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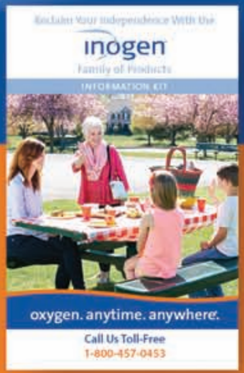
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Cover: A flamethrower operator of K Company, Ninth Marines, goes over the top to assault a Japanese pillbox on Iwo Jima's Airfield Number Two, February 1945. See story page 12.

Photo: Naval History and Heritage Command

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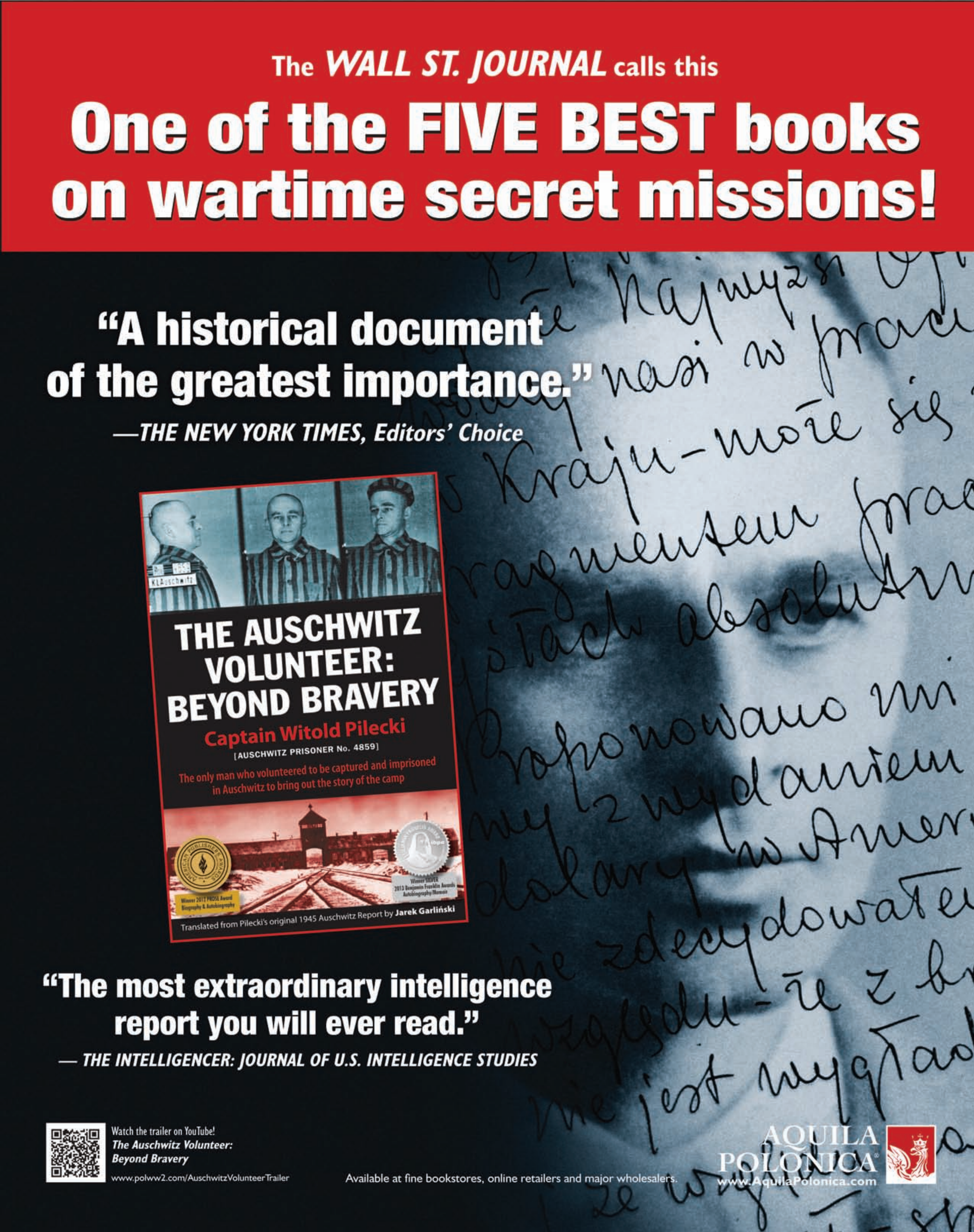

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Editorial

The last of the Doolittle Raiders observes the anniversary of the Tokyo bombing mission.

LIEUTENANT COLONEL DICK COLE IS 101 YEARS OLD. IN APRIL HE ATTENDED observances of the 75th anniversary of the famed Doolittle Raid on Tokyo that marked the first effort by American bombers to inflict damage on the Japanese home islands during World War II. The anniversary was in some ways quite similar to those that have gone by year after year, with one notable exception.

Cole is the last survivor of the 80 intrepid young aviators led by Lt. Col. James "Jimmy" Doolittle on the April 18, 1942, raid that shook Japanese confidence and caused the high command in Tokyo to rethink its Pacific strategy, particularly in terms of preventing a future attack on their capital city. The Japanese decision to proceed with their assault on Port Moresby, New Guinea, and the seizure of Midway atoll in the Central Pacific were almost certainly influenced by the shock of the Doolittle Raid.

History has recorded and analyzed the results of these two Japanese offensives over and over. Suffice it to say here that the Port Moresby thrust was turned away by the strategic American victory at the Battle of the Coral Sea in May 1942, and the epic decisive victory at Midway the next month cost the Imperial Japanese Navy four of its frontline aircraft carriers.

The Doolittle Raiders flew 16 North American B-25 Mitchell bombers from the deck of the U.S. Navy aircraft carrier *Hornet,* a feat that many observers had believed was nearly impossible. However, the pilots and crewmen trained for months at Eglin Airfield near Pensacola, Florida, taking off from a strip with painted markers to indicate the length of an aircraft carrier's flight deck. When a Japanese picket boat spotted the American task force, the decision was made to launch earlier than planned and in rough seas at the extreme limit of the B-25's range.

It was a heroic decision, and the plan had been for the bombers to fly on to China after dropping their bombs since it would have been impossible to land on the *Hornet*'s deck. One after another, the pilots gunned their engines and roared down the length of the carrier, slipping into the air at the end of the flight deck and dropping precipitously close to the wave tops before clawing for altitude and forming up to speed toward their rendezvous with destiny.

The raid on Tokyo and other targets caused only minimal damage, but the psychological impact on the Japanese was tremendous. Three raiders died during their attempt to reach China, while eight were captured by Japanese troops. Three of those taken prisoner were executed, and a fourth died in a POW camp. Doolittle was among the survivors and made his way back to the United States. He was later promoted to lieutenant general, received the Medal of Honor, and commanded the Twelfth Air Force in North Africa, the Fifteenth Air Force in the Mediterranean, and the Eighth Air Force in Europe.

Cole remembers the events of the Doolittle Raid as though they occurred only yesterday, he told the Associated Press. This year's commemoration of the raid is not only significant due to the 75th anniversary. Cole opened a bottle of cognac dated 1896 to raise a final toast to those comrades who died during the previous year. Each survivor of the raid had a goblet engraved with his name, and in 2017 only Cole's was filled for the ceremonial drink.

In the past year, Staff Sergeant David Thatcher of Missoula, Montana, passed away at the age of 94, leaving Cole as the only living survivor. However, there is no doubt that he was surrounded in spirit by those fellow Raiders who are no longer with us. Among the many displays of heroism during World War II, the Doolittle Raid stands tall, bringing hope to a nation rocked by the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor and a string of early defeats in the Pacific.

After the Doolittle Raid, Americans knew without a doubt that their armed forces would prevail during the long trek toward Japan's surrender in Tokyo Bay nearly four years later.

Michael E. Haskew

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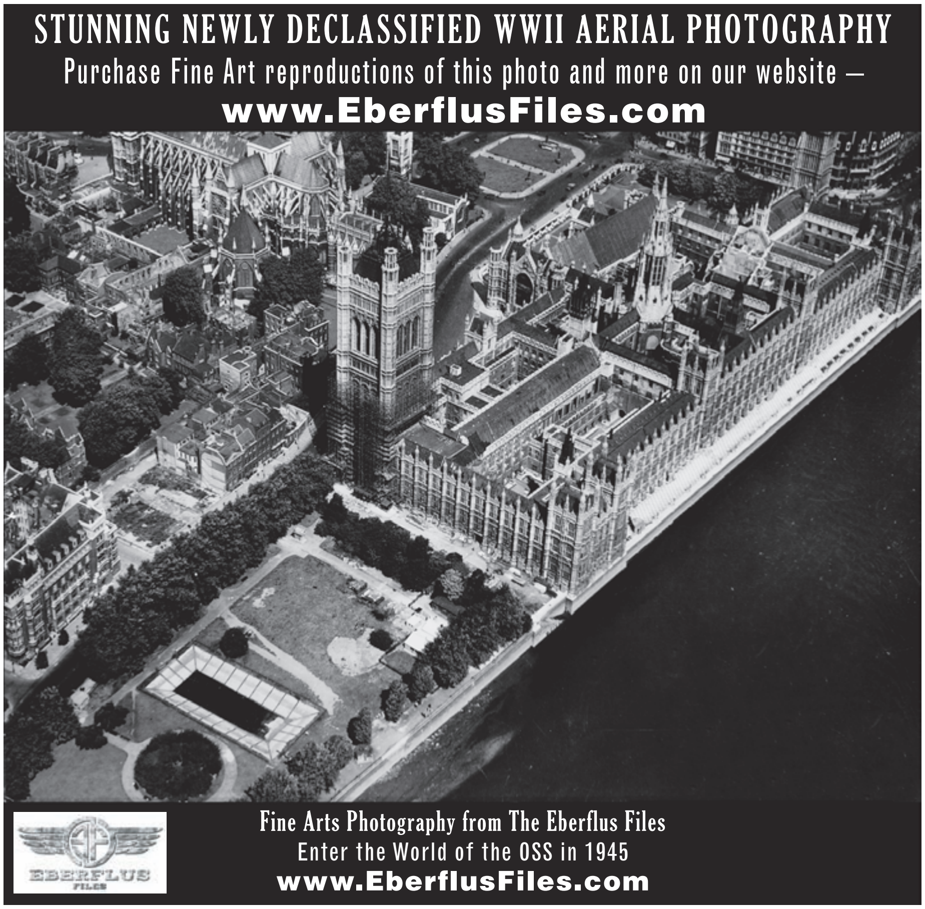

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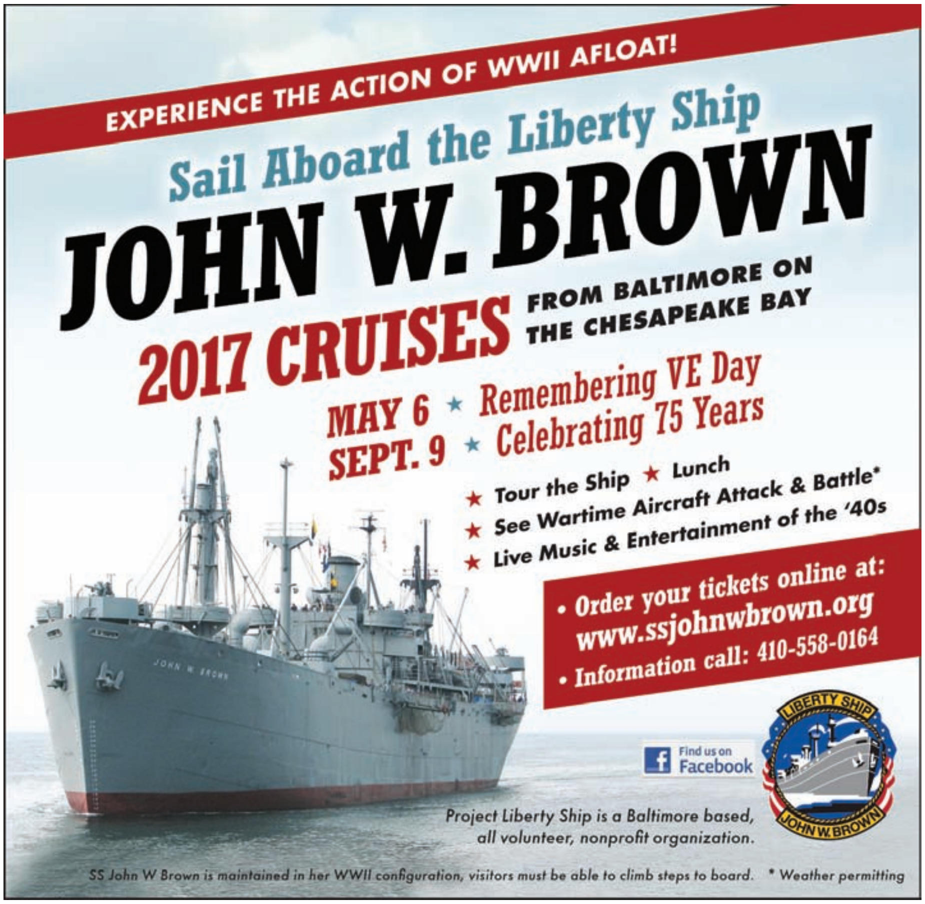

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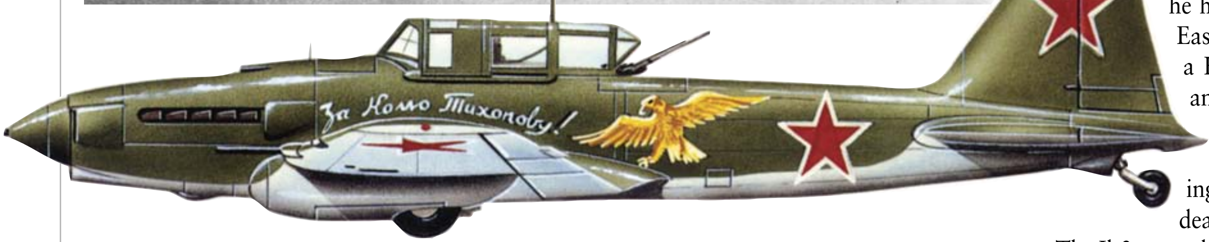
За Колю Михонова!

TOP: The rugged Ilyushin IL-2 Shturmovik ground attack aircraft inflicted heavy damage on German armored columns operating in daylight on the Eastern Front. ABOVE: This Ilyushin IL-2m3 is emblazoned with the red star of the Soviet Union and patriotic slogans.

Storm Birds Wreak Havoc

The Soviet Air Force's Ilyushin Il-2 "Shturmovik" took a heavy toll in German armor on the Eastern Front.

VASILY EMELIANENKO LED A FLIGHT OF SOVIET ILYUSHIN IL-2 SHTURMOVIKS, or "Storm Birds," in late June 1942 against a German-held airfield near Artemovsk in eastern Ukraine, flying low up a deep ravine to avoid detection.

The Il-2 planes banked slightly to rise above the hill to their front, and the ground gave way as they spotted two rows of German bombers lined up neatly on the airfield ahead. Emelianenko had lowered the nose of his plane for the attack when he heard a deafening sound and the craft jolted suddenly as a large hole burst open in his right wing. He worked swiftly, straightening the plane and firing a salvo of rockets into the parked enemy aircraft. Emelianenko's machine guns then erupted, and the bombers caught fire. His wingmen dropped their granular phosphorous, which spread the flames that roared even higher into the sky.

Emelianenko worked desperately to pull his plane above the wall of tall pines located beyond the airfield, but the plane was hit in the engine. The oil pressure plummeted toward zero, and the water temperature soared. The experienced pilot knew he had five minutes at best before the engine seized as he frantically maneuvered toward the safety of the Soviet lines.

The pilot skimmed the terrain, and every spin of the propeller pulled him ever closer to the safety of the Soviet lines. The engine finally seized up, and Emelianenko released the robust landing gear and came roaring down on the rocky soil at more than 60 miles per hour. He was miraculously still alert as the dust settled around him. He looked about to get his bearings as a burst of machine-gun fire struck the plane's heavy armor plating. There was another burst, and when that ended Emelianenko jumped from the cockpit and fell flat on the ground as German machine pistols opened up.

The enemy soldiers seemed almost to be toying with him, firing anytime he moved yet not advancing or showing themselves. It took the pilot more than two harrowing hours to crawl some 200 yards from the plane and to the safety of a Soviet comrade who had carefully edged forward to rescue the downed veteran.

That would not be Emelianenko's last brush with death flying a famed "Ilyusha," the feminine nickname the Soviet pilots affectionately gave their stout attack aircraft. Before the war was over he had flown 92 sorties on the Eastern Front, was proclaimed a Hero of the Soviet Union, and had been shot down three times with the sturdy, armor hardened plane saving his life in each brush with death.

The Il-2 proved deadly throughout the war. For example, as the Battle of Stalingrad was nearing its fateful conclusion, two feared Soviet Shturmovik ground attack planes appeared over the crucial German-held train station at Malorossiyskaya to the south in the Tikhoretsk region.

The Germans scrambled that January 26, 1943, but it was too late. A series of deafening explosions rocked the four trains that sat exposed on the tracks, and a large black plume rose high into the sky as the station itself was obstructed from view in the wake of the destructive attack.

All four trains were destroyed by just the two Soviet "Storm Birds," with a substantial loss of German personnel, fuel, tanks, and ammunition vital to the continued war effort. The tracks themselves were so badly damaged that they could not be readily repaired, and many stranded trains were captured by the advancing Red Army.

The Ilyushin Il-2 was built for business and could deal deadly blows to ground-based forces and equipment, even when located in hardened bunkers. By the midway point in World War II, the

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LEFT: Their engines running prior to takeoff, a group of Shturmoviks sits ready to embark on a mission against the invading Germans. RIGHT: Photographed in formation prior to executing an attack against a German oil depot in the Crimea, these Ilyushin IL-2 aircraft are preparing to begin their dives toward the target below.

planes came equipped with two 37mm cannons, two 7.62mm machine guns, one 12.7mm Berezin machine gun for the rear-facing gunner, and up to 1,300 pounds of bombs or a number of deadly RS-82 or RS-132 rockets.

The rockets, especially the RS-132s, were powerful but were not overly accurate. However, they did prove particularly destructive, especially when fired in volleys from several planes. The aircraft also could carry upward of 216 bottles of incendiary liquid, which proved effective against armor and flak batteries as well.

The success of the train station mission and others like it, executed with considerable heroism by the Shturmovik pilots, prompted Soviet Premier Josef Stalin to issue an order calling for the continued attack of trains and convoys to disrupt German preparations for the upcoming Battle of Kursk, the famed tank battle that led to a near continuous German backpedaling toward Berlin over the next 2½ years in the face of growing Soviet military prowess.

The Shturmovik was both respected and loathed by German pilots, infantrymen, and tankers. The Luftwaffe took to calling it the "Flying Tank," "Concrete Plane," or even "Iron Gustav" because of its highly effective armor protection, while German tankers and infantrymen referred to it as the "Butcher" or even the "Black Death" because of the destruction left in the wake of an Il-2 attack. The robust plane proved that it could more than hold its own against the vaunted Luftwaffe, especially as Soviet tactics improved and pilots gained experience against German flyers who became younger and the veterans fewer as the bloody "Great Patriotic War" pushed ever westward.

The plane was so detested that it became a fairly common practice on the Eastern Front for frustrated and battle-weary Wehrmacht soldiers to simply open the canopy of a downed Shturmovik and fire point blank into the head of an injured pilot.

The Il-2s themselves also improved over time, moving from somewhat underpowered single-seaters to two-seaters with a more robust powerplant and a machine gunner added behind the pilot to provide better protection against attacks from German fighters, particularly from above and behind.

In many ways the Shturmovik was a forerunner of today's A-10 "Warthog," developed by Fairchild Republic for the U.S. Air Force and used for close air support, which is capable of providing punishing damage to hardened ground targets while protecting its pilot with its toughened shell. The A-10 Thunderbolt Hog can spew 30mm high-explosive rounds from a seven-barreled, high-speed cannon protruding from its nose and can carry a deadly array of rockets and other weapons under its wings.

The "Storm Bird" was the right plane developed at the right time by the Soviets. It was designed for survival in the hostile, flak- and fighter-filled skies of the Eastern Front, where the Germans risked so much and suffered more than 70 percent of their causalities during World War II.

The Il-2 had a sturdy undercarriage that enabled often quickly trained pilots to take off and land on comparatively primitive airfields. And it was praised for being easier than bombers to operate in adverse weather conditions. It was also relatively easy and inexpensive to produce, with more than 36,150 of all variants rolled out during the war, making it the most produced combat aircraft of all time.

Like most aircraft, the Shturmovik evolved from previously designed planes to meet a specific need, in this case close air support. The 1939 Mongolian-Manchurian border conflict with Japan, the Spanish Civil War, and the early Winter War with Finland all demonstrated the need for such an aircraft. Various designs were attempted, most employing Soviet RS-82 rockets for air-to-air attacks and later for air-to-ground attacks as well.

Soviet lack of success in using such bombers as the Tupolev SB in the Spanish Civil War had caused the Red Air Force to shy away from the concept of strategic bombing in favor of fast-moving fighters to first gain air superiority and then to be employed in close air support. The decision to move toward a dedicated armored ground attack aircraft led in 1938 to the development of the TsKB-55, which was later called the Ilyushin after Sergey Ilyushin, the project director.

The plane first flew on October 2, 1939, a month after Germany, then the Soviet Union's ally, invaded Poland and ignited World War II in Europe. The craft at that trial stage was a two-seater, single-engine monoplane. Vital components, including the engine and the entire crew compartment, were heavily armored, and the plane was equipped with five 7.62mm machine guns, one for defense and four in the wings for offensive fire capability. Armor plating of varying thicknesses was used rather than just a layering of armor over existing structures as was then most often done.

Designer Ilyushin sought solid performance for the aircraft, which necessitated the selection of a more powerful and available liquid-cooled engine over an air-cooled radial option. He believed the armor plating would provide the necessary protection for the potentially vulnerable cooling system. Ilyushin selected the Mikulin AM-35 engine, which provided 1,350 horsepower on takeoff, and gave the go-ahead for the development of even more powerful engines.

Further engine improvements were made

along with a modification of the glazing where the rear gunner was initially placed, giving rise to the nickname of "Gorbatiy," or "hunchback" in Russian. The plane at that stage had two 20mm cannons (later replaced with two 23mm cannons) and machine guns in the wings. Trials continued, and the go-ahead for production was given in early March 1941, some three months before Germany's invasion of the Soviet Union on June 22 of that year.

The Soviets came to appreciate the plane that the Germans described as the "Butcher" or "Meat Grinder" or even the "Slaughterer."

Some of the Il-2s had nearly full metal fuselages, including metal wings, but because of wartime shortages of metal other variations had wooden wings and still others wooden rear fuselages. Those with rear wooden fuselages needed additional reinforcement, with four metal strengthening ribs added in the field to the exterior of the fuselage. Field modifications occasionally included ski-equipped versions and the cutting of a hole behind the canopy for the addition of a rear gunner position, the plane's second occupant using a commandeered machine gun attached to a swivel mount.

All types of Shturmoviks were exceptionally hardy, and all were well armored. Even when one was shot down or heavily damaged, Soviet forces would retrieve and repair the plane or at least salvage parts for later use. A rather astounding 90 percent of the damaged Ilyushas that were recovered were repaired and sent back into the air, according to Soviet estimates.

Operations in 1941-1942 had shown the need for a rear gunner to provide protection against fighter attacks from above and behind the pilot, especially once the Germans discovered the inherent weakness in the unprotected rear wooden fuselage. The problem was exacerbated by the lack of effective, if any, fighter escort for the close air support planes during this initial period of the war.

By September 1942, the Soviets began modifying the Il-2 on the assembly lines to accommodate a rear gunner. The protective armor plating was extended, a semi-enclosed glass covering was added, and a rather crude strap seat was initially tossed in for the machine gunner. By the end of that year, some 1,450 two-seaters had been produced, and all the airplane factories were producing the two-seaters by February 1943. The more powerful AM-38F boosted engine was installed, giving the craft more than 1,750 horsepower on takeoff to offset the added weight.

The two-seater was also upgunned with two 37mm cannons mounted in streamlined pods under each wing. This gave the Soviet craft twice the cannon power of the American Bell P-39 Airacobra with its single 37mm cannon that the United States provided to the Soviet Union under the Lend-Lease Act.

National Air & Space Museum

Those who were on the receiving end of an attack by an IL-2 nicknamed the aircraft the Butcher, Meat Grinder, and Slaughterer. IL-2s were produced in greater numbers than any other aircraft of World War II.

A Shturmovik's cannon could certainly take out a light tank and had a decent chance of doing the same with a medium tank. The Soviets found that they reportedly could take out a PzKpfw. V Panther medium tank and even a heavy PzKpfw. VI Tiger with a well-placed hit with an armor-piercing shell on the more thinly clad rear of the vehicle. Aiming the guns, though, was difficult, and the heavy recoil necessitated re-aiming the cannon after only a few shots.

As it turned out, by late 1943 the use of 37mm cannons on the Shturmoviks was largely being phased out with the introduction of antitank bomblets (PTABs), which proved exceptionally effective against tanks, artillery, and hardened encasements.

The PTABs were small 5.5-pound armor-piercing shaped bomblets capable of penetrating the top armor of any of the German tanks then in the field. The PTABs were dropped from altitudes as low as 320 feet and had a destructive zone of some 50 by 230 feet. They were first used in the Battle of Kursk and were found to be effective because the bomblets were much easier for inexperienced pilots to use that other antitank weapons. They also eliminated the down time needed to re-aim the cannon.

The initial use of the PTABs proved to be a tactical surprise, reportedly dumbfounding the Germans and undermining their morale. The PTABs were soon put into mass production and widely used from then on against German ground units, railway cars, bridges, and artillery units. For their part, the Germans responded to the new weapon by spreading out their tank formations, which in turn lessened their effectiveness and substantially compounded command and control issues for the Nazi tankers.

The Soviets did not completely give up on the 37mm-armed Shturmoviks, and they were employed in a number of circumstances, including against enemy naval forces. Other Il-2s were modified to become torpedo bombers.

The two-seater did undergo additional changes as the war progressed, including the use of swept back wings to offset the change in the center of gravity caused by the addition of the rear gunner. This led to much better control and stability and eliminated a complicated bungee spring and counterweight system on the elevator controls. The swept wing version went into production in late 1943, and the straight winged Il-2s were completely phased out of the production lines early the following year. By the end of the war, some 17,000 of the two-seater swept wing planes had been built, or 47 percent of the total produced.

Not only did the plane evolve over time, but Soviet tactics did as well. Early war tactics involved a handful of Il-2s flying often unescorted against strong German defenses only to suffer significant losses from both enemy planes and flak. Early in the war the experienced German pilots found it relatively easy to take down inexperienced Soviet pilots flying without fighter escort. Attempts to have the Il-2s dive on targets from altitudes of 2,000 to 3,000 feet did result in increased efficiency but with increased losses from enemy planes and ground fire.

The Soviets resorted to having the ground attack aircraft fly in larger groups of eight to 12

Continued on page 74

By Nathan N. Prefer

Both: Naval History and Heritage Command

The Quiet Marine

General Harry Schmidt played a key role in the U.S. Marine march across the Pacific during World War II.

HE ORGANIZED, TRAINED, AND COMMANDED THE 4TH MARINE Division in the Marshall Islands and Saipan campaigns before taking command of the Fifth Amphibious Corps and leading it against Tinian and Iwo Jima. He was on the short list for commandant of the Marine Corps after World War II, yet his name is rarely heard outside of Marine Corps official histories. He is Maj. Gen. Harry Schmidt, United States Marine Corps.

The future commander of some of the Pacific War's most critical and deadly amphibious operations was born on September 25, 1886, in Holdrege, Nebraska. Living in Stapleton, Nebraska, he attended the Nebraska State Normal College at Kearney from 1906-1907 before accepting a commission as a second lieutenant in the 2nd Nebraska Infantry. While in the National Guard he attended the Garrison School, Fort Crook, Nebraska. His interest in a military career piqued, and the young man enrolled in Swarleys Army and Navy Preparatory School in Washington, D.C., in 1909. Upon completing that school, he resigned his commission in the National Guard on August 16, 1909, to accept an appointment with the United States Marine Corps Officer Training Program. His commission was dated the following day, and he spent the next four months at the Marine Officers School of Application at Port Royal, South Carolina. Graduating on December 20, he was ordered to the Marine Barracks, Guam.

TOP: Marines of the 5th Division claw their way ashore across the black sands of Iwo Jima on February 19, 1945. ABOVE: General Harry Schmidt commanded the Fifth Amphibious Corps during the assault on the island, which was quite close to the home islands of Japan.

Lieutenant Schmidt's career then typified that of a peacetime officer. From Guam he went to China and then the Philippines before returning to Minnesota and recruiting duty. While there he received a promotion to first lieutenant and was assigned to the battleship USS *Arizona*. In 1916, he was promoted to captain. Like many of America's future leaders, he did not see ground combat during World War I, serving instead aboard the battleships *Arizona, Montana,* and *Tennessee*. While commanding the Marine detachment aboard the *Montana*, he led his men ashore at Guantanamo City, Cuba, "for protection of American lives and property." After spending a month ashore, the detachment returned aboard ship having experienced no actual combat. Nevertheless, his excellent performance evaluations brought him another promotion, this time to temporary major on July 1, 1918.

The end of World War I saw Major Schmidt's return to his permanent rank of captain. He spent the next few decades in a typical rotation of assignments for military officers. Between assignments afloat and ashore, he attended the Marine Corps Schools Field Officers Course at Quantico, Virginia, graduating June 2, 1923, as a permanent major. He was immediately retained by the school as an instructor until he returned to the cycle of overseas assignments, serving with the 6th Marine Regiment in China and the 2nd Marine Brigade in Nicaragua. While in Nicaragua he was assigned as the brigade intelligence officer but found results against the local insurrectionists disappointing.

Taking the advice of Captain Merritt A. "Red Mike" Edson, a future distinguished leader of Marine Raiders in World War II, Major Schmidt implemented a series of roving patrols that kept the guerrillas on the run and made the Marines much more effective at suppressing the revolt. For his innovations and other unspecified actions while in Nicaragua, Schmidt was awarded the Navy Cross "in the line of his profession as Brigade Intelligence Officer."

Schmidt's outstanding performance in Nicaragua earned him an appointment to the U.S. Army's prestigious Command and General Staff School at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, usually reserved for those expected to reach high command in the event of war. Only three of the many Marines who attended this

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Both: Naval History and Heritage Command

ABOVE: During the invasion of the island of Saipan in the Marianas on June 15, 1944, American Marines stay low and look for shelter from incoming Japanese fire. LEFT: Marines on the island of Roi watch as a Japanese torpedo magazine explodes on the neighboring island of Namur. Marines of the 4th Division under the command of General Harry Schmidt captured the twin islands in early 1944.

school, Major Holland M. Smith, Major Schmidt, and Captain Roy S. Geiger, would assume the responsibilities of corps commander in World War II. Graduating with the two-year class of 1932, Major Schmidt was next assigned to the Paymaster Department at Headquarters, Marine Corps, Department of the Pacific.

During these years, Major Schmidt and his wife Doris had two children, one of whom would later serve under him as the commander of the 4th Tank Battalion in all his campaigns. By May 1934, Schmidt's work at the Paymaster Department had earned him a promotion to lieutenant colonel.

Schmidt was still a paymaster, this time at Headquarters, Marine Corps, Washington, D.C., when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. He was immediately assigned as an assistant to the Marine Corps commandant with the rank of brigadier general. Here he was officially relieved from the paymaster's office and assigned as secretary to the commandant. His major assignment was to work with Maj. Gen. Holland M. Smith, the leading Marine Corps authority on amphibious warfare and tactics.

Brigadier General Schmidt worked at Headquarters, Marine Corps, for the next year. By 1943, the Marine Corps was undergoing a rapid expansion to provide additional means to conduct the Pacific War. Early that year Schmidt was promoted to major general and given the assignment of creating and training another Marine combat division. Schmidt was to create the 4th Marine Division from a group of units scattered across the United States from New England to California. Quickly assembling a staff, he pulled his far-flung units together in California and began an intense training program based on his earlier experiences with General Smith's amphibious training program.

Between August 1943 and January 1944, General Schmidt and his officers worked tirelessly to train the veterans and new recruits that made up the 4th Marine Division. After numerous exercises and tests, the division was pronounced ready for combat. General Schmidt was advised that his command would take part in the next Pacific offensive to breach the enemy defenses of the Marshall Islands.

Schmidt studied his objectives, the twin islands of Roi-Namur, and agreed with the plan as prepared by General Smith, the overall commander of the Marshall Islands operation. The plan was innovative in that for the first time the Marines would land on some outlying islands near the main objectives and place their artillery there to support the main landings. This would provide early and precise support for the assaulting Marines of General Schmidt's division. The idea was also adopted by the Army's 7th Infantry Division, which was to seize nearby Kwajalein Island.

The 4th Marine Division sailed directly for the Marshall Islands from California, stopping only briefly at Hawaii so that General Schmidt and his senior staff could meet with General Smith's staff. The battle commenced on the last day of January 1944 when Schmidt assigned his 25th Marine Regimental Combat Team to seize three offshore islands, after which the 14th Marine (Artillery) Regiment landed and set up its guns for the next day's assault on Roi-Namur.

Despite the Marines' inexperience and some problems with coordination between different units, the twin islands were secured in less than 48 hours. General Schmidt's training and leadership had paid off with a swift victory and few casualties. Indeed, the confidence the Marine Corps officer corps had in General Schmidt is probably best expressed by the fact that no less than five Marine Corps generals' sons served in the 4th Marine Division under his command, including the son of the commandant, Lt. Col. Archer A. Vandegrift, as well as General Schmidt's own son, Major Richard K. Schmidt.

General Schmidt's next assignment was more difficult. This time his 4th Marine Division, as a part of the V Amphibious Corps, would be attacking the main Japanese line of resistance, which ran through the Mariana Islands in the Central Pacific. Together with the 2nd Marine Division and the Army's 27th Infantry Division, the V Amphibious Corps was to seize the islands of Saipan and Tinian. The Japanese were on the alert and had rushed reinforcements to these islands.

Landing on Saipan on June 15, 1944, the assault troops had a difficult and bloody struggle to establish their beachhead. Soon it was learned that the Imperial Japanese Navy had come out to contest the landings, and the U. S. Navy's covering force, the Fifth Fleet under Vice Admiral Raymond A. Spruance, was leaving to face the oncoming threat. This forced the early landing of the reserve force, the Army's 27th Infantry Division.

The rushed landing of the reserve placed the Army infantry among the still struggling Marines of the 4th Division. Despite brief initial confusion due to the hurried and piecemeal landing, General Schmidt immediately sorted out the units and integrated the individual Army units into his assault force while continuing to clear his section of the island. Under Schmidt's command, Army and Marine units cooperated in the seizure of Aslito Airfield, a major objective of the campaign.

Once the Army division was ashore, those Army units assigned to General Schmidt reverted to their own division control. While the Fifth Fleet turned back the Japanese threat at sea, V Amphibious Corps continued to clear Saipan of Japanese defenders. General Schmidt's division was on the right, with the Army division alongside on the left. Difficulties began when Schmidt's division repeatedly outdistanced the neighboring Army regiment. So rapidly did Schmidt's Marines advance that Holland Smith, not one to hand out compliments lightly, suggested that the division shoulder sleeve insignia be changed from a gold "4" on a red background to a race horse, signifying the speed with which it advanced.

But the rapid advance opened a dangerous gap between the two divisions. As commander of the assault forces, General Smith believed that the Army division was inefficient and that it was due to poor command and training rather than several other reasons, including strong Japanese resistance. As a result, Holland Smith asked for and received permission to relieve the Army's division commander, General Ralph Smith.

This resulted in the infamous "Smith versus Smith" controversy, which damaged Army-Marine Corps relations for decades afterward. But what is noteworthy here is that while Army leaders were quick to condemn Holland Smith and the Marine Corps in general, they exempted General Schmidt, who often had Army units under command with no difficulties in cooperation between the two forces. Schmidt was often complimentary of the Army units fighting alongside his Marines and put many of these compliments on the record. Schmidt, a witness to many of the conversations between General Smith and the Army leaders, later wrote probably the fairest estimate of the situation for Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, Commander-in-Chief Pacific Theater.

The Saipan operation involved nearly a month of fierce fighting, which depleted all those units taking part. After all organized resistance ended, the island was declared secured and base construction for the long-range Army Air Forces bombers, which would soon destroy most Japanese major cities, began. But the "Smith versus Smith" controversy made Holland Smith a liability to the Marine Corps, which had to work with the Army to fight the Pacific War. As a result, Holland Smith was "kicked upstairs," and his place as Commander, V Amphibious Corps, was given to General Schmidt.

Schmidt's first assignment as the commander of the V Amphibious Corps was the seizure of the island of Tinian. Lying barely three miles off the coast of Saipan, it was critical not only because of its location so close to the developing American bases, but also due to the fact that

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ABOVE: Marine landing craft churn toward the beach at Tinian in the Marianas on July 24, 1944. When these Marines went into action, General Harry Schmidt had just been given command of Fifth Amphibious Corps. RIGHT: General Holland M. "Howlin' Mad" Smith (left) confers with his replacement in command of the Fifth Amphibious Corps, General Harry Schmidt, at a command post on Iwo Jima.

it, too, was an excellent platform for more bomber bases from which to strike Japan.

