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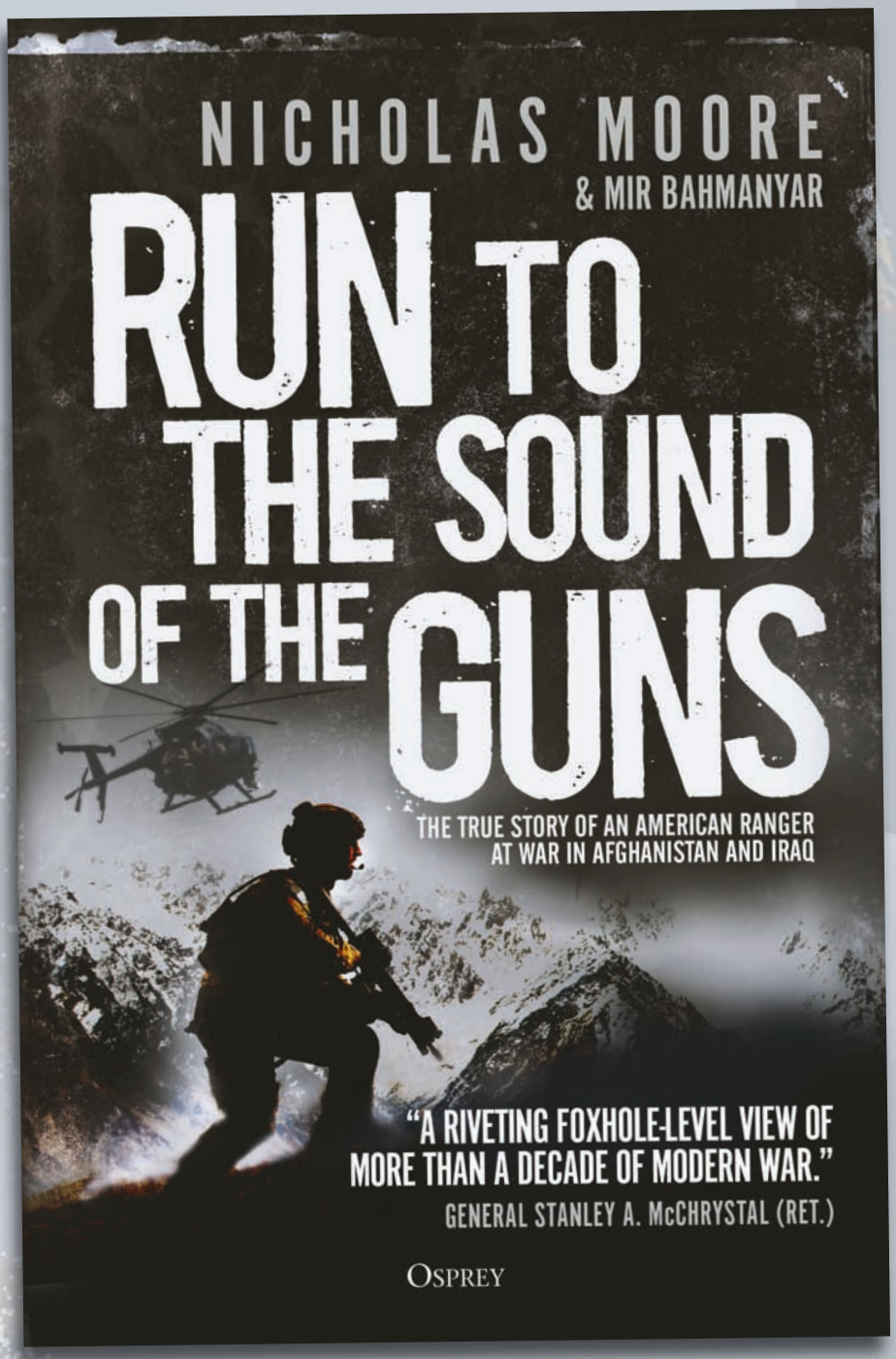

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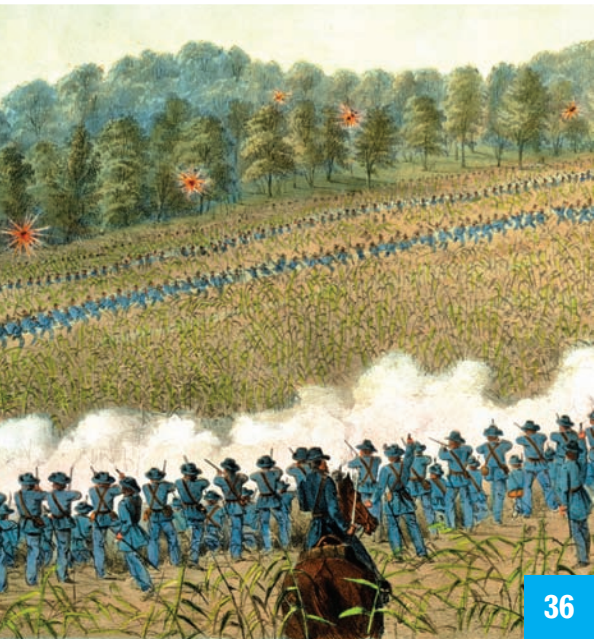

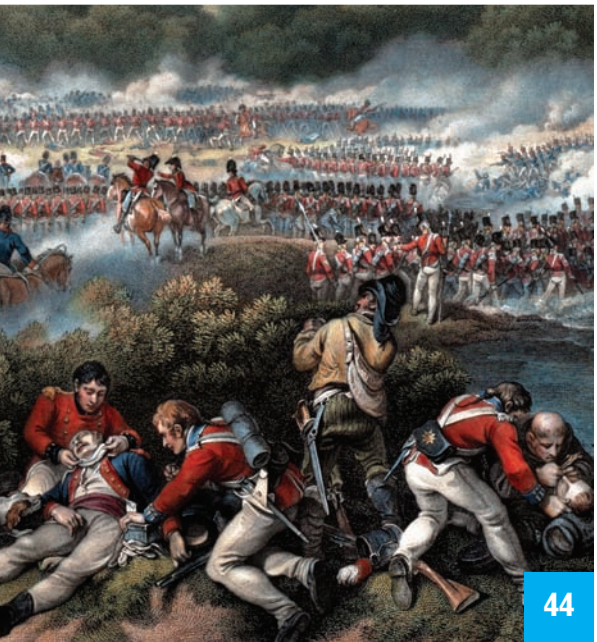

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Cover: A Civil War reenactor, uniformed as a Union cavalry bugler, rides into mock battle. *See story page 36. Photo: Alamy.*

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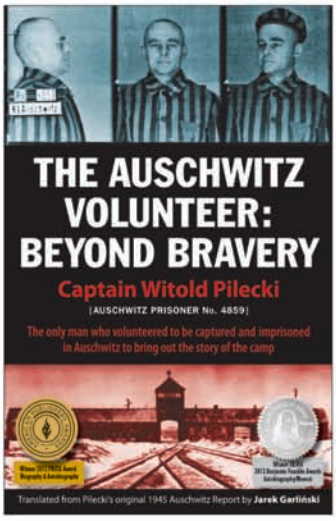

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King John the Tyrant

THE TENSION BETWEEN THE KING AND HIS BARONS always seemed to be ready to explode into civil war during the reign of the three Angevin kings of England. Challenges to their authority came from many directions: internally through their barons, externally through neighboring lands, and overseas through their continental possessions.

For Henry II, his greatest crisis was the revolt of 1173-1174 in which disaffected vassals and his sons rebelled against his rule. But the resilient king, who had a sixth sense for knowing whom to trust and whom not to trust, weathered the storm. He rushed to France where he repulsed attacks against Normandy and Anjou. At the end of his reign, he had recovered key counties from the Scots and annexed Ireland to the crown. Yet his continental lands remained a vexing problem because of the incessant fighting among his sons for their inheritances.

King Richard I spent most of his reign focused abroad, whether on retaining his continental lands in constant warfare with French King Philip II or crusading in the Holy Land. He squeezed as much money as possible out of his kingdom to finance his military campaigns. Worse yet, the enormous ransom of 150,000 marks necessary to free him in 1194 from captivity on the Continent put a strain on the realm. Upon his death five years later in Limousin, he had spent only six months of his reign in England.

John's nickname was Lackland because, unlike his brothers, he initially had not received any fiefs from his father. It was a hopeless proposition for him to try to outshine Richard's remarkable career as a military commander and first-rate tactician. Through a combination of his own fault and external forces, John quickly lost Normandy and Anjou to the French crown, although he managed to hold onto Aquitaine and part of Poitou. The loss of the key regions resulted in part from his failure to acknowledge Philip II as his nominal overlord, as well as his hand in the murder of his nephew Arthur of Brittany.

John's querulous nature brought harm to himself and to his kingdom. He expended great amounts of energy quarreling with Pope Innocent III and with his barons. Excommunicated in 1209 for confiscating church property during the protracted wrangling over the appointment of Stephen Langton as Archbishop of Canterbury, John ultimately had to capitulate when the pope gave the French permission to invade England. This forced John to negotiate a settlement with the pope whereby he received his kingdom back in return for accepting the pope as his feudal overlord.

John's insistence that English knights were liable for service on the Continent sparked bitterness among the barons. When they balked at the extensive service John expected of them as he tried to recover his continental lands, he resorted to greater use of mercenaries. He squeezed his barons with scutage to get enough money to pay the foreign troops in his service.

Compelled to sign the Magna Carta on June 15, 1215, he did so without intending to follow its articles, including those that placed limitations on feudal payments to the crown. Signing the Magna Carta bought him time to begin assembling troops to crush the rebellious barons. The First Baron's War, with its many great sieges, followed on the heels of the Magna Carta. John would not live to see its end.

—*William E. Welsh*

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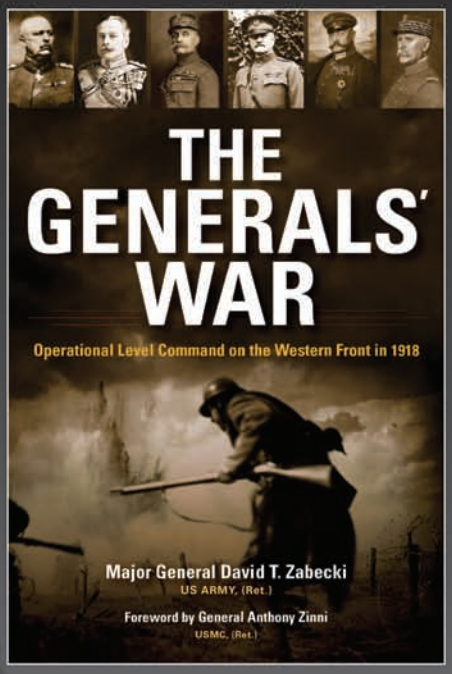

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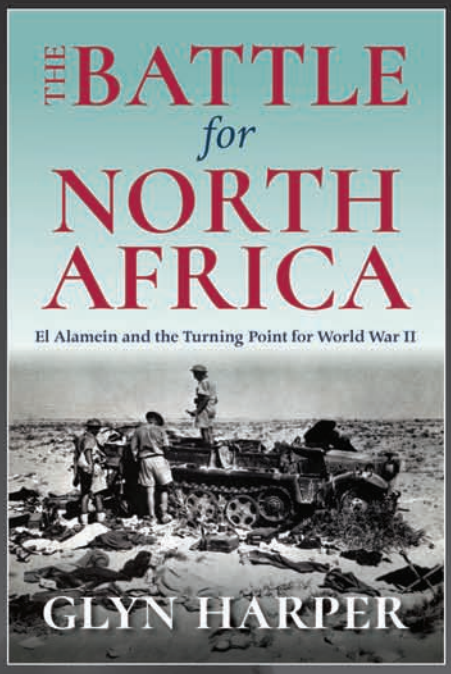

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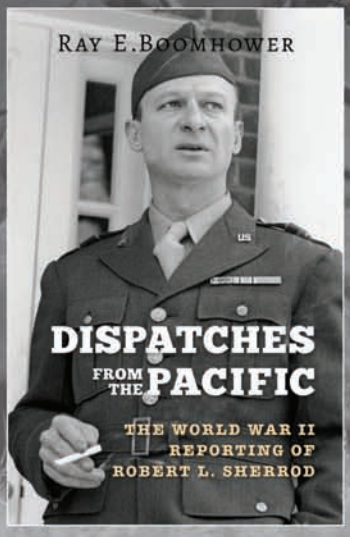

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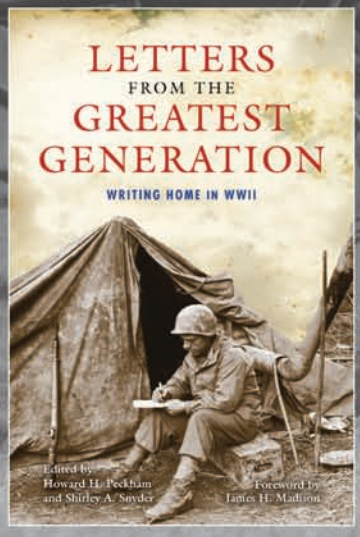

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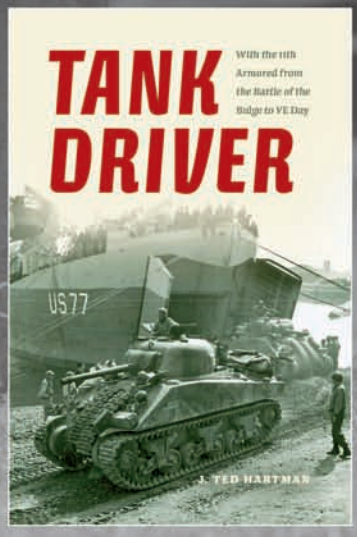

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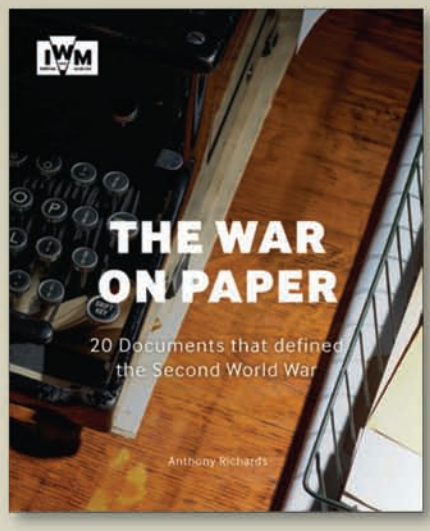

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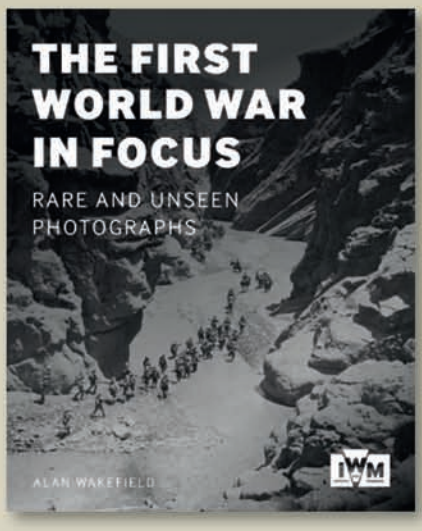

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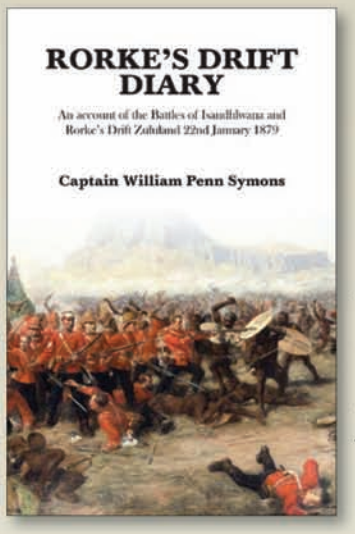

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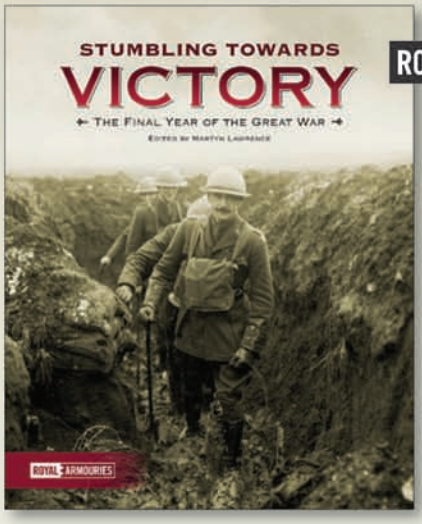

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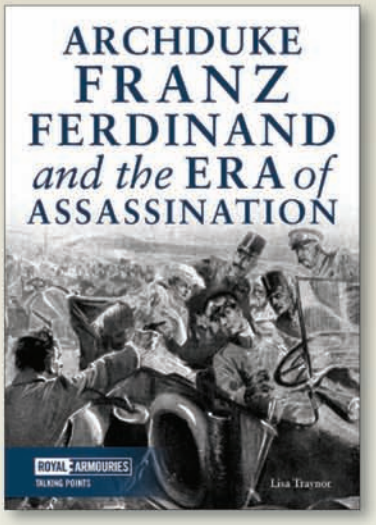

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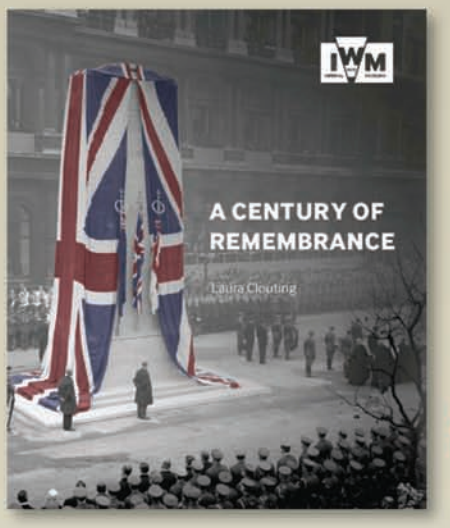

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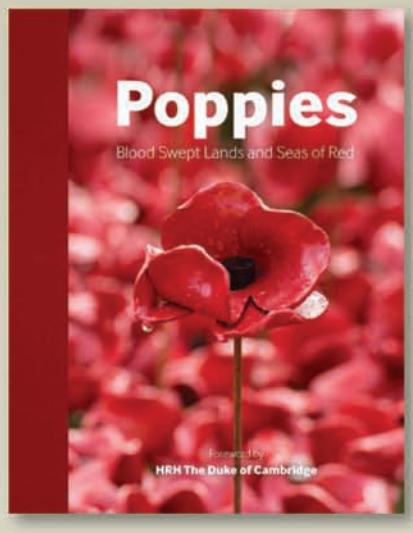

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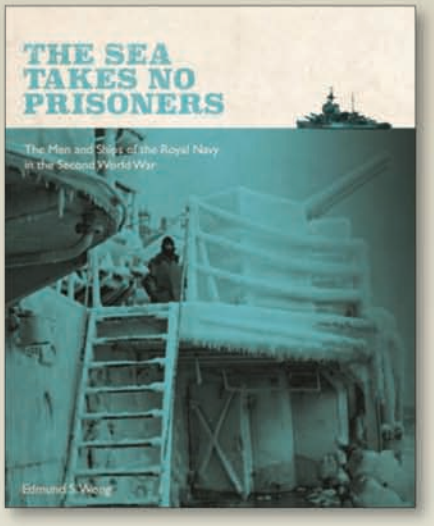

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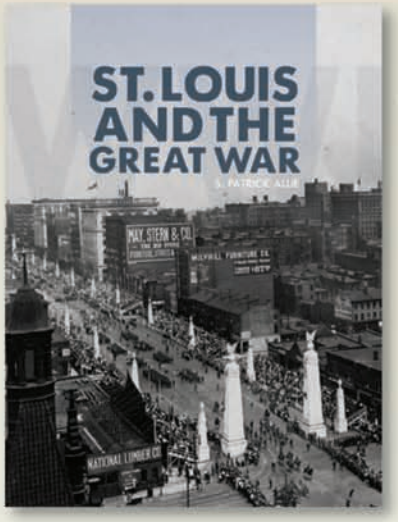

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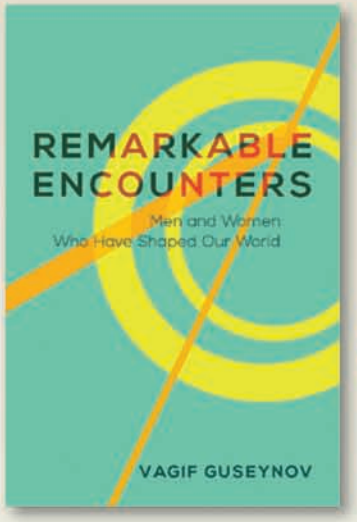

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By Mark Carlson

U.S. Navy commodore Stephen Decatur's death in a duel may have been part of a conspiracy orchestrated by aggrieved rivals.

TO DIE FOR PERSONAL HONOR IS A LONG-VANISHED CUSTOM OF the pre-industrial age. But 200 years ago it still held great meaning for men, particularly in politics and the military. Many men of that period would eagerly face death to defend their honor. Commodore Stephen Decatur was such a man. A veteran of the Barbary Wars and the War of 1812, he was a naval officer whose fame was comparable to that of later American heroes such as pilot Charles Lindbergh and astronaut Neil Armstrong.

Tall and handsome, the Philadelphia native had first gained fame in the nascent U.S. Navy by leading the small volunteer force that boarded and burned the captured frigate *Philadelphia* in Tripoli harbor in 1804. From that day his fame grew, matched only by his unquenchable thirst for glory. In March 1820 Decatur died at the hands of a fellow naval officer in a duel in which he participated to preserve his honor. The duel that felled Decatur might have been a conspiracy to commit murder by those who helped arrange it.

The origins of that day go back to June 1807, during the calm between the first Barbary Wars and the War of 1812. When a squadron of Royal Navy warships rode at anchor just off Norfolk Navy Yard in Virginia, several men deserted and made their way into the city. Some of them took the opportunity to enlist in the U.S. Navy. This led directly to the Chesapeake-Leopard Affair.

The frigate USS *Chesapeake* was being prepared for an extended cruise to the Mediterranean under Commodore James Barron, a veteran of the Barbary Wars. The tall, aristocratic Virginian had served

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The USS *Philadelphia* burns in Tripoli harbor in 1804 after Lieutenant Stephen Decatur (far right) led a covert mission to torch the captured vessel.

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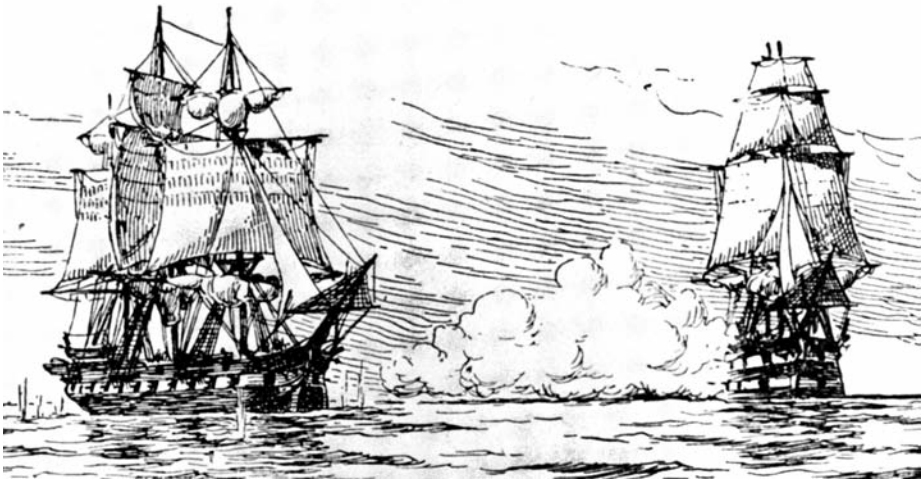

James Barron was court-martialed for surrendering the USS *Chesapeake* to the British warship HMS *Leopard* in 1807. Decatur, who served on the court-martial board, glared at his former mentor with hostility during the proceedings.

with his father as a midshipman during the American Revolution. Although he joined the Navy in 1797, most of his time at sea had been in merchant ships. The U.S. Navy had commissioned the 38-gun *Chesapeake* at the Gosport Navy Yard in 1800. She was one of the original six frigates that Congress authorized via the Naval Act of 1794.

As preparations for the cruise moved forward, Barron was informed by U.S. Secretary of the Navy Robert Smith that a number of men suspected of being deserters from Royal Navy warships had signed on to the crew of the *Chesapeake*. Smith asked Barron to find them and determine their status. Barron spoke with three of these men. He then informed Smith in writing that he was satisfied that, even though they were deserters, they also were American citizens. This ended the matter as far as the Barron was concerned; however, the British had other ideas.

Before leaving port, the *Chesapeake* was in disarray. The crew had piled lumber, crates, and provisions on the upper deck and many guns were not mounted. The disarray on the decks seemed not to bother Barron. On the morning of June 21, 1807, the frigate set sail for the Mediterranean. She cleared Hampton Roads and sailed past a British squadron stationed off Lynnhaven Bay. This was during the Napoleonic Wars, and the British squadron was blockading two French ships in the Cheseapeake Bay.

The Royal Navy squadron included the 74-gun *Triumph* and the 50-gun *Leopard*. They raised anchor and headed out to sea. The Americans took note but read nothing into it until they were well out to sea. At 3:27 PM the *Leopard* came to within 60 yards of the *Chesapeake* and called via speaking trumpet that she had a message for Barron. The commodore agreed to let a boat come over and ordered the *Chesapeake* hove to. Even in peacetime, a prudent commander would call his crew to action when being approached by a warship of another nation. Barron felt this was unnecessary and waited to greet the British representative. The Royal Navy lieutenant handed Barron a letter from the admiral in command of the British squadron at the North American Station. The admiral demanded the return of every Royal Navy deserter onboard *Chesapeake*. Barron fumed at this insolence and flatly refused. Again setting sail, Barron saw the *Leopard* approaching his vessel. Another hailing call was made, but before Barron could reply the larger ship fired a shot across his bow. This was clearly a provocation. Barron was in a tight fix. He had not alerted the crew nor made any moves toward getting his guns ready for action.

Suddenly, the *Leopard* unleashed a massive broadside into the smaller American ship, sending splinters and hot iron tearing across the decks. The *Chesapeake*'s unprepared crew suffered a large number of casualties. Pandemonium ensued as the Americans scrambled to load and fire their guns. The materials stacked around the upper deck hampered their ability to operate quickly and efficiently. "For God's sake, to fire one gun for the honor of the flag I must strike!" roared Barron, who had been wounded in the leg.

One officer managed to get a coal from the galley stove and used it to fire a single gun. Barron had no choice but to surrender. With dozens of men bleeding and dying on the decks he watched impotently as two boats loaded with officers and armed men boarded his ship. They found their four deserters and removed them from the ship. Then, the *Leopard* sailed off. Afterward the battered *Chesapeake*, with dead and dying men strewn across its bloody decks, limped back to Norfolk.

The first U.S. Navy officer to board the crippled frigate the following day was Decatur, the commandant of the Norfolk Navy Yard. He was horrified by the destruction and chaos, as well as downright angry. But unlike the rest of the nation, which was incensed with the unwarranted attack by the British, Decatur reserved his rancor for one man: James Barron. Decatur believed that Barron had surrendered to the British without a fight. In his mind, the act was simply unforgiveable.

Decatur was appointed to the four-man court-martial board convened after a board of inquiry decided Barron should be held accountable for the disaster. Barron faced death if convicted. Decatur did not want to serve on the court-martial board because he believed he could not be objective.

Decatur had known Barron since 1798 when as a young midshipman on the frigate USS *United States* during the so-called Quasi-War with France, he had served under Third Lieutenant Barron. Decatur, who was 10 years younger than Barron, initially had great resepect and admiration for Barron.

Over time Decatur's opinion of Barron underwent a radical change. "He is an excellent seaman, but he is no soldier," Decatur said. Barron simply did not measure up to Decatur's high standards of courage and leadership.

If Barron, who would have to face the court-martial board, hoped for any leniency from his old protegé, he would be sorely disappointed. Decatur glared at his old mentor with uncompromising hostility.

On June 22, 1807, the board found Barron guilty on all charges. Yet because of his long service and exemplary past conduct, he was suspended from the U.S. Navy for a period of five years without pay. Navy rules stated that after five years, effective January 1813, he would be permitted to reapply for his commission.

By that time, the United States was at war with Great Britain. The War of 1812 offered U.S. Navy officers many opportunities for distinction. Like many others, Decatur hungered for fame and glory, which he achieved quickly in one of the first naval victories of the war. On October 25, 1812, he crippled and captured the British frigate HMS *Macedonian* in an engagement in the Atlantic Ocean 500 miles south of the Azores.

Barron returned to the United States in December 1818. During the war, while his fellow officers were actively fighting the Royal

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Navy, Barron was conspicuously absent. He remained in Denmark where he occasionally commanded British-registered merchant ships. It was also alleged that he had made disparaging remarks about the U.S. Navy to a British officer in Brazil. Many officers in the U.S. Navy considered this tantamount to treason.

Although Barron submitted an inquiry about his commission to the Secretary of the Navy in 1813, he did not reapply for it at that time. When he did try to regain his commission in 1818, he found no support for it. Many of the officers in the service opposed it. The most vocal of these was Decatur.

Barron was at first confused, hurt, and insulted. He was incensed when he learned that Decatur had said he could "insult Barron with impunity." In the vernacular of the day, the expression meant that Barron lacked honor and was too cowardly to take insult. For Barron, who had been enduring scorn ever since his court-martial, Decatur's dig was unbearable.

He began by writing peevish letters to Decatur outlining his grievances. Never a combative man, as the affair with the *Leopard* indicated, he only seemed to want Decatur to acknowledge the insult and apologize. But these were things that the proud Decatur would not do. This continued until early the fall of 1819 when Barron's letter writing stopped.

At that point, Decatur considered the matter done. Then, another letter arrived just before the end of the year. Barron's earlier correspondence had been mostly self-serving and querulous. But the new letter was more challenging, almost as if someone else had written it. What had precipitated the sudden change?

Americans had learned that year that Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry had died on August 23 of yellow fever while on duty in South America. Although seemingly unconnected with the Barron-Decatur dispute, it may well have been the catalyst that led directly to the duel.

Captain Jesse Elliott, who was well known in the U.S. Navy for his confrontational behavior, had been second in command under Commodore Perry during the battle for Lake Erie in September 1813. Perry, himself a firebrand like his close friend Decatur, was angered at Elliott's failure to carry out Perry's orders to attack the British ships. He pressed charges of insubordination and cowardice against Elliott, but the demands of the war compelled the U.S. Navy to defer the matter until later.

Perry kept detailed records of the incident and never stopped his campaign to see Elliott court-martialed. The matter had not been resolved when Perry was sent to Venezuela on a diplomatic mission. Perry had handed his documents over to Decatur for safekeeping in case of his death.

All: Naval History and Heritage Command

Clockwise from top: Commodore James Barron, Commodore William Bainbridge, and Captain Jesse Elliott.

Elliott approached Barron in late 1819 and offered his help. He had been a midshipman aboard USS *Chesapeake* in 1807 and had spoken in Barron's defense at the court-martial. His involvement in the dispute coincided with Perry's death. He knew that Perry had given his papers to Decatur. Perry was no longer a threat; Decatur was now the enemy. A man of much stronger will and determination than the complaining Barron, Elliott was almost certainly influencing him in the spring of 1820.

Although exasperated, Decatur told Barron that he accepted his challenge. As time passed, though, Decatur was unable to find a suitable officer to serve as his second. Commodores John Rodgers and David Porter, both of whom served on the Navy Board with Decatur, refused on the grounds that the duel was pointless.

Decatur was walking home from the Navy Department one day in March 1820 when a carriage stopped in front of him. Commodore William Bainbridge emerged from the carriage with a broad smile. Reaching for Decatur's hand to give it a warm shake, he said, "Decatur, I've been a fool! I hope you will forgive me."

This was totally unexpected and with good reason. In the early months of 1815, U.S. President James Madison had sent two strong squadrons of warships to the Mediterranean Sea to force the Barbary States into favorable treaty terms. Overall command was given to Commodore William Bainbridge, a hero of the War of 1812 and the captain of the *Philadelphia* when she was captured by the Tripolitans.

Bainbridge had every reason to want success and revenge. His subordinate, in command of the first squadron, was Decatur, who was to leave for the Mediterranean Sea a month earlier than Bainbridge. Eager and audacious as ever, Decatur confronted, blockaded, and threatened the four Barbary States and in less than two weeks had achieved every goal of the mission.

When Bainbridge arrived with his ships, he found that Decatur had done the job for him. A proud man, Bainbridge was suddenly irrelevant. He never forgave Decatur for stealing his glory. Decatur was not cruel or mean; he simply never gave a thought to Bainbridge's feelings. Decatur had made a bitter enemy. When Bainbridge encountered Decatur in the halls of the Navy Department over the course of the next five years, he never uttered a single word to him.

Although he was confused by Bainbridge's behavior, Decatur invited him to his home. At some point during their conversation, the subject of Decatur's duel with Barron arose. Bainbridge offered to act as Decatur's second. Decatur, who was relieved by the offer, gladly accepted it. Bainbridge set off to handle the duties of the second. He subsequently contacted Elliott and Barron to arrange the time, place, and other details.

For anyone other than Decatur, the sudden arrival and friendliness of someone who had spent five years in bitter hostility would seem highly suspicious. But Decatur, who was an honorable man, tended to attribute these qualities to others. He was too relieved to have a suitable second to question Bainbridge's odd turnabout. But it is very likely Bainbridge had already been in contact with Elliott.

The seconds established the details of the duel. They selected a sloping field in Bladensburg, Maryland, that had long served as a dueling ground. Since dueling was technically illegal, it was better not to conduct it in the nation's capital.

The duelists, who would use flintlock pistols, were told to arrive at 9 AM on March 22, 1820. Some of the specifics established for the duel were unusual. Instead of having each man walk 10 to 12 paces, as was ordinarily done, and

then turn, aim, and fire, Decatur and Barron would stand facing one another at eight paces with aimed pistols. Firing at each other from eight paces was almost sure to produce serious, and perhaps even fatal, wounds. This was likely to be the outcome even with the smoothbore pistols of the day.

