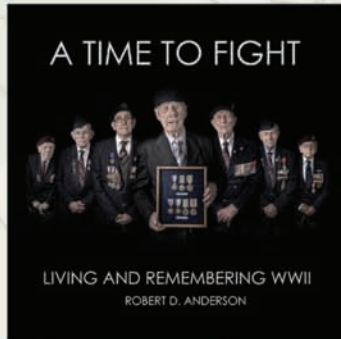


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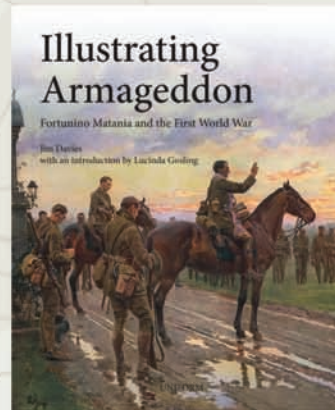
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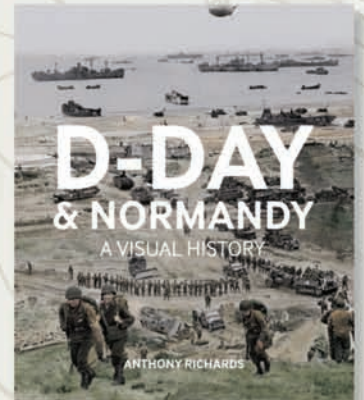


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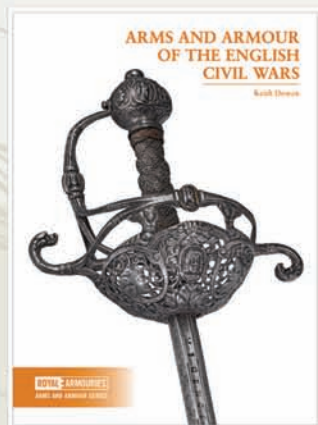
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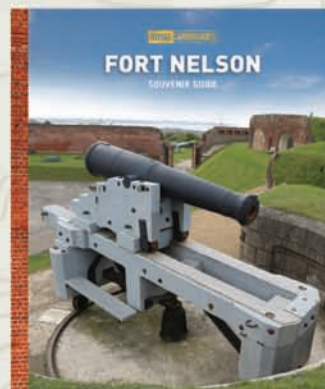
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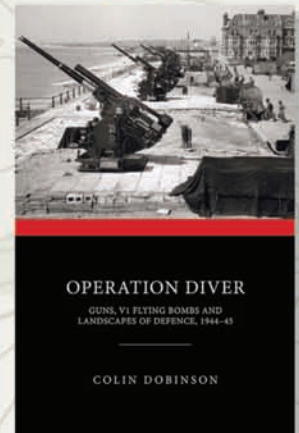


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