But Tinian presented problems to the planners. Much of the island was surrounded by a coral reef, which prevented amphibious landings. There were only two good beaches, and it was obvious that the defenders would strongly cover both. However, while in command of the 4th Marine Division, General Schmidt had learned that there were two small beaches that might suffice for a surprise landing behind the main Japanese defenses. Together with Rear Admiral Harry W. Hill, commanding the Navy's amphibious assault forces, they suggested to the naval commander, Rear Admiral Richmond Kelly Turner, that a reconnaissance be made of these beaches to see if they could be used.

Admiral Turner bluntly refused to consider the option. He ordered all planning to concentrate on the obvious beaches near the island's capital, Tinian Town. Aware that a landing there would be costly in terms of casualties, General Schmidt and Admiral Hill decided to investigate what would come to be designated as the White beaches anyway. Using V Amphibious Corps reconnaissance Marines and underwater demolition teams, the investigation revealed that the White beaches were just barely suitable for an amphibious landing.

Once again, the two leaders approached Admiral Turner, who again refused to consider a change in plans. Rebuffed, they approached General Smith, who supported their plan for the White beaches and proceeded to have a long and loud argument with Admiral Turner. Refused again, General Smith then led a meeting with the top commander of the coming operation, Admiral Raymond Spruance. But suddenly and without explanation, at this meeting Admiral Turner changed his mind and agreed to the White beach plan.

General Schmidt's V Amphibious Corps staff then planned the details. The result was a rare instance of an American landing behind the Japanese defenses, completely disrupting them, and a rapid campaign of nine days to secure the island. For his conduct of the Tinian campaign, Schmidt earned his second Distinguished Service Medal.

General Schmidt and his V Amphibious Corps returned to Hawaii for rest and replenishment. While there they were presented with their next assignment, the island of Iwo Jima. This volcanic island lay athwart the line that the Army Air Forces' long-range bombers would have to take to reach Japan, and air bases there would threaten both the outbound and return journeys of these vulnerable aircraft. Much like Tinian, there were only two possible landing beaches, one on either side of the island's narrow waist between Mount Suribachi and the rugged broken terrain in the north. But unlike Tinian, there were no other beaches available for a surprise landing.

General Schmidt was faced with no choice other than a frontal assault. The lack of a coral reef did allow for the Marines to land directly from the landing craft onto the beach, but both beaches were dominated by high ground on both sides and both had protruding land on the flanks from which the enemy could direct fire onto those beaches.

The command structure at Iwo Jima was unusual. General Holland Smith had been promoted to Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific. General Schmidt had taken command of V Amphibious Corps, yet both men would be at Iwo Jima. As General Smith put it, "I guess they brought me along in case something happens to Harry Schmidt." In fact, General Smith was brought along to match the status of Admiral Turner, who was again in command of the naval supporting forces, in the event of another disagreement in tactics as had occurred at Tinian.

General Schmidt wanted a much longer preinvasion bombardment than the Navy was prepared to execute. Despite support from General Smith, his request was denied. Later this request became the subject of some controversy when the heavy casualties resulting from the battle were blamed on the lack of sufficient bombardment before the assault. With only a three-day bombardment, Schmidt was forced to land his divisions, the 3rd, 4th, and 5th Marine Divisions—the largest all-Marine force of the Pacific War—across the beaches where the enemy expected them to land.

The Japanese were well prepared and expected the invasion of Iwo Jima. The resulting heavy casualties provided the basis for criticism of the Marines for their frontal assault. In fact, General Schmidt had no other options. There were no hidden beaches, no points on the island where maneuvering was possible, and the deeply hidden enemy defenses could only be destroyed by the Marine tank-infantry-artillery teams, which against such defenses inevitably suffered heavy losses. What is often overlooked is that General Schmidt did try other methods to break the enemy defenses. In one instance, he organized all three available tank battalions, one from each division, and attempted an armored thrust into the heart of the enemy defenses protecting Iwo Jima's airfields. This failed because of the enemy's well-prepared antitank defenses, which included thick minefields, antitank guns, and suicide troops who blew themselves and the tanks up by climbing on them with explosives.

Night attacks had some success but could not prove decisive. General Schmidt also allowed his Marines to have rest days, keeping them as fresh as possible in the grueling conditions for the ongoing attack. He further asked for the last infantry regiment of the 3rd Marine Division, held in reserve aboard ships offshore, but was denied, this time by General Smith, who demanded that Schmidt personally declare that he could not complete the campaign without the additional troops. This was obviously not the case, and General Schmidt was left to complete the month-long campaign with his exhausted Marines already ashore.

With Iwo Jima secured, V Amphibious Corps returned to Hawaii where it received its next assignment, the invasion of Japan. They were to take part in Operation Olympic, an invasion of the Japanese home island of Kyushu. With the 2nd, 3rd, and 5th Marine Divisions under his command, General Schmidt was to seize the area around Kushikino in southern Kyushu for naval and air bases for future operations. Planning was ongoing when the Japanese surrendered.

Instead of attacking Japan, the V Amphibious Corps landed peacefully at Yokosuka and Kyushu in September 1945, with the 2nd and 5th Marine Divisions beginning the occupation of Japan. The V Amphibious Corps would remain in Japan until January 1946, when corps headquarters returned to the United States for inactivation.

In a rapidly shrinking postwar Marine Corps, General Schmidt was assigned as commanding general, Marine Training and Replacement Command at San Diego. In January 1947, General Vandegrift was nearing the end of his four-year term as commandant of the Marine Corps. Secretary of Defense James V. Forrestal requested that General Vandegrift submit a short list of possible replacements. This list of six names included that of Maj. Gen. Harry Schmidt. General Vandegrift indicated that his personal favorite was Maj. Gen. Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr., and all but eliminated the others by citing their age and, in General Schmidt's case, the fact that he could not complete a full term due to the mandatory retirement age. As it turned out, neither General Shepherd nor General Schmidt received the appointment, which went to Maj. Gen. CLifton B. Cates.

Schmidt retired the following year after 39 years as an officer in the Marines. He was promoted to lieutenant general upon retirement. He died on February 19, 1968, exactly 23 years after the Iwo Jima landing, at the age of 81. His death, as was his career, was little noted.

Nathan N. Prefer is the author of several books and articles on World War II. His latest book is titled Leyte 1944, The Soldier's Battle. *He received his Ph.D. in Military History from the City University of New York and is a former Marine Corps Reservist. Dr. Prefer is now retired and resides in Fort Myers, Florida.*

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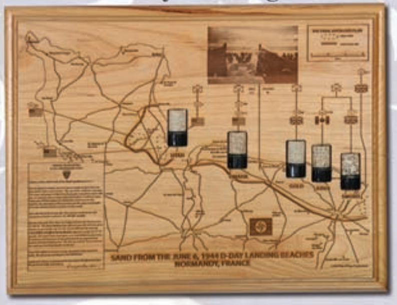

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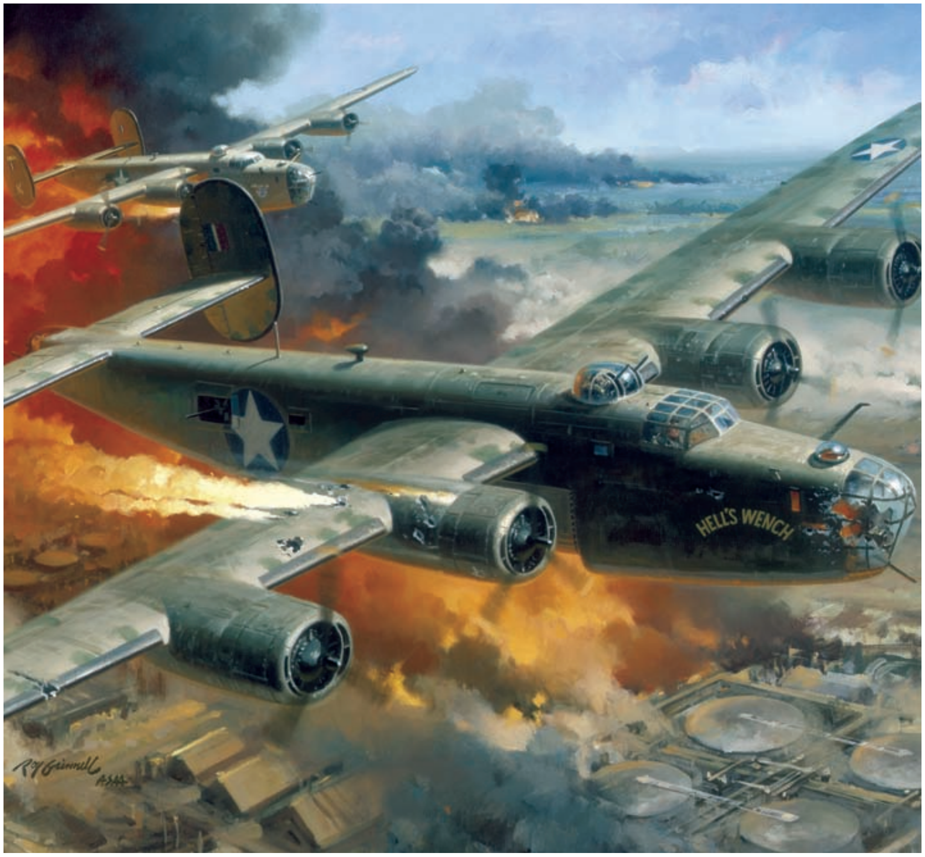

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Lost in 1943, the remains of a bomber were found 51 years later by one of its own crew.

FIRST LIEUTENANT GILBERT B. HADLEY—HE LIKED TO BE CALLED "GIB"—WAS buried back home in Kansas in 1997, some 54 years after he was killed in action on August 1, 1943. "He looked like Clark Gable," a Kansas City newspaper wrote about Gib when he was young. He "could talk his way into or out of virtually anything and loved to wear his cowboy boots and pearl-handled revolvers into battle." He was a handsome, rowdy, flamboyant guy, liked by everybody who met him, particularly his own flight crew.

Like many young men in those hard times before World War II, Hadley joined the Army for the pay. Meager as it was, it was better than no job at all. He scored high enough on the army's intelligence test to be selected for flight training, and he loved it.

Gib's early training took place not far from where he grew up, and he took great delight in buzzing the houses of his parents and friends, flying only a few feet over their rooftops. When he got assigned to the huge four-engine Consolidated B-24 Liberator bombers during the war, he flew them the same way, scaring everyone but himself. When he got his own B-24, he named it *Hadley's Harem* because he liked to think he had a way with the ladies. He wanted to paint nudes on the plane below the name, but the chaplain objected.

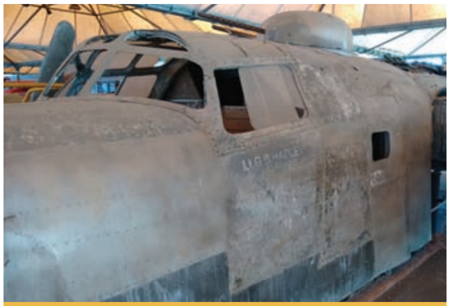
Gib Hadley was 22 when he died piloting his damaged B-24 and its crew 1,200 miles with two engines out back to Benghazi, Libya, in North Africa following a disastrous mission to bomb the oil refineries at Ploesti in Romania. *Hadley's Harem* was one of 177 B-24 Liberators that had set out that morning to bomb the major source of oil for Nazi Germany. The men had been told that the mission was vital; it would help end the war a lot sooner.

Only 93 planes returned to base, and 60 of those were so badly damaged they never flew again. Of the more than 1,700 airmen on the mission, 532 were killed, captured, wounded, or listed as missing in action. Of those fortunate enough to make it back to Benghazi, 449 were wounded, many so severely they were unfit to return to active service. One of the pilots who made it back, Lieutenant John McCormick, said later, "There wasn't a man among us who will ever be the same after that 14-hour jaunt to Ploesti."

Colonel John R. "Killer" Kane, who landed his plane in Turkey after the mission to Ploesti, described the operation as "the worst catastrophe in the history of the Army Air Corps." Kane's navigator, Lieutenant Norman Whalen, said, "We knew it was a disaster and knew that in those flames shooting up from the refineries we might be burned to death. But we went right in."

None of the planners knew it in advance, but Ploesti was one of the most heavily defended sites in all of Europe. Nobody knew it because reconnaissance flights had been prohibited. Why? Because they might cause the Germans to think that a raid was being planned. But the Germans were already more than well prepared. There were hundreds of antiaircraft guns sited around Ploesti, along with several crack German and Romanian fighter squadrons.

Worse, the lumbering B-24s were ordered to approach at treetop level. To reach the refineries, they had to pass through a narrow valley. Enemy guns lined the route, some situated at a higher altitude than the planes, so they were shooting down at the aircraft. The Germans



ABOVE: The remains of the B-24 *Hadley's Harem,* part of the Ploesti raid, are on display at the Rahmi M. Koc Museum in Istanbul, Turkey. TOP: Consolidated B-24 Liberator bombers run the gauntlet of enemy antiaircraft fire and fighters to bomb the oil refineries and other facilities at Ploesti, Romania, on August 1, 1943.

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even had a fast-moving flak train ready to speed down the valley below the waves of bombers and shoot at them from below.

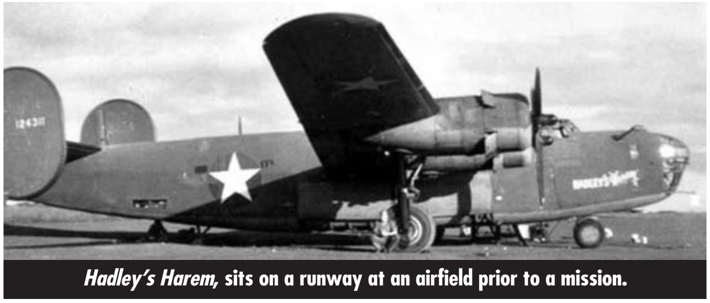
The planes that were able to release their bombs early in the raid sent up columns of burning oil, a deadly screen for the planes that followed. Many of the planes not already damaged by flak burst into flames when they flew through the fire. There was no escape for the crews; they were flying too low to bail out. Lieutenant Richard Britt, a navigator in an exposed front compartment where he could see planes on fire ahead of them, wrote, "When we got there, it was just like an inferno, it was hot as hell. Over the target, when we saw all those planes go down, I just got a don't-give-a-shit attitude and didn't care if we went down or not. Be out of the war and all its misery."

Despite all the suffering and sacrifice, the raid ultimately was of limited value. The damaged refineries were quickly repaired, and a few weeks the Germans had them producing more oil than before.

Gib Hadley flew *Hadley's Harem* so low that the bottom of the plane scraped the trees, spewing leaves and branches throughout the fuselage. The waist gunner, 19-year-old Leroy Newton (who would locate the aircraft and Hadley's remains 51 years later) shouted over the intercom, "Quit trimming the hedges!" Hadley held the plane in formation despite the flak and the shooting flames from the burning refineries.

The bomb bay doors were open; 60 seconds to the target. An 88mm shell tore into the Plexiglas nose, shaking *Hadley's Harem* from one end to the other. The explosion ripped open the chest of the bombardier, Lieutenant Leon Storms, and sent shrapnel into the arm of the navigator, Lieutenant Harold Tabacoff. Seconds later the number two engine caught fire, leaving a trail of flame and smoke. Hadley told the flight engineer, Sergeant Russell Page, to go forward to help the navigator when he remembered that the bombs were still aboard. Storms had been hit before he could release them. Page hit the emergency release lever, and the ship bucked in the air with the release of the weight. He bandaged the navigator's arm and carried him up to the flight deck.

U.S. Air Force



Hadley's Harem, **sits on a runway at an airfield prior to a mission.**

Hadley feathered the burning engine, and the plane took a sudden dive. He and the co-pilot, Lieutenant James Lindsey, pulled up to avoid a crash, and another shell hit the bottom of the fuselage. It buckled into a V-shape and knocked Newton, the right waist gunner, off his feet. He pulled himself upright and back to his gun but was so dazed that he opened fire on a flock of birds, mistaking them for German fighters.

Hadley was able to keep the plane level just above the trees, dodging columns of smoke so thick they blocked out the sun. When they burst free, they spotted two other B-24s. Both were on fire; Hadley and the crew saw them crash. Another one nearby was engulfed in flames, but the pilot was trying to climb slowly to give the crew a chance to bail out. The men inside had to be burning alive. Suddenly the whole plane disintegrated in a ball of fire.

"For a split second I saw that," Sergeant Christopher Howleger, *Hadley's Harem*'s left waist gunner, later told a reporter. "It was the

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most horrible thing I had ever seen. It is stamped on my mind." That reporter, 32-year-old correspondent C.L. Sulzberger, on July 16, 1944, wrote a five-page article for the *New York Times Magazine* titled "The Life and Death of an American Bomber." *Hadley's Harem* became famous until other catastrophes and victories stole the headlines.

Sulzberger described what happened next. "By this time, the *Harem* was staggering along at 25-feet altitude.... Her hydraulic system was shot out and there was nothing the engineers could do about it. Gasoline was leaking badly from the No. 1 engine into the bomb bay, so Page transferred the fuel from the dead No. 2 engine to No.1."

Hadley told his men to throw out everything they could to lighten the ship. They tossed out fire extinguishers, Mae West life jackets, parachutes—by this time they were far too low to consider bailing out—and anything else that was not held securely in place. They headed south, flying along with four other crippled ships toward Bulgaria. But ahead of them was a 6,000-foot mountain range that all four planes were barely able to clear. Just as they passed the mountains and flew on over the Aegean Sea, *Hadley's Harem* lost another engine. Its speed dropped to no more than 125 miles per hour, and the other planes pulled ahead and flew out of sight, leaving them on their own.

The supercharger on one of the two remaining engines caught fire, and oil started leaking out of the other. They were still 20 miles off the Turkish coast and knew they would be lucky to get that far. Hadley got on the intercom. "Do you want to bail out or try and stick with the ship?" They all agreed. "Let's stick with her."

The crewmen took off their shoes to prepare for ditching in the sea. The radioman, Bill Leonard, kept broadcasting their position, and Page, the flight engineer, who was standing behind the pilots, reached overhead to open the escape hatch. By the time they were in sight of land, less than a mile from the coast, the engines quit.

Hadley's Harem dropped instantly, crashing into the sea with what the survivors later described as a paralyzing shock. A few of the men were knocked unconscious. Page said he bounced like a spring. Water poured in through the flak holes and the open nose, jamming the main escape hatch and trapping them inside the sinking plane. "My God," Page thought, "am I going to die this way?"

He tried to force the escape hatch open, but it was stuck. As the water rose rapidly in the cockpit, Page saw Gib Hadley and co-pilot Lindsay unstrap their seat belts and flail around, trying to find an opening, but there was none. After another moment, Page saw them die.

He pulled himself into the top turret, took a deep breath of the last remaining air, and plunged down into the water, desperate for an escape route. A glimmer of light caught his eye. It was where the tail of the ship had been sheared off by the crash. Page swam to the surface just as the wreckage of *Hadley's Harem* sank.

Seven survivors made it to the beach, helping each other onto dry land. Leroy Newton had a broken ankle, and all of them were bruised. Some had sustained deep cuts and broken bones. They knew they were lucky to be alive, but then they looked around and realized that they were surrounded by more than a dozen fierce looking Turkish fighters, who pointed ancient rifles at the men and gestured for them to kneel.

The Turks, none of whom spoke English, searched each man thoroughly, taking flashlights and anything that could be used as a weapon. And then, to the Americans' surprise, they gave them cigarettes! Some of the Turks gathered sticks and branches and built a bonfire on the beach so the Americans could dry off. But they had no food or medicine and could do nothing for their wounds and pain until the following day, when a British air-sea rescue

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This is a very nice reproduction of the extremely rare, regulation visor cap for Allgemeine SS Generals. Made in black wool with silver wire piping and black velvet cap bands, silver bullion chin cords, pebbled silver buttons and Vulkan fiber visors. The sweatshield is marked with the typical SS runes in a circle and the cap is lined in satin fabric, like the originals. Caps are complete with nicely detailed, silvered metal SS eagles & skulls. **Replace ** with size desired. Sizes 56-61**

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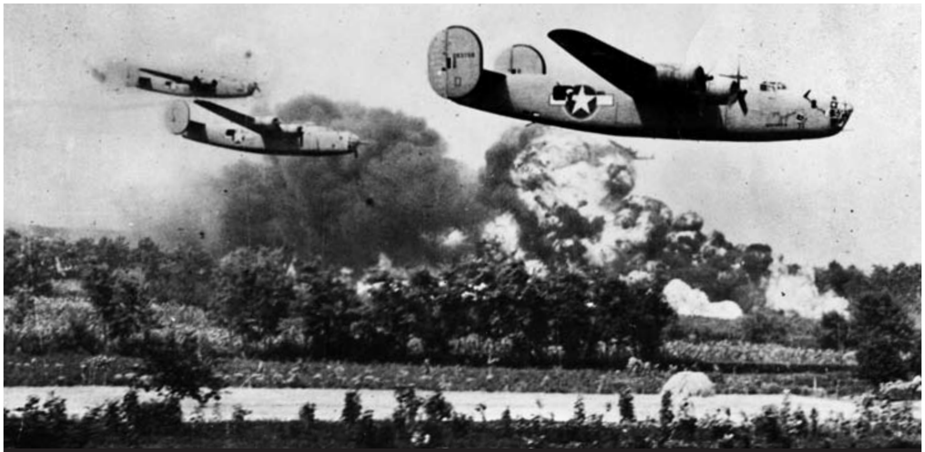


ABOVE: Pilots and crewmen of B-24 Liberator heavy bombers brave enemy fire and fly low toward their target during the costly Ploesti raid. The oil refineries at Ploesti were put out of commission for only a short time as a result of the raid. OPPOSITE: Flying low to avoid detection by German radar, B-24s wing their way toward the oil refineries at Ploesti, Romania, on August 1, 1943. Badly damaged during the raid, *Hadley's Harem* crashed into the Aegean Sea on the return flight, less than a mile from the Turkish coast.

boat arrived with morphine, first aid equipment, and a translator.

The locals brought oxcarts and transported the Americans and their Turkish and British rescuers to a village four miles inland. The villagers were welcoming and generous, cooking huge piles of eggs and beans, the survivors' first meal since the previous morning when *Hadley's Harem* had taken off from Benghazi.

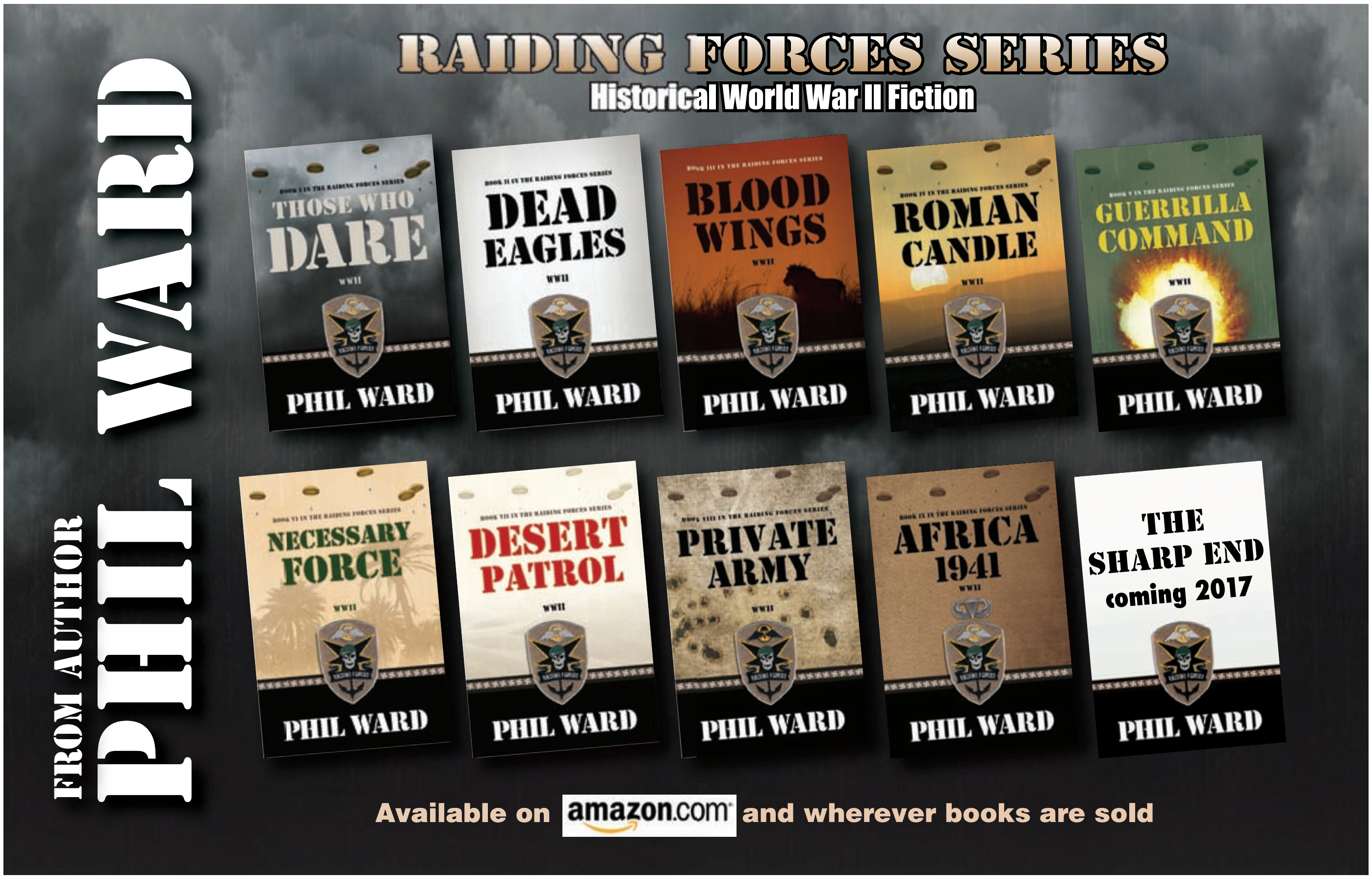
The British called for a truck, but when it arrived the villagers had to be persuaded to let the airmen leave. A village elder who spoke English addressed them: "We hear it was a big raid. Congratulations. It was a good job. Your enemies are also ours."

For the next 50 years, waist gunner Leroy Newton tried to forget about how he had almost died on the Ploesti raid and about the others who did. "I never thought of it as such a big deal," he said. "In those days, someone else always had a horror story worse than yours." He worked as a product designer and did not dwell on his wartime experiences until 1993, when he heard there was going to be a reunion of survivors of the doomed mission to Ploesti.

This was the first time Newton had attended a gathering of these veterans, and he was amazed to see among the display of memorabilia a photo of himself and the other survivors of *Hadley's Harem* on the beach surrounded by the Turks armed with rifles. That picture and his reunion with two other survivors of the plane released a flood of memories for Newton and awakened a desire to go back to Turkey to search for the plane.

"I'm going to Turkey to find that thing," he said. "I had nothing else to do. I had a few coins in my pocket and was looking for an adventure.... The seven of us really owed our lives to [Gib Hadley]. It's miraculous he could fly the thing that far. [He and co-pilot Lindsey] gave me a good 50 years on my life, and I feel this was a good payback."

When Newton got to Turkey in 1994, he walked the coastline for miles looking for something familiar to help him identify the beach where he and the others had come



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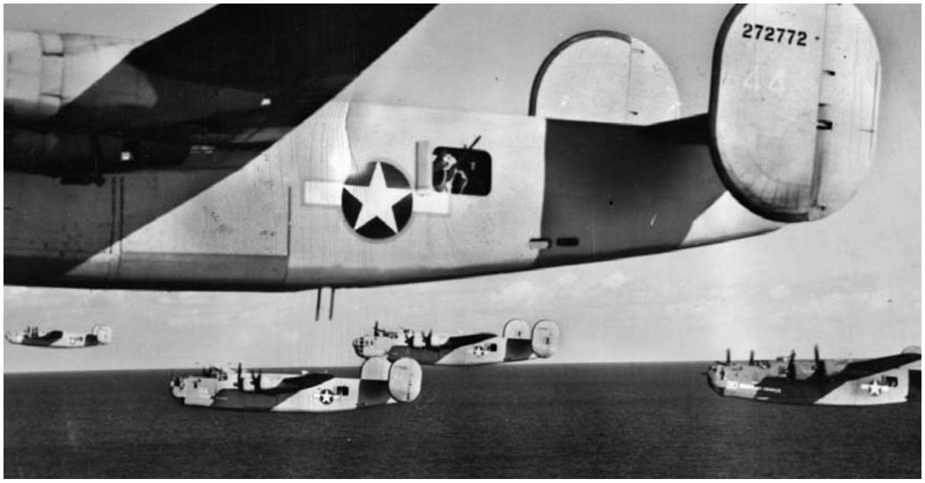

ashore, but he did not see anything he recognized. On the last day of his frustrating trip, a local newspaper reporter interviewed him about his search and wrote a story about *Hadley's Harem* and the American airmen who had survived the crash. By the time the article was published, Newton was back home, disappointed that his trip had been for nothing.

A few weeks later, he received a letter from a retired marine life photographer in Turkey who had read the newspaper article. He told Newton that he and his sons had found the plane in 1972. They had dived to it often when they were making a documentary about turtles. Newton was skeptical at first, thinking it might be a scam, but decided to follow up on this lead. He returned to Turkey, where the diver took him 750 feet offshore. He said the remains of *Hadley's Harem* were 90 feet below. "When we got over the site," Newton said, "I nearly had a heart attack I was so excited."

The bodies of the pilots, Hadley and Lindsey, were still in the cockpit. Newton found Hadley's cowboy boots, his twin pearl-handled revolvers, aviator sunglasses, wristwatch, and a 1943 nickel. But then came more delays dealing with the Turkish government to get permission to raise the wreckage of the plane. That took so long that Newton had to travel to Turkey a third time and finance an increasingly expensive salvage operation.

The forward section of the plane, including the cockpit, was raised very slowly using large inflated balloons, a project that took over a month and a half to complete. The bodies were retrieved, positively identified as Hadley and Lindsey through DNA analysis, and brought back to their respective homes for burial with full military honors. The remaining wreckage of *Hadley's Harem* rests today in the Rahmi M. Koc Museum in Istanbul, the only plane left of the 177 that flew over Ploesti that day in 1943. The museum, established by a wealthy industrialist, is dedicated to the history of transport, industry, and communications.

Duane Schultz is a psychologist who has written more than two dozen books and articles on military history, including Into the Fire: Ploesti, the Most Fateful Mission of World War II *(Westholme, 2008). His most recent book is* Evans Carlson: Marine Raider: The Man Who Commanded America's First Special Forces *(Westholme, 2014). He can be reached at www.duaneschultz.com.*

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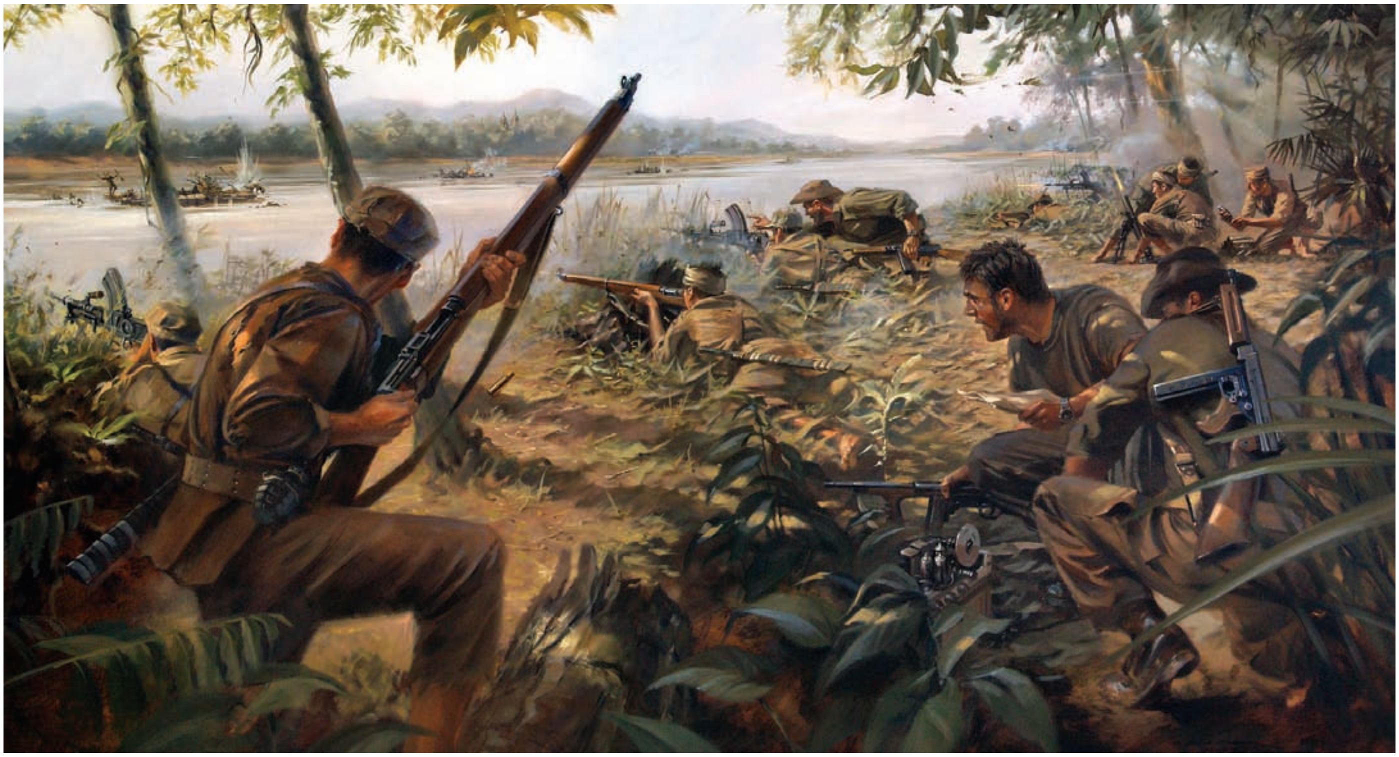

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During World War II, thousands of would-be secret agents roamed rural Maryland and Virginia while learning the "ungentlemanly arts" of espionage, covert action, and irregular warfare. These operatives in training belonged to the U.S. Office of Strategic Services (OSS), the first national-level intelligence organization. Soon they would put their skill and nerve to the ultimate test—as clandestine warriors fighting far behind enemy lines.

On July 11, 1941, President Franklin D. Roosevelt took a momentous step toward centralizing America's intelligence-gathering efforts when he authorized the office of the Coordinator of Information (COI). In doing so, FDR hoped to create a single agency responsible for sorting and analyzing reports collected by more than a dozen U.S. diplomatic, law enforcement, and military establishments. Chosen to head the COI was prominent Wall Street attorney Colonel William J. Donovan.

Donovan, who had earned the nickname "Wild Bill" along with a Medal of Honor for heroism in World War I, took to his task with characteristic energy and enthusiasm. A man of extraordinary vision, he foresaw a growing role for secret intelligence and special operations activities in the conflict already engulfing much of Europe and Asia. America's newest spymaster resolved to build what would become his nation's contribution to this "shadow war."

The COI faced enormous challenges in just getting off the ground. Other information-collecting bodies—among them the State Department, Army, Navy, and Federal Bureau of Investigation—deeply resented Donovan's intrusion into their traditional domain and often obstructed his directorate's early efforts.

Things started to change after Pearl Harbor, perhaps the worst intelligence failure in modern American history. A presidential order dated June 13, 1942, significantly expanded Donovan's responsibilities while reorganizing the COI under a new name—the Office of Strategic Services (OSS). Its mission, in the words of historian Thomas Troy, was to "collect information, conduct research and analysis, coordinate information, print and broadcast propaganda, mount special operations, inspire guerrilla action, and send commandos into battle."

Donovan's immediate problem was how to staff and organize this unconventional civilian-military organization. The U.S. armed forces rarely practiced covert warfare, and its diplomatic corps tended to look down on the practice of espionage. Famously, an American codebreaking operation was halted in 1929 because in then-Secretary of State Henry Stimpson's view, "Gentlemen don't read each other's mail."

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The British, long acknowledged as masters of intrigue, were eager to offer their assistance. In Bill Donovan they found a willing ally; he frequently traveled to the United Kingdom for conferences with officials of Britain's Secret Intelligence Service (SIS) and Special Operations Executive (SOE). William S. Stephenson, head of the British Security Coordination office in New York, was a friend and mentor who first encouraged President Roosevelt to consider selecting Donovan as Coordinator of Information.

With British assistance, an organizational model slowly took shape. Ultimately, OSS formed 12 major branches: Special Operations (SO) and Operational Groups (OG) performed paramilitary, direct-action operations. Secret Intelligence (SI), X-2 (Counterintelligence), and Research and Analysis (R&A) branches focused on espionage activities and intelligence study. Morale Operations (MO) handled propaganda, while Research and Development (R&D), a Maritime Unit (MU), and the Communications (Commo) branches provided special capabilities to field agents. Finally, the Administrative Services and Personnel Procurement branches managed OSS's Washington D.C. headquarters. A Schools and Training (S&T) branch was added in 1943.

Armed with an almost unlimited budget and the benefit of his years as a Washington insider, Donovan began the work of hiring prospective agents. His initial recruits tended to be associates from the legal and academic worlds. Urbane, well educated and often fluent in several languages, these selectees were perceived by some as effete, Ivy League elitists—leading to the snide comment that OSS stood for "Oh So Social."

No one then quite knew what kind of person would make a good agent. William Stephenson's aide, a Royal Navy lieutenant commander named Ian Fleming (later to create fictional super spy James Bond), suggested the Americans appoint as intelligence officers men of "absolute discretion, sobriety, devotion to duty, languages and wide experience." Fleming further recommended their age "should be about 40 or 50."