Barron, who was over 50 and nearsighted, had asked for this concession to assure that he had an equal chance against the younger and steadier Decatur. Bainbridge was to count "one, two, three." The duelists were to fire after one and before three.

The duelists, both of whom wore civilian clothes, arrived on time at the Bladensburg field. Each had come with his second, but Decatur also had the support of Commodores Rodgers and Porter. Barron appeared nervous and even reluctant, but Elliott was at his side, offering support and encouragement.

The two men faced each another. Decatur had told Rodgers he had no wish to kill Barron. At Bainbridge's order to present, each man cocked and raised his pistol and took aim at his opponent's hip. "I hope that when we meet in another world we will be better friends than we have in this," Barron said.

"I have never been your enemy, sir," replied Decatur.

Bainbridge began counting. Both guns discharged. Each barrel emitted a spurt of yellow flame followed by a cloud of white smoke. Barron grunted and slid to the ground; Decatur swayed on his feet. The color drained from his face as a bright red stain spread over his groin. "Oh, Lord," Decatur mumbled. "I am a dead man." He too fell to the ground.

Elliott ran for the carriage. He had almost reached it when Porter caught up to him and shouted at him to stop. "How do things fare?" asked Elliott.

Infuriated by Elliott's flight, Porter said, "Go back and do your duty for your wounded friend!" Elliott never returned.

Meanwhile, Decatur was carried to his carriage. As he was laid inside, Baron said, "God bless you, Decatur."

"Farewell, Barron," Decatur replied in a weak voice.

Decatur died in his home later that day. His death plunged the nation into mourning.

Was it a legitimate duel or a conspiracy to kill Decatur? One point stands out. When Barron and Decatur had their verbal exchange just before firing, it was a clear sign that each had forgiven the other. That was the moment that either second should have spoken up and called a halt, since the duel was no longer necessary. But neither man did so. They failed to protect the men they had sworn to represent. The only plausible reason is that each had a motive for wanting Decatur dead.

Bainbridge wanted revenge, while Elliott sought to remove the final threat to his naval career embodied in the documents that Decatur had in his possession. Despite his unerring skill in naval combat and shrewd dealings with the Navy, Decatur was surprisingly obtuse in not realizing that the two seconds were his enemies.

As for Bainbridge, he had a strong desire to be remembered in a favorable light. He kept extensive letters and papers. Yet on his deathbed, he ordered his daughter to burn all his personal correspondence. This makes absolutely no sense; that is, unless those documents contained correspondence with Elliott and Barron detailing how they plotted to force Decatur into a duel.

Although these theories are now impossible to prove, the circumstantial evidence is compelling. All three officers had long and distinguished careers in the U.S. Navy. Decatur is revered to this day, while Barron is forever tainted as the man who killed a beloved naval hero. He might just have been a pawn in an even greater infamy. □

By William F. Floyd, Jr.

With its six recoilless rifles, the Ontos was a welcome addition to the Marine Corps arsenal during the Vietnam War.

ON JANUARY 30, 1968, EIGHT BATTALIONS OF NORTH VIETNAMESE Army infantry infiltrated the city of Hue in South Vietnam. The NVA 6th Regiment secured the citadel on the north bank of the Perfume River, and the 4th Regiment seized the south side with its more modern buildings. Arriving in the city as part of the Marine Corps reinforcements were the 1st and 2nd Ontos Platoons of A Company, 3rd Antitank Battalion. In the days that followed, they would work together with C Company, 1st Tank Battalion, to furnish much-needed direct fire support to Marine riflemen. During the protracted urban battle, the Marines often paired the nine-ton M50A1 Ontos with the 50-ton M48A3 Patton tanks. The symbiotic partnership allowed the tanks to maneuver against the enemy target while Ontos furnished covering fire and vice versa.

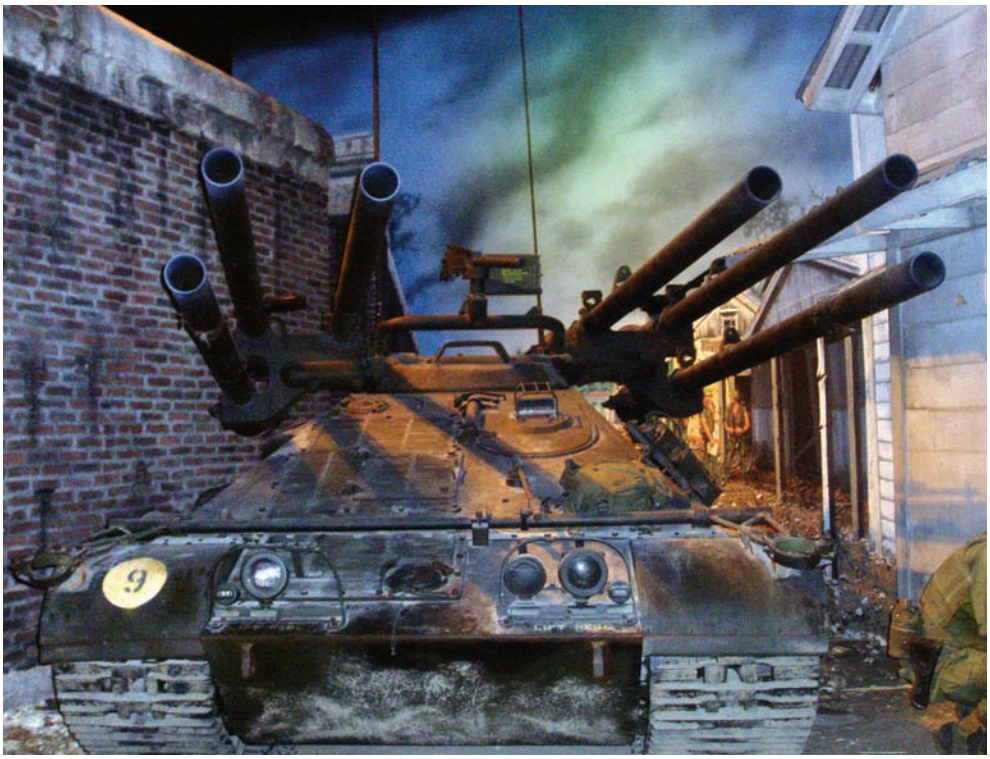
Each had different strengths. Lt. Col. Ernest Cheatham, one of the commanding officers at Hue, liked the Ontos for its speed and maneuverability, whereas Lt. Col. Robert Thompson preferred the Patton tank for its armament and staying power. Over the course of the battle, the enemy would knock out three Ontos. The Ontos came in particularly handy because until the Marine Corps tanks received concrete-piercing fuses for their high-explosive ammunition, ground commanders were compelled to rely heavily on the Ontos' 106mm antitank shells to knock down concrete walls as the Marines worked to clear the city of enemy forces.

The U.S. Army traditionally has named tanks after famous American generals, but in the case of the Ontos officials feared that if they named such an odd-looking vehicle after a revered commander some Americans might be offended. The squat vehicle ultimately received the name Ontos, which means "thing" in Greek. With its tiny chassis and small turret supporting two strong cradles each of which supports three recoilless rifles, it is one of the most unique armored vehicles ever fielded by the American military.

Although the idea of the Ontos began with the U.S. Army's requirement for a self-propelled antitank gun, it ultimately found a home with the U.S. Marine Corps where it was deployed in the service's antitank battalions.

Following the conclusion of World War II, the U.S. Army was interested in developing vehicles that could counter opposing tanks, namely those fielded by the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact allies in Europe. Infantry battalions needed direct fire support, and tanks were simply too cumbersome for them. Therefore, the Army set out to develop a tracked platform with a powerful gun tailored to infantry battalions.

The Ontos exhibit at the National Museum of the Marine Corps shows the vehicle as it rolls through the battle-torn streets of Hue City in 1968 during the Tet Offensive.



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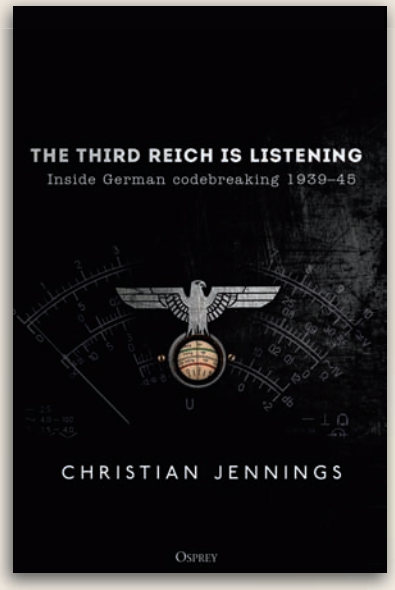

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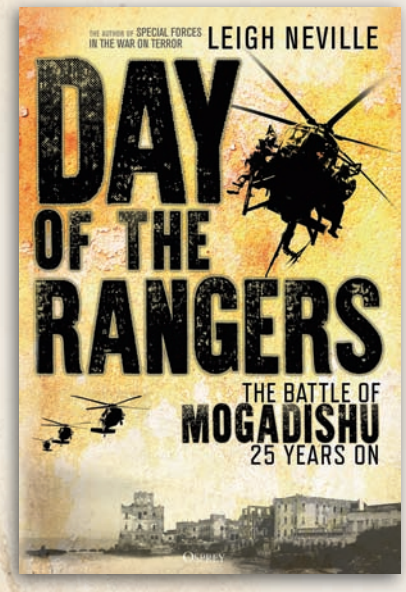

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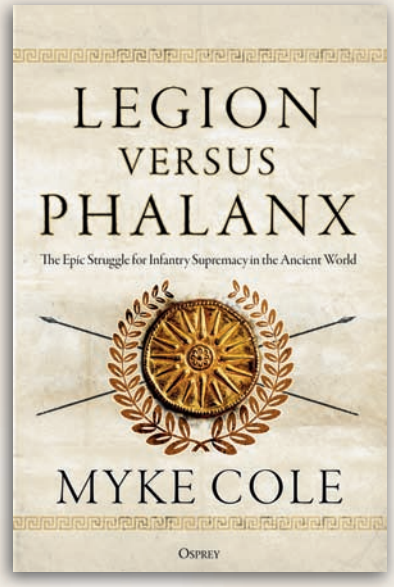

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Because the Army was intent on producing a higher proportion of its equipment for air transport, the service added a requirement that the new weapon system should be suitable for airborne operations.

U.S. Army officials began exploring the requirements for a small tracked antitank weapon at a two-day conference held in October 1948 on antitank defense at Fort Monroe, Virginia. They envisioned an antitank gun on a chasis somewhat similar to that of an American Weasel or a British Bren carrier. The conference findings, presented in a report the following year, outlined the Army's vision for this new weapon system.

By March 1950 the idea had coalesced to the point that the Army's Ordnance Technical Committee had embarked on the development of a 105mm recoilless rifle mounted on a self-propelled chasis that would furnish organic fire support to infantry battalions.

Following the outbreak of the Korean War in June of that same year, it became increasingly clear to the U.S. Army that infantry battalions needed mobile fire support as soon as possible given the heavy casualties that ground forces were suffering at the battlefront. Both Army Secretary Frank Pace and Army Chief of Staff General J. Lawton Collins championed the need for a new weapon system, known simply as the "infantry fighting vehicle," which possessed heavy firepower. Shortly afterward, the Army met with representatives from Allis-Chalmers, Ford, and General Motors to discuss the concept. The Army subsequently received design ideas from each of the three companies.

The Detroit Arsenal unveiled a concept design on April 9, 1951. The initial design featured four recoilless rifles on a tracked chasis, but shortly afterward the requirement was changed to six recoilless rifles. By September 1951 the Army had begun calling the new infantry fighting vehicle Ontos. On October 6 Army Secretary Pace instructed Collins to make the Ontos pilot project a top priority.

The Ontos pilot vehicles were divided into two groups. One group was designated infantry assault vehicles, and the other group was designated infantry carrier vehicles. The Army soon selected Allis-Chalmers over the other two companies to design and produce the test vehicles. Because Allis-Chalmers did such good work on the pilot program, the Army selected it to manufacture the production vehicles, too.

The Army discarded the carrier model idea early in the process on the grounds that the infantry fighting vehicle was too cramped to accommodate mortar or rifle platoons. In addition, the Army decided that it would not use the existing M27 recoilless rifle because it lacked a spotting rifle necessary to extend its effective range. Instead, the service would incorporate the newer M40, which was capable of firing a fin-stabilized, high-explosive antitank projectile through a rifled barrel at an effective range of 1,480 yards.

National Archives

An Onto crew drives along Chu Lai Beach in search of enemy positions shortly after rolling off landing craft in June 1965.

In the meantime, the Army encountered challenges relative to the track and suspension systems that put the project a year behind schedule. As a result, field testing would not begin until March 1954.

The Marine Corps replaced the Army in November 1954 as the lead on the program with plans to conduct its own field tests. The Marine Corps commandant stated the following year that testing had been satisfactorily completed and that the service would soon begin purchasing the Ontos vehicles. Allis-Chalmers received a contract in August 1955 for 297 vehicles.

While the Marine Corps geared up to use the Ontos in 1955, the Army announced that it had found the Ontos unsuitable for use by field forces. The Army announcement had less to do with field test outcome and more to do with political infighting. The real reason was General Collins no longer supported the program. He held that the Ontos was not in keeping with the Army's offensive fighting doctrine and that it would cut into the Army's procurement of additional tanks. To support the Army's case, officials identified a number of acute problems. They said that the Ontos was mechanically unreliable, lacked sufficient space for ammunition storage, and offered scant protection to the loader who would have to reload the recoilless rifles from outside the vehicle.

The Marine Corps accepted its first vehicle on October 31, 1956. The first model emphasized fire power over crew comfort. Its hull was derived from the T55/T56 series of tracked armored personnel carriers. A six-cylinder, in-line gasoline engine made by General Motors powered the vehicle, giving it 145 horsepower. The Ontos's power source was coupled to a XT-90-2 transmission, which drove the front sprockets and turned the tracks.

The final version of the M50 required a three-man crew: driver, gunner, and loader. The gunner, who was the vehicle's commander, had the ability to fire any of the six 106mm rifles in almost any combination with the help of a .50 caliber spotting rifle that was accurate up to 1,500 yards. The vehicle could carry 18 rounds of recoilless rifle ammunition. If necessary, the crew could detach two of the recoilless rifles for use on tripods by ground forces.

The M50's shaped-charged, high-explosive antitank ammunition could penetrate the armor of any existing tank. In addition, its secondary high-explosive plastic ammunition round was capable of penetrating most armor as well as furnishing fire support for infantry units.

By the time the Vietnam War erupted, an antipersonnel round also was available. The 106mm antipersonnel round was a devastating weapon capable of inflicting horrific casualties

on enemy infantry. The round contained 9,600 two-inch, winged steel darts called flechettes. Known colloquially as beehive rounds, the thousands of flechettes made an intimidating buzzing sound. The beehive rounds could be used like canister munitions or with a time fuse.

A .30- caliber machine gun was attached to the turret top. It was capable of firing either coaxially with the recoilless rifles using the interior fire controls or independently under the control of the commander/gunner. The M50 boasted 0.5-inch sloped plate armor for the hull and turret, however, its 3/16-inch floor armor made it highly vulnerable to enemy mines.

The commander/gunner of the Ontos had at his disposal a sophisticated gun-mount system that incorporated a number of subsystems controlling elevation, traverse, and firing. Each of the two weapons cradles held three 106mm recoilless rifles. Each cradle had its own hydraulic breech devices, electrical firing solenoids, and spotting rifles.

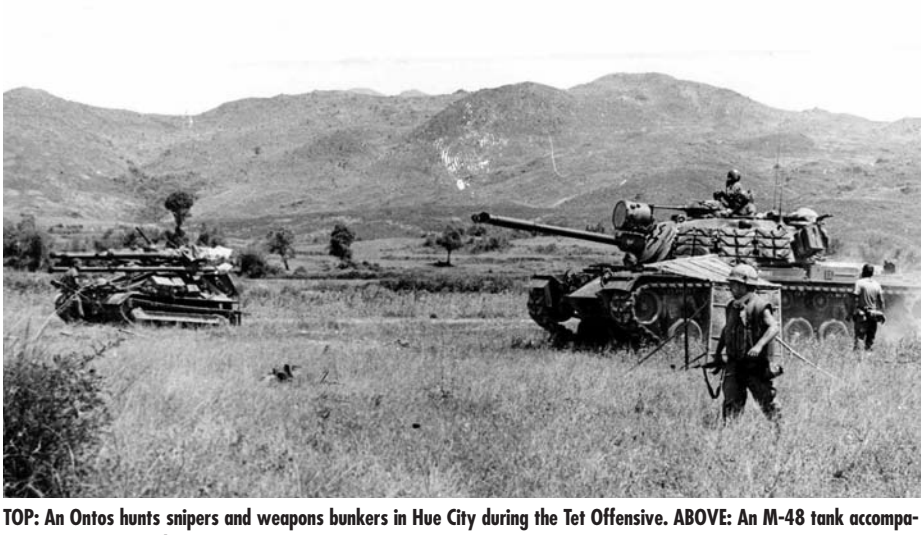
The Marine Corps wasted no time fielding the machines as they began rolling off the assembly line starting in October 1956. The 1st Marine Division was the first to form Ontos companies from disbanded antitank companies. The division equipped each of its new Ontos companies with 15 vehicles.

The Marines revised their offensive and defensive armor tactics to incorporate the Ontos seamlessly into battlefield operations. Although the Marine Corps believed that the Ontos would stand up well against small arms rounds and artillery shrapnel, it realized the vehicles were extremely vulnerable to enemy tank rounds. For that reason, the Marine Corps intended to allow the tanks to make contact with the enemy with the Ontos operating on the flanks. In defensive situations, the Ontos would lay in wait to ambush enemy tanks while the Marine tanks remained in reserve. Ontos companies were expected to hash out primary and alternate firing positions beforehand so that steady fire was maintained on the enemy.

The success of an Ontos in combat depended in large part on the skill of the commander/gunner. He relied on his periscope sights to identify a target. He then used the weapons control panel to arm the rifles and set the firing sequence for the number of rifles he wanted to use. After that, he aligned his reticles (the fibers in the periscope sights) according to an estimated range to target.

The Ontos was upgraded as part of the Marine Corps modernization program of 1963-1964. The upgraded M50A1 included a more powerful engine, solid-state radio, and azimuth indicator. The Ontos's new Chrysler

All: National Archives



TOP: An Ontos hunts snipers and weapons bunkers in Hue City during the Tet Offensive. ABOVE: An M-48 tank accompanies an Ontos in South Vietnam.

361B V-8 engine provided 180 horsepower.

Marine Corps Ontos units saw their first action when the Marine Corps deployed in two civil wars: Lebanon in 1958 and the Dominican Republic in 1965. In these deployments, Ontos platoons were attached to battalion landing teams.

In the case of the Lebanon crisis, BLTs 2nd Battalion, 2nd Marines and 3rd Battalion, 6th Marines went ashore at Beirut on July 15-16, 1958, as part of the 2nd Provisional Marine Force led by Brig. Gen. Sydney Wade. After securing the airport, Marine armor, including tanks, amphibious tractor, and Ontos moved into the city to guard a variety of locations, including the port, bridges, and the U.S. embassy. Altogether, two platoons totaling 10 Ontos participated in the operation.

The deployment to the Dominican Republic during that country's civil war mirrored the Lebanon operation in many respects. The vanguard of the 3/6 Marines arrived by helicopter on April 26, 1965, and was followed quickly by heavier elements landed by the Second Fleet. Within 48 hours, tanks, amphibious tractors, and Ontos joined the battalion landing force in the capital city. When snipers fired on the Marines, the Ontos deployed for direct fire support, but the mere threat of such awesome firepower was enough to deter the hostile individuals.

As relations with Cuba began deteriorating in 1961, the U.S. Defense Department decided to establish a strong garrison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. The garrison included a tank platoon and an Ontos platoon.

The most significant role for the Ontos during its existence was in Vietnam where it provided direct fire to Marine Corps riflemen fighting tenacious foe such as North Vietnamese regulars and veteran Viet Cong guerrillas. The Ontos arrived at Da Nang, South Vietnam, along with other vehicles of the 9th Marine Expeditionary Brigade on March 8, 1965. Within a year's time the tank battalions of the 1st and 3rd Marine Divisions also arrived in country.

Unlike the enemy the Marine Corps faced during the Korean War, the Vietnamese communists possessed superb anti-armor capabilities in the form of recoilless rifles and handheld rocket-propelled grenade launchers, such as the formidable Soviet-made RPG-7. The Ontos vehicles proved capable of traversing rice paddies. This ability was a substantial morale boost to Marine foot soldiers slogging through the paddies who welcomed additional direct fire support.

The Marine Corps in Vietnam was deployed in I Corps, the northernmost of the four tactical zones of responsibility into which South Vietnam was divided. While the 1st Marine Division in the southern part of I Corps was heavily engaged in counterinsurgency, the 3rd Marine Division deployed along the Demilitarized Zone fought under conditions that on occasion were akin to conventional warfare.

In May 1967 the 2nd Battalion, 9th Marines and 2nd Battalion, 26th Marines began Operation Hickory north of Con Thien. The Marines encountered well-entrenched enemy forces using bunkers and trench systems. Following the conclusion of Operation Hickory, the Marines of 2/9 went on the offensive. They were supported to good effect by Patton tanks and Ontos, which were used in a spoiling attack into the DMZ. Use of the Ontos, though, proved problematic because they often had to travel on roadways in the rugged country.

The Ontos also provided a much-needed morale boost by their presence during the six-month siege of Khe Sanh that began in January 1968. In anticipation that the North Vietnamese might at some point launch a human wave attack against the Khe Sanh airfield, Marine Corps Colonel David Lownds had 10 M50A1 Ontos vehicles to supplement his armor and artillery at Khe Sanh.

Lownds positioned the Ontos around his defensive perimeter where they stood ready to shred such an attack if it occurred. No human wave attack ever occurred at Khe Sanh, largely because the Marines succeeded in holding the low hills north of the base despite local attacks by the NVA against them during the early part of the siege. By failing to capture the hills to use for their long-range artillery, the NVA could never create the conditions it felt were necessary to successfully launch a major assault against the Khe Sanh airfield.

The Ontos may well best be known for its role supporting Marine riflemen in the streets

A crew member rests atop his Ontos in South Vietnam.

of Hue during the 1968 Tet Offensive. Hue consisted of two sections. The newer section of the city, where the Military Assistance Command Vietnam compound and the South Vietnamese Army headquarters were located, was south of the Perfume River. The older section, located on the north side of the Perfume River, consisted of an 18th-century citadel built by the French.

The Marines first cleared the newer part of the city before turning their attention to helping the South Vietnamese Army retake the citadel. One of the flaws in the NVA attack on Hue was that it failed to seal off the roads leading into the city from Route 1. As a result, Marine Corps armored columns, which included Ontos vehicles, were able to quickly reach Hue. During the street fighting inside the city, groups of Marine riflemen often furnished covering fire for Ontos engaged with the enemy in order to prevent the vehicle from being struck by enemy recoilless rifle or RPG rounds.

The Marine Corps did not record its Ontos losses in the Vietnam War, but few occurred as a result of enemy fire. Nevertheless, Ontos that broke down remained in a state of disrepair because of a general shortage of spare parts. One of the most obvious and frequent problems was that their tracks wore out.

The Ontos's role in the Vietnam War ground to a halt when the Marine Corps began withdrawing its ground forces in 1969. By that time the Ontos's spare parts supply was nearly depleted. Ontos mechanics salvaged parts from disabled vehicles to keep others running. In an ironic twist, the Marine Corps donated its surviving Ontos to the Army, which had rejected the system. In 1971, the Marine Corps disbanded the last of its Ontos units.

By that time the Marine Corps had refocused its efforts on next-generation antitank guided missiles with which it began equipping its units in 1975. The Marines kept one Ontos in service at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, but its last year in service was 1980. □

By Tim Miller

Theban general Epaminondas instituted changes in tactics so revolutionary that his army toppled the daunting Spartans.

A STOUNDING NEWS SWEPT THROUGH GREECE IN THE SUMMER OF 371 BC. In Boeotia, a crossroads for armies that was usually littered with the dead of its own citizens, the invading Spartans had been beaten, and one of their two kings had been slain in battle. The Boeotian victory at Leuctra on July 6, 371 BC, would change the balance of power throughout Greece. Over the course of the previous century Boeotia had been forced to choose sides in the conflicts that engulfed Greece. The Boeotians had sided with the invading Persians during the Second Persian Invasion of Greece in 480 BC, then with Sparta against Athens, and after that with Athens against Sparta. Even though the Boeotians' victory over the Spartans at the Battle of Leuctra made enemies of both Sparta and Athens, the Boeotians could claim to have truly liberated themselves.

Despite decades in the shadow of the all-powerful Spartans, the rural people of Boeotia had finally managed to free themselves from the local ruling class and oligarchs. Indeed, Boeotia had extended voting rights, office holding, and military service to all of its people, including even the poorest farmers. This expansion of citizenship substantially increased the pool of potential recruits and therefore was a crucial factor in the Boeotians' subsequent military success. Momentous change in Boeotia occurred when philosophers became rulers in Thebes, according to contemporary historians.

Chief among these rulers was Epaminondas, who along with Pelopidas had led the Thebans to victory at Leuctra. Following the repulse of the Spartan cavalry charge, Epaminondas had gone against the prevailing tactics of the time. The visionary commander had not only massed his own hoplites an astounding 50 deep but also attacked the Spartan left rather than its right. The right contained the mass of Spartan army, as well as those allied soldiers Sparta had forced to fight with them. But Epaminondas knew that by attacking the Spartan left, which potentially would wipe out the elite soldiers of their army, he also would be destroying the morale of the highly regimented Spartans.

The man who was later called *princips Graeciae* (first man of Greece) probably was born on or about 410 BC, in the city of Thebes.

Epaminondas (above) defends Pelopidas in a painting by William Rainey. Epaminondas's contribution to military science was the echelon attack and the weighted wing, tactics refined by other commanders who followed after him.

Both: Wikimedia

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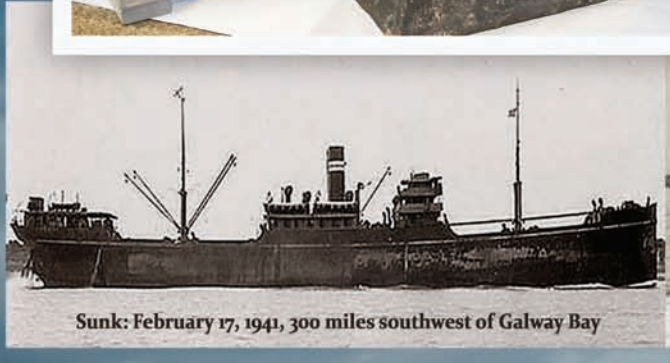
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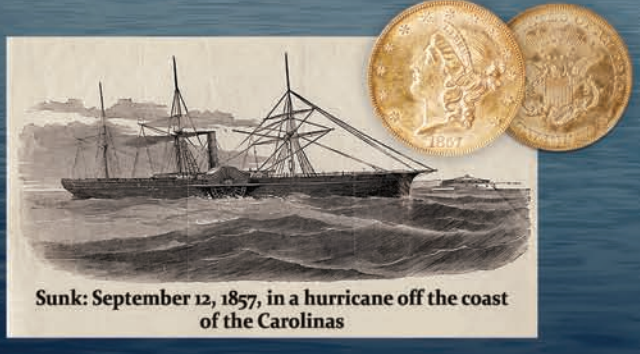
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For all the blank spots in his early life, the one shining certainty is his devotion to the philosophy and religion of Pythagoras. Pythagoras preached a variety of doctrines the everyday Greek would have found strange and, in some cases, even offensive. The sect's belief in reincarnation, which included the possibility of being reborn as an animal, informed not only his followers' strict vegetarianism, but also removed them from the norm of Greek sacrificial religion. Although a host of supernatural abilities, scientific discoveries, and plain folklore were later attached to Pythagoras, it is telling that he led his sect from the Aegean island of Samos all the way to Croton, where they lived in isolation.

Epaminondas refused to believe in the good or bad omens that usually trailed and even justified ancient military campaigns, yet he was smart enough to hint at them as an expedient, given that many of his soldiers would have seen such oracles as a standard of military life. The love of mathematical proportion and harmony that Pythagoras had preached, in which he equated human beings with numbers and musical notes, also allowed Epaminondas to despise the Spartan state even more than he already did, since to him their capital city was a mere disordered maze of streets.

He also treated his allies and enemies in unexpected ways. Fellow Boeotians who had disagreed with his policies or fought on the other side were forgiven, even as the usual penalty for such behavior would have been death. And when he reached Sparta and freed the Helots and founded Messene, his army did not seek to root out Spartan allies who had helped keep the Helots under subjugation. To use modern terminology, there were no witch hunts, no ethnic cleansing. Even as Xenophon records the Helot desire "to eat them raw," such treatment of the Spartans does not seem to have occurred. Never one to avoid the chance for describing brutality and violence, the ancient sources are silent on such actions when it comes to Epaminondas and his army's march into the Spartan heartland in the Peloponnese following their victory at Leuctra. It is worth noting that the force that crushed a tyrannical and oppressive regime did not itself resort to tyranny or oppression in the wake of its decisive victory.

As opposed to those ancient generals whose horses even came to fame, Epaminondas did not ride one; instead, he marched on foot with his men. What is more, he had no qualms about becoming a regular hoplite again, when for a moment his generalship was taken from him. While he was later dubbed "Iron Gut" thanks to the meager rations he demanded his soldiers live on, there is no question he lived on the same amount, or less. Also worth nothing, when Epaminondas marched into Laconia at the head of a huge allied army, they included mostly Boeotian farmers and voluntary allies as opposed to mercenaries or conquered allies.

Fresh off their victory at Leuctra, the Boeotians actually capped it in the most bloodless way; they freed Messenian and Laconian Helots, who by then had been the Spartans' slaves for more than 200 years. Only in Sparta was slavery as an institution specifically set aside for the subjugation of one people only. Incredibly, during the lifetime of Epaminondas, the slaves may have outnumbered the Spartans by as much as 20 to one, a situation that made Sparta's military capability less a well-earned achievement than a paranoid necessity that required year-round training and an emphasis on physical prowess. Corinthian philosopher Timolaus had said that the only way to destroy the Spartans was by applying "fire to them while they were in their nests." The Boeotians did just that.

In the wake of their victory at Leuctra, other states followed the Boeotians into some form of democracy, including former Spartans on the Peloponnese. Meanwhile, Boeotian hoplites had rarely fought outside their own country, this while no one within the historical record had ever invaded Spartan territory; Laconia was referred to as *aporthetos*, or unplundered. But to everyone's surprise, the Boeotian farmers were not just going to do it, and march 200 miles while gathering allies and supplies as they went, but they were going to do it in the winter when there was no possibility of foraging off the countryside. They brought with them baggage trains of dried food, fish, and fruit. When they saw that the locals fled with their approach, the Boeotians hoped that they would have access to the recently harvested grain of the Peloponnese.

At the news of such a plan, Epaminondas and his fellow general Pelopidas were given command of the army. Those who refused to assist Epaminondas also saw that opposing the recently minted war hero was unlikely to succeed; they had already kept him from pursuing the fleeing Spartans after Leuctra, and upon hearing of his winter plans they perhaps wished they had given in on that count. After leaving a small garrison behind, the two generals began their march in December 371 BC with 7,000 Boeotian hoplites. As they marched they were joined by Thessalians, Arcadians, Phocians, Locrians, and Euoboeans. Each of these contingents contributed a baggage train and servants.

Passing through the Isthmus of Corinth, the

collected troops pillaged the countryside as they entered the Peloponnese and marched south through Arcadia. They made as many as 15 miles a day through rough terrain and in the worst of winter conditions. Their line of march, especially over narrow mountain roads, stretched for 25 miles. The need for such a campaign in winter at the end of a major military campaign must have become apparent to those who realized that, although the Spartan army was nowhere to be seen, Epaminondas and Pelopidas continued their relentless advance.

Their tenure as Boeotarchs (chief officers of the Boeotian Confederacy) and hence as generals was legally at an end once the year 370 began. Technically speaking, they had no right to lead the army for they already had made their point by supporting democracy on the Peloponnese and, therefore, should have returned home.

But Epaminondas was determined to push the bounds of democracy. He would stop at nothing to disrupt the designs of tyrants. He continued south into the Peloponnese, freeing and gathering Helots with him as he progressed.

The Boeotian army skirted the city of Sparta entirely, where the remainder of the Spartan army was holed up. This time it was Sparta's turn to experience what it felt like to defend one's city in the face of a superior foe. Desperate as they were, the Spartans briefly agreed to free and arm some 6,000 Helots, but their presence in the city was almost as unnerving as that of the Boeotians passing by outside of it, and the offer was revoked.

Eon Images

Epaminondas and fellow Theban commander Pelopidas first led Thebes to victory over Sparta at the Battle of Leuctra. Their battlefield partnership enabled a period of Theban hegemony.

Wikimedia

Epaminondas is depicted in the aftermath of his mortal wounding at the Second Battle of Mantinea in a painting by 18th-century Dutch artist Isaac Walraven. The Boeotians buried their revered commander on the battlefield.

Epaminondas himself had no desire for a siege or to fight in Sparta's chaos of streets; instead, he led his army south to the port of Gythium on the southern shore of the Peloponnese. The Boeotians destroyed the port and all other walled towns they encountered. Afterward, Epaminondas returned north to Attica, where many of his allies decided to return home after having collected their share of loot and spoils. Perhaps considering this option himself, he suddenly fell sway to an oracle, which the ancient sources stress he rarely did. Diodorus tells us that Epaminondas "meant to seek after great enterprises and to seek everlasting renown." It just so happened that an oracle made it clear that such success depended upon restoring "to Messenians their ancestral land."

They had not freed all of the Helots, and Epaminondas returned to Laconia once again to finish the job. Twenty miles west and a little north of Sparta, and within the shadow of Mount Thome, Epaminondas spent the waning days of the winter of 370 BC helping the local population haul the stones for their new capital, Messene, and its new walls.

True to his Pythagorean leanings, he had his lead architect lay the new city out in a grid. Despite more famous cities in antiquity, the remains of Messene's fortifications are still among the most impressive in ancient Greece. Twenty-five miles to the northeast, Epaminondas ordered the construction of another fortified city. This one, which was named Megalopolis, became a thriving urban center.

The Spartans later attempted to attack Messene but decided against it upon seeing that they were all willing to fight to the death rather than return to slavery. Although the Spartans remained strong enough to harass people within and without the Peloponnese, they never did recover from the Boeotian invasion or from the founding of two formidable cities so near their own. Thus Epaminondas succeeded in his quest to create new cities that could serve as political and military counterweights to Sparta.

It should come as no surprise that Epaminondas's individual daring in the name of democracy made him no friends when he finally did return home. His favorite dog wagged his tail, while "the Thebans in contrast for all that I have done for them try to execute me," he quipped. Willing to accept execution for the actions of his that had been illegal, all charges were suddenly dropped when he asked that his tombstone read: "Epaminondas had forced the Thebans against their will to torch Laconia, which had been heretofore untouched for 500 years; he resettled Messene after two hundred and thirty years; he had united and organized the Arcadians into a league; and he gave back to the Greeks their autonomy."

While not executed, at one point he was demoted to a regular soldier. The "Theban Hegemony" also faded quickly, for the Thebans had overextended themselves and eventually devolved into civil war. Meanwhile, Epaminondas's former allies soon turned against him. Unwilling as ever to execute or harshly treat those who opposed him, he made his own downfall an inevitability. The world, as it were, was not ready for what he had to offer, and after such a titanic victory over the Spartans, overloaded symbolically and literally with so much history and meaning, the day-to-day politics of bickering and reversals proved not to be one of Epaminondas's strengths.

At the Second Battle of Mantinea fought on July 4, 362 BC, Epaminondas relied again on his Leuctra tactic with similar positive results. His phalanx drove the Spartans and their allies from the field. Mortally wounded by a spear, Epaminondas was carried gently from the field. He suggested to those tending to him that they sue for peace for he knew that there wasn't another leader like him among their ranks. When the Boeotians crowding around him declared victory, he is believed to have said, "I have lived long enough, for I die unconquered."

Epaminondas's primary contributions to military science were mass and economy of force. The former refers to applying a preponderance of force at a decisive place and time during battle. The latter refers to using all available combat power in an effective manner. At Leuctra, Epaminondas employed a massed phalanx and what amounted to a refused flank in the sense that he allowed the allied forces that constituted his right wing to follow deep phalanx in echelon as it attacked the enemy's left wing. These fundamental principles became building blocks for the military geniuses of future generations.

As a general with a conscience who had the ability to anticipate problems, Epaminondas was concerned with the ramifications of his campaign against Sparta. He feared that by grinding the Spartans into the dust he would be paving the way for the rise of Athens or Macedon. His worst fears in that regard would come true.

The future king Philip II of Macedon, while a young man, was held as a hostage in Illyria and then in Thebes for three years. While in Thebes he stayed in the house of the famous Theban general Pammenes. In that setting, young Philip learned much about the art of war.

The Macedonian king and his son Alexander both took what inspiration and lessons they could from Epaminondas's life and military career. They adapted it to greater brutality. When the Thebans rebelled against Macedon, Alexander destroyed the city and parceled out its territory to the other Boeotian cities.

More than 600 years later, the historian Pausanias recorded the following inscription dedicated to Epaminondas: "This came from my council: Sparta has cut the hair of her glory, Messene takes her children in, a wreath of the spears of Thebes has crowned Megalopolis. Greece is free." □

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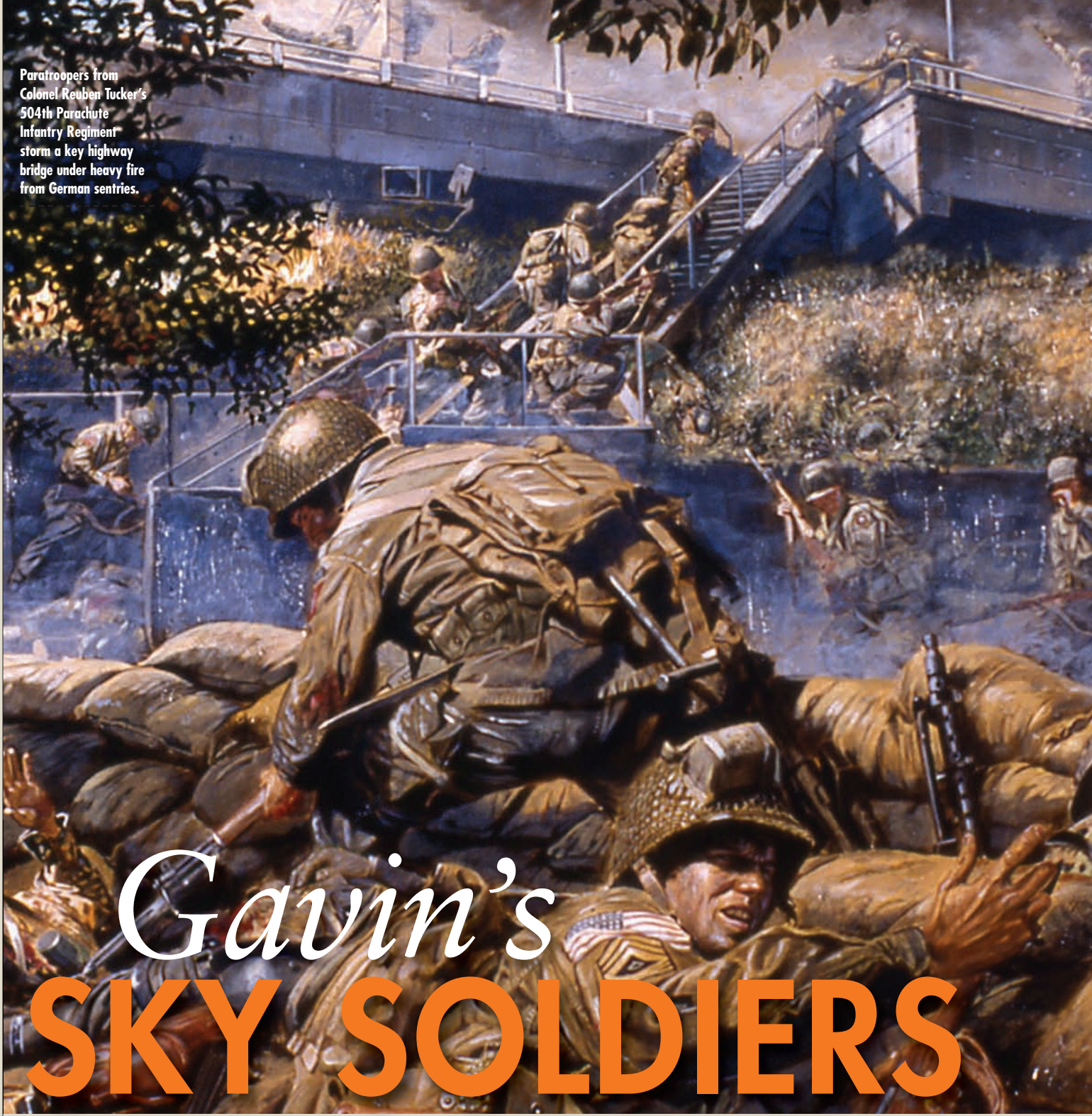

Paratroopers from Colonel Reuben Tucker's 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment storm a key highway bridge under heavy fire from German sentries.

Gavin's SKY SOLDIERS

BY MID-AFTERNOON ON SEPTEMBER 20, 1944, the deceptively placid waters of Holland's Waal River were wreathed in dense clouds of smoke. Allied tanks and artillery had bombarded the north bank of the river for half an hour, unleashing a deafening barrage intended to soften up German defenses. The artillery crews had fired hundreds of rounds of high-explosive and smoke shells. These preparations were necessary to protect the 260 men of the 82nd Airborne Division who were crouched down behind a dike on the south bank of the river. The airborne troopers would shortly begin one of the most desperate operations of World War II.

When the artillery ceased fire, plans called for the paratroopers to rush for the riverbank, grab collapsible canvas boats, and paddle across 400 yards of open water into the teeth of enemy fire. Major Julian Cook, who would command the first wave of the attack, had a sinking feeling in his gut that he was leading his men into a bloody disaster. "Somebody has come up with a real nightmare," the battalion commander thought to himself.

Subsequent to the D-Day landings in Normandy more than three months earlier, Allied troops had faced a brutal fight in expanding their toehold in northwestern France. For a grueling period that lasted six weeks, unexpectedly stiff resistance by German troops fighting on

JAMES GAVIN'S 82ND AIRBORNE DIVISION PERFORMED IMPRESSIVE FEATS IN ITS EFFORT TO SECURE THE RIVER AND CANAL CROSSINGS AT NIJMEGEN FOR OPERATION MARKET GARDEN. **BY JOSHUA SHEPHERD**

the defensive in the bocage country of Normandy had resulted in heavy casualties. The Allies paid dearly in blood for every yard of ground they gained. But by the third week of July, the tide had begun to turn.

British troops attempted to break through German positions east of Caen on July 18. The Germans repulsed the attack but weakened their line farther west as they stripped it of troops to reinforce their positions opposite the British. On July 25 the U.S. Twelfth Army Group smashed through German defenses west of St. Lo, producing the long-awaited breakout from Normandy. Lt. Gen. George Patton sent armored columns through the gap. British troops expanded the scope of the attacks. By the beginning of August, the war in France tipped decidedly in favor of the Allies.

As the German war machine struggled to stem outright collapse, Allied superiority in men and matériel began to tell. In a crushing sweep through the German left, the Americans moved south through open country and then turned east, intending to link up with British and Canadian forces pushing south from Caen. Allied commanders hoped to trap the elite armored units of Germany's Army Group B in a pocket south of Falaise.

Furious fighting during the middle of August tightened the noose. As the German 7th and 15th

Armies frantically scrambled to escape the killing ground of the Falaise Pocket, the Allies subjected them to a battering by heavy artillery and ground attack aircraft. By August 21, their escape route was entirely cut off. Germany's Army Group B had been decimated. The Germans suffered 10,000 dead, 20,000 wounded, and 50,000 troops captured. The Allies were elated. "Two and one half months of bitter fighting have brought the end of the war in Europe in sight, almost within reach," Supreme Allied Commander General Dwight Eisenhower wrote in his intelligence summary for August.

As disorganized German columns streamed eastward, Allied commanders were anxious to maintain momentum and keep the enemy on the run. But the sudden battlefield success proved to be a logistical double-edged sword. As armored columns thundered toward the frontiers of Germany, they outstripped their lines of communication and faced a crippling lack of fuel. The armies consumed a staggering one million gallons of fuel per day, every drop of which had to be transported from the French coast. It was a painful dilemma for frustrated field commanders. Although the German Wehrmacht forces in France were clearly demoralized and ripe for a fatal blow, fuel shortages ensured that the Allies could not fully exploit the opportunity. Despite the astonishing successes of August 1944, the Allied juggernaut slowed to a creeping advance.

Recently promoted Field Marshal Bernard Law Montgomery vowed to break the stalemate. Widely regarded as capable and considered a darling of the British public, he was also vain, contentious, and quarrelsome. But to his credit Montgomery also was an innovative strategist who was willing to entertain bold ideas. With the fighting bogged down in eastern France, it seemed the war might linger into yet another year. Montgomery began sketching out plans in September for a daring campaign. The Allies christened their bold offensive Operation Market Garden.

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TOP German Field Marshal Walther Model discusses operations with subordinates. Model was known as the Führer's Fireman as he was often sent to contain enemy strikes. BOTTOM Brigadier General James Gavin prepares to board a transport plane. He was admired for leading by personal example.

Montgomery developed a novel approach to a vexing situation. In a September 10 meeting with Eisenhower, the British field marshal laid out his proposal. Rather than directly confront the substantial barrier of the Rhine River, as well as enemy defensive positions on the German border known as the Siegfried Line, Montgomery hoped to entirely bypass the defensive works. His plan called for armored units of Lt. Gen. Brian Horrocks' XXX Corps of Lt. Gen. Miles Dempsey's British Second Army to make a deep strike into Holland, which would outflank the Siegfried Line in a massive turning movement. Once the Allies were firmly established in Holland, they would be in a position to drive directly southeast into the Ruhr, Germany's industrial heartland. If successful, there was a chance that the operation would unhinge German positions throughout Western Europe. If everything went according to plan, the war might be over by Christmas.

To pull it off, Montgomery planned to bolster the armored thrust by dropping three divisions of airborne troops deep behind enemy lines. The paratroopers' primary objective would be the seizure of bridges that were crucial to XXX Corps' advance into Holland. The Allies had a formidable airborne force at their disposal, which was Lt. Gen. Lewis Brereton's newly created 1st Allied Airborne Army. Eisenhower had held the airborne army in reserve for just such an operation.

To facilitate the armored advance, the Allies would need to funnel precious supplies of fuel and matériel to the forces participating in Market Garden at the expense of American forces farther south. Much to the annoyance of American generals such as the Third Army's Patton, Eisenhower approved the plan. For his part, Lt. Gen. Omar Bradley was not terribly impressed by the entire scheme. Although he thought the plan was inspired, Bradley foresaw trouble. "It's a foolhardy thing to do, and you'll take a lot of casualties," Bradley warned Ike.

Bradley's assessment proved prescient. A number of demoralized German units in Holland had nearly disintegrated due to combat losses and desertion. The Allies believed this left the Netherlands open for the taking. But the Germans had rushed in reinforcements in an effort to stabilize their northern flank. The reinforcements included Generaloberst Kurt Student's crack 1st Parachute Army, which took over the front along the Belgian border. Worse still, Allied reconnaissance flights and reports from the Dutch Resistance warned of the presence of substantial German armored columns in the vicinity of Arnhem. In the rush to implement Market Garden, top Allied commanders conveniently ignored the intelligence. When warned that German armor might be near the drop zones, Montgomery brushed off the threat. "He ridiculed the idea [and] felt that the greatest opposition would come more from terrain difficulties than from the Germans," wrote Maj. Gen. Bedell Smith, the chief of staff of the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force.

As outlined by Montgomery in his briefing to Eisenhower, the airborne army would "capture and hold the crossings over the canals and rivers on the Second Army's main axis of advance" from Eindhoven to Arnhem. Monty described to Ike an "airborne carpet" in which thousands of paratroopers would be dropped around the key bridges with orders to ensure that they remained intact.

The first objective, Eindhoven, was assigned to the Maj. Gen. Maxwell Taylor's U.S. 101st Airborne Division. A total of nine road and rail bridges were situated in 101st's sector. Specifically, Taylor's division was tasked with seizing multiple bridges at Eindhoven, the bridge over the Wilhelmina Canal at Son, and the bridge

National Archives

American gliders bearing Gavin's paratroopers on the ground near Grave. The armada ferrying Gavin's troopers consisted of 482 planes and 50 gliders.

over the Willems Canal near Veghel. The second objective 20 miles to the north was Nijmegen. Brig. Gen. James Gavin's 7,300-strong U.S. 82nd Airborne Division had orders to secure the bridges over the Maas River at Grave and the Waal River at Nijmegen. Altogether, Gavin's area included 11 key bridges.

The third objective, Arnhem, was assigned to Maj. Gen. Roy Urquhart's British 1st Airborne Division. The British paratroopers had orders to secure the town's strategically important bridge over the lower Rhine River. Operational command of the paratroopers fell to Lt. Gen. Frederick Browning, who was not only the commander of the British 1st Airborne Corps but also deputy commander of the 1st Allied Airborne Army. Browning would accompany Gavin's division in its air drop on Nijmegen. As soon as fair weather permitted, Market Garden would proceed as planned.

The geographic obstacles of Market Garden were incredibly challenging. Horrocks' corps would have to cross five rivers, three major canals, and multiple streams and ditches. Worse still, the armored column would be forced to use a single narrow highway that angled toward Arnhem. The British tanks and armored vehicles would have to stay on the elevated highway because the marshy lowlands of Holland were impossible for armor to negotiate.

The 82nd Airborne Division had a pivotal role to play in Market Garden. The division had a storied history dating back to World War I when, as the 82nd Division, it saw heavy fighting on the Western Front. Before the outbreak of World War II, the U.S. Army High Command, which saw the need for an elite parachute force, redesignated the unit as the 82nd Airborne Division.

After receiving a crash course in the nascent art of airborne operations, the U.S. Army deployed the 82nd Airborne to the Mediterranean Theater of Operations, where it quickly proved itself in combat drops in Sicily and mainland Italy. The commander of the 82nd Airborne at the time was Maj. Gen. Matthew Ridgway. During the planning for Operation Overlord, Ridgeway had successfully convinced Eisenhower to increase the strength of the two American airborne divisions from two parachute regiments and a single glider regiment of two battalions to three parachute regiments and a glider regiment of three battalions.

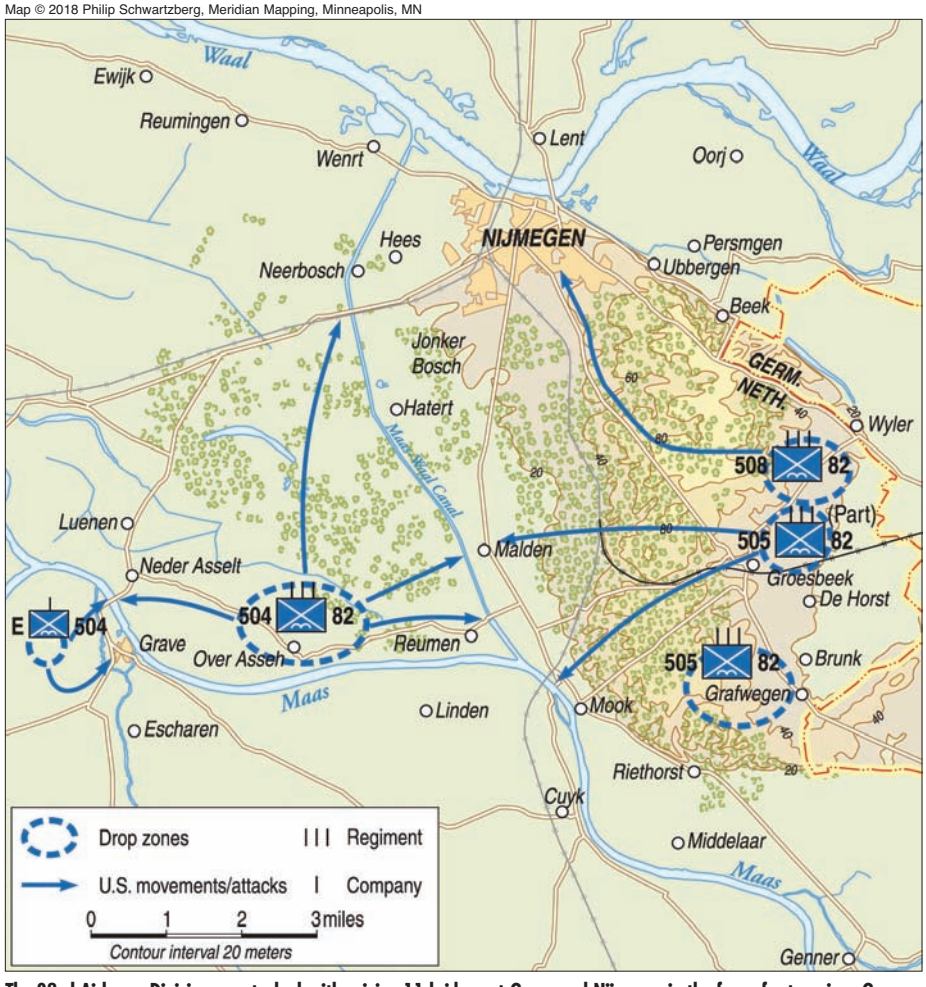
The 82nd Airborne also performed ably in Operation Overlord in Normandy where it incurred heavy casualties in more than a month of hard fighting. When Ridgway was promoted to command the XVIII Airborne Corps, he enthusiastically recommended New York native Gavin, a rising star known for his tenacity and for leading by personal example, to succeed him.

At the outbreak of World War II, Gavin was a company commander in the Army's airborne arm. He served with distinction in the airdrops in Sicily and Normandy. When he was briefed on the 82nd Airborne's role in the operation, Gavin was incredulous. His troops would have to capture, at a minimum, the three major bridges in his sector. Moreover, it was imperative that the division maintain control of Groesbeek Heights, a five-mile-long ridgeline southeast of Nijmegen. Although only 300 feet high, the ridge loomed over the Maas and Waal Rivers. What is more, the ridgeline controlled the approaches from the German border.

Gavin's three parachute regiments were Colonel Reuben Tucker's 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment (PIR), Colonel William Eckerman's 505th PIR, and Colonel Roy Lindquist's 508th PIR.

Gavin's greatest concern was selection of drop zones. British planners had opted for landing fields up to six miles away from the targeted bridges. Although Gavin was inclined to risk heavier casualties by dropping closer to the objectives, he kept his reservations to himself. "I assumed that the British, with their extensive combat experience, knew exactly what they were doing," he wrote.

The morning of September 17 dawned bright and clear. At 10:25 AM transport aircraft carrying the men of the 82nd Airborne began taking off from airfields in Lincolnshire. The aerial armada included C-47 tow planes, troop transports, and American-built Waco and British-built Horsa gliders. The armada ferrying Gavin's troopers consisted of 482 planes and 50 gliders.



The 82nd Airborne Division was tasked with seizing 11 bridges at Grave and Nijmegen in the face of a tenacious German defense. Holding Groesbeek Heights (right) in the face of German counterattacks was crucial to the 82nd's success.

Despite the seemingly invulnerable display of Allied military might, the men were in for a nerve-racking 30-minute flight across the North Sea to the drop zones in Holland. With nearly 5,000 aircraft aloft, accidents were inevitable. As the armada neared the coast of Holland, German antiaircraft guns began pounding away at the vulnerable aircraft flying low at 1,500 feet.

As the planes carrying the 82nd Airborne neared Nijmegen, the threat from German antiaircraft fire slackened. Allied bombers and fighters had attacked enemy positions around the city for nearly three hours preceding the arrival of the troop transports, thereby wreaking havoc on German defenses. Only a single antiaircraft gun in Nijmegen remained operable.

At 12:45 PM American Pathfinders began parachuting in the vicinity of Nijmegen. Their job was to mark drop zones for the pilots. Gavin's first wave of paratroopers followed close on their heels. The initial drops were made by the 505th and 508th PIRs. Gavin jumped with the 505th, which was his former unit.

It was a harrowing daylight descent for the paratroopers, who made easy targets for Germans on the ground. Falling near Groesbeek Heights, Captain Briand Beaudin, the surgeon of the 3rd Battalion of the 508th, was alarmed to see he was about to land on an enemy antiaircraft position. Determined to afford himself a fighting chance, Beaudin drew his .45 sidearm and opened fire. "[I realized] how futile it was, aiming my little pea-shooter ... in the air above large-caliber guns," he wrote. After landing safely, Beaudin succeeded in capturing the stupefied German gun crew.

Other German crews put up more of a fight, downing three American fighter planes and firing at descending paratroopers. Private Edwin Raub of the 505th, who came under 20mm antiaircraft fire, side-slipped in order to land near the gun emplacement. Still attached to his chute, Raub rushed at the gun crew, firing bursts from his Thompson submachine gun. He killed one member of the gun crew and captured the rest.

More Pathfinders fanned out to mark the landing zones for the artillery and the 82nd's glider-borne forces. The overall casualties in the initial drop were negligible. In just 18 minutes, Gavin had 4,500 men on Groesbeek Heights. Gavin, though, fractured two of his vertebrae in the drop; despite the pain, the plucky commander went about his duty.

Farther to the west, the 504th was making its drop near the village of Grave. The 2nd Battalion's E Company had orders to seize the bridge over the Maas River, the southernmost bridge in the 82nd's sector. As the aircraft transporting Lieutenant John Thompson, a platoon leader in E Company, approached its assigned drop zone and the jump light flashed green, he looked out of the aircraft only to see it was over buildings. He waited a few seconds, and when it was over farm fields, he ordered his men out of the airplane. After he assembled 16 of his men on the ground, Thompson noticed the bridge over the Maas was only 300 yards away. Even though he and his men were isolated from the rest of the company, he led them toward the bridge.

Wading through drainage ditches in water up to their armpits, the paratroopers were able to get in close proximity to the nine-arch bridge span despite the presence of enemy troops around it. When Thompson saw the Germans at the south end of the bridge scurrying around a power plant, he ordered his men to rake the area with machine-gun fire. In a few minutes two trucks loaded with German reinforcements arrived. A paratrooper shot the driver of the lead truck. Using whatever cover he could find, Thompson continued to work his way toward the bridge. As he did so, he spotted a 20mm cannon mounted in a concrete flak tower.

The paratroopers made short work of the enemy positions, which were manned by rear-echelon German troops. One of Thompson's men eased his way forward and fired two rounds from a bazooka into the top of the flak tower. When the Americans stormed the tower, they found two dead Germans and one who was wounded.

Thompson continued to press his attack. He ordered his men to fire the captured 20mm gun at German targets on the north bank. His squad's tenacious fighting had paid off handsomely. Reinforcements soon arrived to ensure that the Maas Bridge would remain in American hands.

North of the Maas, elements of the 504th struggled to secure a bridge over the Maas-Waal Canal. The Germans had blown a bridge at Malden when they saw the Americans approaching. A German pillbox, which bristled with machine guns, situated on an island in the canal defended a bridge at Heuman.

German machine-gun fire kept the American at bay for much of the day. Nevertheless, the

paratroopers maintained pressure on the Germans. The paratroopers set up a machine gun on the bank of the canal to furnish covering fire. As the two sides traded machine-gun fire, four paratroopers made a successful dash across the bridge, while seven others crossed the canal by boat farther downstream.

To the amazement of the Americans, the Germans failed to destroy the bridge. But the Americans' grip on the position remained tenuous until the sun set. Under cover of darkness, an American squad sprinted across the bridge and severed the German demolition lines. The paratroopers also assaulted and captured the German pillbox in the canal. The paratroopers succeeded just before midnight in seizing two of the three bridges assigned to them.

That day German senior officers stationed near Arnhem became embroiled in a heated disagreement. Lt. Gen. Wilhelm Bittrich, commander of the II SS Panzer Corps, and his subordinate, Brigadeführer Heinz Harmel of the 10th SS Panzer Division, argued for the immediate demolition of the bridge at Nijmegen; however, Field Marshall Walther Model, commander of Army Group B, overruled them. Model said that under no circumstance was the bridge to be destroyed. He hoped to preserve the bridge for a counterattack he was planning.

Outside the 82nd area of operations, Market Garden was going horribly awry. Horrocks' XXX Corps, which encountered stiff resistance from the Germans as it advanced from the Belgian border, had fallen far behind schedule. Taylor's 101st Airborne at Eindhoven was struggling to keep the road open for British armor.

Meanwhile, the British 1st Airborne at Arnhem faced nothing short of a nightmare. Although warnings about German tanks had gone unheeded, the British paratroopers had dropped in the midst of some of the toughest troops the Germans had in the field. A single British battalion secured a tenuous grip on the bridge at Arnhem. The rest of the division, in a fight for its life, was isolated on the outskirts of the city.

At the time of the airdrops, Bittrich's II SS Panzer Corps was refitting north and east Arnhem. The corps comprised Obersturmbannführer Walter Harzer 9th Panzer Division and Harmel's 10th SS Panzer Division. Both divisions had fought in Normandy, and they had barely escaped total annihilation in the Falaise Pocket.

Seizing the bridge at Nijmegen would consequently prove imperative to relieving the British in Arnhem, a task nonetheless complicated by the uncertainty of the situation experienced by participants in combat known as the fog of war.

National Archives

TOP: Sherman tanks of the Irish Guards roll past the blackened hulks of German fighting vehicles during their advance to Nijmegen. BOTTOM: German 88mm rounds explode as steadfast American airborne troops fight their way forward.

Gavin expected a battalion of the 505th to make an attempt on the bridge as soon as possible after the regiment landed. By Gavin's recollection, he further advised Lindquist, the 508th commander, to approach Nijmegen from the pastures to the east, thereby bypassing much of the city. Lindquist, who had a different recollection, intended to make an attempt to capture the Nijmegen Bridge only after he had completely secured his position on the northern Groesbeek Heights. When no assault on the bridge materialized by evening, an alarmed Gavin ordered Lindquist to make an immediate push for the bridge.

Unfortunately, the attack would unfold in precisely the manner that Gavin hoped to avoid. Lindquist's 1st Battalion, commanded by Lt. Col. Shields Warren, had been assigned a holding position southeast of Nijmegen before receiving orders to move for the bridge. Unaware of Gavin's preferences for the assault, Warren pushed directly into Nijmegen from the south.

As Warren's troopers groped their way toward the bridge, fighting erupted in the streets of Nijmegen. In the worst sort of bad luck, the Americans had bumped into elements of the II SS Panzer Corps that had been rushed south from the Arnhem area. The crack SS troops bolstered German defenses at two traffic circles that controlled the approaches to the rail and road bridges over the Waal.

In the confused night fighting, it was difficult to tell friend from foe, and savage close-quarters combat ensued. In an attempt to maintain the element of surprise, some of the Americans had been

ordered not to fire their weapons. Corporal James Blue of the 508th, who abruptly came face to face with an SS officer, attacked the German with his trench knife, but found the blade too short to do the job, so Blue killed the German with a spray of bullets from his Thompson submachine gun.

Facing a gauntlet of German machine-gun fire, the ill-coordinated American attack was making little headway. "Bullets were whistling down the street, and there was so much confusion in the darkness that the men did not know where the others were ... we couldn't make it to the bridge," wrote Private James Allardyce of the 508th. With no other choice at the time, Warren called in his men and consolidated a secure position. The initial attempt on the Waal Bridge, conducted in improvised haste, had been stopped cold.

Early the following day, Gavin was faced with a grave threat to his thinly occupied position on Groesbeek Heights. Across the German border to the east of the Americans, a scratch force of German rear-echelon troops had hastily formed to contest the landings. The troops were under the overall command of General der Kavalerie Kurt Feldt, who initially had little more than headquarters staff under his command. To make up for such manpower shortages, Feldt cobbled together a polyglot force out of any men he could get his hands on, including trainees, convalescents, reservists, and the students of a Luftwaffe noncommissioned officer school. Promised that he would be reinforced by two divisions of crack fallschirmjagers, Feldt was under orders to wage a desperate delaying action by aggressively attacking the enemy drop zones.

By the morning of September 18, Feldt had assembled 3,400 inexperienced infantrymen into the 406th Landesschuetzen Division of Korps Feldt. The force had five armored cars, three halftracks, and various captured Russian howitzers. Feldt entertained little hope that his rag-tag collection of green troops could defeat veteran American paratroopers. "I had no confidence in this attack with its motley crowd," wrote Feldt. "But it was necessary to risk the attack."

National Archives

At 6:30 AM on September 18, Feldt hurled his force at Groesbeek Heights. The Americans, who had faced little resistance in that sector, were initially caught off guard. "To our surprise, at the beginning, the attack made slow progress everywhere," Feldt wrote. His men managed to gain ground against the Americans, and they fought their way into the village of Mook.

Not surprisingly, the German assault stalled as the more experienced American paratroopers collected themselves. A German staff officer of the 406th Division rushed forward to take over a battalion that had been pinned down. The troops were old men who were veterans of World War I. They had just been called up to fill the depleted ranks of the Wehrmacht. The staff officer rallied them for another assault. "Can't you see that it's up to us ... to run the whole show again?" he asked them.

Although the German attack briefly pressed forward, the momentum soon shifted in favor of the Americans. Gavin shuffled around what troops he had to shore up his lines and recalled Warren's battalion from Nijmegen. Although the Germans began to take the worst of the fight, the Americans paid grudging respect to their tenacity. "They were all around us and determined to rush us off our zones," wrote Arthur "Dutch" Schultz, a BAR gunner with C Company, 505th. A furious American counterattack down the eastern slopes of Groesbeek Heights began driving the enemy back toward the German border.

Just then another wave of American planes arrived over Groesbeek Heights as the battle raged on the ground. As German troops scrambled for cover, Allied fire from the newly arrived aircraft tore into their ranks. "Their crew machine guns swept the entire field with fire," wrote the staff officer of the 406th Division. "Bombs exploded in between, [and] it was as though all hell had broken loose." With German infantry on the run, American gliders began landing on the drop zones. Exploiting the chaos, elements of the 505th launched a counterattack across the northern drop zone. The men of the 406th Division panicked when gliders landed nearby. During their mad dash for the rear, Feldt narrowly avoided capture.

Despite the successful arrival of Allied reinforcements and supplies, Browning was growing anxious regarding developments. Although information from Arnhem was sketchy at best, it was readily apparent that the British 1st Airborne Division was cut off and facing a tough fight of its own. Without reinforcement from XXX Corps, which would have to pass over the bridge at Nijmegen, the British troopers at Arnhem would be destroyed in detail. On the afternoon of September 18, Browning informed Gavin that something had to be done. "Nijmegen bridge must be taken today [or] at the latest tomorrow," said Browning.

By that time the lead elements of XXX Corps, the 1st Battalion of the Grenadier Guards, linked up with the 82nd Airborne. With the assistance of the British tanks, Gavin planned yet another attack on the Nijmegen road bridge for the afternoon of September 19. To lead the infantry element, Gavin chose Lt. Col. Ben Vendevooort, the hard-fighting commander of the 2nd Battalion, 505th. The objective was to dislodge the Germans from the opposite bank of the Waal.

Such expectations were sorely misplaced. By that point, German defenses on the south bank of the Waal were manned by a battalion of crack troops from the 22nd Panzergrenadier Regiment, many of them veterans of the Eastern Front, under the command of the resourceful Captain Karl-Heinz Euling. When the attack proceeded, Vandervoort's paratroopers followed 40 British tanks and armored vehicles into Nijmegen. One column moved for the railroad bridge, while another angled toward the road bridge. All went well until the Allies neared the bridges. American troops scattered for cover when German snipers opened fire, and German guns began knocking out the lead British vehicles. Fierce fighting continued until nightfall, but the German defenses south of the

Waal River had again proven impervious to direct assault.