Donovan himself sought younger, self-reliant operatives who could think on their feet and act decisively under conditions of extreme stress. Intellect was valued as much as physical courage—everything else could be learned. The ideal OSS candidate, according to Wild Bill, was "a PhD who could win a bar fight."

In truth, most of the organization's first employees were hired for skills they already possessed. The so-called "bad-eyes brigade" of 900 economists, historians, psychologists, anthropologists, and political scientists who staffed R&A produced information that immeasurably assisted the war effort. Their analysis of German industrial capacity, for example, led to the Allies' "oil plan" that all but choked off the supply of fuel for Nazi tanks and aircraft during the war's final months.

A combat diver of the OSS Maritime Unit trains with the Lambertson Amphibious Respiratory Unit during World War II.

Brigadier General William "Wild Bill" Donovan (left), a New York attorney, became the first head of the OSS. Captain William E. Fairbairn (right), an expert in hand-to-hand combat, taught American agents the art of close-quarter killing.

While the scholars and administrators working in Washington required little specialized training to orient them to their duties, the same could not be said of those selected for overseas service. Donovan met with two of his branch chiefs during the summer of 1941 to address the need for training schools.

The British had in fact already established several such installations, including a new SOE facility near Toronto, Canada, called Camp X. Beginning in January 1942, several dozen American agents underwent the four-week program of instruction there. These men, all Special Operations Branch cadre, were eager to learn as they would shortly begin schooling paramilitary operatives back in the States.

At Camp X students were introduced to close combat techniques, sabotage, surveillance, codes and ciphers, maintaining a cover identity, and other elements of tradecraft. The emphasis there was on physical fitness, strict discipline, and attention to detail—all for good reason. "If there's anything loose in the intelligence business," warned chief instructor Major Richard T. Brooker, "you're dead!"

Along with a suggested training curriculum, the Americans left Camp X with an assortment of teaching aids, enemy weapons, and specialized equipment for use by OSS schoolhouses. The British also sent along from Canada several officers who possessed particular knowledge in close combat fighting and maritime operations.

The first American instructors were a varied lot. Major Garland H. Williams, an Army reservist and former Federal Bureau of Narcotics investigator, headed this team. Many of Williams' cadremen came from the Military Police or civilian law enforcement agencies. Military Policeman Lieutenant Rex Applegate taught a system of combat pistol shooting while Captain George H. White applied his considerable prewar expertise as an undercover narcotics officer to the dark art of counterespionage.

Not every instructor had a police background, however. First Lieutenant Jerry Sage (whose later exploits as a POW inspired Steve McQueen's character in *The Great Escape*) sold housewares before signing on as a physical conditioning trainer. Marine Corps Lieutenant Elmer Harris previously worked for General Petroleum Company in Alaska; he now taught fieldcraft and camouflage to prospective saboteurs. Two fraternity brothers from the coal mining region of Pennsylvania, 1st Lt. Charles M. Parkin and 2nd Lt. Frank A. Gleason, became demolitions experts. "He loved to blow up simulated enemy targets," Jerry Sage said of Gleason, at age 21 SO's youngest cadreman.

Special Operations Branch's most memorable instructor, however, was British Army Captain William E. Fairbairn. Remembered as "Dangerous Dan" by everyone who underwent his intensive program of "gutter-fighting," the 57-year-old Fairbairn led a colorful life even by OSS standards. Seconded from Camp X on sort of permanent loan to the Americans, this martial arts master once battled Chinese gangsters as head of the Shanghai Municipal Police's riot squad. Rumors spread that he knew 100 ways to kill a man.

Fairbairn quickly achieved a fearsome reputation for his ruthless instructional approach to armed and unarmed combat. "Forget any idea of gentlemanly conduct or fighting fair," the captain advised his students. "There's no rules except one: kill or be killed."

To illustrate his point, Fairbairn would often provoke the largest man in each class into throwing a punch at him. Dodging the blow, Dangerous Dan would then flip his would-be assailant onto the ground, face down, arm twisted behind his back. Few dared underestimate their wiry, bespectacled close combat instructor after witnessing such a display.

With a syllabus established and instructional cadre in place, freshly promoted Lt. Col. Williams next needed to find training sites suitable for the thousands of prospective saboteurs then being recruited. To Williams, an ideal camp was "situated in the country and thoroughly isolated from the possible attention of unauthorized persons." Such a facility also required plenty of land, at least several hundred acres, and must be located "well away from any highway or through-roads and preferably far distant from other human habitations."

Two properties that met Williams' criteria while remaining within reasonable proximity to OSS headquarters were the Catoctin Recreational Demonstration Area (RDA) in north-central Maryland and Chopawamsic RDA, which bordered Quantico Marine Corps Base in Virginia. Both sites served as Civilian Conservation Corps work camps before the U.S. National Park Service took possession of them during the late 1930s. Significantly, Catoctin and Chopawamsic already had in place ready-made living quarters and mess halls, plus administrative and classroom buildings. Each park also offered well over 10,000 acres of forested maneuver area.

The War Department, acting on Donovan's behalf, appropriated both areas in March 1942. Park Service officials informed the public that Catoctin and Chopawamsic had been "taken over for use in the present war effort" and were closed indefinitely. Armed guards patrolling each camp's perimeter also deterred the curious.

Simultaneously, Catoctin RDA was being readied for another top-secret occupant. President Roosevelt had selected a portion of the park to become his new country retreat, naming it "Shangri-La" after the mythical paradise in James Hilton's novel. Roosevelt first came to stay on July 5, 1942.

Catoctin was designated Area B, as SO Branch planned to conduct basic paramilitary training there. Those who completed OSS Basic moved on to Chopawamsic RDA, renamed Area A, for advanced instruction. In May 1943, one section of Chopawamsic was set aside as a communications school. This became Area C.

Area B received its first dozen basic trainees in April 1942. These men, part of Detachment 101, were destined for behind-the-lines operations in Burma. By May an advanced course opened at Area A. Each camp could house from 400 to 600 students, instructors, and support staff.

For a short time, both parachute and waterborne insertion techniques were taught at Area A. Eventually, though, these specialty courses moved to better facilities elsewhere. In 1943, trainees began attending jump school at Fort Benning, Georgia, while a remote strip of land at Smith's Point on the Maryland side of the Potomac River became Area D, home of the OSS Maritime Unit.

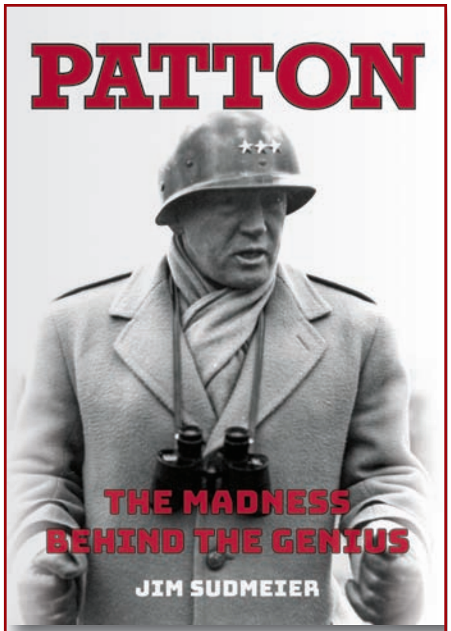
Initially, Secret Intelligence Branch ran a basic espionage school out of Donovan's headquarters in Washington, D.C. It opened a larger facility, codenamed RTU-11, in May 1942, at the 100-acre Lothian Farm estate in Clinton, Maryland—known thereafter as "The Farm." To handle increased demand, the SI Basic course moved in November to a former private school near Towson, Maryland—Area E—while The Farm became home for advanced spycraft training.

The Special Operations and Secret Intelligence branches of OSS conducted entirely separate instructional programs, the nature of which depended on each agent's mission. SO prepared individuals and small teams to conduct independent, paramilitary operations such as sabotage, assassination, and organizing partisans. The training focus of SI was less martial. Aside from schooling students in the nuances of espionage, instructors at The Farm and Area E presented classes on propaganda, counterintelligence, and psychological warfare.

Especially at first, OSS training was often administered in a slapdash, disorganized manner. Some field agents went straight into action without even rudimentary instruction in maintaining cover or unarmed combat. Many operatives remember taking Basic Training at Area A in Virginia, while on occasion Secret Intelligence recruits attended Special Operations Basic and vice versa.

Nevertheless, some experiences were common to all OSS volunteers regardless of what they did or where they trained. Secrecy was paramount. A candidate might arrive at headquarters from civilian life or a military base (two-thirds of all agents were recruited from the U.S. armed forces) or be sent directly to the train station in tiny Lantz, Maryland. He was then loaded into a bus with blackened windows or the back of a 2½-ton cargo truck to begin his journey into a world of deceit and danger.

Upon arrival at the training camp, each aspiring agent would quite literally surrender his identity. Put away were all personal possessions and clothing; instead, students wore an OSS-issue fatigue uniform or "sterile" Army khakis with-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out rank or insignia. The individual also received a false name, like "Jake" or "Bill," which became part of his cover story. Keeping one's cover was the first and most important lesson to be learned by all operatives—unfriendly ears were everywhere, even in the training camps.

The four-week SO Basic Course included such topics as physical toughening, unarmed combat, weapons firing, fieldcraft, demolitions, map reading, and first aid. Covered as well were intelligence gathering and reporting accompanied by instruction on enemy organization and small arms.

The curriculum was specifically intended to build self-confidence and stamina. Each recruit regularly negotiated the "Trainazium," a 40-foot tall jungle gym apparatus set atop 12 large oak poles, which had him swinging from platforms, scrambling up wooden beams, and running across narrow planks. A safety net caught the clumsy.

Fairbairn and Applegate also had built a structure officially titled their "indoor mystery range" but which rapidly became known as "The House of Horrors" by those who experienced it. Armed with a .45-caliber pistol, each nervous candidate advanced through this building "under varying degrees of light, darkness and shadows," explained Dangerous Dan, "plus the introduction of sound effects, moving objects and various alarming surprises." As targets appeared, the student was to fire two instinctively aimed shots. The last target was a realistic papier-mâché mannequin dressed as Adolf Hitler.

Along the "Demolition Trail," instructors would wire small explosive charges that forcefully reminded students of the need to keep their heads down. Lieutenant Frank Gleason, who placed these squibs, recalled one young officer who broke his jaw and lost several teeth after setting off a booby trap by not crawling low enough. That injured agent was future CIA Director William J. Casey.

It was a deliberately rigorous course. "We taught them how to march and react like military men," Jerry Sage recollected. "Then we turned our emphasis on tough training—physical conditioning, explosives work, hand-to-hand combat and knife fighting." By the end of SO Basic, neophyte agents could conduct sabotage, survive behind enemy lines, and gather intelligence and get it into friendly hands.

Those who completed this phase often went on to Area A for a month or more of advanced instruction. The emphasis there was on the training, equipping, and organization of local guerrilla bands—a key function of OSS Special Operations forces.

Operatives of OSS Detachment 101 pause for a photograph somewhere in the Burmese jungle. This photo was taken in 1944, and by that time Detachment 101 was executing covert missions that took a heavy toll in Japanese lives and war matériel.

Students also practiced their recently acquired demolition skills in a series of offsite field exercises. For these missions, small groups of operatives would leave the camp after dark to set mock explosives on bridges and hydroelectric dams throughout the region and return safely without being spotted by the sentinels guarding their targets.

The end of training was marked by a real-life penetration of an American industrial factory. For these schemes, recruits were outfitted with civilian attire and forged paperwork before making their way into a nearby war production facility. "The first mission we had," Agent Geoffrey Jones remembered, "was to blow up a plant in Baltimore. What we did was put a note on the main boiler that said 'This is a bomb' and called up the FBI. Luckily we never got caught."

Some novice operatives were in fact apprehended by suspicious security men. Former major league baseball catcher and OSS trainee Moe Berg successfully infiltrated the Glenn Martin aircraft factory but divulged his real mission and identity when confronted by plant officials. Somehow Berg managed to escape his predicament, eventually becoming a covert agent in Italy, the Balkans, and Switzerland.

Secret Intelligence and Communications trainees also conducted schemes. For those undergoing the three-month "commo" school at Area C, their graduation exercise sent them out 300 miles from the base station with orders to establish radio contact under frequently adverse atmospheric conditions. Using a shortwave "suitcase radio," these operators also demonstrated their skills at encryption/decryption, International Morse code, and the use of "One Time Pad" ciphers to transmit classified information.

Students celebrated on their last night of instruction, but this event too was not all that it seemed. "The final test was a relaxing party," Gene Searchinger said of this alcohol-fueled affair. "They wanted to see if you'd relax and give up your cover." Here was one last lesson for these newly minted secret agents: never lower your guard under any circumstances.

A new role for the OSS required rapid expansion of the organization's training capacity. In December 1942, Donovan began recruiting U.S. servicemen with special language skills and cultural backgrounds into what he called Operational Groups (OGs). These units, each of which contained as many as 34 soldiers, sailors, and Marines, would then enter enemy-occupied territory to lead local resistance organizations on "hit-and-run" missions.

Unlike SO agents, who normally operated undercover and in small groups, OG teams always entered battle wearing full military uniforms. The OSS eventually inserted dozens of Operational Groups deep into Burma, China, France, Greece, Italy, Norway, and Yugoslavia.

The officer selected to train these unconventional warriors was himself a most remarkable man. One-time Czarist cavalryman and New York socialite Lt. Col. Serge Obolensky was 51 years old when he joined Donovan's staff in

1942. Volunteering for OSS parachute training, "Sky" then underwent the week-long course offered at Area A. The tradition there was to make all five qualifying jumps in one day; by jump three Obolensky could barely walk and had to be pushed out of the plane to complete his fifth exit. But the iron-willed former nobleman won his wings.

Working with other instructors, Obolensky instituted a comprehensive course syllabus for the OGs. His six-week program consisted of "longer and more elaborate courses of physical toughening, weapons training, close combat, map reading" and similar subjects, according to the official OSS history. As established facilities could not handle this requirement, some other place for OG instruction had to be found.

The 400-acre Congressional Country Club, located just outside Washington, D.C., in Bethesda, Maryland, fit the bill perfectly. Designated Area F, this elegant resort was swiftly transformed into a training ground for America's newest shadow warriors. A tent camp sprouted up on the tennis courts, fairways became obstacle courses, and bunkers were used for grenade practice. The Mediterranean-style clubhouse contained as classrooms, administrative spaces, and a mess hall.

For Caesar J. Civitella, who arrived there in the dead of night, Area F's grandeur revealed itself that next morning: "We came out of the tent and thought, 'Hey, country club living.' But we were wrong; it was no country club life."

Instructors just returned from combat overseas incorporated their own experiences into Area F's curriculum of dirty tricks. Recruit Alex MacDonald called it "Malice in Wonderland," where trainees learned to "lie, steal, kill, maim ... the Ten Commandments in reverse."

"The training was not the regular military stuff," Civitella agreed. "It was guerrilla warfare, unconventional warfare. Blowing up rail lines and so forth. We had to get through their obstacle course one night. They had booby traps all over the course. So we did it. When you made it to the end you were at Glen Echo Park. It was mostly crawling on your belly."

Some 400 OG recruits per cycle trained at Area F, often under the watchful eye of General Donovan (he received his first star in April 1943, making major general 19 months later) and the senior Allied officials he brought out to watch his "glorious amateurs" run through their paces. Word began to spread: aggressive, independent-minded young people who chafed under the arbitrary discipline of ordinary military life were welcome in this freewheeling, even chaotic organization.

The "Let's do it!" spirit of OSS led to numerous recruiting challenges. One officer reported, "We were working with an unusual type of individual. Many [agents] had natures that fed on danger and excitement. Their appetite for the unconventional and spectacular was far beyond the ordinary. It was not unusual to find a good measure of temperament thrown in."

"The whole nature of the functions of the OSS was particularly inviting to psychopathic characters," added Lt. Col. (Dr.) Henry Murray of Donovan's staff. Working with another Harvard-educated psychologist named James Grier Miller, Murray developed an experimental "situation test" he believed would help weed out those unsuited for field duty. It worked. Murray's assessment system reliably identified substandard candidates and soon became a mandatory part of OSS selection.

Station S, formerly a country estate in Fairfax, Virginia, opened in January 1944. There, recruits spent 3½ days undergoing examinations and problems designed to evaluate their personality, emotional stability, and aptitude for clandestine service. Evaluations conducted at Station S also screened applicants for hidden psychological issues that could endanger them, their fellow agents, or the mission.

At least 13,000 Americans served with the Office of Strategic Services during World War II. While most of these individuals never saw combat, a select few did become covert agents, saboteurs, or direct action commandos with the Operational Groups. The instruction they received, in the words of OSS veteran Jack Singlaub, "was most important for training the state of mind or attitude, developing an aggressiveness and confidence ... that gave you an ability to concentrate on your mission, and not worry about your personal safety. That's really a great psychological advantage."

After VJ Day, all OSS training camps were returned to their previous owners. Golfers now leave divots on the Congressional Country Club's immaculately manicured greens where once special operations recruits tossed practice grenades. And those who visit Catoctin Mountain Park and Prince William Forest Park (formerly Chopawamsic RDA) can sleep in the same cabins where fledgling agents used to rest after a session in Dangerous Dan Fairbairn's House of Horrors.

Frequent contributor Patrick J. Chaisson is a retired U.S. Army officer who writes from his home in Scotia, New York. The author wishes to acknowledge the assistance of Ranger Chris Alford of the Prince William Forest Park and Superintendent (Retired) Mel Poole of Catoctin Mountain Park, in the preparation of this article.

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A Bloody M

THE EVACUATION OF THE BEF FROM NORTHEASTERN FRANCE BY CIVILIAN AND MILITARY VESSELS DURING THE FALL OF FRANCE IN 1940 ENSURED THAT THE BRITISH ARMY WOULD SURVIVE TO FIGHT ANOTHER DAY.

iracle

BY ERIC NIDEROST

ABOVE: British Captain William Tennant was entrusted with rescuing the British army from Dunkirk. LEFT: The beach at Dunkirk is packed with troops awaiting evacuation. As the threat of capture increased, the British altered their evacuation tactics.

Above & Top: Imperial War Museum

CAPTAIN WILLIAM TENNANT STOOD on the deck of the *Wolfhound,* grimily observing the progress of a German air raid as his ship approached Dunkirk. The port city in the northeast corner of France, which was not far from the Belgian border, was being brutally pulverized before his eyes. Bombs detonated, sending up fountains of smoke and debris, smashing buildings, and killing and wounding French civilians unlucky enough to be on the scene.

Fires erupted from different parts of the stricken city, merging until the whole port seemed engulfed in flames. But it was the burning oil tanks, hit earlier in the day, that commanded the most attention. Great columns of acrid smoke rose into the sky, the black and choking clouds so thick they obscured the normal blue of a bright spring day. It seemed a funeral pyre of British hopes, mocking their plans to escape the German juggernaut.

Tennant was on a special assignment, a mission that might well decide the outcome of World War II. The British and a portion of their French allies were trapped by superior German forces and faced with annihilation or capture. If they escaped, then the British Army would survive to fight another day. If not, well, Tennant was not going to waste his time on defeatist speculation. He had a job to do, and he meant to do it well. It was May 27, 1940, and Operation Dynamo, the rescue of the British Expeditionary Force, was shifting into high gear.

Tennant officially was senior naval officer ashore, ordered by his superior, Vice Admiral Bertram Ramsay, to supervise the evacuation and coordinate all the elements that were needed to achieve that end. Originally Dunkirk seemed like a perfect embarkation point. There were no less than seven docking basins, five miles of quays, and 115 acres of docks and warehouses. Pouring over maps and other related documents with his staff, one of Tennant's main concerns was turnaround time. The challenge was to figure out how destroyers and other craft could nose into the quays, fill with troops, and depart fast enough for other ships to quickly take their place.

But in his mind's eye he could see those plans going up in smoke, just as surely as the hoped-for quays and docks were blazing and sending their own black coils into the heavens. Tennant was accompanied by a dozen officers and 150 ratings. Since *Wolfhound* was an obvious target the shore party was landed and dispersed.

Tennant himself set out for the British command post. What was normally a 10-minute walk was a nightmarish hour-long journey through rubble-filled streets. Downed trolley wires festooned the avenues, burned-out vehicles were everywhere, and corpses of both British soldiers and French civilians sprawled about like bloodied rag dolls. A kind of thick, smoky haze enveloped everyone and everything, reminders of the oil fires that still blazed fiercely.

The Royal Navy officer finally arrived at Bastion 32, an earth-covered bunker that served as British headquarters in Dunkirk. He was greeted by Commander Harold Henderson, the British naval liaison officer, and representatives of the British Army. But there was one question that must have been paramount in his mind: How long would he have to do the job? In other words, how long would it be before the Germans arrived? The answer was swift and discouraging: 24 to 36 hours.

The task before him seemed impossible, but

National Archives

Ullstein Bild

ABOVE: A German motorized column moves through the Ardennes. By mid-May, the British were surrounded on three sides and in danger of being cut off from their fuel supplies. TOP: A British field gun, hidden in a treeline against German air attack, in action in France May 30.

Tennant was a professional who was determined to do his duty to the best of his ability. The coming days would determine not only the course of the war but the fate of Britain itself.

The Dunkirk crisis began on May 10 when the Germans unleashed their blitzkrieg attack in the west. The operation, code-named Fall Gelb (Case Yellow), had two distinct phases. General Fodor Von Bock's Army Group A, which totaled 29 divisions, suddenly thrust into Holland and Belgium. To the Allies, these moves were reminiscent of the old Schlieffen plan used the early weeks of the World War I. Although Holland's neutrality was not violated in 1914, in other respects it looked as if the Germans were attempting to repeat history by thrusting into Belgium and turning south into northern France.

The Allies countered with a lackluster effort known as Plan D. In this scenario, the BEF and the French First and Seventh Armies would advance to Belgium's River Dyle and dig in on its left bank. The Dyle was a good defensive position and would be an effective deterrent to any German attempts to move south.

The relatively weak French Second and Ninth Armies were posted farther to the southeast in the heavily forested Ardennes region. The area was thought to be safe because the densely forested hills and deep ravines were considered poor country for tanks. South of the Ardennes was the vaunted Maginot Line, a formidable, at least on paper, series of concrete and steel fortifications. It was manned by 400,000 first-rate troops. France had been bled white by World War I, and over time there was a misplaced faith in big guns and fixed fortifications, an attitude described as the "Maginot mentality."

But the Germans had no intention of repeating 1914, nor were they going to waste lives trying to smash their way through an impregnable Maginot Line. Army Group A's descent on Holland and Belgium was in part a ruse, diverting Allied attention from the main German thrust through the supposedly impenetrable Ardennes. If all went well, the 45 divisions of General Gerd von Rundstedt's Army Group A would punch through the Ardennes, cross the Meuse River, then drive to the sea.

If the Germans managed to get to the sea, they would effectively drive a wedge between the BEF and the First French Army in the north and French forces operating south of the Somme River. A panzer corridor could widen, making it harder for the separated Allied armies to reunite. At the same time, the BEF, northern French units, and possibly the Belgian Army would be trapped between Group A's panzer "hammer" and Group B's formidable "anvil." The German planners believed the two powerful army groups could destroy the Allied forces.

There were no fewer than seven panzer divisions with Rundstedt's Army Group A, a veritable mailed fist of 1,800 tanks. Maj. Gen. Erwin Rommel, a commander who would later gain immortality in North Africa and earn the sobriquet Desert Fox, commanded the Seventh Panzer Division. But as events unfolded it was Lt. Gen. Heinz Guderian who took center stage in this effort. Guderian commanded the XIX Panzer Corps, consisting of the 1st, 2nd, and 10th Panzer Divisions, and had long been a proponent of armored warfare.

From the first the Germans achieved a stunning success. Group A's panzers successfully negotiated the forested slopes and rocky defiles of the Ardennes. They then advanced to the Meuse River where they established a bridgehead. Taken by surprise, the French tried to dislodge the intruders and throw them back across the river, but their attacks were half-hearted at best and ham-fisted at worst.

Some French soldiers fought courageously, but others were so demoralized they surrendered at the first opportunity or simply took to their heels. French generals, fossilized in their military thinking and often ancient in body, simply could not cope with this new style of rapid warfare. General Alphonse Joseph Georges, for example, was commander of the northeast sector, and technically the BEF was under his control. When news came of the German breakthrough he literally collapsed into a chair and began weeping uncontrollably.

Guderian and his tanks were having a field day; opposition was either nonexistent or simply melted away. The French Ninth and Second Armies were pummeled unmercifully until they were effectively destroyed. General Edouard

Ruby, deputy chief of staff of Second Army, movingly described the bombing by high-level German Dornier 17s and dive-bombing Stuka Ju-87s as nightmarish. Then, too, there was the terror of continued panzer assaults, with hulking metal monsters belching shells, their treads steamrolling over defensive positions with almost scornful ease.

Thousands of French soldiers shuffled to the rear as prisoners of war. Many of them were dazed automatons, their nerves shattered by relentless Stuka attacks and the sheer magnitude of their defeat. Scarcely glancing at these pitiful poilus, the German tanks sped on, at one point covering 40 miles in four days.

General John Vereker, 6th Lord Gort, was the commander in chief of the BEF. A no-nonsense professional, he was no military genius but was competent and very protective of Britain's only field army. Communications between Gort and his French allies had almost entirely broken down. It was partly because of the rapidity of the German advance, and partly due to the sheer stupidity of the French high command.

When the war broke out in 1939, the French high command rejected the use of radio communication. Radio messages could be easily intercepted by the enemy, or so the argument ran. The French placed their faith in telephone communication, stringing lines with cheerful abandon, or using civilian circuits when possible. The British had little say in the matter; after all, they had only 10 divisions, the French 90 divisions.

But when the German blitzkrieg struck, all dissolved into chaos. The Germans cut lines, but overworked signalmen just could not keep up with the ever-changing situation. Roads were clogged with retreating units and fleeing civilians, making their task that much harder. At one stage Gort's headquarters moved seven times in 10 days.

The only way to keep communications open was by personal visit or by motorcycle dispatch rider. Maj. Gen. Bernard Montgomery, who would gain later fame defeating Rommel in North Africa, had his own unique way of sending messages. At the time Montgomery was commander of the BEF's Third Division. Riding in his staff car, he would place a message on the end of his walking stick and poke the stick out the window. Sergeant Arthur Elkin would roar up on his motorcycle, grab the message, and speed down the country lanes in search of the addressee. It was no easy task.

Gort had his first real inkling of the true situation when General Georges Billotte, commander of the French First Army Group, visited his command post at Wahagnies, a small town south of Lille. Billotte was normally an ebullient man, but now he looked exhausted and depressed. He spread a map out and explained that no fewer than nine panzer divisions had broken through at the Ardennes and were even then sweeping westward. Worse still, the French had nothing to stop them.

Although there is no specific evidence of the fact, Gort probably started thinking about withdrawing the BEF to the Channel ports about this time. A German trap was closing, and half-hearted French talk about countermeasures was not going to assuage his growing concern. Some of Gort's senior staff began to plan for just such an operation in the early morning hours of May 19.

Back in London, Secretary of State for War Anthony Eden was dumbfounded when he heard the news that Gort might want to evacuate. Chief of the Imperial General Staff General Sir Edmund Ironside also was not too pleased. It seemed to Ironside like alarmist rubbish. In any case, why couldn't the BEF escape the closing trap by driving south to the Somme and joining the French forces that were supposedly gathering there?

Winston Churchill, Britain's new prime minister, tended to agree with Ironside. Churchill's fighting spirit was aroused. But if the BEF managed to link up with the French forces south of the Somme, the Allies might then mount a counteroffensive and turn the tables on the rampaging Germans.

But Churchill was being overly optimistic. Gort knew the situation better than London. Most of the BEF was still engaged with German

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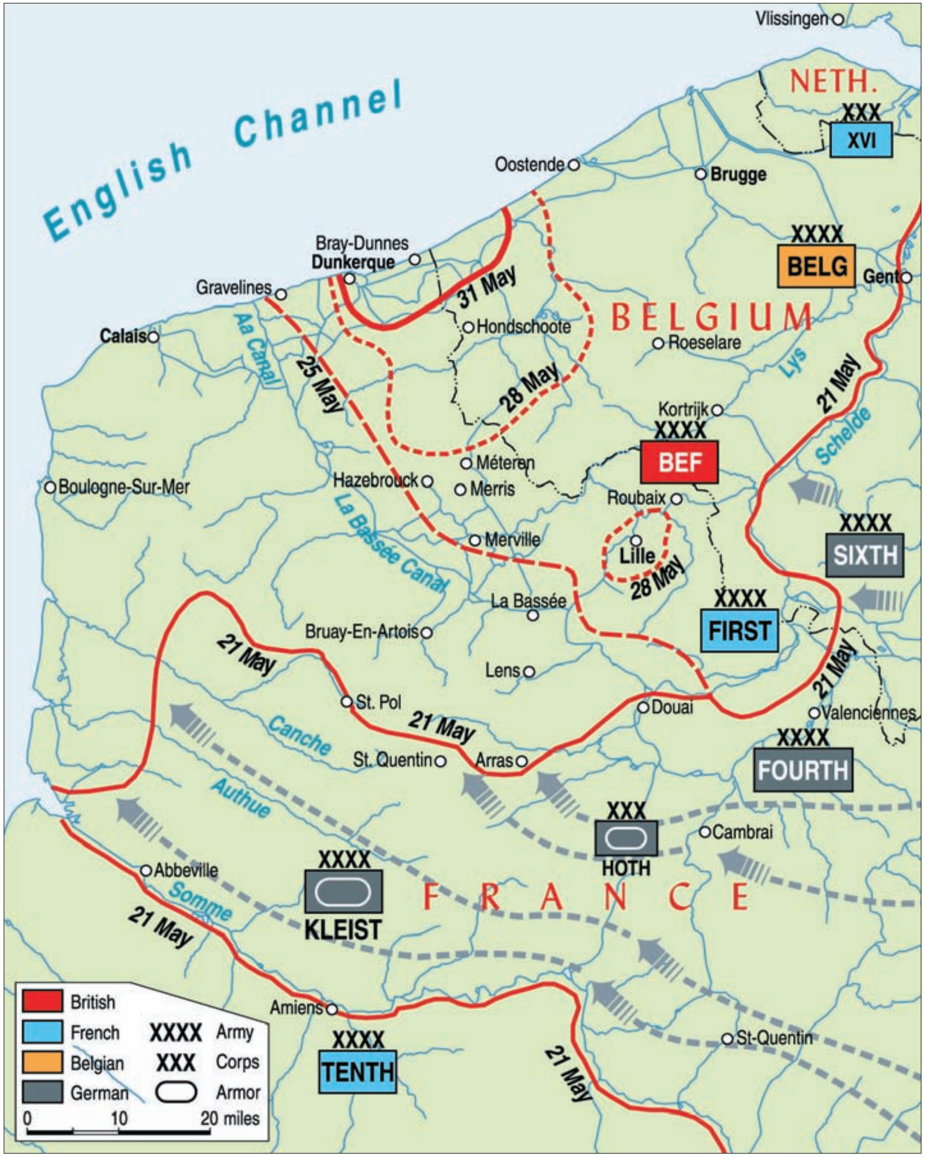
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Douai
Valenciennes
Canche
St. Quentin
Arras
XXXX
FOURTH
Authue
XXX
HOTH
Cambrai
Abbeville
XXXX
KLEIST
FRANCE
Somme
21 May
British
French
Belgian
German
XXXX Army
XXX Corps
Armor
0
10
20 miles
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XXXX
TENTH
St-Quentin
21 May

The Germans squeezed the Allies into a small pocket during the Battle of France. The British deployed vessels of all sizes to get their troops to the safety of English shores.

Army Group B to the east. For that reason, they could not just suddenly shift and charge direction without serious consequences. If they tried to move south, the Germans would have a golden opportunity to pounce on their flank and rear.

Ironside travelled to France to personally convey Churchill's opinion to the BEF commander. The entire War Cabinet in London also concurred with the prime minister. Gort respectfully stood his ground, explaining how most of the BEF was fighting to the east. Ironside conceded the point but suggested a compromise: why not use Gort's two reserve divisions for a drive south? The French agreed to support the effort with some light mechanized units.

Gort agreed to the proposal. He was sure the effort would be stillborn, but he was a good soldier who was not about to defy the prime minister and seemingly half the British government. Accordingly, a mixed force of infantry and tanks, labeled Frankforce after their commander, Maj. Gen. H.E. Franklyn, was assigned to attempt a breakthrough to the south.

The French also had a new commander in chief, General Maxime Weygand. The septuagenarian had a youthful energy and sunny optimism that dispelled the defeatist gloom that had sunk French headquarters into the depths of despair. Weygand impressed Churchill, grandly unveiling a Weygand Plan that envisioned eight British and French divisions, aided by Belgian cavalry, sweeping southwest to link up with French forces farther south.

But the Weygand Plan was based in fantasy, not reality. The situation was deteriorating rapidly, with Allied forces scattered, fully engaged elsewhere, or simply nonexistent. Weygand grandly issued order after order, paper salvos that might boost morale but did little to counter the German threat. General Order No 1, for example, directed northern armies to "prevent the Germans from reaching the sea," but in point of fact they were already there and had been for several days.

Imperial War Museum

> “ROMMEL'S SEVENTH PANZER DIVISION WAS SURPRISED AND INITIALLY THROWN INTO CONFUSION BY THE SUDDEN ASSAULT. EVEN ROMMEL HIMSELF, A MAN NOT PRONE TO PANIC, THOUGHT HE WAS BEING ATTACKED BY SEVERAL DIVISIONS.”

Imperial War Museum

ABOVE: British soldiers wade out to a ship at Dunkirk. LEFT: With little time to spare, the British showed great ingenuity in evacuating their troops; for example, oceangoing ships loaded troops directly from the East Mole.

In the meantime, Gort dutifully proceeded with his promised attack. Frankforce was a hodgepodge, hastily assembled collection of tanks, infantry, field and antitank guns, and motorcycle reconnaissance platoons. The cutting edge of the offensive was provided by 58 Mk1 and 16 Mk II Matilda tanks. The British Matilda was one of the best Allied tanks of the early years of the war. It featured armor up to three inches thick, and mounted a high-velocity 2-pounder gun.

The British Frankforce offensive began near Arras on May 21. It was spectacularly successful at first. Rommel's Seventh Panzer Division was surprised and initially thrown into confusion by the sudden assault. Even Rommel himself, a man not prone to panic, thought he was being attacked by several divisions.

But perhaps the biggest surprise was the Mark II Matildas. The German 37mm gun, the standard Wehrmacht antitank weapon, was completely ineffective against the Matildas. It was said that one Matilda actually took 14 direct hits and yet emerged undamaged. On a literal roll, the British tanks advanced 10 miles before the Germans rallied and stopped the attack.

The British offensive was halted by a variety of factors. French support turned out to be weak or nonexistent. The British tanks had outdistanced their infantry and artillery support. But the Germans discovered they, too, had a surprise weapon. The 88mm antiaircraft guns turned out to be superb antitank weapons as well. The 88s of the German 23rd Flak Regiment were particularly effective against the British armor at Arras.

The British effort at Arras had been a forlorn hope. It was now Gort's prime mission to save Britain's field army. Soon contingency plans for the evacuation of the BEF were well in hand. By May 26, the BEF and elements of the French First Army were being squeezed into an ever-narrowing corridor 60 miles deep and 25 miles wide Most of the British were in the vicinity of Lille, 43 miles from Dunkirk; the French were farther south.

Luckily, British government officials, including Churchill, finally were starting to come to their senses. They had been mesmerized by hopes of victory and Weygand's elaborate fantasies, but now the spell was broken. The BEF had to be evacuated or it faced sure annihilation. Churchill sincerely insisted that, as far as humanly possible, any trapped French troops also be rescued.

It was with a growing sense of urgency that Operation Dynamo was born. It officially began with the arrival of *Mona's Isle,* a British troop transport, the evening of May 26-27. Luckily Ramsey, operating from his headquarters at Dover, had a wide array of resources at his disposal, including 39 destroyers, 38 destroyer escorts, 69 minesweepers, and a host of other naval craft.

Tennant, Ramsey's senior naval officer ashore, should see that the waters immediately in from of the Dunkirk beaches were too shallow for normal seagoing vessels. Even small craft could not get any closer than about 100 yards from shore, so the soldiers would have to wade out to their rescuers. Once the Tommies were aboard, the small boats would deliver them to the larger ships and then go back for another load.

Approximately 300 "little ships," many of them scarcely more than boats, answered the call to duty. Every imaginable type of craft was used; if it could float, it passed muster. There were motorboats, sloops, ferries, barges, yachts, and fishing boats. Most of the civilians taking part were fishermen, but incredibly one boat was manned by teenage Sea Scouts.

Imperial War Museum

An RAF Lockheed Hudson approaches Dunkirk on a reconnaissance patrol as oil tanks burn near the shore during the evacuation of the British Expeditionary Force.

But this shuttle system was taking too long in practice. Necessity is the mother of invention, and Tennant started thing about the moles. The West Mole was unusable because it was connected to the oil terminal and that facility was in flames. The East Mole, 1,600 feet long, was connected to the beaches by a narrow causeway. But the mole was a breakwater, designed to protect the port from raging seas. It was not intended to serve as a dock for shipping.

Tennant experimented a little, and it was found that ocean-going ships could indeed use the mole as a loading dock. The evacuation process was considerably accelerated, and more men could now be taken away.

In the meantime, land evacuation plans were firming up. With French cooperation, a defensive perimeter was established around Dunkirk and its immediate environs, a bridgehead that protected the port during the BEF's evacuation. The generally marshy nature of the terrain helped the defenders, and man-made waterways like the Berg Canal were incorporated into the overall plan. Dikes were opened in certain areas, transforming these quagmires into shallow seas.