With the outcome of Operation Market Garden in the balance, Gavin settled on the most desperate of measures. At a meeting of senior officers that evening, which included Browning and the recently arrived Horrocks, he outlined what he had in mind. Repeated direct assaults against the Nijmegen Bridge had proved both futile and costly, he explained, and the beleaguered British paratroopers in Arnhem could wait no longer.

Gavin proposed taking the bridge from both ends simultaneously. While another direct attack, spearheaded by the tanks of the Grenadier Guards, moved against the southern approaches, an assault party of American paratroopers would cross the Waal River by boat and seize the northern end of the bridge. It was an audacious plan but, by Gavin's reasoning, there was little choice. "The attempt has to be made if Market Garden is to succeed," said Gavin. Browning, quickly running out of options, gave his approval.

The unenviable assignment of the river crossing fell to Tucker's 504th. A taciturn veteran of the Anzio landings, the cigar-chomping Tucker said little during the briefing. But clearly alarmed by the price his men would pay to seize the road bridge, he wanted direct assurances of support from his British counterparts. Captain T. Moffatt Burriss of the 504th wrote that Horrocks' confidence was effusive. "My tanks will be lined up in full force" for the push to Arnhem, and "nothing will stop them," said Horrocks.

The attack was scheduled for 3 PM on September 20. A mile downstream of the railroad bridge, the 504th's 3rd Battalion, commanded by Major Julian Cook, waited nervously behind a dike on the south bank. Few entertained any illusions about the deadly nature of their assignment. Cook was dismayed by the entire plan, but he was determined to carry out his orders.

Thirty minutes before the assault was scheduled to take place, Allied aircraft, artillery, and tanks opened up a deafening bombardment in an effort to soften up German defenses on the north bank. It was an impressive spectacle, but officers peering through binoculars had no idea if the fire was having much of an influence on the Germans.

While the artillery banged away, the assault boats, on loan from the British, finally arrived. They were rather unimpressive, foldout contraptions with plywood bottoms and canvas sides. Many of the craft had only two paddles whereas they were supposed to have eight. Nevertheless, the paratroopers proceeded with the crossing. They hurriedly assembled the boats. Each boat would carry a complement of 13 paratroopers and three engineers. The men had little time to spare. When the artillery barrage ended, a thick smokescreen drifted across the river, and an officer shouted "Go!"

National Archives

Imperial War Museum

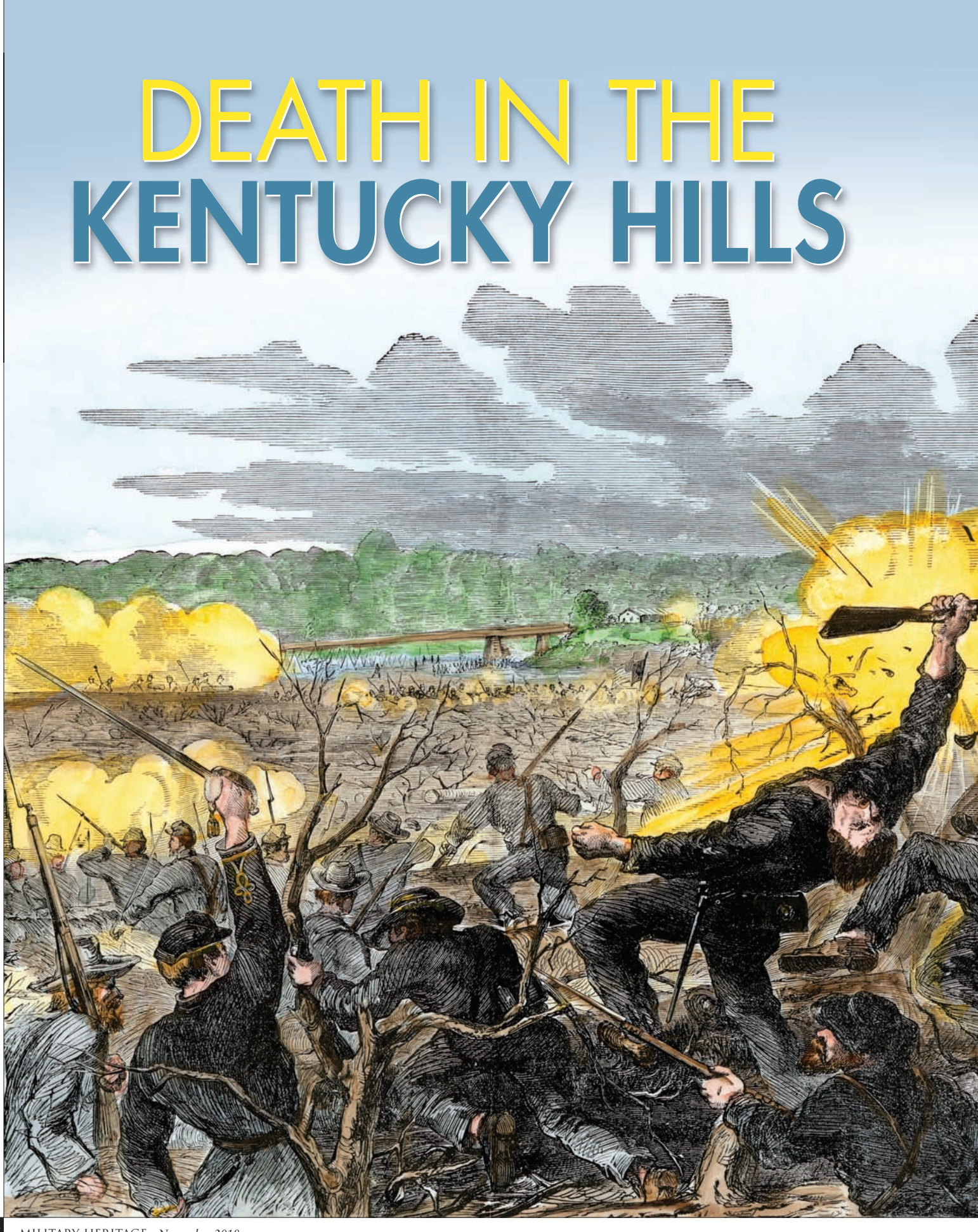
TOP: U.S. airborne troops guard wounded Germans after securing Nijmegen Bridge. A delay in the assault on the bridge meant that the Americans had to fight elements of the German II SS Panzer Corps in the streets of the city. BOTTOM: Paratroopers of the British 1st Airborne Division marching into captivity pass in front of a German self-propelled gun. The British paratroopers' failure to capture the Rhine bridge doomed the operation to failure. OPPOSITE: With the outcome of the battle unknown, Dutch civilians remain noticeably reserved as the Americans clear away German resistance.

Gripping the gunwales and racing for the river's edge, the Americans were quickly afloat but ran into trouble from the outset. Desperate to cross the river as quickly as possible, men began frantically paddling with their rifle butts. The swift river current spun many of the ungainly boats in circles. Worse yet, strong winds soon dispersed the smokescreen. Drifting in the middle of the Waal River, Cook's paratroopers were exposed to the full fury of the enemy fire.

Germans on the north bank opened up with machine-gun and 20mm cannon fire, shredding canvas boats and the helpless paratroopers they contained. Dozens fell overboard or collapsed on the bloody floor of the boats. The river was rent by a nightmarish cacophony of shellfire, curses, and shouts of terror. In the midst of it all, Cook did his duty to the cadence of the rosary. "Hail Mary, full of grace," he repeated to himself as he paddled.

Continued on page 74

DEATH IN THE KENTUCKY HILLS



The armies of Don Carlos Buell and Braxton Bragg collided at Perryville, Kentucky, in October 1862 in a confused battle in which the Confederates landed a heavy blow.

BY MIKE PHIFER

General Braxton Bragg's Army of the Mississippi spent three days besieging Union forces at Munfordville on the Louisville and Nashville Railroad. The Confederates suffered considerable casualties in their initial assault.

Alamy

Confederate Brig. Gen. George Maney maintained tight control of the three regiments in his first line as he pressed his attack against a key position on the extreme left flank of the Union Army on the afternoon of October 8, 1862. The Battle of Perryville had begun less than an hour earlier, and Maney's brigade was part of a sledgehammer attack by the reinforced Confederate right wing against Maj. Gen. Alexander McCook's I Corps.

Maney's immediate objective was to drive the Federals from an eminence known as Open Knob, one of the key positions on the north end of the battlefield. Situated atop the knob was Lieutenant Charles Parson's eight-gun battery. It was supported by the 123rd Illinois of Brig. Gen. William Terrill's brigade.

Maney's Rebels, clad in faded gray uniforms that matched the flora so well that Federal staff officer Samuel Starling thought from a distance that they wore camouflage, had reached a split-rail fence overgrown with brush partway up the east slope of the knob. With his regiments suffering additional casualties from Federal fire with each passing minute, Maney gave the order to charge.

Reluctant to give up their position behind the fence, the men nevertheless heeded their veteran commander. The men might not have moved were it not for Maney's exhortations. "His presence and manner ... imparted fresh vigor and courage among the troops," recalled Colonel George Potter, commander of the 6th Tennessee.

When the Rebels began their uphill assault, the Union gunners switched to double-canister. The spray of lead balls mowed down many of the Southerners. "It was almost impossible for mortal men to stand up in the face of such a rain of lead and our lines wavered a moment," wrote a memberof the 41st Georgia. But the veteran soldiers recovered and swept uphill shrieking the hair-raising rebel yell. Color bearers fell to the ground wounded or dying, but always another soldier picked up the colors and bore them forward. In the 41st Georgia alone three color bearers were cut down by Yankee bullets or canister.

"The battery was playing upon us with terrible effect," wrote Lt. Col. William Frierson of the 27th Tennessee. As a result of the artillery fire, "large boughs were torn from trees, the trees themselves shattered as if by lightning, and the ground plowed in deep furrows."

Maney's other two regiments caught up with the first line and joined the attack. In a desperate effort to save the valuable guns, Terrill ordered the men of the 105th Ohio, who had just reached the knob, to counterattack the Confederates. The Ohioans moved downhill and fired a volley. Most of the bullets passed over the heads of the Confederates.

In response, Maney's men delivered a well-aimed volley that shattered the Buckeyes. The Rebels then chased them back to the top of the knob. What followed was a bloody scuffle for control of the guns. It was just one of the many desperate struggles that characterized the bloody fighting that afternoon.

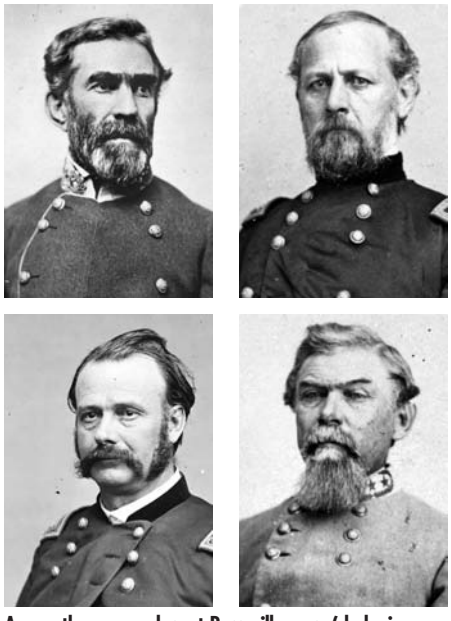
At the outset of the American Civil War in April 1861, both sides coveted the key border state of Kentucky. "I think to lose Kentucky is nearly to lose the whole game," said President Abraham Lincoln. The Bluegrass State was vital to the Federal strategy because it either bordered or contained within its borders four key waterways that the Union needed to move men and sup-

plies. Its northern and western borders ran along the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers, respectively, and the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers flowed through the western part of state.

At the start of the war Kentucky attempted to remain neutral, although some of her sons served in the opposing armies. Kentucky's frail neutrality was shattered in early September 1861 when Maj. Gen. Leonidas Polk, a former Episcopal bishop, ordered Brig. Gen. Gideon Pillow to seize the key town of Columbus along the Mississippi River, believing the Federals were preparing to move into the state. The Federals subsequently occupied Paducah and Smithland. Union troops moved into northern Kentucky, and Confederate troops marched into southern Kentucky.

The Confederate Army's hold on southern Kentucky was short lived. On January 19, 1862, Brig. Gen. George Thomas's Union troops defeated Brig. Gen. Felix Zollicoffer's Confederates at Mill Springs. The following month, Brig. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant advanced into eastern Tennessee and captured Forts Henry and Donelson. Shortly thereafter, the Federals captured Nashville. The Confederates attempted to regain the initiative by striking Grant's Army of the Tenneseee on April 6 at Pittsburgh Landing on the Tennessee River, but Maj. Gen. Don Carlos Buell arrived to reinforce Grant and on the second day of the battle the Yankees recaptured the ground they had lost. Since the Confederates retreated to Mississippi, the Battle of Shiloh was a Union victory.

All: Library of Congress



Among the commanders at Perryville were (clockwise from top left), General Braxton Bragg, Maj. Gen. Don Carlos Buell, Maj. Gen. William J. Hardee, and Brig. Gen. Lovell Rousseau.

Shortly afterward, Maj. Gen. Henry Halleck left his headquarters in St. Louis to take command of the Federal forces in the field. By temporarily combining the armies of Grant and Buell, Halleck amassed an army of 125,000 men. He then advanced cautiously on Corinth, Mississippi.

Unlike Grant, Halleck was not a fighter. He allowed General Pierre Gustave Toutant Beauregard's 53,000-man Army of Mississippi to withdraw from Corinth on May 29 without having to fight a pitched battle. Halleck then dispersed his forces. Although some of the forces remained on the defensive, Halleck ordered Buell to capture Chattanooga, Tennessee.

A native Ohioan, Buell graduated from West Point in 1841. He served ably in both the Second Seminole War and the Mexican-American War, suffering a severe wound at Churubusco. Confederate partisans sought to sever Buell's supply line that ran over the Memphis and Charleston Railroad. The result was food shortages. Buell was reluctant to let his men forage, though, and instead put them on half rations. This made him unpopular with the troops.

When Beauregard went on medical leave without clearing his absence from his army in advance with his superiors, Davis replaced him on May 6 with General Braxton Bragg. The new commander of the Army of Mississippi in Tupelo focused initially on obtaining adequate supplies and improving the army's discipline before considering offensive action.

When Union Brig. Gen. George Morgan's 7th Division of the Army of the Ohio occupied Cumberland Gap on June 18, thereby threatening Knoxville, Maj. Gen. Edmund Kirby Smith, commander of the Confederate Department of East Tennessee, fired off an urgent request for reinforcements to Bragg.

Smith, who graduated from West Point in 1845, was a veteran of the Mexican-American War as well as an Indian fighter who served in the 2nd Cavalry. The native Floridian had been shot in the neck while leading his brigade in spirited fighting on the Confederate left at First Manassas. Promoted to major general upon his recovery, Confederate authorities sent Smith to Knoxville to shore up its defenses. Although loath to reduce the size of his army, Bragg nevertheless sent Maj. Gen. John P. McCown's 3,000-man division to Smith.

When Halleck divided his forces, Bragg seized the offensive. Leaving Maj. Gen. Sterling Price in command at Tupelo, Bragg embarked his 32,000 men by rail for Chattanooga. To get his army from Tupelo to Chattanooga by rail required taking a circuitous 776-mile route south to Mobile and then northeast via Montgomery and Atlanta to Chattanooga. The first group of Confederates entrained for Chattanooga on June 23.

Bragg and Smith met in Bragg's hotel room in Chattanooga on July 31 to plan a campaign designed to expel Union forces from Tennessee. First, Smith was to take his 15,000 men and drive Morgan from East Tennesee. Then, Bragg and Smith would unite against Buell in Middle Tennessee. Should Grant reinforce Buell with Union forces in northern Mississippi, then Confederate forces in the Magnolia State under Price and Maj. Gen. Earl Van Dorn could retake western Tennessee.

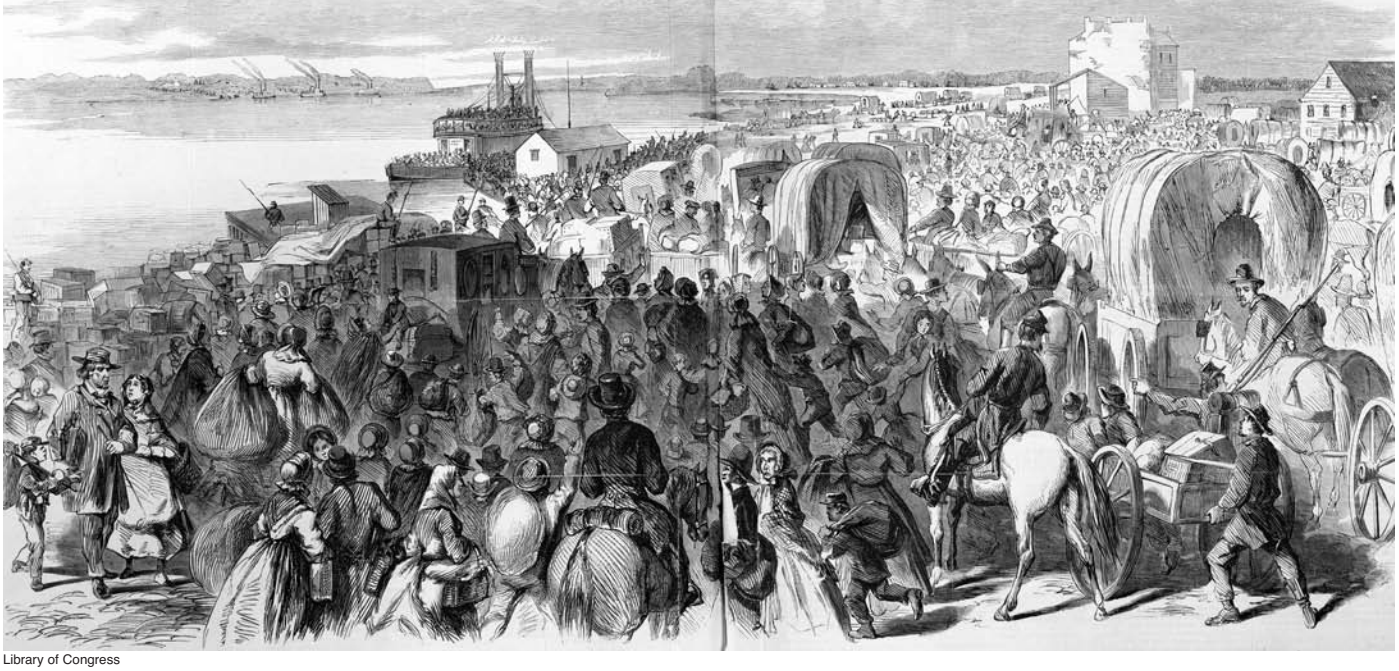
Bragg, who was born in Warrenton, North Carolina, graduated from West Point in 1837. A veteran of the Second Seminole and Mexican-American Wars, he resigned from the U.S. Army in 1856 and became a sugar planter. His swift rise to the upper echelons of command had much to do with circumstance; namely, the untimely death of General Albert S. Johnston at Shiloh and the poor health of General Pierre Gustave Toutant-Beauregard.

The commander of the Army of Mississippi pinned his hopes in part on new recruits from Kentucky swelling his ranks. Brig. Gen. John Hunt Morgan, who had begun raiding from East Tennesee into Kentucky in July, told Bragg that he should expand to receive upward of 25,000 additional men. Smith upended Bragg's strategic plan almost immediately by setting his sights not on clearing the Yankees from Tennesee, but instead on invading Kentucky. Bragg agreed to participate in an invasion of Kentucky, but only after Smith had driven Morgan from East Tennesee.

On the night of August 13, Smith led his newly named Army of Kentucky north toward the state that bore its name. After detaching Brig. Gen. Carter Stevenson's division to keep an eye on Morgan's division at Cumberland Gap, Smith led his troops on a difficult march over treacherous mountain roads to Barboursville, Kentucky. In so doing, Smith cut Morgan's supply line, which ultimately compelled the Union general to retreat to the Ohio River.

From Barboursville, Smith headed north toward Lexington, Kentucky. Greatly concerned over the Rebel invasion of the Bluegrass State, the Federals scraped together two green brigades to stop them. On August 30, Smith's men soundly defeated the Yankees at Richmond. Smith's begrimed soldiers marched into Lexington three days later to the gleeful shouts of citizens waving Confederate flags and cheering for Jefferson Davis.

Bragg, who had reorganized the Army of Mississippi into two wings each of which con-



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In September, with the Confederate army under Bragg preparing to attack Louisville, the citizens of Louisville panicked. Instead of taking Louisville, Bragg left Bardstown to install Confederate Governor Richard Hawes at Frankfort.

sisted of two divisions, led his army north from Chattanooga on August 28. As a result of the reorganization, Maj. Gen. Leonidas Polk commanded the right wing and Maj. Gen. William Hardee commanded the left wing. The cavalry was divided into two brigades, one of which was under Brig. Gen. Joe Wheeler and the other under Colonel John Wharton.

When he received word that Bragg was on his way north, Buell marched to Nashville and then to Bowling Green, Kentucky. Bragg's army stayed ahead of Buell. The vanguard of the Army of Mississippi reached Glasgow, Kentucky, on September 11. In order to cut Buell's supply line, Maj. Gen. Jones Withers' division occupied Cave City, Kentucky, thereby threatening Union trains on the Louisville and Nashville Railroad.

The most vulnerable point on Buell's supply line was Munfordville where 4,000 Federals at Fort Craig guarded the 1,800-foot-long bridge over the Green River. A force of 300 Confederate cavalry under Colonel John Scott reached Munfordville on September 13. Scott demanded that the Federals surrender, but their commander, Colonel John T. Wilder, flatly refused.

Believing Munfordville was lightly held, Scott requested assistance from Brig. Gen. James Chalmers at Cave City 12 miles to the south. Chalmers' infantry marched to Munfordville to assist Scott. The following day Chalmers' graybacks repeatedly stormed the fort but failed to capture it. When Bragg learned of the setback, he marched swiftly to Munfordville and besieged the fort. Outnumbered more than five to one, Wilder surrendered the garrison on September 17.

In the interim, Buell's Army of the Ohio reached Bowling Green on September 14. From there Buell marched toward Bragg's position at Munfordville, but Bragg had departed for Bardstown where he hoped to rendezvous with Smith.

With the road open to Louisville, Buell's vanguard reached the city on September 25. Buell took the opportunity to rest his worn-out troops and assimilate reinforcements. Halleck was flabbergasted that Buell would dither while the Rebels were rampaging through central Kentucky. Although Halleck, with Lincoln's approval, took steps to replace Buell with George Thomas, who had been promoted to major general on April 25, he rescinded the order when Thomas reported that Buell was ready to march against the Confederate forces in Kentucky.

Buell's reinforced army numbered upward of 75,000 troops. The army was organized into three corps, each of which had three divisions. Maj. Gen. Alexander McCook commanded the I Corps, Maj. Gen. Thomas Crittenden commanded the II Corps, and Maj. Gen. Charles Gilbert commanded the III Corps. On October 1, Buell departed Louisville in search of the enemy.

Bragg, whose 30,000 troops were at Bardstown, urgently needed Smith's 18,000 men to join him in order to give battle to Buell's much larger Union army. But Smith remained at Lexington. Leaving Polk at Bardstown in command of the Army of Mississippi, Bragg rode to Lexington to assume overall command of the Confederate forces in Kentucky. While in Lexington, Bragg received a message from Polk on October 2 informing him that the Federals were on the move. Believing the Federals were headed for Frankfort, where he was planning the inauguration of the provisional Confederate governor of Kentucky, Bragg intended to hold the Yankees with Smith's men while Polk struck them in the flank and rear.

Buell sent the divisions of Brigadiers Joshua Sill and Ebenezer Dumont towards Frankfort as a feint. As for the main army, its three corps marched east on separate roads. I Corps marched toward Taylorsville, II Corps toward Bardstown via Mt. Washington, and III Corps toward Bardstown via Shepherdsville.

Polk, who was at Bardstown, received reports that the Federals were converging on his position. He ordered his troops to withdraw east toward the Confederate supply base at Camp Breckinridge east of Harrodsburg. To do so, they would have to pass through the hamlet of Perryville.

After learning of Polk's move, Bragg ordered the Armies of Kentucky and Mississippi to concentrate in front of Harrodsburg. Bragg then proceeded with the inauguration on October 4. The festivities were cut short when the Federals forced the Confederates to evacuate the Kentucky capital. By nightfall Frankfort was under Union control.

Smith decided not to join Bragg at Harrodsburg; instead, he bivouacked near Versailles. He informed Bragg that Lexington was threatened by Federal forces but stated that he was in a good position to cover it. Believing that a large Yankee force was threatening Smith, Bragg reversed course and ordered his army to move north from Harrodsburg and join the Smith's army to strike a blow against Buell.

But reaching Harrodsburg was proving to be difficult for Maj. Gen. William Hardee's troops for they were marching through unfamiliar country. As a result, they had no choice but to trail

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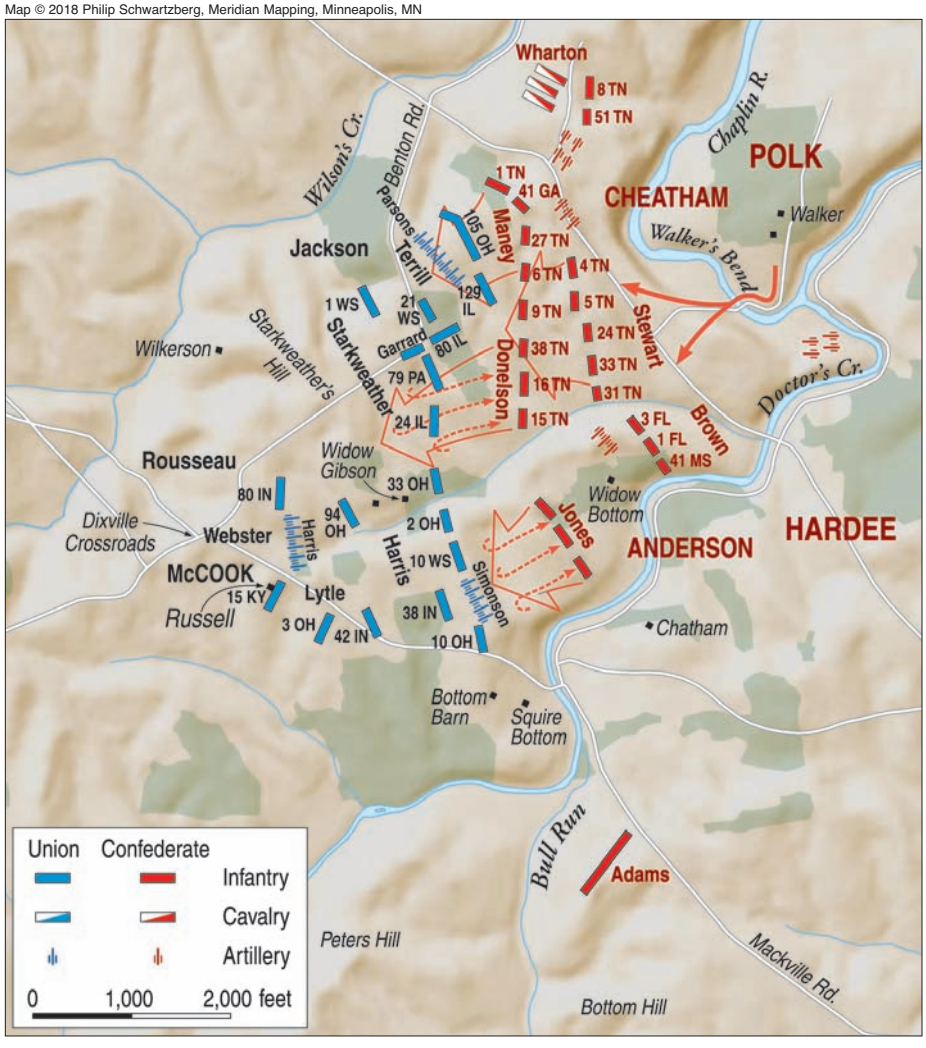

ABOVE: Confusion gripped the units of Maj. Gen. Alexander McCook's I Corps as they sought to stem the advance of the right wing of the Confederate army at Perryville. The Confederates sought to punch their way through the Union I Corps to capture Dixville Crossroads and isolate McCook's corps. OPPOSITE: The 21st Wisconsin Regiment struggles to check the advance of Confederate Brig. Gen. George Maney's hard-driving soldiers in a cornfield. Maney's troops repeatedly shattered Union positions despite coming under severe artillery fire.

behind Polk's men on the Springfield Pike. The Rebels soon came under attack by Yankee infantry belonging to Gilbert's III Corps.

As Buell's 55,000 men approached Perryville, McCook's I Corps advanced cautiously along Mackville Pike, Gilbert's III Corps advanced along Springfield Pike, and Crittenden's II Corps advanced along Lebanon Pike.

Concerned over the fighting moving his way, Hardee fired off a message to Bragg. "Tomorrow morning early we may expect a fight," warned Hardee. "If the enemy does not attack us, you ought to unless pressed in another direction send forward all the reinforcements necessary, take command in person, and wipe him out."

After receiving Hardee's message that the Federals facing him needed to be wiped out, Bragg ordered Polk to send Maj. Gen. Benjamin Cheatham's division to support Hardee. Polk arrived at Perryville late in the evening of October 7 and took command of the 17,000 Confederate troops assembled just north of the town. Bragg issued orders for Hardee and Polk to strike the pursuing Federals a hard blow. "Give the enemy battle immediately," wrote Bragg. "Rout him, and then move to our support at Versailles."

Believing that he faced the entire Confederate Army of Mississippi, Buell also intended to attack in the morning. As the three columns of Yankees neared Perryville, they not only watched for the enemy but also for water as a severe drought had dried up creeks and waterholes. By nightfall on October 7, III Corps was bivouacked about three miles west of the Confederates on the Springfield Pike.

Having spotted some pools of water in the otherwise dry bed of Doctor's Creek, a tributary of the Chaplin River, a mile and half away, a group of Yankees slipped off into the night to try to fill their canteens. Unfortunately, they ran headlong into Confederates of the 7th Arkansas of Brig. Gen. St. John Liddell's brigade. The Arkansas regiment was posted on Peter's Hill overlooking the creek.

Under cover of darkness, a patrol from the 10th Indiana was sent forward to reconnoiter the Rebel position. Two companies of the 10th Indiana slid past Peters Hill. They ran headlong into Liddell's men at Bottom Hill, a mile west of Perryville, and exchanged fire with them before falling back.

The next morning Gilbert ordered Colonel Dan McCook's brigade of Maj. Gen. Phil Sheridan's division to take Peters Hill and secure the water at that location. They set out shortly after dawn to capture the objective. The rattle of musketry reverberated across the hills as McCook's Yankees attempted to drive the Arkansans from Peters Hill. Both sides brought up artillery to bolster their infantry.

After an hour-long duel, Liddell counterattacked with the 5th and 7th Arkansas Regiments. When the Confederates were about 200 yards from Peters Hill, the Federal guns opened fire, tearing huge gaps in the gray battle line. The Rebels continued their advance and soon had to brave Federal musket fire at close range. Unable to stand the heavy fire, Liddell's regiments withdrew into the relative safety of the woods in front of Peters Hill.

Gilbert ordered his 3rd Cavalry Brigade under Brig. Gen. Ebenezer Gay to clear the woods and valley of enemy soldiers in front of McCook. Gay reluctantly ordered his 2nd Michigan Cavalry, supported by the 9th Pennsylvania Cavalry, to advance dismounted against the Confederates in the woods. To assist Gilbert, Sheridan summoned Lt. Col. Bernard Laiboldt's brigade and ordered its commander to move into position to support McCook.

The Rebel infantry laid down heavy fire. To make matters worse, Confederate artillery on Bottom Hill began shelling the exposed troopers. Despite their tenacious defense, the Federal troopers soon fell back among the trees that lined the dry bed of Bull Run Creek.

Sheridan then ordered Lt. Col. Bernard Laiboldt to commit two regiments from his brigade. Laiboldt sent the 2nd Missouri and the 44th Illinois into the fray with orders to push back the Rebels. With mounting pressure applied by Laiboldt's troops and those of Brig. Gen. Speed Fry's brigade, Liddell's men requested permission to withdraw from Bot-

tom Hill. Their request was granted.

At that point, Gilbert arrived on Peters Hill and noticed that Sheridan's troops had captured Bottom Hill. He ordered Sheridan to recall his men to Peters Hill and remain on the defensive until a general advance was ordered.

To the north, McCook's I Corps deployed for battle. They were two hours behind schedule. Brig. Gen. James Jackson sent his two brigades to deploy on the left, while Brig. Gen. Lovell Rousseau put his three brigades into line on the right. By 1:30 PM all of McCook's troops were on hand. The tardy arrival of his I and II Corps compelled Buell to postpone his attack until the following morning.

The Federals were not the only ones behind schedule. When Bragg arrived at midmorning, his mood turned sour when he learned that Polk had taken a defensive stance rather than an offensive one. Unaware that he faced the entire Army of the Ohio, Bragg considered it sufficient to leave two infantry brigades and Wheeler's cavalry brigade to face the Federal II and III Corps, which were situated south of Doctor's Creek. Bragg intended to use six brigades of Hardee's left wing to supplement the main attack against McCook's I Corps. He issued orders for the troops to attack en echelon at 1 PM. An en echelon attack, in this instance, consisted of having one brigade attack first, followed after an interval by a second, and so forth down the line until all brigades had been committed.

While Hardee's wing crossed the Chaplin River, Cheatham's 4,500-man division marched north to Walker's Bend on the Chaplin River. The division comprised the brigades of George Maney, Preston Smith, Daniel Donelson, and A.P. Stewart. Although woods and hilly terrain kept the Confederate columns out of sight from the Federals, the Rebels' kicked up a large dust cloud as they tramped along the dirt roads. Some of the Federals who spotted the dust clouds misinterpreted the movement for a Confederate retreat. They would soon learn otherwise.

Confederate guns began a preliminary bombardment at 12:30 PM. Federal guns soon responded. Reaching their assigned jump-off point at Walker's Bend, Cheatham's men prepared to attack. The native Tennessean assigned Brig. Gen. Donelson's brigade to spearhead the attack. Stewart and Maney were to follow at 150-yard intervals.