Lieutenant Colonel Robert Bridgeman, 2nd Viscount Bridgeman, was responsible for planning the perimeter. Methodical, clear-sighted, and hard working, he was so absorbed in his task that he was subsisting mainly on chocolate and whiskey. The perimeter would be about 30 miles wide and up to seven miles deep.

To buy time, strongpoints were established to slow the German advance. Gort had established a Canal Line that used the Aa Canal and La Basee Canal to guard the forward approaches to Dunkirk. British units held these strongpoints for as long as possible, fighting with dogged determination and stubborn courage, until they were forced to withdraw yet again.

The Dorset Regiment was holding a strongpoint at Festubert when it became clear that it was cut off and virtually surrounded. When they received orders to withdraw, they waited until nightfall to make the attempt. Colonel E.L. Stevenson, the battalion commander, had no maps but did possess a compass. His party included about 250 Dorsets and a ragtag group of odds and sods who had lost their units.

It was a pitch black; even the stars were shrouded by menacing dark clouds. At one point, Stephenson found himself confronted with a German sergeant who was out inspecting Wehrmacht outposts. Quickly drawing his pistol, he coolly killed the sergeant with one well-placed shot and motioned for the men to continue their trek.

Groping their way through the darkness, stumbling forward as best they could, the Dorsets suddenly came upon a road that barred their way. They had to cross this road to gain Allied lines, but at the moment it was filled with a convoy of German tanks and support vehicles rolling their way to some unknown destination. It looked like an entire panzer division was on the move, the Germans so confident they had their headlights blazing.

Stephenson and his men hunkered down in the shadows, hoping for a chance to cross the road. After about an hour the last vehicle passed, and the coast was clear. But the respite was temporary because another convoy of Germans could be heard rumbling up the road. The Dorsets scrambled across the road and hid in the underbrush just as the Germans came into view.

But the Dorsets' odyssey was only just beginning. Guided by Stephenson's trusty compass, they waded waist-deep through ditches stinking with garbage, groped though plowed fields, and crossed a wide and deep canal twice. They reached Allied lines around 5 AM, dirty and exhausted, but triumphant.

The last few days had been a nightmare for the Allies, but the victorious Germans, perhaps a bit stunned by their own successes, were having their own set of troubles. Guderian's panzers pushed on, with the Sambre River on their northern flank and the Somme on their left. On May 20 German tanks reached Abbeville at the mouth of the Somme, to all intents and purposes fulfilling their original mission. They had reached the sea and were the tip of a huge panzer corridor that divided the First French Army and the BEF from French forces south of the Somme.

German panzers rumbled past bewildered French peasants, their treads kicking up clouds of dust plumes. They were followed by truckloads of motorized infantry, bronzed young soldiers who seemed to be in high spirits.

But now that they were on the coast, what would be the next course of action? At 8 AM on May 22, the German high command sent a message in code Abmarche Nord. The plan now was to thrust north, taking the Channel ports and blocking the BEF's last escape route. The Second Panzer Division would head for Boulogne, the Tenth Panzer Division for Calais, and the First Panzer Division for Dunkirk.

Lieutenant General Friedrich Kirchner's 1st Division tanks set out around 11 AM on May 23. Dunkirk was 38 miles to the northeast. By 8 PM that same day, advance units reached the Aa Canal, which was only 12 miles from Dunkirk. The waterway was part of Gort's advance Canal Line defense, but at the moment there were relatively few Allied troops in the area to man it. Although Guderian and his advance panzer crews were in a state of euphoria, some senior officers were not so happy.

Imperial War Museum

A British soldier on the beach at Dunkirk fires at a German aircraft. Some of the British considered the bombing and strafing by German aircraft little more than a nuisance.

To Rundstedt, the long panzer corridor was far too vulnerable to counterattack. The panzers and motorized infantry were too far ahead of the unglamorous but vital regular infantry. It was the foot-slogging regular infantry what would shore up the corridor's long and vulnerable flanks, not seemingly thin as an eggshell and liable to break under a determined Allied counterthrust.

The British attack at Arras had badly scared the Germans, who feared the Allies might be planning an even more powerful counterattack. The Dunkirk area was not really suitable for armor, which was something everyone knew. What is more, a few panzer units were down to 50 percent strength. Some were victims of enemy action, but many more were simply worn out and in need of maintenance.

Rundstedt ordered the panzers to halt, a decision that was supported by Fourth Army commander General Guenther von Kluge. Hitler concurred; he was becoming nervous about the French coastal areas, which he had known firsthand as a soldier in World War I. The land was boggy and cut by numerous canals and certainly not ideal for armor.

The action at Arras might have been abortive, but it did manage to scare the Germans into a mood of excessive caution. Suppose the Allies were planning a new thrust, a counterattack even greater than the one at Arras? It was a possibility that haunted both Hitler and his senior officers.

Luftwaffe chief Hermann Göring now put in his bid for glory. He told the Führer his aircraft could finish off the British, in effect driving them into the sea. Hitler gave Göring the green light in part because his eyes were gazing elsewhere. The panzers still had to defeat the French forces south of the Somme. As for Paris, the prize that had eluded the Germans in World War I, the objective seemed well within Hitler's grasp.

But after two days Göring's assurances were shown to be empty bombast. The BEF was far from destroyed, so the Führer lifted the halt order. The panzers renewed the advance on the afternoon of May 26, but the Allies had been given two precious days to continue the evacuation.

Time was running out if the BEF was going to pull off a successful withdrawal. The Belgian Army capitulated on the night of May 27, a situation the Germans were bound to exploit. King Leopold III of the Belgians had protested that his army could do no more, but the surrender left the BEF's flank dangerously open. For a time, only German uncertainty about a renewed advance prevented a British disaster.

While Hitler and his generals debated, battered units of the BEF continued to arrive at Dunkirk. They had trekked for miles, their progress impeded by roads choked with fleeing refugee civilians. The Luftwaffe was having a field day, with German planes strafing civilian and soldier alike with cheerful abandon. Rations were scanty, and little food was found along the way. Fatigue was etched in their faces, and their battledress was dirty and soaked with sweat, but somehow they managed to put one foot in front of the other by sheer force of will.

Bridgeman had done his work well. To avoid unnecessary confusion, the three corps of the BEF were assigned specific debarkation sectors. III Corps would head for the beaches at Malo-les-Bains, a suburb of Dunkirk. I Corps would march to Bray-Dunes, which was six miles further east. II Corps was told to assemble at La Panne, which was just across the Belgian border.

BEF headquarters was at La Panne. The BEF had selected that location for its headquarters because it was the site of a telephone cable with a direct link to England. Lt. Gen. Sir Ronald Adam set up shop in the Maire, or town hall, of the seaside resort.

The bone-weary Tommies passed through the defense perimeter with a sense of relief, then entered a world that must have seemed almost surreal under the circumstances. Malo-les-Bains and the other towns were peacetime seaside resorts, where many French and Belgians had enjoyed summer holidays. There were bandstands where music once played, and carrousels where laughing children had ridden elaborately carved horses. Beach chairs lay scattered about and the colorful cafés still had stocks of refreshments.

The British soldiers seemed happy to be in this vacation spot and were going to make the most of it while they waited for deliverance. Dunkirk itself still blazed, the raging oil-fueled fires sending up columns of billowing smoke 13,000 feet into the air, but most of the troops were on the flat, sandy beaches that stretched toward the Belgian border.

German Stukas would appear occasionally, but after the terrors of the past weeks, some Tommies considered them more nuisances than objects of terror. The soldiers played games and swam, and some threw away their Enfield rifles and wandered aimlessly across the sands. Still others pilfered French wines and liquor and sat around the cafés chatting and drinking like tourists on holiday. One man even stripped to his shorts and sunbathed, contentedly reading a novel.

At times the German bombardment was more than just a nuisance, but the British had almost no antiaircraft guns because of a monumental mix up. In the original orders, spare gunners were to go to the beach, a directive that included wounded or incapacitated men. Maj. Gen. Henry Martin somehow misunderstood, thinking it meant that all gunners were to be evacuated.

Since all gunners were to leave, or so he thought, Martin ordered all his 3.7-inch artillery pieces to be destroyed, lest they fall into enemy hands. When Martin proudly reported to Adam that "all antiaircraft guns have been spiked," the latter was incredulous. This was stupidity beyond words. Baffled and weary, Adam merely replied, "You fool, go away."

Some Tommies complained that they saw little or nothing of the Royal Air Force. The RAF did its best, bombing enemy positions and sending up fighters during the daylight hours. At the end of Operation Dynamo, the RAF had lost 177 aircraft while the Germans lost 240. This was a foretaste of the Battle of Britain for the Germans, who were meeting an aerial foe equal, or in some cases, superior to them in equipment and personnel for the first time.

The English Channel, which is notorious for being capricious, "cooperated" with the British to a very remarkable degree. For nine crucial days it was flat calm, more like a millpond than a storm-swept waterway. This is not to say that passage to England was trouble free. Each route was in some way exposed to direct German attack or German-created hazards. Route Z was the shortest route, but it was within range of German batteries at Calais. Route X, to the southeast, avoided German artillery but was subject to shoals and mines. Route Y, which was 100 miles in a long, circuitous path, was subject to German air attack.

When their time came the British soldiers peacefully queued in long lines and walked into the surf. Arthur Divine, a civilian who was manning one of the little ships, remembered the British soldiers queuing up, "the lines of men wearily and sleepily staggering across the beach from the dunes to the shallows, falling into little boats, great columns of men thrust out into the water among bomb and shell splashes."

Both: Imperial War Museum

ABOVE: British troops arriving in Dover, England, receive a warm welcome from their fellow countrymen. TOP: The remains of British soldiers and vehicles lie abandoned along the beach near Dunkirk.

"The foremost ranks were shoulder deep [in the water], moving forward under the command of young subalterns, themselves with their heads just above water," said Divine. The BEF had no choice but to abandon all their equipment and vehicles, but some of the army trucks performed a final but nevertheless vital service. They were driven into the shallows and lashed together to form improvised jetties.

The evacuation would not have been possible without the sacrifice of British and French units outside the immediate Dunkirk region. Surrounded and under siege, the bulk of the French First Army held out at Lille until May 30. In the process, they managed to tie up no fewer than six German divisions. The First Army fought so well that the Germans granted them the full honors of war, including marching out into captivity preceded by a band playing lively martial airs.

The British garrison at Calais also performed heroically, although historians debate to what extent their defense held up the German advance. The Calais Force was led by Brig. Gen. Claude Nicholson and 4,000 men. Nicholson's command included some well-trained regulars, the King's Royal Rifle Brigade and 1st Rifle Brigade. There was also the 1st Queen Victoria's Rifles and elements of the 3rd Royal Tank Regiment

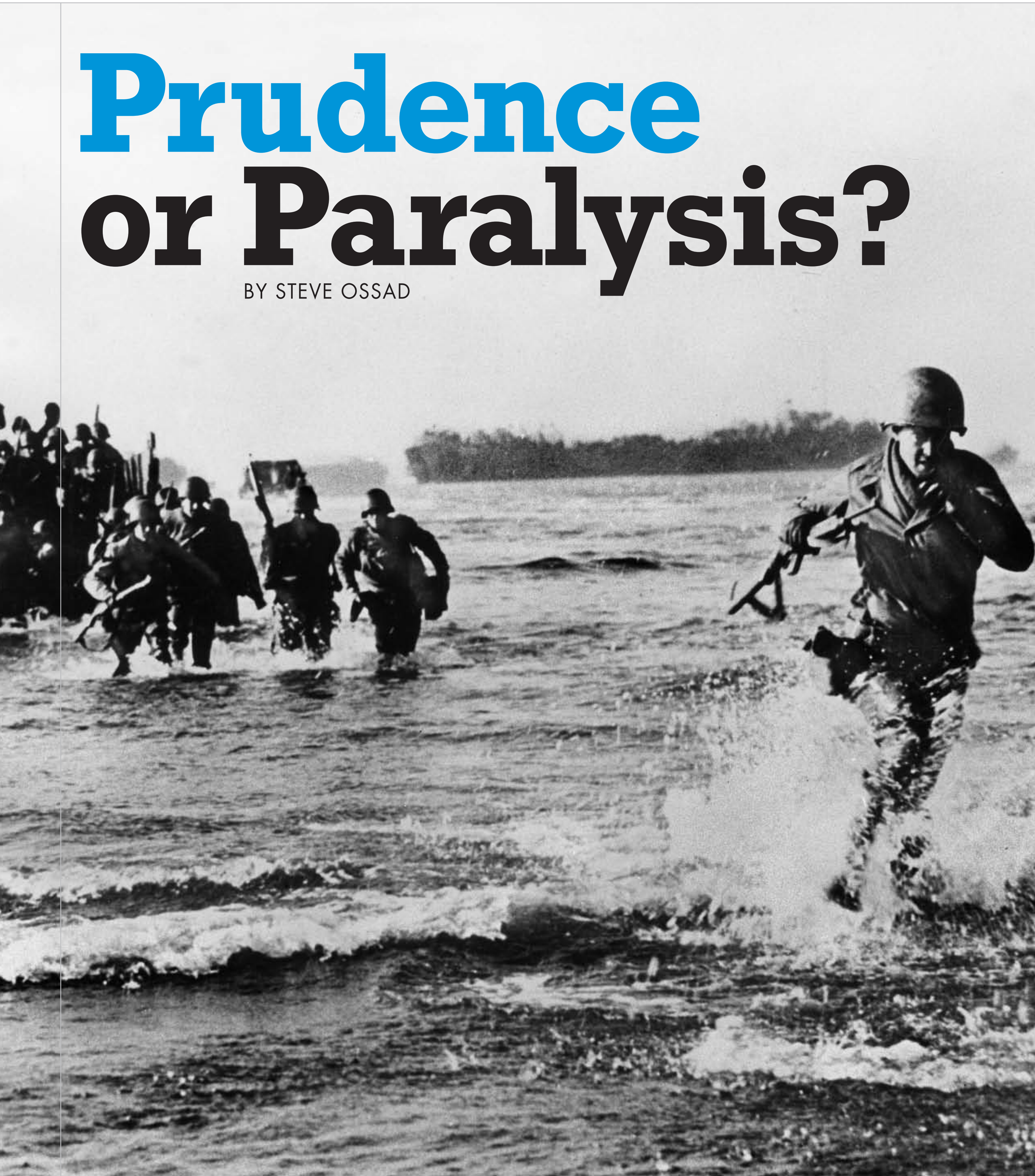
The Calais fortifications were outdated. The celebrated French engineer Vauban had designed some of the fortifications in the 17th century. Despite this defensive weakness, the garrison fought with great courage and tenacity for several days, but it finally succumbed to the enemy and surrendered on May 30. It probably bought some additional time for the evacuation process; given the crisis situation, every little bit helped.

Operation Dynamo continued until June 4, when it was clear French rearguard defenses were finally crumbling. Tennant sent a laconic but succinct message back to England: The official totals were gratifying. No fewer than 338,226 men were evacuated; of that number 139,000 were French. Earlier, more pessimistic estimates of the number of men rescued were as low as 45,000.

Great Britain was relieved that the BEF had escaped, but Churchill reminded the country, "Wars are not won by evacuations." Still, the BEF was a professional core that future armies could be built upon. As one British newspaper put it, the deliverance at Dunkirk was a "bloody miracle." □

Prudence or Paralysis?

BY STEVE OSSAD



Ullstein Bild / The Granger Collection, New York

GENERAL JOHN P. LUCAS, COMMANDING THE ALLIED TROOPS AT ANZIO, HAS BEEN CRITICIZED FOR HIS DECISION TO DELAY THE ADVANCE ON ROME.

Hitler called it an "abscess." British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, the chief sponsor and loudest cheerleader for the endeavor, grudgingly proclaimed it "a disaster." Lt. Gen. Mark Clark, commander of the U.S. Fifth Army, described it as a "strip of hell." American GIs, their British brothers-in-arms, and their German adversaries had more profane and gruesome descriptions, most of which would never pass a censor or editor's review.

The bloody four-month agony of Anzio was one of the most difficult campaigns ever fought by an Anglo-American army. In spite of its ultimately disappointing results, it was also a heroic stage upon which the grim determination, bravery, and sacrifice of Allied soldiers was displayed. By Mark Clark's calculation, more than one in five Medals of Honor awarded to ground soldiers of the U.S. Army during World War II went to men who fought at Anzio.

Even before the end of the battle, however, arguments about responsibility for its disappointing outcome had begun, and they have continued ever since. While the terms and tenor of the debate have varied over the years, there is one constant element in the discussion: whether or not the principle responsibility for the failure to outflank the enemy belongs to American VI Corps commander Maj. Gen. John P. Lucas or elsewhere. Should Lucas have moved aggressively immediately after the successful landing to seize the Alban Hills and cut the German lines of communication and supply, or was he right to consolidate the beachhead, build up his forces, and protect the port that was crucial to his survival? As historian Martin Blumenson framed the question, had Lucas been "prudent" or simply "paralyzed."

John Lucas first gained notoriety early in the 20th century during a fabled episode that still stirs America's imagination and influenced its policies and leaders for decades. Late on the evening of March 8, 1916, 2nd Lt. Lucas, then machine-gun troop commander of the 13th Cavalry Regiment, got off the "drunkard special," the train connecting his duty station at Columbus, New Mexico, with free-wheeling El Paso, Texas, where he had spent the previous week playing in the inter-regimental polo matches. A hunch had moved him to return home after the last match rather than the next morning. Now, bone tired, he was ready to collapse in his bunk.

One more chore remained. His roommate, fellow West Pointer 2nd Lt. Clarence C. Benson, had gone on maneuvers and had swiped most of the revolver ammunition. Lucas wanted to make sure his .38 was loaded—a second hunch or perhaps a premonition of danger. He finally drifted off to sleep well past midnight. At 4:30 AM, he was awakened by the sound of a galloping rider passing his cottage. He looked out the window and instantly realized that Pancho Villa's outlaws had surrounded his house and were moving on the town.

National Archives

ABOVE: Major John P. Lucas, commander of the U.S. VI Corps, had doubts about the prospects for the success of Operation Shingle from the beginning. LEFT: American soldiers splash ashore at Anzio, Italy, during an end run expected to compromise the German defenses of the Gustav Line. The landings failed to achieve the desired results and remain controversial to this day.

He grabbed his pistol and took a position in the middle of the room, where he could command the door and window. He fully expected to die but was determined to "get a few of them before they got me." A sentry posted nearby—who paid for his bravery with his life—saved Lucas by shooting a bandit about to enter the bungalow. The outlaws scattered. Hurrying outside, Lucas joined them, relying on the darkness to hide his identity. After slipping away and rallying his men, Lucas helped secure their guns, and his troop unleashed a terrific barrage, helping to rout the invaders out of town. Lucas emerged from the fracas a hero, but in a stroke of bad luck his commander's recommendation for a Distinguished Service Cross was mishandled and he received no official recognition.

John Porter Lucas was born on January 14, 1890, in rural West Virginia. After graduation from West Point in 1911, he was commissioned into the cavalry. After several years of duty in the Philippines, he served in the Mexican Punitive Expedition to chase down and eliminate his erstwhile nemesis, Pancho Villa. When America entered the Great War, he took command of the signals battalion of the 33rd Division and in June 1918 was wounded during the Amiens campaign. Sent back to the Uunited Staes for convalescence, he was transferred to the Field Artillery, and for the next 20 years his career followed the normal pattern of field and staff assignments, stints as student and instructor at the Army's schools, and glacially slow promotion.

As war preparations and the expansion of the Army gained momentum, he was promoted to brigadier general in 1940 and several years later took command of the 3rd Infantry Division. As a result of the vigorous training programs he initiated during this period, Lucas gained a reputation as one of the few senior American officers with expertise in amphibious operations. He had already attracted the attention of Army Chief of Staff George C. Marshall, who described him as possessing "military stature, prestige, and experience."

Dispatched in 1943 to North Africa as a headquarters observer, Lucas returned to the United States to take over III Corps but was soon ordered back to the Mediterranean, this time as lieutenant general and theater commander Dwight Eisenhower's deputy or, in his words, Ike's "personal representative with the combat troops" in Sicily. After that campaign and a brief assignment leading II Corps, he relieved Maj. Gen. Ernest J. Dawley and took command of VI Corps on September 20, 1943, just 10 days after the Allied invasion of the Italian mainland at Salerno.

Affectionately called "Sugar Daddy," "Foxy Grandpa," or "Corncob Charlie," Lucas performed well in spite of great difficulties, solidifying his reputation as a steady, unflappable, and experienced combat leader. His boss, Mark Clark, noting Lucas's effective employment of artillery and innovative use of pack mules for supply in the impassable terrain, told him in admiration, "You know how to fight in the mountains." Four months of grueling mountain warfare, however, had exacted a high personal cost. Lucas was exhausted, dispirited, and discouraged, and he emerged from the battle "looking far older than his 54 years." Had his combat career ended at this point, his place among the small group of universally respected wartime American corps commanders would have been assured. In fact, he fully expected to be relieved and dispatched home to a training command, a prospect he quietly welcomed. Events, however, would soon overtake his urgent and obvious need for a long rest.

By late 1943, the Italian campaign had settled into a bloody stalemate with the Allies unable to break through the German Gustav Line north of Naples. Among the solutions considered by the senior theater commanders, Eisenhower and 15th Army Group commander Sir Harold R.L.G. Alexander, was an amphibious operation to outflank the strong enemy defenses. The planners soon focused their attention on Anzio, a small fishing and resort town on the Tyrrhenian Sea just 32 miles south of Rome.

A number of characteristics made it an

Navy History and Heritage Command

attractive choice. Most important was the availability of a functioning port, first constructed by Anzio's most famous native son, the first century AD Emperor Nero and rebuilt at the end of the 17th century. The Allied experts were certain the circular facility would be able to sustain a major amphibious force operating behind enemy lines. Furthermore, the surrounding terrain was suitable for a large-scale landing and subsequent expansion of the beachhead. Finally, Anzio was well within range of Allied ground support aircraft based near Naples.

On November 8, 1943, Eisenhower ordered Alexander and his American subordinate, Mark Clark, commanding the U.S. Fifth Army, to begin active planning for the landing code named Operation Shingle and tentatively scheduled for December 20, 1943. For various logistical reasons, that plan was soon scrubbed but was later resurrected after a command reorganization of the Mediterranean Theater. That change shifted the decision-making initiative to the British, whose enthusiasm and strategic interest in operations in Italy, including Operation Shingle, far exceeded that of their American allies. The British—inspired by Churchill—felt that the indirect approach through the soft underbelly of Nazi Germany and a crucial political-military objective—Rome—could best and most quickly be achieved via an amphibious landing at Anzio. That maneuver would reduce the pressure on the main Fifth Army front stalled at the fortified Gustav Line and allow a decisive breakthrough right to the gates of the Eternal City.

A victory would also reassert the importance of the British, whose global influence was rapidly waning under the steady buildup of American and Soviet power. Churchill wielded his considerable influence to secure the necessary support, especially scarce landing craft, to make a landing in late January possible. He smothered any opposition to the plan by force of personality and channeled his energy to motivate his senior commanders, especially Alexander and Clark, whose reservations soon evaporated in the face of the prime minister's eloquent fervor.

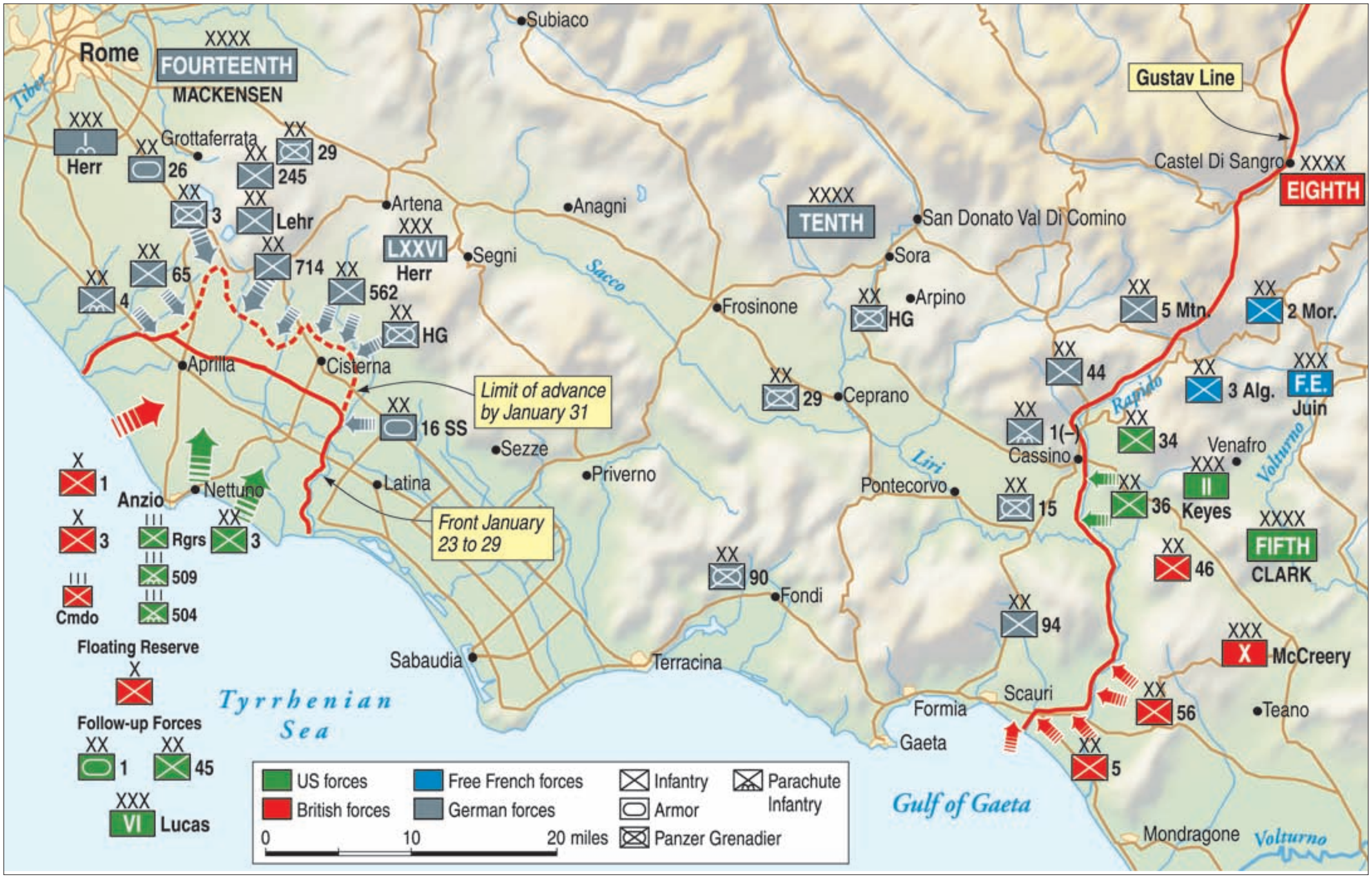
During the course of the stop-and-go planning effort, two distinct approaches to the ultimate objective of the landing had emerged. The British view was that the Anzio operation should be the main strategic focus. Alexander believed that seizing the Alban Hills was essential to cutting supply arteries to the Gustav Line and forcing a German withdrawal. While he never issued an unequivocal order that specified his wishes, his instructions to Fifth Army on January 2, 1944, came close. Clark was instructed to "carry out an assault landing ... with the object of cutting the enemy lines of communication and threatening the rear of the German XIV Corps." On January 12, 1944, Alexander repeated that the object was to "cut the enemy's main communications in the Colli Laziali [Alban Hills] area."

The American view was that the main objective should be forcing the Gustav Line, anchored on the town of Cassino. The goal of the Anzio landing, therefore, was to draw off enemy forces from the main front, enhancing the possibility of a breakthrough and subsequent linkup. Political pressure, especially from the British, smothered any attempt to reconcile the two views. This inherent conflict of purpose just beneath the surface would help stoke the recriminations and decades of debate that followed the battle.

All that remained to put the plan into effect was the selection of the landing forces and commander. In spite of reservations about his physical stamina and aggressiveness, Clark quickly settled on Lucas and his American VI Corps, built around the U.S. 3rd (Maj. Gen. Lucian K. Truscott) and British 1st (Maj. Gen. W.R.C.

American troops land at Anzio on January 22, 1941, against light enemy resistance. The Luftwaffe did make an appearance and scored a hit on a supply ship, which burns in the background.

Map © 2017 Philip Schwartzberg, Meridian Mapping, Minneapolis, MN


Subiaco
Rome
XXXX
FOURTEENTH
MACKENSEN
Tiber
XXX
Herr
Grottaferrata
XX 26
XX 29
XX 245
XX 3
XX Lehr
Artena
XXX
LXXVI
Herr
Anagni
Segni
XX 65
XX 714
XX 562
XX 4
XX HG
Sacco
XXXX
TENTH
San Donato Val Di Comino
Sora
Arpino
Frosinone
XX HG
Gustav Line
Castel Di Sangro
XXXX
EIGHTH
XX 5 Mtn.
XX 2 Mor.
Aprilia
Cisterna
Limit of advance by January 31
XX 16 SS
Sezze
XX 29
Ceprano
XX 44
XX 3 Alg.
XXX
F.E.
Juin
Rapido
XX 1(–)
Cassino
XX 34
Venafro
XXX
II
Keyes
Volturno
Liri
X 1
Anzio
Nettuno
Latina
Priverno
Pontecorvo
XX 15
XX 36
XXXX
FIFTH
CLARK
X 3
III Rgrs
XX 3
Front January 23 to 29
III 509
III Cmdo
III 504
XX 90
Fondi
XX 46
XX 94
XXX
X
McCreery
Floating Reserve
X
Sabaudia
Terracina
Tyrrhenian Sea
Follow-up Forces
XX 1
XX 45
XXX
VI
Lucas
Formia
Scauri
Gaeta
XX 56
Teano
XX 5
US forces
British forces
Free French forces
German forces
Infantry
Armor
Panzer Grenadier
Parachute Infantry
0
10
20 miles
Gulf of Gaeta
Mondragone
Volturno

Northwest of the Gustav Line, Anzio was only about 35 miles from Rome; however, VI Corps failed to advance rapidly on the capital of Fascist Italy. Although the road was open, General John P. Lucas chose to consolidate his beachhead rather than strike swiftly toward the Eternal City.

Penney) Infantry Divisions. Alexander expressed his agreement, describing Lucas as “the best American corps commander” and the most experienced in amphibious operations, a man in whom he had “every confidence.”

The endorsement was disingenuous. Alexander viewed Lucas as he did most Americans, as a lightweight, and his British colleagues, most of whom were uncomfortable with Lucas’s style, shared his opinion. British visitors to Lucas’s headquarters described it as a “debating society” that lacked firm direction, confidence, and clarity of purpose. What his American admirers regarded as a prudent and deliberate nature, his English colleagues viewed as “pathological slowness.” One young officer thought that they were “commanded by a dear old pussy-cat.” Most troubling of all, however, was the lack of Maj. Gen. Penney’s confidence.

While Clark’s choice of Lucas was reasonable on its face and not controversial, it was certainly not inspiring. Stolid, methodical, cautious, and careful, Lucas was no one’s idea of the aggressive, decisive commander suited to a desperate venture and likely to be confronted with many dangerous decisions along the way. Small in stature, slow of gait, and looking very much like a village librarian or accountant, he was already visibly old at 54. Just eight days before the landing, he marked his birthday, writing in his diary, “I am afraid I feel every year of it,” and a British soldier noted that he acted as if he were “10 years older than Father Christmas.”

From the start, Lucas was openly skeptical of the Anzio plan and believed he lacked the men and ships to conduct a successful landing, hold the beachhead, and mount a serious threat to the German rear. Technically, the mission was especially formidable. As a joint American-British undertaking, the special logistical problems of an amphibious operation were even more complicated than usual. He was especially put off by the bravura and overconfidence of the British, particularly Churchill and Alexander. The specter of the 1915 disaster at the Dardanelles, of which the prime minister had been the chief proponent, haunted Lucas, as the general’s diary makes plain: “The whole affair has a strong odor of Gallipoli and apparently the same amateur was still on the coach’s bench.”

Further, there had not been enough time to plan and prepare, as a disastrous rehearsal on January 19, 1944, made plain. Lucas’s entreaties for more time were summarily rebuffed, and he felt that his superiors knew more than they were revealing, writing in his diary, “Apparently everyone was in on the secret of the German intentions except me.… I wish the higher levels [of command] were not so overoptimistic.” Lucas’s intuition was vindicated with the much later revelation of the role Ultra intelligence played in the overconfidence of the Allied high command.

In spite of his reservations, apprehensions, and fears, however, Lucas was a disciplined professional and prepared himself for the task with grim resolve. The description of a famous dinner just before the landings illustrates his fatalism in the face of the general consensus of what lay ahead. George Patton, a friend and admirer of Lucas, warned him that he was being handed a suicidal mission and was almost certain to face disaster and even death. Lucas replied in his folksy manner, “I’m just a poor working-class girl trying to get ahead.” What he meant, of course, was clear to the attendees; he was a professional soldier and would carry out his orders no matter how misguided or impossible they might be.

Those orders were, in fact, deceptively simple: first, establish and protect a beachhead and then "advance on" the hills. The choice of words of the second part of the mission was intentionally vague. What does "advance on" actually mean? Does it mean, "advance toward" or "advance all the way to"—also implying the capture of the heights? The selection of words was described at the time as calculated and the result of much analysis. Clark justified it by the desire to offer Lucas a measure of flexibility in light of uncertainty about the scale and intensity of the German reaction.

A confidential discussion on January 12, 1944, between Lucas and Clark's operations officer, Brig. Gen. Donald W. Brann, suggested that most of the Fifth Army staff believed VI Corps would have its hands full just establishing and protecting the beachhead. Although Brann's briefing included advice from Clark that Lucas should not "stick his neck out," the tactical decisions were left to VI Corps. In the most telling signal of all, during his visit to the beachhead on D-Day, Clark reminded Lucas again that his own aggressiveness at Salerno had nearly led to disaster.

At 0200 hours on January 22, 1944, VI Corps landed on the beaches of Anzio and Nettuno. It was, arguably, the most stunningly successful amphibious landing during World War II. Even the skeptical Lucas thought so. Achieving complete tactical surprise and virtually unopposed, VI Corps landed almost 50,000 troops, 5,200 vehicles, and most of its heavy weapons with the loss of less than 150 men killed, wounded, or missing. Two German battalions were quickly destroyed, and for 48 hours there were virtually no opposing enemy forces confronting the beachhead. During that time, Lucas achieved all his initial objectives, establishing a beachhead that was seven miles deep.

More than satisfied with the results and feeling as if he had won a great victory against all the odds, Lucas dug in and waited for more men, tanks, heavy weapons, and supplies to strengthen his hold on the beachhead and port. He limited his offensive operations to small-scale patrols and reconnaissance and made no significant advance toward the Alban Hills. During one ferocious German bombing raid on the port, Lucas displayed great personal courage for which he was awarded the Silver Star. In spite of the anticipated difficulties, Lucas had presided over a tactical triumph, and Clark and Alexander seemed to concur with his decisions.

The Germans, however, had not been idle, and the initiative and mood at headquarters, soon shifted toward them. Their buildup of forces opposite the beachhead exceeded expectations, and Lucas's belated attempts at the end of January to move out from the beachhead met bloody failure opposite the American lines at Cisterna and at the other end of the landing beach where the British desperately and futilely tried to hold a small group of buildings quickly dubbed "the factory."

As the stalemate continued to deepen with mounting losses, the erosion of confidence in Lucas grew. He rarely left his command post, and a Maginot Line mentality soon developed among the senior staff. At one conference, Lucas seemed confused and forgot the name of the crucial hills dominating the terrain. In a conference with newsmen he openly praised the German fighting spirit, seemingly oblivious of the impact such a statement might have on his

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ABOVE: The nearby resort town of Nettuno was also a focus of the German defenses around Anzio. Although they were hit by American aircraft and artillery, German panzergrenadiers such as these moved forward to stall the Allied drive on Rome. TOP: An American tank rolls forward to the crest of a hill just off the beach at Anzio. When the Germans realized that Rome was threatened, they reacted swiftly and hemmed in the VI Corps on the beach. The result was a months-long, bloody stalemate.

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ABOVE: An American soldier aims a bazooka antitank weapon at a German vehicle in the distance while another crawls forward during the fighting at Anzio. The American forces did not break out of the beachhead until the launching of Operation Diadem in the spring of 1944. RIGHT: This American soldier was killed in action at Anzio during one of many attempts to break out of the German encirclement of the beachhead.

men's morale. Clearly a change was required.

The original plan had called for Clark to turn over Fifth Army to Lucas after Rome had been taken so the former could step up to Army Group command, but that was now impossible. The Allied high command, however, was reluctant to relieve Lucas right in the middle of a desperate fight. This was not the only time before or after that such a calculation delayed a much-needed change of command. After the disastrous Ranger-led attack on Cisterna at the end of January and the German counterattack, however, the pressure mounted. Lucas had to go. On February 23, 1944, as General Eberhard von Mackensen's Fourteenth Army counterattack lost momentum, Maj. Gen. Truscott, the aggressive commander of the 3rd Infantry Division, took over VI Corps at the open insistence of Alexander.

Months of hard fighting followed until the Allies finally broke through the Gustav Line and marched into Rome on June 5, 1944. Even that victory was scant reward for all the suffering. The Normandy landings completely overshadowed the event, robbing Clark of glory and Churchill of his strategic and political victory. The cost of Anzio had been terrible; Allied losses were estimated at 7,000 killed in action, 36,000 wounded and missing, and another 44,000 noncombat casualties. Field Marshall Albert Kesselring estimated the Germans had lost 5,000 killed and 34,000 wounded and missing.

Lucas was promoted to deputy commander of Fifth Army and then quietly sent home, where he performed well in a series of training commands. His career was not officially marked with a failure, and his superiors, especially Clark, tried to spare his feelings and had only positive comments about his performance. The judgment of history, however, has not been so generous, and opinions have varied while the level of intensity surrounding the debate has not. Lucas died an exhausted and disappointed man in 1949 at the age of 59. Until the end of his life he believed that he had been given an impossible task and then abandoned—betrayed may not be too strong a description—by his superiors. His diary is full of self-justification and offers a bitter commentary on the battle and his perception of the perfidy of those who ordered him to do the impossible.

In the years since, two points of view have emerged. The aggressive school of thought posits that Lucas should have gone for the Alban Hills and Rome, if not immediately, certainly within the first few days of the landing. Even the Germans were surprised by his lack of aggressiveness. At the very least, he should have mounted a credible threat by taking several objectives beyond the beachhead. The prudent analysis is that the mission was flawed from the beginning, taking and holding the hills were beyond the capabilities of VI Corps, and Lucas did what was necessary to preserve the beachhead. Regardless of the answers to the lingering questions, there are always lessons in failure. What were they?

First, the choice of a field commander for a difficult mission should never be based on expedience, political acceptability, or the path of least resistance. It must be based on fitness for command, a thorough understanding of the mission and its requirements, and a belief in its chances for success. Mark Clark should have realized that Lucas was exhausted and both physically and mentally unfit for the rigors of an amphibious landing behind enemy lines. If he did not, then he was either negligent or willfully ignored the potential consequences of his choice. Further, Lucas had been frank in his criticism of the concept of the operation, its timetable, allocation of resources, and its chances for success. He did everything short of publicly predicting a disaster and was clearly saying (in so many words) that he should be reassigned.

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Second, while Lucas was a poor choice for command, the failure of the operation cannot be laid at his feet. No one could have accomplished the mission. Why? For one thing, it is still not clear what the mission was. At the level of operational objectives, there was a fundamental disconnect among the goals of the British, the Americans, and the military realities in the field. Each Ally had a different and essentially contradictory view of the operation and its purpose. The British hoped to force the collapse of the Gustav Line by cutting the lines of communication at the hills. The landing was, therefore, the main effort. The Americans wanted to divert the Germans from their assault on the Gustav Line, draw off forces, and ease the way for the drive across the Rapido River and beyond, which Clark regarded as the main effort. The last-minute cancellation of a scheduled paratroop drop at the Alban Hills must have seemed to Lucas even more evidence that the high command did not view the hills as an objective for which excessive risks should be taken.

Third, regardless of the objective, the landing was doomed from the start. The effort was far too weak to mount a decisive blow—or even a credible threat—against the German lines of communication, nor was it strong enough to ease the way for the drive against Cassino. As Lucas himself noted, the landing of two divisions was not likely to send the Germans running in a panic, particularly since Clark had made no progress in denting the Gustav Line, supposedly a necessary precondition for the landing.

Even a cursory look at a map makes it apparent that the sheer mass of the objective would have required many times the size of the force that was committed. The compromise, really the failure to agree on a single objective, resulted in two widely separated efforts, each incapable of mutual support and neither strong enough to do its job. Compounding this basic confusion about the main objective of the landing were the respective attitudes of the Allies. The British were overconfident and overoptimistic, cheered on by Churchill. The Americans were unenthusiastic and skeptical. The irony is that the Gustav Line collapsed only after the frontal assault that Anzio was supposed to avoid. By that time, tens of thousands of soldiers had paid the price.

Fourth, the failure of 15th Army Group and Fifth Army to reach agreement on the campaign objective is bad enough, but Clark's ambiguous orders to Lucas—"advance on" the Alban Hills—were inexcusable. While supposedly designed to allow freedom of maneuver, the unofficial personal briefing delivered by Brig. Gen. Brann at the start of the campaign left little doubt that Lucas was not expected to act aggressively. When a bloody stalemate ensued, Lucas was caught between Alexander's frustration and Clark's indecision and eventually became the victim of his superiors' conflicting expectations and ambitions.

A fair assessment would have to conclude that that the Allies could not have taken and held the Alban Hills. They had neither the resources nor the unity of command necessary for such an ambitious goal. Had Lucas moved aggressively within the first few days, he might have taken several of the objectives along the way, such as Cisterna and Albano, heightening the threat to the German rear. That might reasonably be considered the least common denominator in the divergent British and American concepts of the operation. Whether even that achievement would have been decisive or prevented the bloodbath that resulted is far from clear.

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An American soldier fires a .30-caliber water-cooled machine gun at German positions around the Galleria di Monte Orso near Fondi while an M-10 tank destroyer trains its gun on the enemy as well. The performance of General John P. Lucas, commander of the VI Corps at Anzio, was deemed poor, and he was relieved of command.

Where, then, does the ultimate responsibility lie for the failure at Anzio? As in the earlier case of General Lloyd Fredendall during the North African campaign, the answer must be sought at a level higher than the field commander. The men responsible for the Mediterranean Theater—Clark, and especially Alexander, bear the major responsibility. They picked the wrong man for the job, gave him essentially impossible orders, and refused to take responsibility when the inevitable disaster materialized. Perhaps worst of all, they allowed an honorable soldier to bear the shame of their failure.

In the final analysis, the operation should never have been mounted. The high command should have directed its energies to a more creative plan for breaching the Gustav Line rather than the sacrifice it precipitated. Of course, that is easy to conclude in hindsight, but the fact remains that Anzio was a mistake, paid for in blood, and blamed on an honorable man.

As distinct from the relief of Fredendall after Kasserine, however, the issue was not the competence of the man selected. At Anzio, Alexander and Clark—and their political masters who ratified their decisions—selected a competent but exhausted soldier and hurled him into a grueling and bitter fight under the worst possible circumstances. It is hard in retrospect to understand how they failed to recognize Lucas's diminished condition. The usual explanation—no one noticed he looked old, exhausted, and spent because he always looked that way—is not persuasive. By the time they could no longer ignore the effects of their mistake and it was impossible to avoid the necessity of a change of command, the battle had reached a critical moment, and the immediate relief of Lucas would have raised serious morale issues. A poor decision led to indecision and even more suffering.

Had Lucas been dispatched to America after the Salerno operation, he would have been regarded as a major World War II hero. Instead, he became deeply enmeshed in one of the bloodiest battles of the war and in a bitter historical debate. Still, there is something essentially sympathetic about Lucas, and his fate is heavy with irony. As a professional soldier he had no choice but to carry out an order he regarded as impossible, and he was fully prepared to die in the attempt.

The only other option would have been to decline the assignment and ask to be relieved, thus ending a distinguished career under a cloud. John Lucas, who had faced Pancho Villa alone, barefoot, and in the dark, was not prepared to do that.

Author Steve Ossad's biography of General Omar Bradley will be published by the University of Missouri Press. He resides in New York City.

Ordered to "hold at all costs," 300 American soldiers defended the small Luxembourg town of Hosingen during the first three days of the Battle of the Bulge. They were surrounded and outnumbered more than 10 to 1, bombarded by tanks and artillery that set most of the town on fire, and given no aerial or artillery support. They were abandoned by the 28th Infantry Division's other units but managed to hold out for 2½ days until they ran out of ammunition, sacrificing themselves for time. Stranded miles behind enemy lines, they had no choice but to surrender and would be forced to endure the unimaginable to survive as prisoners of the Nazis.

Landing on Omaha Beach on July 25, 1944, the 28th Infantry Division (ID) entered into its first combat near the town of St. Lo on July 30. As the 28th fought its way across France, it earned a fierce reputation among the German troops. Mistaking the former Pennsylvania National Guard unit's red Keystone emblem as a "Bloody Bucket," they believed the insignia reflected the toughness of the unit's fighting ability, and the name stuck.

On August 13, Maj. Gen. Norman Cota was assigned to take over the unit, and it advanced much more quickly but suffered substantial losses along the way. On August 25, it reached the city of Paris, and the 28th ID was selected to represent the U.S. Army in a victory parade, passing through the Arc de Triumph down the Champs-Elysées to a cheering Parisian crowd. Eight hours later the 28th was back fighting remnants of German units just outside the city limits.

Throughout September, the division continued to push the Germans across France and swept through Belgium, averaging 17 miles a day against heavy German resistance. The 28th became the first Allied unit to reach the German border on September 11. After two months of fighting, the unit was sent to the rear on October 1 for rest and recovery. Thousands of replacement troops were added over the next month to fill out their depleted ranks, many of whom would fight their only battle of the war once they reached the Hürtgen Forest. The battle-seasoned veterans did not even want to know the new GIs' names because they knew many of them would be killed in action or wounded once they started fighting.

Author's Collection

Lieutenant Thomas Flynn had taken command of K Company, 110th Infantry Regiment only days before the desperate fight at Hosingen.

Replacing the 9th ID in the Hürtgen Forest on November 2, the 28th ID lost many soldiers to machine-gun fire from well-positioned German bunkers, antipersonnel mines, mortar attacks, and tree bursts that took a devastating toll both mentally and physically. Freezing weather, a foot of snow, and no winter gear also had a significant impact on the troops as many of the GIs would suffer from severe frostbite and respiratory illnesses. From November 2-14, the 28th ID reported a total of 4,939 casualties, of which 4,238 were infantrymen.

German soldiers surround destroyed American vehicles during the opening hours of the Battle of the Bulge. The heroic stand at Hosingen, Luxembourg, disrupted the German timetable and helped turn the tide of the decisive battle.

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The spirited American defense of Hosingen during the Battle of the Bulge bought precious time for the Allies to reorganize and defeat Hitler's last desperate gamble for victory in the West in World War II.

BY ALICE M. FLYNN

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ABOVE: The church in Hosingen and the Hotel Schmitz at far right both served as headquarters for the defenders of the town. TOP: Photographed before the outbreak of World War II, the village of Hosingen, Luxembourg, was tranquil and picturesque.

Half of those casualties can be attributed to the 110th Infantry Regiment (IR), whose original strength was 3,202 men. The regiment saw 65 men killed in action, 1,624 wounded, 253 taken prisoner, 288 missing, and 86 men with non-battle-related issues, totaling 2,316 casualties.

K Company's casualty rates were among the highest within the 110th with 21 of the regiment's 65 men killed. By mid-November, there were just six men left in K Company, which had been part of the original landing forces in July.

Relieved by the 8th ID on November 14, the 28th was once again sent to rest and rebuild in the quiet section of the Ardennes Forest, just 60 miles to the south. K Company, 110th IR was reassigned to Hosingen, Luxembourg. Fewer than 20 men had survived the Hürtgen Forest action, and only 20 combat veterans returned to duty during the month. The balance of K Company's strength of about 160 men was nearly 100 percent replacements.

Hosingen was four miles from the German border and in the middle of five company strongpoints assigned to the 110th, within a 10½-mile sector along the ridgeline. The Ober Eisenbach-Hosingen-Drauffelt road ran from the Our River, the border with Germany, to Bastogne, Belgium, crossing two bridges over the Clerf River at Drauffelt and Wilwerwiltz. Because military intelligence was confident the Germans were not able to mount any kind of a major offensive, the units stationed along the front line were allowed to pull back into town each night.

K Company was supported by the 2nd and 3rd Platoons of M Company, 3rd Battalion's heavy weapons company, and 2nd Platoon of the 630th Tank Destroyer Battalion with three 57mm antitank guns and three .50-caliber machine guns guarding the crossroads south of Hosingen on Steinmauer Hill.

Also in the town were 125 men with Captain William Jarrett's B Company, 103rd Engineer Battalion, who were responsible for road maintenance to get the units where they needed to go. This unit had at least eight .50-caliber machine guns mounted on trucks. Lastly, there was a group of 20 men from a "raider" unit (organization unknown) who had come in for specialized training in scouting and patrolling. Altogether, there were 387 enlisted men and 13 officers assigned to the Hosingen garrison.

Having taken command of K Company on November 8, 1st Lt. Thomas J. Flynn was responsible for his company establishing the defensive perimeter around the town. His officers immediately began to train the replacement troops; many had arrived with no combat training. Flynn was concerned that normal supply runs delivered only one day's supply of ammunition for training.

Former company commander Captain Frederick Feiker returned to duty on December 6, and Flynn became his executive officer.

Throughout December, K Company observed increasing indications that something was developing on the east side of the Our River, but their commanding officers (COs) failed to take their intelligence seriously.

What the Allies did not realize was that Hitler was preparing for a massive counteroffensive that would once again come through the Ardennes Forest as it had four years earlier. Hitler did not expect the 110th to put up much of a fight, so he planned an offensive right through the middle of the regiment. By mid-December, he had accumulated 250,000 soldiers, hundreds of tanks and self-propelled weapons, and thousands of support vehicles for his massive assault.

The 26th Volksgrenadier Division (VGD) was considered the best infantry division of the Fifth Panzer Army. Twelve thousand men strong, the division was to capture all the positions held by the 110th. Critical to the plan was that Hosingen needed to be captured on day one. An entire battalion was assigned the task to ensure success. From there, the grenadiers were to seize control of the bridges over the Clerf River and then move on to capture Bastogne by the end of day two on their way to the port of Antwerp. Any delays might give the Americans enough time to move additional fighting units to Bastogne to defend the critical crossroads city.

On the evening of December 15, K Company's southern outpost (OP) picked up the sounds of what were believed to be engines coming from the direction of the Our River. Shortly thereafter, the men in Hosingen observed the Germans shining searchlights into the night sky, their reflections bouncing off the low winter clouds and lighting up the entire area almost as brightly as daylight. As a precaution, Captain Feiker ordered the company's mortars moved to new positions, which would prove to be an important tactical decision.

Around 0300 on December 16, elements of the 26th VGD began quietly crossing the Our River in rubber boats, hidden by a thick blanket of fog. Once in position, the German units waited for the artillery bombardment that would signal the beginning of the offensive.

At 0530 the GIs in the OP atop the water tower in the northeast corner of Hosingen had just called their CO when they observed hundreds of "pinpoints of light" to the east. Seconds later artillery shells exploded throughout the town and the surrounding area, severing all wire communications.

Every man in K and M Companies was sent to his prepared defensive position. M Company's 2nd Platoon and K Company's 3rd Platoon were defending a position at the Hosingen-Barrière intersection 1.5 kilometers south, and a squad from the 630th's 2nd Platoon was on Steinmauer Hill, 200 meters south of the village, leaving just 300 men in the town. Both of the outlying locations were now cut off and on their own.

Private William Gracie and the other soldiers of K Company's 4th (heavy weapons) Platoon scrambled out of their beds, grabbing their weapons as they ran out of the house they had called home. Their foxholes near 1st Platoon's northern OP were not far away, but yesterday's snow melt had left them partially filled with water and ice. Lieutenant Flynn jumped in a foxhole behind 1st Platoon machine gunners, and Lieutenant Bernie Porter joined 2nd Platoon on the south end of town. The initial artillery barrage had already set five buildings on fire. "The town was pretty well lit up," Flynn recalled, illuminating the whole ridgetop.

By the time the shelling ended 45 minutes later, two more buildings had caught fire, and it was noted that artillery had fallen in each position where the company mortars had been located just a few hours before, but no casualties had been suffered among the defenders. The sound of troops moving could be heard to the north, but it was still too dark to see.

At daylight, the GIs could make out shadows in the distance, so Flynn ordered his men to open fire on the Germans crossing Skyline Drive. Sergeant James Arbella, 60mm mortar section leader of K Company, climbed the water tower and gave 4th Platoon mortar crews coordinates to targets along Skyline Drive. The combination of mortar shells, Browning Automatic Rifle (BAR), machine-gun, and rifle fire shattered the German assault. The surviving Germans retreated, leaving behind scores of dead and wounded.

An initial rush of the 77th Grenadier Regiment overran the OP on Steinmauer Hill and cut off those units south of the village. Some of these American troops were able to retreat to the west, while others continued to fight on until killed or captured.

Captain Jarrett had gone up the village's church steeple to provide Lieutenant James Morse's M Company 81mm mortars with coordinates of another assault from the south. The mortars temporarily halted this German movement. Captain Feiker requested artillery support, but Battery C, 109th Field Artillery Battalion, located due west of the ridge, was also under attack and unable to respond. The village's defenders only had their own mortars for support as Captain Jarrett's engineers had not yet joined in the defense of the town.

German troops managed to enter the southern outskirts of Hosingen. A German officer was captured with a map outlining their attack plan all the way to Bastogne. Surrounded and grossly outnumbered, it was already impossible to get the map to regimental commander Colonel Hurley Fuller in Clervaux. Feiker then contacted Major Harold Milton, 3rd Battalion CO in Consthum, to inform him of the situation. Milton told Feiker that they were to hold their position and promised to send L Company, in reserve near the CP, with ammunition. However, L Company became involved in its own fight and was never able to reach Hosingen.

In spite of heavy damage to the division's communication system, sufficient information had reached Colonel Fuller and General Cota for them to realize that the 110th was facing a massive German assault and that most of their frontline positions were surrounded and cut off. Cota ordered Fuller to have his regiment "hold and fight it out at all costs." Cota then ordered Companies A and B of the 707th Tank Battalion to head for Clervaux to support the 110th.

Despite their inability to communicate with Captain Feiker, the GIs defending the southern OP at Hosingen-Barrière were still very much a fighting unit because the initial German artillery barrage had missed its target. The GIs defending the southern OP at Hosingen-Bar-

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Officers placed the men of the 110th Infantry Regiment in tactically defensible and vital positions around Hosingen, and the Americans took a fearful toll on the attacking Germans before being overwhelmed.

rière had repelled the initial assault on their position and had captured three German officers. Machine gunner Private Dale Gustafson was ordered to guard the prisoners in a barn.

Feiker was concerned that the enemy might next attack from the west, so Major Milton ordered Jarrett to follow Feiker's orders. Engineer Lieutenant Cary Hutter and 1st Platoon dismounted their .50-caliber machine guns from their vehicles and moved into position to defend the west side of Hosingen supported by M Company's mortars. The engineers shared the 3,000 rounds each of .30-caliber and .50-caliber ammunition they had with K Company. Connecting eight land mines on a daisy chain, the engineers ran it across the street, hoping it would snag onto the first tank to enter from the west end. They also sent Private Frank Kosick up the church steeple with his bazooka.

Lieutenant John Pickering and 2nd Platoon helped cover the southern half of the town, supporting Captain Feiker's command post and the south roadblock. The 3rd Platoon, under Lt. Charles Devlin, was positioned along the northeast edge of town to provide fire support to Flynn's 1st Platoon, helping cover both the north roadblock and the men from K Company in the water tower. Captain Jarrett's CP was in the Hotel Schmitz in the center of town. Each team was then responsible for adding mines on all roads that entered Hosingen.

At 1515 hours, 1st Lt. Richard Payne led the 3rd Platoon, A Company, 707th, south along Skyline Drive from Marnach. With machine guns blazing, at about 1600, Payne's tanks entered the north end of Hosingen to the cheers from the 1st and 4th Platoons. Payne scrambled to get his tanks into defensive positions. Three tanks, accompanied by infantrymen, were sent to retake Steinmauer Hill to help slow the enemy traffic coming up the Ober-Eisenbach road. Payne moved his own tank to cover the road south of the village. The remaining Sherman was positioned to cover Skyline Drive to the north.

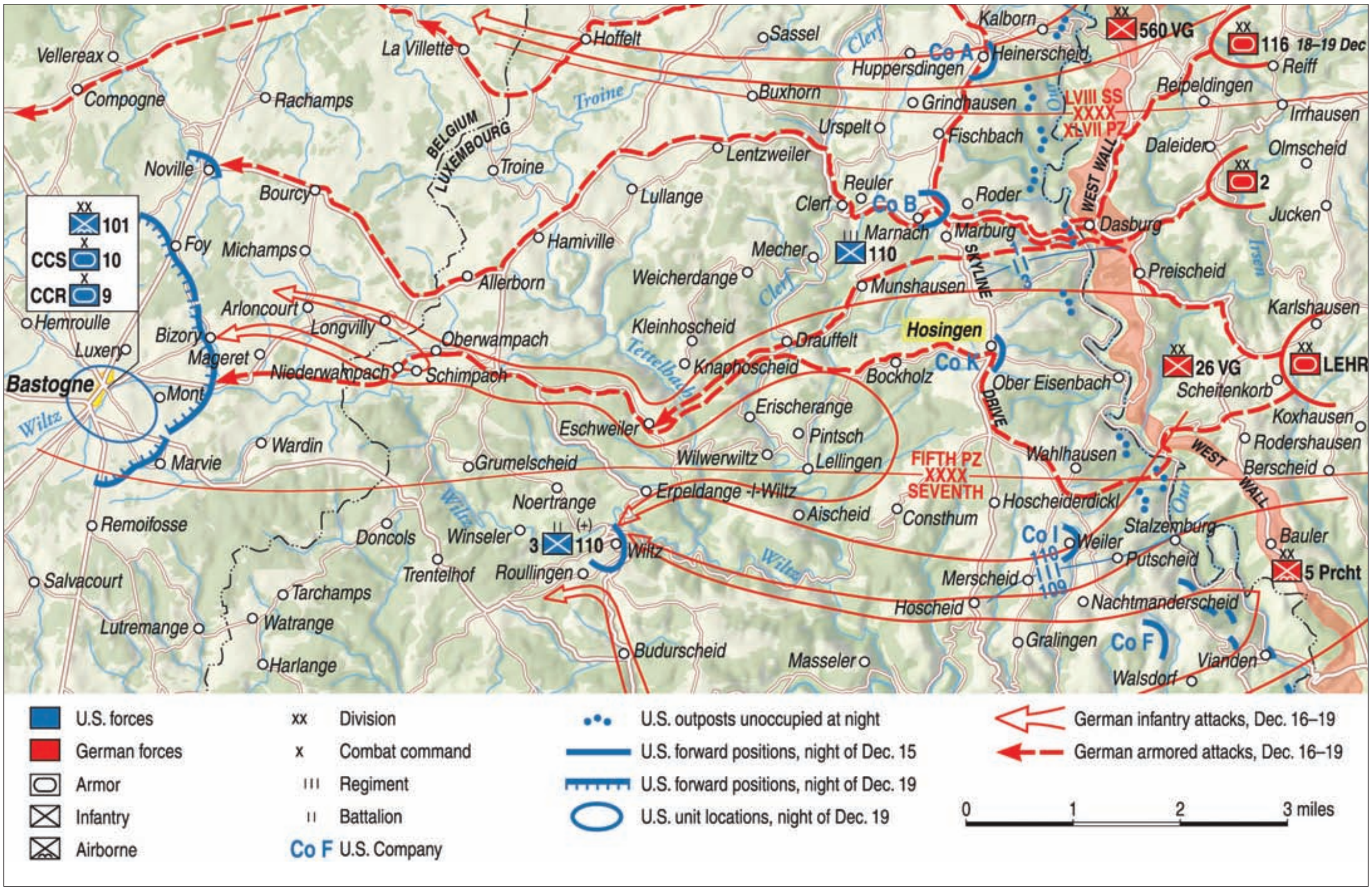
At 1600, German pioneers finished construction of the bridges over the Our River at Gemünd, Dasbürg, and Ober Eisenbach, enabling the German armor to cross. The Americans in Hosingen were proving to be much more difficult to eliminate than expected, so at 1700 General Heinz Kokott ordered three panzers from the Panzer Lehr Division and part of his division reserve, the I Battalion, 78th Grenadier Regiment, to help attack the town. Two German panzers appeared on the high ground on Steinmauer Hill and forced the three Shermans to withdraw into Hosingen; however, they spent the evening lobbing shells at the Germans and then racing back to cover.

West of the tower, Sergeant John Forsell, a 1st Platoon squad leader, watched his machine guns lay down devastating fire. The fighting continued all night with small groups of Germans infiltrating the village. Vicious and often hand-to-hand fighting continued until around 2200. Lieutenant Flynn became involved in one of these skirmishes, killing a German officer. Flynn reported to Feiker that he had found documents on the German's body.

As the fighting died down, German patrols continued to work their way to the edge of the village. Amazingly, there were few American casualties. The men could see two other towns to the north and northwest burning brightly during the night.

General Troy Middleton, commanding the U.S. VIII Corps, finally realized the Germans

Map © 2017 Philip Schwartzberg, Meridian Mapping, Minneapolis, MN



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Urspelt
Fischbach
Daleiden
Olmscheid
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Lellingen
Wahlhausen
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XXXX
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Co F
Harlange
Budurscheid
Masseler
Vianden
Walsdorf
U.S. forces
German forces
Armor
Infantry
Airborne
XX Division
X Combat command
III Regiment
II Battalion
Co F U.S. Company
U.S. outposts unoccupied at night
U.S. forward positions, night of Dec. 15
U.S. forward positions, night of Dec. 19
U.S. unit locations, night of Dec. 19
German infantry attacks, Dec. 16–19
German armored attacks, Dec. 16–19
0
1
2
3 miles

Hosingen stood directly in the path of the German Ardennes offensive, which came to be known as the Battle of the Bulge. The attackers swept around the vital village and were forced to commit heavy troop, tank, and artillery concentrations to take the town.

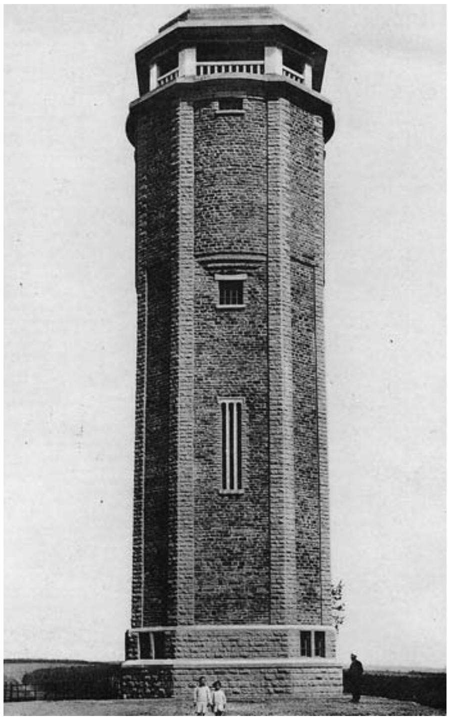
had attacked along his entire 80-mile front and his 4½ divisions were facing four times that number of German divisions. Middleton knew the only option was to delay the Germans as long as possible to allow time to move reinforcements into the Ardennes, and particularly to the key crossroads town of Bastogne. Middleton reiterated that the 28th was to "hold at all costs," especially the 110th, the major unit directly between the Germans and Bastogne.

As daylight approached on December 17, the Germans renewed their attacks, and additional Mark V Panther and Mark IV medium panzers were diverted south to help rid the village of the stubborn Americans.

At Hosingen-Barrière, a shell from a tank blew a hole through the wall of the barn, knocking Private Gustafson down. A few seconds later, a second blast hurled a heavy iron cauldron from the fireplace at his head, knocking him unconscious. By the time he awoke, his platoon had been captured. The German officers Gustafson had been guarding ordered the grenadiers not to kill the Americans because they had been so well treated.

National Archives

Author's Collection



ABOVE: A disabled American half-track lies askew on a dirt road as German troops ride armored vehicles forward during the opening phase of the Battle of the Bulge. LEFT: The water tower in the town of Hosingen became an American observation post and a center of the fighting in the village. German forces realized they were being watched and directed heavy fire against the position.

By 0900, German tanks showered Hosingen once again with artillery, setting more buildings on fire, including Hotel Schmitz. Captain Jarrett was forced to move his CP to the basement of a nearby dairy to the west.

As the artillery fire ended, another German ground assault began, but the GIs continued to fight back, their mortars taking out three enemy tanks with two more already on fire. Small-arms fire could be heard throughout the town. Antitank mines exploded as the Germans wandered into the engineers' well-laid minefield. Fallen grenadiers that had not yet been removed from the battlefield were crushed under the tracks of their own tanks as the Germans made their way toward the edge of town. The fighting lasted for another hour before they pulled back to their starting positions in frustration.

Captain Feiker got a radio call through to Major Milton asking for artillery support, but he was informed that the 109th had been forced to retreat across the Clerf River. They were on their own.

The Germans then sent two half-tracks as decoys down Skyline Drive in an attempt to trick the Americans into giving their northernmost Sherman's position away, but Flynn and Payne's men held their fire. The GIs in the water tower then sighted two Panthers hiding to the northwest in a position from which they could have blasted the Sherman had it revealed its location.

At 1300, the two Panthers opened fire on the tower, cutting the telephone line and leaving K Company with no communication with the GIs still there. Contact with the water tower had to be restored, so with a new wire in one hand and his rifle in the other, Sergeant Lloyd Everson ran several hundred yards to the water tower, bullets frequently kicking up the snow beside him as he ran. Everson managed to connect the new wire and went inside to make sure the phone was live.

Six more Panthers and Mark IVs from the 2nd Panzer Division arrived from Marnach. A total of eight German panzers now worked their way to the north edge of the village. Captain Feiker tried to send bazooka teams to drive off the Panthers, but the German small-arms fire was too heavy to move beyond the edge of the village. The fighting continued all afternoon. Germans who managed to reach the village were engaged in hand-to-hand fighting. Houses, shops, and hotels were slowly and methodically being reduced to rubble. The Germans finally destroyed 1st Platoon's machine guns and mortars, and even rifle ammunition began to run out.

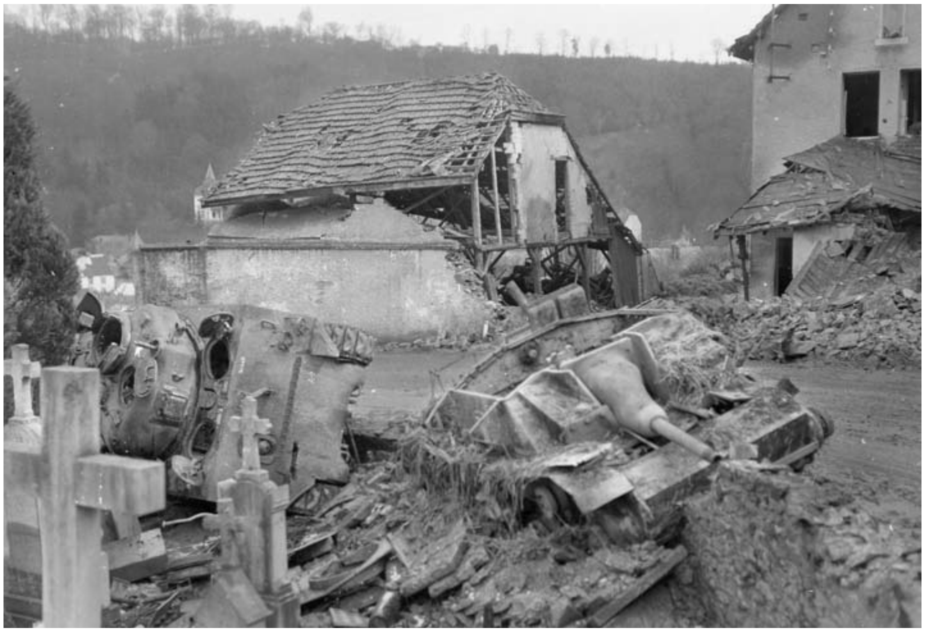
The water tower went next. Once inside, Sergeant Everson found a wounded lieutenant and a couple of his men. He knew that they would make their last stand in the tower. Climbing the stairs, he looked out the window. The enemy was moving in, infantry supported by tanks. Everson began exchanging fire with them. He could feel the heat of the German bullets as they passed by his face and then sizzled in the snow on the floor.

A tank then fired two rounds at the tower, and both exploded outside. Not satisfied with the results it was getting, the German tank moved to a position a little farther away, turned, and swivelled the gun at the tower. Everson kept firing at the German soldiers, watching the tank out of the corner of his eye. The tank reared back and fired its next shell at the tower just as the empty clip flew from Everson's rifle. The impact blew him down the stairs.

Everson lay stunned on floor unable to see or hear, but he felt the concussion of the next shell hit. His mouth was filled with the taste of cordite. He popped his eardrums so he could hear, blowing his nose while holding it shut with his hand as he rubbed his eyes, forcing tears, only to see a German machine pistol pointed at him. A medic bandaged the lieutenant's and Everson's wounds before they were taken away. Everson looked at his watch a few minutes later—it was 1615 hours.

Lieutenant Flynn's 1st Platoon CP could see what was unfolding at the water tower, but his men were dealing with their own problems. Flynn's radio had been damaged, so Feiker had no idea what was happening on the north end of town. Flynn needed to report 1st Platoon's situation, so he ran the gauntlet from his position 650 meters south to Feiker's CP, dashing from cover to cover through the rubble-strewn streets of Hosingen. One of the German tanks spotted Flynn and started shooting directly at him, but its position did not enable it to lower its aim enough. He dodged the German gunfire and shell bursts all the way through town to Captain Feiker's CP in the pharmacy building near the center of town.

National Archives



An American tank from the 707th Tank Battalion lies on its side, while a German Sturmgeschütz III self-propelled assault gun, also knocked out during the fighting, lies abandoned nearby. Both bear mute testimony to the intensity of the action around Hosingen.

By dusk the Germans were inside the town, and the fighting continued house to house and hand to hand. Gradually, most of the men worked their way back to the center of town, but there were small groups of men now cut off and isolated. When forced to withdraw, the GIs set booby traps to inflict casualties and start fires. The fires also helped to light up the fields around the village, exposing the Germans to gunfire. Despite the GIs' efforts, the Germans pressed forward, and their numbers in the village continued to grow.

Captain Feiker met with his officers to assess the situation. There were small pockets of GIs cut off, their ammunition almost gone, and there were only three operating tanks. There was no artillery support or relief force on the way. Payne's Shermans set up a perimeter defense around Feiker's CP.

At 0200 hours on December 18, a group of 16 grenadiers stormed Jarrett's CP, but his men repelled the attack. Jarrett sent a Lieutenant Slobodzian to check on 3rd Platoon's position, but he was shot in the left arm and left leg before he could do so. Several men carried him to the aid station in the town church, where his best friend, Corporal John Putz, B Company's medic, did his best to take care of him and keep him alive, but he had lost a lot of blood. Corporal Putz applied a tourniquet to stem the bleeding and administered morphine, but Slobodzian was already in a state of shock. It was now 0300 hours. There was no more plasma available, and both Slobodzian and Sergeant Lawrence Gronefeld, who had been shot in the upper thigh the previous day, were sinking fast.

The fight continued, and enemy fire from the west was now being directed at the church where K Company's Staff Sgt. Norman Guenther and Master Sgt. Joe Winchester's engineers were protecting the wounded. Jarrett had his men cover him from the dairy while he worked his way close enough to throw a hand grenade over the side street wall, where the shots were coming from. By now, the majority of the buildings in the town were on fire, and the heat was almost unbearable despite the freezing temperature outside. Most of the American vehicles had already been destroyed.

At 0430 hours, Feiker once again spoke with Major Milton, explaining K Company's situation and asking for instructions. Milton finally ordered the men to try to escape while it was still dark, but Feiker said it was too late. "We can't get out, but these Krauts are going to pay a stiff price…." Major Milton then told Feiker that he and his men should do whatever they saw fit.

Feiker promptly called together his officers. They all agreed that there was little chance of escaping through the German lines. The mission of delaying the enemy had been carried out, but they were now entirely surrounded and were no longer delaying the German advance.

Lieutenant Flynn recommended that they surrender so the men would have a better chance of survival, wishing not to repeat what had happened to K Company in the Hürtgen Forest. Feiker conceded, and the other officers agreed. Feiker then issued the order that all remaining weapons and materials that would be of any value to the enemy were to be destroyed. In response, Flynn removed his.45-caliber Smith & Wesson revolver from its holster and destroyed it. He then laid the useless revolver on the table, turned, and left the room to get started on the rest of the demolition.

Feiker briefed Jarrett on the situation and asked for his help with demolition. All remaining maps, records, vehicles, and equipment were set on fire or rendered useless. All weapons were destroyed, ensuring that the same part of each type of weapon was damaged so that the Germans could not rebuild any of them.

Feiker then radioed Major Milton to tell him of their decision. Milton signed off by saying, "You have done your job well. Good-bye and God Bless You."

By 0900 hours, German snipers and panzers once again began to fire on Hosingen. Feiker and Jarrett had a white flag hung from a building on the north end of town and white panels hung on the Shermans. The Germans ceased fire immediately. The two captains walked out into the open field together to surrender to a colonel from the 78th Grenadier Regiment.

Just before Feiker and Jarrett returned at gunpoint at 1000 hours accompanied by German troops, Lieutenant Morse radioed news of the surrender to Major Milton's command post.

Both: National Archives

ABOVE: After their heroic stand at Hosingen, the American defenders who survived the German onslaught were marched off into enemy captivity, much like these GIs taken prisoner during the Battle of the Bulge. RIGHT: General Norman Cota, commander of the veteran 28th Infantry Division, pins the Bronze Star for heroism on the chests of three members of the 110th Infantry Regiment.

"We're down to our last grenades. We've blown up everything there is to blow up except the radio and it goes next." What sounded like a sob came over the radio, but after a brief pause to compose himself he continued, "I don't mind dying, and I don't mind taking a beating, but I'll be damned if we'll give up to these bastards." Then the radio went dead. Lieutenant Morse had ended the conversation by shooting the radio with his .45-caliber pistol.

Major Milton sagged in his chair and glanced at his watch. It was 0955. His men at Hosingen had held out five hours since their last call, and now they were gone.