But Polk received disturbing intelligence from Wharton. The astute cavalry commander had spotted a previously unseen column of Federal infantry marching along the Mackville Road to reinforce the Federal left. Polk feared that the new Federal column could turn his right flank. He preferred that it move into position before he launched his attack, and for that reason, he temporarily postponed the attack.

When the Confederate guns ceased fire, Bragg waited in vain for Cheatham's attack. Disgruntled by the delay, he rode over to investigate. Polk explained the situation, and Bragg concurred with his decision.

Donelson's men moved into position atop the bluffs at Walker's Bend at 2 PM. The 15th and 16th Tennessee Regiments swept forward toward Captain Samuel Harris's 19th Indiana Battery Light Artillery and Colonel George Webster's brigade. The Tennesseans struggled to keep their lines intact as they moved over the rugged terrain.

Colonel John Savage's 16th Tennessee pushed ahead of the rest of the brigade. The Federal guns opened great holes in their line. Instead of striking the left flank of McCook's line of battle, the Tennesseans actually struck his center. As a result, they took fire from three directions.

Brigadier General William R. Terrill's brigade anchored the extreme Federal left. Moving up behind it on the Benton Road at the time of the Confederate attack was Colonel John Starkweather's brigade. Colonel George Webster's brigade was recessed in the middle at Widow Gibson's House. To Webster's right, the brigades of Colonel Leonard Harris and Colonel William Lytle were formed into line of battle north of Doctor's Creek with Lytle's brigade astride the Mackville Road. Donelson thus received fire from elements of the brigades of Terrill, Webster, and Harris.

The 15th Tennessee shifted to the left of Savage's regiment. The Tennesseans were screaming the Rebel yell as they made for a gap in the Federal line near the Widow Gibson's Farm. The Rebels

Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

took possession of the outbuildings and exchanged fire with the Yankees to their front. The Federals plugged the gap. The weight of the Federal numbers became too much for Donelson's Brigade. After enduring a terrible fire for 30 minutes, Donelson's men fell back to their starting point.

Cheatham then ordered Maney to assist Donelson. Maney arguably was the best brigadier general in Bragg's army, having served in both the eastern and western theaters. He commanded 1,500 men organized into five regiments. The four Tennessee regiments were veterans of Shiloh, but the 41st Georgia was a green regiment.

Quickly forming up the 6th Tennessee, 9th Tennessee, and green 41st Georgia, Maney sent them over a wooded ridge toward Open Knob. His other two regiments, the 1st Tennesee and 27th Tennessee, which had not yet reached the starting point, would have to catch up with the lead regiments.

Colonel James Monroe's inexperienced 123rd Illinois, which was posted atop Open Knob with Lieutenant Charles Parsons' Independent Battery, opened fire on Maney's men as they emerged from the wooded ridge 100 yards to the east. Maney's Rebels charged through canister fire to reach the top of Open Knob. A close-quarters fight ensued for control of Parsons' guns during which Union Brig. Gen. James S. Jackson was slain as he tried to rally the 123rd Illinois. Maney's men drove the Federals from Open Knob and captured seven of Parsons' eight guns.

To the left of Cheatham's divisions, two brigades of Brig. Gen. James Patton Anderson's division of Hardee's left wing began their advance as part of the Confederate right wing's attack. Colonel Thomas Jones's brigade spearheaded the Confederate assault aimed at Harris's brigade.

The Federal fire proved too deadly for the attacking Confederates. Jones's Magnolia Staters retreated under the withering fire. Next up was Brig. Gen. John Brown's mixed brigade of Floridians and Mississippians. They rushed to the farthest point that Jones's men had reached at which

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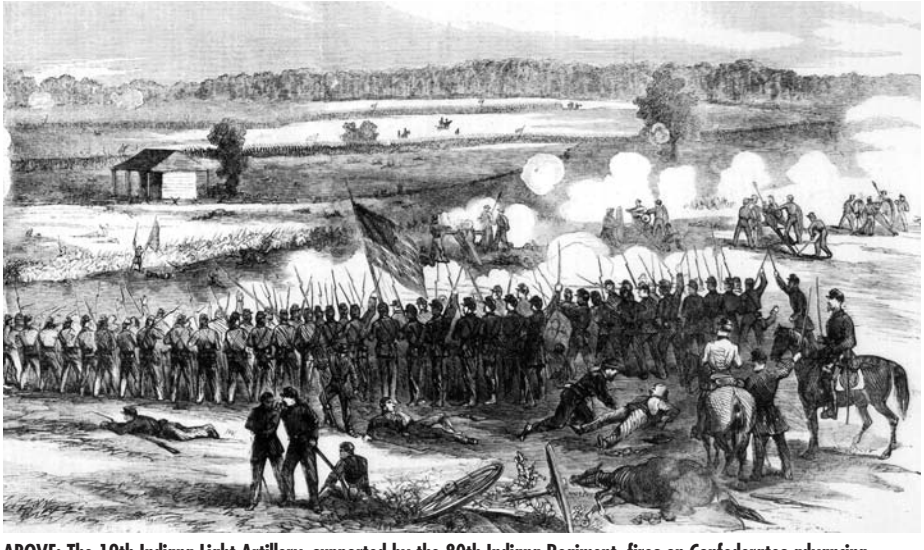


ABOVE: The 19th Indiana Light Artillery, supported by the 80th Indiana Regiment, fires on Confederates advancing directly south of the Benton Road. OPPOSITE: Brigadier General Lovell Rousseau, a native of the Bluegrass State, rallies members of the 15th Kentucky Regiment in a painting by eyewitness correspondent William DeLaney Travis.

time Brown ordered them to fire from the prone position on the Federals. Both sides blazed away at each other, inflicting heavy casualties.

Major General Simon Buckner, who commanded Hardee's 3rd Division, had four brigades led by Brigadiers Patrick Cleburne, Bushrod Johnson, St. John Liddell, and Sterling Wood. Buckner assigned Johnson's Tennesseans to spearhead the attack. Just before Johnson set off with his men, Buckner ordered him to oblique to the left to give his men more cover from the terrain. But not all of Johnson's regiments received the revised orders. The result was that there were major gaps between the regiments during the brigade's attack. To make matters worse, they came under friendly artillery fire.

With matters straightened out, Johnson's Tennesseans crossed the dry bed of Doctor's Creek. They ran headlong into the startled Yankees of the 42nd Indiana who were scooping up water from the few remaining puddles in the empty creek bed. The Rebels pushed on for Colonel William Lytle's brigade positioned to the right of Harris's line on high ground near the home of Henry Bottom. The Confederates soon were hit by a vicious volley from the Federals.

The Tennesseans filed into position behind a stone wall near the Bottom House. The men hurriedly loaded their rifled muskets and began blazing away at the 3rd Ohio on high ground on the west bank of the creek. An artillery shell whistled through the air and slammed into Henry Bottom's barn. Flames leaped skyward as the structure burst into flames. With only a few hours of daylight left, Brig. Gen. Patrick Cleburne's brigade advanced to assist Johnson's men, who were out of ammunition and pinned down behind a stone wall. The 3rd Ohio also was running low on ammunition. Colonel Curran Pope's 15th Kentucky Infantry moved up to relieve the Ohioans.

Deployed to the left of Buckner's division were the graybacks of Brig. Gen. Daniel Adams brigade of Anderson's division. They struck the right flank of the 15th Kentucky, forcing part of the regiment, as well as the men of Colonel John Beatty's 3rd Ohio, to face them. The Federals fixed bayonets in preparation for hand-to-hand combat.

Cleburne's graybacks swept past the stone wall and up the hill, shells screaming down on them. The shells were not from Federal guns, but rather from their own guns. Some of Cleburne's men were wearing captured blue pants from Union Army uniforms, and the Rebel gunners mistook the troops for Federals. Confederate officers soon put a stop to the errant shelling.

With the brigades of Cleburne and Adams advancing on his right flank and center, Lytle knew he could not check another Rebel attack. He therefore ordered the 3rd Ohio and 15th Kentucky to withdraw toward the Russell House, near Dixville Crossroads, where they could refill their cartridge boxes from the ammunition wagons there.

With Lytle falling back to his left, Harris also knew he would have to fall back as well. By this time Brown's men had been resupplied with ammunition and resumed their attack. Brig. Gen. Sterling Wood's brigade of Buckner's division joined the action, while Donelson's brigade and part of Brig. Gen. Alexander Stewart's brigade joined the advance.

Cleburne's main battle line continued its advance. Lytle was attempting to form another line when the Cleburne's skirmishers popped over the ridge. The Yankees fired a volley in the mistaken belief that they were firing on Cleburne's battle line. Before the bluecoats could reload, Cleburne's brigade came up. It fired a volley at Lytle's line and then charged against it. Lytle's line broke under the pressure.

While trying to establish a rear guard, Lytle was wounded and captured. With the brigades of Lytle and Harris in full retreat, Hardee's men pushed on toward Dixville Crossroads, the intersection of the Mackville and Benton

Alamy

Roads. If the Confederates could secure the crossroads, McCook would be cut off from the rest of Buell's army.

At his headquarters two miles to the south, Buell was unaware of the danger facing McCook's corps. Due to the hills surrounding his headquarters, Buell and his staff could neither hear the battle nor see it. It was not until 4 PM that a member of McCook's staff arrived and informed the Union commander of the magnitude of the threat facing I Corps. The stunned commander immediately ordered Gilbert to send two brigades from his corps to assist McCook.

The situation on McCook's left was grim. After taking Open Knob, Maney's brigade continued its advance. Maney's Rebels engaged Starkweather's brigade, part of which was deployed on a hill near the Benton Road. The hill became known after the battle as Starkweather's Hill.

Having received two devastating volleys from the 21st Wisconsin situated in a cornfield in front of Starkweather's Hill, Maney's Rebels shattered the Wisconsinites' cohesion and sent them fleeing for the rear. With the assistance of Stewart's brigade, Maney's Rebels continued their westward advance in an attempt to secure Starkweather's Hill.

Two Federal batteries fired canister at close range into the ranks of the attackers. Despite the carnage the Rebels suffered, they pushed on to the crest of the hill. The Rebels sought to capture Battery A of the Kentucky Light Artillery. An intense hand-to-hand melee ensued in which the men of both sides wielded clubbed muskets and bayonets in a struggle for control of the guns.

A handful of the Wisconsinites ignored the hail of lead to help work four guns that were firing double canister at the attacking Rebels. The gunners were supported by bluecoats from the 1st Wisconsin and the 79th Pennsylvania of Starkweather's brigade whose stinging volleys helped drive off the Confederates.

But the Confederates regrouped and launched a fresh assault. The Federal guns were "mangling and tearing men to pieces," wrote Private Sam Watkins of the 1st Tennessee Infantry of Maney's brigade. Another melee ensued for control of the 4th Battery of the Indiana Artillery. A Rebel battery began shelling Starkweather's position, killing and wounding large numbers of his men. One of these was Terrill, who suffered a mortal wound.

Fearing that he could not repulse another attack, Starkweather withdrew 300 yards to the west where his brigade took up a new position atop a steep ridge. Starkweather knew he had to stop the Rebel advance, for Dixville Crossroads was only a half mile behind his second position.

The Confederates renewed their attack on Starkweather's Hill in a fresh attempt to capture the Federal guns. Having lost the battery horses to enemy fire, Federal artillerymen and infantrymen dragged six guns and caissons to the new position. Other Federal units rushed to assist Starkweather's hard-pressed troops. The Federal infantry now stood six deep behind a stone wall. The Federals' heavy musketry punished the worn-out Confederates.

Cheatham's attack was spent by 4:30 PM. His graybacks lacked the strength and numbers to make a third assault. McCook's left flank had bent, but it had not broken.

With the sun dipping low in the sky, sporadic fighting continued on McCook's right as Hardee's troops tried their best to reach Dixville Crossroads. The Federals withdrew to Russell House, which was McCook's headquarters, and established a new line from which to make a last stand. To encourage the men, Rousseau walked up and down the line of battle waving his cap back and forth atop his sword in an effort to rally his exhausted troops.

Having received two wounds, Cleburne led his troops to within 75 yards of the beleaguered Yankees when enemy artillery shells began to explode around them. By that point, Cleburne's Rebels had moved beyond the units on their flanks, thus exposing them to enfilading fire. For that reason, as well as the need for more ammunition, Cleburne halted his attack.

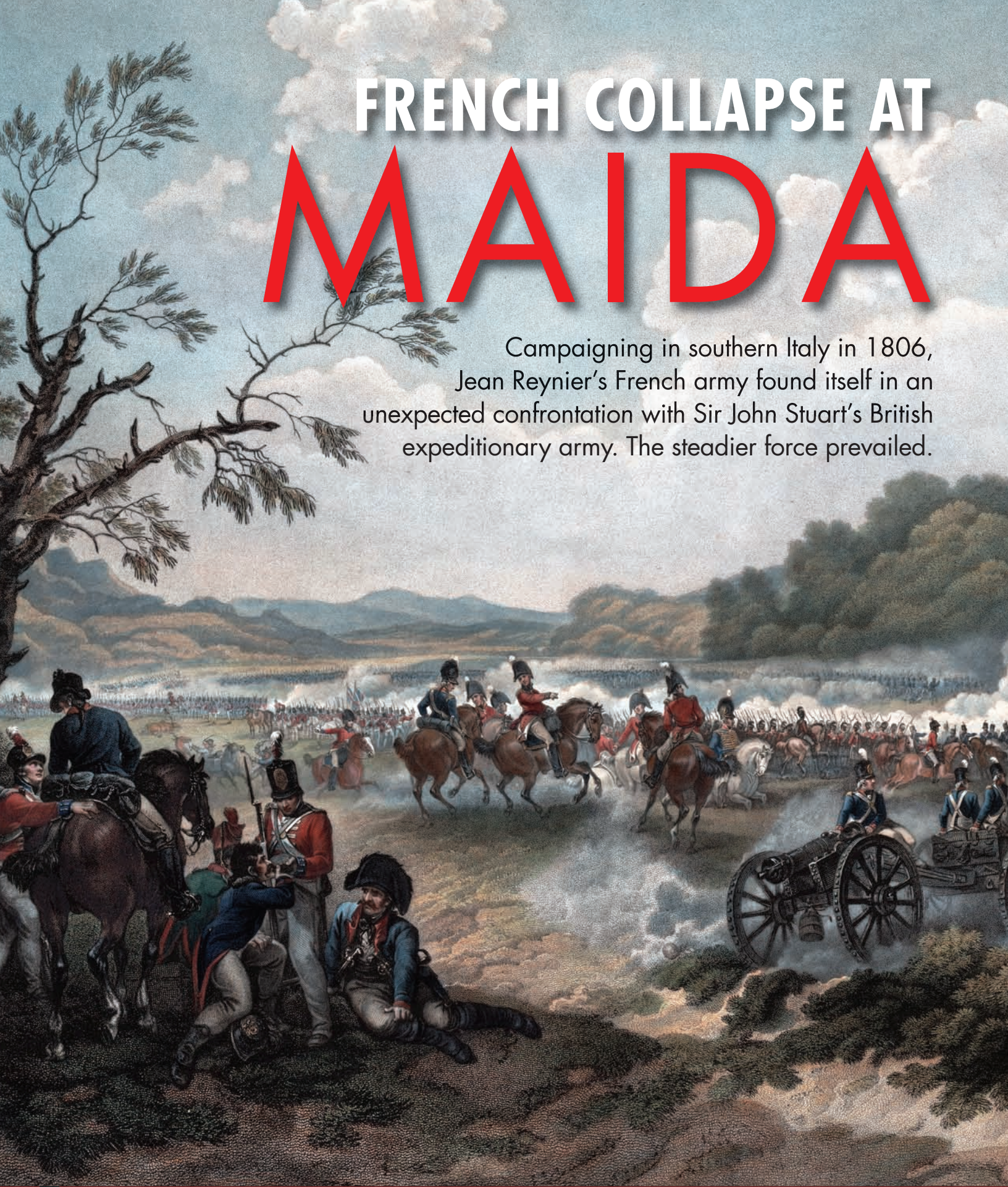
Wood's Rebels continued their advance. In the process of assaulting Rousseau's line, they ran headlong into the newly arrived brigade of Colonel Michael Gooding, which belonged to Brig. Gen. Robert Byington Mitchell's division. Gilbert had sent Gooding into action with orders to assist McCook. Vicious fighting raged as the Federals sought to shatter Wood's brigade. Lt. Col. Squire Isham Keith's 22nd Indiana repulsed the Rebels.

Hardee fed Liddell's brigade into the fight in a last-ditch effort to break the Federal lines.

Continued on page 74

FRENCH COLLAPSE AT MAIDA

Campaigning in southern Italy in 1806, Jean Reynier's French army found itself in an unexpected confrontation with Sir John Stuart's British expeditionary army. The steadier force prevailed.



THE soldiers of the French 1st Light Infantry surged forward toward the double line of the British Light Battalion. As the French advanced across the level plain in Calabria, British cannon balls crashed into their ranks. The misery experienced by the French soldiers was turned into a nightmare at 250 yards when the gunners switched to case shot, which consisted of shells filled with hundreds of musket balls that mowed down men by the dozens.

The British light infantry fired its first volley at 150 yards. Owing to their exemplary musketry skills, at least half of their shots hit an enemy soldier. When the veterans of the 1st Light came to within 80 yards a second volley crashed out. Almost every musket ball struck home. General of Brigade Louis Compere, commander of the 1st Light Infantry, was among the wounded, but he continued to wave his men forward. The British fired their third volley at 20 yards. The carnage was horrific. Whether the French 1st Light could survive the storm of iron and lead in the opening minutes of the Battle of Maida on July 4, 1806, would be known in a matter of minutes.

The sanguinary clash just 60 miles north of the Strait of Messina occurred during the War of the Third Coalition that pitted France and its allies against a coalition that eventually comprised the major powers—Great Britain, Austria, and Russia—and also the lesser powers—the Kingdom of the Naples, Kingdom of Sicily, and Sweden. Although the war technically began in 1803, it did not get into full swing until the following year when France's aggression in Italy prompted Austria and Russia to join Britain in its continuing conflict with France.

During lengthy negotiations, Russia asked Britain to send an expeditionary force into the Mediterranean to support a possible joint expedition against 14,000 French troops stationed in the Kingdom of Naples' eastern ports. The Russians wanted the option of creating a southern front to draw French resources away from central Europe, while simultaneously removing a potential threat to their hold on the Ionian Islands, particularly Corfu. The British were less certain. The Kingdom of Naples was part of a dual monarchy that included the Kingdom of Sicily, and at the time it was neutral. Intervention might create an unnecessary sideshow where the chances of success were far from guaranteed.

Great Britain suspected the Russian urge to intervene would recede once campaigning in central Europe started in earnest. But London was worried about Napoleon seizing Sicily, the

BY SIMON REES

Sir John Stuart's British army presses its attack against the French at Maida in a painting by Franco-British painter Philip James de Loutherbourg. London sent Stuart from Sicily to check the French aggression in Calabria.

Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

island that dominates the Mediterranean's seaways, and using it as a base to strangle Britain's considerable military and economic interests in the Near East. An expeditionary force stationed on Malta that was capable of sailing for Sicily and defending it would be an excellent form of insurance against this threat. Its presence would also perform a face-saving role as Russia and Austria were expected to perform the bulk of the fighting on land and wanted a show of good faith beyond Britain's generous war subsidies. Having weighed the pros and cons, Prime Minister William Pitt the Younger's administration decided to equip and send an army of several thousand to Malta during the spring of 1805.

The Two Sicilies was covertly receptive to the idea of intervention because it wanted to eject the French garrisons. In addition, the autocratic royal family had personal scores to settle: it was a cadet branch of the Bourbons and the wife of King Ferdinand, Maria Carolina of Austria, was Marie Antoinette's sister; however, they needed to tread carefully as the French had already backed the Parthenopean Republic, a short-lived puppet regime that seized the Kingdom of Naples in late 1798 and sent Ferdinand and Maria scurrying to Sicily. Napoleon had been content to leave the royal family in place after a successful Neapolitan counterrevolution, although he demanded they pledge strict neutrality and host French forces in return. These had been withdrawn during the short Peace of Amiens of 1802 but reintroduced once war with Britain resumed.

Few of these complexities would have bothered the minds of most soldiers in the British expeditionary force. They had sailed into Valetta harbor on July 22 after suffering a miserable voyage packed with delays caused by Admiral Pierre-Charles's famous pre-Trafalgar run across the Atlantic and back, and almost every man on board just wanted to get off the fetid transports. Their commander was Lt. Gen. Sir James Craig, a veteran of the American Revolutionary War and something of a specialist in light infantry tactics; however, he was in poor health by 1805 and his reserves of strength would wax and wane depending on the pressures to come. His primary mission was to reorganize the Malta garrison, assist the Russians, and keep a sharp eye on Sicily.

All: Wikimedia

Clockwise from top left: General Jean Reynier; Maj. Gen. Sir John Stuart; Brig. Gen. Galbraith Lowry Cole, who led the British 1st Brigade; and Brig. Gen. Jean-Baptiste Delanne-Franceschi, a French cavalry commander.

Craig had already made an important mistake by deciding his 300 dragoons would sail without their horses in a bid to minimize shipping difficulties and costs. Their mounts would only be purchased when needed, although the British soon discovered that good animals were rare in the region and only available for large sums. Indeed, it was something of a minor miracle that Britain's ambassador to the Neapolitan Court, Hugh Elliot, had procured 200 horses before Craig's men eventually arrived in the Kingdom of Naples. Only a few seedy-looking creatures were obtained afterward and all of the available animals had to be dedicated to the baggage train, pulling guns, or given to the officers, leaving the expeditionary force bereft of cavalry support.

Some important correspondence was waiting for Craig at Malta, including a notification that he would be officially subordinate to Russia's Mediterranean commander, General Maurice Lacy, in the event of a joint operation. Another letter was from Lacy himself, informing Craig that he and members of his entourage were traveling incognito through the Kingdom of Naples, testing the political waters, monitoring the French, and examining the terrain. In addition, he wanted to know the expeditionary force's strength and state of available transports as the British would have to ship Russian forces from the Ionian Islands if necessary. As Craig's staff started tallying vessels, he reported to Lacy a force of 5,000 infantry, 400 engineers, 400 gunners, and the 300 horseless cavalrymen.

His next job was to assess and integrate some of the men already on Malta into a revamped expeditionary force. Realizing he lacked experienced formations, Craig created a special Light Battalion by combining his light companies and topping them up with "flankers," men from the regular companies noted for their marksmanship. A composite grenadier battalion was formed using similar methods, while there were several foreign units to evaluate as well. This included 740 Corsican Rangers who hailed from the island of Napoleon's birth and were sworn enemies of the emperor, and the Regiment de Watteville of 725 Swiss mercenaries led by Colonel Louis de Watteville. Improved liaison with the Russians was also established, although they presented a poorly devised contingency plan for landings in the Kingdom of Naples that needed thorough revision.

In the meantime, French demands that Ferdinand recognize Napoleon's title as King of Italy had just reached Naples. Technically, this could amount to a form of homage, and an outraged royal family informed the Russian ambassador Tatishcheff they wanted an alliance with the tsar and to join the Coalition at once. He excitedly drew up a secret treaty that Ferdinand signed on September 10. The details were revealed to Craig as a fait accompli, followed by a request from Lacy that the contingency plan be put into effect. But the Russians were about to learn that diplomacy and duplicity often went hand-in-glove at the Neapolitan court. Napoleon had suddenly announced the French garrisons would be increased to 20,000 men, panicking the dual monarchy until it secretly learned the emperor wanted to remove all of his men and use them to reinforce Marshal Andre Massena's army in northeastern Italy.

All the Two Sicilies needed to do was reaffirm its strict neutrality and the garrisons would be gone. The dual monarchy agreed and a formal ratification took place on October 8; a bewildered Tatishcheff was told this new deal had been signed under duress and that Coalition landings should proceed. Although the royal family loathed Napoleon, they considered the outcome an excellent one: French forces were evacuating as promised, just as two allied armies were about to land and assume responsibility for protecting the country's borders. Never mind that Ferdinand's signature had just released an enemy army for operations elsewhere, or that its departure negated the main reason for intervention, namely the destruction of the enemy garrisons and the diversion of Napoleon's resources away from other theaters.

British transports reached the Bay of Naples on November 20 loaded with 13,000 Russian troops and 1,500 Albanian irregulars, and the expeditionary force of 7,650. Lacy and Craig now met for the first time, with the Russian general creating something of a stir among the British staff. He was born in 1740 and came from long line of Irish mercenary officers, start-

ing his military career during in the Seven Years War of 1756-1763. This made him seem like a relic by 1805. "He shewed no trace of ever having been a man of talent or information," wrote Sir Henry Bunbury, Craig's quartermaster. It was an unduly harsh assessment, although Lacy did himself no favors by wearing a nightcap during councils of war and dozing off when others spoke. With no enemy in the vicinity, and with details of the Austrian defeat at Ulm in mid-October still filtering through, the two generals decided they could do little more than defend the Kingdom of Naples' border and hope for Coalition success elsewhere.

The British established themselves on the Mediterranean flank, near the Neapolitan-held fortress of Gaeta, while the Russians were responsible for the difficult central ground, with more of Ferdinand's men policing the Adriatic side. Not much was expected of the Neapolitan army as it was poorly led, badly equipped and shoddily supplied. Yet there was no time to correct these glaring weaknesses as details of Napoleon's staggering victory at Austerlitz on December 2 started to arrive, followed by news that Russian forces were retreating out of central Europe and Austria had surrendered via the Treaty of Pressburg on December 26. The Two Sicilies was now firmly in Napoleon's sights, confirmed by a blistering proclamation dated December 27. "Shall we trust again a Court without loyalty, without honor, without sense? No, no!" the emperor said. "The dynasty of Naples has ceased to reign."

Massena was ordered to take a 30,000-man army south to seize the Two Sicilies and place the emperor's brother, Joseph Bonaparte, on the dual monarchy's throne. They were underway by New Year's 1806 and the British and Russians held a series of crisis meetings in response, with Craig arguing that it was impossible to hold a thin line across the Italian peninsula against an experienced enemy that could be easily reinforced. The British should immediately sail for Sicily and the Russians return to the Ionian Isles. Lacy was inclined to agree but noted he was obligated to defend the Two Sicilies and that only official word from Russia could release him. Craig pledged to remain at Lacy's disposal and both men agreed to at least withdraw from Naples, provoking outrage at the Neapolitan court. Maria Carolina even condemned Craig as a coward, but the veteran of Bunker Hill and countless other engagements refused to let accusations of this sort cloud his judgment. Yet others were less sure as a retreat without firing a shot was worrisome in an age when matters of honor often took precedence over strategic interests.

Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

A cavalry dash at Ulm in the Electorate of Bavaria. News of Napoleon's victories at Ulm and Austerlitz in 1805 dampened the spirits of the Third Coalition's Neapolitan army based at Gaeta.

The impasse was broken when an order from the tsar arrived on January 7, instructing Lacy to leave for the Ionian Isles at once. Craig's health collapsed several days later, although he summoned his remaining strength to assist the Russian departure and oversee the expeditionary force's own evacuation at the same time. His men sailed on January 19 and reached the Sicilian port of Messina on January 22, only to be refused permission to land and help prepare the island's defenses.

Neapolitan envoys were already seeking forgiveness from Napoleon and the dual monarchy believed a British army in Sicily would scupper their chances of success. The emperor responded with terms that amounted to an unconditional surrender, a demand that was rebuffed as further entreaties were made. The situation had become a farce because the British remained cooped up in their transports, begging to defend an ally that kept pleading with an implacable foe.

King Ferdinand had sailed for Palermo not long after the British departure, while Queen Maria Carolina and her entourage remained in Naples until word arrived on February 9 that Joseph Bonaparte had reiterated his brother's terms. Massena's army crossed the frontier at the same time and the queen promptly fled for Sicily, with the Kingdom of Naples' fortresses falling behind her without a shot. Gaeta was the only exception and it would stand fast until July 18. The British finally received permission to land at Messina on February 15, the same day Joseph Bonaparte made a triumphant entrance into Naples, and it was not long afterward that Craig, still gravely ill, started handing over command to Maj. Gen. Sir John Stuart. Many thought Craig would die on the voyage back to Britain, but he survived and would go on to serve in Canada.

Craig had ordered the 1st Battalion, 81st Foot to leave Malta for Sicily before his departure, while further reinforcements arrived in the form of the 2nd Battalion, 78th Foot (Highlanders). Stuart rather ungratefully bemoaned this unit's lack of experience as most of its soldiers were raw recruits. The expeditionary force's new commander was a somewhat unusual British military specimen. Stuart was the son of a loyalist born in Georgia in 1759; his career included the American Revolutionary War and several important campaigns across the 1790s. He had also won recognition in Egypt, particularly at the Battle of Alexandria, but resented the praise Sir John Moore had received for his part in the same action. Egocentricity and self-promotion were some of Stuart's worst flaws, but he proved competent enough in the field and possessed a fair eye for both tactical and strategic details.

Stuart's defense of Sicily depended on Royal Navy ships keeping the Strait of Messina clear, affording vital shoreline support. Across that narrow gap of water, Massena's III Corps under General Jean

Louis Reynier had arrived, simultaneously preparing for an invasion of the island and trying to subdue southern Calabria. The unit comprised almost 12,000 men and more than 1,000 cavalry, and it had crushed the last major Neapolitan army at the Battle of Campo Tenese on March 10. However, the French seizure of local produce was prompting guerrilla bands to form, their attacks provoking fierce reprisals and creating a cycle of violence that Reynier found difficult to restrain. Still in his mid-30s, he had been considered a military wunderkind during the 1790s and later Egyptian campaign, although his star had fallen after he killed an officer in a duel not long after returning to France. Almost cashiered, Reynier only regained a position of command when war resumed in 1803, and Massena's decision to appoint him head of III Corps was considered a new vote of confidence. Getting bogged down in an ugly insurrection was decidedly not part of his plan.

The British compounded Reynier's difficulties by landing weapons to assist the guerrillas and hiring local fast boats to attack French supply ships. They mistakenly believed he had stationed around 5,000 men in southern Calabria, with the bulk of III Corps to the north. It was actually vice versa, which the British would soon discover because Stuart wanted to land an army near the top of the toe of the Italian boot, aiming to cut off and destroy his opponent's southern units in quick succession. He wanted to ruin whatever invasion preparations for Sicily had been made so far and then return to the island before Reynier and Massena could properly respond. An army of roughly 5,500 frontline troops, as well as engineers and ancillary staff, was earmarked, the numbers including 550 soldiers from the 20th Foot who would be responsible for sailing on fast ships between Reggio and Cape Spartivento to keep the French guessing Stuart's intentions. They were commanded by Lt. Col. Robert Ross who would play an important role in events to come and, several years later, would command the army that burned Washington, D.C., in 1814.

With three ships of the line offering protection, Stuart's men set sail on June 26 and reached the Bay of St. Euphemia on the night of June 30. The landings took place at a northerly point where the village of Gizzeria Lido is now situated and were witnessed by a handful of Polish soldiers under French command. These men promptly rushed inland to raise the alarm as contingents from the Light Battalion, 78th Foot, and Corsican Rangers formed a vanguard under the command of Colonel John Oswald. The British swiftly captured the nearby Bastione di Malta, a mid-16th-century watchtower that still stands, and then marched toward the village of St. Euphemia, located a couple of miles east. It was defended by around 400 soldiers, mostly Polish troops, who had failed to secure their flanks and allowed the vanguard to work its way around the village. Threatened with being cut off, they were forced to make a hasty retreat, leaving several dead behind and almost 80 men taken prisoner. By comparison, Oswald reported just one person wounded, making the action an excellent start for the expeditionary force.

Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

A Corsican ranger (left) and a Swiss soldier of the Regiment de Watteville. Both were bundled into the British expeditionary force in the western Mediterranean.

More British troops were soon landing and many were set to work helping the engineers build southward-facing defensives that incorporated the watchtower. The expeditionary force would need a strong position on which to retreat if events went badly, while Stuart thought a redoubt would rally local Calabrian insurgents to the beachhead. In the event, only 200 poorly equipped peasants arrived as most locals decided to avoid the danger of battle in what was clearly a temporary affair. The unloading of troops and matériel continued on July 2, a process slowed by heavy surf, while a company of grenadiers was ordered to take the village of Nicastro, a position that afforded reasonable views of the immediate countryside. The landings were finally complete on July 3. Any satisfaction of a job well done, though, was upset by the unexpected arrival of French units roughly 10 miles to the southeast.

Reynier had ordered a series of forced marches on hearing about the landings and unnerved his enemy by assembling an opposing army at such speed. His men soon occupied excellent defensive ground stretching west from the foothills of San Pietro a Maida toward an area near the modern village of Acconia. Scrambling to gather intelligence, Stuart and his staff concluded they faced an army of 4,000 infantry, 300 cavalry, and four light artillery pieces by the evening of July 3, and guessed that between 2,000 and 3,000 reinforcements would arrive in two or three days' time. This helps explain Stuart's eagerness to attack on July 4: he believed the expeditionary force outnumbered the newly arrived French by several hundred, potentially tipping the scales in his

favor when combined with the larger number of British guns. By contrast, delaying an attack would guarantee the arrival of Reynier's reinforcements and leave the expeditionary force in an extremely precarious position.

Stuart was quick to hammer out a basic plan. His men would march south along the Bay of St. Euphemia's shore, reassemble at the River Amato's mouth, and then turn inland to press the French left, which was on weaker ground. He was also gambling Reynier would receive no reinforcements of note that night, an unsuccessful bet as General of Brigade Louis Fursy Henri Compere's 2,400-man brigade marched into the French camp on the evening of July 3. This formation comprised the veteran 42nd Regiment and the elite 1st Light, one of the best infantry units under French arms. After the battle, the British contended they had faced 7,000 infantry plus the 300 cavalry and four guns. But Reynier and other French sources recorded between 5,100 and 5,500 men present. That still meant Stuart was outnumbered on July 4 as he would take 4,800 men into the field, leaving four companies of Watteville's regiment, four 6-pounders, and a couple of howitzers to protect the landing site.