The GIs were ordered to come out with hands on their helmets and to assemble in front of a nearby church. Staff Sgt. Norman Guenther was hesitant to go outside. Private William Hawn had fainted, but others were not allowed to help him outside. The Germans then entered the church, and the GIs heard Private Hawn's screams. No one saw him after that.

The Germans were surprised when the American defenders gathered in the street. They could hardly believe that such a small unit had put up such a fight against their superior forces yet suffered so few casualties while inflicting such enormous damage on their own forces.

All the American officers could do was watch in silence as their men were yelled at, slapped around, searched, and stripped of their valuables. Enlisted men were forced to give up their combat shoes or galoshes in exchange for the inferior German boots of the soldier doing the trading.

A group of Germans mounted two MG42 machine guns pointed directly at the American POWs. An accidental discharge killed two men, and Private John Wnek was wounded in the forearm. The German captain reprimanded the machine gunner responsible for the shooting. Captain Jarrett later reflected that the German captain had saved many GIs' lives that day by stopping a potential massacre.

Corporal Sam Miller avoided being shot by jumping behind the blade of a bulldozer parked nearby. A German soldier quickly had a gun pointed at his head to force him back into the lineup. The Americans could not help but stare at the lifeless bodies on the ground, the pools of blood slowly growing larger underneath them.

The American officers were separated from the enlisted men and marched to an isolated house at the south end of Hosingen, where they were searched and interrogated. One by one, each officer was required to empty his pockets into his helmet so a German officer could inspect each item. Lieutenant Flynn spoke German, so he served as an interpreter when needed. The interrogation took approximately an hour as the Germans were primarily concerned with details about the locations of minefields and booby traps.

At the same time, some of the enlisted men were marched around the corner of the church out of view and lined up in a nearby drainage ditch, machine guns on each end and two bulldozers waiting nearby. They all knew what was going to happen. They were going to be executed and buried right where they stood. Fortunately, a German staff car drove up and the officer stood up and yelled at the German sergeant to get the prisoners out of the ditch. The Americans climbed back onto the road and were marched to a field on the east side of town, where they would wait for more prisoners to join them.

Happy to still be alive, Sergeant Winchester whispered to Corporal Miller, "We put on a heck of a show, didn't we?"

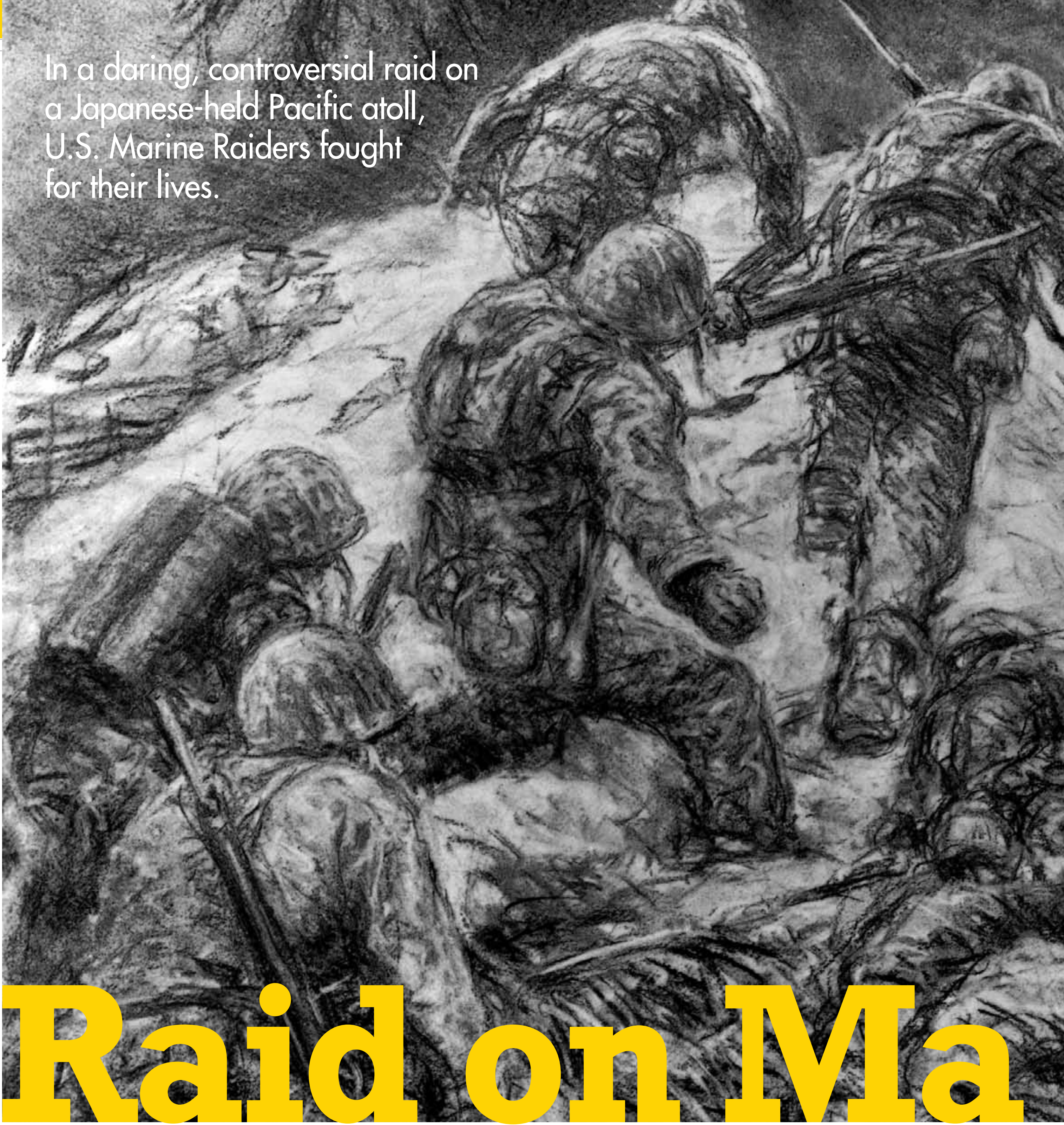
The rest of the enlisted men had been moved out into the open fields around the town to tally and search through the dead and wounded while the officers were being interrogated. Medic Wayne Erickson and Staff Sgt. George McKnight were forced to help bury 300 dead Germans. When finished, they were ordered to help take care of the wounded prisoners until transportation to a hospital could be arranged for them.

While the weather conditions had grounded most planes over the past few days, a spotter plane's report of the intense shelling at Hosingen the day before had prompted several American fighter planes to be sent to the area for air support to help defend the town. From out of nowhere, the American planes flew in low and opened fire on the American POWs, mistaking them for German soldiers and unaware that the men of Hosingen had surrendered that morning and were being held in the open field below.

German planes were not far behind, having pursued them all the way from Bastogne, and the prisoners witnessed a dogfight directly overhead. One of the American planes was hit and set afire, but despite the plane's rapid descent en route to a crash landing its machine guns were still firing and some of the prisoners in the field were killed. The plane crashed and exploded

Continued on page 73

In a daring, controversial raid on a Japanese-held Pacific atoll, U.S. Marine Raiders fought for their lives.



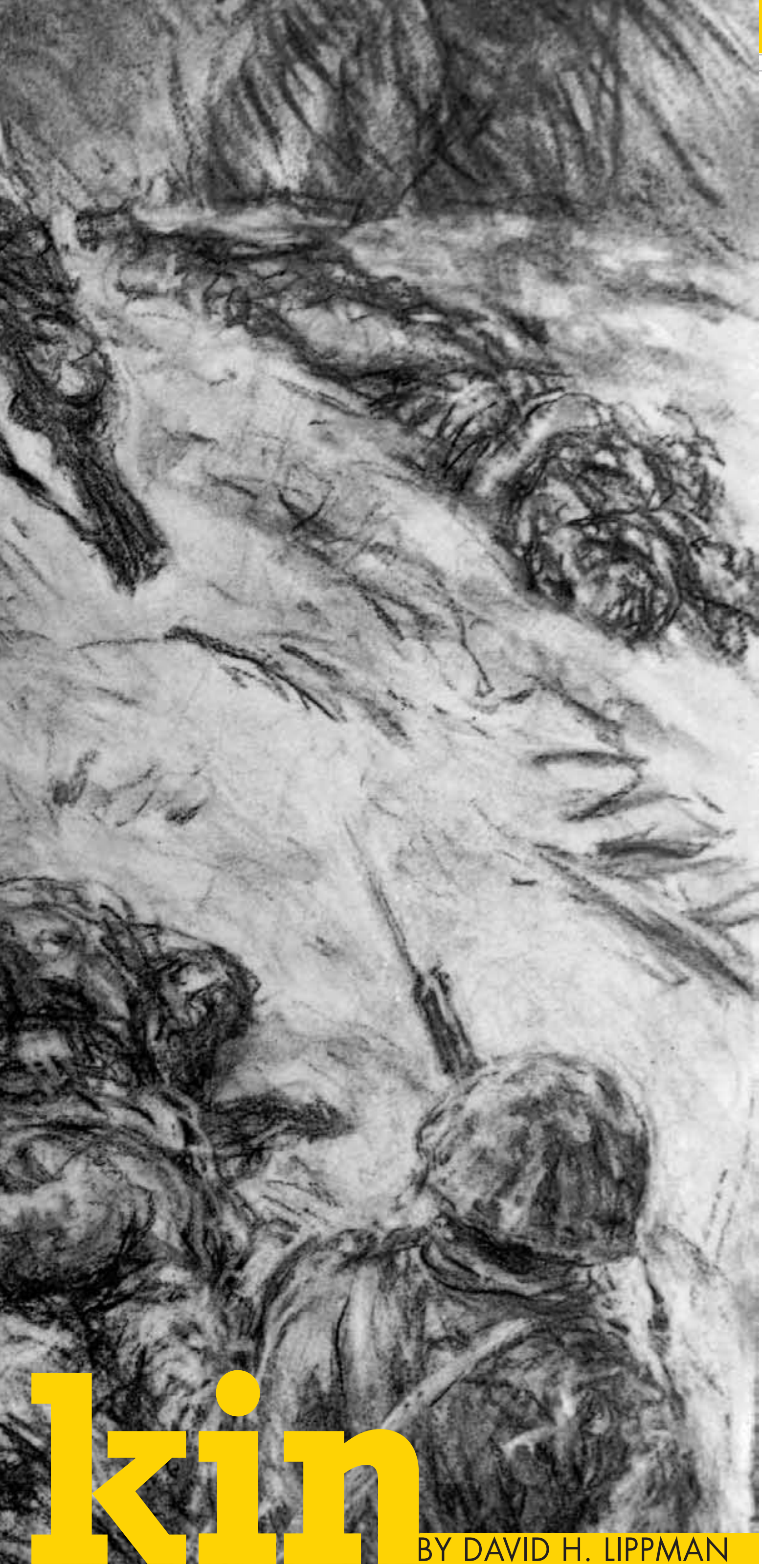
Raid on Ma

In the darkness, the two American submarines moved toward the hostile beach, inching carefully through badly marked waters. They surfaced well before dawn, and the Marine Raiders and submarine crews began bringing up rubber boats from below, inflating them on deck, installing outboard motors, and filling them with the Marines' ammunition and supplies.

It was the early morning of August 17, 1942, and a team of U.S. Marine Raiders, led by a Corps legend and the son of the president of the United States were going to launch a raid that would boost morale in America but have an unexpected blowback a year later—leading to the deaths or wounding of 3,000 more Americans.

As the invasion of Guadalcanal opened on August 8, 1942, Admiral Chester Nimitz, Commander-in-Chief of the Pacific, was determined to keep the Japanese off balance and unable to respond properly. A raid on Makin (pronounced "Muckin" or "Muggin"), one of the Gilbert Islands, a British colony seized by the Japanese after the outbreak of war, seemed just the ticket.

Assigned to do the job was the 2nd Marine Raider Battalion, under a



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BY DAVID H. LIPPMAN

colorful, leathery, hawk-nosed, 46-year-old major named Evans F. Carlson. Son of a Congregationalist minister, he had joined the Army at age 16 to fight in the Great War and risen to the rank of captain. In 1922, he joined the Marines and was commissioned as a second lieutenant the following year.

At a time when most American troops were enjoying leisurely peacetime routine, the Marine Corps was seeing a lot of action, fighting in what today would be called "peacekeeping missions" in Central America and the Caribbean or defending American holdings in China. Carlson was in the middle of this, earning his first Navy Cross in Nicaragua fighting "banditos." He did a China tour in 1927-1929 and again in 1933-1935. After that, he was second in command of the Marine Guard at the Little White House in Warm Springs, Georgia, where he caught the eye of and made a great impression on President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

When Carlson was sent to China for his third tour in 1937, FDR asked the lean major to provide personal reports to the White House on the volatile situation. Carlson reached Shanghai on July 7, 1937, a week after the Japanese invaded the city. From the safety of the International Settlement and its Marine Barracks, Carlson had a grandstand seat for the unparalleled savagery of the Sino-Japanese War, writing weekly detailed reports.

In November 1937, Carlson headed for Yenan in Shensi Province to study the Communist Chinese guerrillas to see if their operations matched their press releases. He marched with the legendary 8th Route Army for months and sent home vital information. The good side was that he reported that the Communists were an outstanding force. The bad side was that he reported that the Communists and Nationalists were working together to save China. Either way, two things resulted: FDR was able to provide arms to Nationalist China despite the Neutrality Act, and Carlson gained numerous ideas for developing a Marine force based on the Communists' guerrilla principles, down to their slogan of "Gung Ho," which meant "Everybody works together."

After returning from China, Carlson resigned his commission, wrote two books on the China situation, and then rejoined the Corps as a major in the Reserves in April 1941. By this time Roosevelt was becoming intrigued by the exploits of the British Commandos in Europe and wanted to create similar forces under American auspices. The Army was developing the Rangers, but Roosevelt, who regarded the Navy as "us," wanted such a force under its command.

The result was two battalions of Marine Raiders, and the 2nd Raider Battalion would be headed by Carlson himself. Another celebrity would

Both: National Archives

ABOVE: Marine officers Evans F. Carlson and James Roosevelt, son of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, led the 2nd Marine Raider Battalion on a daring raid against the Japanese garrison on the Pacific atoll of Makin. OPPOSITE: In this haunting charcoal sketch titled *Marines Fall Forward,* artist Kerr Eby depicts U.S. Marines fighting in the Gilbert Islands against the Japanese. The raid on Makin was an early offensive action that was fraught with risk. Its success is a topic of debate to this day.

National Archives

Colonel Evans F. Carlson (left) confers with Lieutenant Merwin Plumley (center) and Major James Roosevelt (right) during training in the days leading up to the raid on Makin Atoll. In this image the officers are consulting a map while the Marines at right are both holding Browning .30-caliber air-cooled machine guns.

be the battalion's executive officer, Marine Reserve Major James "Jimmy" Roosevelt, the president's son, who had served as assistant naval attaché in London and an observer with British forces in the Middle East. In London, he had had ample opportunity to study British Commandos, while in Cairo he had pored over the work of the legendary Long Range Desert Group and the Special Air Service.

Despite this colorful and knowledgeable leadership, the top Marine Corps brass was not impressed by the new battalions. They smacked of gimmickry, and high-ranking officers questioned the value of assigning the Corps' best men to light units that would be sent on near-suicide missions. A strong answer came in the Corps' own history—its first action in March 1776 had been a raid against British forces at New Providence Island in the Bahamas. Raiding was part of the Marine heritage.

The 2nd Raider Battalion got down to business on February 5, 1942, forming up at Camp Pendleton outside San Diego. Three thousand Leathernecks volunteered for 1,000 slots and were hit with Carlson's tough question: "Could you slit a Jap's throat without warning?"

Carlson ran a loose outfit, relaxing traditional forms of military command and discipline, adopting the communal methods of the 8th Route Army. Fully trained, the battalion was sent to Hawaii in May, baffling Nimitz, who later said, "Here I was presented with a unit which I had not requested and which I had not planned for."

Nonetheless, he quickly found them a job—sending C and D Companies to Midway Island to defend that atoll from the expected Japanese invasion. Carlson's Raiders provided color and dash to the defense, with their bandoliers of cartridges hanging from bronzed shoulders, belts bristling with knives, and pockets bulging with grenades. Even the medics went fully armed.

The Raiders worked hard at everything from hurling knives into trees to display their prowess to unloading supply ships to manufacturing antitank mines. Demolitions officer Lieutenant Harold Throneson and several Spanish Civil War volunteers developed an antitank mine from dynamite and a flashlight battery that exploded from 40 pounds of pressure. The Raiders delightedly manufactured 1,500 of them in a matter of days. Another Raider created booby traps from cigar boxes loaded with nails, spikes, glass, and rocks with a small charge of TNT. They could be exploded either electrically or by firing a rifle at a bull's-eye painted on the side of the box. Other Raiders armed themselves with 14-inch screwdrivers that normally were used to repair PT-boat engines. A Raider explained that they were "good for the ribs, if you know what I mean."

In the end, though, the preparation proved unnecessary. The Japanese force headed for Midway Atoll suffered a crushing defeat, losing four aircraft carriers and its air umbrella, and the invaders withdrew, never actually coming ashore. The Raiders left too, returning to Hawaii, and Nimitz searched for suitable employment for them.

That turned out to be Makin, part of the Gilbert Islands chain, which was an atoll about six miles long and half a mile wide, 2,000 miles west of Pearl Harbor, guarded by about 45 Japanese troops. In addition to the usual tasks of intelligence gathering and installation destruction, Carlson's raid would distract the Japanese high command from the battles on Guadalcanal, making Tokyo think the Americans were opening a new front in the Central Pacific.

Carlson assigned 222 men to the operation, who would travel to the island on two large submarines, *Nautilus* under Commander Bill Brockman and *Argonaut* under Commander Jack Pierce. Neither sub had been much of a success so far. In addition to dealing with misfiring American Mark 14 torpedoes, both submarines were burdened with slow speed, slow diving, poor maneuverability, and engines that were at risk for crankshaft explosions. *Argonaut* had been designed as a minelayer and proved a flop in that role. *Nautilus* was the only American submarine to strike a blow at Midway, trying to torpedo the crippled Japanese carrier *Kaga,* but two fish missed, and the third's warhead did not work. It shattered, popping loose the air flask, which gave shipwrecked *Kaga* sailors a life preserver. Now the two submarines were being converted for use as guerrilla transport and supply vessels by having their torpedo racks removed and extra air conditioning and tiers of bunks added. They would build a fine record in that critical role.

Commander John Haines would head the naval task force. Carlson assigned Company B and his own staff to *Nautilus* and Company A to *Argonaut*. The two submarines loaded up at Pearl Harbor on August 8, the day after the Guadalcanal invasion, and sailed off. It was an uncomfortable voyage for everybody. The air conditioning could not keep up, so Bluejackets and Leathernecks sweltered below decks, unable to sit or stand in the crowded spaces. Haines let the Marines go topside in small batches for 10-minute breaks in the sun. Soon the subs were hot and fetid from unwashed men and the heat of cooking—the chefs and stewards were on 24-hour watches, as it took three hours to feed all hands.

The voyage proceeded without enemy intervention, and on August 16 both submarines joined company off of Makin Atoll's main island, Butaritari, defended by Warrant Officer

National Archives

ABOVE: Staying in shape during their voyage to Makin, a group of Carlson's Raiders does calisthenics aboard the submarine USS *Nautilus*. The raid resulted in the gathering of some intelligence and the inflicting of serious casualties on the Japanese, but 19 Marines were killed in action. BELOW: Carlson's Raiders pull away from a fast transport (APD) during training for the Makin Raid in early 1942. This exercise was to gain proficiency in the use of small rubber boats. However, heavy seas swamped several of the craft during the run-in from the submarines to the beach at Makin.

Naval History and Heritage Command

Kyuzaburo Kanemitsu and 42 other Japanese naval troops. For Kanemitsu and his men Makin was a soft billet, far from the war, but a dull place. A few days before the Americans arrived, Kanemitsu's superiors, worried about Guadalcanal, logically ordered a general alert, and Kanemitsu took those orders seriously. Every day his men held maneuvers and built nests for their rapid-fire Nambu machine guns as snipers prepared to climb coconut trees to eviscerate potential enemy invaders.

The seaward side of Butariti is a fringing coral reef, and Carlson chose at the last minute to land over the northern reef opposite the principal settlement, which lay on the lagoon only 1,500 feet across Butaritari. However, Carlson did not pass that on to Lieutenant Oscar F. "Pete" Peatross, who led 1st Platoon, Company B, and he and his 11 men would head for the southern beach.

In the predawn hours of August 17, the submarines surfaced in position, and the Marines and sailors broke out the rubber rafts, outboard motors, and combat gear for the assault. Before dawn, 15 motorized assault boats were speeding over the reef straight for Government Wharf against no Japanese opposition. Instead, they had to cope with heavy seas, which swamped the outboard motors. The Leathernecks tied their boats together to keep going.

Lieutenant Merwin C. Plumley led Company A southward and ran smack into the first Japanese defenders, arriving on bicycles and in trucks. The Japanese gave Plumley's men a warm welcome with their rifles and machine guns, forming up a skirmish line.

When Carlson reached the beach, eight natives joined him and reported the presence of a Japanese 3,500-ton merchant ship and patrol boat in the lagoon. Carlson radioed to *Nautilus* and *Argonaut* to shell these two enemy vessels, but the message only got to Brockman, skipper of the *Nautilus*. He promptly turned his submarine's six-inch guns on the Japanese vessels and hurled 65 shells at them. Everybody reported seeing the two ships sink, but incredibly Brockman was not given credit for the sinkings after the war.

Meanwhile, Carlson's Company A was pinned down by Kanemitsu's men. Carlson wasted no time. He sent Company B into action on the left flank, and Kanemitsu soon realized that his 45 men were badly outnumbered.

"All men are dying serenely in battle," he radioed to his superiors. Even so, his snipers did their best, shooting at any American operating a radio, and his machine gunners fired their Nambus until they all died at their posts.

At 10:39 AM, a Japanese reconnaissance seaplane turned up to find out what was going on, and the two submarines dived to avoid bombs. The reconnaissance bird was followed at 11:30 AM by two more, which circled over the island looking for targets for 15 minutes. Finally they dropped some bombs on the sand, doing little damage, and headed home.

Meanwhile, Peatross, having landed on the wrong beach, tried to carry out his original orders to rendezvous with Company A at the island's church. While doing so, he and his men attacked the island's radio station, destroying the equipment. He found the Japanese were between him and the rest of his buddies but thought he could push through. He got to within 200 yards of the main Marine force, knocking out a Japanese machine gun and killing some of the enemy, including two fleeing in a car. But three of Peatross's men were killed and several more wounded. Peatross moved over the ocean side of the island away from the lagoon and decided to wait for the larger force come to him. When that did not happen, he and his men withdrew to their boats and *Nautilus*, in that order.

Back at the main battle, 12 more Japanese

Both: National Archives

ABOVE: A Marine Raider machine-gun crew uses palm fronds to camouflage its position during intense training prior to the Makin Raid. The Marines fought heroically against a stout Japanese garrison on the atoll and withdrew after controversially considering surrender to the enemy. BELOW: The beach at Makin, as it appeared in 1943, months after the Marine raid, appears tranquil. Makin was assaulted by U.S. Army troops in November 1943, concurrent with the 2nd Marine Division's attack on Tarawa Atoll during Operation Galvanic.

planes of various types showed up at 12:55 to bomb and strafe the island with little success. Two Kawanishi "Mavis" flying boats landed 35 troops in the lagoon to reinforce Kanemitsu's defenders. Alert Marines opened up on the huge planes with automatic fire, burning one in the water and causing the second to crash on takeoff.

With those reinforcements, Kanemitsu and his men fought back. Japanese snipers in palm groves were hard to find, so Carlson pulled his men back to open terrain. The Japanese counterattacked three times in the afternoon, and another Japanese air raid hit the Raiders at about 4:30 PM.

By 5 PM, Carlson figured he had done enough damage and it was time to break off the action. He sent his boat crews back to the beach to get the boats ready for withdrawal. At 7 PM, Carlson ordered his main force to fall back with withdrawal to coincide with darkness and high tide. The withdrawal was difficult. The outboard motors did not work, and the Marines could not paddle their way over the breakers. Boats capsized, men lost their weapons, clothing, and gear, and were hurled up on the beach exhausted. Only seven boats and fewer than 100 men made it back to the submarines in the dark—45 to *Nautilus* and 25 to *Argonaut.* About 100 Raiders were still ashore, most of them unarmed—all machine guns and most rifles and automatic rifles had been lost.

Luckily for Carlson, the Japanese did not pursue the Americans, and that gave Carlson time to figure out his next move. He grouped his 120 or so men, four of them stretcher cases, on the beach. At midnight Carlson called a meeting of his officers and some of his men and asked what they should do—hide on the north end of the atoll? Try the surf again? Surrender? The Marines looked to their commander for a decision. He gave none. By his creed, all Marines could make their own choice. Sergeant Henry Herrero, Major Roosevelt's runner, found five men willing to make another try for the submarines. They boarded a rubber boat and made it to *Nautilus*.

Meanwhile, *Nautilus* blinkered a signal to Carlson, saying the two submarines would stay as long as necessary to rescue the Marines.

During the night, there was only one skirmish with a Japanese patrol. At dawn Carlson made a new effort to get off the beach, sending Major Roosevelt through the surf with three boats and 15 men. They succeeded, but Carlson and about 70 Raiders were still on the hostile shore.

Nautilus sent back a volunteer five-man crew on a boat hoping to get a line through the surf and two of the remaining boats and the Leathernecks back to the sub. One of the five men made it ashore, but a Japanese plane strafed the boat and it disappeared into the brine.

With 70 men left, Carlson believed he had been abandoned and the only humanitarian thing to do now seemed to be to surrender. He wrote out such a note, handed it to a captain and a corporal, and ordered them to find the enemy. Instead, they found a native islander, who in turn found them a Japanese soldier, who took the note and then disappeared.

With no answer to the surrender offer, the captain and corporal set off to find the Japanese and discovered to their astonishment that there were no longer any Japanese troops on the island. Most of the defenders were dead, and the rest had fled to other atolls and islands.

Now master of all he surveyed, Carlson regrouped his forces and had them sweep the island from side to side. They found 83 Japanese bodies and two live Japanese stragglers, who they promptly shot, near the southern tip. The Raiders collected intelligence from the abandoned Japanese headquarters, destroyed supplies, including 700 barrels of aviation fuel, and finished off the radio station. The burning aviation gas was a fine navigational beacon for the submarines, and they headed for it to rescue the Raiders.

As dusk fell, the Marines carried four rubber boats to a quiet area of the lagoon, lashed them to an outrigger canoe, and entered the lagoon at 9:30 PM. By midnight all but 30 of the

Raiders were back on the submarines. Twenty-one were dead, and nine were missing.

Actually those nine were still alive and on Makin. They avoided Japanese capture for a month, but when they were rounded up on August 20, they were flown to Japan's 6th Base Force Headquarters on Kwajalein Atoll, where they were the problem of the force's boss, Vice Admiral Koso Abe. The Japanese gave them candy and cigarettes, joked about the sights they would see in Tokyo, and put them in a barracks.

Meanwhile, Abe asked Tokyo what he should do with his nine captives. Tokyo did not tell him. He waited for six months, then made a flag decision ordering Kwajalein's garrison commander, Captain Yoshio Obara, to execute the lot.

Obara, who had two brothers in America and nephews in the U.S. Army, protested vehemently against this illegal order, but Abe was adamant. He was also an admiral. Obara could not find any volunteer executioners, so he detailed four officers and selected October 16, 1942, the day that coincided with Japan's annual memorial to departed heroes, the Yasukuni Shrine festival, as the day of execution.

That day the nine Marines were led to a large grave and ceremoniously beheaded in front of Abe. After the burial, Obara's men placed flowers on the grave and considered the incident closed. But a Marshall Islands native witnessed the horror from a hiding place in the bushes.

After the war, Abe and Obara were tried on Guam for war crimes. Abe was hanged in 1946. Obara drew a 10-year sentence.

Meanwhile, Carlson and his merry band headed home. *Nautilus* reached Pearl Harbor on August 25, *Argonaut* a day later.

At a time when clear-cut American victories were few and far between, this one was a good boost for national morale. American newsmen shot photographs of the leathery Carlson and the skinny Roosevelt—he had overcome a stomach ailment to serve in the Marines—holding up a captured Japanese Rising Sun flag. The flag itself went through channels to Marine Corps Commandant Lt. Gen. Thomas Holcomb and from him to President Roosevelt in the White House, who put on a show of recoiling from the flag at a press conference to display it, refusing to touch the "evil banner."

The flag wound up in the Marine Corps Museum. Roosevelt wound up receiving a Navy Cross, which helped cut down on Republican Congressional attacks on the four Roosevelt sons, all of whom while in uniform and on active duty were being accused of serving in cushy stateside jobs. In fact, all would see considerable combat by war's end, and two of them, because of their Navy assignments in the Pacific, would miss their father's funeral in April 1945.

Naval History and Heritage Command

After their baptism of fire at Makin, some members of the 2nd Marine Raider Battalion bear the stoic gaze of combat veterans aboard the submarine USS *Nautilus* as they enter Pearl Harbor on August 25, 1942. A Marine at left is holding a captured Japanese Arisaka rifle.

Americans celebrated the raid as yet another tweak to the Japanese, like the Doolittle Raid and the defense of Wake, to make up for the defeats of Pearl Harbor and the Philippines, but military men on both sides took grim note of the bizarre encounter.

Carlson led his Raiders into action on Guadalcanal. In one 30-day, 150-mile armed reconnaissance, his men killed more than 500 Japanese at a cost to themselves of only 17 men. Illness sent Carlson home, and he never held another combat command, but was an observer at Tarawa and at Saipan. There he was injured while trying to rescue a wounded man, which led to his early retirement as a brigadier general in July 1946 and his equally early death the following year.

Roosevelt took over the new 4th Raider Battalion, while 2nd Battalion was sent to the Solomons, where it saw heavy fighting. Eventually all the Raider battalions became the reformed 4th Marine Regiment in 1944, which took up the colors and heritage of the old "China Marines," which had been annihilated in the defense of the Philippines, the only Marine regiment ever to surrender. By then all Marines were considered to be as tough and flexible as the Raiders, and there was no further need of specialized outfits in the mass amphibious assaults that were coming.

Nor had the raid succeeded in its original intent. The Japanese did not divert troops from Guadalcanal specifically to the Gilberts—there was no impact on the Solomons campaign. American officers regarded the military impact of the raid as being "negligible," although it did provide the United States with some lessons on how to transport raiders by submarine to and from a defended target.

But, tragically, the Japanese did realize how weakly defended the Gilbert Islands were. A month after the raid, they landed a detachment of Special Naval Landing Forces on Tarawa, one of the Gilbert atolls. These troops, Japan's version of America's Marines, were ordered to prepare the island's defenses, and prepare them they did. Tarawa alone received 24 coast defense guns ranging from 5.5-inch to 8-inch, some purportedly captured from the British defenses at Singapore, others incredibly from Russian defenses at Port Arthur, dating back to 1905 but still capable of hurling explosive shells at troops. Tarawa would also receive 25 field guns, a system of barricades, and bombproof shelters, all defended by 4,500 men. Makin itself would be defended by 800 men.

When the U.S. 2nd Marine Division stormed Tarawa's defenses on November 19, 1943, they would pay an immense price for the success of the Makin raid—in 76 hours of bitter fighting they would suffer nearly 1,000 dead and more than 2,000 wounded.

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Undoubtedly, the World War II aircraft type that attracts the most attention is the fighter plane. Yet, before the war, the U.S. Army Air Corps paid little attention to fighter development and tactics because its senior officers, with certain exceptions, would later lead the Army Air Forces with a sharp focus on bombers.

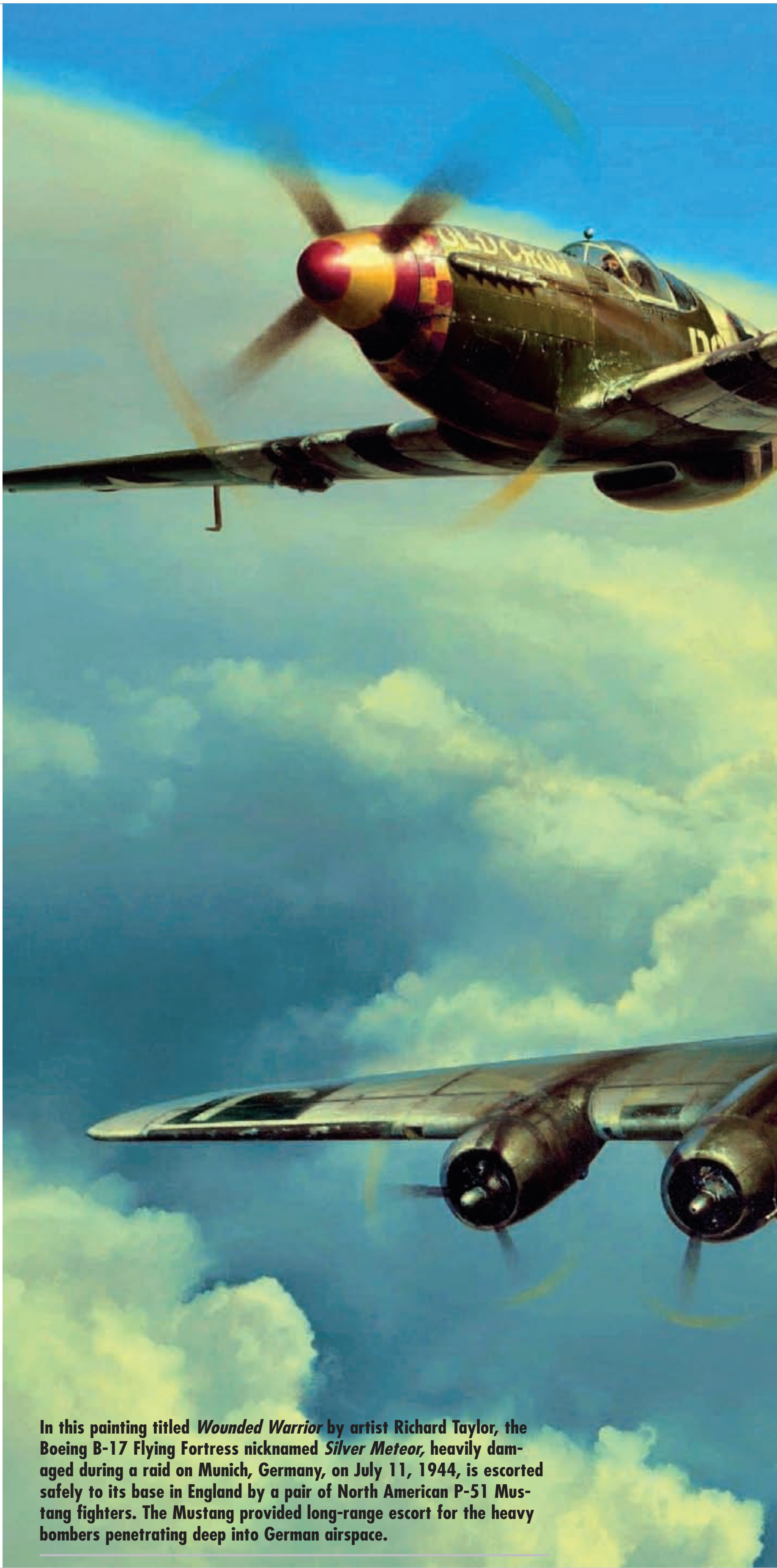
It was not until the success of Axis fighters in Europe and Asia revealed their value that more than a modicum of attention was paid to what American bomber crews in World War II came to know as "little friends." Even then, it took a while for truly long-range fighters and effective fighter tactics to be developed within the U.S. Army Air Forces. Meanwhile, the ill-founded beliefs of senior officers who had placed their faith in daylight "precision" bombing without fighter escort, were sending young airmen to their fate in European skies.

As air force doctrine developed after the Great War, a major precept became "the bomber will always get through." Coined as a phrase in a speech given by British politician Sir Stanley Baldwin before Parliament in 1932, the concept was based on theories of Italian airman Guilio Douhet, who advocated that air power was a decisive weapon that could operate in the third dimension unhampered by armies, navies, or natural obstacles to reach an enemy's population centers and destroy the nation's will to fight. While Douhet's theory met with mixed reviews in Britain, it received a more favorable reception in the United States.

In 1920, the Air Service Field Officers School, later renamed the Air Corps Tactical School, was established at Langley Field, Virginia. Douhet's theories received wide dissemination at the school, where a core group of instructors adopted them as the basis for strategy. The faculty was dominated by devotees of Brig. Gen. William L. "Billy" Mitchell, some of whom had participated in his test bombings of obsolete ships off Norfolk, Virginia. Actually, Mitchell never advocated reliance on bombers, but that did not stop some of his disciples from pursuing that line of thinking.

During the school's first years of operation, the predominant theory taught was that pursuit aviation was to the Air Service what the infantry was to the Army. Attitudes had changed by 1926 when tactical school instructors started advocating that, in addition to striking at military targets, airplanes could bombard manufacturing facilities and other civilian targets. By 1931, air force doctrine held that once an air attack was launched it would be nearly impossible to stop.

The leading theorist was Major Harold L. George, who advocated that the bomber was the Air Corps' primary weapon and daylight precision bombardment should be the air force's primary mission. The list of other advocates reads like a who's who of senior World War II U.S. Army air officers—Henry H. Arnold, Carl Spaatz, Ira Eaker, Haywood Hansell, and James H. Doolittle, among others. They came to be known as the "Bomber Mafia" by their opponents at the school, including George C. Kenney, who favored an air force designed to support ground forces; Lewis H. Brereton, who believed that air forces should be eclectic; and Claire Chennault, who was the primary advocate for the pursuit mission.