The British attack force comprised four brigades. The rather grandly titled Advanced Corps was commanded by Lt. Col. James Kempt and was, for all intents and purposes, the 730-man Light Battalion supported by some detachments from the Royal Corsican Rangers and the Royal Sicilian Volunteers. Brig. Gen. Lowry Cole led the 1st Brigade, which featured the 2nd Battalion, 27th Foot and the composite Grenadier Battalion, while Brig. Gen. Wroth Acland headed the 2nd Brigade, comprising the 2nd Battalion, 78th Foot and 1st Battalion, 81st Foot. The 1st Battalion, 58th Foot and the remaining five companies of Watteville's men made up Oswald's 3rd Brigade of reserves. Kempt, Acland, and Cole would each have three or four pieces of light artillery in support, while the companies of the 20th Foot commanded by Ross were expected shortly, albeit most likely after July 4.

Interestingly, the French also overestimated their enemy's scale, calculating Stuart had 6,000 troops and, rather fancifully, around 2,000 Calabrian insurgents. Reynier was undaunted by what appeared to be a larger opponent and vowed to "throw the English into the sea." He was already on record for disparaging British military leadership, and the expeditionary force's earlier misfortunes under Craig only appeared to confirm his bias. A quick and decisive victory would destroy most of the army protecting Sicily, making a French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Lieutenant Colonel James Kempt's British troops give cold steel to visibly shaken soldiers of the French 1st Light Infantry Regiment.

invasion of the island much easier. Others urged him to wait until enough reinforcements had arrived to make victory certain, but Reynier rejected this advice. It was simply too good an opportunity to miss and an attack on the landing site was ordered for the next morning.

But the British would steal a march on Reynier and used the cover of night to move their artillery to the Amato's mouth in advance of their main force. It was back-breaking work as the gun crews discovered the roads were little better than dusty tracks through terrain covered with heavy undergrowth. The rest of Stuart's men started heading south as dawn broke on July 4, with Oswald's reserves trudging along the beach as Cole, Acland, and Kempt's brigades squelched through the marshy pastures beyond. The Amato was reached at 7 AM, with the British then turning east but staying north of the river. Kempt took the right, Acland the center, Cole the left, and Oswald just behind the center, with the strength of Reynier's positions more fully revealed as they neared. Alexandre de Roverea, then a captain with the Royal Sicilian Volunteers, later shuddered at the potential danger ahead: "[Their ground] could be defended foot by foot and would have cost us many lives," he said.

Reynier was surprised but pleased to see the British advance. From his perspective, Stuart had made a critical mistake by moving away from the beachhead's defenses and naval support. The previous evening's attack orders were promptly cancelled and a general advance called for instead. Instead, Reynier's men would cross the Amato, swing west, and then plough through the enemy, rounding up any survivors in their wake. Rather ironically, the British thought Reynier was the one who had blundered by quitting his excellent ground. "Imagine our surprise and joy when we saw the French troops leave [their] advantageous position and descend into the plain!" Roverea said. He was also impressed by the subsequent vista of both sides advancing to engage. "The coup d'œil was magnificent—our fine troops as steady and in good order as on the parade ground, vis-a-vis the French, also in line, their arms glittering in the sun," he said.

The two armies inadvertently advanced in echelon on a southeast to northwest axis as the undergrowth interrupted the pace away from the Amato River, which meant Compere's brigade and the Advanced Corps would clash first nearest the river. At first glance it seemed Reynier's plan for a swift victory might come to early fruition as Kempt's men were facing a more experienced and much larger foe. The first shots rang out 300 yards east of where the modern highway crosses the river, with around 200 voltigeurs (skirmishers) using the cover of reeds on the Amato's southern bank to needle their enemy. Roverea was given temporary command of a Corsican Ranger company and ordered to cross the shallow river and neutralize this threat; however, they were outnumbered and pushed back into the path of the Light Battalion's right flank, forcing Kempt to send extra troops over to bring this preliminary phase to a quick end. The British suffered a number of casualties during the action, including their only officer to be killed that day, Captain Murdoch Maclean of the 20th Foot's Light Company.

The Advanced Corps came to a halt at roughly 9 AM as Compere's brigade continued to close the gap. Kempt's supporting artillery had unlimbered, with their first shots slamming into the 42nd Regiment's 1st Grenadier Company and killing six men. There was no counterbattery fire as the four French pieces were targeting Acland's men at maximum distance and causing minimal damage. Compere's brigade now had to endure a 15-minute advance to reach the enemy. The 1st Light was somewhat to the south and ahead of the 42nd Regiment. As it advanced against the British double line, the 1st Light suffered heavy losses from the well-served British artillery and devasting musketry.

Sensing their enemy was on the verge of disintegrating, the veterans of the British Light Battalion surged forward, stabbing and slicing with their bayonets. Compere did his best to rally the 1st Light. Already badly wounded, Compere had his horse shot out from under him. He survived the deadly melee when a British officer hauled him to safety. The 42nd Regiment responded to the collapse by wheeling back and taking up a defensive position to protect Reynier's southern flank, with the remnants of the 1st Light streaming past as the British chased them from the field.

The Advanced Corps' position was covered by Oswald's 58th Foot as the British center finally moved up. Their view had been obscured by the growing heat haze and dust created by French cavalry feints being made to unnerve and distract. This worked to some extent as Bunbury noted a temporary and rather botched effort by some units to make a square during the advance. Opposing Acland's men were those of General of Brigade Luigi Peyri's foreign brigade, which comprised the 1st Swiss Regiment and the 1st Regiment of Polish infantry, units from which had already performed poorly at St. Euphemia on July 1. Their heart was not in this particular fight and the Poles fell back as the 81st approached. Meanwhile, Peyri's Swiss continued to advance. They wore red jackets and, because of the dust and smoke, the 78th thought they were some of Oswald's reserves trying to backtrack after pushing too far ahead.

Their inexcusable error was only realized when the battalion received an enemy volley. Along with some of the 58th and the brigade's supporting artillery, the 78th started to return fire and watched with satisfaction as the Swiss gave ground. Acland now called his men to a halt and tried to realign them after the gap with Cole's men on his left had widened, creating a breach the enemy might try to exploit. Indeed, Reynier had already noted this opportunity and ordered the 23rd Light of General Antoine Digonet's brigade to press away from the northwest and focus on the gap instead. But this proved impossible as the unit's three battalions were fast closing with Cole's men and disengaging so close to the enemy would have invited disaster. All Reynier could do was support Digonet's advance with whatever reserves were left, including the cavalry and four pieces of artillery.

French sharpshooters on the far left of the British line were already sniping from cover and Cole had to send four companies of the 27th to deal with this unwelcome attention. Their efforts were successful at keeping the voltigeurs at bay until a large patch of dry grass was ignited by French artillery fire, the billows of smoke causing confusion and unsteadying nerves. British difficulties were amplified when enemy cavalry started to threaten the left as well, forcing Cole to remove two grenadier companies from his right to act as reinforcements.

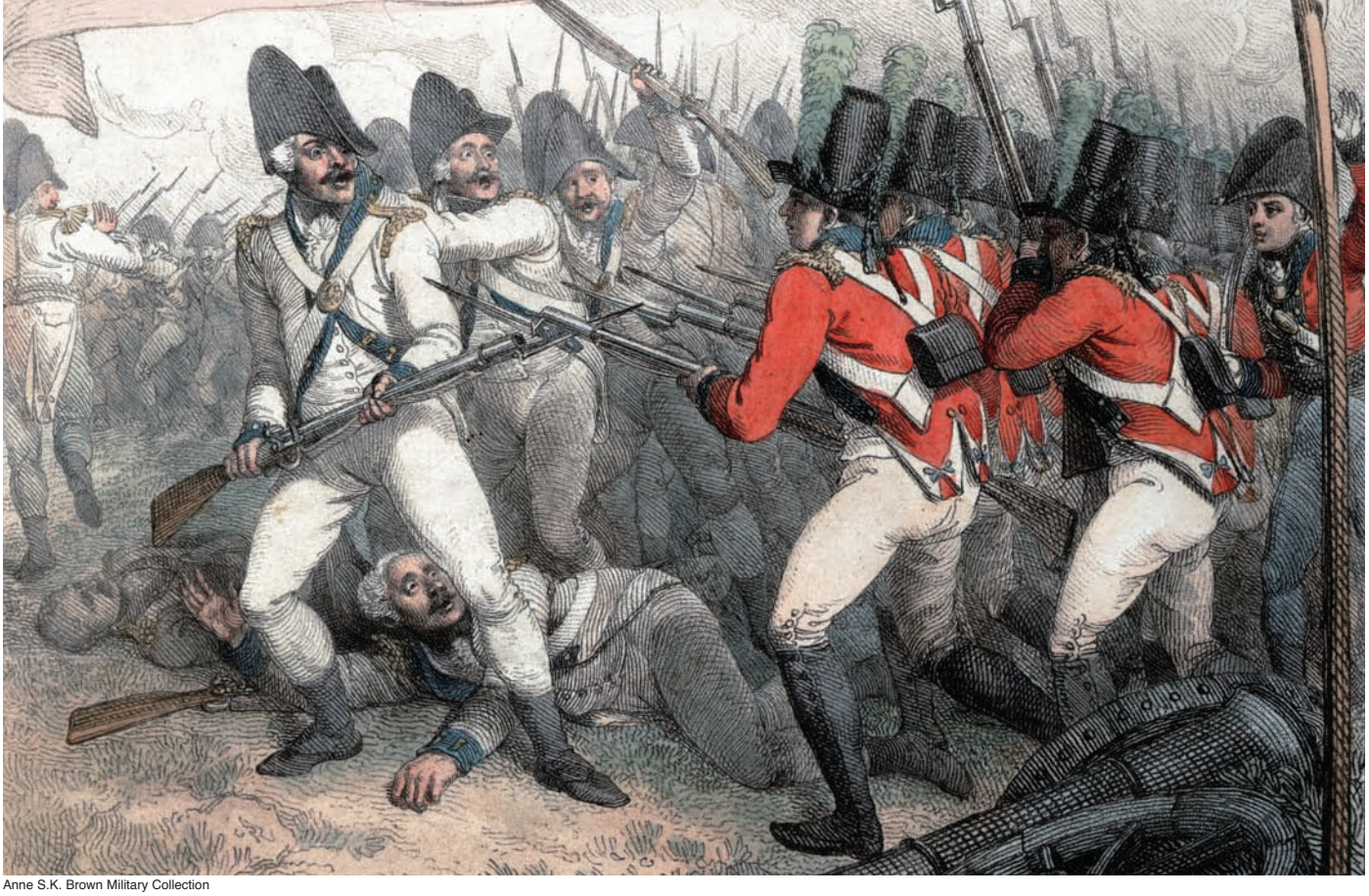
The bulk of Digonet's men were closing in at around 11 AM and it seemed the French might achieve their breakthrough after all. Bunbury was watching this drama unfold when he received word that Ross's companies had just landed and were marching at top speed to the sound of gunfire. He dashed over to meet them and explained Cole's urgent need for help.

Not missing a beat, Ross had his men race through the burning stubble and form up at an angle to the French cavalry and other formations pressing Cole's left. They fired a relatively effective volley and then joined Cole's men in forcing the dismayed 23rd Light to withdraw. Reynier had no options left and decided to exit the battlefield, taking his battered army northeast. He had been seen exhorting his men at various points during the fighting, while Stuart was a static presence by comparison, remaining with his staff and making casual observations as the odd musket ball whizzed past. Bunbury thought little of his commander's performance that day and noted Stuart had fallen into a kind of daze after the 1st Light's rout. "He dawdled about, breaking into passionate exclamations: 'Begad, I never saw anything so glorious as this!' It's the finest thing I ever witnessed.'" From that moment on he was an altered man and full of visions of coming greatness.

Bunbury also claimed Stuart's apparent lethargy forced him to ride between brigade leaders to share vital information. This was both unfair and rather self-serving; in truth, the battlefield was small enough for an eye to be kept on most of the action and Stuart would have used aides-de-camp or other officers to assess the situation and report back. More pertinent, perhaps, was the criticism that he missed an opportunity to destroy Reynier's army as it retreated. However, an all-out assault could have been costly as most enemy units remained unbroken and were being screened by cavalry. They were also withdrawing into hilly terrain where solid rear guards could be mounted. In addition, Stuart would have wanted to minimize further casualties as the job of reducing Reynier's remaining southern outposts lay ahead, along with the need to resume Sicily's defense. The battle and scorching heat had left his men parched and too exhausted for much further action.

Hundreds of Reynier's men were left dead or dying on the plain, and Stuart noted the burial of 700 enemy troops in his post-battle dispatch dated July 6. The British had also captured 1,000 men, the majority of whom were wounded, while Reynier later reported 300 injured with him after the battle, most likely the walking cases. In total, the French suffered a staggering 2,000 men killed, wounded, or captured during the fighting, with Compere's brigade having suffered most. By contrast, the British recorded one officer, three sergeants, and 41 other ranks dead and 282 wounded for a total of 327 casualties, which was considered extraordinarily low. As the surgeons and grave diggers got to work, the expeditionary force returned to an area near the landing site and each brigade was rewarded, in turn, with a refreshing plunge in the Mediterranean.

Cole's brigade was taking a dip when one of Bunbury's officers spotted a cloud of dust and galloped over, shouting that French cavalry was fast approaching. The men rushed out of the sea, grabbed their muskets and belts, and



Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

Red-coated British infantry troops force back French infantry at Maida. Major victories on land had become a rare commodity for the British people, and they relished Stuart's triumph at Maida.

formed a stark-naked battle line. Fortunately it turned out to be a false alarm. A herd of Italian water buffalo had been spooked nearby and it was their cantering about that had caused the officer to panic. Further frivolity occurred when Stuart and his staff were entertained by Rear Admiral Sir Sidney Smith on board his flagship HMS *Pompee* that evening. Smith enthusiastically held up a shawl during the proceedings and showed his guests how to make a "turban after the fashion of the most refined Turkish ladies," said Bunbury.

Stuart's subsequent mopping-up of southern Calabria was rapid, with all of Reynier's remaining garrisons surrendered by July 24. The French invasion preparations for Sicily had been thoroughly wrecked, while the British also netted plentiful supplies and almost 1,400 additional prisoners. Meanwhile, Reynier's surviving army and several units not present on the battlefield slogged their way into the Catanzaro region, waiting for reinforcements that failed to materialize because insurgents kept cutting French lines of communication. Reynier was forced to retire farther north, with many of his men harried out of Crotone by cannon fire from HMS *Amphion* and it was only on August 4 that around 4,000 half-starved scarecrows reached the comparative safety of Cassano all'Ionio. Order had broken down twice along the way, with the small towns of Strongoli and Corigliano Calabro sacked, looted, and virtually destroyed.

The expeditionary force was back in Sicily by the time London and Paris had fully digested the battle's details. The French people were left largely bemused and, except for those with friends or family involved, not just a little disinterested. True, an army comprising some of the emperor's finest had been bested, but Maida's smaller scale made it seem like a niggling defeat on the edge of an all-conquering empire. And so what if Reynier had bungled? There was plenty more talent to choose from. It was a different story across the English Channel, with news sparking a bout of national jubilation. Stuart's dispatch on July 6 helped set the tone: "Never has the pride of our presumptuous enemy been more severely humbled, nor the superiority of the British troops more gloriously proved," he wrote. There was good reason for the hyperbole because comprehensive victories on land had become a rare commodity for the British people. Maida was a boost when the United Kingdom needed it most, and it proved that Napoleon's soldiers, who were starting to appear invincible across 1805 and into 1806, could be comprehensively defeated.

Stuart decided to return home not long after reaching Sicily. General Henry Fox had arrived on July 22 to head the Mediterranean theater, while Sir John Moore was slated for second-in-command and Stuart was not the kind of man to play third fiddle. Back home, he received the thanks of Parliament, a £1,000 annuity, and the title Count of Maida. Stuart returned to Sicily in 1808 after he was appointed Mediterranean commander and defeated a French invasion attempt during 1810. The praise was more muted this time as the Iberian Peninsula had become the focus of Britain's military efforts and now captured the general public's attention.

But at least Stuart had already won his place in the sun. Craig's efforts were largely ignored, despite getting the expeditionary force out of the potentially lethal Neapolitan quagmire. The Battle of Maida would never have happened without his insistence that British forces should evacuate and secure Sicily at the start of 1806. Regardless of the criticism, though, the greatest laurels were owed to the man behind the musket as Maida was undoubtedly a soldier's battle. There were no elaborate plans of attack or cunning use of stealth, just a hard slog that required steady volleys and great courage in the face of an experienced enemy. Cole's correspondence dated July 11 rightly credits his troops with the victory: "Everything is due to the steadiness and good discipline and gallantry of the troops, without which we must have been defeated." □

WAR OF SIEGES

The royal garrison of Dover Castle bedeviled Prince Louis of France during the First Barons' War. At stake was the future of the Plantagenet dynasty.

BY ERIC NIDEROST

IN the summer of 1216 a large French army appeared just outside the gates of Dover Castle, a magnificent fortress on the southeast coast of England. The army was led by Prince Louis of France, son and heir of King Philip II "Augustus" of France, who sought to win the English crown. And yet this was not an invasion in the usual sense. Disaffected English barons, fed up with high taxes and a string of embarrassing defeats, had invited Louis to depose King John and seize the throne.

Prince Louis seemed to be on a roll, with the political momentum increasingly in his favor. Even William Longsword, King John's own half brother, had declared for the French outsider. Yet Dover Castle, the greatest fortress in England, remained steadfastly loyal to the discredited English king. Louis had to take the fortress in Kent if he hoped to maintain his credibility.

The Dover Castle knights would mount their war horses every so often and file out of the main gate in a stately and obviously defiant parade. They rode nonchalantly, as if traveling to a tournament, completely ignoring the Gallic host who must have stood in awe of their behavior. The sun danced and sparkled on their helmets, colorful pennants flapped from long lances, and still the English knights paid their enemies no heed.

The knights rode in the no-man's land that fronted Dover Castle. The snaking, multihued procession was all the more of a spectacle because of the colored surcoats many of them wore. But the knights were outnumbered 10 to one, and they had no intention of attacking the siege works that the French were in the process of building.

After riding about for a time, collectively snubbing their noses at their besiegers, the knights filed back into Dover Castle. It was said that a French crossbowman, mesmerized by

Alamy

French attack toward the barbican after breaching an outer wooden palisade in a modern depiction of the siege of Dover Castle. Prince Louis of France expended great time and resources attempting to capture the strategically important castle.

the spectacle, got too close and was captured by the garrison knights and triumphantly brought back as a prisoner.

Perhaps stung by this act of defiance, Prince Louis had inaugurated the formal siege in the middle of July 1216. Mangonels and perriers, two types of siege engines, started lobbing shot at the castle walls. The future of England, as well as the fate of the Plantagenet dynasty, hung in the balance.

The siege of Dover Castle was rooted in both the politics of the period and the complex personality of King John. John was unscrupulous, vindictive, and sometimes cruel, but he was not the stereotypical black-hearted villain so vividly portrayed in the Robin Hood legends. He also was plagued by bad luck, including having a reign that coincided with the papacy of Innocent III, considered by most historians as the greatest and most powerful of medieval popes. John's barons, many of whom were magnates of great power and wealth in their own right, were just becoming aware of their own potential power. What is more, John had a deeply flawed and contradictory nature. These factors combined to create a potentially disastrous situation.

When John came to the throne in 1199 he inherited not just a kingdom, but a far-flung empire. Overseas possessions included Normandy, Anjou, Maine, Touraine, Aquitaine, Poitou, and Auvergne. This vast expanse, generally labeled the Angevin Empire, encompassed about half of France. Indeed, his possessions were actually greater in extent than those of French monarch Philip II, who was John's nominal overlord. John may have been king of England, but as Duke of Normandy and Aquitaine and Count of Anjou, he was Philip's vassal or underling, owing the French king loyalty, service, and obedience.

Both: Wikimedia

ABOVE: King John I of England had a deeply flawed and contradictory nature. BELOW: When Prince Louis of France landed in England he was welcomed as a kind of Gallic savior.

John was energetic, hard working, and diligent. He was a sound judicial administrator who instituted some legal reforms and even tried some small cases himself. If a matter did not involve his interests he could be amazingly fair, impartial, and even wise.

John's troubles began in the bedroom, not the council chamber. He became enamored with Isabella of Angouleme, whom he married in 1200. Isabella was the daughter and heiress of Audemar, Count of Angouleme. It helped that Angouleme was a strategic territory, but John seems to have genuinely been smitten by her. Simply put, he was head over heels in love.

Isabella was said to be a beauty, a second Helen of Troy, and the fact that she was 12 or 13 made little difference to John or his contemporaries. The 12th century went by biology, not calendar age. If you experienced puberty and were capable of bearing a child, you were of age. The real scandal was that she had been betrothed to another, Hugh de Lusignan. Lusignan was a powerful magnate from Poitou, and he appealed to John's liege lord, King Philip, for justice.

Philip demanded that John appear in person to explain himself, but when the English king refused, hostilities began. Of course, Philip did not really care who John married, but the matter offered the King of France an opportunity to take direct possession of Anjevin lands. The king of France was an old hand at dynastic struggles, having already fought with John's father, Henry II, and John's brother, King Richard I "Lionheart" in past decades. Philip took measure of John and decided that he was weaker than the previous two English kings.

John's initial moves were noteworthy, even brilliant, but both his campaigns and his resolve began to weaken. John fell into a pattern that he would repeat numerous times; namely, he began by taking vigorous action on a matter but then succumbed to a self-defeating lethargy that baffled his supporters and cheered his enemies. On other occasions, he became paralyzed by indecision or put his faith in gut intuitions that subsequently proved disastrous.

Philip soon took possession of Anjou, Maine, and Touraine. John's countermeasures were ineffective, and by 1204 the valuable region of Normandy fell to the victorious French. As the disasters mounted, John seemed cowardly to many. He stayed in England while a handful of faithful knights tried in vain to hold together the disintegrating Angevin Empire.

After 1206 John devoted himself to raising money for an attempt to regain what had been lost. The heavy taxation to which he resorted bordered on extortion. The barons grew restive, but it was his lack of military success that proved to be the fatal last straw that tipped the scales to open rebellion.

In the 12th century English barons were inherently warriors, and bloodshed and fighting were their stock in trade. The feudal lords were like a pack of ravenous wolves, and the king had to be an alpha male, equal or even surpassing them in martial ardor and military skill if he had any hope to lead and command their respect. John's feeble and even embarrassing attempts to defend his ancestral lands disgusted the barons.

As if John did not have enough troubles, he also ran afoul of the Roman Catholic Church, the most powerful institution in Western Europe. A dispute arose over who was to occupy the vacant Archbishop of Canterbury seat, and when John rejected Innocent's candidate an angry pontiff placed all of England under interdict. All church services were suspended indefinitely, and no sacraments were administered, especially for baptisms, weddings, and funerals. In essence, the people of England were collectively punished for their monarch's sins.

This was a serious matter because most Europeans were intensely religious. They hoped for a blissful afterlife that would compensate for their hard lives on zzzzearth. In 1209 John himself was excommunicated, a pariah with no hope of salvation. The English king's prestige, already low, sank even lower.

And if the pen is mightier than the sword, it certainly was proved in John's case. History

was written by churchmen, usually monks or friars, who were literate at a time when few people could read and write. They had a field day with John's continuing woes, painting the maligned monarch in the darkest colors possible. For example, John probably did order the assassination of his nephew Arthur of Brittany, a teenager who was a rival and who flirted treasonously with King Philip. Not content with reporting the facts, the monkish chroniclers had John personally killing his nephew and disposing of the body, which was almost certainly not true.

John eventually threw in the towel, publicly submitting to Pope Innocent and, at least on paper, making England a fief of the pontiff. The act of submission was witnessed by all the barons in a public ceremony, which must have been humiliating for John.

And yet, in some cases, John had only himself to blame. If a vassal fell afoul of the king, he could treat him and his relations with great cruelty. For example, William de Briouz owed the king money, and so John had his wife and son imprisoned and literally starved to death. Any baron who did not want to go on campaign had to give scutage, a money payment in lieu of military service. John levied these fees no less than 11 times, so frequently it became almost a regular tax.

John managed to scrape together a coalition against Philip, only to see his allies (Holy Roman Emperor Otto IV, Count Ferrand of Flanders, and others) badly defeated by the French king at the Battle of Bouvines in July 1214. One of the rare large-scale battles of the period, Bouvines was catastrophic for John and negatively influenced his ability to rule as England's king. King John spent heavily on the alliance to fund its battles. For that reason, the costly battle was the last straw for the barons, who rose up in rebellion. The result was the gathering at Runnymede, a traditional place for assemblies, where a reluctant John was forced to sign the Magna Carta.

The Magna Carta dealt mainly with feudal issues and had little to do with the daily lives of ordinary people. Nevertheless, it was still hugely significant because it established the principle that the monarch is not above the law. The great charter also set up a watchdog council of 25 barons whose duty was to ensure its provisions were followed to the letter. The council of committee was self-perpetuating and chose its own members. As things developed, only two were the king's supporters, and some of his bitterest enemies were among the rest.

Within a short time some of the more headstrong barons began throwing their weight around. A few started to pillage and otherwise devastate royal manors, safe in the knowledge they had, or seemed to have, the upper hand. John had been arbitrary and extortionate at times; for example, he frequently took hostages to get what he wanted. With the creation of the new baronial council, it seemed that one tyrant had been replaced by a whole ravenous horde of them.

No medieval king would have put up with this for very long. If this arrangement continued, John would be a mere figurehead, a mere political marionette choreographed to dance to the barons' tune. King John decided to make a bid to crush the rebels and restore his former power. He traveled to Dover, where he started to assemble an army capable of dealing with the barons by force of arms.

Dover, which was the closest city to the European continent, was an ideal location to gather an army because the king intended to recruit Flemish mercenaries who would form the core of his army. The Flemish mercenaries were tough, resourceful, and inured to hardship. If paid sufficiently and on time, they had a reputation for being steadfast and loyal.

The rebel barons controlled London, England's capital, which was a major advantage in their war with the king. But the barons chose a bold course of action. They invited Prince Louis to take the English throne. Immediate political gain was more powerful than the nascent English nation-

King John's allies Holy Roman Emperor Otto IV and Count Ferrand of Flanders were badly defeated by French King Philip II at the Battle of Bouvines in 1214. In regard to his continental strategy, John was repeatedly outmatched by the French king.

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alism that would not be fully developed until the 14th century, or even the 15th century. Louis accepted with alacrity; as a result, Pope Innocent, who by that time had become John's ally, excommunicated the French prince.

The rebel barons made the first move in this game of sanguinary chess by taking Rochester Castle in October 1215. The castle stood across the road from London to Dover, so controlling it was of vital importance to both sides. William of Albini, who was one of 25 barons empowered by the security clause in the Magna Carta to use force against King John if he violated the charter, set out from Belvoir Castle on September 29 to occupy Rochester Castle before the king's troops could secure it. Albini, who was newly recruited to the rebel cause, had a force of 95 knights and 45 men-at-arms. Upon his arrival, Albini was appalled at the state of the castle, which lacked provisions and even furniture. His men grabbed whatever scant supplies could be had from the locals before the royalist vanguard arrived.

Rochester was important because it was the guardian of the Medway Bridge, a span that the old Roman road crossed on its way to London. John could little afford to have the rebels in possession of so strategic a location.

The king immediately grasped what was at stake and gathered what forces he could to take Rochester and its castle. The largely mercenary royal army, which included Flemish knights led

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Fed up with John's costly spending on alliances and wars, the English barons forced him to sign the Magna Carta, limiting the power of the monarchy. Pope Innocent III subsequently annulled the document, freeing John from its limitations.

by Robert of Bethune, arrived to start the siege on October 11. Meanwhile, King John instructed the castellans of the various castles still loyal to him to send what men they could spare.

"No one alive can remember a siege so fiercely pressed and so manfully resisted," said the Barnwell Chronicler. John took personal control of operations two days later, and for a few weeks at least he was the ideal warrior king. He was energetic, brave, bold, and resourceful. His father, Henry II, and brother, Richard the Lionheart, would have been proud.

In this period John seemed everywhere at once, not one king but many, in his quarters writing dispatches, conferring with his knights, or personally supervising siege operations at great risk to himself. After all, his brother Richard had been killed by an infected crossbow wound that he suffered while supervising the siege of Chalus-Chabrol Castle in France in 1199.

John must have been a tempting target as he slowly rode around the siege lines. He probably was outfitted like most knights at that time. In all likelihood he wore a helmet, mail coif, and a mail hauberk. He also would have worn a surcoat emblazoned with his coat of arms. The king's arms were three golden lions passant, or striding, on a bright red field.

It was the kind of design most people today associate with Richard the Lionheart, and it made the king stand out among his men, thereby endangering him. At one point during the siege, a crossbowman on the Rochester Castle parapet asked William of Albini if he "should slay the king, our bloody enemy, with this bolt that I have ready?" Albini was horrified. "No, far be it from us, villain, to cause the death of the Lord's anointed," he replied.

John had five siege engines assembled, and before long they were lobbing stones at the castle's outer walls. The king, sizing up the situation, seemed to realize that the keep, the massive inner fortress, would not be reduced by such methods. John instructed the reeves in Canterbury to produce pickaxes for his miners. "As soon as you see this letter, make by day and by night all the pickaxes that you can," he wrote. "Every blacksmith in your city should stop all other work in order to make them and you should send them to us at Rochester with all speed."

The outer wall was breeched and after some desperate hand-to-hand fighting the bailey—the open ground between the walls and the keep—fell to John's men. But many of the Rochester garrison managed to fall back to the keep, so the contest was far from over. It was at that point that John's foresight paid a handsome dividend for he already had requested the tools necessary for successful siege mining.

Undermining was a technique by which a tunnel was dug underneath castle walls; in this case, the keep's southwest tower. The excavation was temporarily shored up by timbers, just like a gold mine, and the diggers were careful to create a subterranean chamber under the tower's base corners.

Next, ample amounts of pork fat would be smeared on the tunnel's wooden scaffolding to promote fire. On November 25, 1215, John sent a writ to justiciar Hubert de Burgh with specific instructions. He told de Burgh to "send us by day and night, forty of the fattest pigs of the sort least good for eating that we may bring fire beneath the castle." It was done, and after the pigs were slaughtered their fat was thickly applied to the beams. Torches set the wood alight, and before long the whole tunnel was a blazing inferno.

The burning beams gave way, and the tower collapsed with a deafening roar. John's men surged forward, entering the keep, but found that there was a cross wall in the building that effectively divided it in half. Survivors of the garrison barricaded themselves on the other side of the cross wall.

The Rochester garrison held out for another few days, even eating horseflesh to fend off the specter of starvation. They finally capitulated on November 30.

The siege had lasted about seven weeks and had cost John many men-at arms as well as enormous amounts of money—perhaps as much as

£1,000 a day. In no mood to be merciful, he wanted to hang the whole garrison. Dissuaded, he only sent one bowman to the gallows. The man had been in John's service, and by this time John was bitter on the issues of loyalty.

John had every right to be proud of his achievement. The taking of Rochester Castle was a bright spot in the royal campaign and showed he was not entirely lacking in soldierly qualities. Next, the king decided to divide his army. A portion of his forces would watch London, the insurgent stronghold, while he harried the north, capturing rebel castles and stamping out the flames of rebellion there.

The king's mercenary army had a field day. The king's troops pillaged and burned every manor, village, and small town with gleeful abandon. Rebel manors were utterly destroyed, but if rebel barons submitted before the king's troops arrived, their lands would be spared. They would be forgiven; that is, provided that they paid a large monetary fine for their transgressions.

So far things were going John's way, but just over the horizon a greater threat loomed: Prince Louis of France. When Louis landed in England on May 21, 1216, he was welcomed as a kind of Gallic savior. Canterbury opened its gates to his army, and Rochester Castle, won after the loss of so much blood and treasure, fell back into rebel hands.

John's kingdom seemed to be collapsing around him. London gave Louis an ecstatic welcome, and on June 2 its citizens and the Lord Mayor joined William FitzWalter in swearing allegiance to the French prince. Louis was proclaimed king at St. Paul's cathedral, although not yet crowned. Scores of previously uncommitted barons and earls flocked to his fleur-de-lis banner. Even a teenaged King Alexander II of Scotland hurried south to pay him homage.

In the meantime, King John withdrew, retreating to Winchester before moving westward to Wiltshire and Dorset. The semi-fugitive king stayed at Corfe Castle for more than three weeks, apparently waiting for an opportunity to reverse his declining fortunes. While John remained inactive Prince Louis went from triumph to triumph. By some estimates Louis now controlled about half of England and had the loyalty, at least for the moment, of two-thirds of its feudal lords.

But there still remained Dover Castle, firmly held by de Burgh. He was not a mercenary but a native Englishman who hailed from Norfolk. As the castellan he was determined to hold Dover as long as he could. A veteran warrior, he had held Chinon Castle against Louis's

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ABOVE: At the outbreak of war, John moved quickly to capture Rochester Castle, which lay astride the old Roman road connecting Kent to London. He skillfully employed undermining to bring down the southeast section of its formidable keep. BELOW: An English archer defends the battlements of a castle during the First Barons' War in this period drawing.

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father, Philip Augustus, from 1204 to 1205. After a year Hugh was forced to surrender, but only after Chinon had been pulverized into a virtual ruin by French siege engines.

The French had imprisoned him, and his incarceration was a bitter memory, something, he said to his men, he did not want to repeat. With another French army before his walls, de Burgh declared he would rather die than surrender.

Dover Castle was one of the great fortresses of the Middle Ages. Its construction was originally begun by John's father, Henry II. Henry recognized the strategic importance of Dover, situated as it was along the narrowest part of the English Channel. A scant 20 miles of water separated England from France at this point, and as such it was a natural avenue of invasion. There were some earlier fortifications on the site, but Henry to all intents and purposes was starting from scratch.

The famous white cliffs of Dover are only part of the story, for much of southeastern Kent is chalk. The castle site was well chosen for it is perched on a hill above jagged chalk cliffs. But chalk is a crumbly, unstable material, soft and liable to disintegrate in one's hand; however, Henry had resources unavailable to other medieval princes. Indeed, the walls of Dover Castle bear mute testimony to the size of the Anjevin Empire. While some of the material, like Kentish ragstone, is from England, some of the white stone was imported from Caen in Normandy, which was one

of Henry's many Angevin possessions.

A second wall was eventually erected that encompassed the first, creating a layered defense that made Dover even more formidable. Dover Castle was the first concentric castle in England, meaning its fortifications had a common center. The center in this case was the keep, a great stronghold in its own right.

Henry spent £7,000 building Dover Castle. This was an enormous sum at the time, but the king's prestige was on the line. Maurice the Engineer was the principal architect and planner, a man of real genius who added some bold innovations to traditional designs.

The keep or donjon was the heart of the castle, a stronghold in war and a palace in times of peace. It was almost a perfect cube, measuring 98 feet by 96 feet by 96 feet, its massive corners both anchored and guarded by four towers. A curtain wall encircled the keep, punctuated at intervals by 14 towers. A second, outer wall was even more formidable and may have featured as many as 20 towers in its heyday.

The twin-towered gatehouse was fronted by a large and rounded barbican, or outer work, made of sturdy oak. This wooden palisade also had a ditch that circled around it. One special feature of note was the Avranches Tower, a three-story affair that had three crossbowman positions on each level. Each individual position had three crossbow slits at different angles. That meant that nine crossbowmen could cover 27 fields of fire.

Because Dover Castle took some 30 years to build, its walls reflect the advances in military engineering. By the early 13th century it was discovered that round towers have two desirable qualities: they tend to deflect siege missiles, and they are much harder to collapse in mining. That was because of their foundation and weight distribution. Square towers were more vulnerable to undermining, especially at their corners. King John made sure that several of Dover's towers were round, or at least "D" shaped, with the curved side facing outward.

Dover Castle was a bone in Louis's throat, essentially blocking his line of supply, reinforcement, and communication with France. While de Burgh's garrison could not turn the tide of war, they could stage harassing raids that might be quite effective. Even King Phillip Augustus was said to chide his son over his seeming lack of concern about Dover Castle. Prince Louis was at last stirred into action, but de Burgh had used the lull to good advantage.

De Burgh scoured the countryside for supplies, sending parties out near and far. Castle blacksmiths, whose arms glistened with sweat from blazing smithy forges, fashioned weapons and sharpened older ones to make sure they had a keen cutting edge. The air was filled with the sounds of hammering and sawing, a familiar cacophony in times of war. The noise came from carpenters and other workers constructing wooden roofed extensions known as hoardings that would add further protection to the garrison on the parapets.

Prince Louis and his army arrived in Dover on July 19, but the prince was in no hurry to start a formal siege; instead, he reconnoitered the castle from afar. He determined the only possible avenue was from the north side. But he probably was angered when the castle garrison defiantly rode out in full view, boldly daring the French to attack.

The siege opened with artillery barrages from the various siege engines Louis's army had constructed. Chroniclers mention perriers and mangonels as being the main siege engines used when operations began. The perriers used smaller shot and were ideal as an antipersonnel weapon. A perrier was like a giant slingshot whose power was provided by a six-man crew simultaneously pulling on ropes.

The perrier worked on the principle of counterpoise. When the crew pulled on its ropes, the engine arm went forward and propelled the shot. By contrast, the mangonel was a kind of catapult that derived its power from the torsion created from a large skein of twisted rope or sinew, not human muscle.

The French also erected a wattle siege tower. Usually such towers were meant to be wheeled

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up to walls to give attackers access to the parapets. In this case, it seems this tower was simply a platform for crossbowmen to shoot down on the castle garrison that was manning the parapets.

While the siege engines began their bombardment, a cat was constructed and moved forward to a place near Dover Castle's wooden outer palisade. The cat was essentially a moveable shed whose roof was covered in hides to make it less flammable. Louis's cat protected miners, who began a tunnel under the palisade.

The wooden wall soon collapsed and French soldiers poured through the gap. It was said a knight named Huart de Paon was the first to mount the barbican breech, boldly planting the banner of his lord, the Lord of Bethune, in the process. One of the first barbican casualties was its captain, Pierre de Creon.

There was heavy hand-to-hand fighting, and those who could fell back to the main part of the castle. The wooden wall had been an extra protection, designed to buy some time and delay the attackers. It was not expected to fend off the French army indefinitely.

The main Dover Castle gatehouse was the next target for undermining. There is evidence that the Dover garrison tried to intercept the enemy tunnelers by means of countermining. If this were the case, then at the place where the two tunnels intersected, there would have been horrible, almost surreal bloodshed amid cramped spaces and by the light of flickering torches. Sources suggest that this battle deep in the bowels of the earth was won by the French because their tunnel continued on its way to the tower.

The tunnel was put to the torch, the beams burned, and the east gatehouse tower collapsed. Once again French knights and men at arms surged forward, this time clambering up the rubble of the collapsed tower, all the while subjected to a rain of crossbow bolts. But once they reached the collapsed tower summit, a new and shocking surprise awaited them. De Burgh had hastily erected a makeshift inner wall of timbers to bar their way.

The fight at the collapsed tower was a bloodbath, with the fate of England hanging precariously in the balance. Medieval warfare was quite literally butchery, where chivalry was forgotten and the main object was to take down your opponent by any means possible. Mail offered decent protection, but heavy blows from a mace, axe, or war hammer might break an arm or leg and leave an opponent helpless.

Faces were not covered, and a polearm thrust or sword slash might leave deep and horrific wounds to the jaw or skull. Legs and feet also were targets. Once an opponent was on the ground, he could be dispatched quickly or finished off with a dagger thrust later.

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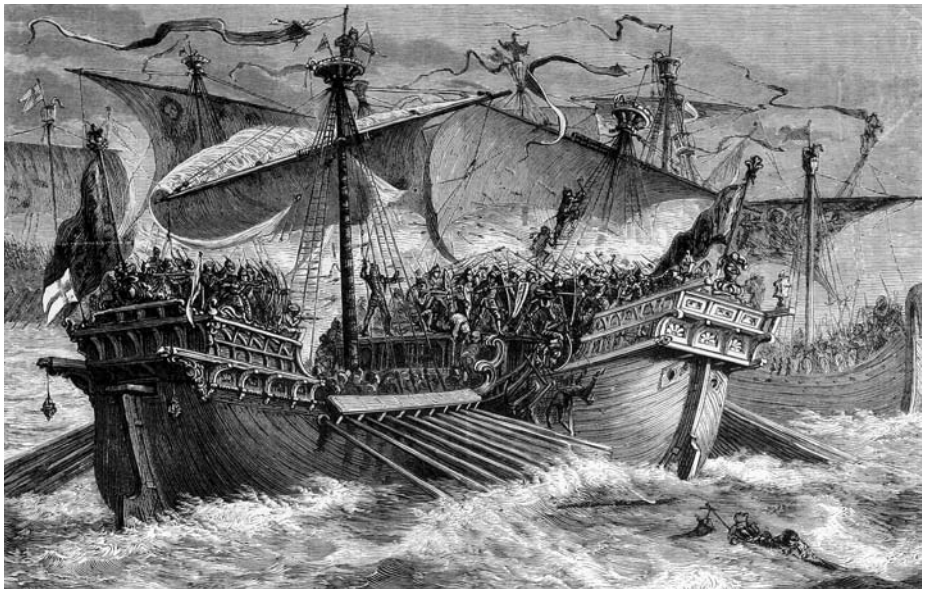


ABOVE: A better-led English fleet sank the French armada attempting to resupply Prince Louis in August 1217. Lacking any prospects of reliable supply, Louis quit England once and for all. OPPOSITE: Prince Louis of France twice besieged Dover Castle during the First Barons' War. His first siege in 1216 combined bombardment with undermining, and his second siege in 1217 was notable for the use of a massive counterweight-powered trebuchet.

Meanwhile, the first stirrings of a national feeling began to manifest themselves in some popular resistance. Prince Louis had only half his army at Dover; the rest was scattered around southwestern England. The Gallic invaders aroused the peasant population by pillaging villages and abusing, even raping, their inhabitants. French detachments were soon set upon by enraged English partisans.

The Weald, which was situated directly west of the castle, was a vast forested area that covered much of Kent and Sussex, ideal cover for bands of archers and woodsmen who attacked French foraging parties, then slip back into the forest. After three months, Prince Louis had had enough of Dover Castle. He signed a truce pact with de Burgh, lifted the siege, and marched away frustrated and probably angry. But the real turning point came when John unexpectedly died of dysentery on October 18. Royalist supporters, most especially the famous knight William Marshal, moved swiftly to have John's nine-year-old son Henry crowned king.

The young boy was an attractive alternative to Louis. He was only a lad, unburdened by his father's political sins, and above all he was native English. The English began to look askance at French arrogance and frequent depredations. Before long the pendulum swung to young Henry III's favor, and more barons returned to the English royalist fold.

Louis might have been down, but he was not quite out. The prince decided to besiege Dover Castle yet again, confirming its vast importance in securing England. The second siege commenced in May 1217, and this time Louis brought a trebuchet, a powerful counterweight siege engine that could hurl stones weighing up to 300 pounds. This particular machine had a grimly humorous nickname, Malvoisin, meaning bad neighbor.

The second siege lasted only 10 days, brought to an end by a series of heavy blows to the French cause. First, Malvoisin seemed to have little effect on Dover's fortifications. Perhaps it would have smashed the walls if given time, but time was something Louis simply did not have. Second, his siege camp was being harried by partisan English bowmen, and there seemed no means of stopping their raids. English ships also were blocking the coast, cutting off his supply line from France.

But then Louis received bad tidings: his main army and his English supporters had been decisively defeated at Lincoln by royalist forces under the command of William Marshal. Negotiations opened, and Louis finally gave up his claim to the English throne and returned to France. A substantial payment from the English also helped assuage his royal disappointment.

Dover Castle's stout defenses and stubbornly courageous garrison had not only thwarted an invasion, they had saved the Plantagenet dynasty, which would rule in one way or another until 1485. The fortress lived up to its reputation as the "Key to England." □

Deep in a brick-lined tunnel, grenadiers of the army of Louis XIV hacked at a sturdy wooden door. The door gave way, and the grenadiers rushed through. They were inside a warren of tunnels underneath the defenses of the city of Turin. They could be reinforced in just minutes by hundreds of troops. The invaders could then spread out through the city and its massive citadel, prying it loose from the clutch of the Grand Alliance. But just as they stepped through the door, they saw they were not alone. There was Private Pietro Micca, one of the hundreds of soldiers of the army of Victor Amadeus, Duke of Savoy. Micca had a smoldering match, a short length of fuse, and a barrel of gunpowder. He was there to thwart the aims of the Imperialists. Because of Micca, Turin would not fall to the Sun King that fateful night in 1706.

The death of King Charles II of Spain plunged Europe into crisis in late 1700. Leaving no children, Charles willed the throne of Spain to Philip, Duke of Anjou. Philip was the grandson of Louis XIV. His accession would unite the most powerful nation in Europe, France, with Spain, which while in decline was still a first-rank European and colonial power.

PRINCE EUGENE OF SAVOY LED AN IMPERIAL RELIEF FORCE TO TURIN IN 1706, INTENDING TO RAISE THE FRENCH SIEGE OF THE CITY DURING THE WAR OF THE SPANISH SUCCESSION.

To prevent the melding of the armies and fleets of France and Spain, Louis XIV's main enemies on the European continent had formed a coalition known as the Grand Alliance. The principal participants were the Holy Roman Empire, which was ruled by its Austrian monarch Emperor Leopold I, Great Britain, and the Netherlands. They would soon be joined by Portugal, Prussia, and various other states whose rulers also feared the vast increase in Louis XIV's power. The Grand Alliance's preferred candidate for the Spanish throne was Archduke Charles, son of Leopold I.

When the War of the Spanish Succession broke out in 1701, Spain sought to keep control of Milan and Mantua, northern Italian territories the Austrians wanted to secure their southern possessions. Savoy, an important power in the region ruled by Duke Victor Amadeus II, at first sided with France.

In the early 1700s, the Duchy of Savoy included the larger Italian state of Piedmont. The latter, a large, prosperous region with fertile fields, was so important that the dukes had long since moved their capital to Turin. By the early 1700s, Turin had a population of 40,000. On the west bank of the Po River, Turin protected the

French and Imperial cavalry clash in the foreground at Turin. The north Italian town was significant because it lay astride the route from Lombardy to France via the western Alps.

BPK / The Image Works, NY

"ITALY IS OURS"

BY DAVID A. NORRIS

Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection

Soldiers construct siege works outside of a town in 1703. In a typical siege, an attacker dug parallels that enabled it to move men, supplies, and explosives forward under protection of the trenches.

route from Lombardy to the Alpine passes of Mont Genevre and Mont Cenis.

Victor Amadeus was a reluctant ally of Louis XIV. He broke with France in 1703 and joined the Alliance. This placed him on the same side with his cousin, the great military commander Prince Eugene.

Had fate moved differently, Prince Eugene might well have served Louis XIV instead of plaguing him with defeats. Born in Paris, he was the son of Eugene-Maurice, the Comte de Soissons, and Olympia Mancini, the niece of Louis XIV's adviser Cardinal Mazarin. But the French king denied young Eugene a commission as an army officer, having decided he was better fitted for a career in the church. Eugene instead went to Vienna and accepted a military commission from the Hapsburg Emperor Leopold I.

After serving in the Austrian forces that repulsed the Ottoman siege of Vienna in 1683, the prince had fought against the Turks in Hungary and then had opposed the French in the 1690s Nine Years' War. After the outbreak of the War of the Spanish Succession, Eugene was assigned to work with English commander, Lt. Gen. Sir John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough, in Bavaria. Together, they won the decisive Battle of Blenheim in 1704.

When campaigning began with the arrival of spring in 1706, Marlborough remained in Flanders. The responsibility for the alliance's campaign against the French in northern Italy fell to Prince Eugene. Before operations began in Italy, the prince left the peninsula, seeking reinforcements and funds from Vienna.

Marlborough gained another great victory in Flanders at Ramillies on May 23, 1706. Within a couple of weeks, the defeated army of Louis XIV had withdrawn, leaving nearly all of the Spanish Netherlands in allied hands.

Despite the withdrawal, affairs looked promising for the French south of the Alps. By late 1705 the French controlled much of Piedmont. Their goal for the next year was to snap up the rest of Savoy and its capital of Turin. Turin already had been the target of a brief siege by 21,000 French troops in August 1705. The French commander, Marshal Louis de la Feuillade, broke off the siege but intended to return the next year with a larger army.

Two French armies campaigned in Piedmont. The first, which was commanded by the able Louis Joseph de Bourbon, Duke of Vendome, routed a smaller allied force at the Battle of Calcinato on April 19, 1706. Eugene hastened back and assembled a new force from the broken remnants of the army defeated at Calcinato and as many garrison troops as he could spare from fortified points. But he was at Gavardo, at the foot of the Alps in Lombardy. Turin was more than 150 miles by road to the west. What is more, the French held the vital crossings of the Adige, Mincio, and Oglio Rivers in the intervening territory.

The second French army, which numbered 48,000 troops with 110 heavy guns and 49 large mortars, marched to Turin. It was led by Marshal Louis d'Aubusson de la Feuillade, Duke of Roannais. The French reached the edges of the city on May 12, the very day that a solar eclipse temporarily darkened all of Europe. Many of the people inside Turin saw the dimming of the sun as a hopeful omen because the sun was the symbol of Louis XIV, who was known to the French as the Sun King.

The French undertook their siege at a leisurely pace. Sappers began digging their first trench on June 3. Turin was rather loosely invested, and supplies continued to reach the city for some time. Six days later the French opened fire with 15 great siege mortars. Shells smashed into the citadel, battering the governor's house and setting the barracks afire. Often the mortar rounds flew beyond the citadel, plunging through the roofs and floors of the buildings beyond. Giant shells crashed deep into churches, where they exploded, shattering old tombs and scattering the bones of long-dead parishioners. Civilians streamed out of the threatened districts to safer precincts out of range of the mortars.

Victor Amadeus's wife and family managed to slip through the loose French grip on the city. They undertook an arduous journey to Genoa where they arrived safely. The Duke of Savoy,

lest he become penned up and captured in the city, rode out with 6,000 men on June 17. He left command of Turin to Austrian Field Marshal Count Wirich Philipp von Daun.

In early July, Prince Eugene slipped past Vendome. Moving south from the Alps, he reached the Adige River not far from the Adriatic coast on July 5. Vendome, scrambling to catch up, moved west to cross the Mincio. Yet he failed to block the clever Eugene, who crossed the Po at Polesella on July 18 and continued toward Turin.

Because of the disaster at Ramillies, Vendome was ordered to Flanders. It was a fortunate stroke for Prince Eugene. Prince Eugene had high regard for Vendome. The able Vendome "carried with him the love, the heart, and the spirit of the French," wrote the prince.

On the same day that Prince Eugene crossed the Po, Vendome left for Flanders. He had delayed his departure for some time in order to hand over command to the far less competent Philippe, Duke of Orleans, who was Louis XIV's nephew. The king subsequently assigned Marshal Ferdinand de Marsin to advise his nephew.

As for the operations against Turin, Prince Eugene wrote with a touch of sarcasm in his memoir, "Luckily, thanks to the discernment of Louis XIV, la Feuillade was charged with the conduct of the siege." A mediocre commander at best, la Feuillade rose to his high rank because his father-in-law was Michel Chamillart, Louis XIV's minister of war.

For the previous year's attempt to besiege Turin, la Feuillade had the advice of the era's most talented military engineer, the aged Sebastien Le Prestre de Vauban. Well acquainted with Turin, Vauban helped plan a major renovation of the city defenses over a four-year period beginning in 1669. He recommended securing high ground near the city, taking the town next, and then blasting the citadel at close range from protected batteries. Rejecting Vauban's advice, la Feuillade did the opposite: he aimed directly for the strongest part of the defenses, the citadel.

Turin would not be easily plucked. The eastern end of the city rested on the Po River. North of the city wound the smaller Dora Riparia River, and farther north, the Stura River. Both streams emptied into the Po.

Roughly egg shaped, with the smaller eastern end touching the west bank of the Po, Turin was surrounded by defensive walls that bristled with stone bastions. La Feuillade's half-hearted siege the previous year was a clear warning to the garrison, and it sparked work to strengthen the city's already formidable protection.

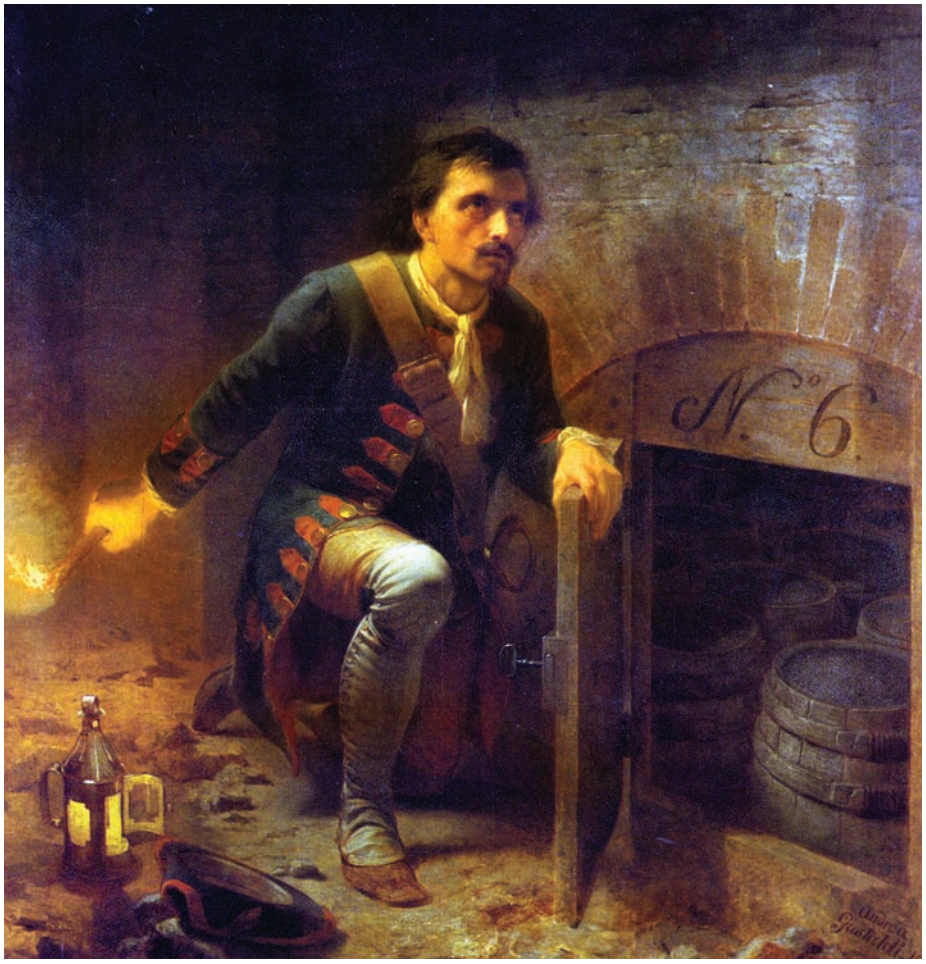
Anchoring the defense at the southeastern edge of the walls was a massive citadel that the rulers of Savoy had maintained since the 1500s. At each of its five corners, the pentagonal citadel of Turin had a massive stone bastion pointing out like an arrowhead and presenting two sides to project fire at approaching enemies. The design enabled two neighboring bastions to catch attackers in a deadly crossfire.

Between the bastions were protective works called demilunes. A bit to the front of the bastions, and at a lower level, were smaller triangular works called ravelins. Each ravelin pointed

All: Wikimedia

Clockwise from top: Imperial commander Prince Eugene of Savoy, French Marshal Ferdinand de Marsin, and French commander Philippe II, Duke of Orleans. Eugene scraped together whatever Imperial forces he could find in spring 1706 and rushed to the relief of Turin.

Wikimedia



ABOVE: Savoyard Private Pietro Micca, who belonged to a patrol entrusted with preventing the French from tunneling under the walls, ignited a massive explosion when he heard French grenadiers approaching. He sacrificed himself to save the city. OPPOSITE: A period engraving shows furious trench combat in the foreground against a backdrop of the strategic city of Turin.

outward, with two more stone sides protecting defenders as they returned fire. The rear of each ravelin was open to the citadel, so if enemy troops took it, the captured work offered as little cover as possible. Prickling from the edges of the citadel were smaller works, called fleches, which served as small ravelins.

Inside the defenses, Daun commanded six regiments of Imperial infantry, 17 battalions of Savoyard or Piedmontese foot, 5,570 cavalry, and 1,030 artillerymen. Some of the cavalry was dismounted, and three-fourths of the artillerymen were detached from other branches of service. All told, by an allied estimate, there were 14,770 men.

An 18th-century siege moved in stages nearly as predictable as a minuet. The besieging army began with a parallel, a trench dug approximately 500 yards from the edge of the enemy works. The besiegers then dug a second parallel, followed by a third and perhaps a fourth, the last of which was placed as close as they dared to the enemy's walls. The army moved its sappers, as well as its tools and supplies along the parallels that zigzagged across the battlefield.

At Turin, the French pushed toward the two bastions facing west away from the city. The St. Maurice Bastion was situated to the north, and the Amadeus Bastion was located to the south. As the sappers drew closer to the citadel, the defenders opened fire with little mortars called pierriers. Designed to fire stone projectiles, the pierriers of Turin lobbed cobblestones into the enemy trenches.

Chamillart wrote his son-in-law that Vauban scoffed at his conduct of the siege, and the legendary engineer even said that he was willing to have his throat cut if the citadel was taken by la Feuillade's plans.

Work on the third parallel began on the night of June 25-26. As the visible siege works grew, a second front to the operations proceeded underground. French sappers burrowed beneath the ground toward the citadel in an effort to blow up the works protecting the bastions. Turin's defenders were well prepared for this form of warfare. Beneath the modern and formidable fortifications was a network of tunnels that stretched for more than 9 miles. The defenders kept the brick-lined tunnels lit with lamps. Bellows pumped in fresh air as soldiers patrolled the long main corridors and side branches, listening for the sound of enemy troops digging toward them. Barrels of gunpowder were located at predetermined intervals, ready to be lit in case the French burst into the tunnels.

Up on the surface, there was a simple way to detect enemy sappers working underground. The soldiers placed a few dried peas on a drum. If the peas rattled around on the drumhead, the soldiers knew it was caused by vibrations coming from a subterranean tunnel.

As an English account of the time summed up la Feuillade's efforts, the siege "was carried on with more obstinacy than success." One setback after another slowed their progress. At one point, the French blew up a new mine, but they had miscalculated the necessary distance for the tunnel, and the explosion was a few yards too far away from the citadel to cause any damage. The garrison detonated a countermine on July 15, destroying some of the French tunnels and blowing a 20-foot-wide crater on the surface.

Around the outer edge of the Turin citadel ran the covered way. A shelf along the outer edge of the outer ditch, the covered way was dug just deep enough to hide a standing soldier from the garrison. He could stand on a step to fire over the parapet and then step down to safety. Taking a section of the covered way would give the besiegers a toehold in the enemy works.

At dusk on August 5, the French began a heavy bombardment of the citadel. "Their bombs appeared in the air twenty-six at a time," wrote Lt. Gen. Comte Solar de la Marguerite. With the return fire from Turin, "the air seemed all on fire," he added. Escorted by 20 companies of grenadiers, one dozen French engineers with a party of sappers pushed onto the covered way near the Amadeus Bastion. As the sappers tried to dig in, grapeshot poured on them from above, and enemy sappers sprang more than one mine under their feet. Although the first attackers were driven off the covered way, the French launched another assault. This time they managed to hold on and start throwing up defenses on the covered way to accommodate a couple of batteries. The attacks cost the French nearly 1,000 casualties, according to one account.

By mid-August, the French had dug a fourth parallel in the dry ditch in front of the inner glacis and constructed breaching batteries on

the covered way. Pounding at close range, the cannons battered the ravelin and counterguards between the St. Maurice and Amadeus Bastions. The garrison occasionally sprang a mine under the besieging troops, sometimes wrecking a siege gun or even an entire battery.

Throughout this time, Prince Eugene drew nearer Turin. He had outmaneuvered the Duke of Orleans and Marshal Marsin, aided by his bold nature as well as rivers rendered easily fordable by a drought. His army moved at night to escape the summer heat.

Up to that point, the garrison held out well enough against the besieging army; however, its food stores were beginning to run low. A peculiar incident highlighted another of Daun's growing perils: his supply of gunpowder was dwindling. At dawn on August 22, French sentries guarding the Po River Bridge above the city saw an inflated goat skin floating down the river. Spotting one after another, the guards pulled seven of them out of the water. Each one was "partly filled with powder, and partly blown up with wind," in hope of smuggling gunpowder to the garrison, according to a contemporary English account.

On the night of August 26-27, the French ignited a mine that brought down sections of the counterscarp. At midnight their grenadiers rushed into the demilune. The grenadiers forged on until the attackers managed to set up a battery. All around them the ditch was a roaring inferno, with flames fed by the garrison hurling in fascines, firewood, and anything that would burn. A German visitor to Turin years later heard tales of the townspeople taking apart their roofs and even throwing in their furniture to feed the fires burning in the ditch. The continuous flames and smoke held back the French while the garrison repaired some of the damage to the walls.

Two days later, a lucky shot exploded the magazine of the French battery in the demilune. Grenades and artillery cartridges exploded, one after another, as if the noise heralded a new attack rather than the result of a single shell burst. From the citadel, the soldiers saw hats, weapons, and coats hurled high in the air. As if in contrast to the summer heat, tiny bits of shredded cartridge paper fluttered down like snowflakes. Count Daun watched the commotion from the St. Maurice Bastion. Afterward, he handed out coins to reward the gun crew who destroyed the magazine.

In the galleries below the surface, Micca and his comrades prowled on the alert for French attempts to tunnel under the walls. Their dark world would soon be invaded by the enemy.

That night, after the explosion on the ravelin, French grenadiers at the bottom of the counterscarp found an entrance to the upper level of the Turin tunnels. Inside, they began battering down another door. This portal was an Achilles' heel of the defenses. It led to a flight of steps leading into the lower levels and would admit an attacking force into the interior of the citadel.

Behind the door was Micca, another soldier (whose name is lost to history) holding a smoldering match, and a keg of gunpowder. As the French hammered the door, Micca asked his companion for the match. His comrade did not move. "Get out of here!" Micca snapped. "You're slower than a day without bread! Let me do this, and save yourself!" The soldier hurried away, leaving Micca to light the fuse himself. Micca set a short fuse; there was no time to use a longer one.

As the door gave way, Micca touched off a massive explosion that wiped out the grenadiers at the door. Up on the surface, a four-gun battery and three companies of soldiers were thrown into the air. Micca's dead body, it was said, was flung 40 feet down the tunnel.

Micca's sacrifice was not forgotten. Victor Amadeus bestowed a pension on his widow and children. He is one of the few enlisted men of the 18th century who has a statue dedicated in his honor. In the mid-19th-century era of Italian unification, Micca became a symbol of Italian patriotism. Children's books lauded him as an example of courage, and histories briefly veered from their tales of princes and generals to tell the story of an enlisted man of humble origins.

On the night after Micca's death, a final French offensive was broken up by the garrison artillery and a countermine detonated under their feet.

Prince Eugene's gunners fired a triple salute to welcome Duke Victor Amadeus and his army

Wikimedia

into their camp on September 1. One day later, the duke and the prince stood a mile east of the city, on a 2,200-foot rise called Superga Hill. They could clearly see the walls and rooftops of Turin, the massive citadel, and enemy siege lines sprawling around the city. That night, bright signal fires blazed atop the little mountain, alerting the garrison that help was arriving. Prince Eugene was so confident that when his steward asked where he would dine the next day, he answered emphatically, "At Turin!"

By September 5, the Allied troops had crossed the Po and marched toward Pianezza Castle, about five miles west of Turin. They numbered only about 30,000, less than three-fourths of the French force of 42,000. En route, they learned of an enemy convoy heading to the French camp. The Allies overran the convoy, capturing by one account 1,450 pack mules laden with ammunition and supplies.

A remnant of the caravan escort escaped and holed up with the French guards in Pianezza Castle. That night, a young woman named Maria Bricca told the allies about a secret passage that would admit them into the castle. She offered to lead them herself. It is said she burst into the ballroom of the castle, wielding a hatchet and shouting "Viva Savoia!" Behind her was a party of Imperial troops, who seized the castle. Maria Bricca is a legendary figure today with three streets in Turin and nearby towns named for her.

On the night of September 6, the allies camped about five miles northwest of the city. The Duke of Orleans had considered marching out to confront the enemy on the plains around the city. After all, even with the Duke of Savoy's men added to Prince Eugene's, the French outnumbered them by about 10,000. But at a council of war, Marshal Marsin carried the vote with a cautious strategy of waiting for the enemy to attack them within their siege lines. This negated their advantage in numbers by spreading out their available men along 15 miles of siege lines. At first, though, only 17 battalions of foot and 65 cavalry squadrons could be spared to man the line of entrenchments between the Dora and the Stura that protected their camp.

Prince Eugene planned for the allied infantry to attack in eight columns divided into two lines. The first line of four columns would move out 300 to 400 paces ahead of the second. Each column in the first line would be 20 to 30 paces apart to allow room for field guns to cover them. Second-line units were spaced farther apart; if the first line was repulsed, they could pass through and regroup behind them. If the first line took the enemy trenches, they were to halt and knock down the palisades so the cavalry could pass through and push the attack.

By 4 AM on September 7, the allied troops drew up in battle order. Prince Johann William of Saxe-Gotha commanded the right, which in addition to his own men included Palatine, Austrian, and Dutch troops. Prince Karl Alexander of Wurttemberg led the left, composed mainly of Prussians with a multinational spearhead of grenadiers culled from different regiments led by Prince Leopold of Dessau. Latvian-born General Otto von Rehbinder led the center, with Austrian and Palatine troops. In charge of the reserve was Marquis de Langallerie. Once one of Louis XIV's generals, Langallerie deserted after a quarrel with the king's court and offered his sword to the Hapsburg emperor.

As soon as the allies stepped into cannon range, the French guns opened up on them, and Imperial guns responded. During the siege, French guns had employed ricochet fire to devastating effect on garrison troops in the covered ways. Cannon shot fired at nearly flat trajectories bounced and skipped, plowing through enemy troops rather than soaring harmlessly over their heads. In the open plain before Turin, the Imperial troops suffered great losses from the enemy artillery, while much of their return fire was absorbed by the entrenchments protecting the French.

Anxious from standing still while cannon balls bounced through their ranks, the foot soldiers were allowed to charge at 11 AM, a bit before the commanders originally planned. As they pushed forward, they could see the French "were entrenched up to their teeth," wrote Baron Wilhelm von Hohendorf, Prince Eugene's adjutant.

Aiding the attackers, Count Daun sent 12 battalions of infantry through the Palace Gate. Townspeople crowded the ramparts, rooftops, and church steeples and watched the battle until the masses of troops disappeared in a thick fog of powder smoke.

Prince Eugene was in the thick of battle. A page and a valet who accompanied him were both shot dead. The prince was hurled into a ditch when his horse was shot. A wave of fear rolled through his men, but Eugene dispelled their worries by quickly rising to his feet and waving his hat to show he was unharmed.

On the allied left, the Prince of Wurttemberg's troops overran the enemy entrenchments. They tore down gaps in the works for their cavalry to pass through. Instead of holding the line, they pushed forward, leaving the entrenchments deserted. Fortunately for them, a general in the second line detached the Austrians of the Regiment of Starhemberg, ordering them to stay in the works and turn the captured artillery on the enemy. The regiment anchored a successful repulse of a French counterattack.

In the center, the Palatines broke through and pushed the defenders back. On the right, Saxe-Gotha's men faced more formidable works. For example, a French battalion held the Castle of Lucento, a manor belonging to the House of Savoy that served as a strong fortification.

While the Imperial troops on the right were bogged down, the French threw in their cavalry. Marshal Marsin led 15 squadrons of cavalry at the enemy lodgment near the Stura, but the Prussians repelled the French horsemen and mortally wounded Marsin. The Imperial troops also repulsed another cavalry charge, this one led by the Duke of Orleans. Twice wounded, the duke was carried off the field.