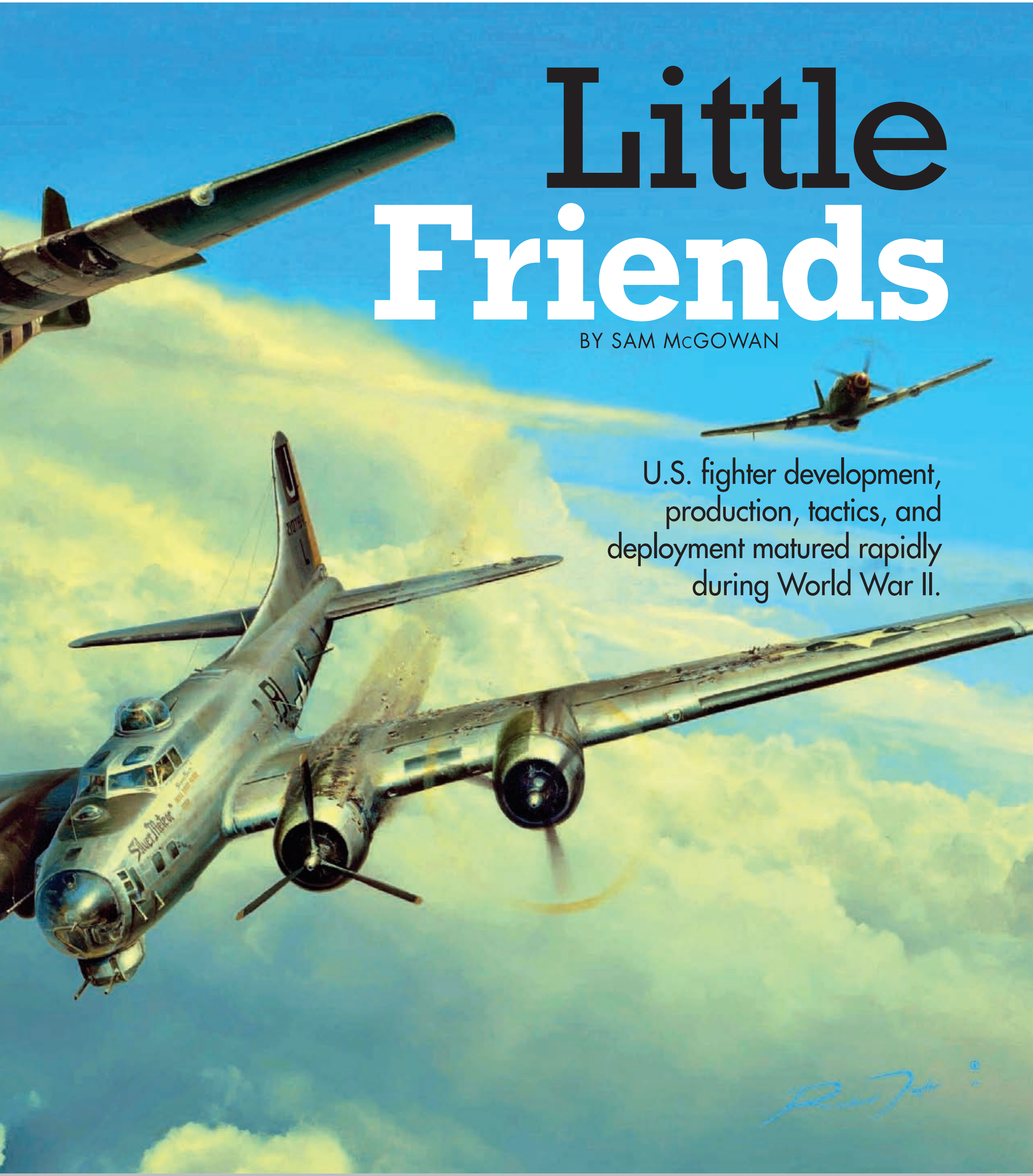


In this painting titled *Wounded Warrior* by artist Richard Taylor, the Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress nicknamed *Silver Meteor,* heavily damaged during a raid on Munich, Germany, on July 11, 1944, is escorted safely to its base in England by a pair of North American P-51 Mustang fighters. The Mustang provided long-range escort for the heavy bombers penetrating deep into German airspace.

Little Friends

BY SAM McGOWAN

U.S. fighter development, production, tactics, and deployment matured rapidly during World War II.



Art © Richard Taylor, www.MilitaryGallery.com

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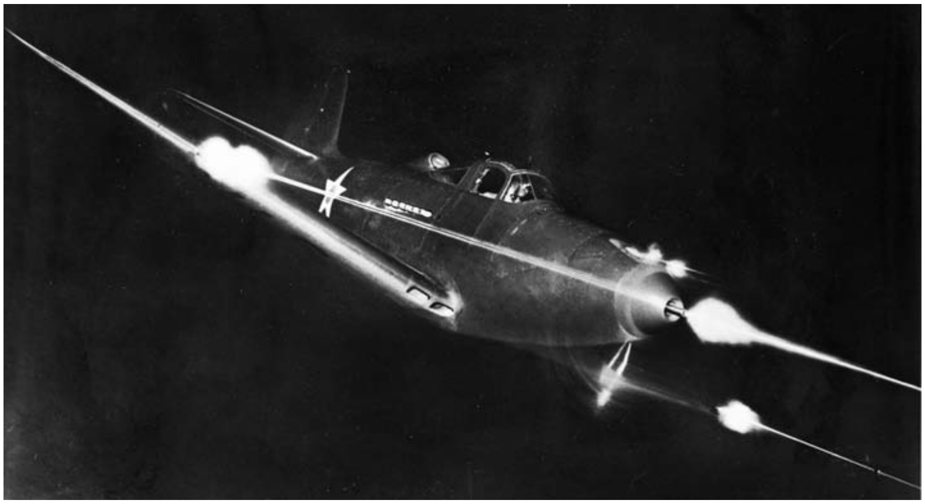

A Bell P-39 Airacobra fighter fires its guns during a nocturnal demonstration flight. Although the P-39 was a disappointment as a dogfighter, the aircraft was adept at ground attack and provided excellent ground support to Allied troops in the Pacific.

Others such as Frank Andrews, who was a strong believer in the bomber, leaned toward it as the primary weapon but believed that an air force should be balanced. Two other believers in an eclectic air force were Lieutenants Ben Kelsey, who worked with Doolittle in the Blind Flight Project and went on to become a leader in fighter research and development, and Gordon Saville, who worked closely with Kelsey and also taught at the Tactical School where he assumed Chennault's mantle. By the mid-1930s, bomber advocates held sway over Air Corps thought, particularly after Chennault was medically retired.

In the mid-1930s, U.S. strategy was based on defending against invasion rather than waging an overseas war, and the Air Corps was authorized to purchase aircraft with this in mind. Providing escort for bombers was not a consideration. Invasion by sea, although remote, was a far greater possibility than air attack. Instead of developing pursuit ships designed to climb rapidly to high altitudes to intercept an enemy force, the emphasis was on rugged construction with heavy firepower for ground attack.

Lieutenant Ben Kelsey, as the Air Corps fighter projects officer, was responsible for developing new pursuit aircraft. He was particularly interested in Allison Engine Company's work on inline liquid-cooled engines since they seemed to offer the best performance. He chafed at Air Corps restrictions that limited fighters to 500 pounds for guns and ammunition and pressed to have the restriction raised to 1,000 pounds. To get around the restriction, he and fellow lieutenant Gordon Saville formulated two new "interceptor" specifications, one for a single-engine airplane and one for a long-range multi-engine high-altitude fighter, which led to the development of the Bell P-39 Airacobra and the Lockheed P-38 Lightning.

In 1937, the Air Corps issued a specification for a fighter that could go into production quickly. Curtiss offered a version of their Hawk fighter, using Allison's V-1710 engine, which became the P-40 Tomahawk. While the P-39 and P-40 were designed primarily for ground attack, the specification that led to the P-38 was for a long-range, high-altitude interceptor. All three types used the V-1710 engine. The P-39, however, was developed without a supercharger, although as a ground attack aircraft and low-altitude fighter it did not apparently need one.

In January 1939, using advances in aviation technology abroad as justification, President Franklin D. Roosevelt called for a military appropriation of $300 million to purchase aircraft for the Army. Less than three months later, Congress passed an emergency Army air defense bill authorizing the procurement of 3,251 aircraft. To speed up deliveries, Air Corps chief Maj. Gen. Henry "Hap" Arnold restricted purchases to aircraft already in or nearing production, which limited fighter purchases to P-39s and P-40s.

It was not until 1941 that the restriction was lifted, and the development and purchase of other types, particularly Republic's robust P-47 Thunderbolt and the P-38, resumed. Little thought had been given to bomber escort. In fact, the Bomber Mafia believed the bombers of the day were so fast that it would be hard to intercept them and, if intercepted, their gunners would be able to fight off attacking aircraft.

At the time, the new war was still thousands of miles away in Asia and Europe. The only place where the United States had interests close enough to possibly be in harm's way was in the Philippines, although the Panama Canal was a potential target. Until July 1941, the Philippines were not a priority for defense, but after President Roosevelt imposed an embargo on oil sales to Japan he decided to beef up defenses in the islands. When war came to the U.S., it came in the Philippines and the Netherlands East Indies.

P-40s had some success in the Philippines in spite of inexperienced pilots and airplanes with engines that had not been broken in, but losses could not be replaced. Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress and Consolidated LB-30/B-24 Liberator bombers operated unescorted against Japanese targets in Java and held their own but not without six losses to fighters. They were operating under the command of Maj. Gen. Lewis Brereton, who was all for using escorting fighters, but all he had were P-40s and P-39s, and there were not enough experienced pilots to be effective.

By the spring of 1942, a substantial fighter force had been built up in Australia. They were P-40s and P-39s, along with some 200 P-400s (P-39s that originally had been built for the British and were lighter armed than the U.S. version). While they were ineffective defending against Japanese bombers attacking Port Moresby at high altitude, the P-39/P-400s were successful in the escort role on missions to the other side of the Owen Stanley Mountains and on strafing missions. P-39s/P-400s were used extensively to attack ground targets in New Guinea and on Guadalcanal. It was not until the Air Staff finally sent P-38s to the Southwest Pacific that autumn that Allied airmen began gaining the upper hand over the Japanese. Meanwhile, Claire Chennault's American Volunteer Group and 23rd Fighter Group used his tactics to achieve considerable success in Burma and China with their P-40s.

American aircraft first saw action against the Luftwaffe in the Middle East, where Brereton transferred in June 1942, in response to the British defeat at Tobruk. His Middle East Air Force's (MEAF) mission was to support British operations in Egypt and Libya. MEAF included two P-40 groups, but they operated under RAF Middle East Command control primarily for ground attack and providing air cover at low altitudes. The only high-altitude fighters available were RAF Supermarine Spitfires, which lacked the range to go with MEAF's B-24s to their targets.

In November 1942, MEAF became the Ninth Air Force. It continued a dual mission of supporting the British with its P-40s and light and medium bombers while mounting unescorted attacks on strategic targets with the heavy B-24s. The use of fighters, particularly P-40s, for ground attack had become the primary fighter mission in the Mediterranean by mid-1943, but it was not until the spring of 1944 that such missions became primary in Western Europe, where fighters had been used mostly for escort.

Although the United States formally entered the war on December 8, 1941, it was not until August that heavy bombers commenced operations out of the United Kingdom. Only four fighter groups—the pursuit designation was changed to fighter in early 1942—were part of the initial move of Eighth Air Force units to Britain. One operated P-38s while the others had P-39s before they left the United States. Originally, the P-39s were supposed to go to the United Kingdom by ship, but at the last minute the Air Staff decided that two groups would leave their airplanes behind and they would be equipped with Spitfires when they arrived. All four groups moved to North Africa to join the Twelfth Air Force, as did a second P-38 group that arrived later in the summer. The Air Staff also decided to form a new group in the United Kingdom made up of former RAF pilots and Spitfires. Eighth Air Force activated the 4th Fighter Group in September. After the other groups left for Africa, the 4th was the only Army Air Forces group left in the United Kingdom. A third P-38 group arrived in September but also transferred to North Africa.

In early November, American and British troops landed in northwest Africa during Operation Torch. All three P-38 groups, two Spitfire groups, and the P-39 group left England for Algeria to join the Twelfth Air Force. Bomber groups arrived throughout the summer, but it was not until the end of November that a fighter group arrived. The 78th Fighter Group was an experienced P-38 group, but shortly after it arrived its airplanes and most of its pilots went to North Africa. The group re-manned and equipped with P-47s. The transition took place in January 1943, right after the 56th Fighter Group arrived. The 4th Fighter Group also transitioned into Thunderbolts. To say the pilots were not happy to lose their Spitfires is an understatement!

The Republic P-47 was a radical departure from the Allison-powered fighters that had become standard in the Air Corps. Initially, Republic planned to develop a new fighter based on its P-35 using the Allison inline engine. After the Army expressed reservations about the XP-47, Republic decided to adapt it to the new Pratt and Whitney Double Wasp engine, a large radial engine with double-banked cylinders. The new P-47 was the largest fighter ever built to that time—it grossed out at 11,600 pounds (eventually increased to 17,500 pounds). The Army was impressed by its performance and issued a contract for 773 airplanes; by the war's end, more P-47s would be produced than any other fighter. Although the P-47 was heavy, it was fast, with a top speed of 427 miles per hour, but its climb performance was less than desired. On the other hand, it could dive—so fast that it started nibbling on the edge of the speed of sound and encountered compressibility. The air-cooled radial engine turned out to be better suited to combat operations than liquid-cooled engines, which would overheat and seize if the coolant was lost. The first fighter group to equip with the new Thunderbolt was the 56th.

Although the three P-47 groups began training in the United Kingdom in January and February, they did not become operational until April. Several milk run missions were flown along the French coast with RAF Spitfires to allow the pilots to become accustomed to combat conditions. The first pilot to down a German fighter was Major Don Blakeslee of the 4th Fighter Group. He spotted three Focke-Wulf FW-190s and used his airplane's diving speed to catch up with one and shoot it down.

Two other 4th Fighter Group pilots also put in claims. After the mission, Blakeslee was widely reported as saying, "It ought to dive, it sure can't climb." Even though Blakeslee and other former RAF pilots were not fond of the Thunderbolt, the men of the 56th were, and they began racking up the highest number of kills of any fighter group assigned to VIII Fighter Command and producing the most American aces of the war. On May 4, VIII Fighter Command's P-47s escorted B-17s to Antwerp. None were lost; the only casualty was a P-47 that suffered an engine failure. Over the next month, encounters with German fighters increased and victories mounted but so did losses since the young Americans were fighting far more experienced Germans. Some losses were attributed to engine failure.

Bomber Mafia members believed strongly in daylight bombing without fighter escort even though the RAF had learned it was too costly early in the war when casualties were so severe they turned to night operations. They encouraged the Americans to do so as well, but Generals Spaatz and Eaker, the two senior air officers in Britain at the time, were determined to prove the theory in combat. In the summer of 1943, Eaker ordered deep-penetration missions into Germany with disastrous results. Escorting fighters could operate just beyond the German border, but not by much. The Luftwaffe knew the fighters' range limitations and planned interceptions of bomber formations after they turned back. The VIII Bomber Command suffered heavy casualties as a result.

Earlier in the year, the Eighth Air Force Technical Section began addressing the use of drop tanks to increase range. Although P-38s and P-39s had been fitted with external tanks for ferrying, P-47s were initially shipped by sea, and no tanks were sent with them. Colonel Ben Kelsey, the technical section commander, requested tanks from the United States and put

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The Curtiss P-40 Tomahawk was a rugged aircraft that served in all theaters of World War II. The P-40 was also widely used by British and Commonwealth air squadrons under Lend-Lease, and variants were known by other nicknames such as "War Hawk" and "Kitty Hawk."

Both: National Archives

The Lockheed P-38 Lightning fighter, upper right, was a robust twin-boom and twin-engine aircraft that was capable of flying bomber escort missions and engaging in air-to-air combat. The Germans nicknamed the Lightning the "Fork-tailed Devil."

his assistant, Lt. Col. Cass Hough, in charge of testing them. The resonated paper tanks, which held 200 gallons of gasoline, proved unsatisfactory because reduced atmospheric pressure at high altitudes prevented fuel from transferring. They were prone to leak and produced a significant amount of drag, which increased fuel consumption. To solve the problem, Hough requested new tanks from the United States and also went to the British for help.

Hough and his assistant, Lieutenant Robert Shafer, soon realized that for external tanks to work they had to be pressurized. Due to the urgency of the situation, they chose to ignore Army regulations prohibiting pressurizing fuel tanks and developed their own pressurized tanks. Working with British engineers, they came up with a means of using exhaust air from the instrument vacuum pump to pressurize the tanks. On May 20, the prototype of an all-metal, 100-gallon tank capable of providing fuel up to 35,000 feet arrived in Britain. Plans were made to have the tanks produced in Britain, but a shortage of sheet metal caused a three-month production delay. Meanwhile, more than 1,100 unpressurized 200-gallon tanks arrived. Although they could not be used above 23,000 feet, Hough suggested using them during climbout. There was not enough time to consume a full 200 gallons by the time the fighters reached hostile airspace, so the tanks were only partially filled. The procedure increased the Thunderbolt's range by 75 miles.

On August 17, a shipment of metal tanks arrived. They were designed for P-39s and P-40s but were easily adaptable to P-47s. Although they only held 85 gallons, that was roughly the amount carried in the 200-gallon tanks. The new tanks produced less drag and only reduced airspeed by 12-15 miles per hour. The British offered a paper tank with a capacity of 108 gallons; by the end of September, the 4th Fighter Group was using them. The extended range allowed fighters to penetrate German airspace for the first time on September 27 on a mission to Emden. The force met stiff opposition, but losses were kept to seven bombers and two fighters; the P-47s claimed 21 German fighters destroyed.

On October 2, the 56th Fighter Group flew a mission to Emden with the 108-gallon tanks, an overall distance of 750 miles. By burning their tanks empty, P-47 pilots were able to fly missions 375 miles from their base while the 85-gallon tanks allowed missions to 340 miles. This was some 200 miles short of Berlin, but P-47s were now able to accompany bombers well into German airspace. Long-range escort fighters were beginning to arrive in the United Kingdom as two P-38 groups, the 20th and 55th, joined VIII Fighter Command. Meanwhile, bomber losses mounted.

On October 15, the day after a disastrous mission to Schweinfurt, the 55th Fighter Group became operational with its complement of 75 P-38s. With drop tanks, they had a combat radius of 450 miles, which was getting close to Berlin. A second P-38 group, the 20th, became operational in December. New tactics were developed using P-38s to protect the bombers over their targets while P-47s covered the bomber stream at the points where fighter attack was most likely. By November 1, 1943, P-47s had accounted for 237 German aircraft against a loss of 73 of their own. While this number seems small in comparison to later totals, it was because German pilots refused to engage fighters but waited until they started turning back to attack the bombers. Additional fighter groups arrived in Britain in the fall, most with P-47s. The VIII Fighter Command was authorized to maintain 15 groups, but that figure was not reached until the spring of 1944.

Improvements were made to the P-47, including injecting water into the engine cylinders, which boosted power by 200-300 horsepower, thus increasing performance. A larger four-bladed propeller gave the P-47 greatly improved climb performance. The heavy fighter's range was increased by the addition of two more drop tanks, one under each wing, in addition to the one under the belly. Although it was not until April 1944 that all P-47s had been modified to carry wing tanks, enough had been modified by February that VIII Fighter Command was able to take advantage of them by assigning groups to different positions along the bomber stream in relation to their range.

In September 1943, a turn of events brought large numbers of additional fighters to Britain. In preparation for the upcoming invasion of France, the Ninth Air Force transferred to England from the Middle East to develop a new tactical air force. Original War Department plans were for the Eighth Air Force to switch from the strategic to the tactical role to support the invasion with its VIII Air Support Command, but a new plan led to the establishment of a second numbered air force dedicated solely to tactical operations. The transfer was only of the Ninth's headquarters, which was still commanded by Brereton, and IX Fighter and Bomber Commands without equipment or personnel. Brereton's new air force would consist of fighter bombers, light and medium bombers, and troop carriers to support airborne operations and provide logistical support for his other units once they had crossed the English Channel to France.

The Ninth Air Force eventually included IX Fighter Command and two tactical air commands, IX and XIX. The Ninth was supposed to operate as an independent command in conjunction with Royal Air Force units reporting to Air Marshall Trafford Leigh-Mallory, who had been appointed to command the Allied Expeditionary Air Force (AEAF) for the D-Day invasion, but the issue became political in February 1944 when General Carl Spaatz, who had been named commander of a new organization

A P-51 Mustang fighter, upper left, flies escort duty with a formation of B-17 Flying Fortress bombers. The marriage of the North American airframe design and the Rolls-Royce Merlin engine produced a high-performance fighter that was originally conceived as a dive bomber powered by an Allison engine.

called U.S. Strategic Air Forces in Europe, maintained that the Ninth should be under his administrative control. Another political issue involved Brereton's new North American P-51 Mustang fighters.

There is a common misconception that the P-51s with Rolls Royce Merlin engines were developed solely to be escort fighters and that as soon as they appeared in the skies over Europe the Allies won air superiority. This, however, was not the case. The design came about when North American Aviation president Dutch Kindleberger took exception to a Curtiss offer to allow his company to produce P-40s under license for sale to the British. Kindleberger proposed that his company instead design and produce a new fighter with the same engine around a new wing. He promised to have the first one ready in four months.

North American Aviation's new design, which was given the U.S. designation P-51, proved to be fast and maneuverable, but it suffered a lack of performance above 15,000 feet because the Allison engines were not turbocharged, so the RAF assigned its new Mustangs to ground cooperation squadrons. Because of its range, the Air Staff decided to adapt it as a dive bomber with the designation A-36. A British test pilot recommended that the RAF modify a Mustang with a Rolls Royce engine to correct the lack of high-altitude performance. The modification was successful, and the Army Air Forces decided to evaluate the conversion.

Volumes have been written about the P-51 with the Merlin engine and how it was developed to be a long-range escort fighter; General Arnold even indicated as much in his memoirs. The problem is that this is simply not true. By the time it entered service, the focus had switched to the fighter bomber, which had proven so effective in North Africa and the Middle East. At the Trident Conference in May 1943, the Combined Chiefs agreed to mount a cross-Channel invasion of France in the spring of 1944 after an invasion of Sicily in mid-1943 and a subsequent move onto the Italian peninsula. During the interim, RAF Bomber Command and VIII Bomber Command would mount a combined bomber offensive, but as the date for the invasion approached the emphasis would switch to preparations for it. In a letter to Eighth Air Force commander Eaker in September 1943, AEAF commander Leigh-Mallory outlined the role of fighter squadrons: provide fighter cover over the beaches; provide fighter cover for the shipping lanes leading to the beaches; make fighter bomber attacks against enemy ground forces and installations; provide fighter escort for light and medium bombers; and provide reconnaissance.

Providing escort for heavy bombers was not even mentioned. Leigh-Mallory realized that prior to, during, and after the invasion the heavy bombers' role would be to support the ground forces. In fact, Eighth Air Force's mission all along had been to prepare for an invasion of France. Although historians have not addressed the issue, the decision to discontinue daylight bombing operations deep into Germany may have been prompted as much by the upcoming change in mission as it was by the heavy losses taken in the late summer and fall of 1943. Leigh-Mallory also addressed the P-51s, stating that they appeared equally suited for fighter escort and the close air support role and should be under a single commander.

When the Air Staff began allocating aircraft for Ninth Air Force, all of the new P-51 groups were dedicated to it. It was a logical decision since the Ninth's role prior to the invasion would be attacking German lines of communication throughout Western Europe and the RAF's Mustangs were going to II Tactical Air Force, Ninth's counterpart.

The P-51s' increased range would allow them to operate well into Germany on tactical missions; in preparation for the invasion, all missions would be tactical. In October 1943, the first of the Ninth's P-51 groups, the 354th, arrived in the United Kingdom, although it was not until the following month that its airplanes arrived. Since it was a new group, a few VIII Fighter Command pilots were temporarily

Dana Bell Collection

One of heaviest fighter aircraft of World War II, the Republic P-47 Thunderbolt, photographed at an airstrip in Italy, was a hefty radial-engine plane that could take severe punishment and bring its pilot safely home. The Thunderbolt was versatile, serving as an escort, dogfighter, and fighter bomber during the war. In this image ground crewmen prepare to attach bombs to hardpoints under a P-47D's wings.

attached to it to help its pilots gain experience. One was Lt. Col. Don Blakeslee. He never had liked the P-47s he had been flying for the past year, but the new Mustangs reminded him of the agile Spitfires he had started out in. Blakeslee, who was not a tactician and evidently did not understand the Ninth's role in the upcoming invasion, mounted a campaign to have the P-51s reassigned to VIII Fighter Command. He pressed his case to VIII Fighter Command's leader, Maj. Gen. William Kepner, who went to Spaatz, who appealed to the Air Staff, which told him no.

While Spaatz was unable to have the 354th transferred to VIII Fighter Command, he managed to convince the Air Staff to let him swap a P-47 group, the 358th, for the recently arrived 357th Fighter Group. Spaatz finally persuaded the Air Staff to reallocate the 33 fighter groups that were planned to be assigned to Britain. The Eighth Air Force would get seven P-51 groups instead of none along with four groups each of P-38s and P-47s. The Ninth would have 13 P-47 groups, three of P-38s, and two of P-51s. Those numbers would change after the invasion when a need developed for additional P-47s and P-38s in the fighter bomber role and the P-51 proved vulnerable on low-altitude operations.

Except for the 56th Fighter Group, all of VIII Fighter Command's groups were equipped with P-51s by the end of the war, and their P-38s and P-47s were transferred to Ninth Air Force. The reequipping was at least in part due to General George Kenney's refusal to accept P-51s in the Southwest Pacific, where the P-38 remained the primary fighter, but it was also due to the Mustang's vulnerability in the tactical role.

It was not until May 1944 that all of the Ninth's groups arrived or that VIII Fighter Command had received its seven groups of P-51s. Consequently, the P-38 and P-47 groups were most responsible for gaining air superiority over Germany. Throughout the winter and early spring of 1944, escort missions were scheduled so that the predominant P-47s would escort the bombers through areas most prone to fighter attack while the long-range P-38s and P-51s protected them over the targets. VIII Fighter Command's fighters were not alone in the escort role; the Ninth Air Force's fighters were also flying escort, as were RAF squadrons, some of which were equipped with Mustangs.

In his New Year's address to Army air units, USAAF commander Arnold stressed that the mission of air forces in Europe was to destroy the Luftwaffe "in the air, on the ground and in the factories." Lt. Gen. James H. Doolittle arrived in England on January 6, 1944, to take command of VIII Bomber Command, which would soon be elevated to become Eighth Air Force when the original headquarters became USSTAFE. Sunday, February 20, 1944, kicked off a week of air attacks on German aircraft factories that became known as Big Week. Its purpose was to carry out Arnold's intentions. Over a five-day period, Eighth and Ninth Air Force fighters flew 3,839 sorties—only 425 were by P-51s.

Doolittle was eager to mount an attack on the German capital of Berlin, which had yet to be visited by the Eighth Air Force. The mission was originally scheduled for March 3, but bad weather over Germany caused an abort. The following day turned out to be just as bad, and another recall was sent out, but one combat wing of B-17s allegedly failed to get the message. When Eighth Air Force realized some bombers were not turning back, they allowed part of the fighter escort to continue to Berlin.

The 4th Fighter Group, which had just converted to P-51s, and the 354th Fighter Group were in the vicinity of Berlin, but it was the 55th Fighter Group's P-38s that actually got over the city. On March 6, a mission was finally flown over Berlin, and it turned out to be an even worse disaster than the Schweinfurt mission the previous October, even though the bombers were escorted all the way to and from the target.

Sixty-nine bombers and 23 fighters were lost, while a number of others failed to return to their bases due to battle damage. Another mission two days later also resulted in heavy losses; 37 bombers and 11 fighters failed to return. Losses on the two missions amounted to 106 bomber crews and 34 fighter pilots, a total of 1,094 men missing in action, not to mention the airplanes that had to be scrapped and those that came back with dead and wounded crewmen.

The two missions were evaluated in both England and the United States to determine why so many bombers had been lost even though they were escorted. It was determined that the fighters operated too close to the bombers and were unable to get into position to break up attacks. Consequently, new fighter tactics were developed. Instead of sticking close to the bombers as they had been doing, some fighters went out well ahead of the bomber streams to intercept German fighters as they were assembling, while others ranged above and off to the sides of the bombers, sometimes so far away that the crews could not see them.

The change in fighter tactics was met with a lack of enthusiasm by the bomber crews, who felt they were being left unprotected. Many accused Doolittle of using them as bait, a belief that was not that far from the truth since the rationale for the Berlin mission and others into Germany at the time was to draw the Luftwaffe into combat and reduce its fighter strength through attrition. The new tactics worked, and German fighter losses mounted. More than 500 of Germany's best pilots were lost, a loss that could not be overcome. Bomber losses reached their peak in April then declined.

In another move to inflict damage on the

Luftwaffe, escort fighters were encouraged to drop down on the deck during their return flight and expend their ammunition strafing airfields and other targets, particularly locomotives. Fighter pilots were admonished that it did not matter whether an airplane was destroyed on the ground or in the air. For a few weeks in March and April, a special unit made up of volunteers from four P-47 groups practiced strafing. After the P-47 groups pioneered ground attack missions, the 4th Fighter Group got permission to fly strafing missions against German airfields in France.

The P-38-equipped 20th Fighter Group flew a strafing mission deep inside Germany only 80 miles west of Berlin. Soon, fighter sweeps over France and even deep into Germany were regular occurrences. Experiments were also conducted with bombs, which had been standard practice for P-40s in North Africa and the Mediterranean. Fighters were adapted to carry high-velocity rockets to attack tanks and other targets. Experiments were also conducted with level bombing by fighters dropping when a modified P-38 with a bombardier on board dropped its bombs. The "droop snoot" P-38s not only led P-38 formations, but also led formations of other fighters, particularly P-47s.

In October 1943, the War Department authorized a new air force in the Mediterranean. Fifteenth Air Force was set up using the Twelfth's B-17s and two B-24 groups that had been with the Ninth. Finding fighter groups for escort duty was a problem. The Air Staff reassigned six groups that had previously been with the Ninth and Twelfth, three of P-38s and three of P-47s, but priority for fighters was given to Britain due to the upcoming invasion. The only group still in the United States not allocated to an overseas air force was the 332nd Fighter Group, an African American unit. In late 1943, Spaatz asked to have it assigned to Italy to XII Fighter Command. There was already one African American fighter squadron in Italy, the 99th, which had been attached to several different groups. The 99th's record in ground attack was poor, but in January the squadron put in a good showing against German fighter/bombers over Anzio.

Senior air force leaders reasoned that the 332nd might be better suited to the air combat role and reassigned it to the Fifteenth Air Force. At the time, the 332nd was flying P-39s while the 99th was flying P-40s, but they both briefly transitioned into P-47s and then into Mustangs. The 332nd began flying escort missions in early June, and the 99th joined it in July. The 332nd was the only new fighter group to join the Fifteenth Air Force. It gave the Fifteenth a fourth fighter group and four additional squadrons. By mid-July, the Fifteenth's P-47 groups had all transitioned into P-51s, while their P-47s went to Twelfth Air Force, which, like Ninth Air Force in Britain, had become a tactical air force.

There is a common misconception that P-51s were used primarily for escort duty because they were superior in the air-to-air combat role. Actually, although the Mustang had greater range, the transition into P-51s was because they were less suited for ground attack due to their liquid cooling system, which made them vulnerable. A single hole in the cooling system could cause a complete loss of coolant followed by an engine failure. Of the two groups that served longest with VIII Fighter Command, the 4th lost twice as many fighters as the 56th, which operated P-47s for the entire war, while the 4th was the first of VIII Fighter Command's groups to convert to P-51s. Spitfires, which used the same engines, also proved unsuited for ground attack missions for the same reasons.

The Hawker Typhoon also had a liquid cooling system, but it had been modified for ground attack so the RAF was forced to make do with it. The P-38 also featured liquid cooling, but with two engines a pilot at least had a chance to make it to a friendly base if one failed. The P-38's concentrated fire and 20mm cannon made it an effective ground attack aircraft.

The P-38's record in Europe is somewhat checkered, although in the Pacific it was the preferred fighter due to its long range and the safety provided by the second engine in an environment where missions were flown over long stretches of open water. Although P-38s were assigned to Eighth Air Force at the beginning of its service in the United Kingdom, they all transferred to North Africa in late 1942 and it was not until nearly a year later that any were assigned to VIII Fighter Command, when the 20th and 55th Fighter Groups arrived. They offered new escort possibilities due to their much longer range; with external tanks, they were able to go 100 miles farther into Germany than P-47s.

However, early VIII Fighter Command P-38 operations were plagued with mechanical problems. The cockpit heaters were ineffective in the severe cold over Europe, where air temperatures can be 50 degrees or more below zero. The cold caused engine problems as lubricating oil thickened and led to failures. The turbochargers also gave problems.

National Archives

Carrying drop tanks to extend their range, a flight of P-51 Mustangs maintains formation in the skies over Europe. The P-51 became the premiere Allied long-range escort fighter of World War II, even reaching Berlin from airfields in England.

The P-38s were not the only fighters to suffer problems due to cold. So did the P-51s. Yet, even though Eighth Air Force was lukewarm to the Lightning, the three groups that moved to North Africa operated them for the duration of the war with considerable success. After escorting Northwest Africa Air Forces heavy bombers, the three P-38 groups were reassigned to the Fifteenth Air Force when it was formed and served as almost half of its escorting fighter force.

The increased kill ratio during the last year of the war is often attributed to the superiority of the Mustang, but there were other factors that led to an increase in German losses while Allied losses declined. Not the least was the decline in quality of the Luftwaffe's fighter force due to

Continued on page 74

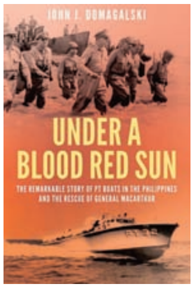
By Christopher Miskimon

Lieutenant John Buckeley led the daring evacuation of General Douglas MacArthur from the Philippines through enemy waters and heavy seas.

Daring PT Boat Rescue

> When Douglas MacArthur was ordered to leave the Philippines a brave group of PT boat crewmen took enormous risks to get him out to safety.

ON FEBRUARY 22, 1942, PRESIDENT FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT ORDERED GENERAL Douglas MacArthur, commanding American and Filipino forces resisting the Japanese invasion of the Philippines, to leave the islands for the relative safety of Australia. There, he would assume command of American forces in the South Pacific. MacArthur received the president's order on February 23 and initially thought to disobey it. In the end, he asked only for a delay to time his departure for the right moment.


JOHN J. DOMAGALSKI
UNDER A BLOOD RED SUN
THE REMARKABLE STORY OF PT BOATS IN THE PHILIPPINES AND THE RESCUE OF GENERAL MACARTHUR

The question remained as to how he would make good his escape. The method chosen was by sea using a flotilla of tiny Patrol Torpedo craft, the now famous PT boats. The commander of Torpedo Boat Squadron 3, Lieutenant John Bulkeley, was asked if his vessels could withstand a sea voyage of several hundred miles to Palawan. He told them his boats could indeed handle such a trip. Within two weeks MacArthur himself appeared to take a ride in a PT boat to assess its capabilities. Afterward he told Bulkeley of his need to evacuate and asked if he could get the job done. Bulkeley told him it would be a "piece of cake." The plan went forward from there.

Despite his optimism, Bulkeley knew there were problems. His four operational boats lacked spare parts, quality fuel, and ammunition, including torpedoes. The crews gathered what they could and repaired their boats as far as was possible. It was a risky assignment and meant the squadron would probably not get out on its own after completing the mission. The submarine USS *Permit* was detailed to rendezvous with the PTs in case they could not get MacArthur out on their own. They would have to sail hundreds of miles south to Cagayan on Mindanao Island. From there, Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress bombers would take MacArthur the rest of the way to Australia. A duffel bag of food was gathered for each boat.

At 7:30 PM on March 11, MacArthur, his family, a servant, and four aides boarded PT-41 to begin their journey. The general raised his cap as the boat pushed away from the dock at Corregidor Island and moved slowly into the darkness. More evacuees boarded other PT boats at other locations, and soon the entire group was sailing south. Once past the minefields, the craft sped up. The first night was rough. Swells made for hard going, especially for the passengers who were unused to being aboard a bouncing, rocking boat in heavy seas. The crews had trouble staying in contact with each other. One crew spotted what they thought was an enemy destroyer and dumped their spare fuel to help increase speed. The shadowy form turned out to be another PT boat. Despite the difficulties, the journey went on into the unknown waters ahead.

The crews of these torpedo boats carried out their duties and fought on until all of them were eventually lost in battle. The fight for the Philippines would be lost, but these sailors fought bravely to the last. The saga of their service and sacrifice is recounted in *Under a Blood Red Sun: The Remarkable Story of PT Boats in the Philippines and the Rescue of General MacArthur* (John J. Domagalski, Casemate Publishers, Havertown, PA, 2016, 304 pp., maps, photographs, notes, bibliogra-

ADVERTISEMENT

New Male Potency Formula Makes "The Little Blue Pill" Obsolete

Scientific advance made just for older men.
Works on both men's physical ability and their desire in bed.

By Harlan S. Waxman
Health News Syndicate

New York – If you're like the rest of us guys over 50; you probably already know the truth… prescription ED pills don't work! Simply getting an erection doesn't fix the problem" says Dr. Bassam Damaj, chief scientific officer at the world famous Innovus Pharma Laboratories.

As we get older, we need more help in bed. Not only does our desire fade; but erections can be soft or feeble, one of the main complaints with prescription pills. Besides, they're expensive… costing as much as $50.00 each.

Plus, it does nothing to stimulate your brain to want sex. "I don't care what you take, if you aren't interested in sex, you can't get or keep an erection. It's physiologically impossible," said Dr. Damaj.

MADE JUST FOR MEN OVER 50

But now, for the first time ever, there's a pill made just for older men. It's called Vesele®. A new pill that helps you get an erection by stimulating your body and your brainwaves. So Vesele® can work even when nothing else worked before.

The new men's pill is not a drug. It's something completely different

Because you don't need a prescription for Vesele®, sales are exploding. The maker just can't produce enough of it to keep up with demand. Even doctors are having a tough time getting their hands on it. So what's all the fuss about?

WORKS ON YOUR HEAD AND YOUR BODY

The new formula takes on erectile problems with a whole new twist. It doesn't just address the physical problems of getting older; it works on the mental part of sex too. Unlike the expensive prescriptions, the new pill stimulates your sexual brain chemistry as well. Actually helping you regain the passion and burning desire you had for your partner again. So you will want sex with the hunger and stamina of a 25-year-old.

THE BRAIN/ERECTION CONNECTION

Vesele takes off where the others only begins. Thanks to a discovery made by 3 Nobel-Prize winning scientists; Vesele® has become the first ever patented supplement to harden you and your libido. So you regain your desire as well as the ability to act on it.

In a 16-week clinical study; scientists from the U.S.A. joined forces to prove Nitric Oxide's effects on the cardio vascular system. They showed that Nitric Oxide could not only increase your ability to get an erection, it would also work on your brainwaves to stimulate your desire for sex. The results were remarkable and published in the world's most respected medical journals.

THE SCIENCE OF SEX

The study asked men, 45 to 65 years old to take the main ingredient in Vesele® once a day. Then they were instructed not to change the way they eat or exercise but to take Vesele® twice a day. What happened next was remarkable. Virtually every man in the study who took Vesele® twice a day reported a huge difference in their desire for sex. In layman's terms, they were horny again. They also experienced harder erections that lasted for almost 20 minutes. The placebo controlled group (who received sugar pills) mostly saw no difference.

JAW-DROPPING CLINICAL PROOF

✓ Satisfaction—Increase from 41.4% to 88.1%
✓ Frequency—Increase from 44.9% to 79.5%
✓ Desire—Increase from 47.9% to 82%
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✓ Hardness—Increase from 36.2% to 85.7%
✓ Ability to Satisfy—Increase from 44.1% to 83.3%

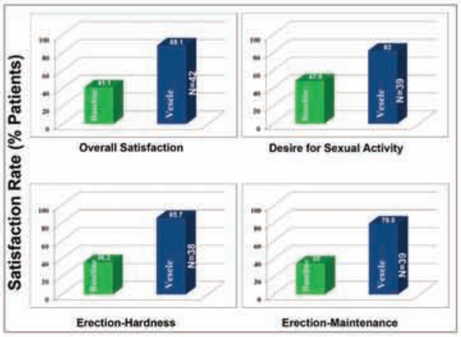
AN UNEXPECTED BONUS: The study results even showed an impressive increase in the energy, brain-power and memory of the participants.

SUPPLY LIMITED BY OVERWHELMING DEMAND

"Once we saw the results we knew we had a game-changer said Dr. Damaj. We get hundreds of calls a day from people begging us for a bottle. It's been crazy. We try to meet the crushing demand for Vesele®."

DOCTOR: "VESELE® PASSED THE TEST"

"As a doctor, I've studied the effectiveness of Nitric Oxide on the body and the brain. I'm impressed by the way it increases cerebral and penile blood flow. The result is evident in the creation of Vesele®. It's sure-fire proof that the mind/body connection is unbeatable when achieving and maintaining an erection and the results are remarkable" said Dr. Damaj. *(His findings are illustrated in the charts below.)*



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HERE'S WHAT MEN ARE SAYING

- **I'm ready to go sexually and mentally.**
- **More frequent erections in the night (while sleeping) and in the morning.**
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- **Amazing orgasms!**
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This is the first official public release of Vesele® since its news release. In order to get the word out about Vesele®, Innovus Pharma is offering special introductory discounts to all who call.

A special phone hotline has been set up for readers to take advantage of special discounts during this ordering opportunity. Special discounts will be available starting today at 6:00am. The discounts will automatically be applied to all callers. The Special TOLL-FREE Hotline number is 1-800-865-6507 and will be open 24-hours a day.

Only a limited number of bottles are available during this special discounted promotion. Consumers who miss out will have to wait until the next discount promotion is made available. But this could take weeks. The maker advises your best chance is to call 1-800-865-6507 early.

Vesele is a Registered Trademark of Innovus Pharmaceuticals publicly trading on the OTCQB under the Symbol INNV.

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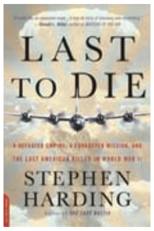
phy, index, $32.95, hardcover).

MacArthur is a controversial figure to many, alternately respected or disliked. This book takes neither side in that argument, instead rightly focusing on the PT boat crews and their actions. General knowledge of their story has faded since the war, and this booked brings much deserved attention to it. Multiple sources, including many interviews with participants, are used to provide authenticity to the narrative, giving the reader a true impression of the events. The author has created a readable book that includes appendices with additional information. It does justice to the men who fought both the sea and the Japanese military to affect the escape of a critical war leader and take the fight to the enemy despite long odds.



Last to Die: A Defeated Empire, A Forgotten Mission, and the Last American Killed in World War II (Stephen Harding, Da Capo Press, Boston, 2016, 262 pp., maps, photographs, notes, bibliography, index, $16.99, softcover)

Anthony Marchione, the son of Italian immigrants, volunteered to enlist in the U.S. military rather than wait to be drafted. Assigned as an air crewman aboard a Consolidated B-24 Liberator heavy bomber, he and his fellow crewmen were originally slated for combat duty in Italy but were diverted to Oklahoma, where they underwent specialized photoreconnaissance training, including a test flight to Colorado and back to assess their skills. Their B-24 carried no bombs, only cameras and a full complement of machine guns for defense.

Sent to the Philippines, Anthony and his comrades soon transitioned to the new Consolidated B-32 Dominator. When the war ended, the bombers ceased flying, but reconnaissance planes continued their mission. On August 18, 1945, Anthony's aircraft was sent on such a mission. While over Tokyo, it was attacked by Japanese interceptors that were either unaware of the ceasefire or ignored it. The B-32 was able to return to base, but Anthony was killed, the last American to die during the war.

The story of Marchione's death is one of a young American who willingly served his country, taking all the risks associated with that act and paying the ultimate price for his convictions. It is also a tale of Japanese politics and fatalism among some of its leaders. Some were willing to bow to the inevitable and end the conflict, while others wanted to continue until the bitter end. Toward that end they plotted and even rebelled against the directives of their supreme leader, Emperor Hirohito, which actually led to the senseless death of Anthony Marchione.

Hitler's Arctic War: The German Campaigns in Norway, Finland and the USSR 1940-1945 (Chris Mann and Christer Jorgensen, Pen and Sword Books, South Yorkshire, UK, 2016, 224 pp., maps, photographs, notes, bibliography, index, $29.95, softcover)

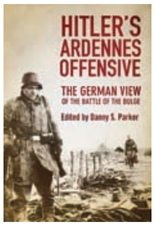
World War II in Europe's far northern reaches was a frozen exercise in both ingenuity and endurance. The initial German campaign to seize Norway was an overall success, giving the Wehrmacht a base for both ships and aircraft operating against convoys supplying the Soviet Union. After the Nazi invasion of that country, Germany allied with Finland, and extensive operations continued in the region for much of the war. The soldiers who fought there had to traverse harsh terrain carrying what they needed on their backs, with only limited help from armored or even transport vehicles. Commando raids were carried out under the most difficult conditions, and Nazi SS troops inspired fear in soldiers and civilians alike. Despite the difficulties and hardships, the war in the Far North was a tangent to the main fighting which neither side could afford to ignore.

Well illustrated and organized, this volume shows that while the war in this region was an unavoidable adjunct to the main fighting to the south, it also diverted resources the Germans could ill afford to lose. The authors effectively explain how soldiers dealt with the arctic conditions and the extensive hardships they endured while fighting at the top of the Continent. The book is a good general history of the various operations in Norway, Finland, and the Soviet Union during the war.

Vanished Hero: The Life, War and Mysterious Disappearance of America's WWII Strafing King (Jay A. Stout, Casemate Publishers, Havertown, PA, 2016, 350 pp., photographs, bibliography, index, $32.95, hardcover)

Few have ever heard of Elwyn G. Righetti, but his story is worthy of a Hollywood blockbuster. He took command of the 338th Fighter Squadron in England late in 1944. His boldness and leadership ability quickly made the unit a successful squadron. Soon Righetti was an ace pilot and went on to destroy more aircraft on the ground—27—than any other flyer in the Eighth Air Force. At the same time, his command suffered a high proportion of casualties in men and aircraft. Some of his subordinates came to see him as a latecomer who was seeking glory and medals, though most respected him for his courage and daring. His unit was most famous for "Loco Busting," or destroying locomotives. One tactic included releasing the drop tanks on their North American P-51 Mustang fighters so they would hit the locomotive and drench it in gasoline. A follow-on plane would then strafe and ignite the fuel. In April 1945, Righetti's plane was hit while strafing an airfield. Characteristically, he went around for one more pass—and was never seen again.

The author is a respected military aviation writer with several books to his name, and this is how he came upon this topic. A researcher who was interested in Righetti's story spent years gathering material, only to have his life cut short by cancer. Before he died he contacted the author and asked him to take all the research material for the book. The result is this volume, which is well-written and detailed with smooth prose. It is a fitting tribute to both Righetti and the man who collected his life's journey.

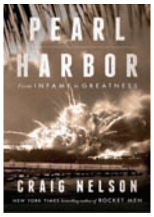


Hitler's Ardennes Offensive: The German View of the Battle of the Bulge (Edited by Danny S. Parker, Frontline Books, South Yorkshire, UK, 2016, 264 pp., maps, photographs, index, $16.00, softcover)

The Ardennes offensive was Nazi Germany's last chance to stave off defeat in the West, and it ultimately failed. The American side of the battle is well known, a story of desperate holding actions and determined defensive battles. The German side was just as desperate; however, this was their last opportunity to hold off defeat against the Western Allies, and Hitler's plan had many limitations and problems.

This book is a collection of writings by various German officers involved in the planning and prosecution of the attack. Some of the selections are essays outlining their views and recollections, while others are straight interviews, the participants answering a series of questions posed by the victorious Allies when they were prisoners in the war's aftermath. This is a revealing look at the thoughts of German leaders. Many of their statements are things they could not have said under the Nazi regime.

Pearl Harbor: From Infamy to Greatness (Craig


PEARL HARBOR
CRAIG NELSON

Nelson, Scribner Books, New York, 2016, 532 pp., photographs, notes, bibliography, index, $32.00, hardcover)

The infamous attack on Pearl Harbor spawned a thousand small stories of courage, frustration, sorrow, and perseverance. Sailors aboard burning ships had to choose whether to stay aboard the flaming wrecks or dive into waters ablaze from leaking fuel oil. Officers tried to direct efforts to save their ships and aircraft from destruction. Terrified spouses took their children to caves to hide from more attacks. Japanese officers led attacks they hoped would cripple the U.S. Navy long enough for their nation to achieve its goals across the Pacific. A few American pilots got into the air and fought their own small battles against the attackers, while gun crews exulted at the scarce victories they were able to win. The rest of America reacted in horror and rage at the attack that pulled them into world war.

In a fresh look at a pivotal moment in the history of the United States, the author asserts that in December 1941 America started the path from great power to world power. He begins in 1914, with Franklin D. Roosevelt, then Assistant Secretary of the Navy, at the keel-laying of the USS *Arizona,* the battleship that would come to symbolize the sacrifice and courage of December 7, 1941. Five years of research went into creating this work, and it shows in the depth of detail and wide-ranging breadth of coverage, revealing both the American and Japanese sides of the event.

Battle for Belorussia: The Red Army's Forgotten Campaign of October 1943-April 1944 (David M. Glantz, University Press of Kansas, Lawrence, 2016, 936 pp., maps, photographs, notes, bibliography, index, $39.95, hardcover)

BATTLE FOR BELORUSSIA
THE RED ARMY'S FORGOTTEN CAMPAIGN OF OCTOBER 1943–APRIL 1944
DAVID M. GLANTZ
with MARY ELIZABETH GLANTZ

Students of World War II on the Eastern Front are familiar with Operation Bagration, which crippled Germany's Army Group Center in mid-1944. What many do not consider is that this was not the Soviet Union's first attempt at such an offensive. Beginning in late 1943, Stalin ordered three Red Army fronts to attack a 400-mile stretch of the front line in an effort to reclaim Belorussia and its capital, Minsk, from the Nazis. The fighting lasted months and caused some 700,000 casualties in the Red Army. Still, it set the stage for the later success of Bagration.

Expert use of old Soviet records creates this detailed account of a less known period of the Eastern Front's history. This allows for a balanced outlook that presents Soviet assessments in a new light rather than focusing on a German-centric point of view so often used in the West. The author is a long acknowledged authority on the Eastern Front with many books and articles to his credit. ☐

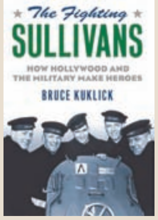
New and Noteworthy

MY LIFE IN THE SERVICE
The World War II Diary of GEORGE McGOVERN

My Life in the Service: The World War II Diary of George McGovern (Introduced by Andrew Bacevich, Franklin Square Press, 2016, $25.95, hardcover) McGovern, a future politician and presidential candidate, was a bomber pilot during the war. This diary reveals his experiences and thoughts.

WE MARCH AGAINST ENGLAND
OPERATION SEA LION
1940–41
ROBERT FORCZYK

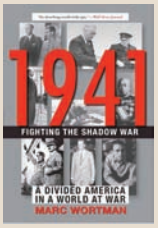
We March Against England: Operation Sea Lion 1940-41 (Robert Forczyk, Osprey Publishing, 2016, $30.00, hardcover) A comprehensive look at both sides' plans for a German invasion of England, the book reveals why the Germans never carried out their plan.


The Fighting SULLIVANS
HOW HOLLYWOOD AND THE MILITARY MAKE HEROES
BRUCE KUKLICK

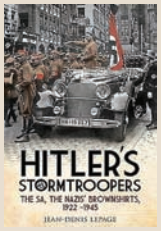
The Fighting Sullivans: How Hollywood and the Military Make Heroes (Bruce Kuklick, University Press of Kansas, 2016, $27.95, Hardcover) The five Sullivan brothers died when the cruiser USS *Juneau* was sunk in late 1942. This book reveals how their tragic loss was transformed into a propaganda tale.

Hitler's Home Front

Hitler's Home Front: Memoirs of a Hitler Youth (Don A. Gregory and Wilhelm R. Gehlen, Pen and Sword, 2016, $34.95, hardcover) Wilhelm Gehlen helped man an antiaircraft gun as a member of the Hitler Youth. His memoir is a sober and unapologetic look at a dark time in his life.


1941
FIGHTING THE SHADOW WAR
A DIVIDED AMERICA IN A WORLD AT WAR
MARC WORTMAN

1941: Fighting the Shadow War (Marc Wortman, Grove Atlantic, 2016, $27.00, hardcover) This is a summary of America's clandestine efforts to support Great Britain before the U.S. entered the war. Everything from Lend-Lease to espionage is covered.


HITLER'S STORMTROOPERS
THE SA, THE NAZIS' BROWNSHIRTS, 1922–1945
JEAN-DENIS LEPAGE

Hitler's Stormtroopers: The SA, the Nazis' Brownshirts, 1922-1945 (Jean-Denis Lepage, Frontline Books, 2016, $34.95, hardcover) The SA was the Nazi Party's first army. This is a history of its formation and actions.

101st AIRBORNE
MARKET GARDEN 1944

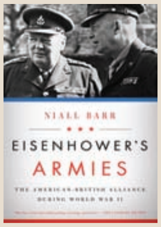
101st Airborne Market Garden 1944: Past and Present (Stephen Smith and Simon Forty, Casemate, 2016, $16.95, softcover) This photo book presents images of the Market Garden fighting alongside pictures of what each site looks like today.

IWM
FIRING ON FORTRESS EUROPE
HMS BELFAST AT D-DAY

HMS Belfast at D-Day: Firing on Fortress Europe (Nick Hewitt, Imperial War Museum, 2016, $30.00, softcover) The cruiser *Belfast,* today a museum ship in London, took part in the enormous invasion on D-Day. This book details one ship's part in winning the day.

DRAWINGS FROM NAZI CONCENTRATION CAMPS
IMPRISONED

Imprisoned: Drawings from Nazi Concentration Camps (Arturo Benvenuti, Skyhorse Publishing, 2017, $29.99, hardcover) The author met with many former camp inmates and collected their memories and artwork into a wrenching volume.


NIALL BARR
EISENHOWER'S ARMIES
THE AMERICAN-BRITISH ALLIANCE DURING WORLD WAR II

Eisenhower's Armies: The American-British Alliance During World War II (Niall Barr, Pegasus Books, 2016, $35.00, hardcover) The Anglo-American alliance in World War II was one of the most effective in history. This book examines that partnership.

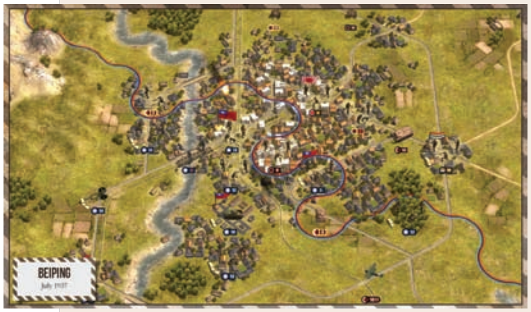
Simulation Gaming BY JOSEPH LUSTER

ORDER OF BATTLE OPENS UP TO A VARIETY OF HISTORICAL CAMPAIGNS, AND *CALL OF DUTY* AIMS TO RETURN TO ITS WORLD WAR II ROOTS.

ORDER OF BATTLE: WORLD WAR II

PUBLISHER SLITHERINE • **SYSTEM** PC • **GENRE** STRATEGY • **AVAILABLE** NOW

Order of Battle: World War II is a game that's been around for a while in one form or another, but it only recently cemented itself as a solid hub for a variety of WWII-related campaigns. What started out as a Pacific Theater-oriented outing is now essentially a menu to which you can add as many or as few additional DLC campaigns as you like. Its key strength, then, is customizability. Oh, and the turn-based warfare is pretty darn good, too.



With the free version of *Order of Battle,* players have access to a Boot Camp campaign and a sample of every other available campaign pack. This should be enough to let you know whether or not you're interested in trying out something else from the ever-growing list of full campaigns. At the moment these consist of *U.S. Pacific, Rising Sun, U.S. Marines, Morning Sun, Winter War, Blitzkrieg,* and *Kriegsmarine.* New missions are added to the free sample list each time a campaign is released, so you won't have to worry about missing any future fronts.

The name of the game in *Order of Battle* is the same as it was two years ago, and that's a very good thing. Even as developer The Aristocrats has expanded its scope bit by bit, balance is still the series' strong suit. Some strategy games favor raw power over strategy, but you can't just overload your patrol with the most powerful tanks and expect to emerge victorious. Planning is key, and despite the game's relative simplicity it's very easy to get overzealous and find yourself cut off from the rest of your army. It pays to play patiently and work outposts into the mix as you traverse the map. Doing so will increase your range of supply and make survival that much likelier.

Not every campaign in *Order of Battle* is created equal, but you'll find some interesting content within the overall downloadable add-on setup that you likely haven't encountered before. If you've ever played a campaign that depicted Japan's invasion of China, for instance, it must have been in a fairly niche title. That's what *Morning Sun* does here, and though it isn't the most exciting selection available, it's intriguing for its place in history alone.

That historical aspect has become much more rigid as the game has grown, however. Earlier campaigns allowed players to turn the tide of war in an ahistorical direction, but that doesn't seem to be the case here. This news will likely please the real history buffs out there, but it can be a little deflating to perform exceedingly well only to face defeat because that's what happened in the actual battle.

Order of Battle makes up for minor shortcomings like these with style and speed. The animated 3D units look great atop the grid-based 2D map, and there's just enough detail present to suck you into the battles. Speaking of which, the battles are at their most exciting when they incorporate a mix of land, sea, and air combat. The challenge is just right during these missions, and they're short enough to not be terribly annoying to replay repeatedly. You will ultimately get however much enjoyment you feel like investing here. With an assortment of optional campaigns to choose from without the pressure of playing any theater you're not particularly interested in, *Order of Battle* serves up a nice à la carte counterpoint to some of the more demanding and hyper-realistic strategy games out there without sacrificing any of the smarts.

PREVIEW

CALL OF DUTY: WWII

PUBLISHER ACTIVISION • **SYSTEM** PC, PS4, XBOX ONE • **GENRE** SHOOTER • **AVAILABLE** NVEMBER 3, 2017

Even with the added bonus of fan-favorite and critical darling *Call of Duty 4: Modern Warfare* in the mix, it's no secret that the last entry, *Infinite Warfare,* had some trouble attracting players. Whether that came down to the Infinity Ward's work on it or general audience exhaustion—particularly for the increasingly futuristic development of the series' setting—it warranted a reset of sorts. And what better way to reset *Call of Duty* than to bring it back to where it all began: World War II.

The fact that WWII seems like a novel setting for *Call of Duty* at this point says a lot about the industry as a whole, at least in terms of console gaming. The PC world has seen a steady stream of WWII content over the years, but it's pretty rare on other platforms. Developed by Sledgehammer Games (*Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 3, Call of Duty: Advanced Warfare*) and due out on November 3, 2017, *Call of Duty: WWII* is looking to mix things up in some potentially cool ways.

Even more information will be available by the time this issue hits the stands, but at the moment we know a few interesting tidbits, particularly in regard to *Call of Duty: WWII*'s overall difficulty. Sledgehammer co-founder Glen Schofield explained some of the changes to *Polygon,* emphasizing the fact that players won't be the "superheroes" they normally are in war games. Every bullet comes with a cost, which is further illustrated by the lack of regenerating health. Yep, this time around you'll need to depend on squadmates for medical assistance, and even ammunition, while on the battlefield. It's not just about being "hard," it's about highlighting the vulnerability of these soldiers and showing how substantial their sacrifices truly were.

Story will play a major role, as usual, with this narrative following an Allied squad in the European Theater from 1944 to 1945. Multiplayer is also a big deal, and the first major video reveal for that is right around the corner at the time of this writing. It's impossible to predict how Sledgehammer's return to WWII will play out, but as of right now it all looks like a pretty refreshing direction for *Call of Duty.*

Hosingen

Continued from page 53

into flames, close enough to observe that no one made it out alive.

Around 1500 hours, the POWs were marched to Eisenbach on the Ober Eisenbach-Hosingen-Drauffelt road. Even after three days the road was still jammed with westbound traffic in support of the massive German offensive. The POWs arrived at Eisenbach an hour later and were jammed into a small church, where they lay tightly packed together on the floor and pews with only straw to cover them. Captain Jarrett, selected as senior officer of the group, was removed by the Germans and marched off for further interrogation. The prisoners tried to get some sleep as most had not slept in three days.

Erickson and McKnight were not fortunate enough to sleep indoors that night and would spend most of the next four months on forced marches back and forth across Germany until their liberation on April 12, 1945, near Horsingen, Germany, a journey of over 900 miles.

There were 23,000 Americans captured during the Battle of the Bulge. Because of this massive influx of prisoners, the GIs were split up once they reached the train stations. The POW camps were divided into stalags for the enlisted men and oflags for officers.

Camps where most of the men were held included the following: Stalag IXB at Bad Orb, Germany (enlisted men); Stalag IVB at Mühlberg, Germany; Oflag XIIIB at Hammelburg, Germany (officers); Stalag VIIIA at Gorlitz, Germany; Oflag 64 at Szubin, Poland ; Stalag 9A at Ziegenhain, Germany (noncommissioned officers); Berga Am Elster at Gera, Germany (slave labor camp).

Many of the men from Hosingen were first shipped to Stalag IXB at Bad Orb. On January 11, 1945, the officers were moved to Oflag XIIIB at Hammelburg. After the officers left, 300 American Jewish soldiers and 50 non-Jewish NCOs chosen at random were separated within the camp. On January 25, another 1,200 noncommissioned officers were relocated to Stalag IXA at Ziegenhain.

On February 8, the 350 Americans that had been separated within the camp were shipped to Berga Am Elster slave labor camp near Buchenwald concentration camp and were put to work digging tunnels for an underground ammunition factory. Private Clifford Williford of M Company was part of this group. This camp had a 20 percent fatality rate and represented six percent of all American POW deaths during World War II.

Out of a force of some 300 American defenders in Hosingen when the Battle of the Bulge began, just seven were killed and 10 wounded. The defenders had inflicted an estimated 2,000 casualties on the Germans, including more than 300 killed.

Hosingen was the last town held by the 110th Infantry to fall, giving the U.S. First Army time to rush troops to Bastogne on December 18, 1944, including the famed 101st Airborne Division. The story of the defense of Bastogne would have been much different if the 110th had not successfully carried out its orders.

The brave men who fought in Hosingen would never come together as one group again. Their "hold at all costs" order resulted in their suffering unimaginable hardships until they were either liberated or died as prisoners of war. They would all lose at least 25 percent of their body weight due to starvation, illness, disease, or wounds left untreated. Most would be locked in boxcars for days at a time, where they were bombed and strafed by Allied planes unaware they were locked inside. Many were forced to march hundreds of miles from camp to camp during the coldest winter on record. Only a few managed to escape.

After liberation by the Soviet Red Army at the end of January 1945, 110th Regiment commander Colonel Hurley Fuller nominated his unit along with the 109th Field Artillery Battalion and Company B, 103rd Engineer Battalion for the War Department's Distinguished Unit Citation (now called the Presidential Unit Citation) for its critical defense of the Ardennes region against the German assault from December 16-18, 1944. The request was denied in 1946, much to the amazement of many of the officers who fought in the area and were familiar with the results the units had achieved, including General Anthony McAuliffe of the 101st Airborne.

There have been several other attempts since 1946 to have the U.S. Army reconsider its decision; however, each attempt has failed.

Because of the mass destruction of unit reports before their capture, there is no official list of the names of the men who fought in Hosingen, Luxembourg, from December 16-18, 1944. If you know of someone who fought there, please contact the author, Alice M. Flynn at www.HeroesofHosingen.com so that their contributions may be properly documented and recognized.

Alice M. Flynn is the author of the book The Heroes of Hosingen: Their Untold Story, *available through Amazon.com.*

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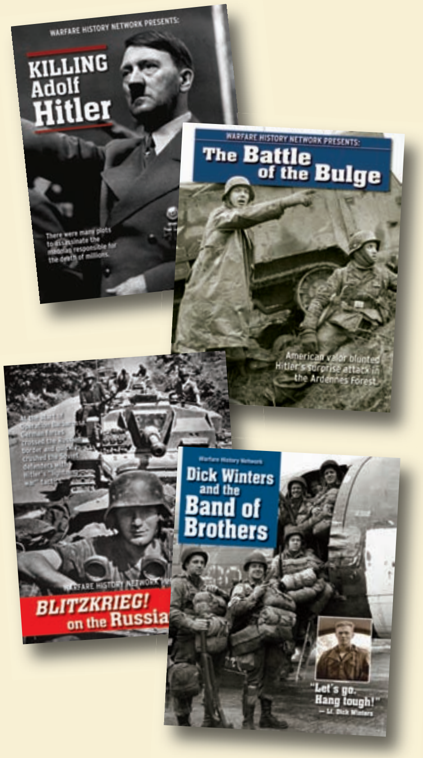
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Ordnance

Continued from page 11

planes, enabling the Il-2s to better protect each other by flying in a defensive circle, which the Germans called the "Wheel of Death." Attacking in such groups also helped assure that the volleys of the somewhat inaccurate rockets would strike vital components of the German defenses. The changes also included having a few of the Il-2s initially attack German artillery positions to help lessen flak damage in subsequent attacks. The pilots also developed a zigzag system of attack that reduced chances of being hit. Studies conducted on a Soviet test range revealed that it was more effective if rockets were used on the first run, followed by secondary runs with bombs and following runs with guns.

Soviet flyers also discovered that while the Ilyusha was slower in a turn than German fighters it could outturn them in a half-turn maneuver, which enabled them to become the attackers. They also learned to suddenly slow the Shturmovik so the German fighters would zip past and then become victims of the Soviet planes' heavy cannon and machine-gun fire. They also learned to sideslip the Il-2 in a 20-degree bank, creating aiming problems for the Germans.

By late 1943, Soviet tactics had evolved to the point where the Shturmovik had become a much feared weapon. Pilots had gained significant experience, and the Germans were forced to rely on fewer pilots with often inadequate training because of attrition in the East and escalated Allied pressure in North Africa, Sicily, and Italy. With fewer enemy fighters in the air, the Wheel of Death was modified from a defensive mode to a nearly purely offensive one as Soviet attackers circled a target with round after round of blistering fire until the targets were obliterated or the Il-2s ran out of ammunition.

These attacks would sometimes last more than 90 minutes, and as the war progressed even more Il-2s were added to the deadly wheels, often resulting in elongated formations of planes. The addition of radio sets also simplified and greatly improved aerial communications in the increasingly crowded skies.

After the war, the rear wooden fuselages were replaced with metal, which extended the useful life of many Il-2s. A large number were used by foreign countries well through the mid-1950s.

Author Phil Zimmer is a U.S. Army veteran and a former newspaper reporter. He has written on a number of World War II topics.

Little Friends

Continued from page 67

heavy losses among its experienced pilots. Strafing of airfields also had a major impact; more aircraft were destroyed on the ground than in the air. German aircraft losses were covered by factories as fighter production continued right up to the end of the war, but experienced pilot losses could not be overcome.

Another factor was the interruption of petroleum supplies, both by attacks against the Romanian oil industry and the destruction of locomotives and tank cars. Fuel shortages reduced training hours for Luftwaffe pilots. While new American pilots had an average of 120 hours in fighters by the time they entered combat in 1944, Luftwaffe pilots had less than 30. When Soviet forces captured the Romanian oil fields in August 1944, German gasoline supplies were cut to the bone. Consequently, the Luftwaffe kept its fighters on the ground unless a mission was headed for certain targets, particularly Berlin. The Luftwaffe deployed jet fighters in late 1944, but their high fuel consumption and limited endurance reduced their effectiveness.

Escort fighters were never the problem in the Pacific that they were in Western Europe. Although missions were much, much longer, they were mostly over open water until reaching the target area, so the bombers were not prone to interception as early in the mission. Fighter range was greater because they did not have to weave over the bombers to protect them. General George Kenney, the senior air officer in the Southwest Pacific where most of the air action took place, was not locked into the daylight precision bombing theory. Until P-38s became available for escort, he instructed his bomber commanders to schedule missions so their bombers came over the target in darkness or right at daylight while the Japanese were still asleep.

Missions over New Guinea were escorted by P-39s and P-40s. Beginning at the end of December 1942, long-range P-38s became available and the Allies quickly gained air superiority. The Fifth Air Force also began receiving P-47s. In mid-1944, Charles Lindbergh visited the theater as a technical representative for Chance-Vought and got permission to fly with the P-38 squadrons. He taught Kenney's fighter pilots how to extend their range greatly by using power control techniques he had learned during his record-setting flights.

Lindbergh, who was experienced with the P-47 and the Double Wasp engine, taught fuel-saving techniques to P-47 pilots as well. Consequently, Fifth Air Force fighter pilots operated at much greater distances from their bases than their counterparts in Europe. When he was offered P-51s, Kenney refused them. He had settled on P-38s as his primary fighter due to the long overwater missions his pilots were required to fly. The loss of an engine on a single-engine fighter over shark-infested waters or the dense tropical jungles was a death sentence. It was not until early 1945 that the Fifth Air Force received any P-51s, except for those assigned to reconnaissance squadrons as F-6s.

Fighters played a major role in China starting in early 1942, when Claire Chennault's American Volunteer Group (AVG) went into action with their P-40s. In July, the AVG was brought into the U.S. Army as the 23rd Fighter Group, although most of its pilots went back to the States or went to work for China National Airways Corporation. Since all fuel and other supplies had to be flown to China from India, fighters were better utilized due to their lower fuel consumption. Initially, fighters in the CBI were P-40s, but as new types became available they were joined and eventually replaced by P-47s, P-38s, and P-51s.

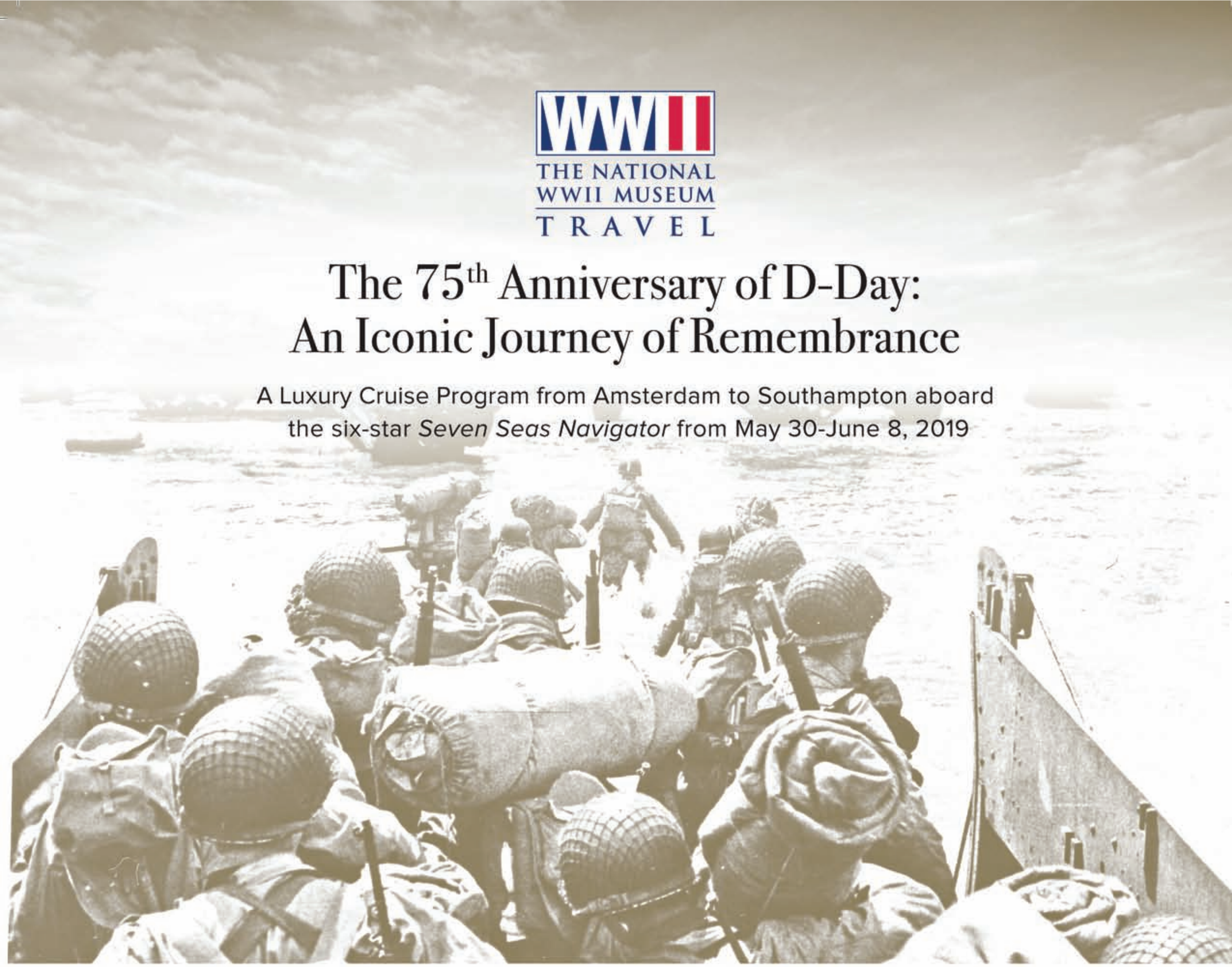
In the summer of 1944, Boeing B-29 Superfortresses commenced operations against Japan from China, then later in the year from the Mariana Islands. Not even the vaunted Mustang had the range to reach Japan from the Marianas, but some had been assigned to the Seventh Air Force to escort its Liberators (there were no B-17s in the Pacific after 1943).

As it turned out, the B-29s faced a much smaller Japanese fighter force than expected, and losses to fighters were light. Nevertheless, one of the reasons given for the capture of Iwo Jima was that it could serve as a base for P-51s for missions to Japan. However, the escort issue soon became moot.

In March 1945, XXI Bomber Command turned to night operations at low altitudes, and the Mustangs were used primarily for fighter sweeps. Once Okinawa fell into Allied hands, Fifth Air Force fighters moved to bases there and on nearby islands and began flying strafing and bombing missions against Kyushu, where the planned invasion of Japan was supposed to take place.

On August 5, 1945, the day before the first atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, Fifth Air Force pilots came back from their missions to report that white flags of surrender had been laid out all over Kyushu.

Author Sam McGowan is a veteran and licensed pilot. He has written on numerous topics for WWII History *and resides in Missouri City, Texas.*



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