Other French cavalry charged at the center. The barricades having been torn down by the Palatines to admit the allied horse, the galloping horsemen surged through and hit Saxe-Gotha's left flank before being turned back by the allied cavalry. Soon after, Saxe-Gotha's troops took the entrenchments. As the French right collapsed, the allies also captured a fortified stone farmhouse that guarded one of the Dora bridges. The Castle of Lucento was not attacked as it was too strong a point to take without heavy losses of time and men. In the end, the defenders set the castle afire and rushed to join the retreat.

Their front line was gone, but la Feuillade's men rallied behind another line of defenses, originally part of the line of circumvallation that formed the outer rim of the siege lines. A brief lull occurred while the allies brought up their artillery and allowed the second four columns of their infantry to catch up. Another charge pushed the French from their second position, and by this time the outnumbered defenders had had enough.

Crumbling into disorderly retreat, defeated troops streamed across the Po, Stura, and Dora bridges. Thirty squadrons of French dragoons, dismounted to support the infantry, were unable to recover their horses and had to leave them behind.

Oddly enough, while the great infantry and cavalry battle went on out on the plain, the siege gunners turned their backs on the whole affair and single-mindedly lobbed shots into the citadel and the town. When they learned the battle was lost, they hastily rushed away from their batteries, abandoning 12 dozen siege guns.

Although most of the French rushed across the bridges, the fighting went on until nightfall.

Alamy

In his brilliant relief of Turin, Prince Eugene destroyed the French army, forcing it to abandon Italy.

A few batteries kept up their fire, buying time so they could destroy ammunition and supplies. Some foot battalions held on for hours, holed up in fortified cassines.

Prince Eugene surveyed the battlefield with his perspective glass, which was an early type of telescope with a single large lens that projected an enlarged image on a flat surface. Seeing the enemy troops reeling back in disorder, he told Victor Amadeus, "Italy is ours, cousin!"

The wounded Duke of Orleans was borne away to safety, but Marshal Marsin was captured. Eugene wrote that Marsin was conveyed to a house, where he lay on a makeshift bed of straw and began dictating letters to the court. He died the following day. His death may have been the result of inhaling smoke when gunpowder in an adjacent room ignited, according to multiple accounts.

French casualties ran to 2,000 dead and 6,000 captured. Among the dead were three generals. This was in addition to 14,000 casualties suffered before the climactic battle ended the siege.

The French lost a staggering amount of equipment. They lost 255 cannons and 108 mortars abandoned in the enemy siege works and the battlefield, according to one report. They lost 80,000 kegs of gunpowder, according to another account. Four captured paintings of Louis XIV, set with diamonds, were valued at 4,000 pistoles.

Allied losses in the battle were 1,800 dead and 4,000 wounded, with few prisoners taken. To these losses should be added the 6,607 casualties lost by Daun's garrison troops during the siege. Worth noting, the casualty figure includes 2,100 deserters. The Imperial casualties numbered 1,026; as for the remainder of the casualties, they were Savoyard or Piedmont troops. An officer estimated that the garrison artillery threw 6,000 bombs, hurled 8,000 stones from its mortars, and fired 75,000 cannon discharges.

After entering the city, the victorious duke and prince of Savoy attended a celebratory mass at the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist where the famous Shroud of Turin had been kept since 1578. Around the altar were 55 captured banners. With the city in safe hands, the Turin garrison could afford blasting away their remaining powder with cannon salutes. Thousands of la Feuillade's men finally saw the streets of Turin as they were marched through as prisoners of war.

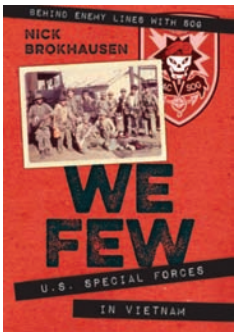
The following day a small French army defeated an Imperial army at Castiglione in Lombardy. The German troops were commanded by Prince Frederick of Hesse-Kassel, who in 1720 ascended the throne of Sweden as King Frederick I. Louis XIV's commanders tried to magnify the success at Castiglione, but the battle did little to further the Sun King's hopes in Italy. Naples and Milan fell to the Grand Alliance in 1707, thereby putting much of Italy under Hapsburg control.

The Battle of Turin marked a change in the course of the war, but the long conflict had another half a dozen years to go. For Savoy's aid to the Grand Alliance, the duchy was awarded Sicily in the 1713 Treaty of Utrecht at the end of the war. Through the later Treaty of The Hague signed in 1720, Victor Amadeus agreed to exchange Sicily with Austria for the island of Sardinia. Thereafter Duke Victor Amadeus II became King of Sardinia, also known as Sardinia-Piedmont, since its center shifted even more from old Savoy to its Italian possessions.

Victor Amadeus's descendant, King Victor Emmanuel II, became the first king of Italy in 1861. Turin served as the first capital of the united Italy until 1865. The original region of Savoy was given to France in 1860 to reward Napoleon III for his help in driving the Austrians from Italy. □

By Christopher Miskimon

A firsthand account of U.S. Special Forces operations in South Vietnam captures the adversity experienced while gathering ground reconnaissance.



Special Forces operator Nick Brokhausen is shown with Montagnard fighters in South Vietnam. The Montagnards fought alongside the Americans.

SPECIAL FORCES SERGEANT NICK BROKHAUSEN AWOKE TO THE TASTE of dirt in his mouth and the crump of exploding mortar bombs. Above him there were voices but he could not tell who they were. Hands pulled him from the ground where he had been lying face down. Nick caught glimpses of blue sky, a leg, and a face. The man sloshed water from a canteen onto a rag and cleaned Nick's face. It helped him see more clearly. "He's alive, but he ain't gonna be on no quiz show," the man said. Then the other soldier picked up his weapon and dashed away.

With growing lucidity, Nick realized he was in a bunker, but it did not have a roof anymore. Nearby was a dying Montagnard tribesman, his clothing in tatters and his dead hands clutching at the entrails protruding from his stomach. An empty syrette of morphine was pinned through his cheek; someone was merciful and gave him an entire dose, which was enough to kill the diminutive Montagnard. From the left an M-60 machine gun began banging away in short, aimed bursts. The weapon was served by two tribesmen who were aiming carefully and adjusting for each new target they spotted. Expended brass cartridge cases struck Nick's face.

Brokhausen moved away from the machine-gun team as the loader picked up a fresh belt from an ammunition can. Nick still did not remember where he was or what was happening, but he knew he had to find his weapon, a CAR-15 carbine. He could not find it so he instinctively reached to his back and found the sawed-off, double-barreled, 12-gauge shotgun he carried. He opened it and saw the weapon was still loaded, a slug on the left and buckshot on the right. Small arms fire crackled nearby, the distinctive sound of M-60s, CAR-15s, and AK-47s rattling. Nick needed to find his carbine; visions of the enemy overrunning his position crawled through his mind.

He cradled his shotgun and began to move. Suddenly he recalled the name of the man who helped him moments ago. Davidson! Nick could not stand Davidson; the man was a bullet magnet. He was shot at more than anyone else in the outfit. If Davidson was with him, Nick had to find a better weapon right away. He had risen to his hands and knees when he heard noise behind him. Spinning to point the shotgun, Nick saw another American jump into the wrecked bunker next to him. His name was Eldon. Brokhausen was glad he was no longer alone with Davidson. Eldon pushed Nick into a sitting position and told him to nod if he could understand him. Nick nodded. He told Nick that medical evacuation choppers were on the way and that the crew members would load him onto the first one along with the other wounded. Nick was confused. He did not believe he was wounded. He tried to explain that he was fine, but the words were jumbled. Soon a helicopter arrived

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and Nick was placed on it. Minutes later it lifted away and Nick looked out over the wreckage of a battlefield.

Brokhausen spent his second tour in Vietnam as part of a reconnaissance team in the Military Assistance Command Vietnam Studies and Observations Group, the famous MACV-SOG. His unit earned distinction for the number of valor awards they earned and the high casualties they sustained, numbers that might be considered suicidal today. Nick's experiences are detailed in his new memoir ***We Few: U.S. Special Forces in Vietnam: Behind Enemy Lines with SOG*** (Nick Brokhausen, Casemate Publishers, Havertown, PA, 2018, 251 pp., $32.95, hardcover).

Brokhausen's personal account is gritty, harrowing, descriptive, and full of detail. This is not a scholarly history of Special Forces. It contains slang, dialect, and inner thoughts. The author is not overly concerned with exact times, places, or names. He describes for readers the war as he lived it. His account is full of visceral accounts of battle, soldierly descriptions of fellow warriors, and other tales both mundane and exceptional. The various missions described are full of the sort of military detail and recall expected of a reconnaissance operator, giving a vivid impression of the activities of the author's unit. The everyday prose flows naturally and draws the reader into the narrative.

Looking Back at the Cold War: 30 Veterans and a Patrol Plane Commander Remember (Don Stanton, Wingspan Press, Livermore, CA, 2018, 233 pp., maps, photographs, bibliography, $14.95, softcover)

On the evening of October 23, 1962, Lieutenant (j.g.) Roger Stambaugh was sitting in the officer's club at Naval Air Station Norfolk after a training exercise. Stambaugh, the commander of a P-2 antisubmarine patrol plane, and his comrades listened as U.S. President John F. Kennedy announce the embargo of Cuba. It was the beginning of the Cuban Missile Crisis.

The next morning the aircraft's crew gathered on the flight line to fly back to their home base and found their plane had been fully loaded with weapons overnight, including a nuclear depth charge. Stambaugh went to find out what was happening. An admiral told him the plane and its crew were under his command now and they were to start flying patrols. He had authority to use the weapons his plane carried. Stambaugh specifically asked about the nuclear depth charge. The admiral told him to contact the operations center before he dropped that one, assuming he could get through. If he could not make contact, then he was to use his judgment. It was a heavy responsibility for a 25-year-old pilot with only three years in the U.S. Navy.

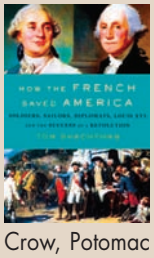
SHORT BURSTS

Tanks: A Century of Tank Warfare (Oscar E. Gilbert and Romain Cansiere, Casemate Publishers, 2018, $12.95, softcover) This is part of the publisher's new "Short History" series. This volume is a thorough introduction to the history of the tank in combat.

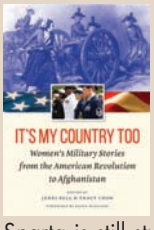
Chiang Kai-Shek Versus Mao Tse-Tung: The Battle for China 1946-1949 (Philip Jowett, Pen and Sword Books, 2018, $22.95, softcover) This is a new volume in the "Images of War" series. It is filled with photographs and artwork of the Chinese Civil War.

Latin American Wars 1900-1941: "Banana Wars," Border Wars and Revolution (Philip Jowett, Osprey Publishing, 2018, $18.00, softcover) The early 20th century was a time of almost constant conflict in Central and South America. This book covers 14 of them in detail accompanied by rare photographs.

The "Trapdoor" Springfield: From the Little Big Horn to San Juan Hill (John Langellier, Osprey Publishing, 2018, $20.00, softcover) The U.S. Army's first general-issue, breech-loading rifle went through numerous iterations and was used in action across the American West. The weapon's sunset came during the Spanish-American War.

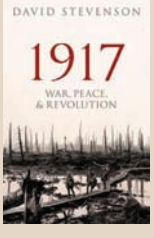


How the French Saved America: Soldiers, Sailors, Diplomats, Louis XVI, and the Success of a Revolution (Tom Shachtman, St. Martin's Press, 2017, $27.99, hardcover) This book tells the story of France's vital assistance to the fledgling United States. The author argues the American nation would likely not exist without French help.

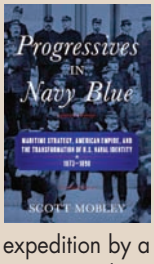


It's My Country Too: Women's Military Stories from the American Revolution to Afghanistan (Edited by Jerri Bell and Tracy Crow, Potomac Books, 2017, $32.95, hardcover) This anthology collects the stories of women in combat throughout American history. It brings to light many unknown and underappreciated tales of valor and service.

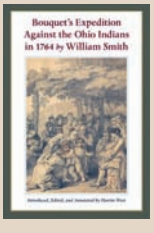
Sparta: Rise of a Warrior Nation (Philip Matyszak, Pen and Sword Books, 2018, $39.95, hardcover) The city-state of Sparta is still studied religiously by scholars and soldiers alike. This new work reveals how Sparta rose to become a power in the ancient world.



1917: War, Peace, and Revolution (David Stevenson, Oxford University Press, 2018, $39.95, hardcover) The year 1917 was a pivotal one not only in World War I, but also in the subsequent events of the 20th century. This volume explores in depth that crucial turning point in the Great War.



Progressives in Navy Blue: Maritime Strategy, American Empire, and the Transformation of U.S. Naval Identity (Scott Mobley, Naval Institute Press, 2018, $34.95, hardcover) The last three decades of the 19th century saw the U.S. Navy evolve from a continental defense force into a global fleet.



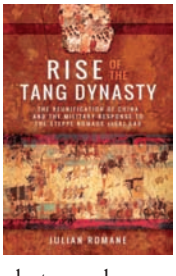
Bouquet's Expedition Against the Ohio Indians in 1764 by William Smith (Edited by Martin West, Kent State University Press, 2017, $39.95, hardcover) This is a history of Bouquet's expedition by a contemporary author. It was widely read in its time and remains an essential primary source for the period.

The Cold War was not actually very cold. There were proxy wars, tense standoffs, and accidents of all kinds. Thousands of people in both the U.S. and Soviet militaries died over the decades of the undeclared conflict, as much a casualty of war as those who died in Vietnam or Afghanistan. This new book gathers the experiences of Cold War veterans and places them in the context of the larger events of the day. It is a fascinating look at the struggles of these veterans, who served and suffered to keep the Cold War from becoming hot.

Tenochtitlan 1519-21: Clash of Civilizations (Si Sheppard, Osprey Publishing, Oxford, UK, 2018, maps, photographs, bibliography, index, $24.00, softcover)

Spaniard Hernan Cortes led an expedition to the Americas to gain riches and glory for himself and to serve God. Arriving in 1519, he made for the center of what is now Mexico, home to large but disparate tribes of Native Americans. Some allied with the Spanish while others resisted his encroachment. Cortes marched to Tenochtitlan, the city in the middle of Lake Texcoco. Horrible fighting ensued, but Spanish arms prevailed. The Spanish laid waste to Tenochtitlan, took Aztec Emperor Cuauhtemoc prisoner, and established a new territory that would remain under Spanish control for centuries. The Conquistadors changed the history of North America forever and paved the way for the future nation of Mexico.

The campaign Cortes fought in Mexico was a turning point in the history of the Americas and the world. This new work reveals the story of that campaign in a concise, easy-to-read yet detailed text. It is lavishly illustrated with a combination of period paintings, photographs of artifacts, and original artwork that brings the subject to vivid life. The author also provides background information on the leaders, armies, and weapons used in the fighting.



Rise of the Tang Dynasty: The Reunification of China and the Military Response to the Steppe Nomads (AD 581-626) (Julian Romane, Pen and Sword Books, South Yorkshire, UK, 2018, 240 pp., photographs, appendices, bibliography, index, $32.95, hardcover)

During the 4th century AD, nomads on horseback seized most of northern China. Conflict

THE COLD WAR GETS THE STRATEGY GAME TREATMENT WHILE TWO VERY DIFFERENT WAR GAMES MAKE THEIR WAY TO CONSOLES.

PUBLISHER GOOD SHEPHERD ENTERTAINMENT
GENRE STRATGEY
SYSTEM(S) PS4, XBOX ONE, PC
AVAILABLE NOW

Phantom Doctrine

How often do we get to check out strategy games set during the Cold War, especially on multiple platforms? Publisher Good Shepherd Entertainment recently released something to fill this void in the form of *Phantom Doctrine,* a turn-based tactical espionage game that takes place at the Cold War's peak. Those interested in the period and fond of classic spy thrillers will find

the web of paranoia and conspiracy immediately engaging.

Phantom Doctrine puts players in place as the leader of The Cabal, a secret organization tasked with preventing a wide-spanning global conspiracy. To do so, you'll need to pull off secret missions, interrogate enemy agents, and investigate highly classified files, which will eventually uncover a sinister plot and an appropriately urgent ticking clock to go along with it.

As is fitting of this type of story-driven experience, the meat of the game is focused on an extensive single-player campaign, with both renegade CIA wet work commando and KGB counterintelligence operatives available. The turn-based battle system that bridges the narrative is full of strategic possibilities, from triggering Breach abilities and Overwatch modes to positioning assets around the world so you can call upon assistance when you need it most. The deeper you worm your way into the enemy's inner workings—especially when it comes to meeting up with undercover operatives and finding out more about the enemy's plans—the easier it will be to stay one step ahead of their own traps and reinforcements.

Beyond single player, there are also online multiplayer matches and intense one-on-one skirmishes. Whichever side you choose to tackle, you can create your own fully customizable character, changing appearance, forging documents, and training them in new deadly arts whenever they need a new identity. The unique combination of the setting and the clandestine stealth gameplay make for a unique package unlike a lot of the other war-centric games on the market.

PUBLISHER MY.COM
GENRE SHOOTER
SYSTEM(S) PS4, XBOX ONE
AVAILABLE NOW

Warface

From the creators of *Far Cry* and *Crysis* comes *Warface,* which will be a familiar name to those who have played the PC version before. This free-to-play first-person shooter previously debuted on Steam, and it recently made its way to PlayStation 4 and Xbox One. For the unfamiliar, *Warface* offers up faction-based action with a mix of PvP and story-based PVE, so there's something in it for anyone looking to dig their claws into a different war-themed FPS.

The primary factions at the heart of battle here are Warface and Blackwood, each of which has four simultaneously-leveled classes available for players. These consist of Rifleman, Sniper, Engineer, and Medic, making it easy to put together a varied team for modes like ranked matches and clan wars. Even if you end up in the same class as another player on your team, you can make your character stand out with your own personalized skins and equipment, as well as a bunch of primary, secondary, and melee weapons that are updated on a regular basis.

Outside of the 50-plus maps and all the various modes found on the player-versus-player side of the equation, the player-versus-enemy content includes its own unique foes and environments. There are over eight special operations at the time of this writing, and hopefully Crytek will have even more in the works once *Warface* finally hits consoles. As it stands, *Warface* definitely has enough cooperative and competitive content to make it worth the initial download, so we'll have to see how the console community develops over the course of the coming months.

PUBLISHER UBISOFT
GENRE ADVENTURE
SYSTEM(S) SWITCH
AVAILABLE NOVEMBER 8

Valiant Hearts: The Great War

Valiant Hearts: The Great War has graced pretty much every platform imaginable since it first launched, including PS4, Xbox One, PS3, Xbox 360, PC, iOS, and Android. Now that Nintendo's latest has been on shelves for a while, though, it's time for Ubisoft's beautiful World War I adventure to wage its heartfelt war on Switch. If you haven't experienced this unique, story-focused trek through the Great War, you owe it to yourself to give it a shot as soon as possible.

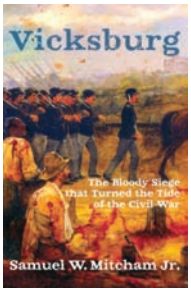
Right from the start, the most outstanding feature of *Valiant Hearts* is definitely its art direction. With the help of Ubisoft's UbiArt Framework engine, the 2D comic-style art comes to life and helps breathe another layer of emotion into the narrative. The team handling this art is full of all-star talent, too, including key level designers from *Rayman Origins* and *Rayman Legends,* as well as the audio and art directors from games like Peter Jackson's *King Kong* and fan-favorite *Beyond Good & Evil.* This aesthetic doesn't trivialize any of the related events. Rather, it enhances each moment and helps create memorable characters you'll want to follow through to the bitter end.

Despite its somewhat grim setting, the story itself revolves around romance. Players take on the role of a handful of different characters and their immensely useful canine companion, who can put his enhanced sense of smell to work, avoid obstacles, and stay out of the way of enemies while solving puzzles. Together, the group attempts to help a young German soldier navigate the trenches and ultimately find his lost love. Though the story itself is a work of fiction, the locations in which it takes place are anything but. You'll be roaming and surviving through historical battles on the Western Front like the Battle of the Somme and the Battle of the Marne and passing through areas like Reims and Montfaucon.

If you're looking for a true surprise of a game, you can't do much better than *Valiant Hearts: The Great War.* The Switch port offers another welcome opportunity for this adventure to leave its mark. If we're lucky, this won't be the last time the UbiArt Framework gets put to such captivating use.

with these invaders would continue for the next two centuries. The Sui Dynasty made limited headway in dealing with the problem but that fragile line of rulers soon succumbed to internal weaknesses. The succeeding group, the House of Tang, was more stable and better led, leading to military success. Li Shimin, who would become Tang Taizong, the second Tang emperor, created an effective army that he used to reunify China. He soon became known for his tactical and strategic skill along with the application of a Chinese way of war.

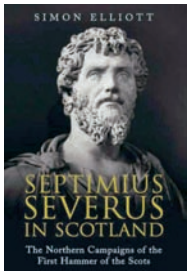
The author carefully and thoroughly examines the both the Sui and Tang Dynasties, revealing what led them to either victory or defeat. The book pays attention to the tactics and strategy of the period, bringing the various battles and campaign to vivid life. The overall theme is that of the massive infantry forces of the Chinese colliding with the nomadic horse cavalry of the Asian steppes.



Vicksburg: The Bloody Siege That Turned the Tide of the Civil War (Samuel W. Mitcham Jr., Regnery History, Washington, D.C., 2018, 402 pp., maps, photographs, notes, bibliography, index, $29.99, hardcover)

The City of Vicksburg was the key to controlling the Mississippi River during the American Civil War. Its loss made the Confederacy's position much more difficult and was a grave turning point in its fortunes. When Maj. Gen. John C. Pemberton surrendered the city to Maj. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant on July 4, 1863, news quickly spread and Pemberton was excoriated in the Confederate press. They called him a fool, a traitor, and a failure. Many believed he had intentionally surrendered Vicksburg to his enemies given that he was born in Pennsylvania.

The author of this new work argues that Pemberton did all he could to deny Vicksburg to the Union and displayed strong leadership during the six-week siege. During that time the citizenry were reduced to eating rats and living in caves, but Pemberton's dedication kept them in the fight as long as possible. Reinforcements were nearby but were never sent due to a petty grudge between Pemberton and his commander. The author makes effective arguments about the man's actions during the siege, restoring Pemberton's reputation and defending him against the various criticisms leveled over the years. This book is a fresh look at one of the Civil War's most famous and critical battles.



Septimius Severus in Scotland: The Northern Campaign of the First Hammer of the Scots (Simon Elliott, Greenhill Books, South Yorkshire, UK, 2018, 206 pp., maps, photographs, bibliography, index, $34.95, hardcover)

In the early 3rd century AD Scotland was invaded by the Roman armies of Emperor Septimius Severus. Some 50,000 troops with extensive naval support struck deep into Caledonia in two campaigns. The fighting was intense and bloody, but when it was over the slowly fading Roman Empire enjoyed 80 years of peace on what had been its most dangerous border. The threat to its holdings in the English Isles was abated for a time.

In the last several decades new archaeological evidence has come to light concerning these campaigns in Scotland and the author uses this knowledge expertly in this new book. It begins with extensive background information on Severus, his leadership, and the armies he led. Of particular note are passages explaining how he reformed the Roman military and concentrated his power as emperor. A social and economic summary of Roman Britain places Severus and his army into place, explaining the background leading to the conflict. This gives the reader good context to understand the following chapters, which tell the story of the actual expeditions in great detail. The result is a work that relays the experience of Rome in England during the middle stages of its imperial period and tells the fascinating tale of the brutal war between Roman and Scot.

Behind the Lawrence Legend: The Forgotten Few Who Shaped the Arab Revolt (Philip Walker, Oxford University Press, 2018, maps, photographs, notes, bibliography, index, $34.95, hardcover)

British officer T.E. Lawrence gained lasting fame for his efforts to help Sherif Hussein of Mecca resist the Ottoman Empire during World War I. The Ottoman Turks chose to side with Germany, bringing them into conflict with bordering Russia along with Britain and France, which had colonial interests in the region. With the bulk of Allied forces committed in Europe, the British turned to Sherif to declare independence from the Turks, placing added pressure on their mutual enemy. Lawrence was not the only soldier in the Arabian Desert, though. Other men such as Colonel Cyril Wilson and Lieutenant Lionel Gray also toiled to support the Arab efforts. While Lawrence was able to claim fame by blowing up trains and fighting Turkish troops, there were many supporting people who carried out diplomatic and intelligence work, working in the shadows to ensure the success of the Arab Revolt of 1916-1918.

Many books about Lawrence have been published in the last four years, coinciding with the centennial of World War I. What makes this work stand out is its focus on the relatively unknown personalities who also strove to achieve victory in Arabia. The author uses extensive research collected from private archives to tell the classic story in a new way. Any revolt is at times a dark and sordid affair, and this book provides a look at what happened behind the headlines and conventional battle history.

Young Washington: How Wilderness and War Forged America's Founding Father (Peter Stark, HarperCollins, New York, 2018, 528 pp., maps, photographs, notes, bibliography, index, $35.00, hardcover)

Young George Washington was not the man modern Americans have come to know. At that age he was impulsive and inexperienced. The 22-year-old lieutenant colonel in the newly formed Virginia Regiment oversaw the ambush of a detachment of French troops in the Ohio Country in 1754 sparking the French and Indian War. He may have done this because he felt a need to prove himself after repeatedly failing to gain a commission in the Regular British Army. The following year he survived the Battle of the Monongahela in which Maj. Gen. Edward Braddock was mortally wounded. During the course of the battle Washington's coat was pierced four times and two horses were shot out from under him. This convinced him God had greater plans for him.

The author explores in detail George Washington's flaws as a youth; however, rather than create a negative revisionist history, he instead shows how a brash and occasionally foolish young man was forged in the fires of history to become a great figure. The author's prose is clear and engaging. He book is a lively account of the man who played a central role in the creation of the United States of America. □

Nijmegen

Continued from page 35

Despite such bravery, the men of Cook's battalion endured the brutal gauntlet. Captain Burriss of I Company likened the unrelenting German fire to a hailstorm. When one of his engineers was struck in the wrist, Burriss reached for the rudder when the soldier was struck by a 20mm round. The captain would never forget it. "It just blew his head apart," he wrote. In the face of such horror, survivors continued paddling to shore. Only half of the 26 boats reached the north bank. When they did, furious American paratroopers jumped out and raced toward the dike.

Settling a bloody score was first on their minds. The men were "rendered crazy by rage and lust for killing," wrote Captain Henry Keep of the 504th. The Americans made short work of the German defenders, who turned out to be inexperienced rear-echelon troops. Enemy positions behind the dike collapsed in the face of the American steamroller. When the paratroopers reached the northern end of the rail bridge, German troops in Nijmegen were attempting a retreat to the north bank. The Americans, turning on them with machine-gun fire, showed no mercy. When the firing ceased, several hundred German corpses littered the bridge.

From a command bunker on the north bank, 10th SS Panzer Division commander Harmel realized that the loss of the bridge was inevitable. From his perspective, Allied artillery fire had proved decisive, knocking out the 20mm crews that were vital to German defenses. On his own initiative, and in direct violation of Model's orders, Harmel ordered the demolition of the bridge. "It failed to go up, probably because the initiation cable had been cut by artillery fire," wrote Harmel.

The road bridge, the greatest prize for the 82nd Airborne, was seized from both ends just as Gavin had hoped. Cook's paratroopers secured the north end and British tanks, after a tough fight through SS defenses in Nijmegen, thundered across the bridge from the south. Burriss was ecstatic. Realizing that the bridge was now open for British armored columns, the captain waved them on. "I kissed the tank, and told them to head on to Arnhem," wrote Burriss.

His enthusiasm was short lived. When the tanks sat tight, Burriss inquired about the delay. A German 88mm gun was visible, he was told, and the tank column would not move against it without orders. Burriss offered his own men as infantry support but was rebuffed. He seethed with anger. "I felt betrayed," Burriss wrote. He had sacrificed half of his company to capture the bridge and the British were stopping for fear of one gun. The epic capture of the bridge at Nijmegen, which had begun with one of the most heroic feats of war, ended with little more than an anticlimactic display of inaction.

The failure of XXX Corps to press forward on the evening of September 20 sealed the fate of the British troops in Arnhem. Even the Germans were surprised by the lack of aggression. Harmel would later explain that there were virtually no troops available to block the road to Arnhem, which was wide open to an Allied thrust. "If they had carried on their advance, it would have been all over for us," he wrote, quipping, "[But] the English drank too much tea."

The respite allowed SS troops enough time to tighten the noose around the bridge at Arnhem. By the morning of September 21, SS troops had seized the bridge at Arnhem and killed or captured its heroic British defenders. That same day, German troops rallied for a fresh counterattack against Nijmegen. Though the attack was beaten off, Gavin correctly deduced that the enemy was funneling fresh reinforcements into the area.

Horrocks' XXX Corps, after attempting a breakthrough, was fought to a standstill on the road to the city. On September 25, the battered remnants of the British 1st Airborne Division were evacuated to the south bank of the Rhine. Operation Market Garden, the most audacious campaign of World War II, had ended in complete failure. The Allies suffered 17,000 casualties, of which 12,000 were airborne troops, in the failed offensive. Most of the airborne casualties were from the British 1st Airborne Division.

Blame for the disaster was widely shared. Weather had delayed subsequent airborne landings. Horrocks' tankers, for all their gallantry, had failed to reach Arnhem when they were most needed. As for the Germans, they had fought with remarkable tenacity to thwart the Allies from reaching their homeland. Strangely enough, such ugly realities seem to have been lost on Montgomery.

The mastermind of Market Garden, despite all evidence to the contrary, was oddly enthusiastic about its outcome. In a glowing report to King George VI, Montgomery announced that he was "well pleased with the gross result of the airborne adventure." He deliberately deceived the king when he informed him that Market Garden had been "90 percent successful." Although the average enlisted men who fought and bled in Holland lacked Montgomery's professional training and high rank, it is doubtful if many shared such sentiments of deluded self-aggrandizement. □

Perryville

Continued from page 43

Tramping over the rolling terrain in the growing darkness, Liddell's men exchanged fire with the 22nd Indiana as the Hoosiers repositioned themselves to the left of Gooding's brigade. Lt. Col. Keith believed that his men were trading fire in the gloaming with another Federal regiment. He shouted to his men that they were firing on friends and ordered them to stop.

Polk spurred his horse forward in order to determine the identity of the troops in his immediate front. He was shocked to learn it was the 22nd Indiana. When Keith asked Polk who he was, Polk tried to bluff his way out of the predicament. "I'll soon show you who I am sir, cease firing, sir, at once," he said. After riding along the enemy's battle line, Polk rode to Liddell's position. "General, every mother's son of them are Yankees!" he shouted. "Open fire!"

Liddell's graybacks poured hot lead into the Yankees. Three volleys felled two-thirds of the Hoosiers. Gooding, who rode up just in time to witness the carnage, was soon captured as the survivors of the 22nd Indiana fled the field.

With victory seemingly within reach, Liddell wanted to pursue the beaten Yankees. To his left, Liddell heard the enemy soldiers cheering as Brig. Gen. James Steedman's brigade arrived on the field. The arrival of fresh Yankees broke Polk's will to continue fighting. "I want no more fighting tonight," he told Liddell.

The fighting on the southern sector was on a much smaller scale than that of the northern sector. Brig. Gen. Phil Sheridan's division had repulsed an attack by Colonel Samuel Powell's brigade of Anderson's division. When Powell's brigade withdrew, Colonel William P. Carlin's brigade pursued Powell's graybacks to Perryville and secured the west side the town.

Both sides claimed victory. The Confederates suffered 3,173 casualties, while the Federals suffered 3,805. Yet Bragg sustained proportionally the heavier casualties (20 percent compared to 7.7 percent) of the total force engaged. By the time the fighting ended, Bragg became aware that he had faced Buell's entire army.

With the Federals poised to cut off Bragg's escape route south, the Confederate commander issued orders for an immediate retreat. As for Buell, he failed to vigorously pursue Bragg's army. For that reason, Halleck replaced him with Maj. Gen. William S. Rosecrans on October 24. The change in command occurred the same day that the dejected Confederates marched through Cumberland Gap into Tennesee. Kentucky remained firmly within the Union. □

CIVIL WAR TOURS 2018-19

The Maryland Campaign: South Mountain & Antietam, Oct 11-14, 2018
Spend 3 days with historians ***Ed Bearss & Tom Clemens*** as we cover the events that led to America's bloodiest day in history. We will tour Harpers Ferry, the gaps of South Mountain, and the key sites of Antietam Battlefield including the North Woods, West Woods, Bloody Lane, and Burnside's Bridge.

Fredericksburg in the Civil War, October 20-23, 2018. In the span of 18 months, five major battles were waged within a 15-mile radius of this Virginia town--Two Battles of Fredericksburg and the Battles of Chancellorsville, Wilderness, and Spotsylvania Court House. Join ***Ed Bearss & Frank O'Reilly*** as we examine three of these significant engagements, ***Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, and the Wilderness***.

Spotsylvania Court House, No. Anna, & Cold Harbor, Oct. 24-27, 2018.
On May 4, the Federals crossed the Rapidan River launching the Overland Campaign of 1864, pitting Grant and Lee against one another for the first time. We will trace the armies as they clashed in a series of brutal engagements in a 5-week period following the Battle of Wilderness. Included is a stop at Guinea Station to see where General Stonewall Jackson died on May 10, 1863. Led by ***Ed Bearss & Frank O'Reilly.***

The Vicksburg Campaign, March 28-31, 2019. Join historians ***Ed Bearss & Terry Winschel*** as they spend 3 days examining the Vicksburg Campaign. We will follow the action of the dramatic events associated with the Battles of Grand Gulf, Port Gibson, Raymond, Champion Hill, and the Big Black River Bridge. We will also examine the siege operation at Vicksburg and see the U.S.S. Cairo, the ironclad gunboat raised from the Yazoo River by a team led by Ed Bearss.

Chickamauga & Chattanooga, April 11-14, 2019. Join expert historians ***Ed Bearss & Jim Ogden*** on this 3-day tour of the Battle of Chickamauga & Chattanooga. This in-depth tour will include stops at Reed's Bridge, Snodgrass Hill, Orchard Knob, Lookout Mountain, Missionary Ridge, and the National Cemetery.

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